Transference/Countertransference Dilemmas in the Treatment of Patients with Character Pathology

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We’re looking forward to meeting you and beginning our ten week course on Transference/Countertransference Dilemmas in the Treatment of Patients with Character Pathology. We will explore – through a series of clinically oriented papers and our own clinical material – some common transference and countertransference dilemmas that arise in the work with patients suffering from Trauma, Schizoid Character, Borderline Personality Disorder, and Narcissistic Pathology. We hope this course will dovetail with Elsa Ronningstam’s course on Borderline and Narcissistic Character Pathology, allowing us an opportunity to delve more deeply into the clinical manifestations of these “character- types” [Freud, 1916] and some of the technical challenges in our work with these patients.

Week I: March 23, 2016  Countertransference

Freud S. (1910) *The Future prospects of psycho-analytic therapy*. Vol XI, pp 143-144. PEP Web Link

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to identify one difference between Heimann’s and Freud’s conceptions of countertransference.

Week II: March 30, 2016  Countertransference


Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to identify one current psychoanalytic concept of countertransference as described by Gabbard.

Week III: April 6, 2016  The Patient who is Withdrawn, Hard to Reach, or Hard to Love

Recommended Reading:

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to identify one treatment issue utilized in the approach to the withdrawn patient.

Week IV: April 13, 2016  Trauma:

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to define two discrete psychoanalytic approaches to dealing with traumatized patients, as described by L. Brown.

Week V: April 20, 2016  Counter-Transference Hate

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to identify one possible etiology of antagonistic feelings that arise in the treatment of a patient with Narcissistic character pathology.

Week VI: April 27, 2016  Borderline Personality Disorder: Hate in the Countertransference

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to discuss Maltzberger’s clinical approach to dealing with countertransference hate.

Week VII: May 4, 2016  The Erotic Transference
The Erotic or Eroticized Transference/Countertransference and The Pressure to Action

Recommended Reading:

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to define erotic transference and countertransference.

Week VIII: May 11, 2016
Communication through destructive action

Recommended Reading:

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to identify one example of destructive acting out and one theoretic implication for its clinical treatment.

Week IX: May 18, 2016
Narcissistic Character
Narcissistic Character: Defenses against affect and accompanying transference manifestations

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to define narcissistic character pathology and identify one manifestation in the transference.

Week X: May 25, 2015
Narcissistic Character continued
Severe forms of Narcissistic pathology – the Antisocial personality disorder

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the student will be able to define antisocial personality and identify one implication for clinical intervention with one prominent symptom.