As a post-Freudian psychoanalytic theory, self psychology is continually undergoing changes and transformations. These changes have two major sources:

The first is related to the fact that the theory as it was originally articulated by Heinz Kohut over a period of less than two decades, contained ideas the meanings of which could only become clear with time and increasing clinical experience. The best example of this is the selfobject concept: originally a purely intrapsychic concept, the concept now includes intersubjective and relational perspectives.

The second major source of changes is related to the fact that there is a continuous, imperceptible influence that all psychoanalytic theories exert on each other. While each theory attempts to preserve its “purity,” discussions of clinical material reveal that analysts’ private theories (Sandler) have multiple theoretical sources.

This eight one and half hour course can only be an overview in which we will focus on the most essential features of self psychology. We will aim for a systematic presentation recognizing that all psychoanalytic theories have to meet the criteria of inner consistency: all clinical theories are based on clinical observations (transferences) which have to be supported by a theory of development and a theory of psychopathology.
September 18, 2014

Why and how did Heinz Kohut develop a theory of the psychology of the self? What is the place of self psychology in the history of psychoanalysis?


Learning Objective: Candidates will appreciate the fact that psychoanalytic concepts have to be put into a historical perspective in order to appreciate their meaning at a particular period in the development of the field.

October 2, 2014

The methodological underpinning of self psychology: empathy as a mode of observation and the definer of the field.


Teicholz, J.G. The Analyst’s Empathy, Subjectivity, and Authenticity: Affect as the common Denominator, *Progress in Self psychology* 16:33-53 PEP Web Link

Learning objective: To learn about the close relationship between method of observation and the evolution of a new theory.

October 9, 2014

The basic concepts of self psychology; definitions and developmental considerations.


Learning Objective: to learn the language of self psychology and the definition of its basic concepts

October 16, 2014

Questions related to the Oedipus Complex


Learning Objective: Self psychological reformulation the Odipus Complex, one of the fundamental neurosogenetic factors in classical psychoanalytic theory.

October 30, 2014

The psychoanalytic process: the selfobject transferences and countertransference in an intersubjective perspective.


Learning Objective to learn the foundational concepts in the psychoanalytic process when viewed from a self psychological perspective.

November 6, 2014

The Interpretive Process, the Process of Working Through and the influence of the analyst’s subjectivity on the analytic process.


Learning Objective: Deepening the candidates’ understanding regarding the analytic process

November 13, 2014

Assertiveness, Anger, Rage and Destructive Aggression; the clinical and theoretical significance of narcissistic rage.


Learning Objective: Candidates will learn to recognize the special features of narcissistic rage and its importance in the clinical situation.