The concept of the Self, while seemingly self-evident to anyone reflecting on her or his own experience, has nevertheless been elusive and/or controversial in psychoanalysis. This likely stems from the origins of psychoanalysis as a field of intra-psychic forces, which had taken the “selfhood” for granted as an entity within which those forces played on. The psychoanalytic examination of the “self” as well as of the “object” in their own terms (other than as objects of drives) was thus suspect as expressions of resistance against the intra-psychic focus.

This course takes its point of departure from the view that the Self has clinical existence as it has existence in life. It issues from a deeply embedded psychophysiological core of bodily self-experience and develops through the process of laying down psychological engrams of its encounters with the world through its surface perceptions, proprioception and social contact. * In psychoanalytic terms, the Self is comprised of many self-representations, each of which is organized around these psychologically salient bodily and mental experiences. It is deeply rooted and inescapably personal.

The course is an effort to highlight the concept of the Self from several perspectives of psychoanalytic thought, in the hopes that each may, alone or more likely in combination with others, revisit some salient theoretical propositions, illuminate clinical encounters and inform therapeutic ramifications accordingly.

*See: Hartmann.E. : Comments on the Psychoanalytic Theory of the Ego, PSC, 1950, pp. 84-85

Luba Kessler, MD
Alina Rubinstein, MD

*Available on P-E-P

CLASS #1: Defining Self

READINGS:

Terminological Placement of Self

THEORIES OF THE SELF

SYLLABUS

Third Trimester, 2014

Neurobiological Placement of Self

Damasio. A. – Self Comes to Mind, Pantheon Books, NY, 2010
- Chapter 1, “Awakening”, pp. 3-30

Narrative Placement of Self

- Chapter 2, “Narratives of the Self”, pp. 21-35

Sketch of Human Brain

Optional:

Narrative placement of Self:

--Chapter 6 (I) Secondary Revision

--Chapter 8, “The Sense of a Verbal Self”

Psychosociobiological Placement of Self


CLASS #2: Undifferentiated Psychophysiological Self/ Psychological Birth

READINGS:


THEORIES OF THE SELF

SYLLABUS

Third Trimester, 2014


Optional:


CLASS #3: Intersubjectivity in the Formation of the Self: Infant Research

READINGS:


--Chapter 2, “A Dyadic Systems View”, pp. 21-44
--Chapter 8, “Three Principles of Salience in the Organization of the Patient-Analyst Interaction: The Case of Clara” pp. 185-207

Optional:


--Chapter 1, “A Central Role for the Sense of Self”, pp. 5 -12
--Chapter 2, “Perspectives and Approaches to Infancy”, pp. 13 – 34

CLASS #4: Self Psychology: Selfobject in Transmuting Internalization

READINGS:


CLASS #5: Libidinization

READINGS:


Spitz, R., & Cobliner, G. - The First Year of Life, IUP, NY, 1966
   -- Chapter 4, “The Cradle of Perception”, pp. 61 – bottom of 65

   -- Chapter 3, “Fusions of Self and Object Images”, pp. 33-37;

   -- Chapter 4, “The First Sub-Phase: Differentiation and the Development of the Body Image”, pp. 51 – 58

   - Essay 2, “Sexuality and Attachment in Metapsychology”, pp. 27-50

Optional:


CLASS #6: Identification

READINGS:


   -- Chapter 4, “The Child’s Discovery of his Identity and his Advance to Object Relations and Selective Identification, pp. 49 – 69;
Optional:


-- Chapter 11, “The Instinctual and Emotional Conflicts of the Adolescent and the Remodeling and Growth of His Psychic Structures”, pp. 185 – 188

-- Chapter 8, “The Organization and Integration of Different Superego Components into a Consolidated Functional System”, pp. 119 – 127

CLASS #7: Introjection

READINGS:


CLASS #8: Self Psychology: Selfobject in Narcissistic Transferences

READINGS:

*Nuclear Self*


-- Chapter 2, “Does Psychoanalysis Need a Psychology of the Self?”, pp. 98-111

*Selfobject Transferences*


-- Chapter 5, “The Idealizing Transference”, pp. 37 – 56;
-- Chapter 5, “Types of Mirroring Transferences: Developmental Considerations”, pp. 105 – 132
Optional:

CLASS #9: The Endangered Self: Self Preservation/Self Esteem/Shame

READINGS:

Freud: Danger Situations


  -Chapter 7 through end of Chapter 8, pp. 128 (bottom) - 143

Kohut: Self Esteem

Kohut, H. -- The Restoration of the Self, IUP, 1977


Self Psychology: Shame


CLASS #10: Psychic Envelope

READINGS:


  -Chapter 2, pp. 19 – 26 (especially 25 – 26)


  –Chapter 7, “The Functions of the Skin Ego”, pp. 96 – 113