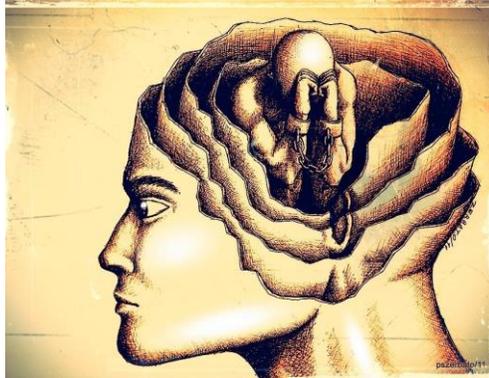


Syllabus
NYU Postdoctoral Program

***The Art of Psychoanalysis:
A Clinical Case Seminar on Working (and Playing) with the Unconscious***

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Course Description: Psychoanalysis has traditionally been thought to exist somewhere between the disciplines of science and art. Recently, much thought and research has gone into attempting to “prove” the scientific nature of what we do. This course will instead focus on *the art of psychoanalysis*. In particular, it will emphasize the playful and creative aspects in our work with the unconscious. We will address the multiple dimensions, functions and manifestations of the unconscious mind. As cognitive neuroscience continues to prove Freud’s claim that much of our life is unconsciously lived, it has become increasingly relevant to develop our capacity and comfort with the life of the unconscious—our patients’, our own, and the many ways they mutually influence each other in the treatment. The art of working with the unconscious is one of the most exciting and challenging aspects of the psychoanalyst’s craft.

This course will develop the candidates’ ability to and to. Most of the class time will be spent presenting and “playing” with candidates’ clinical material. Unconscious fantasies, dreams, and free associations will be the primary tools used in this creative analytic process. The literature on these central psychoanalytic concepts will be critically reviewed and updated with recent findings and evolving models of mind.

Overall Course Objectives: At the end of this course, candidates will be able to 1) attend to unconscious communications between patient and analyst, 2) recognize the role of the unconscious in creating and resolving impasses in treatment, 3) gain a better understanding of unconscious fantasies and how to work with them, 4) learn theory and technique for using free association and dream interpretation, and 5) appreciate the creative aspects of analytic work.

Readings and Course Outline

- I. The first section of the course will focus on **unconscious fantasies**. We will read what Freud had to say about the unconscious and then review some of the core fantasies that one sees in patient material. Unconscious fantasies attempt to answer the question, “What would happen if...?” and therefore are key to imaginative thought, for all creation begins with imagination. Unconscious fantasies (and daydreams) represent a way into working with the unconscious and addressing such questions as, what object relationships are we trying to work out in our fantasies? Who are our patients to us and who are we to them? And how do we use this material once we figure it out?

Readings will be chosen from the following:

- A. Freud, S. 1911. Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning. *Standard Edition*, 12: 213-226.
- B. Knafo, D. & Feiner, K. 2005. *Unconscious Fantasies and the Relational World*. Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press.
- C. Isaacs, S. 1952. The nature and function of phantasy. In: *Developments in Psychoanalysis*. Ed. M. Klein, P. Heiman, S. Isaacs, & J. Riviere. London: Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, pp. 67-121.
- D. LaPlanche, J. & Pontalis, 1968. Fantasy and the origin of sexuality. In: *Unconscious Phantasy*, ed. R. Steiner. London: Karnac Books, 2003, pp. 107-143.
- E. Schimek, J. 1987. Fact and fantasy in the seduction theory: A historical review. *JAPA*, 35: 937-965.

Learning Objective: At the end of this section, candidates will be able to discuss the important theories, starting with Freud's and including his followers, who have written about unconscious fantasies.

- II. The second section of the course will focus on **dreamwork**. Dreams are perhaps the most direct communication of the unconscious mind. Freud used dreams as the prototype and “royal road” for all unconscious mental experience. We will examine the transference communications in dreams and explore the connection between a mind that dreams and one that cannot. We will explore the raw, creative power of the dream as well as the creativity needed to mine some of its meanings.

Readings will be chosen from the following:

- A. Freud, S. 1901. On Dreams. *Standard Edition*, 5: 630-686.

- B. Freud, S. 1911. The Handling of Dream-Interpretation in Psycho-Analysis. *Standard Edition*, 12: 213-226.
- C. Freud, S. 1923. Remarks on the Theory and Practice of Dream Interpretation. *Standard Edition*, 19: 109-122.
- D. Freud, S. 1933. New Introductory lectures in psychoanalysis. Lecture 29. Revision of the theory of dreams. *Standard Edition*, 22: 8-13.
- E. Mauro Mancia. 2004/2007. The dream: A window into the transference. In *Feeling the Words: Neuropsychoanalytic Understanding of Memory and the Unconscious*. NY & London: Routledge.
- F. Ogden, T. 2003. On not being able to dream. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 84: 17-30.

Learning objectives: At the end of this section, candidates will be able to understand Freud's theory of dream analysis as well as later thinkers who view dream interpretation in new ways—e.g., Mancia's view of the dream as exposing elements of the transference and Ogden's view of the dream as signifying unconscious work, whether asleep or awake.

- III. The third section of this course will focus on **free association**. Although some controversy exists about whether free associations are truly free, we will discover how Freud's "fundamental rule" invites creativity into analytic work. The sequential yet nonlinear and sometimes seemingly contradictory thinking that characterizes free associations is a central component of creative thinking. We will use case material to closely study the hidden logic and connectivity in free associative thinking.

Readings will be chosen from the following:

- A. Christopher Bollas. 2009. Free Association. In *The Evocative Object World*. Pp. 5-45. NY. Routledge.
- B. Aron, L. 1990. Free association and changing models of mind. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis*, 18: 439-459.
- C. John, Rosegrant. 2005. The therapeutic effects of the free associative state of consciousness. *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, LXXIV: 737-766.

Learning Objectives: At the end of this section, candidates will be able to describe different ways of working with the free association method and appreciate its hidden connections and logic.

- IV. The fourth section of the course will concentrate on an implicit theme of the earlier sections of the course, the **creativity** of the unconscious mind and **the art of psychoanalysis**. It will explore the potential for play, humor, spontaneity and the creative transformations of traumatic experience in psychoanalysis and attempt to address the following questions: What is

creative in the work we do? How can we enhance the creativity and play in our patients and in ourselves? How can the creative process be unlocked in psychoanalysis and in life?

Readings will be chosen from:

- A. D.W. Winnicott. 1971. Playing: Creative Activity and the Search for Self. In *Playing and Reality*. London: Tavistock, pp. -64.
- B. Loewald, H. 1974. Psychoanalysis as an art and the fantasy character of the analytic situation. In *Papers on Psychoanalysis*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980, pp. 352-371.
- C. John Bowlby. 1979. Psychoanalysis as art and science. *International Review of Psychoanalysis*. 6, 2-14.
- D. Parsons, M. 1999. The logic of play in psychoanalysis. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 80(5): 871-884.
- E. Ogden, T. 2004. The art of psychoanalysis: Dreaming undreamt dreams and interrupted cries. *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 85: 857-878.
- F. Antonino Ferro. 2009. *Mind Works: Technique and Creativity in Psychoanalysis*. London: Karnac.
- G. Phillip Ringstrom. 2011. Principles of improvisation: A model of therapeutic play in relational psychoanalysis. In L. Aron & A. Harris (Eds.) *Relational Psychoanalysis Vol. V*. (pp. 447-474). New York: Analytic Press.
- H. Knafo, D. 2012. Creative transformations of trauma. In *Dancing with the Unconscious: The Art of Psychoanalysis and the Psychoanalysis of Art*. (pp. 65-89). New York & London: Routledge.
- I. Knafo, D. 2012. Dancing with the Unconscious: The Art of Psychoanalysis. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 32: 275-291.

Learning objectives: At the end of this section, candidates will be able to describe the creative elements in psychoanalysis. They will be able to understand the creative process and the “art” of psychoanalysis, how to foster creativity in their patients and in themselves.