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Forgiveness In Psychoanalysis and Judaism: Developing a Forgiveness Sensibility

This paper argues for the development of a “forgiveness sensibility” within contemporary psychoanalytic stances. It reviews psychoanalytic writings on forgiveness as well as approaches to forgiveness, in religion—specifically Judaism. The paper points out potential stumbling blocks the analyst needs to watch for as he/she moves from having a forgiveness sensibility to bringing it into the analytic setting. In a clinical context, an analyst with a forgiveness sensibility needs a good deal of wisdom to hear and accept from the victim that the trauma inflicted may remain unforgivable for that patient. What the analyst's forgiveness sensibility provides is an alternative possibility for the patient to consider, not a requirement for change; in this sense, the forgiveness sensibility is an additional tool in the analysts tool kit, as useful as any other tools that might be tested out in the analytic process.

Edith Boxer, LCSW, Ph.D., Psy.D.

Where Are You Going To Pedal Next? My Analytic Journey With Howard

Within the context of an intimate autobiographical and analytic perspective, this paper imparts my experience working with Howard. Although I did not know about Specificity Theory at the time of our work, I trust Howard paid close attention to our “particularity in a unique field of interwoven experience.” (Call for Papers, 2017). Howard’s and my recent conversation about what is in a connection that makes it therapeutic is vital to my sessions with him where, out of our mutual stories, we were able to harmonize. Our work has become indispensable to my way of relating both analytically and personally.

Ginna Clark, MFT, Psy.D.

More Than Skin Deep: Queering Pornography and Matters of Flesh

Pornography revolts, titillates, frightens, and entices. It engages our imagination, our deepest fears, and our steamiest fantasies. More than just moving images, naked bodies, and friction, pornography has meaning. Designed to elicit an intense, embodied experience, it also serves as another kind of “royal road” to understanding our unconscious desires. In playing with interiority and exteriority in such a provocative way, pornography offers multi-faceted interpretations of the individual skin’s surface as well as the space between bodies. This paper puts pornography on the couch and asks it to free associate. It utilizes queer theory, which much like the psychoanalytic task, asks us to unsettle our preconceived notions and redirect our attention to deviations. As such this paper attempts to disorient from prescriptive or moralistic ideas about pornography in order to explore its substantive commentary on our greatest inner conflicts, desires, and cultural dictates.

Ellyn Freedman, Psy.D., LCSW

Unintended Effect of Demagoguery on Therapeutic Change in an Asian Indian Immigrant

This paper illustrates within a complexity model the unintended influence of aversiveness to Trumpian demagoguery upon a motivational system of change within an Asian Indian’s

immigrant's concept of gender and overall forays into self-expansion and freedom from constricted forms of expression and interpersonal need for control. Intersubjective dimensions are explored as analyst's abhorrence to misogyny, sexism and racism as promulgated from presidential context are also experienced with the patient. Pathways towards understanding sources of control dynamics are explored as well as cultural prescriptions of gender which ultimately are challenged and modified by patient as he distinguishes himself from Trump as an anti-self-object, not –me identification as patient comes to realize his future is held captive by him.

Daniel Goldin, Psy.D., MFT

The Narrative Turn (Not Taken) In Psychoanalysis

Freud's initial goal was to help his patients remember rather than to relive. In other words, the process of psychoanalysis at its inception involved rendering experience into autobiographical narratives. This original purpose has recently been discounted in favor of more present-moment-centered goals such as emotional attunement and deconstructing enactments. And yet patients continue to come into our offices wanting to work out stories, wanting to figure out what they are doing and what has happened to them. This paper will look closely at the phenomenon of narrative and how the skill of telling our experiences and our lives emerges in development and informs the clinical situation. We will consider some tendrils towards a storytelling emphasis in all the major psychoanalytic theories, paying particular attention to the contributions of Schafer, Spence, Donnel Stern, Hoffman, Mitchell and Ricoeur. We will devote the bulk of the paper to exploring the ways an emphasis on a storytelling dimension opens up new ways of understanding clinical experience.

Tyia Grange Isaacson, LCSW, Ph.D., Psy.D.

Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Specificity Theory as imaged through case study over time

This presentation offers creative vignettes based upon an actual patient in order to illustrate a central perspective of specificity theory, to tolerate the pain and confusion of not knowing. Several questions are raised including: what is being privileged? What may be out of our awareness? How can we ascertain what is therapeutic? Discussion and audience participation welcome.

Darren Haber, MA, MFT

Yearning for Godot: Beckett, Repetition and Vulnerability in Psychoanalysis

This paper finds resonance between psychoanalysis and Beckett's landmark play, "Waiting for Godot." In the play, both tramps await Godot; in analysis, participants await markedly different "Godots." Analysands often begin treatment in hope of a concretized or literal answer, or "savior," in pursuit of concretized relief from suffering; analysts thus encounter strongly defended curative fantasies or desires (even demands) for antidotes, while analysts themselves hope for the mutual development of a new relational home for the patient, and empathic understanding of long-sequestered trauma-affect -- the very affective experiencing many patients, in this author's experience, have long sought to dissociate or repress via those same stubbornly entrenched self-protective processes. The dyadic process is further complexified via

the analyst's own developmental hopes of "good enough" healing or empathic understanding of such trauma, which itself may well disappoint an analyst hoping for early "cure" or affective bypass – possibly provoking an analyst's own fear of "failing" or disappointing others.

Russell Koch, Ph.D.

Jacob and the Angel

This paper discusses psychoanalytic attitudes that are embodied in our psychoanalytic theories. The author considers relational attitudes including radical hope, collaboration, and dealing with conflicting attitudes between analyst and patient with clinical vignettes that illustrate each. By making psychoanalytic attitudes explicit, a hunger for positive integrative experience is likely to emerge. The story of Jacob and the Angel is used as a metaphor of engagement whereas each might have differing attitudes, the relationship can result in mutual benefits in the therapeutic alliance.

Peter Maduro, JD, Psy.D.

Theory and Patients as Friends to My Post Election Shock

Peter Maduro illustrates how his psychoanalytic theory, as well as several of his patients, helped him better tolerate the reactive anxieties he felt in the immediate aftermath of the 2016 U.S. Presidential election. He shows how particular theoretical ideas and values, including transference, intersubjective conjunction & disjunction, specificity in clinical understanding, and an existential point of view, operated to reorient him from his then disoriented state. Additionally, he shows how several of his patients, in their unique emotional reactions to the election, helped him re-find his own personal and therapeutic center; they helped him help them.

Peter Maduro, JD, Psy.D.

The Existential and Personal Nature of Psychoanalytic Ethics, as Evidenced in Howard Bacal's Specificity Theory

While the possibility of psychoanalytic ethics is claimed here to arise from the relational structure of human being generally, the specific content of the individual psychoanalyst's ethical values is shown to arise from his or her life experiences. This claim is illustrated with reference to Howard Bacal, M.D. and his Specificity Theory.

Liz Markey, Psy.D., LMHC

The Utility and Futility of Patient's Technology Use

This paper demonstrates the value for contemporary psychoanalysts to grapple with how patients use technology to express and work through thwarted developmental longings and current relational conflicts. The author operationalizes "social utility" and "social futility" and applies these ideas to patients' "working through" process. What follows is a review of what recent authors are saying about technology in addition to the application of theories on schizoid phenomena and transitional objects illustrated through a case study. The paper underscores the

growing need for clinicians to cultivate a twenty-first century ear finely attuned to a growing body of therapy patients for whom technology acts as a daily relational appendage.

Kathy Marks, Psy.D., MFT

In the Nick of Time: Motherhood and the Analytic Pair

I had moved from successful businesswoman to therapist and was doing fine. Then suddenly, at age 50, I was tripped up from an unexpected source-- deep, unresolved feelings of confusion and pain surrounding my lost opportunity to become a biological mother. In this paper, I will examine both other women's and my own ambivalence over issues of motherhood and track how those issues affect female identity. I will show how psychoanalytic training provided me the holding environment and safe relational home from which to deal with this sensitive part of my identity. Finally, I will examine, from an experience-near perspective, how concepts of complexity, intersubjective systems, and relational theories and new attitudes changed my organizing principles, and discuss the intersubjective implications of working with patients when the analyst integrates authenticity and self-disclosure into the therapeutic relationship.

Philip Ringstrom, Ph.D., Psy.D

Three Dimensional Field Theory: Dramatization and Improvisation in a Psychoanalytic Theory of Change

This presentation of Three Dimensional Field Theory involves; 1) the illumination of an *information theory* based epistemology of change, 2) how the "field" is attended to by its participants in terms of *right* and *left* hemispherical processing, 3) how information is discerned in terms of Six Axes of Truth, 4) how "semiotic structures" reflect that which is *impermissible* vs. *permissible* to be addressed in the field, and 5) how all of this coalesces in a *dramaturgical* study of *repetition* vs. *improvisation* in cultivating change in a psychoanalytic field.

David Schrieber, MA, MFT

In Heinz-Sight: Towards a Contemporary Understanding of Expansiveness and the Grandiose Self

This paper examines the clinical importance of distinguishing between healthy, expansive grandiosity on one hand, and regressive expressions of the archaic grandiose self in the form of defensive grandiosity on the other. I will compare Kohut's theory of the grandiose self with a treatment perspective that privileges a distinction between the affects and context associated with grandiosity as it is manifested in healthy expansiveness, and grandiosity as it is employed defensively. Using clinical material from an on-going analysis, a treatment approach will be illuminated that focuses on the patient's and the analyst's affects associated with these distinct expressions of grandiosity, along with the careful tracking of fluctuating states of grandiosity within the context of the shifting dimensions of the transference.

Penelope Starr-Karlin, Psy.D., MFT

The Phoenix Finds a Relational Home: The Emotional Phenomenology of Trauma, Myth, Image and Word

The Phoenix myth is commonly thought of as a simple metaphor of self-renewal but this analytic dyad found that the visual images evoked by its elaborated mythemes (sub-plots) related to the various existential moods and affects characteristic of trauma as identified by Stolorow (2007). Mythology has most consistently been adopted for use in Jung's analytical psychology but this paper demonstrates this myth's usefulness with a contemporary relational psychoanalytic approach, that of intersubjective-systems theory. This combination was effective for an analysand whose former analysis had been abruptly terminated. The dialogic exploration of possible meaning in the mythemes brought dissociated experience into language and assisted with the emotional integration of the trauma. Images bring together diverse somatic, cognitive, and verbal information, normally separated into different communication "codes" (Bucci, 1997). This ancient myth's longevity may be due to a useful psychological function; its images can aid the organizing of unformulated unconscious chaotic experience and assist in the process of bringing dissociated or pre-verbal emotions and moods into language. The utility of the Phoenix myth in a relational dialogical process that helped symbolize unsymbolized unconscious content could assist in work with other survivors of catastrophic loss.

Mark Winitzky, MFT

Confusion of Asymmetries: Attitudes, Values and Feelings

The asymmetry of the roles of analyst and patient is a basic aspect of the analytic situation that is rarely examined explicitly as its own topic, and therefore understandings and attitudes about asymmetry are often formed indirectly, enacted implicitly, and maintained by identifications with various theoretical principles or positions, as well as by the inevitable personal affective responses of individual analysts. The configuring of asymmetries in any actual psychoanalytic moment is an extremely complex process that is continually changing, and attending to it, as it is being experienced by either party, can open our horizons to new understandings of what is happening. The advent of relational and intersubjective psychoanalysis has seen a division of theoretical positions that reflect differing attitudes about the asymmetry, or asymmetries, of the therapeutic relationship.

David James Fisher, Ph.D.

Torn at the Shoulder: A Psychological Exploration of Tenderness, Splitting and the Divided Self in the Leonard Cohen Song, "Famous Blue Raincoat"

This paper provides a close textual and contextual reading of the Leonard Cohen song, "Famous Blue Raincoat," one of his most autobiographical and elusive works of art. It explores the ways in which tenderness, splitting, and the divided self get thematized in the song, without providing a neat or satisfying resolution. I view the song as a letter written by Leonard Cohen to himself. It oscillates between states of mourning and sadness and those of joy and exuberance. Ultimately it is a song about the song writer's inability to love or be loved. It is also an affirmation of the value of creativity in remembrance and in opening up a space for powerful emotions and the expression of ambivalence about self and others. I draw on the writings of Fairbairn to explore some of the schizoid dynamics at work; some of the psychoanalytic literature on the doppelgänger phenomena; and Winnicott's writings on the true and false self.

