

September 7, 14, 21, 28 and October 5, 2018
SFCP Year 2
INFANT OBSERVATION

Fridays 8:00 a.m. -9:30 a.m.

Coming into being: States of emergence in early life and in analytic work

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Overview

This short course is an opportunity to explore emergent and aesthetic qualities of early life and of clinical experience. We will listen to observations of young families as they begin to find their way with their new infants. How do parents dare to know without knowing and how do they remain malleable and attentive to the temporal, rhythmic and sensual needs and limitations of their baby? Likewise, in our work with patients, how do we gain access to states of mind so rooted in early experiences of being at one with, being with, and simply just being? Are we also willing to be played upon, be used in ways that reverberate back to the *temenos* of such deep sensual/psychical states?

The intent is not to imagine that the infant is a prototype for the patient, but rather to explore qualities of being and of communicating that have origins in a time when we were all non-verbal and communicated primarily with our bodies: our eyes, our mouths, our kicking and our stretching and our dribbling, but then again, also through means that may not be sensory. I am speaking here of what can be experienced as language in a more inchoate form, what can be experienced through human presence--what may even resist representation-- and can only be vaguely or unconsciously intuited. These experiences with an 'other' can be recognized as real and as knowable. They can accumulate and become psychic structures around which deep conversations (both internal and external) can take place. Yet, they may never take on the structure of what we understand as verbal or even symbolic language, but rather, remain as the sensuous embodied experience of being with an 'other'.

We will attend first to the communications that inhere in the sensate/sensual/rhythmic field that come forth in experiences of embodiment in moments of close bodily proximity with an 'other'. We will then wonder about what this might express of an inner world we can only tap through making contact with such deep common grounds.

Tavistock-model family observations: The observer of a family --who visits one hour each week for at least a year--does not have the luxury of interpreting or even commenting in any evaluative way, but must experience what happens directly as it emerges in the hour. This offers a unique opportunity to be exposed to the raw experiences of early life and communication without the filter of having a job to do. After the hour, the observer writes a descriptive account from memory and then presents this material for discussion in a group.

Meeting 1: The body: an incomplete deal

Sowa, A., Facchino, D. (2010). Published copy provided: From shared bodies to nursing couple: Developmental implications in the movement towards weaning. *International journal of infant observation*. 13:2, 223-241. **(reader)**

PEP-WEB Stein, R. (1998). PEP-web: The Enigmatic Dimension of Sexual Experience: The “Otherness” of Sexuality and Primal Seduction. *Psychoanal Q.*, 67(4):594-625. **(PEP)**

Meeting 2: Fluid vs fixed states

Stern, D.N. (1992). PEP-web: The pre-narrative envelope: An alternative view of unconscious phantasy. *Bul. AnnaFreud Centre*, 15:291-318. **(PEP)**

Goldberg, P. (2012). Active Perception and the Search for Sensory Symbiosis. *J. Amer. Psychoanal. Assn.*, 60(4):791-812. **(PEP)**

Meeting 3: Communicating and not communicating

Barmack, B. (2016). Silence in the Work: Beauty and Creativity in an Infant Observation. *Fort Da*, 22(1):8-20. **(PEP)**

Winnicott, D.W. (1958). The capacity to be alone. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 39:416-420. **(PEP)**

Meeting 4: What is needed/found/created/discovered

Sowa, A., (2016).: Awakening to the discoverable: Exploring emergent states in analytic process. Presented at *Stanford Psychiatry grand rounds, May 21*. **Copy distributed in class.**

Meeting 5: A world of shared (aesthetic) objects

Markman, H. (2006). PEP-web: Listening to Music, Listening to Patients: Aesthetic Experience in Analytic Practice. **(PEP)**

Goals and Objectives

This is an advanced seminar on exploring pre-verbal/non-verbal states of being with one's self and with

another. It is assumed that participants have a post-graduate level background in the areas of early human development.

Cultural objective: Participants will explore their own early cultural milieu and how this affects their thinking related to early states of mind, as well as their work with patients.

(Also see other weekly goals below.)

Weekly Goals

Week 1: Participants will explore the sensuous aspects of communications that pass from mother to baby and how the delivery of these messages open the baby to a world of discoverable objects.

Week 2: Participants will identify ways in which an analyst might catalyze experiences of a shared sensory world with a patient, particularly with patients for whom this is not taken for granted.

Week 3: Participants will explore the value of silence, of just being and allowing to be and what can be gained from the experiences of being alone yet in proximity to an 'other'.

Week 4: Participants will be able to identify differences in qualities of finding, creating and discovering an object.

Week 5: Participants will be able to identify qualities found in making and experiencing music and that of the performative and improvisational aspects of analysis.

BACKGROUND READING

Fonagy, P., Target, M. (2007) The rooting of the mind in the body: New links between attachment theory and psychoanalysis. *JAPA*, 55:411-456. (1999). **(PEP)**

Goldman, D. (2012). Weaving with the World: Winnicott's Reimagining of Reality. *Psychoanal Q.*, 81(1):123. **(PEP)**

Lombardi, R. (2011). The Body, Feelings, and the Unheard Music of the Senses. *Contemp. Psychoanal.*, 47(1):3-24. *Fort Da*, 12(2):18-29. **(PEP)**

Ogden, T.H. (2004). PEP-web: On holding and containing, being and dreaming. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal.*, 85(6):1349-1364. **(PEP)**

Rhode, M. (2003). Sensory aspects of language development in relation to primitive anxieties. *International journal of infant observation*. 6:2, 12-32.

Rustin, M. (2008). Appendix III: Esther Bick's Legacy of Infant Observation at the Tavistock: Some Reflections 60 Years on. *The Tavistock Model: Papers on Child Development*. **(PEP)**

Salomonsson, B. (2011). Exploring core concepts: sexuality, dreams and the unconscious. *IJP*, (92-2:263-265). **(PEP)**

Sowa, A. (2015). Stuck between two worlds: A case of extreme prematurity. In *Frances Tustin Today* (Eds: Mitrani, J., Mitrani, T.). London: New Library of Psychoanalysis, pp. 19-36.

Winnicott, D. W. (1953). Transitional objects and transitional phenomena. *IJP*, 34: 89-97. **(PEP)**

Winnicott, D.W. Communicating and not communicating

Winnicott, D. Primary maternal preoccupation. In *Maturational processes and the facilitating environment*. New York: International Universities Press, 29-36. **(PEP)**