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Technique III, Fall 2019

Current Issues in Technique: The Two-Person Approach

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From the beginning of psychoanalysis, there has been a dialectic tension between the potential therapeutic action of insight and interpretation on the one hand, and the analytic relationship itself on the other hand. In recent decades, this debate has become less binary and increasingly nuanced. In this course, we will focus on contemporary views, especially the role of the analyst as a co-actor in the field. We will consider how the analyst's unique involvement influences technique and affects the ongoing interaction in the analytic dyad.

We will start the course focusing on the issue of the analyst's character. Next, we will move on to discuss ideas related to the construction of clinical evidence, followed by exploration of the subjects of countertransference, projective identification, enactment, impasse and self-disclosure, and resistance. As we proceed, we will consider the evolution and impact of the analyst's participation in the treatment, along with the ethical implications of the various technical choices and personal stances.

1. September 19: The Analyst's Character

Our unique selfhood inevitably affects what we do as analysts and the resulting treatment process. In our first class, we will begin thinking about individual style and its impact. We will begin with Kite's article on the impact of the analyst's character (defined by Kite as "the manifestation of a person's fixed, unconscious personality organization") upon the analysis. Next, we will read a paper by Bonaminio, which provides a clinical example focused on the personal factors of the analyst, which may have both a therapeutic and anti-therapeutic effect. Bonaminio speaks of the "person of the analyst" and the way in which it influences the analyst's story of the patient, and the process of interpretation. In addition, he explores the ways people from various schools have thought of the influence of the individual analyst. These articles will begin our exploration of the second person in the two-person theory of psychoanalysis.

Reading:

Kite, J.V. (2008). Ideas of influence: The impact of the analyst's character on the analysis. *Psychoanalytic Q.*, 77(4), 1075-1104. [PEP Web Link](#)

Bonaminio, V. (2008). The person of the analyst: Interpreting, not interpreting, and countertransference. *Psychoanalytic Q.*, 77(4), 1105-1146. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will identify one way in which the analyst's character, manner of relating, and analytic technique affect the treatment process.

2. September 26: Modes of Listening

In this session, we will admire the complexities involved in the clinical construction of analytic knowledge. Schwaber presents her radical approach of annealing as closely as possible to the patient's psychic reality, rather than imposing a fantasy of objectivity and superior appreciation of "objective reality." Spezzano describes the gathering of evidence of patient's unconscious mental activity from three different sources: the patient's associations, the analyst's reverie, and the transference-countertransference enactments.

Reading:

Schwaber, E. (1983). Psychoanalytic listening and psychic reality. *International Review of Psycho-Analysis*, 10, 379-392. [PEP Web Link](#)

Spezzano, C. (2001). How is the analyst supposed to know? Gathering evidence for interpretations. *Contemporary Psychoanalysis*, 37(4), 551-570. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will identify three ways in which he or she gathers clinical data in attempts to understand the patient and to formulate interventions.

3. October 3: Understanding Countertransference within Intersubjective Theory

Over the years, the concept of countertransference has been refined and broadened. Levine uses the term countertransference to refer to "the totality of the analyst's emotional reactions to the patient and the analysis" and contends that the countertransference "is a fundamental, inevitable, and necessary component of the analytic relationship, one that can be conceived of as potentially helpful or potentially obstructive, according to how that experience becomes manifest and is dealt with by the analyst and analysand within the analytic process."

Larry Brown, a BPSI faculty member, is a contemporary Kleinian/Bionian, who integrates clinical material and high theory. He focuses on the intersubjective unconscious, the co-created narrative springing from the minds of both therapist and patient. In his sweeping historical paper, he travels through the evolving schools of thought on countertransference, bringing us to a present day focus on Bion's theory of dreaming the analytic situation where "countertransference may be likened to dreaming in that the analyst's experience of the patient performs the function of transforming (dreaming) frightening emotions unbearable for the analysand to manage (dream) on her own."

Reading:

Levine, H.B. (1997). The capacity for countertransference. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 17(1), 44-68. [PEP Web Link](#)

Brown, L. (2012). Countertransference: An instrument of the analysis. In Gabbard, G., Litowitz, B. and Williams, P. (Eds.) *Textbook of psychoanalysis* (2nd Ed., Ch. 6, pp. 85 – 90). Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric Publishing. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be able to define the various meanings of countertransference, and to explain how the concept has evolved since Freud's use of the term.

4. October 10: Projective Identification

This week we will consider projective identification, a concept introduced by Melanie Klein in her seminal 1946 paper, 'Notes on some schizoid mechanisms.' Klein outlines her theory on splitting internal and external objects and emotions, notably describing the process underlying projective identification. Ogden, building on the ideas of Klein and Winnicott, describes projective identification as a process involving the following three steps or aspects: 1) the projector has a fantasy of projecting a part of himself and putting that aspect of himself into another in a controlling way; 2) the projector exerts pressure on the recipient of the projection via the interpersonal interaction to think, feel, and behave in a manner consistent with the projection; and 3) the recipient processes the projection and makes it available for re-internalization by the projector.

Reading:

Klein, M. (1946). Notes on some schizoid mechanisms. *IJP*, 27, 99-110. [PEP Web Link](#)

Ogden, T. (1979). On projective identification. *IJP*, 60, 357-373. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Reading:

Feldman, M. (1997). Projective identification: The analyst's involvement. *IJP*, 78, 227-241. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will identify at least one indication of the occurrence of projective identification in his or her clinical work.

5. October 24: Enactment

This week we will focus on enactments, keeping in mind the ethical as well as treatment implications of our technical choices. Black, using a lively clinical example, illustrates the internal work of the analyst, while placing the idea of enactment squarely in the interpersonal realm.

Reading:

Black, Margaret J. (2003). Enactment: Analytic musings on energy, language and personal growth. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 13(5), 633-655. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be able to recognize two indications that he or she is experiencing pressure towards and susceptibility to enactments within the context of the participant's particular character and ways of working in analysis.

6. October 31: Self-Disclosure

Our focus this week will be on the contentious issue of self-disclosure. Busch, writing from a modern ego psychological perspective, presents principles of modern structural theory that are relevant to considerations regarding the use of self-disclosure and its impact on analytic process. Bromberg, positioned in postclassical mode, asserts that self-revelation facilitates the goal of intersubjective negotiation, and is a necessary component of effective treatment.

Reading:

Busch, F. (1998). Self-disclosure ain't what it's cracked up to be, at least not yet. *Psychoanalytic Inq.*, 18(4), 518-529. [PEP Web Link](#)

Bromberg, P.M. (2006). The analyst's self-revelation: Not just permissible, but necessary. In *Awakening the dreamer* (Ch. 7, pp. 128-150). Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will describe at least one potential benefit and one hazard in the utilization of disclosures in clinical work.

7. November 7: Impasse

In our penultimate class we will focus on logjams (or *crunches*, or *impasses*) in analyses. We will consider the analyst's contributions to the development and possible resolution of the difficulties. Ferro & Basile discuss gradients of the analyst's functioning, focusing in particular on times of difficulty. O'Shaughnessy describes two possible deteriorations in the analytic situation; 'enclaves' and 'excursions,' and provides clinical material to illustrate how she works with each of these problematic conditions.

The suggested (optional) paper by Kantrowitz brings the reader through the analysis and resolution of resistance and transference/counter- transference binds in situations of impasse. The paper by Paul Russell is a classic resource on working with widening scope patients.

All four articles stress the importance of self-analysis, especially during periods of stasis in treatments.

Reading:

Ferro, A. & Basile, R. (2004). The psychoanalyst as individual: self-analysis and gradients of functioning. *Psychoanal Q.*, 73(3), 659-682. [PEP Web Link](#)

O'Shaughnessy, E. (1992). Enclaves and excursions. *IJP*, 73, 603-611. [PEP Web Link](#)

Suggested Reading:

Kantrowitz, J.L. (1993). Impasses in psychoanalysis: Overcoming resistance in situations of stalemate. *JAPA*, 41, 1021-1050. [PEP Web Link](#)

Russell, P. (2006). The theory of the crunch. In *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 76(1/2), 9-21. [Available in the library: check the reading folder or request from library@bpsi.org]

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be able discuss the analyst's contribution to the development and resolution of impasses in analysis.

8. November 14: Resistance

Resistance has played a central role in psychoanalytic technique from the beginning. In the last class we will take a fresh look at the concept, from the perspective of the resistance as reflective of the both the patient's old and newer experience; it is to be appreciated as an element within "the field," both intra- and inter-psychic.

Reading:

Civitaresse, G and Foresti, G, (2008). When our words disturb the psychoanalytic process: From resistance as a defense to resistance as an interactive process. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 17(2), 82-90. [PEP Web Link](#)

Learning Objective: At the conclusion of this session, the participant will be able to describe an instance of clinical resistance from a two-person psychology point of view.