

**THE BOSTON PSYCHOANALYTIC SOCIETY AND INSTITUTE**  
**141 Herrick Road, Newton Centre, Massachusetts 02459**

## **Transference, Counter-Transference and their Relationship to Therapeutic Action in Psychoanalysis**

ATP II, Spring 2017

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“Without ... transference – of the intensity of the unconscious, of the infantile ways of experiencing life that have no language and little organization, but the indestructability and power of the origins of life – to the preconscious and to the present day life and contemporary objects – without such transference, or to the extent to which transference miscarries, human life becomes sterile and an empty shell.

... There is neither such a thing as reality nor a real relationship without transference. Any “real relationship” involves transfer of unconscious images to present day objects. In fact, present day objects are objects, and thus real, in the full sense of the word only to the extent to which this transference ... is realized.”

Hans Loewald (1960)

Transference is a central concept in psychoanalytic psychotherapy. In this course, we will examine the concept of transference from its historical beginnings to its present elaborations. We will explore the usefulness of working with transference for understanding the past and helping to create therapeutic change in the present. We will look at different kinds of transferences and different ways of working with transference. We will also consider the relationship between transference and countertransference, touching on related concepts of projective identification, role responsiveness, enactment, the therapist’s use of reverie, and the question of therapist self-disclosure.

Throughout this course we will draw on clinical examples, from the literature and from our own work, to enrich and enliven our understanding. The class is encouraged to bring in brief vignettes with this question in mind: how do I recognize the presence of transference and its nature?

As fundamental psychoanalytic concepts, transference and countertransference are closely tied to the question of what constitutes therapeutic action, that is, how do we best help our patients achieve growth and change?

## Syllabus

### Week 1 – March 23 - Freud's discovery of Transference

1) Freud, S. (1905) *Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*. *S. E.*, 7: 112-122, Postscript. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Freud, S. (1912) *The Dynamics of Transference*. *S. E.*, 12: 99-108. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: The first of these readings is Freud's earliest concise description of the phenomenon of transference and the second elaborates his observations. Together they describe how Freud made the leap *from* transference as an impediment to teaching the patient about their neurosis *to* recognizing that the transference provides a lived repetition of the original conflict that created the patient's disturbance and an essential aspect for understanding and transforming neurotic symptoms.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to describe the nature of transference, the origin of transference in early life, and the double aspect of transference as both an obstacle to change and a means to change, all as these were conceptualized by Freud.

### Week 2 – March 30 - Further development of Freud's ideas about transference

1) Freud, S. (1914) *Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through*. *S. E.*, 12: 147-156. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Loewald (1971) *Transference neurosis*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 19:54-66. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: These two readings bring a fuller description of transference as reflecting a "new edition" in the present of an original situation of conflict, providing the means to resolve forgotten trauma and repressed conflicts. The therapist must largely allow the transference the freedom to emerge unchallenged in the treatment, and with fullness of affect, to be gradually understood/interpreted with the patient.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to provide a detailed description of Freud's understanding of transference (and more specifically transference neurosis) as a repetition within the treatment that is initially visible "in action," but gradually can become understood as an emotionally charged "memory" leading to resolution of unconscious conflicts.

### Week 3 – April 6 - The central role of transference in ego psychology

1) Bird, B. (1972) *Notes on Transference: Universal Phenomenon and Hardest Part of Analysis*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 20: pp. 267-301. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: This paper offers a deepened understanding of the mental capacity to form transferences and specifically the *transference neurosis*, the required deep involvement of the analyst/therapist in the emergence of the transference neurosis, and thus the centrality of the countertransference. Bird further considers the tendency to focus on

libidinal aspects of the transference at the expense of aggressive aspects that often appear in the form of seemingly intractable resistances. Bird, like Loewald, also draws a distinction between 'ordinary' and automatic transference reactions, the transference neurosis, and reactions based in 'reality' – a distinction that continues to haunt and confuse.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to define 'transference neurosis,' conceptualized as distinct from transference reactions characteristic of all human relationships, and be able to discuss the roots in early conflicts about both love and aggression.

#### **Week 4 - April 13 – Debates about transference, real relationships, alliance, and transference resistance**

1) Brenner, C. (1979) *Working Alliance, Therapeutic Alliance, and Transference*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 27:137-157. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Stolorow, R. & Lachman, F. (1984) *Transference: The future of an illusion*. *Annual of Psychoanalysis* 12:19-37. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: If all relationships are built from past experience aren't they always transference. Can we recognize a "real relationship"? Or a therapeutic or working alliance that is effectively free of transference? Is a positive transference benign in terms of therapeutic gains? Is a negative transference an obstacle? When are either of these resistance? How do we decide?

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the concept of "therapeutic alliance" and will be able to suggest potential transference meanings in the ordinary and unremarkable moments of therapy.

#### **Week 5 – April 20 - The transference use of the analyst**

1) Winnicott, D. W. (1969) *The Use of An Object*. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 50: 711-716. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Sandler, J. (1976) *Counter-transference and Role-Responsiveness*. *International Review of PsychoAnalysis*, 3: 43-47. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: The central theme of this weeks readings is how the patient experiences and uses the therapist developmentally (in contrast to predominantly as an interpreter) to achieve greater self-differentiation, relying on the therapist's capacity to respond at the developmental and emotional level required by the patient.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to describe how a range of developmental needs may become evident within the transference/countertransference matrix at different times and discuss how the therapist can recognize and respond to these needs while maintaining the treatment frame.

## **Week 6 – April 27 – Countertransference: past and present**

1) Tower, L (1956) *Countertransference*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 4: 224-255. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Greenberg, J. (1991) *Countertransference and Reality*. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 1:52-73. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: Our readings move away from viewing countertransference as “analyst’s blind spot,” and something to eradicate, to viewing countertransference as inevitable transferences of the analyst within the dyad arising both from the therapist’s internal world and in response to the patient. This perspective also brings attention to the “real” analyst as a source of patient’s phantasies and associations.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to describe a difference between old views on countertransference as a hindrance to psychoanalytic discourse and modern views - transference in the analyst – which, together with the patient’s transference, creates a combined dynamic unconscious.

## **Week 7 – May 4 - Klein, neo-Kleinians and Bion**

1) Joseph, B. (1985) *Transference: The Total Situation*. *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 66: 447-454. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Brown, L.J. (2010) *Klein, Bion, and Intersubjectivity: Becoming, Transforming, and Dreaming*. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 20:669-682. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: Transference as a total situation is an actualized living experience of the patient in analysis. Analyst and patient co-create a narrative based on a notion of a shared unconscious phantasy.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to describe a meaning of transference as a total situation and differentiate object relational approach to transference from an ego-psychological one.

## **Week 8 – May 11 - Self psychological views of transference and entering the patient’ experience**

1) Ornstein, A (1990). *Chapter 5: Selfobject Transferences and the Process of Working Through*. *Progress in Self Psychology*, 6:41-58. [Available Upon [Request from the Library](#)]

2) Schwaber E. A. (1992) *Countertransference: The analyst’s retreat from the patient’s vantage point*. *The International Journal of PsychoAnalysis*, 73: 349-361. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: Self-object transference is concerned with the patient’s moment-to-moment self-experience. Self-object transference is established in response to deficits and developmental arrests rather than intrapsychic conflicts.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to describe self-object transferences in analytic and other relationships as well as different ways of working with these transferences and the related defenses.

### **Week 9 – May 28 - Mutual involvement in therapeutic process (intersubjectivity)**

1) McLaughlin, J.T. (1991) *Clinical and Theoretical Aspects of Enactment*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 39: 595-614. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Jacobs, T. (1996) *Analysis, Mutual Analysis, and Self Analysis: On the Interplay of Minds in the Analytic Process*. *Canadian Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 4: 255-277. [PEP Web Link](#)

Main topic for discussion: Analytic enactments are viewed as events occurring within the psychoanalytic dyad that both parties experience as being the consequence of behavior in the other. Analytic material emerges from interplay between the minds of patient and analyst. Analysts have different reactions to being their patients' transference objects. The analyst's relationship (transference) to analytic theory may play a significant role in that reaction.

Learning objective for this session: Participants will be able to describe the evolving understanding of the concept of enactment from viewing it as "misbehavior" on the patient's or analyst's part to viewing it as inevitable co-creation of the analytic dyad, and will be able to describe the role played by self-analysis in modern psychoanalytic treatment.

### **Week 10 – May 25 - Erotic Transference and the analyst's needs**

1) Freud, S. (1915) *Observations on Transference Love*. *S. E.*, 12: 159-171. [PEP Web Link](#)

2) Morris, H (2016) *The Analyst's Offer*. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 64:1173-1187. [Available Upon [Request from the Library](#)]

Main topic for discussion: What is Transference Love? Is Transference Love the same as "real" love? What is the role of seduction in psychoanalytic encounter? Our main topic for discussion is the origin of Erotic Transference, ways of handling this difficult aspect of psychoanalysis, as well as the analyst's contribution to the development of it.

Learning objective for this session: At the conclusion of the session the participants will be able to discuss vicissitudes of erotic transference/ countertransference and the complex nature of the analytic relationship.

### **Further Optional Reading:**

Adler, G. (1980) Transference, real relationship and alliance. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 61:547-558. [PEP Web Link](#)

Canestri, J. (1993). A cry of fire: some considerations on transference love. In: E.S. Person (ed.), *On Freud's "Observations on Transference Love."* Yale University Press: New Haven, CT, 146154. [Available Upon [Request from the Library](#)]

Cooper, A. (1987) Changes in Psychoanalytic Ideas: Transference Interpretation. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 35: 99-118 [PEP Web Link](#)

Cooper, A. (1988) Our Changing Views of the Therapeutic Action of Psychoanalysis: Comparing Strachey and Loewald. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 58: 15-27. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ferenczi, S. (1949) Confusion of Tongues Between the Adult and the Child (The Language of Tenderness and of Passion). *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 30: 225-230. [PEP Web Link](#)

Freud, S. (1910) Five Lectures on Psychoanalysis. *S. E.*, 11: 49-55. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ferro, A. (2002) Some Implications of Bion's Thought: The Waking Dream and Narrative Derivatives. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 83 (3): 597-607. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ferro, A. (2006) Clinical Implications of Bion's Thought. *The International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 87 (4): 989-1003. [PEP Web Link](#)

Loewald, H. (1975) Psychoanalysis as an Art and the Fantasy Character of the Psychoanalytic Situation. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 23:277-299. [PEP Web Link](#)

Loewald, H. (1960) On the Therapeutic Action of Psycho-Analysis. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 41:16-33. [PEP Web Link](#)

McLaughlin, J.T. (1987) The Play of Transference: Some Reflections on Enactment in the Psychoanalytic Situation. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 35:557- 582. [PEP Web Link](#)

McLaughlin, J.T., (1981) Transference, Psychic Reality, and Countertransference. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 50: 639-664. [PEP Web Link](#)

Meissner, W.W. (2009). Toward a Neuropsychological Reconstruction of Projective Identification *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 57:95-129. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ogden, T. (1994) Analyzing the matrix of the transference-countertransference. In: *Subjects of Analysis*. Jason Aronson, Inc.: Northvale, NJ. [Available Upon [Request from the Library](#)]

Ogden, T. (2005) Forward to Ferro, A., The genesis of suffering and the role of psychoanalysis. In: Dana Birksted-Breen (ed.), *The New Library of Psychoanalysis: Seeds of Illness, Seeds of Recovery*. BrunerRoutledge, NY, ixiii. [Available Upon [Request from the](#)

[Library\]](#)

Stern, D., Sander, L., Nahum, J., Harrison, A., LyonsRuth, K., Morgan, A., BruschiweilerStern, N., Tronick, E. (1998) Non-Interpretive Mechanisms in Psychoanalytic Therapy: The "Something More" Than Interpretation. *The International Journal of PsychoAnalysis*, 79(5): 903-921. [PEP Web Link](#)

Tessman, L. H. (1999) A cry of fire, an old flame, and the matter of the fireplace. In D. Bassin (ed.), *Female Sexuality: Contemporary Engagements*. Jason Aronson, Inc., NJ, 33-48. [Available Upon [Request from the Library](#)]

Tolpin, M. (2002) Chapter 11, Psychoanalysis of Normal Development: Forward edge transferences. *Progress in Self Psychology*. 18: 167-190. [PEP Web Link](#)

Westen, D., Gabbard, G. (2002) Developments in Cognitive Neuroscience II: Implications for Theories of Transference. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 50 (1), 99-134. [PEP Web Link](#)

Whitebook, J. (2002) Psychoanalysis and "The Disenchantment of the World." *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 50: 1197-1217. [PEP Web Link](#)