Sunday, October 18th
8:30 am – 10:30 am

Paper and Panel Session B

1. Meet-The-Author: Psychoanalytic Complexity: Clinical Attitudes for Therapeutic Change

Speaker: William Coburn, PhD, PsyD
Discussant: Estelle Shane, PhD
Moderator: Eldad Iddan, MA

Abstract:
Psychoanalytic Complexity is the application of a multidisciplinary, explanatory theory to clinical psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. It carries with it incisive and pivotal attitudes that aim to transform our understanding of therapeutic action and the change process. In sharing the essence of this book, this session offers participants a revolutionary and far-reaching counterpoint to the remnants of Cartesianism and scientism, respecting and encouraging human anomaly rather than pathologizing or obliterating the uniqueness of the individual person.

This Meet-The-Author session explores the value of complexity theory previously understood as an explanatory framework with which clinicians can better understand, retrospectively, therapeutic action and the change process. It further extends this sensibility by examining the ways in which such a rich theoretical framework can inform what clinicians can do, prospectively, to effect positive change within the therapeutic relationship. The medium of bringing to light new ways of relating, emotional experiencing, and meaning making resides in the fundamental attitudes derived from a complexity theory sensibility as applied to psychoanalysis and psychotherapy. These attitudes are outlined and discussed in this Meet-The-Author session, and commented upon by the discussant.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Understand the fundamental tenets of psychoanalytic complexity theory.
2. Gain greater insight into the pivotal role that the clinician’s attitudes play in therapeutic action and in shaping the trajectory of the psychoanalytic relationship.
3. Better grasp the implications of a complexity sensibility in contextualizing the lives of our patients and the resulting emerging sense of individuality and agency.
2. Meet-The-Author: A Relational Psychoanalytic Approach to Couples Psychotherapy

Speaker: Philip Ringstrom, PhD, PsyD  
Discussant: Kati Breckenridge, PhD  
Moderator: Allan Gelber, PhD

Abstract:
The presentation and discussion of this book is premised upon its three broad themes: 1) the actualization of self-experience in an intimate relationship, 2) the capacity for mutual recognition, and 3) the “relationship having a mind of its own”. This model of conjoint treatment is articulated in Six Steps wedding theory and practice. The steps first take up the importance of the therapist’s attunement to each partners’ bi-dimensional transference along with pointing out the couple’s “vicious circle” engagements that arise from each partner’s self-object, developmental longings triggering one another’s states of repetitive transference. Second, the model focuses on the partners’ unique subjective experiences underscored in terms of the epistemological stance of “perspectival realism.” Third, their perspectives are then contextualized in terms of the impact of their developmental backgrounds. Fourth, where attunement is insufficient, enactments emerge from dissociated self-states finally making them available for examination. The fifth and sixth steps take up what is both negotiable and nonnegotiable within the partners themselves as well as within their relationship. Ultimately, termination is in evidence to the degree that the couple has internalized the functions of the overall model. It is noted that the Six Steps do not operate in a fixed linear manner rather they function non-linearly working as practice guidelines rather than stepwise rules for the practitioner to follow.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Learn about how the three organizing themes: self-actualization in an intimate relationship, mutual recognition, and the “relationship having a mind of its own” bridge important elements of contemporary psychoanalysis, namely self-experiencing in a complex nonlinear system lending to the principle of “thirdness” in long-term intimate relationships – marital and otherwise.
2. Learn how these three themes are practiced in terms of the model’s six steps.
3. Investigate modifications in psychoanalytic technique in conjoint therapy in light of this perspective shift.
4. Understand why and where attunement is insufficient and therefore enactments emerge.
5. Appreciate the place of dissociated self-states that must be reconciled for each partner to own their own conflict.
6. Determine what can be negotiated in terms of conflicts within each partner as well as between and what might have to be surrendered.
7. Understand how accomplishing the above results from turning binaries of dominance and submission into the “thirdness” of intersubjective mutual recognition.
8. Discern both the advantages and limitations that may arise from this perspective.
3. Self Psychology and the Concept of the Nuclear Self: A Dynamic Systems Perspective

Speakers: Jeffrey Trop, MD and Gabriel Trop, PhD
Discussant: Roberto D’Angelo, PsyD, MMed, MBBS
Interlocutor: Maria Slowiaczek, PhD

Abstract:
The purpose of this paper will be to review some self-psychological concepts and describe their commonalities and differences with system theories that have emerged under the umbrella of a dynamic systems framework. There are several important elements of self-psychological language and theory that cohere with a systems vantage point. There are also elements that are not consistent with a dynamic systems perspective, such as nuclear self. It is our view that the language and underlying theory of psychoanalysis should be consistent, with the fluidity, variability, and soft assembled nature of a systems viewpoint.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Discuss the concept of nonlinear and how it applies to the clinical situation.
2. Describe how an attractor state applies to child development in development.
3. Discuss the meaning of dynamic stability.
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4. Psychoanalysis and the Impact of Environmental Crisis

Speakers: Elizabeth Allured, PsyD and Anthony Rankin Wilson, MSW
Discussant: Mary Walters, LCSW
Moderator: Michael Reison, PhD

Abstract:
Relational and Intersubjective Revisions: Self Psychology in an Age of Environmental Crisis,
Anthony Rankin Wilson

The Cartesian myth of the isolated mind with its disavowal of our “absolute dependence on the physical environment” and kinship with the other-than-human still casts a shadow over psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, in both theory and practice. Even the self-psychological, intersubjective, and relational schools which are gradually emerging out of the myth continue to largely ignore the increasing effects of the environmental crisis, and media reports of the crisis, upon inner psychological and emotional landscapes, and upon contemporary clinical theory and practice. These effects extend to identity and moral confusion rising from intimations of the shifts in cultural norms, values, and traditions that will become increasingly necessary for some semblance of a sustainable human future on the planet. This paper will embrace the “expansiveness” intentions of the Conference through exploring the findings of a narrative research project begun in 2012. 6 psychoanalysts, a Jungian analyst, and 5 analytic psychotherapists, at various stages of life and career, were interviewed. The recorded interviews were then transcribed. The resulting narratives provided an intimate glimpse into the interviewees personal and clinical worlds. The project explored clinicians other-than-human (Nature) experiences, their reflections on the environmental crisis, and whether the environmental crisis is appearing in sessions through patient narratives, dreams, anxieties, dilemmas, and enactments. Theory and practice implications, as well as clinical material, and weaves its way throughout.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Begin to reflect on their experiences in and with the other-than-human; their relatedness to the environmental crisis; and on whether the symptoms of the crisis are presenting themselves through patient’s narratives, dreams, anxieties, dilemmas, and enactments.
2. Begin questioning our current basic clinical assumptions of intersubjective relationality. These assumptions privilege to the extreme the human-human connection, and largely ignore the human - other-than-human relationship.
3. Reflect on their level of denial or disavowal of the environmental crisis, and the possible clinical significance of this for patients and 21st century analysts/psychotherapists.
4. Psychoanalysis and the Impact of Environmental Crisis (continued)

Speakers: Elizabeth Allured, PsyD and Anthony Rankin Wilson, MSW
Discussant: Mary Walters, LCSW
Moderator: Michael Reison, PhD

From Dissociation and Enactment to Conscious Intersubjectivity: Living and Working in the Environmental Crisis, Elizabeth Allured

The analytic concept of the human holding environment has been useful in exploring psychoanalytic ideas such as mutual influence and affect regulation for the child as well as for the patient. As we face feelings of anxiety and guilt related to human-induced climate change, it can be helpful to try to understand our experience of, and psychological defenses against, the larger holding environment, earth’s ecosystems, of which we are a part. We can strengthen our attachment bond to a mother-in-transition in order to more consciously engage in the dance of mutuality and intersubjectivity with our nonhuman relatives. We as analytic practitioners have moved our focus to the two-person bi-directional frame. Can we take the bold step of looking at our environmental context as part of the psychological field in which we live and work? Linking our psychological health with the physical health of the biosphere and its nonhuman inhabitants is a relatively new concept, first proposed by Harold Searles. A review of Searles’ early contributions to our understanding of this relationship will be shared. This paper will begin a discussion of how we can hold in a creative tension the exploration of the analytic dyad’s intersubjectivity in both the human and more-than-human worlds.

Learning Objectives:
1. Participants will understand Harold Searles’ views on the nonhuman environment as a factor in psychological functioning.
2. Participants will begin to question our limiting the definition of the self to the typical human and cultural contexts.
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5. On Ethics in Psychoanalysis

Speakers: Hilary Maddux, LCSW and Elizabeth Corpt, LICSW
Discussant: Carol Levin, PhD
Moderator: Jill Gardner, PhD

Abstract:
Meeting Patients Halfway: Toward an Ethic of Care in Psychoanalysis, Hilary Maddux
The question of if, when, and how we “care for” our patients has been the subject of much debate within our field. While some hold the ethic of care in high regard as central to our work with patients, others disparage it as, among other concerns, gratifying our patients, inhibiting their autonomy and agency, and demanding too much of us as clinicians. This paper traces, albeit briefly, the long history of “care.” The paper asks, and seeks to answer, whether the disparagement of care might be linked to holdovers from our psychoanalytic past, including the repudiation of all things feminine, soft, dependent, and vulnerable in favor of a more robust, masculinized theory—one that foregrounds science and certainty, the rational and masterful. It also asks the question whether, in the case of self-psychology, care’s disparagement might be linked to the mistaken understanding of self-psychology as the “nice” theory and of its central concepts – empathy and the self-object functions – as meaning nothing more than a prescription for therapists and analysts to be kind and friendly to patients? With these questions as a backdrop, the paper searches for some deeper understanding of “care” and suggests that is not only essential to our work with patients but mutative as well.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Identify and describe some of the key milestones in the unfolding of an “ethic of care.”
2. Describe the conflict between those who see the “ethic of care” as central to their work with patients and those who question and/or disparage it.
3. Give examples from your own practice of “moments of meeting” that were guided by an “ethic of care.”

Abstract:
The Ethics of Listening and Psychoanalytic Conversations, Elizabeth Corpt
This paper explores the ethics of listening as they pertain to engagement in psychoanalytic conversations. Particular emphasis is placed on some of the philosophical underpinnings of deep engagement and the clinical dilemmas one must consider.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Describe what is meant by the ethics of listening as they pertain to engaging in psychoanalytic conversations.
2. List some of the philosophical/ethical dilemmas involved in deep engagement.
6. Systems Sensibility in Psychoanalysis

Speakers: Ellen Shumsky, LCSW, LP and Lynn Preston, MA, MS, LP and Margaret Sperry, PsyD, MFT
Discussant: Carol Mayhew, PhD
Moderator: Sandra Kiersky, PhD

Abstract:
*The New Us: The Development of the Therapeutic System, Ellen Shumsky and Lynn Preston*

The New Us refers to an ever-changing, complexly layered vision of an evolving therapeutic partnership. Through the vehicle of an unusual, compelling clinical narrative we explore the developmental processes of such an analytic system. Using a complexity theory perspective, we focus on the expansion of the system (the us) within which the individuals grow, rather than the more conventional approach of attending to the patient's development and healing.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Explain the concept of the development of the therapeutic partnership
2. Discuss the concept and clinical usefulness of a complexity sensibility
3. Discuss the concept of perturbations as an engine of systemic process

Abstract:
*How Theory Informs Clinical Practice: Psychoanalytic complexity theory and the lived experience of complexity, Margaret Sperry*

In this presentation, I will explore complexity not as an abstract conceptual theory, but as a lived reality in the therapeutic process. I contend that an awareness of complexity in the technical, theoretical sense supports the therapist’s capacity to embrace the experience and potential of complexity in the analytic space, and that this promotes a relational process that supports our patients’ abilities to tolerate the experience of uncertainty. In addition, this awareness counteracts the tendency to reduce the complexity of human experience. The utility of a complex systems perspective will be illustrated clinically, further demonstrating how an understanding of complexity theory can support the therapist’s capacity to remain hopeful when working with very challenging patients.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Identify and describe ways that therapists may avoid experiential complexity in the treatment setting.
2. Identify ways that knowledge of the dynamics of complex systems fine-tunes their understanding of therapeutic action.
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7. Self-Psychology: New Perspectives

Speakers: Shelley Doctors, PhD and Donna Orange, PhD, PsyD and Richard Geist, EdD
Discussant: Janna Sandmeyer, PhD
Moderator: Denise Davis, MSW

Abstract:

Self-Psychology and Intersubjectivity are Relational Theories, Shelley Doctors and Donna Orange
Discuss the concept of perturbations as an engine of systemic process. This panel will elucidate and comment on a paradox. Self-Psychology and Intersubjectivity theories were initially criticized as “not really psychoanalytic”, as they focused on the psychological impact of relations between people rather than intrapsychic relationships. Now both theories, which have since won large international followings, are sometimes considered “not Relational enough,” by Relational practitioners. Though the presenters consider the Relational movement well-positioned to reinvigorate popular interest in psychoanalysis, to fulfill its great potential, it should be welcoming, dialogic, and inclusive.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Understand why both Self Psychology and Intersubjectivity (developed by Stolorow, Atwood & Brandchaft) are relational theories.
2. Learn that there are a cluster of Intersubjectivities and will be able to identify them.
3. Learn about the history in psychoanalysis of repeatedly excluding some theories, and, hopefully, become persuaded that an inclusionary attitude better serves psychotherapists and psychoanalysts alike.
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7. Self-Psychology: New Perspectives (continued)

Speakers: Shelley Doctors, PhD and Donna Orange, PhD, PsyD and Richard Geist, EdD
Discussant: Janna Sandmeyer, PhD
Moderator: Denise Davis, MSW

Abstract:
From Self Protection to Relational Protectiveness: The modification of defensive structures, Richard Geist

Kohut was instrumental in shifting our attention from the removal of individual defenses in the service of making the unconscious conscious to emphasizing the importance of empathically understanding the healthy, self-protective usefulness of defenses, both developmentally and during the therapeutic process. Despite this pivotal change in reactive tone toward defenses, there has been few experience near attempts to describe how we help patients to modify characterological and individual defenses that interfere with the healing process. In this paper I suggest that one of the most important but unrecognized ways we work through these resistances is by facilitating a shift in the patient from the need for self-protective defensiveness to a felt relational protectiveness. Verbatim clinical examples illustrate a protective attitude and explain how a relational protectiveness is actualized when dealing with characterological and individual defenses.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Describe the importance of a shift from self-protective defensiveness to relational protectiveness.
2. Explain the origins of characterological defenses.
3. Discuss how the therapist responds to resistances in order to modify them and the attitude and clinical conditions under which this shift occurs. The analyst’s protective function refers to safeguarding the selfobject transference, protecting the connectedness between patient and analyst, protecting the patient from affective overload, and protecting the fragile tendrils of health that seep subtly into the relationship. Verbatim clinical examples illuminate a protective attitude and explain how our protective function is actualized when dealing with characterological and individual defenses.
8. Confronting Religious and Racial Difference in Psychoanalytic Treatment

Speakers: Lynne Jacobs, PhD and Jane Lewis, LCSW
Discussant: Veronica Abney, PhD
Moderator: Roger Segalla, PhD

Abstract:
Racializing Kohut’s ‘guilty man’ and ‘tragic man’: Serious play in the service of inclusiveness, Lynne Jacobs

Drawing on history, philosophy and complexity thinking, I address some limitations and possibilities in our theory, for tackling the thorny and stubborn problem posed by white-centeredness. Although this paper is written largely with white US culture in mind, that situation is a fulcrum for explorations of inclusion and exclusion more generally.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participant will be able to:
1. Explain the contradiction between our enlightenment values and white-centeredness.
2. Explain the meaning of ‘recognition trauma.
3. Describe the value of embracing discomfort in relation to inclusiveness.
8. Confronting Religious and Racial Difference in Psychoanalytic Treatment (continued)

Speakers: Lynne Jacobs, PhD and Jane Lewis, LCSW
Discussant: Veronica Abney, PhD
Moderator: Roger Segalla, PhD

Abstract:
Lost and found in Palestine: A Jewish Analyst’s challenging Journey and Difficult Return to her Jewish Patients, Jane Lewis

This presentation focuses on this analyst's journey to Palestine, which included a ten-day stay with a Palestinian family in the West Bank in October, 2014. On her return, she juxtaposes all the horror of human rights violations, cruelty, and humiliation she had witnessed with her return to her work, where she focuses specifically on the chaotic destabilization that occurred in her relationship with her Jewish patient, Maurie. To process the effect of his difficult journey, she explores her personal sensibilities that accompanied her throughout, as well as new ones which, as a result of her experiences, have now become central to her way of being in the world. Beginning with her self psychological sensibilities, she identifies other companions such as Gadamer and Levinas' hermeneutic philosophies of dialogue and ethics and a contextualist, complexity systems theory sensibility. Importantly, as a result all her experiences, she has come to realize that her sensibilities are compatible with Roger Frie's (2011,2013,2014) belief that we are "relentlessly situated" and that "there is a need for a sociocultural turn in contemporary psychoanalytic theory and practice." All of the above sensibilities intertwine with visceral lived experience, which begins with the last session that took place with her patient, Maurie, before she left; anecdotes of what occurred in Palestine; and a summary her sessions with Maurie upon her return where their relationship seems irreparably destabilized. Ultimately, the repair of their relationship is the result of this analyst's painful exploration of her life-long disavowal and new discovery of what it has meant to her to be Jewish.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to:
1. Understand the psychoanalytic multidisciplinary sensibilities that accompanied her on this difficult journey.
2. Explain the intersubjective dynamics of her relationship with her patient Maurie before and after her difficult journey to Palestine.
9. Conceptual Issues in Psychoanalytic Self Psychology

Speakers: Elizabeth Carr, MSN and John Riker, PhD
Discussant: Christina Emanuel, MA
Moderator: Phyllis DiAmbrosio, PhD

Abstract:
Cooperation, Collaborative Engagement and Relational Intimacy: Getting to a Genuine Empathic Connectedness, Elizabeth Carr

As psychoanalytic theory has increasingly moved to view the clinical encounter as mutually co-constructed between the two participants, there has been a growing focus on enactments related to the forms of implicit transactions that take place between the clinical partners. Thus, psychoanalytic practitioners are challenged to expand their clinical repertoire in order to better appreciate the manner in which enactments spontaneously emerge, pull for deeper engagement, and create powerful, sometimes challenging intersubjective opportunities, ultimately promoting the possibility for greater relational intimacy. Cognitive science, attachment and infant studies have all contributed findings relevant to our consideration of clinical engagement, especially concerning the explicit and the implicit memory systems. In this paper, I will discuss enactments, implicit and explicit processes, and finding from developmental research that have great relevance and applicability to the clinical exchange. In a number of clinical vignettes, integrated within the paper, I will apply these ideas to my work with a patient I call Al.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to:
1. Describe how the implicit, nonconscious processes of clinical engagement promote psychoanalytic transformation.
2. Discuss a developmental enactment in the case of Al.
3. Discuss a repetitive enactment in the case of Al.
9. Conceptual Issues in Psychoanalytic Self Psychology (continued)

Speakers: Elizabeth Carr, MSN and John Riker, PhD
Discussant: Christina Emanuel, MA
Moderator: Phyllis DiAmbrosio, PhD

Abstract:

Self-Psychology and Historical Explanation, John Riker

In this paper I attempt to show how Kohut’s theory of narcissism can be used to understand important historical phenomena by attempting to interpret the creative and destructive outbursts of the European 19th century as re-investments of idealizing and grandiose needs in response to the traumatic loss of king and God, the two foci for narcissistic investment in the religious era. The positive re-investments include generating a new form of democratic/economic life in which each person gets to be the ruler/God of his own personal kingdom, a new form of art in which the being of the present rather than the eternal is created, and new forms of sport and recreation. I then show how the narcissistic rage pursuant on the traumatic loss of God and king fueled the toxic colonialism and nationalism that led to WW I and the hideous anti-Semitism that resulted in the Holocaust. I further explain why the contemporary age has not solved the problem for how to deal with narcissistic pressures by demonstrating how it has created unfavorable conditions for the development and sustenance of the self. I conclude by indicating why self-psychology is the path the future must take if we are to have non-destructive organizations of narcissistic pressures.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to:

1. Learn how self-psychological theory can be used to interpret historical phenomena.
2. Learn how to situate psychological illness and distress in a wider context.
3. Grasp the contemporary socio/cultural variables that negatively impact persons’ abilities to develop and sustain self-structure.
10. Psychoanalytic Studies on Films

Speakers: Terry Cooper, EdD, PhD, PsyD and Margaret Allan, PsyD, LCSW
Discussant: Amy Joelson, LCSW
Moderator: Sue Mendenhall, PsyD, MSW

Abstract: Casting out Pathology and the Analyst’s Vulnerability: Some Unexpected Lessons from “The Exorcist”,
Terry Cooper
Two characters from the popular movie, The Exorcist, Fr. Merrin and Fr. Karras, are used to illustrate some of the primary differences between classical and contemporary psychoanalysis. The manner in which these two priests approach human suffering reveals key distinctions and psychoanalytic tensions over issues of authority, objectivity, neutrality, vulnerability, mutual influence, and reciprocity. Specific examples of two very different approaches help us grasp the underlying assumptions in each of these theoretical frameworks.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to:
1. Identify significant differences between classical and contemporary psychoanalysis through an examination of the two priests, Fr. Merrin and Fr. Karras, as they each approach a case of “possession” in the film, The Exorcist,
2. Learn how to situate psychological illness and distress in a wider context.
3. Grasp the contemporary socio/cultural variables that negatively impact persons’ abilities to develop and sustain self-structure.

Abstract: "Weightless" An exploration of obsession in the life of a younger woman through the lens of Systems of Pathological Accommodation and the film Gravity, Margaret Allan
This paper explores Bernard Brandchaft’s theoretical concept of Systems of Pathological Accommodation as applied in the life of a young woman with an obsessional disorder. It uses the film Gravity as a phenomenological journey in to the heart of the terror at the center of these “incompetent systems of attachment”.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to:
1. Discuss the concept of Systems of Pathological Accommodation.
2. Discuss the relevance of Bernard Brandchaft’s theory in relation to obsessional disorders.
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11. Trauma Research and Self Psychology: How 9/11 Survivors Integrate the Irrationality of Wide-Scale Trauma

Speakers: Koichi Togashi, PhD and Doris Brothers, PhD
Discussant: Marcia D-S Dobson, PhD
Moderator: Lewis Barth, BHL, MAHL, MA, PhD

Abstract:
This paper describes the results of a self-psychologically oriented research study into the meanings of the 9/11 attacks in New York. First the authors introduce idea that a sense of irrationality or absurdity is often part of the meaning of trauma and plays a significant role in the healing process. Recent trends in the psychoanalytic understanding of trauma that support this understanding are then reviewed. Next the results of the study are presented. It was found that the research participants were able to integrate a sense of the irrationality and/or absurdity of the event into their lives to the extent that they became engaged in activities that they felt would heal the wounded society. Finally, we address the clinical implications of our findings by means of a short clinical vignette.

Learning Objectives:
At the conclusion of my presentation, the participants will be able to:
1. Explain the reasons that irrationality and/or absurdity are often part of the meaning of wide-scale societal traumas.
2. Describe the importance for survivors of integrating a sense of trauma’s irrationality and absurdity into their lived experience.
3. Discuss the ways in which a commitment to helping the wounded society serves to help the survivor of wide-scale trauma to integrate experiences of life’s irrationality and absurdity.