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Termination Seminar 2022
Winter – ATP III
Stephanie R. Brody, Psy.D.

January 6, 13, 27; February 3, 10
5:30 – 7:00PM

In this brief seminar, we will grapple with the concept, principles, and application of “termination” in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. What do we mean when we talk about termination? The immediate irony is that termination is often a process that can take months, even years to unfold, or can occur with little preparation, dramatically and precipitously. In most cases, termination is a private process between two people, a therapeutic quirk that sets it apart from other losses: People don’t really talk to others about the end of a therapy relationship, nor are there grief rituals and public contexts for mourning. Even when endings feel liberating - a shared acknowledgement of transformation - there are other reactions. Clinicians and patients often feel deeply disrupted during the process. Just like Death, some endings are better - or worse - than others.

Often, we rely on ideal models of ending that are relatively rare; curiously we never really know if there is a “right way” to close a treatment. At the heart of it, we will be struggling with questions of attachment and loss in the clinical relationship, the meaning of endings, the conflict between personal and professional, and the implications of separation when there is no death. The experience of ending, of separation, and of termination will be different for each person. Every life story is unique, and when grief and mourning has been part of, or preceded the therapeutic story, each layer of loss, including losses that are part of a social reality, will be impactful.

The articles that we will read address the numerous theoretical orientations regarding the concept of termination and are meant to stimulate our clinical and theoretical discussion. I hope these readings will expand our discussion and help us to think about loss from these other perspectives.

Because we only have 5 meetings, I would like each of you to email me in advance to tell me a bit about yourself, and if there is anything in particular that you hope to learn from the seminar. I would like to bring the concept of termination to life, so we will need clinical material at each meeting. Please let me know if you would be willing to share a clinical experience.

January 6, 2022

Week 1:

Bass, A. (2009). "It ain't over 'til it's over": Infinite conversations, imperfect endings, and the elusive nature of termination. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 19(6), 744-759. [PEP Web Link](#)

Brody, S. (2009). On the edge: Exploring the end of the analytic hour. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 19(1), 87-97. [PEP Web Link](#)

January 13, 2022

Week 2:

Freud, S. (1937). Analysis terminable and interminable. *The standard edition of the complete psychological works of Sigmund Freud*, 23 (pp. 209-254). [PEP Web Link](#)

Loewald, H. W. (1988). Termination analyzable and unanalyzable. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 43, 155-166. [PEP Web Link](#)

January 27, 2022

Week 3:

Orgel, S. (2000). Letting go: Some thoughts about termination. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 48(3), 719-738. [PEP Web Link](#)

February 3, 2022

Week 4:

Bergmann, M. S. (1988). On the fate of the intrapsychic image of the psychoanalyst after termination of the analysis. *Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 43, 137-153. [PEP Web Link](#)

Deutsch, R. A. (2011). A voice lost, a voice found: After the death of the analyst. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 31(6), 526-535. [PEP Web Link](#)

February 10, 2022

Week 5:

Gabbard, G. O. (2009). What is a "good enough" termination? *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 57(3), 575-594. [PEP Web Link](#)