

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

**Year III Fall Semester, 2016**

**Self Psychology**

**Instructors: Richard Gomberg and Rafael Ornstein**

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.

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This course of eight, one and a half hour sessions 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.

CME Objective:

Self-psychology is a clinically focused theory that bridges theory of development, psychopathology therapeutic process and curative action. By demonstrating knowledge of the precepts of this theory participants will be more skilled in treating a wide range of patients with a sophisticated psychoanalytic approach.

## September 22, 2016

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?

Ornstein, P.H. & Kay, Jerald (1990) Development of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology: A Historical-Conceptual Overview. *Review of Psychiatry* Vol. 9 (eds.) Tasman, A., Goldfinger, S., Kaufman, C., Am. Psychiatric Press, Hillsdale, N.J. [Available in [Library](#)]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to compare Self Psychology to Ego Psychology and describe a deficiency that Self Psychology attempted to fix.

## September 29, 2016

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

Kohut, H. (1959) Introspection, Empathy and Psychoanalysis: an examination of the relationship between the mode of observation and theory. *JAPA* 7:459-483, also in: *Search for the Self* (ed.) P.H. Ornstein, 1978, 1:201-232. [PEP Web Link](#)

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: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to define empathy and explain its use as the primary tool of psychoanalytic observation.

## October 6, 2016

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

Tolpin, M. (1986) The Self and Its Selfobjects: a Different Baby, *Progress in Self Psychology* 2:115-128. [PEP Web Link](#)

Optional: Teicholz, J. (1999) The Concept of the Selfobject. In: *Kohut, Lowald and the Postmoderns*, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, N.J. [Available in [Library](#)]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to define a "self-object" and explain how this concept is used clinically.

## October 13, 2016

### Questions related to the Oedipus Complex

Ornstein, A. (1983) An Idealizing Transference of the Oedipal Phase. In: *Reflections on Self Psychology* (eds. Lichtenberg, J. Kaplan, S. 135-161, The Analytic Press, Hillsdale, N.J. [Available in [Library](#)]

Optional: Kohut, H. (1997) The Oedipus Complex and The Psychology of the Self In: *Restoration of the Self* Int. U. Press. [Available in [Library](#)]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to compare the classical conception of the Oedipus Complex with the Self Psychological reformulation.

## October 20, 2016

### Comparative Psychoanalysis

Ornstein, P.H. (1990) How to "Enter" a psychoanalytic process conducted by another analyst: A self psychological view. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 10:478-497. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to compare how a self-psychologist understands a case to how an analyst from another school understands the same case

## October 27, 2016

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

Stolorow, R. & Lachmann, F. (1984) The Transference: The future of Illusion, *Annual of Psychoanalysis* (ed.) The Chicago Inst. for Psychoanalysis 12/13:19-37 Int. U. Press, New York. [PEP Web Link](#)

Brandchaft, B (1991) Countertransference in the Analytic Process, *Progress in Self Psychology* 7:99-105. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to apply the Self Psychological understanding of Transference to a clinical vignette.

## November 3, 2016

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

Ornstein, P. H. & Ornstein, A. (1985) Clinical Understanding and Explaining: the empathic vantage point. In: *Progress in Self Psychology* (ed.) A. Goldberg, Guilford Press, N.Y. 1:43-61. [PEP Web Link](#)

Jacobs, T.J. (1996) Analysis, Mutual Analysis, and Self-Analysis; on the interplay of minds in the analytic process, *Canadian J. of Psychoanalysis* 4: 255-277. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to define how self-psychology understands the working through process.

## November 10, 2016

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

Kohut, H. (1972) Thoughts on Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage, *Psa. S. Child* 27L360-400, also in: *The Search for the Self* (ed,) Ornstein, P.H., 1978. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ornstein, A. (2012) Self-Abuse and Suicidality; clinical manifestations of chronic narcissistic rage, *The Clinical Problem of Masochism* (eds.) D. Holtzman & N. Kulish, Jason Aronson, N.Y. [Available in [Library](#)]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to define narcissistic rage and explain the Self Psychological approach to helping patients who demonstrate narcissistic rage.