

SELF-DISCLOSURE IN PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PSYCHOTHERAPY

Abstract:

The workshop will present and deeply review 2 perspectives towards therapist self-disclosure (TSD) in the relational approach – Conservatives vs Radicals. The Conservatives (Greenberg, Mitchell, Aron) believe and emphasize that while the therapist's subjectivity is always and inevitably there, intentional TSD shouldn't be recommended but rather be used on the basis of the therapist considerations in the context of each specific psychotherapeutic dyad. On the other hand, the Radicals (Renik, Maroda, Eherenberg) recommend the use of TSD as intentional therapeutic action since they believe it has the potential to equalize the power structure in the therapeutic alliance, to foster meaningful and curative intersubjective exchange, to avoid the illusion of objectivity on behalf of the therapist and to encourage introspection. The perspectives of Conservatives and Radicals on TSD will be reviewed and discussed with special emphasis on their implications for the understanding of the roles of play and improvisation in psychoanalysis, including discussions of the assets and liabilities of the dialectics of constraint versus possibility. The workshop will combine theoretical presentations together with case demonstrations and role plays involving the presenters and the audience.

Learning Objectives:

- 1) Participants will learn about the dialectic tension between the more "conservative" approach versus "radical" approaches to therapist self-disclosure.
- 2) Participants will learn about some of the chief authors of each tradition.
- 3) Participants will also learn about where these constructs relate to the prospects of constraint versus possibility in the field, especially as it relates to play and improvisation in psychoanalysis, including discussions of the assets and liabilities of the dialectics of constraint versus possibility.