



## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper and Additional Sessions:

There are four sessions for Paper Presentations in which registrants select one to attend.

Additional sessions: The Child & Adolescent Initiative Group Meeting and the Couples Therapy Interest Group will have meetings that qualify for CE credits.

Additional group meetings will be held for The Social Justice Interest Group, The Teaching Interest Group, The Writing Interest Group and the Students & Candidates Group.

*For a description of the session, learning objectives, presenter bios and other details, please click on the paper's listing (ie: Paper 1-X).*

**Paper Sessions 1-F, 2-E, 3-A & 4D will be offered both for in-person and virtual attendees.**

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#### Paper Session 1 and Meet the Author Presentation: Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup> 4:00 – 5:30pm

##### Paper Session 1-A: Surviving: On Mourning and Loss

**Paper 1:** From the Ashes: Persevering and Changing in Worlds on Fire

**Presenter:**  
David Fireman, MSW

**Interlocutor:**  
Arthur A. Gray, PhD

**Paper 2:** The Person Who Cannot be Tragic Among Tragedies

**Presenter:**  
Şükran Pelin Balcı

##### Paper Session 1-B: Twinship: Bridging Difference and Distance

**Paper 1:** Long Distance Twinship and the Specificity of Positionality: When is Different Too Different?

**Presenter:**  
Claire Jaynes, MA

**Interlocutor:**  
Fabia Eleonara Banella, PhD

**Paper 2:** The Train Waits: Twinship and Alter-Ego Experiences in a Delicately Titrated Treatment

**Presenter:**  
Lisa Ruesch, JD, LCSW

##### Paper Session 1-C: Meet the Author Presentation

Kohut's Self Psychology for a Fractured World

**Presenter:**  
John Riker, PhD

**Interlocutor:**  
Raanan Kulka, MA

##### Paper Session 1-D: Emotional Trauma and Embodied Experience

**Paper 1:** Traumatic Shame Revisited: Paralysis of Action

**Presenter:**  
Lorraine Cates, PhD, LCSW

**Interlocutor:**  
Marina Amore, PhD

**Paper 2:** Self Psychology and Adult-Onset Trauma – Body Inclusive Short Term Treatment for First Responders

**Presenter:**  
Ernst Meyer, MA

##### Paper Session 1-E: Perspectives on Complexity and Intersubjectivity: Two Case Discussions

**Paper 1:** On Beauty: The Power of Resonance in Communion

**Presenter:**  
Ebba Schmitz-Hubsch

**Interlocutor:**  
Maria Silvia Soriato, PsyD

**Paper 2:** Complexity and Intersubjectivity in a Contemporary Tragedy: Mario and I Looking for a House in Chaos

**Presenter:**  
Hélder Chambel

### **Paper Session 1-F: The Sharing Unconsciousness and the Vulnerability of the Analyst**

**Paper 1:** Shattering, Recollecting and Cocreating the Meaning of Life in the Midst of Pain: Clinical work on Special Women's Existential Trauma from the Relational Self Psychology Perspective

**Presenter:**  
**Xiaofeng Long, MA**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Cecilia Belardelli, PsyD**

**Paper 2:** When We Are Undone: Exploring Moments of Vulnerability, Surrender, and Creative Transformation within the Analyst

**Presenter:**  
**Michelle Harwell, PsyD, LMFT**

### **Paper Session 2: Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm**

#### **Paper Session 2-A: Students and Candidates Papers**

**Paper 1:** Two for the Royal Road: Moment in Meeting shaped by Mourning, Melancholia, and a Dream

**Presenter:**  
**Todd Frugia, MFA, MA, LCPC**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Lily Qu, MA**

**Paper 2:** Finding Hope During Collapse

**Presenter:**  
**Kateryna Bagan, MA**

#### **Paper Session 2-B: Moral Injury: From Myth to Clinic**

**Paper 1:** Kohut's and Sophocles' Oedipus: The Birth of Tragic Man and its Resonances for our Contemporary World

**Presenter:**  
**Marcia Dobson, PhD**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Davide Belluardo, PsyD**

**Paper 2:** Moral Injury: The Existential Loneliness of an Israeli Soldier

**Presenter:**  
**Iris Eliraz**

#### **Paper Session 2-C: Identity: Between Shame and Hope**

**Paper 1:** Tragic Youths: Shame and Identity

**Presenter:**  
**Rebecca Minto, PsyD**

**Interlocutor: Orly Shoshani, PhD**

**Paper 2:** The Tragedy of Inherited Shame

**Presenter:**  
**Stefano Borioni, PsyD**

#### **Paper Session 2-D: The Traumatic Rupture of War and Reconnection: Empathy and Solidarity**

**Paper 1:** Tragic Man, Empathy, Solidarity, War, and Courage

**Presenters:**  
**Eldad Iddan, MA & Amina Taiber, MA**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Luca Migliaccio, PsyD**

**Paper 2:** The Tragic Man in Times of Collective Catastrophe: Thoughts on Empathy and Analytic Listening as a Bridge Towards Potentiality

**Presenter:**  
**Simona Katz Nirensztajn, MA**

#### **Paper Session 2-E: Patterns and Experiences in Psychoanalysis: New Theoretical Perspectives**

**Paper 1:** Behavior is Memory - Introduction to Template Theory, a New Direction in Self Psychology

**Presenter:**  
**Bruce Herzog, MD**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Sarah Mendelsohn, LCSW**

**Paper 2:** Toward a Pragmatic Self Psychology

**Presenter:**  
**Daniel Goldin, MFT, PsyD**

#### **Paper Session 2-F: The Subjectivity of the Analyst and The Therapeutic Field**

**Paper 1:** The Self and The Other: How does The Analyst's Subjectivity come into play in the Clinical Encounter?

**Presenter:**  
**Massimo Perrini, PsyD**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Elizabeth Carr, APRN**

**Paper 2:** Present-absent Mother, Present-absent Analyst

**Presenter:**  
**Ashley Leeds, LCSW**

#### **Paper Session 2-G: Tragic Consciousness as a Therapeutic Aim (Panel)**

**Presenters:**  
**Heather Ferguson, LCSW & Jan Chess, PhD, MFT**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Enrico Paolini, MD**

### **Paper Session 3: Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm**

### **Paper Session 3-A: Timeless Dilemmas: Empathy, Realness and Reciprocity**

**Presenters:**

Malcolm Slavin, PhD & Hazel Ipp, PhD

**Interlocutor:**

Estelle Shane, PhD

### **Paper Session 3-B: Social and Political Complexities: How Psychoanalysis Can Help Us**

**Paper 1:** Bridging the Gap Between Understanding and Blame, Dialogue and Rupture, Compassion and Outrage

**Presenters:**

Daniel Perlitz, MD, & Margy Sperry, MFT, PsyD

**Interlocutor:**

Valentina Desiderio, PsyD

**Paper 2:** Psychoanalysis as a Path to Liberation: Unveiling the Power of Self-Reflection

**Presenter:**

Nariman Sedaghat, MA

### **Paper Session 3-C: Despair and Healing**

**Paper 1:** A Field Guide to Clinical Artifacts and Bones - Guilty Man; Tragic Woman

**Presenter:**

Anna Stothart, PsyD

**Interlocutor:**

Michele Argalia, PsyD

**Paper 2:** In the Heart of Darkness: Facing the World's Tragedy Together in Therapy

**Presenter:**

Gökçen Bulut, PhD

### **Paper Session 3-D: Personal Life and Personal Work: The History of Buber and Masud Khan**

**Paper 1:** Relational Homelessness: The Tragedy of Masud Khan

**Presenter:**

Ilene Philipson, PhD, PhD, PsyD

**Interlocutor:**

Petra Purkharthofer, PhD

**Paper 2:** The Importance of intersubjective Systems Theory: An Agent for Change as Seen in the I-Thou Perspective

**Presenter:**

Donna Wolfskehl DiStefano, LCSW

### **Paper Session 3-E: The Subjectivity of the Analyst in the Encounter With The Patients**

**Paper 1:** Dismantling the Barricades: Ways into One's Own Personal Experience as Gateways into a Sense of Connection

**Presenter:**

Margaret Allan, MSW, PsyD

**Interlocutor:**

Leslie Smith, MSW

**Paper 2:** The Flavour of the Intersubjective Encounter: "Finding" the Other in the Reciprocal "Hiding Places"

**Presenter:**

Maria Tammone, MD

### **Panel Session 3-F: Couple Psychotherapy and Separations: Broken Bond, Broken Self**

**Paper 1:** Terminable and Interminable Separations: The Relationship Without the Other

**Presenter:**

Cristina Bonucci, PhD

**Interlocutor:**

Karen Bloomberg, LCSW, PhD

**Paper 2:** Possible and Impossible Separations: Losing the Bond or Losing the Self?

**Presenter:**

Rosetta Castellano, PhD

### **Paper Session 3-G: Tragic Man and an Existential Self Psychology**

Tragic Man and an Existential Self Psychology

**Presenter:**

John Riker, PhD

**Interlocutor:**

Gabriella Mann, PhD

## **Paper Session 4: Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am**

### **Paper Session 4-A: The World Today: Between the Shadows of Tragedy and the Reflections of Hope**

**Paper 1:** My Patient is Not Getting Better!

**Presenter:**

Amira Simha-Alpern, PhD

**Interlocutor:**

Lucia Maiorino, PsyD

**Paper 2:** Meaning in Life of Tehran's Recovering Homeless Men: A Phenomenological Study

**Presenter:**

Sepideh Shirani, MA

### **Paper Session 4-B: On the Power of Music as a Selfobject Experience**

**Paper 1:** A Musical Adolescent's Self and a Tragic Mother: After the Father's Traumatic Loss

**Presenter:**  
**Marco Bernabei, PhD**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Andrea Harms, PhD**

**Paper 2:** "Silence the pianos ... Let the mourners come": How a moment of musical rupture transformed Kohut's Tragic Man, in life and in the analytic hour

**Presenter:**  
**Ephrat Havron, PhD**

#### **Paper Session 4-C: Is Losing Guilty Man a Tragedy?**

**Paper 1:** Guilty Man and Tragic Man in Dialogue: Rethinking Difference as Dynamics

**Presenter:**  
**Cheryl Goldstein, PsyD**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Judith Aronson, PhD**

**Paper 2:** Toward The Co-Existence of Guilty Man and Tragic Man: A Social-Psychoanalytic Perspective

**Presenter:**  
**Ilene Philipson, PhD, PsyD**

#### **Paper Session 4-D: Facing Together the Pain of Personal and Collective Trauma**

**Paper 1:** Storytelling in Times of Acute Trauma - The story of June within the tragedy of October 7th

**Presenter:**  
**Edna Lahav-Zimmermann, MA**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Raanan Kulka, PhD**

**Paper 2:** The Guilty, the Tragic, and the Transformed: Contemplating Human Potential from Patients' Experiences in the Israeli-Hamas War

**Presenter:**  
**Uri Moshovitz, PhD**

#### **Paper Session 4-E: Self-Realization and Freedom in the Analytical Field: Theoretical and Clinical Insights**

**Paper 1:** The Ice Mother Melting

**Presenter:**  
**Sara Khosravi, MA**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Massimo Segù, PsyD**

**Paper 2:** Analytic Freedom and The Loving Gaze

**Presenter:**  
**Shir Shanun, PsyD**

#### **Paper Session 4-F: Research Studies: Tragic Conditions and Their Outcomes**

**Paper 1:** Reflecting on the Intergenerational Impact of Early Experiences of Being Fostered or Raised in Alternative Care Settings from Clinical Observations of Chinese-Canadian Adolescents

**Presenter:**  
**Cherry Qi, RCC, MCP, MA**

**Interlocutor:**  
**David Poulin-Latulippe, MA**

**Paper 2:** A Self Psychologist in Public Service: Tragic Communities. From the Bronx to Newtown with a Stop in Methadonia

**Presenter:**  
**George Hagman, LCSW**

#### **Paper Session 4-G: Clinical Process and Integrative Functions of the Self**

**Paper 1:** Self-Involvement, Selfobject Presence, and Cohesive self: A Perspective Based on the Tragic Person today

**Presenter:**  
**Weifeng Huang, MA**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Fulvio Ambrosio, PsyD**

**Paper 2:** A Dancing Robot

**Presenter:**  
**Homa Khorsani, MA**

#### **Paper Session 4-H: Complexity of Life and Complexity of Clinical Work: From Despair to Resilience**

**Paper 1:** Loss, Grief and the Mourning of Gay Men

**Presenter:**  
**Robert Benedetti, PhD**

**Interlocutor:**  
**Deborah Sherman, BC-DMT,LMHC**

**Paper 2:** Tragic Man Evolved: Navigating Existential Challenges Through Therapeutic Transformation

**Presenter:**  
**Douglas Zimmerman, MA,Ed. LCSW**

### **Additional CE Earning Sessions:**

Friday, October 25, 2024 1:00 – 2:00pm

[Child and Adolescent Group Initiative](#): The Importance of a Psychological Hand in Child Psychotherapy

Presenter:

Lynn Borenstein, MSW

Interlocutor:

Denise Davis, LCSW

Friday, October 25, 2024 1:00 – 2:00pm

[Couples Therapy Interest Group](#): Variations in the Couple Setting

Presenter:

Christina Bonucci, PhD

Moderator:

David Shaddock, PhD



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##### **Paper 1: From the Ashes: Persevering and Changing in Worlds on Fire**

**Presenter: David Fireman, MSW**

##### **Paper 2: The Person Who Cannot be Tragic Among Tragedies**

**Presenter: Şükran Pelin Balcı**

**Interlocutor: Arthur A. Gray, PhD**

*Thursday, October 24, 4:00 – 5:30pm*

#### **Paper 1: Abstract:**

This paper contends that loss has many forms, but its impact, the traumatic upheaval of one's personal identity and assumptive world, is nearly always the core reaction. Only the question of source and degree differentiates one situation from another. Consequently, clinical practice becomes a witnessing of a staggering multiplicity of tragedies, all easily considered to be loss. Death is the most obvious, but clinicians must also help their patients come to terms with economic failure, professional failure, profound medical diagnoses, divorce, and ruptures in other crucial relationships. And now, in a world on fire with war, political schism, pandemics, climate change and humanitarian crisis, loss's "landscape" is ever present and everywhere. Grounded in case examples and bereavement theory, this paper will explore the phenomenology of grief and mourning from a self-psychological perspective enhanced by other insights, including those espoused by Kohut, Stolorow, Riley, Peskin, Hagman, Rando, Perlitz, Niemeyer, and Jung. It will show how grief and mourning are natural restorative processes that, when explored and worked through in a self psychologically oriented therapy, can be navigated to help people "survive" loss and open a path to deep personal change.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Analyze the phenomenology of bereavement through a grief and mourning phases model within the dynamic self-selfobject matrix of patient and therapist.
2. Conceptualize how specific bereavement counseling principles and interventions enhance psychotherapy generally.
3. Demonstrate through case examples the individual and societal meanings of the tragic human, loss, self-restoration and life-recommencement in the context of world shattering events.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

**Background of the Patient:** The father of the patient passed away due to a suicide seven years ago. The patient, who started therapy a year after her father's death, was in the midst of a deep mourning process. She just wanted to be able to look at her father's photos. Her father had committed suicide by setting himself on fire. And she couldn't stop thinking about her father's physical pain. Her father would work as a tradesman in a small town. He committed suicide due to his inability to pay off debts in his last days. The patient struggled with feelings of guilt and inadequacy for a long time. Over time, she began to see feelings of shame. We had 105 therapy sessions in approximately 6 years. During this time period, she had to cope with difficulties such as her father's death being publicized on social media, her brother's suicide attempts and

addiction treatment, her mother and brother moving to her city, her father being blamed and abandoned by his family, and her own migration due to political and economic reasons.

At the beginning of our sessions, I was employing some techniques under the influence of classical theory. I was interpreting the patient's anger and guilt and creating contexts without the patient's awareness. It was as if only these emotions were the response risen by the grief she had. I would then judge myself for not understanding the patient enough during the sessions. Somewhere along the way, I encountered Self Psychology. And I realized that there was room for me in the therapy room as well. By the aid of the realization, the patient began to talk about how her father's suicide, her poverty, and the burdens left on her made her feel ashamed and helpless. I probably said to her, 'I'm here too.' I believe that with the realization and feeling that I was there, the patient found a space where she could be herself.

The reason why I particularly want to bring out the patient's psychologically evolution is that, as a therapist who has experienced a similar loss, it enables me to practice therapy in the most authentic way, being closest to myself in the therapy room.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Identify the process of transitioning from interpretation to empathic listening.
2. Discuss a painful existence following a traumatic loss.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**David Fireman, MSW, LCSW**, is the Executive Director of the Center for Grief Recovery in Chicago. David practices psychotherapy grounded in Self and depth psychologies. His extensive background helping others grows out of a sincere respect for inherent individual differences, social learning, the interplay of love and loss throughout the lifespan, finding purpose and meaning, and placing value in the power of the therapeutic relationship. He is an active and involved therapist who believes that the rare combination of honesty and courage brings about lasting change. In tandem with his client work, he also provides professional consultation services to therapists in private or agency settings. Finally, to round out his traditional training in social work and psychotherapy, David draws from his experience as a black belt [student and senior class member] in judo, Tibetan forms of meditation, and Jewish spirituality. David is an active and sought-after workshop presenter and blogger. His work has been published in various sources. He was social work lecturer at The University of Chicago and Jane Addams College of Social Work, UIC. As past president of the Transpersonal Psychology Network Chicago, David is committed to values and practices that nurture the human spirit, courage, creativity, compassion, and pragmatic action.

**Şükran Pelin Balcı** : After graduating, for a year, I worked in the field of special education, assessing children with learning difficulties and addressing behavioral problems. I conducted individual counseling sessions with the families of children with learning difficulties and also provided seminars on their diagnoses. From September 2010 to June 2012, while attending a language school in London, I also participated in individual and family work with individuals experiencing adjustment issues, mostly in their native language, at London Enfield Council's Social Services. Shortly after returning to Turkey, I started working in the adult department at Madalyon Psychiatry Center. Over the course of two and a half years, I focused on family, couple, and individual therapy, specifically working on Family Therapy, Sexual Dysfunction Relationship and Marriage Therapy, Anxiety Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Personality Disorders, Grief Process, and Depression. Throughout this period, I received training in Classical Psychoanalysis. After continuing my career by following up with patients at a private clinic and providing counseling at a private high school for 3 years, I returned to work at Madalyon Psychiatry Center for another 2 years as of September 2018. As of 2019, I started my training in SELF PSYCHOLOGY through IAPSP (International Association for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology) and APPD (Anatolian Psychoanalytic Psychotherapies Association) and continue my supervision. I have been continuing my work at Penta Psychology, which I founded, for about 4 years.

**References:**

Peskin, H. (2019). Who Has the Right to Mourn?: Relational Deference and the Ranking of Grief, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 29, 477-492.

Hagman.G (2022). Mourning Alone Together: Suhidra Yadavalli's Contribution to a New Mourning Theory, *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 17(3-4), 255-259.

Perlitz, D. (2022) Mutual Imbeddedness: The Foundation for a Relational World. *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 17(1), 8-22.





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### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 1-B: Twinship: Bridging Difference and Distance

##### **Paper 1: Long Distance Twinship and the Specificity of Positionality: When is Different Too Different?**

**Presenter: Claire Jaynes, MA**

##### **Paper 2: The Train Waits: Twinship and Alter-Ego Experiences in a Delicately Titrated Treatment**

**Presenter: Lisa Ruesch, JD, LCSW**

**Interlocutor: Fabia Eleonora Banella, PhD**

*Thursday, October 24, 4:00 – 5:30pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

My background and training have encouraged me and my local colleagues to interrogate power, privilege, oppression and intersectionality. Around me I see psychology and psychologists grapple with these concepts. I have sought to make Self Psychology my theoretical home, and IAPSP my community of practice. However, I am greatly affected by a sense of stark difference and contrast between myself and the prominent voices in the community. It is not just a sense of being different, but perhaps irreconcilably so? I feel alien, and offended, unseen and taken aback. It feels my choices are a) pathological accommodation or b) retreating to sameness and belonging on home soil. This paper is my attempt to reject those binary options in search of a more complex and authentic relationality. The community is also challenged to see their blind spots and to be more attuned to those who are different and marginalised.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Define 'intersectionality'.
2. Explain how elements of power and privilege impact on a sense of belonging, and thus impact on twinship and selfobject needs.
3. Describe how elements of sameness and difference impact on belonging and attunement.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

This paper explores the delicate titration of twinship and alter-ego selfobject experiences in a treatment of an older Ashkenazi Jewish woman by a middle-aged Chinese female therapist, from the Covid-19 pandemic to the present. The author draws upon recent theorizing on twinship and alter-ego selfobject experiences to show the therapeutic effect of quiet companionship and emotional dwelling; the emergence of hidden alter-ego selves; self-disclosure on race; the provision of "practical advice"; and the use of virtual sessions in this treatment of a patient who is staring down the barrel of the end of life and facing head on multiple traumas, regrets of the past, and what it all might mean.

## Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:

1. Discuss and compare twinship and alter-ego experiences.
2. Understand I-It and I-Thou relating and their oscillations.
3. Describe how an alter-ego experience emerges.

## Presenter Bios:

**Claire Jaynes, MA** is a queer counselling psychologist working in private practice in Brooklyn, Pretoria, South Africa. She is passionate about taking a stand against all forms of social asymmetries including homophobia, transphobia, racism, and sexism. Her research interests include (anti)racism, the intersection of race and gender, sexuality and gender identity, neurodiversity/neurodivergence, and psychotherapy from a relational self psychology orientation.

**Lisa L. Ruesch, JD, LCSW**, is a 2023 IAPSP Early Career Professional Scholarship Recipient. She is a graduate, faculty, and board member of the National Institute for the Psychotherapies (NIP) and the Books Editor of *Psychoanalytic Perspectives*. Her paper, *Tiny Little Asian Thing: Appearances in a Therapeutic Dyad*, received NIP's Educators' Award.

Lisa works with adults, children, and families in her private practice in New York City. Before entering the field, she practiced complex commercial litigation and family law.

## References:

Kottler, A. (2015). Feeling at Home, Belonging, and Being Human: Kohut, Self Psychology, Twinship, and Alienation. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*, 10(4), 378-389.

Kottler, A. (2020) When the Echoes of Red and Blue Turn to Green: Disentangling Alienated Alter-Ego Self Experiences Through a Collaborative and Complex Relational, and Conversational Dance. *Psychoanalysis, Self, and Context*, 15(1),62-70.

Corpt, E. & Richard, A. (2022) Racism and Other Traumatic Inequalities: Editors' Introduction. *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 17(2), 137-140.

Berzoff, J. (2023). Intersectionality: Power Differentials, Impasses and Enactments in Clinical Practice and in Supervision. *Psychoanalytic Social Work*, 30(1), 64-76.



## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### 1C: Meet the Author Session

#### *Kohut's Self Psychology for a Fractured World*

**Presenter: John Riker, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Raanan Kulka, MA**

*Thursday, October 24, 4:00 – 5:00pm*

#### **Abstract:**

The book has three aims: First, to offer the most extensive conceptual understanding of Kohut's ideas in the literature by examining his structural, functional, and dynamic concepts of the self along with differentiating the self from the ego and offering a full understanding of psychopathology from the perspective of self psychology. My second aim is to compare Kohut's understanding of the self with modernity's notion of the self as autonomous, pragmatic individuality to show not only how modernity is misconceiving the self and its needs but how this misconception is implicated in many of society's most grievous problems, including homelessness, the epidemic of loneliness, deaths of despair, sexual violence, gun violence, income inequality, the addictions, the epidemic of cheating, the obesity epidemic, and even climate change. That is, as a good philosopher, I attempt to show that one of the primary ills of modern society is a profound misconception of who we are as humans and what we most need.

My third aim is to imagine what an ideal self psychological community would look like. In this section of the book, I attempt to sketch out in this part of the book what homes, schools, workplaces, and the general practices of socio/economic life would look like if the fundamental aim of the culture was not economic productivity but creating persons who had vibrant, coherent selves as the core of their experience.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Analyze Kohut's ideas by examining his structural, functional, and dynamic concepts of the self.
2. Describe what the author believes what an ideal self psychological community would look like.

#### **Presenter Bio:**

For the past three decades, **John Riker, PhD** has been devoted to exploring the relation of psychoanalysis--especially Kohutian self psychology--to problems in ethics and philosophical anthropology. He has written five books intersecting psychoanalysis and ethics (most recently, *Kohut's Self Psychology for a Fractured World* (2024)), and published numerous articles and spoken in many conferences on this material, including conferences in England, Belgium, Turkey, Austria, Canada, and Israel. John has been a professor of philosophy at Colorado College for over half a century and been named Professor of the Year a record four times, and Advisor of the Year a record three times. He was the initial recipient of the award Colorado College established to recognize someone who most promotes diversity and inclusion on campus. He has recently been appointed co-editor-in-chief of *Psychoanalysis, Self, and Context*.

## References:

Riker, J. H. (2017). The Dialectical Core of Self Psychology: A Reflection on Coburn's and Maduro's Essays. *Psychoanalysis, Self, and Context*, 12(2), 173-180.

Riker, J. H. (2021). A Critical Appraisal of Stolorow's Criticism of Kohut's Concept of the Self and His Contextualization of Heidegger's Notion of Authenticity plus the Possibility of an Intersubjective Self Psychology. *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 16(4), 338-351.

Riker, J.H. (2021). The Philosophical Significance of Kohut's Theory of the Self. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 108 (2),215-237.



## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 1-D: Emotional Trauma and Embodied Experience

##### **Paper 1: Traumatic Shame Revisited: Paralysis of Action**

**Presenter: Lorraine Cates, PhD, LCSW**

##### **Paper 2: Self Psychology and Adult-Onset Trauma – Body Inclusive Short Term Treatment for First Responders**

**Presenter: Ernst Meyer, MA**

**Interlocutor: Marina Amore, PhD**

*Thursday, October 24, 4:00 – 5:30pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

While developmental emotional trauma engenders much attention and debate, the subject of traumatic shame remains elusive and, as such, easily brushed off. It is shameful to feel shame—a reaction that may be mutually shared by patient and analyst alike. As opposed to ordinary shame, traumatic shame, a dimension of emotional trauma, implicates the lived body with states of unbearable painful affect that seek immediate riddance. Often shrouded in defense activity, traumatic shame can be difficult to detect. Hence, clinicians tend to treat the symptoms rather than the experience itself. In exploring this highly complex dynamic, my focus remains on the experiencing body as a source of emotional knowledge that issues from unformulated, unspoken lived experience. Discussed through clinical vignettes is the role of body emotion situated in both the suffering and healing of traumatic shame.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Identify the therapeutic significance of an emotional phenomenological framework in working with the embodied experience of traumatic shame.
2. Apply to the clinical process the importance of the nonverbal embodied interchange between patient and the analyst as a crucial element in the treatment of traumatic shame.
3. Explain the lived body in relation to the unity of a mind-body-world system.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

The author proposes a short-term, self-psychological and intersubjective model for the treatment of first responders suffering from trauma related presentations. While psychodynamic approaches are well suited for developmental or childhood-based trauma, they are insufficient for adult-onset trauma in general, and specifically for a first-responder population. Combining the principles of Self Psychology, Stolorow's proposal of emotional dwelling (2014), an understanding of our embodied nature (Brothers & Sletvold, 2022) and a clinical attitude informed by body psychotherapy (Geuter, 2016), the author describes a phased short-term treatment approach. Case material from treatment with first responders is provided and compared with verbal/top-down mainstream approaches to treatment. The paper concludes with a discussion of how to integrate embodiment into self psychological theory and clinical practice.

## Learning Objectives:

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Identify why self psychological treatment needs to be adjusted to the specific needs of first responders.
2. Describe the stages of a body-inclusive short-term approach.
3. Demonstrate how to address shame in short-term treatment with first responders.

## Presenter Bios:

**Lorraine Cates, PhD, LCSW** is a member and training analyst at NPAP, National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis in New York City. She is a 2008 graduate of Columbia University College of Arts and Sciences where she was awarded a doctorate in Social Policy and Administration. Dr. Cates served as an adjunct faculty member between 2006 and 2008 at the School of Social Work. She attended University of Vermont and studied acting at Boston University, School of Theater Arts, graduating from the School of Liberal Arts with a BA in English Literature.

In her former life, she pursued a career in the theater and appeared in several Equity productions at both New England Mutual Playhouse, Boston, Ma., and Boothbay Harbor Playhouse, Maine.

Dr. Cates is an active member of the Blue Hill Troupe, Ltd., a Gilbert and Sullivan group of Savoyards celebrating its 100th season, 1924 -2024. The proceeds from two yearly productions are gifted to New York City charities.

My name is **Ernst Meyer**, I am a Registered Clinical Psychotherapist, hold a Masters Degree in Psychotherapy and Counselling, and have ten years of experience in private practice. I have been elected to the board of the "Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia" (PACFA) as the psychotherapy representative, and am part of the leadership group for somatic psychotherapy in Australia. I am a full member of the "European Association for Body Psychotherapy" (EABP) and a member of the "International Association for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology (IAPSP)". As a trained Somatic Psychotherapist I understand that human beings are embodied, and my clinical approach is body-inclusive and trauma informed. Being a former police officer, my aim is to support current and retired first responders - most carry a diagnosis of PTSD, and many have experienced one or more suicide attempts – in ways that are meaningful for them, and their families. As an educator I provide body-inclusive training for existing practitioners. In my clinical experience an awareness of embodiment in general and connection with body-inclusive approaches to lead to better outcomes for those seeking help. Outside of the practice and training room I am advocating for human-science based psychotherapy to be recognized as a clinical alternative to clinical psychology and psychiatry.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 1-E: Perspectives on Complexity and Intersubjectivity: Two Case Discussions

##### Paper 1: On Beauty: The Power of Resonance in Communion

Presenter: Ebba Schmitz-Hubsch

##### Paper 2: Complexity and Intersubjectivity in a Contemporary Tragedy: Mario and I Looking for a House in Chaos

Presenter: Hélder Chambel

Interlocutor: Maria Silvia Soriato, PsyD

*Thursday, October 24, 4:00 – 5:30pm*

#### Abstract: Paper 1:

Starting from a view on the complex weave of subjectivities in the fluid moment-to moment movement in the therapeutic communion, we will illuminate how this intersubjective encounter contains risks (limitations, distortions,...) as well as chances and enrichment. The fostering experience of being part of a communion in recognition and resonance leads to a feeling of inner safety and coherence. When we experience continuing moments of fittedness in being-at-one in the beauty of a warm milieu, a space for growing is opened for an empowered self which can feel safe, vital and creative. Here, the hermeneutic stance of emotional understanding from the midst of the living experience is seen as the transmuting factor in its tension between communion and differentiation. The vignette of A., a girl of 15y, can help getting a feeling for these woven processes. Trust in the creative self-organizing of complex processes and emergent change can arise. This might lead to an expansion of Kohut's concept of the Tragic Man to a vision of the idea of the creative human. Thus, helplessness can be transmuted into confidence. It is to be discussed how this change of perspective might help us in these times of turbulences and threat.

#### Learning Objectives:

**At the conclusion of the presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the being together and the vibrant resonance in the intersubjective therapeutic communion as the empowering dimension in the mastery of traumatic crises.
2. Explain the evolving understanding from the midst of the living experience in the present moment as a transmuting factor.
3. Identify the contextuality of Kohut's concept of the Tragic Man and discuss its expanding to the idea of the creative human as a rich perspective on change.

#### Abstract: Paper 2:

Through the analysis of a clinical situation, I try to demonstrate the importance of the theories of complexity and intersubjectivity for clinical work in psychoanalysis. I emphasize the therapeutic relational experience in intersubjectivity, and the "therapeutic self-state" of the therapists, as essential factors for the transformation of the patient in the therapeutic relationship. I highlight the early intersubjective formation of our minds and emphasize the importance of the ability to understand and live in complex systems that are always insecure and unpredictable. Living in a "hypermodern" world of permanent acceleration is a challenge (sometimes tragic) to the subjectivity of each one of us, and the transition from a patriarchal family organization to a more "liquid" world, in various dimensions of life, being a human evolution, can be a source of insecurity.



### Learning Objectives:

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

1. Describe complexity theories for clinical work in psychoanalysis.
2. Demonstrate the inevitability of intersubjectivity in the clinical situation.
3. Discuss the consequences for mental health of the

transition from a patriarchal model of society to a more "liquid" model and greater expression of the self.

### Presenter Bios:

**Ebba Schmitz-Hubsch:** Studied at Westfälische-Wilhelms-Universität, Münster, Germany 1971-1976: Psychology, Social Sciences, Education Sciences, Philosophy with Diploma in 1976; Staatsexamen II in 1978; Training in Psychoanalytic Art Therapies 1988-1992 in Hannover; at Winnicott Institut Training in Deep Psychology and Analytic Therapy 1992-1999; at ZAP (Zentrum für Ausbildung Psychotherapie), Bad Salzflen, Germany Approbation and Registration in Medical Register 1999 (Children and Adolescents). Private Practice in Detmold since 1995 – today. Registration /Acceptance by Kassenärztliche Vereinigung 2007 Tagungen (conferences) Dreieich since 1997; Member of Maschsee Gruppe (Selfpsychology orientated Study group, organizing conferences) since 2003 – today; Member of IAPSP since 2016; Member of DPNW/Germany since 2019; Teacher / Lecturer (since 2007) at ZAP (Center for Training Psychotherapists); supervisor and trainer since 2012.

### References:

Ávila, A. (2016). The intersubjective: A core concept for psychoanalysis. *International Forum of Psychoanalysis*, 25(3), 186–190.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 1-F: The Sharing Unconsciousness and the Vulnerability of the Analyst



**Paper 1: Shattering, Recollecting and Cocreating the Meaning of Life in the Midst of Pain: Clinical work on Special Women's Existential Trauma from the Relational Self Psychology Perspective**

**Presenter: Xiaofeng Long, MA**

**Paper 2: When We Are Undone: Exploring Moments of Vulnerability, Surrender, and Creative Transformation within the Analyst**

**Presenter: Michelle Harwell, PsyD, LMFT**

**Interlocutor: Cecilia Belardelli, PsyD**

*Thursday, October 24, 4:00 – 5:30pm*

**Abstract: Paper 1:**

Most of the author's patients are women, born during the implementation of China's one-child policy and in the context of China's patriarchal culture. They may have been abandoned for the sake of a brother's birth, hidden, or falsely claimed to be dead or disabled, or their families may have been punished with huge fines that burdened the family or caused their parents to lose their public positions. Their destiny is a tragedy from the moment they were born, and the fact that they came into the family as "sinners" so unwanted inevitably leads to an abusive upbringing that traumatizes their souls. Interestingly, they were able to study hard to get into university under limited educational conditions, and then went to big cities to live independently and gain a foothold in society, but they did not lead a satisfying life because of this, and the traumas of the past are still impacting their lives and meanings at the present time. Difficulties in identifying as women, including shame and guilt, and especially the complicated conflicting feelings about their mother, who is also a woman, as both a victim and a victimizer, gnaw at their souls, day and night. Their selves were fragmented, and during the long clinical work, with the dyads sharing the patriarchal impacts of the author's own experience as a woman, evoked the author's own traumas. The couple became each other's selfobjects, moving forward in pain and growth. This paper presents the connection and search for meaning through a relational self psychology through several clinical moments.

**Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Assess the clinical relational situation and have more reflect to role of their own experience thus unconscious content.
2. Analyze the shared traumatic history and the unconscious resonance, and to cocreate new meaning for both.
3. Apply his experience and reconnected self which had been isolated as a whole to be a real object as well as selfobject.

**Abstract: Paper 2:**

The physics of vulnerability tells us utter helplessness comes for us all, including the treating psychoanalyst, raising the question of what happens within a treatment when the analyst is taken by the riptide of her own primal pain, memory, even trauma? In this clinical paper, this author charts new territory as she offers us a deeply personal inside look at the interiority of the analyst as she navigates the impossible entanglement of two traumas, her patient Lacy's and her own. How doors within herself she much preferred to keep closed, are opened in the services of understanding Lacy and inevitably herself. And the spontaneous and ingenious ways healing begins to come, not through the triumph of either one of their traumas but by moving deeper into them. Emotional risk taking and bearing our fears of exposure can help us and our patients reclaim foregone internal territory from the tyrannical ruler of our inner wounds.

**Learning Objectives:**



**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Discuss the centrality of the analyst's vulnerability in the analytic relationship.
2. Assess how denial of the analyst's vulnerability constricts the analytic field.
3. Discuss how undigested trauma on the part of both the analyst and patient can get enacted in the analytic field.

**Presenter Bios:**

**Xiaofeng Long, MA** earned their MA in psychology in 2013 and began their clinical practice, achieving more than 7,000 hours and supervising 300 hours. Has earned a psychotherapist certificate through the 5-year China-American Psychoanalysis Alliance (CAPA) Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy & supervision training. Has finished training programs of 2-year psychodynamic psychotherapy, 3-year Winnicott, 2-year self-psychology, 1-year Klein in local institute, and is now studying as a psychoanalytic candidate in Chicago Psychoanalysis Institute in the 4th year and in a 2-year Relational program in Sichuan Huguang Clinical Psychology Institute.

**Michelle Harwell, PsyD, LMFT** is a training and supervising analyst and instructor at the Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis. For over a decade she has trained and supervised emerging clinicians through a unique integration of contemporary psychoanalytic principles and the humanities, believing that our reverence for theory must live alongside a deep humility and respect for the complexity of the human story. She is the author of numerous papers and her writing interests are centered on the interior process of the analyst. Dr. Harwell maintains a clinical practice in Eagle Rock, CA where she works extensively with adults, children, families, and couples.

**References:**

Shane, E. (2018) A Relational Self Psychological Approach to the Clinical Situation. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 28(6),687-695.

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**45th Annual IAPSP International Conference**

**The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning,  
In Life and in Clinical Practice**

**Paper 1: Two for the Royal Road: Moment in Meeting shaped by Mourning, Melancholia, and a Dream**

**Presenter: Todd Frugia, MFA, MA, LCPC**

**Paper 2: Finding Hope During Collapse**

**Presenter: Kateryna Bagan, MA**

**Interlocutor: Lily Qu, MA**

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

**Abstract: Paper 1:**

The surrounding soup an emerging self is steeped in spawns a smorgasbord of possible selfobject experiences to make structure of. While analytic literature can often accentuate the more positive variety of such situations, the negative selfobject experience can be just as potent and formative.

In this paper, I work to illustrate the ways I believe the negative selfobject experience profoundly shaped a set of beneficial skills and talents within one of my patients. Employing a clinical vignette in which two interlocking dreams are explored, I describe a progression towards a crucial moment of meeting in which my patient's exquisitely constructed talents offer me the gift of healing—and my affect within such healing reveals to my patient a pathway to change.

**Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Discuss ways early negative dynamics with caregivers construct an emerging selfobject experience.
2. Explain the negative selfobject's relationship to attachment and self-cohesion.
3. Describe possible clinical implications in the treatment of a patient with internal structures constructed from early negative situations.

**Abstract: Paper 2:**

A paper from Kateryna Bagan presenting her perspective as a person and a psychotherapist in a different reality than most of Europe and America. Her country is engaged in a struggle for its existence, preservation of its history, and proof of its uniqueness. In this context, she is reflecting on two main questions: what is the interface of the therapeutic relationship with the external world - how does the external frame influence what happens in the therapy itself? How can such a relationship be a source of hope in the context of social collapse? Kateryna use vignettes from working with patients to illustrate ideas.

**Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the interface of the therapeutic relationship with the external world - how does the external frame influence what happens in the therapy itself?
2. Explain how can such a relationship be a source of hope in the context of social collapse

**Presenter Bios:**

**Todd Frugia, MFA, MA, LCPC** is a psychotherapist in Chicago where he sees adult individuals and couples at his practice. He is currently a candidate at the Chicago Psychoanalytic Institute where he has also completed a two-year fellowship working in their adult clinic. In 2022 Todd was awarded an Early Career Professional scholarship from IAPSP and has participated in programming developed for ECP recipients since. Todd earned his Master of Arts in Counseling from the Family Institute at Northwestern University. Prior to pursuing a career in mental health, Todd had an extensive career in the arts. With an MFA in professional acting from Ohio University, Todd spent near twenty years participating in and creating works for theater, performance art, and video.

**Kateryna Bagan, MA**, was born and raised in Kyiv. She has a master's degree in clinical psychology, and is currently a psychoanalytic candidate at the Lviv Psychoanalytic Institute of Mental Health, with additional training in a psychodynamic approach in psychosomatic medicine. She has worked at the Kyiv drug addiction treatment center, and is currently in private practice in Kyiv.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 2-B: Moral Injury: From Myth to Clinic

##### **Paper 1: Kohut 's and Sophocles' Oedipus: The Birth of Tragic Man and its Resonances for our Contemporary World**

**Presenter: Marcia Dobson, PhD**

##### **Paper 2: Moral Injury: The Existential Loneliness of an Israeli Soldier**

**Presenter: Iris Eliraz**

**Interlocutor: Davide Belluardo, PsyD**

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

Kohut devoted an entire chapter of his magnum opus, *The Restoration of the Self*, to a reformulation of the Oedipus complex, indicating a re-thinking of who Oedipus is as essential to understanding his psychology of the self. In this paper, I discuss the conceptual move from Freud's Oedipus Complex to Kohut's Tragic Man, engaging not just Oedipus the King, but the Antigone and Oedipus at Colonus - the full Oedipus Cycle - showing their contributions to Kohut's transformation of Freud's Oedipus, and their political and spiritual importance for our contemporary world. The Antigone shows us the struggle to maintain a democracy that cherishes responsibility, free will, and conscience in the face of the unwritten laws of an inevitably deterministic nature, and the Oedipus at Colonus shows us that insofar as we as humans mirror nature's moving energies, we participate in cycles of birth and death, embodying not just individual growth and cohesiveness, but interconnections with the whole of the cosmos.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Compare Oedipus in Sophocles Oedipus Cycle and in Kohut's formulation of "tragic man."
2. Explain Kohut's bases for the necessity of turning to a vision of "Tragic Man" from Freud's "Guilty Man."
3. Discuss new possibilities for understanding our contemporary world based on Kohut's understanding of tragic persons and their place in cosmic embeddedness.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

Israeli soldiers come to military service from different backgrounds, and for many of them, serving in the army is an opportunity to cope with strengthening, empowering and raising their sense of self-worth, sense of belonging and social cohesion. In extreme conditions such as war or encounter with civilian population, the sense of security may crack and be replaced by an experience of helplessness, disappointment, shame, and in some cases create a split in the self. This paper refers to the complexity of the traumatic experience that threatens mental and physical existence through the psychoanalytic term Moral Injury.

Moral injury is caused to the soldier who commits, witnesses, or fails to prevent acts that do not conform to his moral values, beliefs and internal morality code. The undermining of the soldier's moral values and ideals, provokes narcissistic tension and overwhelming sense of shame (Kohut, 1975). My presentation will be accompanied by clinical examples.

**Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Discuss questions of wartime ethics.
2. Explain the therapist's role as a witness, and about aspects of countertransference.
3. Identify different types of therapeutic presence in trauma therapy and self-rehabilitation efforts.

**Presenter Bios:**

**Marcia Dobson** has PhDs in Classics, where she specializes in ancient Greek Tragedy and Myth, and in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Depth Psychology. She is a psychoanalytically informed relational self psychologist and has a private practice in Colorado Springs, CO. She has been an award-winning Professor of Classics at Colorado College in Colorado Springs for over forty years.

**Iris Eliraz** is a clinical social worker, psychotherapist, couple and family therapist. Expert in Trauma treating - mental, military service and terrorism. Therapist, teacher and supervisor practicing both in my private clinic as well as in "Natal" - an NGO providing psychological assistance to victims of terrorism and war in Israel. Member of the "Tel Aviv Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis". Teacher and supervisor in: - The psychotherapy program of the "Israeli Association for Self Psychology and the study of subjectivity" - The psychotherapy program of the "Tel Aviv Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis".

**References:**

Carr, R. B. (2014). Authentic Solicitude: What the Madness of Combat Can Teach Us About Authentically Being-With Our Patients. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*, 9(2), 115–130.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 2-C: Identity: Between Shame and Hope

##### **Paper 1: Tragic Youths: Shame and Identity**

**Presenter: Rebecca Minto, PsyD**

##### **Paper 2: The Tragedy of Inherited Shame**

**Presenter: Stefano Borioni, PsyD**

**Interlocutor: Orly Shoshani, PhD**

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

My clinical observation, in working with young adults, increasingly imposes on me the need to reflect about the dramatic relationship between them and shame, perceived as an insurmountable obstacle between Self and the attainment of an authentic identity. The common thread, which unites the stories of the young people I have encountered in carrying out my profession, seems to me to be a widespread sense of foreignness and indefiniteness, of self and others. In my paper, I will talk about Elia, a young man who will be a herald of a broader section of anthropological subjects, what U.S. psychologist Peggy Drexler in a 2019 article published in the Wall Street Journal called the “Therapy Generation”, that is, those born between 1981 and 1996 or otherwise known as the millennials. These young people seem to be bearers of questions related to "meaning", as well as characteristics that are the result of our contemporaneity and the disturbing scenery relating to the conditions of the human being, of the planet, and of the ongoing global crises.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Analyze the psychological characteristics of "young adult" anthropological subjects and their implications in clinical practice.
2. Compare relational experiences and the psychological impact of certain events between adults and young people.
3. Utilize the concept of Self-Object, applied to the current social and cultural context.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

This work presents the tragedy of a patient who, throughout his childhood and adolescence, has searched for the reasons and secrets behind the shame permeating his family daily life. His life demonstrates an intersubjective dynamic which, from 1970s Sicily to contemporary Rome, and has led to the construction of invariant organizing principles related to suspicion. In a context of unrepaired ruptures, heralds of emotional dysregulations and destructiveness of his wounded self, the therapist tries to mirror those crises, to propose a new experience related to being seen, to establish an alliance based on the hypothesis – revolutionary due to his experience - that mirroring and repair may be possible. From the identification of Lichtenberg’s "model scenes" and the identification of "half-truths" that still affect emotional, friendship and work-related reactions, the clinical work is pursued with the aim of giving rise to new principles to be co-built and placed next to the old organizing principle of suspicion: hope and trust.

## Learning Objectives:

### At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:

1. Assess the positive impact of empathic mirroring on the patient who has never experienced it, except that in one episode of his life related to his addiction.
2. Evaluate how much patient's addiction is connected not only to the substance itself, but also to the regulatory relational value associated with the use of the substance.
3. Assess the revolutionary value for the patient - following many unrepaired ruptures – due to a rupture with the therapist being followed by a repair that involves him in relational terms.

## Presenter Bios:

**Rebecca Minto** is a psychologist, specializing in clinical and life cycle psychology. She is a final year student at the ISIPSE psychotherapy school in Rome, and supervised with Dr. Gianni Nebbiosi, Dr. Carlo Carapellese and Dr. Paola Canari. She works as a psychologist in a psychiatric residential clinic, currently in a ward for intensive treatment of sub-acute patients. She practices mainly with young patients.

**Stefano Borioni** is a psychotherapist specialized at ISIPSE. He has been working since 2020 as director of a group home for adults with disabilities, since 2024 as a psychotherapist at a facility for people with Alzheimer and social co-housing for people with social fragility. In recent years, in collaboration with the Order of Psychologists, he has presented webinars and projects funded by the Lazio Region to bring psychosocial issues to the outskirts of Rome and the province. He works as a psychotherapist in his private practice.

## References:

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 2-D: The Traumatic Rupture of War and Reconnection: Empathy and Solidarity

##### Paper 1: Tragic Man, Empathy, Solidarity, War, and Courage

Presenters: Eldad Iddan, MA & Amina Taiber, MA

##### Paper 2: The Tragic Man in Times of Collective Catastrophe: Thoughts on Empathy and Analytic Listening as a Bridge Towards Potentiality

Presenter: Simona Katz Nirensztajn, MA

Interlocutor: Luca Migliaccio, PsyD

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

The war in Gaza, amid which we still are, took Israel by total surprise, when Hamas militants invaded small towns and Kibbutzim enveloping Gaza strip, and committed unspeakable atrocities against civil inhabitants. In response, Israel launched a massive counterattack. Numerous stories of heroic and courageous acts, which took place at the beginning of this war, caught the authors' attention. These acts sent them revisiting Kohut's thought about Tragic Man, nuclear self, empathy, and courage. Presenting two testimonies of such courageous acts, the authors weigh the role of empathy and solidarity (which they add) embedded in them and draw the parallel between them and the courageous historical and literary figures addressed by Kohut. The testimonies also demonstrate how courageous deeds vis-à-vis tragically mortal danger, constitute the fulfilment of the nuclear self.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Analyze heroic acts, despite threat of death, of individuals in war and other emergency situations.
2. Apply Kohut's Self-Psychological insights to current-day events.
3. Demonstrate the affinity of empathy and solidarity to courage.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

After the 7th of October, Israeli society underwent an unprecedented catastrophe, plunging the collective psyche to the brink of collapse. The once-ubiquitous sense of security within one's own home dissipated, replaced by an overwhelming prevalence of grief and terror that seized the very core of continuity and cohesiveness of the Self. This paper aims to reflect on the daily journey undertaken by psychoanalysts as they engaged in analytic listening during this tumultuous period: while immersing in their patient's unthinkable and chaotic experiences they reconstructed the empathic matrix in order to recollect the traumatic breakdown. This served as a bridge, facilitating the reconnection with the shattered remnants of the essential constituents of their patient's nuclear tension-arc tending to live out its intrinsic potential. This reconnection allowed to access what can be termed as the Tragic Man who can live courageously and die with no regret. In this way the experience of "interbeing" with fellow human beings was transformed from a perceived threat to a wellspring of inner strength. This transformative process was not unidirectional but was circularly experienced by the analyst and by the broader Israeli analytic community. While facing the threat to our own foundational cohesiveness, assuming the role of a selfobject became a means through

which we could go in the direction of restoring our own tragic nuclear selves. To illustrate and discuss these points, 4 clinical vignettes will be presented.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Discuss the concept of Kohut's Tragic Man and its relation to the Nuclear Self, in the context of a collective catastrophe.
2. Analyze the characteristics and the role of analytic listening which enables a prolonged immersion of empathy.
3. Explain how the experience of Interbeing in times of catastrophe can become a resource of healing for the wounded Self.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Eldad Iddan, MA** is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and supervisor in private practice in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, with adolescents and adults. Founding member of Israel Association for Self-Psychology and the Study of Subjectivity, of which he is current chairman. Past president of IAPSP. Faculty and clinical supervisor in the three-year curriculum for advanced studies "Self-Psychology and Therapeutic Presence" at the psychotherapy program, faculty of medicine, Tel Aviv University. He has translated and co-translated (with Tsilli Zonens) into Hebrew four of Kohut's books.

**Amina Taiber, MA** is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist, psychoanalyst, and supervisor in private practice in Tel Aviv, with adolescents and adults. Member of Israel Association for Self-Psychology and the Study of Subjectivity, where she is current secretary, IASPS Executive Committee. Faculty and clinical supervisor in the three-year curriculum for advanced studies "Self-Psychology and Therapeutic Presence" at the psychotherapy program, faculty of medicine, Tel Aviv University. She is also faculty in the three-year program of the IASPS, Lod. Member of Tel-Aviv Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis.

**Simona Katz Nirensztajn, MA** is an Israeli-Italian psychoanalyst, trained at "Human Spirit", Psychoanalytic Buddhist Institute in Israel. Presently, she works mainly with adults in her private clinic in Tel Aviv, where she also supervises. She is a member of the Steering Committee of the Psychotherapy Training Program of the Israel Association for the Self Psychology and the Study of Subjectivity and part of the teaching staff of Tel Aviv University's Psychotherapy School. Her path to psychoanalysis began from music. She is a pianist - M.A at Jerusalem's Rubin Academy -and after her studies in Music Therapy she evolved as a therapist while holding musical language as a core for listening and understanding patients. Early interactions, and their influence on adult lives, became her professional focus for many years, while specializing at the MA of Tavistock School East London University, and later as supervisor and coordinator of different early interventions mental-health centers. She wrote different essays and papers on the influence of non-verbal and musical layers of communications in early interactions and therapy.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### **The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice**

#### **Paper Session 2-E: Patterns and Experiences in Psychoanalysis: New Theoretical Perspectives**

**Paper 1: Behavior is Memory - Introduction to Template Theory, a New Direction in Self Psychology**

**Presenter: Bruce Herzog, MD**

**Paper 2: Toward a Pragmatic Self Psychology**

**Presenter: Daniel Goldin, MFT, PsyD**

**Interlocutor: Sarah Mendelsohn, LCSW**

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

Self psychology's focus on self object experience demonstrates Kohut's interest in the importance of the other, which moved psychoanalytic theory towards a two person sensibility. The self object transference was central to his ideas, involving both the selfobject needs of the patient, with the anticipated and actualized therapist response. Template theory extends the phenomenon of selfobject responsiveness, by connecting it to the individual's developmental years. A summary of template theory is presented, first outlining the origin of relational templates in 1) directly experienced, repeated interactions, 2) observed relational events, and 3) relational fantasies that develop in opposition to unacceptable interactions. Following this, clinical manifestations of activated relational templates are discussed. The therapist can become aware of these through observing the automatic relational 1) behavior, 2) expectancies and 3) premises a patient exhibits in the consultation room. Recognizing and evaluating an activated relational template allows the therapist to hypothesize about the patient's developmental history that created it. That which is not remembered explicitly can be shown through our patients' reflexive behavior, often outside of their own awareness. Their behavior can reveal past experience. This is how behavior is memory.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Explain the origins of relational templates.
2. Describe the manifestations of relational templates.
3. Use template theory to intuit past relational history in the patient.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

This talk is designed to explore a revision of self psychology with the object of focusing on the self as it emerges in action in the patient's life-world, as opposed to in the transference. I situate the theory in the pragmatic tradition of Peirce, James and Dewey, which emphasizes usefulness as a measure of truth and narrative in therapy itself as a form of action, a collaborative activity rather than an artifact.

## **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Participants will be able to differentiate between concepts of absolute truth and the pragmatic concept of instrumental truth, which is towards useful action.
2. Participants will be able to apply the concept of fittedness to the clinical situation.
3. Participants will be able to explain how objects arise differently for different people in the form of "affordances for action."

## **Presenter Bios:**

**Bruce Herzog, MD** is a graduate in Psychology and Medicine from the University of Western Ontario, Canada. He completed his specialty training in Psychiatry and the Child and Adolescent Program at the University of Toronto and received his Psychoanalytic certification at The Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis. He is a faculty member at the Toronto Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis and an associate editor of the journal *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*.

**Daniel Goldin, MFT, PsyD** serves as editor of Psychoanalytic Inquiry. He is a training and supervising analyst on the faculty of the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis in Los Angeles and has written numerous articles for Psychoanalytic Dialogues, Psychoanalysis: Self and context and Psychoanalytic Inquiry. His book *Storying in Psychoanalysis and in the Everyday World* will be published by Routledge this year.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 2-F: The Subjectivity of the Analyst and The Therapeutic Field

**Paper 1: The Self and The Other: How does The Analyst's Subjectivity come into play in the Clinical Encounter?**

**Presenter: Massimo Perrini, PsyD**

**Paper 2: Present-absent Mother, Present-absent Analyst**

**Presenter: Ashley Leeds, LCSW**

**Interlocutor: Elizabeth Carr, APRN**

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

Writing about the analyst's subjectivity and how it comes into play in the intersubjective field of the clinical encounter means reflecting on how patients see us, how they allow us to influence the field, and how willing they are to engage with the Other. I will discuss the delicate tension between The Self and The Other through two clinical vignettes drawn from therapeutic work with two patients whom I have been following for many years. In the first, I will recount Antonio's need to establish a solid and long-term therapeutic relationship with me, while simultaneously needing to keep me at a distance in various ways. In the second, I will discuss Ludovico and how despite significant continuity and stability in therapy, he often makes me feel meticulously confined to a therapeutic object self-function, in which the process of meaning-making risks being flattened. The long-term relationship and the affective climate that characterize these two therapeutic relationships have allowed me to expose myself more and to try to make therapy a safer space, feel them closer, more authentically involved in the self-healing process.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Explain how the therapist's subjectivity can contribute to the psychotherapeutic process and broaden the intersubjective field, especially in long-term therapies.
2. Describe how I have attempted to bring my subjectivity into play with two different patients, and promoting the idea that the therapist's subjectivity/alterity can become a resource for the emergence of the Self and the patient's subjectivity.
3. Discuss the potentialities of working jointly with models based on Self Psychology and those more relationally oriented.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

Emily and I are alike: in age, in interests, and in the present absence of parents. In many ways, she is my "me" patient; the one, in which, I often feel like I am seeing, hearing and subsequently caring for myself. Early on in her treatment, Emily and I experienced a rupture, one that evoked a long felt sense that Emily is a burden, and a boring one at that. This rupture replicated early memories in which mother derived joy and pleasure from experiences other than her daughter: Emily was not the gleam in her mother's eye. In this paper, I will discuss how our rupture not only shed light on Emily's early lived experiences, but also surfaced a personal experience of mine involving a rupture with my former therapist. Emily and I both felt that we were "bad" and therefore unworthy of care and attention. I will illustrate the reparative aspects of a twinship bond for both patient and therapist, and how this early experience of ours shaped the following years of treatment.

This paper demonstrates how an analyst's old wounds can change the trajectory of a different treatment and help a patient find a deep and meaningful sense of self-worth.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Demonstrate how twinship experiences can be reparative for both patient and analyst.
2. Define the qualities of the present-absent mother and the implications for analytic treatment.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Massimo Perrini**, Psychologist, Psychotherapist, Psychoanalyst ISIPsÉ, member of IARPP, member of IAPSP, lives and works privately in Rome with adults, young adults, and couples. He actively collaborates in the seminars organized by ISIPsÉ, particularly as part of the study group on Alterity, and serves as a trainer with a seminar titled "Alterity, Gender, and Intersubjectivity" at the Psychoanalysis program of the Institute of Specialization in Psychoanalytic Psychology of the Self and Relational Psychoanalysis (ISIPsÉ) in Milan.

**Ashley Leeds** is a 4th year candidate of NIP's Four-Year Training Program in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy and she maintains an adolescent and adult private practice in Brooklyn where her areas of interest are gender and sexuality, children of divorce, and eating disorders. She is a trained group therapist, has a certificate in Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy, and is a 200 hour-YTT certified yoga instructor. Ashley was an IAPSP ECP award recipient in 2022. She is the Co-Dean of Admissions for Eastern Group Psychotherapy. Ashley's theoretical orientations lean towards Self-Psychological, relational, and attachment theories, but she integrates other modalities into her work.

### **References:**

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 2-G: Tragic Consciousness as a Therapeutic Aim (Panel)

**Presenters: Heather Ferguson, LCSW & Jan Chess, PhD, MFT**

**Interlocutor: Enrico Paolini, MD**

*Saturday, October 26, 2:30 – 4:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Panel**

Tragic consciousness, an important concept developed by Naiburg (2006), arises out of an acceptance of a particular paradox. We may feel “acted upon” or “done to” (Jessica Benjamin) while retaining the perspective that, to some extent, we also have the capacity to determine our outcomes. The ability to determine our life’s course despite reality’s challenges can be understood as turning “fate into destiny.”

When early trauma and neglect leave in its wake an inner inchoate, dissociated, somaticized, and wordless world, the challenges for both patient and analyst are exacerbated. Knowing may be largely available through bodily sensation and the action of re-enactment in ways that affect both clinician and patient. As a result, “under-integrated” or non-integrated traumatic experience requires the analyst to viscerally embody the patient’s suffering as a “living witness.”

We posit that this embodied identification is necessary for the therapist to be fully with the patient in their struggle to accept life’s contingencies and find purpose.

How does this occur? Chess and Ferguson describe the necessity of empathic, emotionally vivid work with their two female patients who have childhood trauma experiences. Both analysts hold hope for the dyad when hopefulness is unavailable and too risky for the other. Both analysts find potential in the unconscious messages of dreams. Both analysts must contend with their vulnerabilities, struggles with omnipotence, and limitations when facing tragic consciousness. The therapeutic goal is an increased capacity to be present while envisioning a future.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Define the therapeutic aim of tragic consciousness.
2. Explain what it means to turn fate into destiny.
3. Describe the prospective function of dreaming.

#### **Presenter Bios:**

**Jan Chess, PhD, MFT** is a psychoanalyst seeing individuals and couples in private practice in Oakland, California. Her clinical experience spans thirty-five years with diverse areas of expertise which include trauma, adoption, LGBTQ concerns, and creative writing. Additionally, Jan teaches at San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis in two different programs as well as supervising students and experienced clinicians.

**Heather Ferguson, LCSW** is faculty and supervisor at the Institute for the Psychoanalytic Study of Subjectivity, the National Institute for the Psychotherapies, and faculty at the Manhattan Institute for Psychoanalysis Certificate in Trauma Studies and the Wilhelm Reich Center for the Study of Embodiment, all in NYC. She is a certified hypnotherapist and practitioner of EMDR. She has written about eating disorder treatment, the role of intergenerational transmission of trauma, and the use of embodied techniques to deepen psychotherapeutic engagement. She is a member of the Music Industry Therapist Collective (MITC) and Co-Book Review Editor for *Psychoanalysis, Self, and Context*.

#### **References:**

Borgogno, F. (2014). "Coming from Afar" and "Temporarily Becoming the Patient without Knowing it": Two Necessary Analytic Conditions According to Ferenczi's Later Thought. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 74(4), 302–312.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 3-A: Timeless Dilemmas: Empathy, Realness and Reciprocity

**Presenters: Malcolm Slavin, PhD and Hazel Ipp, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Estelle Shane, PhD**

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract:**

In this panel Mal and Hazel join in exploring and deepening an understanding of different aspects of the treatment relationship that oscillates in various ways between explicit and implicit levels of awareness and engagement between and within analyst and patient as they enter uncharted and emergent territory together.

Working with a presentation of Mal's case of Tanya, we are confronted with the challenges that arise in dialectical tension as the patient responds to her understanding of her analyst's understanding of her intense engagement with captivating flirtations - unconsummated flirtations that she sees as "transcendent" experiences - that carry her close to the "presence of God".

Hazel's discussion illuminates the complexities of Mal's evolving responsiveness as his and Tanya's imaginations are tapped in new ways. In ways that can be framed as part of an "empathic stance" that can accommodate a "deliberate realness" where relational "probing" is understood as seeking the invariably present and invariably hidden otherness within everyone Tanya has ever known.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Assess and confront their own countertransference blind spots as clinicians.
2. Notice and explore the disavowal and/or dissociation within their patients.
3. Recognize and address with patients when traumatic residues are manifesting within the intersubjective space.

#### **Presenter Bios:**

**Malcolm Owen Slavin, PhD** is a founder, past-president, faculty member and supervising analyst at the Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis, MIP. He is also on the faculty and is a supervisor at several other psychoanalytic institutes around the world.

Dr. Slavin's earlier book, *The Adaptive Design of the Human Psyche: Psychoanalysis, Evolutionary Biology and the Therapeutic Process*, has been followed by a series of papers and a forthcoming book, (Routledge, 2024), *The Story of Original Loss: Grieving Existential Trauma in the Arts and the Art of Psychoanalysis*.

Dr. Slavin is on both the Board of Directors of the International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy (IARPP) as well as the International Council for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology.

He is on the Editorial Boards of *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* and *The International Journal of the Psychology of the Self*.

**Hazel Ipp, PhD**, is a psychologist-psychoanalyst in private practice in Toronto, Canada. She is a founding board member, faculty, and supervisor of the Toronto Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis. She also serves on the faculties of ISIPSE (Rome) and the Florida Psychoanalytic Center.

Dr. Ipp is Chief Editor Emeritus of *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* and serves on the editorial boards of multiple psychoanalytic journals. She has also published numerous articles in major international journals of psychoanalysis.

Dr. Ipp is a founding and current board member as well as past president of the International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy.

She regularly teaches, supervises, and presents nationally and internationally.

### **References:**

Ipp, H. (2016). Interweaving the Symbolic and Nonsymbolic in Therapeutic Action: Discussion of Gianni Nebbiosi's "The Smell of Paper". *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 26,10-16.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 3-B: Social and Political Complexities: How Psychoanalysis Can Help Us

##### **Paper 1: Bridging the Gap Between Understanding and Blame, Dialogue and Rupture, Compassion and Outrage**

**Presenters: Daniel Perlitz, MD and Margy Sperry, MFT, PsyD**

##### **Paper 2: Psychoanalysis as a Path to Liberation: Unveiling the Power of Self-Reflection**

**Presenter: Nariman Sedighat, MA**

**Interlocutor: Valentina Desiderio, PsyD**

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

This paper is our exploration of the psychologic roots of socio-culturally-generated traumatic dualisms. As we explore the empathic challenge of understanding our enemy's attacks and views, we also consider the concern that such an attempt results in drawing an equivalence between the actions of perpetrators and the response of those who are victimized. We further consider the forward and trailing edges of the binaries created in response to such enormous trauma. As excruciating and difficult as it may be, we contend that achieving a lasting peace requires us to find ways to engage in "a generative dialogue of rage rather than destructive hatred," (Grand, 2023) and to develop the capacity for a pluralistic rather than dualistic understanding of both violator and victim. We need to understand the other as well as hate the other. We need to grieve and endure suffering whilst also stretching our capacity to engage in dialogue and reaching toward mutual understanding. We ask how Kohut's understanding of the tragic person might be extended to socio-cultural issues and conflicts. Drawing on clinical and socio-cultural examples, we illustrate ways that the gap between empathic understanding and moral outrage might be bridged.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Identify traumatically generated dualisms.
2. Explain the gap between dualistic binaries and pluralistic understanding.
3. Describe the forward and trailing edges of dualistic binaries.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

This paper explores the potential of psychoanalytic examination as a liberating methodology for comprehending the human experience amidst social and political upheavals, particularly in times of war. By integrating psychoanalytic perspectives with societal and political levels of explanation, the study delves into the complex dynamics at play during conflicts, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychological, societal, and political dimensions of the "Tragic Man" in crisis. Emphasizing the interdisciplinary nature of this approach, the paper envisions insights that contribute to the alleviation of human suffering in such challenging circumstances. Key elements such as the role of authoritative figures in individual development, the impact of primitive anxieties, and the construction of polarized political narratives are examined through a psychoanalytic lens. Drawing on Jürgen Habermas's conceptualization of psychoanalysis as interpretive knowledge, this study seeks to elucidate the liberating potential of psychoanalytic insights in fostering self-reflection, critical thinking, and an emancipatory understanding of social and political complexities.

## Learning Objectives:

### At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:

1. Explain how psychoanalysis can contribute to the analysis of social phenomena and the interconnectedness of individual psychology and the broader social context.
2. Evaluate the potential of psychoanalysis as a liberating form of knowledge.
3. Apply the method of self-reflection as a critical tool to assess and evaluate politicized experiences, while concurrently examining the implications for the exercise of freedom of thought within a scholarly framework.

## Presenter Bios:

**Daniel Perlitz, MD** is a psychoanalyst in private practice in Toronto, Canada. He completed his psychoanalytic training at IASP (Institute for the Advancement of Self-Psychology) in Toronto, Canada in 2014. Perlitz is on the board of directors and faculty of IASP, an Adjunct Lecturer at University of Toronto, and a supervisor of psychiatric residents in psychotherapy at St. Joseph's Hospital in Toronto. He is also on the board of directors and is treasurer of IAPSP (International Association of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology). His first published article, "Beyond Kohut – from Empathy to Affection," appeared in the *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self-Psychology* in 2016. Subsequently he has published five more articles in the same journal in 2017, 2019, 2021, and 2022.

**Margy Sperry, MFT, PsyD** is a training and supervising analyst at ICPLA, and a member of the International Council for IAPSP (the International Association of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology). She is a former associate editor for the *Journal, Psychoanalysis Self and Context* and the Co-chair of the Social Justice and Ethics special interest group within IAPSP. Margy's writing challenges contemporary psychoanalysis to notice the cultural and socio-political contexts which frame the therapist's and patient's lived histories, especially the ways that those histories and contexts overlap and diverge, shaping the therapeutic process. She maintains a private practice in West Los Angeles.

**Nariman Sedaghat** is a psychoanalytic psychotherapy candidate and psychologist based in Tehran, Iran. He holds a Master's degree in Psychology from Allameh Tabataba'i University and is currently pursuing training in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy. With over four years of experience, he is committed to mental health and therapeutic growth. In addition to his clinical work, He has contributed to various mental health research for the Ministry of Health. Nariman is simultaneously involved in educational programs for medical professionals besides translating works of notable psychoanalysts like Ernest Wolf, Dr. Beatrice Beebe, and others. As an active member of the Iran Psychotherapy Association and an international member of the American Psychological Association, he participates in lectures and international congresses, focusing on the intersection of psychoanalysis with social and political issues.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### **The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice**

#### **Paper Session 3-C: Despair and Healing**

**Paper 1: A Field Guide to Clinical Artifacts and Bones - Guilty Man; Tragic Woman**

**Presenter: Anna Stothart, PsyD**

**Paper 2: In the Heart of Darkness: Facing the World's Tragedy Together in Therapy**

**Presenter: Gökçen Bulut, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Michele Argalia, PsyD**

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

The myriad of relationships we have with landscape and the creatures that inhabit it form a wholeness of which we are apart. These places impress themselves upon us, as we in turn, impress ourselves upon them, taking meaning from one another, in a kind of call and response of reciprocal exchange. If we consider our more-than-human environment as something that actively shapes and transforms our psyche, we must grapple with our understanding of its subjectivity, its agency, and its history within psychoanalysis. During this moment of devastating breakdown of the earth's climate, it seems crucial that we pay attention to these relationships. In this paper, I will examine Freud's case of the "Wolf Man," illustrating the ways Freud imagined the wolf as a manifestation of "guilty man's" Oedipal conflicts. I will then discuss two clinical vignettes to illustrate a rethinking of the ways we listen for our relationship to "nature" by using the framework of Kohut's formulation of "tragic man".

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Cultivate awareness of our interconnection with the more-than-human environment.
2. Identify the ways in which the more-than-human environment has shaped experience.
3. Discuss psychoanalytic thought regarding human relationships to the more-than-human environment.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

A lonely infant wailing in his cradle, enveloped in darkness as he awaited his mother's return. Each passing moment without her felt as if his mother had vanished forever. To ensure the mother's presence, he devised strategies to please her, warding off the overwhelming sense of aloneness. Sometimes enduring physical violence in silence, at other times sacrificing his own desires, he found fleeting solace in these actions. Later, he moved from his hometown - a place in the Middle East - to Turkey for his PhD studies. Many destructive political and economic developments occurred in Turkey and his home country during the long therapy process. Turkey began to reiterate the history he witnessed almost like an echo. Occasionally, it turned into a thorny cradle that pushed him away as he wanted to stay. As he strove to exist amid all this despair, and with the world agenda posing such real threats, there were moments when it became a challenge for both him and the therapist to distinguish the inner darkness from the outer. Although some realities may remain immutable, this article details how we discovered bringing light into his dark chamber and bearing the darkness together when the power goes out. In essence, this paper explores the intersection of personal trauma and global crises and their implications for the therapeutic process.

## **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Utilize Brandchaft's "pathological accommodation" concept to analyze and interpret the patient's adaptive strategies within the context of self-psychology, particularly as they pertain to the 'tragic person' who endures suffering while striving for coherence and integrity.
2. Examine the impact of external crises on the therapy process regarding the emergence of empathic failures and opportunities for attunement.
3. Discuss the facilitating and hindering effects of twinship experiences shared by the therapist and patient on the therapeutic process.

## **Presenter Bios:**

**Anna Stothart, PsyD, LMHC** is a graduate and faculty member at Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis. She also teaches at Lesley University and maintains a private practice in psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and supervision in Cambridge, MA.

**Gökçen Bulut, PhD** received her PhD degree in psychology from Middle East Technical University (METU) in 2021. In her doctoral dissertation, she conducted qualitative research utilizing Constructivist Grounded Theory to explore the subjective experiences of parents after losing a child, and proposed a model differentiating between different types of parental mourning. She continues her training and supervision at the Anatolian Psychoanalytic Psychotherapies Association (APPA) in Ankara. She is a member of the Turkish Psychological Association and the International Association for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology. Gökçen is currently in private practice in Ankara, Turkey.

## **References:**

Togashi, K. (2014). A sense of "being human" and twinship experience. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*, 9(4), 265–281.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 3-D: Personal Life and Personal Work: the History of Buber and Masud Khan

##### Paper 1: Relational Homelessness: The Tragedy of Masud Khan

**Presenter:** Ilene Philipson, PhD, PhD, PsyD

##### Paper 2: The Importance of intersubjective Systems Theory: An Agent for Change as Seen in the I-Thou Perspective

**Presenter:** Donna Wolfskehl DiStefano, LCSW

**Interlocutor:** Petra Purkarthofer, PhD

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

This paper argues that there is no better example of Tragic Man than Masud Khan, one of the most famous and reviled psychoanalysts of the twentieth century. Through an examination of his life, and particularly his unsuccessful analysis with D.W. Winnicott, it is asserted that Khan never received what Tragic Man so fundamentally needs, that is, what Robert Stolorow terms a “relational home” that offers “bonds of deep emotional attunement within which devastating emotional pain can be held, rendered more tolerable, and hopefully, emotionally integrated.”

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Explicate the relationship between Kohut’s Tragic Man and the need for what Stolorow calls a “relational home.”
2. Evaluate the various explanations for why Khan’s analysis with Winnicott was unsuccessful.
3. Describe the forms of Khan’s otherness that were so radical that they fell outside of his four analysts’ categorical imperatives.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

Martin Buber was influenced by his intimate relationship with his wife, Paula Winkler, of whose relationship gave Buber the elements that can be paralleled in The Intersubjective Experience and important in Buber’s I-Thou ideas. This paper is a case for the importance of Intersubjective Systems Theory’s approach to expanding reflective awareness and addressing trauma. A psycho-biographical analysis will show that Martin Buber developed a sense of Being and genuine feeling from maternal loss at a young age and growing up with caretaking relationships lacking attunement to his tragic experiences and need for the symbiotic relationship in development towards language and symbol-based connection of painful experience.

**Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the reality around the Traumatized individual around Finitude and loss.
2. Describe the pre-reflective unconscious and Organizing Principles.
3. Differentiate between first-person subjective experiencing, third person objective experiencing, and mutuality and reciprocal aspects the second person is experiencing.

**Presenter Bios:**

**Ilene Philipson, PhD, PhD, PsyD** holds doctorates in sociology, clinical psychology, and psychoanalysis. She is a training and supervising analyst at the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis in Los Angeles, a supervising analyst at the San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis, and is in the private practice of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis in Oakland, California. Her books include *On the Shoulders of Women: The Feminization of Psychotherapy*; *Married to the Job: Why We Live to Work and What We Can Do About It*, and *Ethel Rosenberg: Beyond the Myths*.

**Donna Wolfskehl DiStefano, LCSW** is a Clinical Social Worker in private practice in Highland Park, NJ. Donna entered the field of Social Work as a result of becoming acquainted with Intersubjective Systems Theory through George Atwood, during undergraduate studies in psychology at Rutgers University. Donna graduated from the NYU Ehrenkranz School of Social Work in 2000 and has over 20 years working experience in various psychiatric and addiction treatment settings. She currently works in Employee Assistance Program.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 3-E: The Subjectivity of the Analyst in the Encounter With The Patients

##### **Paper 1: Dismantling the Barricades: Ways into One's Own Personal Experience as Gateways into a Sense of Connection**

**Presenter: Margaret Allan, MSW, PsyD**

##### **Paper 2: The Flavour of the Intersubjective Encounter: "Finding" the Other in the Reciprocal "Hiding Places".**

**Presenter: Maria Tammone, MD**

**Interlocutor: Leslie Smith, MSW**

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

While we may feel increasingly isolated and like barricading ourselves in from a world gone mad, we are enduringly connected, intertwined and formed in ways we can only partially know. On the one hand these worlds we inhabit, inhabit us and make our lives, on the other we can feel spun out from that sense of connection and significance on a macro level. The emergency of our times is the heat under us. However, in the very therapeutic action of the psychoanalytic relationship we are invited to discover and name our experience as real, this offers both a feeling of fit and a sense of connectedness to not just the person of the analyst but to a world beyond ourselves.

In two compelling clinical vignettes I will discuss how making meaning in the particular, is relentlessly entangled in the collective. Patient and analyst exist as worlds within worlds and in all the specificity of our interaction a repetitively, teetering sense prone towards disconnection is restored within and beyond our dyad.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the cocreation of meaning as an emergent property of the psychoanalytic relationship
2. Discuss the notion of Emmanuel Ghent's distinction between submission and surrender as it applies to the analyst/patient relationship.
3. Illustrate ways in which personal experience when named and discovered within the relationship can contribute to both a feeling of "fit" and a sense of connectedness.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

In this paper I will focus on the meeting between two subjects in a crisis: one, the patient, having troubles with her son. The other, the therapist, in a moment of perceiving herself as very physically and psychologically vulnerable, feeling her strong physical limits as an obstacle also to her creativity, assertiveness, and also to the possibility of feeling helpful and effective for patients. My paper will also cover the patient-therapist relational dynamics, their gradual meeting, the mutual rigidities, and my discouragement in a certain period of the relationship (about a year after the beginning) on the possibility of "breaking through" the patient's emotional world, defended by walls that appeared progressively thicker than I had realized until then. My patient and I were two vulnerable women, but also determined not to give up, faced with the relational challenge of opening breaches in the wall that separates us from others, a wall

that is sometimes so thick that it prevents us from seeing and being seen, which deprives us of the pleasure of touching and being touched by the subjectivity of the other.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Analyze the therapeutic relationship as a possibility to explore the reciprocal difficulties in the relational realm, and develop the possibility to overcome these challenges.
2. Discuss the meanings and the value of reciprocity, mutuality, recognition in the therapeutic relationship.
3. Assess the meaning of guilt and shame in the context of the analytic encounter.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Margaret Allan, MSW, PsyD** is a Training and Supervising Psychoanalyst and Senior Member at the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis, Los Angeles, California. She is a published author and won the Daphne Stolorow Award for academic writing. She has been a frequent presenter at international psychoanalytic conferences. She is Australian, having relocated to the U.S. some thirty years ago an hour north of LA. but was moved to settle in California some thirty years ago, for love.

**Maria Tammone, MD** is a psychiatrist and a psychoanalyst, she works in private practice in Rome. She has been a member of both Isipsé and IARPP since 2003. She teaches in Isipsé Institute, she is supervisor. She has attended several IARPP and Isipsé Congresses both in Italy and abroad, presenting papers. She has been co – editor of the IARPP eNews (2013 – 2018) along with C. Emanuel. She has been a member of the IARPP Board (elected March 2018).

### **References:**

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### **Paper Session 3-F: Couple Psychotherapy and Separations: Broken Bond, Broken Self**

##### **Paper 1: Terminable and Interminable Separations: The Relationship Without the Other**

**Presenter: Cristina Bonucci, PhD**

##### **Paper 2: Possible and Impossible Separations: Losing the Bond or Losing the Self?**

**Presenter: Rosetta Castellano, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Karen Bloomberg, LCSW, PhD**

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract: Panel:**

Inspired by the title of the Congress, this panel aims at drawing attention on a tragic topic, that appears to be amplified in today's world: the meanings and consequences of separations in couple relationships. Couple therapy may represent the "last chance" to save the bond. In other cases, couple therapy addresses the difficulty of taking into account separation, despite the pain, the violence, the despair. At the extreme, separation may result impossible, to the point where death represents the only, fatal way to create the illusion of the dramatic attestation of "you are mine forever". The two papers are presented in an ongoing dialogue regarding what is "terminable and interminable" and what is "possible and impossible" in separations. Our reflections are supported by a framework that integrates the Self-psychological concepts of self-cohesion and fragmentation anguish, as well as the attachment theory's concepts of the breaking of the affectional bonds and separation anguish. The discussion will be enriched by revisiting Mahler's concept of 'separations-individuation' and Daniel Stern's concept of 'being-with'. Clinical vignettes inspire and support our reflections, alternated with references to ancient myths, literature, and other arts, in order to better highlight how separation powerfully combines the human struggles between bond and Self, union and differentiation, detachment and split, fusion and loss, abandonment and fragmentation.

#### **Learning objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Identify two different meanings of separations in couple relationship;
2. Describe the concept of 'being-without-the-other';
3. Use the concept of 'self-objects needs' in its application to couple functioning;
4. Describe the use of attachment theory in explaining the reactions to the threat of separation.

#### **Presenter Bios:**

**Christina Bonucci** received her analytic training at the Italian Society of Psychoanalysis; (IPA), before her studies veered towards contemporary psychoanalytic models, mainly coming from North America. Christina is currently a teacher and supervisor at Isipsè in Rome, where she teaches the intersubjective perspective of Stolorow, Atwood, Brandschaft and Orange; furthermore, she conducts creative writing and psychoanalysis workshops with a special focus on the application of psychoanalytic theories to clinical practice.

Christina has published articles on specialized journals on creative writing and psychoanalysis, as well as on consultation and referrals. She coordinates a group *Isipsé* (Italy – Rome) that presents and discusses clinical cases with the purpose of investigating in depth how settings vary and the therapeutic factors that foster change in the treatment of particularly serious patients and/or contexts. She has been working with couples and parental couples for many years, always attentive to new stimuli and critical ideas.

**Rosetta Castellano** is a training and supervisory analyst at the Institute for Self-Psychology and Relational Psychoanalysis 'Isipsè' in Rome and Milan, Italy, where she teaches "Infant Research and Psychoanalysis" and "Psychoanalysis and couple psychotherapy". She is author of several articles on attachment in couple relationships, and co-editor of the book "What makes us stay together" translated into English by Karnac. Her current research focuses on attachment disorganization in couple's relationship. She is in private practice in Avellino, Italy.

#### **References:**

Emde, R. (2017). Remembering Daniel Stern (1934-2012): A legacy for 21st Century Psychoanalytic Thinking and practice. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 37(4), 216-219.

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Kanwal, G.S. (2023). Integrative individuation: An alternative to the Separation-Individuation model. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 71(3), 419-444.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 3-G: Tragic Man and an Existential Self Psychology

**Presenter: John Riker, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Gabriela Mann, PhD**

*Saturday, October 26, 4:30 – 6:00pm*

#### **Abstract:**

In this paper I argue that it is necessary to add an existentialist ontology to Kohut's self psychology in order to have a psychology with enough darkness in it for persons to be called "tragic man." I explain why self-conscious beings experience themselves as a contradiction of being both subject and object (Hegel) and why this contradiction leads to violence and despair (Kierkegaard). I then elucidate why Nietzsche believes one cannot live freely without descending into the void of meaninglessness, for without such a descent we will be colonized by "the herd." I add Heidegger's claim that one must experience the angst (dread) of not-being in order to wrench one's self out of captivity in the They and live authentically. I conclude by saying what is needed for a self psychological therapy to address these ontological realities of human existence.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Explain why self psychology needs the addition of Existentialist philosophy.
2. Explain why an Existential Self Psychology presents a truly tragic concept of human life.
3. Explain why concerns about mortality and social conformity need to be incorporated into a self psychological therapy.

#### **Presenter Bios:**

For the past three decades, **John Riker** has been devoted to exploring the relation of psychoanalysis--especially Kohutian self psychology--to problems in ethics and philosophical anthropology. He has written five books intersecting psychoanalysis and ethics (most recently, *Kohut's Self Psychology for a Fragmented World* (2024)), and published numerous articles and spoken in many conferences on this material, including conferences in England, Belgium, Turkey, Austria, Canada, and Israel. John has been a professor of philosophy at Colorado College for over half a century and been named Professor of the Year a record four times, and Advisor of the Year a record three times. He was the initial recipient of the award Colorado College established to recognize someone who most promotes diversity and inclusion on campus. He has recently been appointed co-editor-in-chief of *Psychoanalysis, Self, and Context*.

#### **References:**

Stolorow, R. (2015). A phenomenological-contextual, existential, and ethical perspective on emotional trauma. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 102 (1), 123-138.

Phillipson, I. (2017). Fearing the Theoretical Other: The Legacy of Kohut's Erasure of the Analyst's Trauma. *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 12(3) 211-220.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 4-A: The World Today, Between Tragedy and Hope

##### **Paper 1: My Patient is Not Getting Better!**

**Presenter: Amira Simha-Alpern, PhD**

##### **Paper 2: Meaning in Life of Tehran's Recovering Homeless Men: A Phenomenological Study**

**Presenter: Sepideh Shirani, MA**

**Interlocutor: Lucia Maiorino, PsyD**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

Contemporary psychoanalysis is highly influenced by the Western culture's bias of idealizing resilience and post trauma growth, while denying the inevitability of despair and the need to contain rather than dissociate the latter. The author asks: Is resilience always possible? What if we cannot transcend trauma and hardship? Are we defective or simply human? And, as therapists, are we useless if our patient is not resilient? The paper addresses cases of severe complex trauma in which the idealized aims of facilitating "resilience" and post trauma growth are extremely challenging and, in many cases, impossible to obtain. The paper explores the role of the therapist in cases of "no progress". It draws from Stolorow's and Atwood's concept of "emotional dwelling", Stern's "needed relationships", and Grossmark's "psychoanalytic companionship" to understand the role of the therapist in cases of severe trauma where ushering the patient towards developing an agentic, goal-oriented self is extremely challenging and at times, even impossible. The paper will share an extensive clinical case illustration of a man who deteriorated during treatment only partly due to external financial, medical, and familiar circumstances. Like a tragic hero, although he had heroic traits that earned him sympathy and admiration for dealing with serious adversities, the combination of the unsurmountable difficulties he faced, and his own flaws and mistakes ultimately led to his own downfall.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of the presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the concept of "emotional dwelling."
2. Describe the concept of "needed relationships."
3. Describe the concept of "Psychoanalytic companionship."

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

Homelessness is a profound psychopathological challenge, yet some homeless individuals successfully navigate life changes without the support of a social or personal network. This study employs Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to explore the meaning in life of recovering homeless men in Tehran. The research focuses on those voluntarily residing in Toloo Bi-neshanha organization, with seven participants selected through purposive sampling. Semistructured in-depth interviews reveal eight main themes and twenty-three minor themes, analyzed for internal construction and chronological sequence. Themes include addiction as a transformative experience, being a stranger to everyone, despair, the annoying nature of

homelessness, better dead than alive as a homeless, a glimpse of hope, recovery as introspection, and the newborn self against the past self. Notably, the study identifies selfcoherence and narrative consistency as significant outcomes of recovery. The findings underscore that motivations for change, coupled with a desire for reconnection with loved ones, propel homeless individuals to engage in recovery programs, mitigating the risk of suicide. These findings offer valuable recommendations for shaping interventions and strategic planning in residential service centers, enhancing motivation and facilitating access to services, ultimately improving the quality of life for the homeless population.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Enhance their ability to conduct a more precise assessment of the human condition during crises and states of meaninglessness.
2. Engage in a comprehensive analysis of individuals' motivations to actively seek meaning and re-establish connections with life.
3. Reevaluate the approach to complex conditions associated with severe pathologies, placing equal emphasis on the abilities of individuals alongside their injuries.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Dr. Amira Simha-Alpern** is a clinical psychologist, a certified psychoanalyst and clinical supervisor. She is the Director of the Postgraduate Programs in Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy at the Derner School of Psychology, Adelphi University; as well as Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry at Stony Brook University. She maintains private practice in Smithtown, NY. She published journal articles and book chapters in relational psychoanalysis, trauma, and the clinical application of attachment theory on psychotherapy.

**Sepideh Shirani**, an Iranian psychodynamic psychotherapist and member of the Tehran Center for Psychoanalytic Studies and IARPP, holds an MA in Psychology. Her primary research focus centers on understanding the impact of individual and shared traumas on individuals, clinical scenarios, and group dynamics. Recently, Sepideh has played an active role as the assistant to the scientific committee chair of the Fourth Iranian Congress of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychotherapy. Also, alongside her colleagues, she presented a symposium at the same congress, exploring the challenges faced by psychotherapists in the aftermath of the shared trauma in Iran in 2023. Notably, their symposium received acclaim as the most favored session by the audience.

### **References:**

Atwood, G. E. & Stolorow, R. D. (2016) Walking the Tightrope of Emotional Dwelling. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 26,103-108

Grossmark, R. (2016). Psychoanalytic companioning. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 26(6), 698–712.

Stolorow, R. D. & Atwood, G. E. (2018). The Power of Phenomenology: Psychoanalytic and Philosophical Perspectives, chapters 10 & 11. London, UK: Routledge.

Allan, M. (2022). The Intimacy of Not Knowing and the Experience of Transcendence in the Clinical Relationship. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 42,681-688.



## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 4-B: On the Power of Music as a Self Object Experience

##### **Paper 1: A Musical Adolescent's Self and a Tragic Mother: After the Father's Traumatic Loss**

**Presenter: Marco Bernabei, PhD**

##### **Paper 2: "Silence the pianos ... Let the mourners come": How a moment of musical rupture transformed Kohut's Tragic Man, in life and in the analytic hour**

**Presenter: Ephrat Havron, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Andrea Harms, PhD**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

The selfobject function performed by the male therapist of 15-year-old Matteo in a therapy that began two years ago, three years after the traumatic loss of his father, is the focus of the narrative that spans the first two years of treatment, which also involved Miriam, the mother, in separate sessions. The paper looks at how the therapist's thirdness regulates the distance between the son and his mother. Miriam's failure to stay true to her innermost design led me to regard her in terms of Kohut's Tragic Man. This design, involving her pursuit of a career in music, seems to be taken up by the son who studies clarinet. The paper shows how the cultural selfobject function performed by played music for the son, falls short in the mother, partly as the result of a chain of bereavements. The dissociative potential of Matteo's motivations, to fulfil himself as the son - as Mitchell remarks - imagined by his mother or as the son dreamed of by his father, are examined. His desire to continue to enjoy music, following in his's mother wake, is linked to the aspiration to study medicine, following in his father's footsteps. (Bernabei, Pedroni 2017). The implications of the son's way of coping with grief, accepting that his father is gone, as opposed to the mother's inclination to feel her husband always at her side, are also considered. Some of the therapy's results are described from the instances when it can be used as a specific "needed relationship" always "unique" (Stern, 2019).

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Explain how a relationship with a male therapist can help an adolescent, who has suffered the traumatic loss of his father in preadolescence, to partially surrogate the loss of a caring mirroring selfobject.
2. Discuss how the tracks of successful attachment experiences in infancy, together with the therapist's thirdness can help to better regulate the insufficient distance in adolescence between a mother and her child and continue to support a firmer individuation at this developmental stage.
3. Analyze how a Tragic Mother, with her failure to fulfill her own project in music, may have as much bearing on the project of an adolescent son, a musician in the making, as the professional medical legacy of a father lost in preadolescence.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

In my paper, I wish to present a small, modest musical moment from a concert that demonstrated the potential for the Tragic Man to escape the tragic nature through art. I will first address how the transformative moment became possible in the concert hall, and then explore the clinical implications of this



experience by presenting a vignette from an analytic session the morning after the concert. To begin, I will offer some personal reflections on the tragic existential situation currently faced by Israeli and Gazan citizens following the events of October 7th. After considering the potential of music, specifically the art song, to transcend the tragic, we will examine the musical moment in question – a 2-minute song where the singer choked up and could not continue singing. I will illustrate how, precisely because of the singer's rupture, all those present assumed a selfobject role: the singer to the audience, the pianist to the singer, the audience to the artists. For one fleeting minute, this musical moment elicited a selfobject presence with an inspiring impact, allowing us all, if only briefly, to transcend tragicness. The second part of the paper will explore how this experience and its interpretation engendered an empathic stance, enabling me to function as a selfobject in the analytic session the following day. I hope I can modestly contribute to understanding art's potential to transform, even temporarily, the state of the Tragic Man here in conflict-ridden Israel, and perhaps elsewhere too.

### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the potential for the Tragic Man to transcend his fate through art in troubled times.
2. Discuss the transformative power of music in the therapeutic setting and its clinical implications.
3. Explain how the dialogue between music and psychoanalysis can mutually inspire one another, with each acting as a selfobject for the other.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Marco Bernabei, PhD** is a faculty member and supervisor of IsipSé, the Italian Training Institute and School of Psychotherapy in Self Psychology and Relational Psychoanalysis, member of IAPSP (International Association for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology), of IARPP (International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy) and of IARPP's Child, Adolescent and Parent Psychotherapy Committee. At the Rome section of IsipSé he teaches how to work with parents using a relational-systemic approach. The main focus of his papers, featured in books published in Italy and France and in North American and European journals, is clinical work with children, adolescents, young adults and their parents. His scientific interests have currently been focusing on a reflection about clinical work with those born in the third millennium (the so-called zeta generation) and on the therapeutic achievements of the work of one analyst following, in parallel settings, both adolescents and/or young adults and their parents. He works in private practice in Florence with children, adolescents, young adults, parents /parental couples as well as with adults and adult couples.

**Ephrat Havron, PhD** is a bibliotherapist and psychotherapist, a 6th year candidate at the Human Spirit Psychoanalytic-Buddhist Training Program. She is a lecturer at the at David Yellin Academic College of Education in the graduate program training bibliotherapists and in the Special Education Department. She is the author of *Saying It Differently: Talking About Incest Through Poetic Language* (Moffet, 2019). Her published articles have addressed self-psychology and its connections to literature, educational benefits, and implications for multicultural contexts. Additional articles have examined trauma and its manifestations in language.

Havron co-founded the Yoga-Therapy project for survivors of sexual abuse and works as a therapist and supervisor in private practice in Jerusalem.

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Kulka, R. (2020). From civilization of pessimism to culture of compassion: Self psychological reflections on Freud’s essay “Civilization and Its Discontents.” *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 40(5), 288-299.

Aibel, M. (2023). And He Showed Me Things: The Transformative Power of Sondheim’s Songs – A Discussion of Philipson and Jones’ Stephen Sondheim: Relational Psychoanalyst of the American Musical Theater. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 43(8), 665-672.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 4-C: Is Losing Guilty Man a Tragedy?

##### **Paper 1: Guilty Man and Tragic Man in Dialogue: Rethinking Difference as Dynamics**

**Presenter: Cheryl Goldstein, PsyD**

##### **Paper 2: Toward The Co-Existence of Guilty Man and Tragic Man: A Social-Psychoanalytic Perspective**

**Presenter: Ilene Philipson, PhD, PsyD**

**Interlocutor: Judith Aronson, PhD**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Panel:**

In Kohut's writing "Guilty Man" and "Tragic Man" serve as embodiments of psychoanalysis' past and future. "Guilty Man," at the mercy of the Freudian drives and destined to struggle with intrapsychic and intergenerational conflict, represents a biological destiny at the core of traditional analysis. "Tragic Man," as the representation of Kohut's Self-Psychology, offers the hope of "joyfully experienced development" and the potential, even if generally unrealized, of fulfillment through expressing the "nuclear self." According to Kohut, "Tragic Man" displaces "Guilty Man" much as Kohut's Self-Psychology moves beyond the Freudian drives.

This panel reconsiders the dynamics at work between Kohut's "Guilty Man" and "Tragic Man" in a contemporary context. Re-evaluating the definitions and limitations of "Guilty Man," we suggest ways that today's Tragic Person maintains, and in fact potentially benefits from, ongoing interactions with a more relevant version of "Guilty Man" or "Guilty Person." Rather than positioning the Tragic Person as a psychoanalytic overcoming, we suggest how an ongoing dialogue between "Guilty Man" and "Tragic Man" expand our psychoanalytic perspectives and therapeutic options.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of the presentations the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the different concepts "conflict" from a Freudian, Kohutian, and contemporary Self-Psychology perspectives.
2. Compare and contrast Kohut's idea of a "nuclear self" with other genetic or "biological" psychic constructs.
3. Identify how tensions within the therapeutic dyad reflect dynamics of "cohering difference."

#### **Presenter Bios:**

**Cheryl Goldstein, PsyD** holds doctorates in Comparative Literature/Jewish Studies and psychoanalysis. Her areas of research include the works of Hans Loewald, psychoanalysis and the Other, and the intersection of psychoanalysis, Jewish thought and ethics. She is a member of the New Center for Psychoanalysis and of the Institute for Contemporary Psychoanalysis where she serves on the faculty. Cheryl has a private practice in Los Angeles, CA.

**Ilene Philipson, PhD, PhD, PsyD** holds doctorates in sociology, clinical psychology, and psychoanalysis. She is a training and supervising analyst at the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis in Los Angeles, a supervising analyst at the San Francisco Center for Psychoanalysis, and is in the private practice of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis in Oakland, California.

#### **References:**

Slavin, M.O, (2016) Relational Psychoanalysis and the Tragic-Existential Aspect of the Human Condition, *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 26,537-548.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 4-D: Facing Together the Pain of Personal and Collective Trauma

**Paper 1: Storytelling in Times of Acute Trauma. The story of June Within the Tragedy of October 7th**  
**Presenter: Edna Lahav-Zimmermann, MA**

**Paper 2: The Guilty, the Tragic, and the Transformed: Contemplating Human Potential from Patients' Experiences in the Israeli-Hamas War**  
**Presenter: Uri Moshovitz, PhD**

**Interlocutor: Raanan Kulka, PhD**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

With both analyst and patient experiencing life-threatening circumstances, this presentation will demonstrate the value of a slow, meticulous, step-by-step revealing of the different pieces of one's larger story. June's growing ability within the therapeutic process to tell her story, recall various traumatic events, put them into words, and write a deeply personal text about them, displays the inner constitution of the selfobject empathic matrix. It is a counter-reply to a current "visualism", that gives dominance to one sensual modality only. Kohut's idea of the historian, as well as the therapist, serving as the collector of the scattered pieces will help understand June's storytelling. When during therapy June, a survivor of the October 7th massacre in southern Israel, reclaims her idealized selfobject function regarding herself and for others, she teaches us a lesson of resilience and mental courage.

#### **Learning objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Apply the idea of storytelling to their clinical work.
2. Explain the value of narrative-auditory clinical therapeutic work and its relation to Kohut's understanding of history as a selfobject of culture.
3. Discuss contemporary "visualism" and its consequences on victims of deep collective trauma.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

In the history of (classical) psychoanalysis, war is considered proof of the existence of a death instinct that takes over the mental and social arena. Kohut interpreted this as an example of the guilty man concept. On the other hand, he boldly saw that war can be a time for the emergence of the 'tragic man', a man who strives to realize his nuclear self as a whole. Following this line of thought, the current work will present 3 personal angles, from the clinic, of the experience of the war currently taking place between Israel and Hamas. An officer who was wounded and lost a soldier in battle lives the Greek tragedies that 'raised dust' from high school. An Israeli Arab man experiences compassion for suffering wherever it may be, and bravely faces a reality that silences and divides. An educator from the Gaza Strip whose life, like the lives of her pupils, was turned upside down on October 7, teaches and learns about the human spirit, humanity, and total contextuality through the state of war. This mosaic will demonstrate, as Kohut envisioned it, how Self-Psychology can offer a crucial space for human society, not just as a psychotherapy method, but as a selfobject of, and for, culture. The 'tragic man' and the 'transformed man' (Kulka) will emerge through the

experiences in the clinic, as an epistemic, ontological, and ethical horizon for the survival of both individuals and society, infusing life with meaning and even fostering spiritual development.

### **Learning objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the concepts of the guilty man, the tragic man, and the transformed man, through meeting different angles of the experience of the war currently taking place between Israel and Hamas.
2. Assess the healing potential of Self-Psychology psychotherapy, and specifically the concepts of the guilty man and the transformed man, for individuals living in a divided world in a state of war.
3. Identify the role of Self-Psychology as a selfobject of, and for, culture, and its potential to enable the space for the transformation of conflict and war into a horizon of brotherhood and spiritual development.

### **Presenter Bios:**

**Edna Lahav-Zimmerman, MA** is a clinical psychologist and has completed her studies in a seven year long Psychoanalytic Program. She is the future head of the Psychotherapy Program for Self-Psychology beginning from October 2024. She has studied extensively philosophy as well as the history of arts. Edna presented original papers in three international psychoanalytic conferences and was a 2018 Gradiva Award nominee for the student category. She is a mother of three and has worked both in her private practice in Tel Aviv and in different public institutions as a clinician supervisor and teacher. Her professional interests include psychoanalysis, philosophy and the history of arts.

**Uri Movshovitz, Ph.D.**, Supervising Clinical Psychologist. Sixth year candidate at Human Spirit Psychoanalytic-Buddhist training program. Mental Consultant to top Israeli athletes and teams, on behalf of the Olympic Committee. Former Head of the Psychology Unit in the Israeli prime minister's office. Worked as a Psychologist in post-hospitalize boarding school. Member of the Israel Association for Self-Psychology and the Study of Subjectivity. Practices Meditation & Tai-chi, long distance runner. Private practice, psychoanalytically oriented, for adolescents, adults, and couples in Tel Aviv & Modiin.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### **Paper Session 4-E: Self-Realization and Freedom in the Analytical Field: Theoretical and Clinical Insights**

##### **Paper 1: The Ice Mother Melting**

**Presenter: Sara Khosravi, MA**

##### **Paper 2: Analytic Freedom and The Loving Gaze**

**Presenter: Shir Shanun, PsyD**

**Interlocutor: Massimo Segù, PsyD**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

The absolute silence of a young anxious man in therapy sessions, had made the analysis almost impossible. Stuttering was introduced the main problem, but in my opinion the lack of true self development. (Winnicott 1960) due to the relation limitations with external and internal objects had made him confused in life. I had learned the framework of taking risks in Tehran psychoanalysis institute, so "I dared to employ a new method of communicating that after two years of my patience and his strong resistance it worked and became a reason for sharing this essay with psychoanalysis enthusiasts.

#### **Learning Objectives**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe how a disorder of the self manifests as stuttering.
2. Explain how breaking the silence is necessary for the formation of the transference.
3. Identify trauma in the gaps of the patient's history.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

This paper explores the creation of meaning within our experiences in the intersubjective field as impacted by analytic freedom and modulated by the loving gaze. The loving gaze transforms and contributes to Relational Freedom as emergent in the complex system. The analyst can make use of orienting to restriction on the Loving gaze as alerting to restrictions in the field. Restoring the loving gaze through specific techniques can increase degrees of freedom. Post Bionian Field Theory as well as other field theories such as Storying are explored in service of the loving gaze and analytic freedom.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the concept of analytic freedom.
2. Describe the concept of the loving gaze.
3. Describe how field perspective can increase freedom modulated by the loving gaze.

## **Presenter Bios:**

**Sara Khosravi, MA** holds a master's degree in psychology. She has also passed the psychoanalytic self psychology course, in Tehran Psychoanalysis Institute. It has been almost 6 years since she started analyzing patients as an intern in this institute. She is interested in broadening her knowledge in contemporary psychoanalysis.

**Shir Shanun, Psy.D.** Is a licensed clinical psychologist in California, and a candidate at the Institute of Contemporary Psychoanalysis in Los Angeles. A graduate of the EDCAS (eating disorders compulsions and addictions from a relational perspective) at the William Alanson White Institute in New York and is currently at the ReCAST program. Working with individuals, couples, and poly-relationships in Arcadia, California, and passionate about Post-Bionian Analytic Field Theory and Storying.

## **References:**

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### **The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice**

#### **Paper Session 4-F: Tragic Scenarios: Research and Personal Stories Offer New Hope**

##### **Paper 1: Reflecting on the Intergenerational Impact of Early Experiences of Being Fostered or Raised in Alternative Care Settings from Clinical Observations of Chinese-Canadian Adolescents**

**Presenter: Cherry Qi, RCC, MCP, MA**

##### **Paper 2: A Self Psychologist in Public Service: Tragic Communities. From the Bronx to Newtown with a Stop in Methadonia**

**Presenter: George Hagman, LCSW**

**Interlocutor: David Poulin-Latulippe, MA**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

The clinical experience working with Chinese-Canadian adolescents in Canada has allowed me to see the early upbringing of their Chinese parents, many of whom have either long or short experiences of being fostered at their grandparents' homes or being sent to boarding schools. The intricate connections between their parents' early experiences and the lives of the children are worth noting. This paper attempts to bring in some observed commonalities of similarity and repetition from clinical practice for observation and discussion. It is hypothesized that parents who have been fostered or sent to boarding schools early on are more likely to send their children to distant places for education and the investigation on the factors will be made in this study.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Analyze intergenerational emotional traumas of people who own the early experience of being away from home, fostered, or boarded.
2. Explain what the unconscious psychological predicaments repeated and transmitted between generations are.
3. Discuss how the lack and scarcity of "selfobject experience" might lead to insufficient emotional attunement and bonding functionality during the childrearing process.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

This paper describes clinical work in a variety of community settings ranging from homeless outreach, to methadone maintenance, community mental health and crisis intervention. Various clinical challenges are discussed, such as severe mental illness, addiction, AIDS, forensics, and school violence. The paper explores how an expanded and open approach to analytic practice informed the author's clinical and managerial thinking, interventions and relationships. In particular, it shows how psychoanalysis and self psychology became increasingly important to clinical and managerial approach across a range of communities, service types and treatment modalities.

## Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:

1. Identify specific opportunities for psychoanalytic practice in the community.
2. Integrate psychoanalytic principles into community practice.
3. Integrate analytic clinical ideas into non-analytic forms of therapy.

## Presenter Bios:

**Cherry Qi, RCC, MCP, MA** has been practicing counselling for eight years in both China and Canada working with clients at adolescence and adulthood with a variety of issues. Her Asian cultural background as well as her personal experience as an immigrant to Canada also afford her an insight into immigrant and second generation ways of being as well as their mental health concerns.

**George Hagman, LCSW** is a clinical social worker and psychoanalyst in private practice in New York City and Stamford, Connecticut. He is on faculty of the Training and Research in Intersubjective Self Psychology, and is a training analyst, supervisor, and faculty member of the Westchester Center for the Study of Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy. George is co-editor with Peter Zimmermann and Harry Paul of *Intersubjective Self Psychology: A Primer (Routledge, 2019)*. He is also the Co-Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Psychoanalysis, Self, and Context*.

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Hagman, G. (1995). A psychoanalyst in methadonia. *Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 12(3)*, 167 – 179.

Hagman, G, (2014). Helping Newtown: Reopening a School in the Aftermath of Tragedy. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 45*, 168 – 175.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Paper Session 4-G: Clinical Process and Integrative Functions of the Self

##### **Paper 1: Self-Involvement, Selfobject Presence, and Cohesive self : A Perspective Based on the Tragic Person today**

**Presenter: Weifeng Huang, MA**

##### **Paper 2: A Dancing Robot**

**Presenter: Homa Khorsani, MA**

**Interlocutor: Fulvio Ambrosio, PsyD**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

This paper aims to provide a new perspective on understanding the psychological state of modern individuals in complex relationships, based on Kohut's theory of the tragic person. Firstly, we focus on self-involvement, explore how individuals navigate psychological contradictions and pain, analyse how individuals confront and resolve these internal conflicts through participation and engagement in relationships. Secondly, we explore the significant function of selfobject presence. Individuals gain attention and recognition through the presence of selfobjects, and these selfobjects need to maintain a certain continuity and stability to provide a psychological field that harmonizes internal polarities. Finally, we focus on the cohesive self, delving into Kohut's view that individuals achieve internal integration through participation in relationships. This process involves "experience-near" and "experience-distant". Guided and sustained by empathy, recent and distant experiences continuously integrate, confirming and respecting the ongoing need for integration. Based on the processes outlined above, the threat of self-disintegration hanging over the tragic person diminishes, and individuals begin to express their ideals of self-realization.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**By the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Explain Kohut's perspective that empathetic understanding of the tragic nature of modern individuals' psychological lives is essential for truly alleviating existential challenges.
2. Describe three key aspects of selfobject presence.
3. Identify the two processes of emotional comprehension and cognitive understanding that empathy plays in the process of self-integration.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

The case presented in the article has been able to revive its existential mission. Through the creation of new organising principles, from re-experience in the treatment room to the creation of a new relationship through his own experience or the therapist was able to enjoy his function and his existence. The self, the core of the self that was unknown become known, a living, dynamic interaction in which both psychoanalyst and therapist were free and overcoming institutionalized fear opened the way to help self-fulfillment.

**Learning Objectives:**

**By the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Identify the developmental deficit that leads to a need for a mirroring transference.
2. Describe the formation of the idealizing transference and the difficulty it poses for therapists.
3. Assess the value of flexible boundaries in fostering the relationship and growth.

**Presenter Bios:**

**Weifeng Huang, MA** is a university lecturer in China, holds a master's degree in Mental Health Education from Beijing Normal University and is a Nationally Certified Second-level Psychological Counselor. With a commitment to continuous learning, she has undergone extensive training in psychoanalysis, including participation in: (1) the Self Psychology Educational Project (SPEP), (2) Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment of Personality Disorders: Clinical Application of Transference-focused Therapy, (3) Arthur Lynch's Modern Conflict Theory Course and Case Supervision, and (4) Xu Jun's Modern Self Psychological Training, etc. Since 2015, she has been actively involved in psychological counseling, specializing in areas such as personal growth, intimate relationships, and emotion-related issues. Moreover, she imparts her knowledge through teaching courses on Positive Psychology and Psychological Health Education for College Students. Dedicated to the development of psychological health education, she plays a pivotal role in creating provincial-level online courses for college students. Additionally, she has translated three books related to mental health and served as an editor for the "College Student Psychological Health Textbook." In 2024, she became a member of IAPSP, aspiring to further her studies and practices in Self Psychology.

**Homa Khorasani, MA** holds a master's degree in psychology from Azad Rodehen University in Iran. Homa has been studying and seeing patients at the Institute of Psychoanalysis in Tehran since 2017.

**References:**

Magid, B. & Shane, E. (2017) Relational Self Psychology, *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 12(1),3-19.

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Gardner, J.(2024) Forms and transformations of empathy: Subtleties and complexities of empathic communication, *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 19(1), 80-93.



## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### **Paper Session 4-H: Complexity of Life and Complexity of Clinical Work: From Despair to Resilience**

##### **Paper 1: Loss, Grief and the Mourning of Gay Men**

**Presenter: Robert Benedetti, PhD**

##### **Paper 2: Tragic Man Evolved: Navigating Existential Challenges Through Therapeutic Transformation**

**Presenter: Douglas Zimmerman, MA. Ed., LCSW-R**

**Interlocutor: Deborah Sherman, BC-DMT, LMHC**

*Sunday, October 27, 9:00 – 10:30am*

#### **Abstract: Paper 1:**

Nearly thirty years after the height of the AIDS epidemic in the United States, when there was not yet hope for a cure and when it was at its most grim, there remains an aging group of gay men who are confounded in their grief. There is a paucity of psychoanalytic literature interrogating grieving experiences of individuals from stigmatized groups, such as gay men who often knew selfobject failures from an early age. When AIDS appeared, their sexual behavior was linked with illness and death further contributing to their sense of precarity and their experience of alienation. When survival became possible the relief and excitement of having been spared alongside the destabilizing awareness of having come so close, and then beating an early death confounded and confounds to this day the mourning of gay men. Creative acts allow a meeting of the complexity of what has been lost with the loss itself (Ogden, Bollas). This paper will consider some of these acts while also reviewing the psychoanalytic literature beginning with Freud's foundational distinction between the meanings of mourning and melancholia, and the self psychological and intersubjective offerings (Ornstein, Stolorow, Estelle and Morton Shane, Hagman), among others. Clinical material as well as the author's personal experience are woven into the paper.

**This paper has been awarded the Ralph E. Roughton Award by the American Psychological Association for best paper on Gender and Sexuality this year.**

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe why the current psychoanalytic literature fails to provide an adequate description of the unique grief experiences of individuals from a stigmatized group, such as gay men post AIDS.
2. Discuss the effect of the selfobject milieu on the mourning process of gay men.
3. List examples of how and why aging gay men are confounded in their grief.

#### **Abstract: Paper 2:**

In this paper, the author acknowledges the shift from tragic man to tragic person, and the paper illustrates the work that the patient and therapist undertook –a profound journey of self-discovery, navigating the depths of despair to emerge with newfound resilience. Ketamine assisted therapy is introduced as part of the therapist's personal journey and becomes part of the therapeutic process with the patient. Drawing inspiration from Roman Theater, the author reframes its traditional 5-act structure into a contemporary 3-act framework, comprising a setup, a confrontation, and a resolution.

## Learning Objectives:

At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:

1. Describe how psychedelics, such as ketamine, can promote growth in therapeutic relationships.
2. Identify insights into the effects of one's personal journey on treatment.
3. Discuss when to confidently disclose personal experiences and when discretion is advisable.

## Presenter Bios:

**Robert Benedetti, PhD** is a psychologist/psychoanalyst in private practice in Washington, D.C. He received his certificate in contemporary psychoanalysis from the National Training Program in Contemporary Psychoanalysis (NTP) — National Institute for the Psychotherapies (NIP) in New York, New York. He has served as Co-Director of Curriculum and is a Training Committee member and Consulting Faculty member of the NTP. He is on the Executive Committee and is a Faculty Member and Supervisor in the Psychoanalytic Training program at the Institute of Contemporary Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis (ICP+P) in Washington, D.C. He has served as a member of the Webinar committee for The International Association for Relational Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy (IARPP). Dr. Benedetti was Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Georgetown University Medical Center and Director of Forensics and Clinical Operations, Saint Elizabeths Hospital, Washington, D.C. before he trained to be a psychoanalyst. He has given papers nationally and internationally and has publications in psychoanalytic and forensic psychology journals. His paper being presented in Rome has won the Ralph E. Roughton Award, as the best paper on Sexuality and Gender this year.

**Douglas Zimmerman, MA** lives and works in Manhattan, with over 25 years in mental health and 20 in private practice. He is affiliated with the Institute for the Psychoanalytic Study of Subjectivity (IPPS), and with the International OCD Foundation in Cambridge, Mass, and am a supervisor for Journey Clinical/Assisted Psychedelic Psychotherapy/NYC. Having trained both analytically and behaviorally, he uses this unique skill set in treating adults with OCD, ADHD, and high-functioning Autism (ASD). Those with a neurodivergent mindset seek my assistance. Personally, he is passionate about ice hockey, drawing, writing, and family time with my wife and 6-year-old daughter.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### Child & Adolescent Initiative: The Importance of a Psychological Hand in Child Psychology

**Presenter:** Lynn Borenstein, MSW

**Interlocutor:** Denise Davis, LCSW

*Friday, October 25, 1:00 – 2:00pm*

#### **Abstract:**

The clinician's challenge is to offer the child patient, often inwardly defeated and discouraged, an opportunity for growth and forward development. The actual experience in treatment, from the moment a patient enters the office until the final goodbye, requires the clinician to convey to the child that she is not alone. By providing a psychological hand to hold, a sense of safety and security reawakens in the child, facilitating an enlivened self. This occurs through the clinician's consistent gestures of psychological and physical safety, which over time, builds a scaffold for and around the child. Though they may experience many bumps along the way, a foundation of connection between clinician and child is forged, strengthening the self. Clinical vignettes elaborate how the clinician and patient experience this strengthening process.

#### **Learning Objectives**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Describe the concept of psychologically holding the child patient's hand through treatment, to broaden the clinician's use of self with vulnerable children.
2. Gain an understanding of the child patient's experience of feeling the clinician's commitment and capacity to psychologically hold her hand.

#### **Presenter Bios:**

**Lynn Borenstein, LCSW** is in private practice in Northfield IL. She is on the faculty of the Chicago Institute for Psychoanalysis, (supervisor and instructor in Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Program) and the faculty (Emeritus) of the Institute for Clinical Social Work in Chicago, IL. She has taught many courses and workshops on child treatment. She has consulted throughout her career in nursery schools and high-risk daycare centers. She specializes in consultation with nursery school and day care children.

She has published numerous articles. Her favorite publications include:

Stop, Look and Listen: Being a Child Psychotherapist (20) *Smith Studies in Social Work*

I am, I Can: A Writing Duet with Marian Tolpin (2009) *International Journal of Self Psychology*

"When More "We" Becomes More "Me": Transitional Objects and Forward Movement in Child Psychotherapy (2019), *Journal of Infant, Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy*

Imagination and Play in Teletherapy with Children (2022) in *American Journal of Play*

The Therapist as a Dream Catcher: Holding the Dream (2003) *Clinical Social Work Journal*.

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## 45th Annual IAPSP International Conference

### The Tragic Person Today: Existence and Meaning, In Life and in Clinical Practice

#### **Couples Therapy Interest Group: Variations in the Couple Setting**

Presenter: **Cristina Bonucci, PhD**

Moderator: **David Shaddock, PhD**

*Friday, October 25, 1:00 – 2:00pm*

#### **Abstract:**

The paper examines some dynamics characterizing the crisis, dissolution, or creative transformation of a couple. Variation in the setting makes it easier to explore defensive limitations that may prevent understanding the motivations organizing the partners' shared experience of each other's lives.

#### **Learning Objectives:**

**At the conclusion of this presentation, the participants will be able to:**

1. Consider introducing variations to the setting in order to promote the creative regeneration of the bond or its conscious dissolution.
2. Enhance self-narrative capacity in the presence of the other as an opportunity to expand mentalization and mutual emotional knowing.

#### **Presenter Bio:**

**Christina Bonucci** received her analytic training at the Italian Society of Psychoanalysis; (IPA), before her studies veered towards contemporary psychoanalytic models, mainly coming from North America.

Christina is currently a teacher and supervisor at Isipsè in Rome, where she teaches the intersubjective perspective of Stolorow, Atwood, Brandschaft and Orange; furthermore, she conducts creative writing and psychoanalysis workshops with a special focus on the application of psychoanalytic theories to clinical practice.

Christina has published articles on specialized journals on creative writing and psychoanalysis, as well as on consultation and referrals. She coordinates a group Isipsè (Italy – Rome) that presents and discusses clinical cases with the purpose of investigating in depth how settings vary and the therapeutic factors that foster change in the treatment of particularly serious patients and/or contexts. She has been working with couples and parental couples for many years, always attentive to new stimuli and critical ideas.

#### **References:**

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Shaddock, D. (2023). Couples therapy as therapy: Fostering individual growth in conjoint contexts. *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context*, 18(2), 314–326.