



Year III Fall Semester, 2018

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 self-object 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 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 20, 2018

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 the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

Kohut, H (1971). *The Analysis of the Self*. New York. IUP. (Clinical vignette of Ms. F) ppg-283-295 (PDF to follow) [Available in the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

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 27, 2018

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 4, 2018

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 the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

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 11, 2018

Clinical Application of Self Psychology: An updated review and integration

Halpern, Jeffrey and S. Ornstein (2018) “Self-Experience within Intersubjectivity: Two clinicians’ use of self-psychology.” *In Introduction to Contemporary Psychoanalysis: Defining Terms and Building Bridges*, Marilyn Chambers (Ed.) pp-165-190 (PDF available) [Available in the library. Download in the library, check the reading folder or request from library@bpsl.org.]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session candidates will be able to describe at least three different types of self-object transferences and will be able to apply this knowledge in responding to their patients.

October 25, 2018

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 the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsl.org.]

Optional: Kohut, H. (1997) The Oedipus Complex and The Psychology of the Self In: *Restoration of the Self* Int. U. Press. [Available in the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsl.org.]

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.

November 1, 2018

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

Stolorow, R. & Lachmann, F. (1984) Transference: The future of an 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 8, 2018

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 15, 2018

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

Kohut, H. (1972) Thoughts on Narcissism and Narcissistic Rage, *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child* 27:360-400, 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 the library. Check the reading folder or request from library@bpsl.org.]

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.

Suggested supplemental readings:

Baker, Howard and M. Baker (1987). "Heinz Kohut's Self psychology: An Overview", *American Journal of Psychiatry*. 144:1 January 1987, pp 1-8. (PDF available) [Available in the library. Download in the library, check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org.]

Bacal, H.A. (1985). Optimal Responsiveness and the Therapeutic Process. *Progress in Self Psychol.*, 1:202-227 [Pep Web Link](#)