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International

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Editorial

This will be the final issue of Contexts using the formats we have used since Contexts became a digital online only publication at the start of 2016. All being well, the next issue in December will be fully embedded in the GASi website with a new look completely consistent with the form and aesthetics of www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk. The hope is that this will render Contexts a much easier and inviting publication to both read and navigate. While the Yumpu platform that we have used to publish Contexts, since going digital only, has proved convenient, relatively easy to organise and extremely low cost, i.e., free, allowing us to visually mimic the old paper and Sage online versions, it is clear that enough members have found it too uncomfortable as a reading experience and have, as a result, given up. That some (many?) members are no longer following Contexts is of course a real concern and goes against the spirit of what the publication is about. Embedding Contexts in the GASi website is the first stage in transforming the publication. For those members who enjoy the pdf version of Contexts because it can be stored on your smartphone, laptop or tablet and read at leisure away from WiFi and internet signals, another option that is being considered is the installation of a function that will allow members to download a pdf version of the newsletter that can be both stored and printed in a form that will carry the new look. I am excited about these forthcoming changes and feel confident that Andre Pessoa, who designed the new website and is collaborating with us on the Barcelona Symposium 2020 image and publicity materials, is more than sufficiently sensitive to the needs of our society.

In my previous editorial I invited people to come forward with proposals for special issues of Contexts. I am determined to increase member involvement in the editorial process. So, in recent years we have begun to have regular contributors such as Derek Love, Susanne Vosmer, Mike Tait and Marcus Price. After the Foulkes Lecture, Rob White, who filmed the lectures that weekend and will hopefully continue to do so, offered his services to Contexts as an experienced writer and editor. I have since invited Rob, who has agreed to take this on, to start a regular interview feature. It is hoped that in time members across the full spectrum of membership will be interviewed by Rob, whether individually or as part of a group interview. I am grateful to Rob for offering his time and experience and look forward to working with him. We hope to have the first interview in the December issue.

All of the contributors to this issue have written for Contexts before. Harold Behr takes us into the realm of confusion and its importance for patient and therapist alike. Once more, members of the Group Section of the Foundation for Psychotherapy and Counselling – graduate body of the Westminster Pastoral Foundation – collectively report on a recent gathering held in London. Kalliopi Panagiotopoulou has generously made available to us, two very contrasting pieces, one in the realm of theory, the other a brief theatrical piece, both exploring the relationship between the refugee and mental illness. I am very grateful to her.

I look forward to seeing colleagues at the Autumn Workshop in November, when the Large Group will be the focus of our attention. I hope that one outcome of the event will be a near future issue exploring applications of large groups in a variety of settings. I also look forward to receiving feedback about Contexts from colleagues at the AGM, perhaps a good moment for us to be reflecting on the publication, as it enters another period of transformation.

Peter Zelaskowski

President's Foreword

Dear Fellow Members

As I write this, the poll to elect new members of the GASI Management Committee is fourteen days old. We sent the email, inviting 437 members to vote. Currently, the society's constitution limits voting to Full and Honorary members. We have 285 Associate and Training members and these are not eligible to vote. I wonder whether this is an enlightened rule?

So far, 90 of us have voted – about 20% of the electorate. Before the poll closes, on 22nd October, we will send a reminder to non-voters, so the final turnout may be higher. However, I don't suppose it will be very much higher because what is reflected, here, is the enduring disconnection between members and committee. This is hardly a new situation and it's common to very many organisations. I'm not even sure that it is a problem, although I've always assumed that it is.

In a small move to address the sense of disjunction, we've looked for a way to make this year's AGM a more integral element in the [Autumn/Winter Workshop](#), on "Large Groups: Contemporary Challenges", on 9/10th November. We've brought the AGM into the middle of the Saturday and it will take place in the same setting as the workshop LG's. The AGM will then be followed by a final LG session.

I'd like to encourage new members to attend the [Quarterly Members Group](#), in London on 20th October. It's an established and well-attended group, which benefits from the participation of, and greatly welcomes, those who travel long distances. If you ever think of coming from outside London, please feel free to ask whether we can find accommodation for you.

I repeat my invitation to write to me, at: gasipresident@gmail.com about any matter that you'd like to discuss with me.

All the best,
David

David Glyn
dearjee@gmail.com

Be a Contexts Writer!

“Substitute “damn” every time you’re inclined to write “very”; your editor will delete it and the writing will be just as it should be”. **Mark Twain**

Contexts welcomes contributions from GASi members and non-members on a variety of topics: Have you run or attended a group-analytic or group psychotherapy workshop? Are you involved in a group-analytic or group psychotherapy project that others might want to learn about? Would you like to share your ideas or professional concerns with a wide range of colleagues? If so, send us an article for publication by post, e-mail, or fax. Articles submitted for publication should be between 500 and 5,000 words long, or between one and ten A4 pages. Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about practice, a review of a book or film, a reply to an earlier article published here, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

Articles are welcome from all those who work with groups in any discipline: whether practitioners, trainers, researchers, users, or consultants. Accounts of innovations, research findings on existing practice, policy issues affecting group therapy, and discussions of conceptual developments are all relevant. Group therapy with clients, users, professional teams, or community groups fall within our range.

Length: Full length articles; of up to 5,000 words, should show the context of practice and relate this to existing knowledge. We also accept brief contributions which need focus only on the issue at hand: brief descriptions, reviews, personal takes of workshops or events attended, humorous asides, letters and correspondence.

Presentation: articles, letters, etc. should ideally be in Word format and forwarded as an email attachment to the Editor.

Please don't worry about language, grammar and the organisation of your piece. We, as editors, receive many pieces from non-English speaking countries and it is our job to work with you to create a piece of writing that is grammatical and reads well in English. This

help also extends to English speakers who may need help and advice about the coherence and organisation of a piece of work. Writing for Contexts is an ideal opportunity to begin your professional writing career with something that is informal, even witty or funny, a short piece that is a report of an event, a report about practice, a review of a book or film, or stray thoughts that you have managed to capture on paper. Give it a go!

Now that Contexts is a digital publication only, the deadlines are different. We are now able to receive your writing up to only a week or so before publication.

- For publication at the end of March: March 15th
- For publication at the end of June: June 15th
- For publication at the end of September: September 15th
- For publication at the end of December: December 15th

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Confused? You Will Be....

By Harold Behr

The word 'confused' has always confused me. As a trainee psychiatrist I was taught that it was too vague a term to be used for clinical purposes. Therefore, to have described someone as 'confused' because they might have been slow to comprehend what was being asked of them or because they might have responded with a form of words which made no immediate sense, was seen as taking a dangerous short cut, very possibly leading to the wrong treatment.

Nevertheless, the term obstinately found its way into the lexicon of harassed junior doctors working in the fevered atmosphere of a busy hospital setting. What better shorthand way could there be of directing the next doctor in the chain of command towards a more refined diagnosis at a later stage? How often did I not hear, in corridors blocked by trolleys laden with suffering human beings the solemn pronouncement: 'This patient is confused'? Sure enough, the term 'Mental Confusion' came to acquire the status of a provisional diagnosis, often abbreviated to its parent letters - 'MC', as is the way with medical conditions.

But yours truly, having been thoroughly grounded in the school of terminological exactitude, trained himself to eschew the term. Teachers whom I respected had explained that the term 'confusion' was too vague to be of any diagnostic use. What was important in these cases was to tease out the distinction between mental states which pointed towards disturbed brain chemistry and those which signified mere bewilderment in a state of so-called 'clear consciousness'.

In politics, confusion is regarded as a most unappealing attitude. Clarity, on the other hand, is much valued. I can readily call to mind Tony Blair or Theresa May prefacing an important statement with the ringing phrase, 'Let me be quite clear about this!' There is grandeur in such a pronouncement. It sounds positively statesmanlike. On the other hand, no politician would be foolish enough to declare the opposite: 'Let me be quite confused about this.' Or even, except in irony, 'I am somewhat confused about this.' That would be tantamount to political suicide.

A psychiatrist with whom I worked at University College Hospital was fond of promoting clarity in the spoken word as well as in professional writing. He would frequently intone the maxim: 'Claritas, Brevitas, Simplicitas!' and, seduced by his Latin, I happily

embraced this philosophy, resisting my natural tendency to use ten words when one or two would suffice.

I encountered a further complication during my training as a psychotherapist, when I was told that confusion was not only a virtue but an absolute necessity if one was to make progress either as a patient or as a therapist. One of my supervisors at the Maudsley Hospital, a psychoanalyst by the name of Irving Kreeger, introduced me to the notion that individuals who began their therapeutic journey from a position of clarity had to be patiently guided into a mind-set of uncertainty in which their formerly held assumptions could dissolve to be reassembled later in a different constellation. In other words, patients first had to be rendered confused before they could focus on reality. Clarity, it seemed, was a tempting solution to life's problems, but it could also lead people horribly astray.

It slowly dawned on me that confusion could be creative as well as destructive. Creative confusion allowed the mind to open up for the entry of new thoughts. Bob Hobson, a Jungian psychoanalyst, espoused this philosophy of therapy. Supervision with him seldom advanced beyond reflections on the opening words of the conversation between patient and therapist but was immensely informative. Time faded into the background and it became possible to dwell on the infinite meanings and inflections conveyed by a single word or gesture.

At the opposite end of the spectrum were the diagnosticians - people whose contribution lay in the collection and ordering of data into compartments which then opened the way to an infinite number of diagnostic possibilities. Prominent among these practitioners was Sir Aubrey Lewis, a polymath and obsessional character who intimidated registrars with his ferocious insistence on recording every jot and tittle of the patient's life history and examination. I disliked the rigour which this approach called for and much preferred to paint the canvas with random strokes and see what picture emerged.

In a group, the scope for confusion is limitless. One is dealing, not just with the muddle of one mind but several minds thrumming together in various degrees of harmony and cacophony. The art of making sense of all this proved too much for some diagnosticians of my acquaintance, and many a good psychiatrist was lost to the world of group psychotherapy for this reason.

I suppose it all depends on one's ability to tolerate uncertainty. According to the model of Sir Aubrey Lewis, which we can think of as the disease model, the patient's journey through illness has a fairly neat trajectory with a beginning, middle and end. Study of

this trajectory is circumscribed by the psychopathology of the individual, and although lip-service is paid to social and cultural factors, these are often consigned to the realms of irrelevance, or at best, placed in the background of the clinical investigation.

Unfortunately, there is an opposite condition to be found among some psychotherapists, for whom the individual has no real existence other than as a biological entity. According to such thinkers we are all constituted as a melting pot within the group mind, or as Foulkes put it, the individual is merely a nodal point in the group matrix, merging and differentiating, happily or unhappily, towards an uncharted destination.

So where does this leave the confused disciple? Probably not much better off than at the beginning of this piece. But let me offer a few words of consolation. Whatever our starting point (both in life and in our professional journey) we have a tendency to gravitate towards our natural state. We may be lucky enough to discover this early on, or it may take many years. The influence of people whom we admire and the trainings which we undergo do shape our attitudes, but we still exercise choice over whom and what we allow into our sphere of influence. Those of us who thrive in a state of confusion can make as much of a contribution as those of us who strive towards ever more precise definitions and clarifications.

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Consultant Child Psychiatrist (retired)

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Cartoon

By Harold Behr



Slags, Tarts and Hoydens or Bleeding Women - Reconfiguring Oedipus!

By Jean Byrne, Jacqueline Fogden, Joan Fogel, Merryn Jones, Di King, Kathy Smith, Philippa Marx

There are about twenty members in the Group Section of the FPC (Foundation for Psychotherapy and Counselling – graduate body of WPF [Westminster Pastoral Foundation]). There is no more group-analytic training at WPF. Some of us continue to meet regularly in London Bridge to keep the FPC Group Section going and, as you'll read below, for a weekend every year or so in a member's home. At the end of June 2018, we met in London. It was decided, as in Ireland in 2014¹, to do a group write-up.

Our various submissions.....like our food dishes, fit together...

.....
I had an amazingly powerful and strengthening experience with the eight other wonderful women at the group section weekend. Although I had to miss the Sunday I felt I went away full up with masses to process over the coming weeks.

We were an interesting mix of women all over 50, many over 60 and some over 70. We came from an array of backgrounds with varied religious and non-religious upbringings. What hit me was how our experiential discussions and groups covered all the main areas of life; from childhood to sexuality, children and relationships; politics and beliefs; back to sex and relationships mixed with bodily functions, smells and feelings.

Generational differences between the few years were amazingly powerful and how decisions made decades ago, in such different times, live with us forever and how we manage them is the key. There was respect and admiration but also gentle and not so gentle challenge and questioning that hopefully was accepted with the good intentions behind them.

¹ Kerry Gold by Pam Blakelock, Jennifer Clegg, Jacqueline Fogden, Joan Fogel, Di King & Kathy Smith. *Contexts*, March 2015, Issue 67.

I felt so nurtureda quiet maternal presence making sure we had food and drinks at regular intervals in a home perfect for the purpose of our meeting together. I came with some excitement and some trepidation; I surprised myself by feeling drawn to some people I hadn't expected to and slightly annoyed by others! This was all fine as it shifted and evolved over time and was a great experience in difference.

We could all relate to the usual old patterns of fears and anxieties we bring into any new setting and how a group can provoke such primitive behaviours and emotions but somehow the strength and power of these wonderful women felt containing and safe enough to speak and feel freely and know that whatever came up would be managed and accepted and wanted as well as taken care of and processed. I have missed being in a group for myself.

The paper was perfect to trigger off such a torrent of thinking and feeling around the fluidity or rigidity of sex in the widest sense and our sense of ourselves as alive changing people who wade through the storms of our instincts and needs and endeavour to find sense and relationships to shore us up.

I realised I am probably the least tolerant and the older I get the more I am unable to bear some aspects of some people I don't want to understand anymore! Not sure what that means but it is something I will contemplate.

I also came away grateful for knowing these people and being part of something so special – what a privilege in the best sense of the word!

I also realised I am a lucky person with a good life and vibrant relationships which mean everything to me and nothing else matters. Not only luck though – I have worked damn hard in therapy for which I owe it my lifelong gratitude.

Here's to the power of the Group and Thank you to the wonder of the women!

Forethought: nine white middle-class, middle-aged women but there'll be differences.

Of course there were..... in our backgrounds, in how and from where we'd started; in our families, from where they'd come. We nine women knew each other well, some better than others. This was the 4th time together for most – in Kerry* (2014), Wiltshire (2015), Hertfordshire (2017) and now here in London. In Wiltshire our

weekend was recorded in embroidery on a tablecloth. In Harpenden we had only a day and decided it wasn't enough. We missed the overnight dreams so decided that the next weekend, in London, would be from Friday night until Sunday lunchtime.

There were two new joiners. We came to know much more about each other and know each other better.

All meals were in the garden, delicious and plentiful. Between were a check-in on the Friday evening, two experiential groups and a study session (indoors not distracted by the glory of the birds and sun), and a walk on the Saturday, and a presentation session and experiential group on the Sunday.

The paper which chose us for the study session was Jody Messler Davies (2015) *From Oedipus Complex to Oedipal Complexity: Reconfiguring (Pardon the Expression) the Negative Oedipus Complex and the Disowned Erotics of Disowned Sexualities, Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 25:3, 265-283. It framed and influenced our conversation. Our lives and others wrote it. It proposes a group of oedipal triangles in each of our internalised group of object relations. Before we met some of us had read about the Bissu in Indonesia, (what you might call gender pluralists) and watched some of the BBC *Hear Her Season* marking the centenary anniversary of the women's vote in the UK. The concurrent issue of *Group Analysis* dealt with love and romance in the group. On the Monday, my daughter sent me a link to the Red School (<https://redschoo.net/>), a website and book about "the future of feminine spirituality and leadership". Love and sex were in the air.

We were for that weekend a group-analytic women's group. The title of this piece gives an idea of some of what we talked about and the tales of love and loss we told.

Reconfiguring the Oedipus myth in light of modern-day parlance to be more inclusive. The FPC group section explored the professional and personal meaning within the context of leaderless small groups with the aim of co-creating relationally, using our group analytic skills.

As an older woman(!) I found it liberating to talk about and share our experiences of our female bodies in all their manifold and various processes. Prior to our weekend group, I had found it exciting, and

indeed, liberating, to encounter, read and re-read the paper on more expansive ways to view the Oedipus complex. Our current social context is so different to Freud's Vienna and I have heard several of my colleagues recently speaking of abandoning the Oedipus complex as Attachment Theory regains more emphasis in these times of fluid gender parenting. And yet I remain wedded to the importance of the presence of a 'third' to open up enmeshed dyads. So, I was intellectually hungry to find a psychoanalytic theory that made sense to me personally and which could help me think about my clients in a more integrated way.

I realised at our group weekend, and in my subsequent reflections, that not only was I also exploring my own sexuality and gender relationships, but also my complex issues with my father which impinge on all my human relationships and are taking a lifetime to resolve...

The group felt safe and containing enough to talk about very private experiences and emotions in our past and present - and strong enough to challenge each other. I could talk about my shame of not feeling a 'good enough mother' in my own fused dyads. Our collective background history of our training as group-analytic psychotherapists at WPF and our previous meetings together obviously contributed to the strength of the group. We took care to hold the boundaries of time and space - and we nourished ourselves with mounds of delicious self-prepared food and the odd glass of good wine; celebrating Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath, together in a unique and profound way provided very special nourishment.

Some thoughts

I left the weekend and was immediately thrown into a hectic period of family life, some very enjoyable and some stressful leaving me little time to process the experience.

Last Sunday I sat in a beautiful garden in France with a group of friends, and it took me back to the previous weekend's beautiful setting aided by sensational weather. The difference being the conversations. The outer life is not centred on, instead the concentration on the inner, like minded through work and life experiences yet so different too. And that is what enriches experiential groups.

Others have expressed the power of those sessions, supportive and challenging. Leaving them stirred up - with food for

thought. Food being such an important ingredient and never disappoints.

I saw the excitement in the two new participants, and envied them that first experience of not knowing, on the other hand knowing the broad layout of what was ahead allowed me to really look forward to seeing everybody again and remember the past weekends.

For me it was about whether I still belonged having retired, and hearing others thinking about a future with reduced work, made me realise I was not alone. Finding my voice from a new perspective is my challenge. The importance of being there was being among other women, remarkable women and sharing intimate thoughts. Each time I am amazed at how the group moves effortlessly through the days between different activities (not sure that's the right word) and I think this is largely down to the host, the container.

I imagine that most of us would say that we are never too old to learn, and that groups can help in this is not unfamiliar but what I appreciated in this weekend of warmth and shared purpose was the rigour and depth that eventually moved me from a stuck projected place to a more open and flexible way of thinking. Working in the group I was able to tap into wisdom and life experience that made thinking about a difficult and current familial problem possible and allow the process of acceptance and some maturity – to begin.

First it was good to be able to voice it. Then it was good to feel the situation was shared by many and especially good – though not easy at the time – not being let off lightly or have people placating. It certainly is not that sort of group. I was made to work and though the situation is not resolved there is some lightness.

The other things about the venue, already mentioned, were just lovely. The beautiful house, the comfort, the relaxed atmosphere. It was also in a part of London where as a child I had lived briefly and hated it and it was good to see it now with different eyes for the attractive place it is.

We don't meet often but when we do it is good – more than good. Let's hope it continues.

Some thoughts

I had experienced some anxiety in anticipation of the weekend,

especially about the intimacy involved. In practice that was one of the most gratifying aspects.

The personal is political - we talked about our adolescent selves and experiences as young women, with contraception and fear of pregnancy. There were many powerful and moving stories. For me, some of the hurt is still there and it seemed that was the case for some others as well.

Along with that and seeing ourselves now so different, but not, from those younger selves, we described more recent hurts - illnesses - our own and of loved ones - and encroaching frailties.

I enjoyed identifying with others around experiences within our families of origin. Awareness of difference was always there as well, for me anyway.

The paper sparked some interesting thoughts. E.g. how the Oedipus complex is experienced in large family groups.

Jean Byrne, Jacqueline Fogden, Joan Fogel, Merryn Jones, Di King, Kathy Smith, Philippa Marx

A Refugee in the World: The Course of a Refugee Towards Mental Illness and the Trajectory of People Suffering from Mental Disease to Refugeeism

By Kalliopi Panagiotopoulou

A version of this paper was presented at the 8th Annual Conference: 'Psychosis and Migration', of ISPS Hellas, 2/12/2017, organized by Dr Anastassios Koukis, Chair of ISPS Hellas, in Athens, Greece.

“νόστιμον ἡμῶν” {meaning the day of the return} (Homer)
“...Returning to the uterus, a common primordial place for two...”
(Lacan, 1949, 1966)

We are all refugees in the world, refugees in life. Our natural environment is the uterus. The separation of the uterus and the trauma of birth are interwoven in the beginning of life; life starts through detachment. We all seek to return where we started from.

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR. 1966. 1976) legislates for ‘the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health’ (Article 12, 1966, 1976). Availability of services, goods and programs is everybody’s right. Physical, financial and informational access should be granted without discrimination. Acceptance, as far as it concerns medical morality, culture, age, gender is necessary. A scientifically and medically adequate quality of services should be granted (International Organization for Migration, 2007).

The increasing cost of mental health - approximately 1/3, along with cardiovascular diseases and cancer - reflects not only the increasing impact of these diseases, but also the need for more effective intervention (WHO, 2008).

Basic fundamental issues, such as poverty, unemployment, inequality, weakening of social structure, lack of solidarity, discrimination and racism need to be attended to. Proper and rational management of systems with medium- and long-term targets is required for this purpose (WHO Response, 2011).

Psychosis and migration: does a correlation exist?

A multitude of retrospective studies since 1930 so far agree that the impact (and the risk too) of developing psychosis among emigrants, refugees and asylum seekers is significantly increased in comparison with the native population, continuing in the second and third generation (Ødegaard, 1932; Schick M. et al., 2016; Tarricone I. et al., 2015; Rhodes J.E. et al., 2016; Mandaglio C. & Maierà E., 2014; Hollander A.C., 2013; Morgan C. et al., 2010; Bradley A.J. & Dinan T.G., 2010).

The risk of psychosis in first-generation immigrants is almost three times higher than that of natives (Maltzeberg, 1995). The risk of psychosis developing among second-generation immigrants is increased 4-5 times in comparison to the indigenous population (McGrath, 2004).

Early childhood mental trauma is as much indicative as it is explanatory for the development of psychosis. Mondelli et al. (2010) found a significant negative correlation between the number of stressful life events and cortisol levels in first-episode psychotic patients, in contrast to the control group. This was attributed to the excessive load of stressful life events, since 85,7 % of psychotic patients had experienced a childhood trauma.

A dose-dependent relationship has been described between traumatic exposure and psychological detriment (Johnson & Thompson, 2008; Mollica et al., 1998). Stress may be associated with psychosis by sensitizing people, both at the behavioral and the neurological level. An example of genes – environment interaction in psychosis: the vulnerable gene type is more susceptible to the development of psychosis after environmental exposure in comparison to the invulnerable type (Moffitt et al. 2005; Winkel et al. 2008). Abuse during childhood correlates with the development of psychosis during adulthood (Ackner et al. 2013). A number of studies suggest that emotional abuse and cumulative trauma exposure is related to psychotic experiences.

Migration related factors potentially associated with psychopathology are: direct violence, poor living conditions, humiliation, exclusion and discrimination occurring during the migration period (violence, lack of water, food, health and basic services), as well as the pre- (battles, tortures, rape, death or disappearance of individuals, lack of water, food and health services, loss of native country and individuals) and post- (racist assaults, gang violence, retention at refugee camps, exclusion from the host country infrastructure) migration ones (Migration and health in the European

Union, 2011).

Risk factors for triggering psychosis among vulnerable people on the move may be of social, environmental, psychosocial and neurodevelopment origin.

Trauma and stress contribute to triggering psychosis among vulnerable people, as is shown by numerous psychosocial and neuroimmunological data. Indicatively the following are mentioned: social isolation, depression, stress from pressing family and working environment, long-term weakening, genetic, epigenetic and oxidative cerebral stress, chronic inflammation, psychogenic dysphonia, apoptosis, cerebral atrophy, vulnerability of a deeper characterological class, mental trauma (confusion, disorientation, difficulty in perceiving the surrounding conditions), isolation, psychotic stress from disintegration, (Kontis, 2017; Giannoulaki, 2017) lack of basic trust, social defeat (other people's rejection – lack of mirroring – causes unbearable pain), stigma (people are hiding in their illness so that their being different will not become reality), freezing, immobilization, absence of empathy, increased vulnerability when there is an early stress and sub-cortizolism due to abuse, transgenerational transmission of trauma, relationship suffering (Chroussos, 2009; Korpa, 2017; Guasto, 2013).

The stress of mother's parental role relates significantly to the cortisol levels in the saliva of children with ADHD, contrary to healthy peers and their mothers, as is shown in the correlation between ADHD child's blunted CAR with parenting stress index (Korpa, 2017). This is an indication of the reciprocal influence between mothers and children and the characteristics of their relationship. The early interaction between mother and child constitutes the main carrier for transgenerational transmission in general and of the trauma in particular (Maniadakis, 2017). The exposure to interpersonal trauma correlates with constant trends of avoiding bonds among refugees, especially women. According to attachment theories, prior adverse interpersonal experiences can undermine secure attachment systems, and may promote avoidance of attachment seeking. This is therefore leading affected refugees to poor psychological health (Morina, 2016).

Internalized stigma, depression and social stress impact the risk of psychosis in the occurrence of the first episode of psychosis, recurrent episodes in individuals with psychosis as well as those at risk of psychosis. Greater levels of internalized stigma are associated with greater levels of anxiety and depression and are equally problematic for people who meet the criteria for being at risk as well as those who have established psychosis (Pyle and Morrison, 2017).

Refugees in the world could be thought of as people in a society in which mental diversity and different features are not accepted (Panagiotopoulou, 2017). Mrs A., a lady with mental health problems, writes: ‘...I always thought about my truth which people around me do not accept, none has ever accepted, has ever listened to my truth, to my desires, to my abilities...’.

The ‘invisible refugee’ metaphorically means the group member that society does not regard as a refugee, but is a refugee in a dubious manner, socially and mentally. For example, the unemployed person, a refugee within society, unable to find his place in the job market, does not look like a refugee, so his despair is not recognized, he becomes invisible. The ‘black sheep’, a refugee within the family, is bearing the fear of failure for the whole family. A refugee in his mind is someone estranged from his internal sources who unconsciously vacates them (Biran, 2017).

The mental patient considered as a refugee in society and in the world.

According to Freud, ‘...this uncanny is in reality nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression’, that is ‘the uncanny (*unheimlich*) is what was once familiar’ (Freud, 1919). The menace in the foreigner and in the different other is about our relationship with the estrangement of our own unconscious. As Mitchell describes, “the first narcissism is a notional ‘at one-ness’ with its environment, uterine and then maternal.” (Mitchell, 2003). Lacan emphasizes ‘...the role of the brother, the role of the similar in our figuration as a subject’ (Lacan, 1938).

Separation constitutes the beginning of the ego. ‘There is a need to die (symbolically) in relation to the Ego I represent and to recognize (internalize) the Other who has been an enemy so far’ (Koukis, 2009). But, at the same time, it may imply the onset of psychosis. ‘The (family) organization that the subject meets and the reason which it listens to are what transform the space where the ego is impending to a space where paranoia impends... Madness expresses the extreme form of the only feasible refusal to the ego... The schizophrenic, as each subject, has met one out-of-itself according to the desires of the Other’ (Aulagnier, 1975).

The Other, as a fellow-being and brother, represents the one who is identical to us and proclaims envy. ‘In the individual’s mental life, someone else is invariably involved, as a model, as an object, as a helper, as an opponent’ (Freud, 1921). We understand ourselves

through the Other. ‘The object and the ego are realized through the similar’ (Lacan, 1938).

Analogies of human relationships to the rivalries between siblings are obvious. ‘The primordial way in human relationships is certainly the devouring of the existence of your peer’ (Lacan, 1963). ‘The feelings are dealt with hatred; they are perceived as too powerful to fit within the immature soul’ (Bion, 1967). The sibling’s relationship in a family resembles that in an analytic group and in society. ‘The individual also becomes itself within a group which, even in a nuclear family, will involve other babies... you are like others but with differences... love and hate, rivalry, jealousy and envy are social, and can be specifically lateral acquisitions in a group’ (Mitchell, 2003).

Common characteristics of refugees and people suffering from mental disease

A de facto double discrimination exists for refugees as well as mentally ill people. This stigma constitutes a trauma. Trauma is a stressful event for the organization, leading to increased morbidity. People are confused and disoriented. They lose their mind purity and face difficulty in perceiving environmental conditions. They experience internal alienation and mental death. Feelings of shame and guilt, humiliation and resignation lead them to the loss of self-identity. Their intrapersonal lack of a capacity for symbolism deprives them of the meaning of the past, present and future. Their inability in trusting others leads to interpersonal isolation. They show weakness at making relationships and communicating. (Tucker, 2011; Christodoulou N., 2017; Giannoulaki, 2017; Stevens, 2017).

Trauma results in mental disorganization. According to Marty (1980) trauma leads to mental silence and disease. Trauma disrupts the continuity of the individual’s psycho-emotional state due to the loss of an object, function or relationship. Injury provokes the ultimate disruptive effect on the mental and physical organ (Freud, 1915; Marty, 1980).

Homeostasis, the dynamic organizational balance, is the goal of every living creature. When stress, - due to either external or internal traumatic factors - threatens it, behavioral, physiological and cognitive adaptation responses of the organization take place (Chroussos, 2009). Anxiety disorders, metabolic syndrome and long-term debilitation are related to stress and affect human behavior through changes in the function of human memory in the hippocampus, amygdale, prefrontal cortex and modulation of the cognitive function.

Brain plasticity ensures the ability of intervention (Chattarji, 2015; Kontis, 2017). Long-term potentiation is feasible via electrical neuron irritation resulting in the enforcement of synaptic transmission (Bliss and Lomo, 1973).

The transgenerational transmission of trauma and possible interventions: is prevention possible?

Preclinical experimental models indicate that transgenerational transmission of behavioral symptoms can be prevented. Negative as well as positive environmental factors impact on behavior through generations (Gapp, 2016).

Scapegoating is a phenomenon observed in both social and therapeutic groups. The ‘passing stranger’ in anthropological literature was often seized and sacrificed, looked upon as a potential threat. A question is raised, whether the group, out of its needs, creates a scapegoat upon whom it can project all its accumulated guilty feelings - group with members who have inherent difficulties in expressing their aggression and guilt in the open forum. ‘The scapegoat may be selected in the first place on the elemental basis of being different’. The phenomenon is precipitated when the urgent need for the group to punish meets an urgent need in a particular member to be punished. (Foulkes, S.H. & Anthony, E.J., 1957). Through the stigma a distance and indifference for the other are created, a negative simulation, a ‘we’ versus ‘others’ distinction. Negative characteristics are attributed (e.g. he is dirty), whereas de-personalization and de-humanization gradually occur (Tzavaras N., 2017).

When the suffering is unbearable, the idea of guilt seems to fill the empty place of the meaning. By the process of projective identification, guilt may be transmitted through generations and recycled (Klímová, 2007). Trans-generational, un-housed ghosts in the eyes of parents may look very ugly, and the child may rather flee from its own subjectivity. We often experience more than we can bear, so consequently dissociation occurs in order to prevent annihilation. Group flow can take different directions, either to vicious spirals or towards development. Development of our psycho-social identity is essential for us to take full responsibility for the matrix disrupted around us (Mojović, 2015).

The re-libidinalization of self-representations may resolve the sense of helplessness and humiliation, tame aggression, end mourning, test reality and enhance the adaption to a new environment (Volkan, 2003). In-cohesion manifests in patterns of interaction,

normation, communication, in styles of thinking, feeling, leadership, followership. Nevertheless, it is possible to help people make creative use of their own traumatic experience (Hopper, 1997). Psychic black holes, as a collective defense, control our actions as well as our feelings and thoughts related to what has been made unconscious (Doron, 2017).

Alienation and familiarization cohabit concurrently in the world. We are all strangers; we have yet to know each other, seeking a way of being at home with ourselves and one another. (Schlapobersky, 2015). Learning alone from experience is probably more difficult than being able to go through the process of working 'through the Other' (Friedman, 2012).

'When the work of mourning is completed the ego becomes free ...' (Freud, 1917 [1915]). Our existence equilibrates on the edge of a razor blade: to the limit. 'The inside and the outside are identical, creating continuity without inside and outside' (Danezis, E. and Theodossiou, E., 2012). This is a different description of the Möbius Lane. It is imperative to identify the internal and external processes in our understanding of the world. The boundaries between the individual and the social and between the conscious and the unconscious are always changing (Bacha, 2017). 'Society' is inside the individual, just as well as outside, and what is 'intrapsychic' is at the same time shared by the group... the borderline of what is 'in' or 'outside' is constantly moving (Foulkes, 1968). Insides and outsides would not be there without the markings... power relationship between the we and the not-we exist (Dalal, 2001). Social unconscious permeates us (Bacha, 2017). Humans are open to each other and permeating each other in a growing and developing interdependence (Elias, 1994, 2000, 2001). Mess is the material from which life and creativity are built (Stacey, 2003). The brain is the organ of human sociality. Humans influence each other all the time (Bacha, 2017).

Psychosocial interventions and requirements for the management of issues affecting migration and mental disease

Mental health is a major issue of personal and public health. It is essential to convince the State of the necessity of action, using research examples as well as narratives. Forms of recognizing psychiatric, biological, psychological, social and cultural problems of both traumatized people on the move and mentally ill, are useful. Planning of international policies leads to the promotion of health and disease prevention. The reweaving of social structure, so that people

are not abandoned, is needed. Care paths, with understanding of mental health and creating a legal framework for psycho-education and engagement, are helpful. Multilevel intervention, in family, school, community, society, is effective. Unification and internationalization of service models of prevention are necessary. Gradual placement of simple goals helps ensure success.

Diversity and heterogeneity constitute human groups. Mental and social alterity characterize human nature. Differentiation and personalization harmoniously compose social groups, thus resulting to the elimination of stigma for 'different features'. According to Foulkes (1948), '...these patients (group members), collectively constitute the very norm, from which, individually, they deviate....each individual is to a large extent a part of the group, to which he belongs'.

In order to ensure the world is a safe shelter, we need to create an egalitarian value system, to show the interdependence existing between human beings, to build bridges across differences, to accept and promote diversity as a basic element of society, to destroy the borders imprisoning our souls, to advocate inclusion directions, to embrace human experience, suffering and trauma, to recognize the challenges of existence, to ensure a good quality of life for all. Success is established via cooperation and collaboration.

The road to health is open to ameliorations and improvements. The dimension 'health' is outraged by being preoccupied solely with the disease. An urgent need for mental comfort emerges. The simultaneous impact of a financial and refugee crisis quashes mental health, not only of the refugees, but also of the host population.

The implementation of group analytic psychotherapy in health promotion and in the prevention of mental disease

Interdependence and interconnection characterize social networks. This is the human condition. 'We have an effect on others we are affected by others, we influence and we are influenced' (Dalal, 2012).

The individual, while helplessly compressed into a mere particle of social groups and masses, is at the same time left without any true companionship in regard to his inner mental life ... all the disturbances ... are essentially and integrally bound up with human relationships (Foulkes and Anthony, 1957).

It is essential not to split into good and evil. The deeper levels of the social unconscious are useful only when they integrate. In the group analytic group ... in a positive atmosphere even the most negative feelings may find positive outlet (Ormay, 2011, 2013). 'The personal mind is capable of interacting processes... We have a brain always able to regenerate or generate significant functional elements in response to stimulation' (Mela, 2009). The psychodynamic culture opens up possibilities of deeper and more complex understanding of the psychic functioning of the patient and enlarges the containing capacity for the patient's most overwhelming symptoms (Urlić, 2010).

The psychotherapeutic culture of the group enhances the expression of different cultures. In Friedman's 'sandwich model' (2016), working in groups with members of different nationalities, provides a very interesting and useful clinical example. Groups consisting of mixed nationalities and mixed diagnosis are optimal for integration, therapy and prevention, since the object and the ego is materialized through the similar. The participation in groups of both 'healthy' members of the community as well as caregivers - professionals, volunteers, relatives - enriches the patterns of interaction within multiple levels of communication. Data from neuroimmunological studies highlights the importance of early intervention, in order to avoid cerebral damage in populations suffering from stress and trauma – this is also applicable to psychosis.

Group analysis may be considered an effective therapeutic option and form of prevention for refugees and people suffering from mental illness. Group analytic psychotherapy is aimed at fundamental psychopathological change. It dynamically promotes communication among different people. Group members gradually realize that all people share common psychological phenomena. Their internal emotional spectrum expands, enriching their inner experience and, as a consequence, human existence flourishes. Empathy in understanding others is activated. The process of anger, shame, guilt, fear, differentiation in the group promotes enforcement and resilience. Awareness and acceptance of the historical nature of the phenomena takes place gradually in the group. The ability to influence our microenvironment becomes apparent, since we are all part of the social reality. (Koukis, 2009; Yalom, 2005; Tzavaras N., 2017).

By fostering and expanding the idea of a group – analytic symbolically meaningful matrix, group analysis could constitute an antidote to the overwhelming power of a

postmodern, globalised, devouring matrix of relationships and, thus, help analysands, as well as society more generally, to transcend this morass and perhaps to rediscover their lost desire (Koukis 2016).

The desire of the human being, often unknown, latent, unreachable and obscure, is interconnected with its freedom. In Koukis' (2017) words: '...freedom of thought and, based on it, freedom to choose at least our own death'. This interrelation is endogenous in human nature while struggling for survival, maturation, integration and completion. Since the menace of mental death (Potamianou, 2001) hangs over humans ceaselessly, it is perhaps an act of energetic resignation of some delicate people to choose their psychic death.

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A Life Not Lived

A theatrical one-act play, based on a combination of true-life experiences and narratives

By Kalliopi Panagiotopoulou

Performed at the 8th Annual Conference: 'Psychosis and Migration', of ISPS Hellas, 2/12/2017, organized by Dr Anastassios Koukis, Chair of ISPS Hellas, in Athens, Greece.

The narrator sits in an office and reads half-hidden behind a huge old diary with his head bent over and the lamp.

Plutarch, a man suffering from psychosis, wears a jacket buttoned up to his neck, when he speaks he looks no one in the face, his eyes turn slightly sideways and low, his right hand on the temple next to his right eye, with his fingers half-opened, as if the light dazzles him. The voice loud, sharp, steadfast, spitting the words as if they were orders.

The refugee, Rashid, as if coming out of deserted shadows, from the background, as a reflection, he is all eyes and his gender is not visible. He wears jeans and a shirt, wide and long like a robe, with a dirty backpack and torn sports shoes.

The reporter's voice is intermittently heard with difficulty, from far away.

Aaa!!! The cry awakens the sky. A man is born.

NARRATOR: New Plutarch is born! New Plutarch is born! The grandfather, Plutarch, was almost dancing full of joy in the corridors of the maternity hospital that the son of his son was born, treating everyone. He also bought many books on the life and work of ancient Plutarch and shared copies to his friends, relatives and neighbours. His rejoicing did not fit into his mind; it was all taken away and went out into the streets rolling like a raging river.

NARRATOR: Baby Plutarch - he is crying, scared, hungry and is shouting so loudly that the swing is trembling.

Plutarch: But, isn't anybody here? I'm hungry, I'm afraid, I'm cold ... How did I get here by myself? Where did you throw me? I find no stone in the abyss to lean on.

Refugee (Rashid): Somebody help me, is there anyone? I'm hungry, I'm afraid, I'm cold ... How did I get here by myself? What waves washed me up? What sort of unfair fate is hunting me?

REPORTER: [THE REFUGEE'S BOAT HAS SUNK, HE ALMOST DROWNED, ENDED UP IN LESVOS WITHOUT ANYTHING]

NARRATOR: Plutarch in the kindergarten - he got dirty again with excrement and the teacher has him in the corner as a punishment.

Plutarch: I won't give you anything that's mine, you are mean and unfair, get me out, get me out of this prison!

Refugee: Why did you put me in jail? I only asked for help!

REPORTER: [THE REFUGEE HAS TEMPORARILY BEEN SENT TO THE RESERVATION CAMP UNTIL HIS REQUEST FOR A RESIDENCE PERMIT IS CHECKED]

NARRATOR: Running with eyes blinded by tears and brushing past the coat hanger on the wall he almost hangs on it by his temple and blood is flooding his face and clothes and the floor. He faints.

Plutarch: I am empty inside, I have no life anymore. I'm dead. What a relief!

Refugee: My blood was sucked by the enemies. My veins are empty.

REPORTER: [THERE WAS A WAR IN HIS NATIVE COUNTRY, HE WAS TORTURED, HIS LIFE WAS AT RISK, HIS BROTHER WAS KILLED IN FRONT OF HIM]

NARRATOR: Plutarch is a fresher at primary school - his letters cannot be read, a beating by the teacher. He pulls her hair screaming.

Plutarch: Well, my turn! I will tear up the notebooks and the books, I'll be throwing them at you, along with my pencils and all my weapons!

Refugee: More application forms, more papers, what else do you want? Take them back, it's not me in these words.

REPORTER: [HE IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ENDLESS OFFICIAL PAPERWORK WITH DETAILED INFORMATION IN ORDER THAT HIS REQUEST FOR A RESIDENCE PERMIT BE CONSIDERED]

NARRATOR: Plutarch is a second-year at primary school; the other children gather against him, mock him and beat him. He rushes against them with his head, head-butting them, grunting and trying to bite.

Plutarch: Get out of here! Get out of here I told you brats! Leave, you damn monsters! I'm telling, I'm telling your mothers and then woe be tide you!

Refugee: You're hunting me, bums, to get what? I have nothing else to give!

REPORTER: [HE STARTS BECOMING PARANOID, BELIEVING THAT HE IS BEING HUNTED DOWN, BOTH BY HIS OWN PEOPLE AND BY THE FOREIGNERS]

NARRATOR: Plutarch in summertime childhood, in the countryside - his mother beats him with the flip-flop to make him sleep at noon.

Plutarch: I'm telling you I don't want to, I don't want to sleep, the vampires and the beasts will come to take me, I don't want to sleep, they will drink my blood and I'll be empty inside!

Refugee: But I cannot sleep, a black hole is lurking in me. It will suck me whole. My eyes, stay open!

REPORTER: [HE HAS ILLUSSIONS AND METATRAUMATIC SYMPTOMS, NIGHTMARES, IMSOMNIA, HE THINKS THAT A BLACK HOLE WILL DEVOUR HIM]

NARRATOR: Plutarch in the last grade of primary school - the teacher told his parents that he wants to break him, to prune his excessive selfishness. Beating him with a ruler, whenever he solves problems that the teacher cannot.

Plutarch: I solved it right, you're the one who doesn't know

arithmetic! I am the mathematical brain, I have surpassed even Einstein!

Refugee: I both studied next to great teachers and was taught by them, and despite what I've learned, they taught me nothing!

REPORTER: [HE LOOKS BACK ON HIS PREVIOUS STUDIES AND REALISES THAT THEY DID NOT PREPARE HIM FOR HIS CURRENT DIFFICULTIES, THEY DID NOT TEACH HIM THE TRUTH OF LIFE]

NARRATOR: And his parents changed his school...

Plutarch at the vacant lot, football with the other boys in the neighborhood, kicks the ball, kicks the legs, gives and gets.

Plutarch: You are useless, you clowns! I know proper football! You will obey!

Refugee: I'll beat you up, I'll catch you, before you kill me.

REPORTER: [HE BELIEVES THAT THE OTHERS WANT TO HURT HIM, CONSPIRING AGAINST HIM, SO HE IS ATTACKING THEM FIRST, BOTH HIS FELLOW REFUGEES AND NATIVE GREEKS]

NARRATOR: Plutarch at high school in the summertime - gathers dead cockroaches and spreads them around the room, sleeps naked, his mother is terrified.

Plutarch: I have my own army and don't you dare resist me, I'll do whatever I want. I put myself all around. I stretched it out like a ditch and you can't get in!

Refugee: I'd better sleep on the terrace outside, the room is full of bugs that are running over me, and they have draped my whole body!

REPORTER: [HE HAS ILLUSSIONS, THINKS THAT HE IS COVERED BY BUGS THAT HAVE ALSO FILLED THE ROOM WHERE HE IS ACCOMMODATED, THAT IS WHY HE SLEEPS ON THE TERRACE]

NARRATOR: He is asleep holding his kitten, Tiger, in his arms. He

doesn't swim in the sea, nor does he approach it, he turns his back on it. The waves are beasts, the Cyclopes and the Laistrygones, they will devour him.

Plutarch: Don't look at me, you're stealing my mind, my eyes hurt, don't pull them out from me...

Refugee: All your food has got poison in it.

REPORTER: [HE IS AFRAID THAT THE ENEMIES - WE-WILL POISON HIM, THAT IS WHY HE REMAINS UNFED]

NARRATOR: Plutarch at Lyceum - tells his sister that his mind doesn't obey him.

Plutarch: There are times I'm afraid. What's happening with my mind? It doesn't listen to what I say. I know it. I can do whatever I want, I'm a magician, I'm God, and Castaneda's method is nothing compared to me, I have overcome it, I am the ruler of the world!

Refugee: I'll go to the bridge, and from there I'll fly like an eagle.

REPORTER: [HE IS SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING COMMITTING SUICIDE TO ESCAPE FROM HIS TORMENT]

NARRATOR: Plutarch first-year at the Polytechnic school - he breaks the kitchen door of the house and beats his father and his mother with fists and kicks. His parents are asking for a prosecution order for forced hospitalization.

Plutarch: don't you touch my room; it's the sacred room, where I keep my energy.

Refugee: don't you take my sacred book; I keep my soul in there.

REPORTER: [HE IS AFRAID THAT THEY WILL STEAL HIS RELIGIOUS BOOK, WHICH CONSTITUTES HIS SOUL, HIS BEING]

NARRATOR: Plutarch is hospitalized in a state of physical and mental suppression at a psychiatric clinic. He comes out with the diagnosis of "schizotypal personality disorder" under medication and undergoes a day hospital program for one year. He constantly talks

with his sister; he asks for it, he needs it. His father does not want to see him, he rejects him completely. His mother is walking the line between the two tasks. Both his parents are pushing him to finish his studies.

Plutarch: (crying in the clinic) - why are you binding me, why? I'm in pain, I'm afraid, I want to get out of here, isn't anyone listening to me? Why did you tie me up? Let me go!

Refugee: Why are you binding me, why? I'm in pain, I'm afraid, I want to get out of here, let me go!

REPORTER: [THEY HAVE RESTRAINED HIM IN ORDER TO STOP HIM COMMITTING SUICIDE AND TO GIVE HIM PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS IN THE MENTAL HOSPITAL]

NARRATOR: The Day Hospital program is concluded and Plutarch is not referred anywhere else. He turns to his parents. He suffers from the side effects of the drugs; his mouth is dry, his hands tremble, his legs are stiff like wood. He decides to discontinue the medication by himself, passing through a difficult "rehabilitation" phase.

Plutarch: Useless doctors, human-shaped worms that know nothing! You won't steal my brain from me! You won't do whatever you want to me! You are sick, all of you! So, you yourselves take your medicines, your poisons!

Refugee: Why are you filling me up with drugs, with poisons? It would be better if you shot me!

REPORTER: [He still thinks they want to poison him, instant death by being shot seems redemptive to him]

NARRATOR: Plutarch lives cut-off, in a world of his own, with his own rules and constant aggression manifestations towards his hostile environment. He can't work, his few old friends abandon him, and his fellow students are walking away. He only looks after his kittens, has five or six of them, buys them food, gives them some water, and exercises them by flipping them high. He broke the glass and goes in and out of the house through the windows.

Plutarch: Well, first thing in the morning I'll check on the kittens.

What's going on Renoula, you're not eating again? And you little Tiger, be lively, well done!

Refugee: I had a dog in my distant hometown. I wonder if it remembers me. Will it be alive?

REPORTER: [HE LOOKS BACK ON THE PAST, THE HOMELAND, THE PREVIOUS CAREFREE LIFE, THE PREVIOUS ROMANCES]

NARRATOR: Plutarch's mother suddenly dies; her heart was torn from sorrow. During the funeral, he stands far away, not approaching anyone.

Plutarch: She died a long time ago! I killed her.

Refugee: These bones that I brought with me, of my ancestors, these are my home. (He embraces the backpack with the bones)

REPORTER: [THE ONLY THING HE MANAGED TO SALVAGE FROM DESTRUCTION WAS HIS ANCESTORS' SACRED BONES, A SYMBOL OF HIS IDENTITY AS A PERSON AND ALSO AS A MEMBER OF A WIDER NATIONAL GROUP]

NARRATOR: Plutarch punches his demented father. He threatens and extorts the woman who looks after him.

Plutarch: You don't know what's happening to you, you're useless and stupid, a useless corpse!

Refugee: Nobody understands me here, which language should I speak?

REPORTER: [HE DOES NOT KNOW THE LANGUAGE, HE CAN'T COMMUNICATE - AN INTERPRETER IS BROUGHT FOR HIM - YET AGAIN HE CAN'T COMMUNICATE BECAUSE THE TRADITIONS ARE DIFFERENT, THE ETHICS, THE CUSTOMS, THE WAY HE SEES THE WORLD]

NARRATOR: Plutarch's father dies. He doesn't go to the funeral. He lives 'imprisoned' in the cottage. He sleeps during the day and at night he is surfing on the Internet.

Plutarch: The night is spreading everywhere, and I, I'll be dancing on your graves! But I don't care, because I myself am inside!

Refugee: Come night, cover me!

REPORTER: [HE IS THE STRANGER WE ALL HAVE IN OURSELVES, THE REFUGEE TO THE WORLD WHERE WE ALL EXIST, THE MENTAL PATIENT WE ARE ALL AT RISK OF BECOMING - AS KAFKA CLAIMS - AND ASKS FOR SHELTER TO HIDE IN THE DARKNESS, BECAUSE THIS AWARENESS ITSELF IS HORRIFYING]

NARRATOR: The sun rises. It's time for Plutarch to sleep. Good night. Sweet dreams! Good morning!

{The narrator turns off the light of the lamp. Darkness and Silence}.

Acknowledgements

My gratitude to Prof. Anastassios Koukis for his overall trust, support and containment.

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Kalliopi Panagiotopoulou MD PhD

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Allergist and Clinical Immunologist

Trainee in Group Analysis (Hellenic Network of Group Analysts)

Student Member of IAGP

BOOK CORNER

Request for Foulkes Letters and Documents for Society Archives

We are appealing for letters, notes, and correspondence from Foulkes that Society members may possess. This will add to our already valuable society archive that contains much interesting material, papers and minutes and that is a significant source of information on our history and development.

Please contact Julia in the GASI office if you would like to donate any original or copied documents:

Group_Analytic Society
1 Daleham Gardens
London NW3 5BY
Tel: +44 (0)20 7435 6611
Fax: +44 (0)20 7443 9576
e-mail: admin@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

EVENTS



SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT

44th Autumn Workshop followed by AGM & Large Group

**Friday 9th and Saturday 10th November 2018
London, UK**

Large Groups: Contemporary Challenges

Chairs:

Carla Penna and Linde Wotton

Lecturers:

Earl Hopper and Teresa von Sommaruga Howard

Participants' Panel: Contemporary Applications

Large group conductors:

Göran Ahlin & Jale Cilasan

Saturday afternoon: AGM & Large Group

3 Large Groups over 2 days

**Venue: Coin St Neighbourhood Centre
South Bank, SE1 9HN**

Nearest underground station: Waterloo

Full programme and registration to follow

Group Analytic Society
1 Daleham Gardens
London NW3 5BY

Phone: +44(0)20 7435 6611
www.groupanalyticsociety.co.uk
E-mail: office@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

Contact:
Julia Porturas
Administrator

Group Analytic Society International **Quarterly Members Group**

Current members of the Society are eligible and invited to attend this group. Interested non-members may attend once.

The next QMG will take place on

Saturday 20th October 2018

at the Guild of Psychotherapists, 47 Nelson Square, London SE1

There will be three 90-minute sessions with a 90-minute break for lunch; the day will run from 9.30am - 4.30pm with the first group starting at 10.00

The conductor for the group is Ian Simpson.

The venue is a three-minute walk from Southwark Underground station. In addition to the large group room, we have the use of a kitchen - morning refreshments will be provided. For lunch, the Guild is in an area where there are many good, inexpensive places to eat

The fee for the group is £30 per day

You can pay on the day by cash or preferably by BACS to GASI

(tel. +44 20 7435 6611)

Account name: **GASI** Sort code: **40-03-02**

Account no: **11100408**

If BACS, ref **'QMG October 18'** and notify transfer by email

to: office@groupanalyticsociety.co.uk

We look forward to seeing you.

QMG Organisers: Joan Fogel, Derek Love, Jud Stone

Group Analytic Society International **Quarterly Members Group**

Revised Dates for 2019

26th January

27th April

20th July

19th October

N.B. The dates in April and January have both been changed to take account of Easter and the "Creating Large Group Dialogue" workshop.

QMG Organisers: Joan Fogel, Derek Love, Jud Stone

Scottish Quarterly Meeting of Members and Analytic Colleagues, 2018 (QMMAC)

Quarterly Meeting for members and colleagues for professional contact, dialogue and development.

QMMAC meets at the Quaker Meeting House, Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh. Victoria Terrace gives onto George IVth Bridge, just below its junction with the Royal Mile. This makes the venue central, easily accessible on foot or by public transport - a 10/15 minute walk (uphill) from the main train station - but also not an easy place to park close to.

QMMAC is open to all GASi members at the standard charge of £30 including lunch. This can be paid on the day but it is more helpful if you book through the IGA if you intend to come so that the organisers, Sheelagh McCartney and Sheena McLachlan can order sufficient lunch for all who'll be in attendance.

The format of the day:

10 to 11.30am: Large Group
12 to 1.15pm: Presentation or seminar
1.15 to 2.25pm: Lunch
2.30 to 4pm: Large group

QMMAC dates for 2018:

Friday February 23th
Friday June 15th
Friday September 7th
Friday November 30th



IAGP

International Association for Group
Psychotherapy and Group Processes

2nd IAGP International
Research Congress on:

TRAUMA & CRISIS



Save the Dates:

14-17 June 2019 | Thessaloniki Greece

Save the dates for the 18th International GASi Symposium in Barcelona, 2020

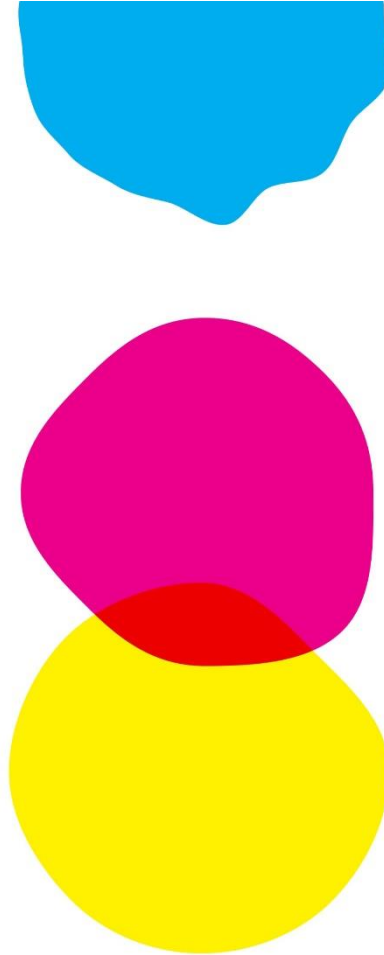
1st – 5th September 2020

**18th GASi
International
Symposium
BCN 2020**

The languages
of groups
Power to include
and exclude

Las lenguas
de los grupos
El poder de incluir
y excluir

Les llengües
dels grups
El poder d'incloure
i excloure

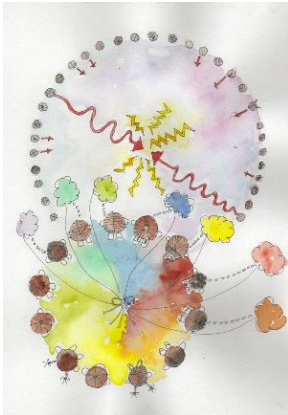


Barcelona
1-5.09.2020



A Study Programme of Connected Residential Workshops, 2019 & 2020

Creating Large Group Dialogue in Organisations and Society



In Association with the Group Analytic Society International

This is the first opportunity to bring together the potential of the large group with our work on management and leadership. It will not only enable participants to facilitate dialogue in any setting of their choosing but it will also place them at the leading edge of sophisticated approaches to management and organisational development.

WHERE?

Roffey Park, one of the foremost colleges for management training in the UK set in beautiful countryside only 15 minutes by taxi from Gatwick airport or 20 minutes from Victoria, an hour from London Bridge or Blackfriars by train. The workshops will be residential with accommodation and all meals.

WHEN?

YEAR 1: 18 – 20 January 2019; 8 – 10 March 2019; 10 – 12 May 2019; 19 – 21 July 2019; 11 – 13 October 2019

YEAR 2: 17 – 19 January 2020; 6 – 8 March 2020; 8 – 10 May 2020; 17 – 19 July 2020; 9 – 11 October 2020

<https://groupanalyticsociety.co.uk/creating-large-group-dialogue-in-organisations-and-society/>

OBITUARY

Dorothy Stock Whitaker

Emeritus Professor of Social Work, University of York

1925-2018



Dorothy Stock (as she then was) grew up in an immigrant neighbourhood in the South Side of Chicago; an only child, but with easy access to her large extended family nearby. She attended a vast High School where girls predominantly learnt domestic and secretarial skills. She had soon had enough of this and opted in to the academic stream. More than that, she declared, she was going to go to university. In the face of her family's bafflement, she quietly held her ground and followed her course. Of the 800 students in her school year, only two went to university – 'Dorrie' and one other.

By 1952, she had completed her PhD (in Social Psychology) but additionally she took all available classes in Clinical Psychology and established herself in both disciplines. Along the way, as a graduate student, she had been recruited, with some others, by Professor Herbert Thelen (a prominent figure in the T group movement) to pursue a study of dynamics in T groups. This was followed by a more particular study to examine how or whether the ideas of W.R. Bion might be operationalised within T groups. Through these research activities, she became very involved as a staff member in the NTL Institute in Bethel, Maine (recently founded by Kurt Lewin): and she attended there for a number of years.

It was through NTL that she encountered Galvin Whitaker, a charismatic Yorkshireman and polymath whom she would soon marry. Galvin was a logician, a lecturer in management studies, possessed of high-level engineering skills and fluent in a dozen or so languages.

The early/mid 60s was a momentous period for Dorrie. As well as moving to England to set up home with her husband, she (and Morton A. Lieberman) published a major text, *Psychotherapy through the Group Process*. This saw the emergence of group focal conflict theory, taking ideas from Thomas French's work with individuals and applying these to the group situation. This proved to be an influential work and gave both an international profile. Invitations came from here and there to teach and to consult. A place and people that she found particularly congenial was Scandinavia and she made a number of valued colleagues there, notably Goran Ahlin and Siv Boalt Boethius, with whom she tried to keep in touch over the years.

She was also adapting to a new work situation as she took on a lecturing post at the University of Leeds. This was relatively brief, however, and she was soon appointed to be Professor of Social Work at the University of York (making her one of the very few woman professors in the country at that time).

Thus, were the next couple of decades mapped out for her - between creating and maintaining a new department (this was the first time she had actually managed a service) and motherhood. Both of these were pre-occupying and contributed to her relative isolation from the "group world" which was very much a London "world". She kept her hand in by teaching a course on groups for her MSW students and what interested her was the exposure to a much wider variety of groups than hitherto. Similarly, she taught a weekly, post-qualifying course, *Introduction to Group Psychotherapy*, with colleagues Una

McCluskey and Anne Harrow, for intending group therapists across the various disciplines.

In 1985, she published *Using Groups to Help People* (with a 2nd edition in 2001). Dorrie regarded herself as a practical woman, but always with the rider (and a nod to Kurt Lewin) that 'there is nothing so practical as a good theory' - and that is shot through her writing, inter-locking theory and practice. The book has sold many thousands of copies and has gone on to be a classic, being used on training courses in the UK, the USA, Europe and Australia.

Along the way, she was awarded Honorary Membership of the IGA. And, in 1991, she gave the 15th S.H. Foulkes Annual Lecture, *Transposing Learnings from Group Psychotherapy to Work Groups*, thereby anticipating a substantial future development within the IGA. But, effectively, this was to be her last contact with this organisation. It was a great pity that she was so neglected as a teacher and researcher within the IGA - a huge resource overlooked.

The latter period of her career was taken up by new ventures (*Learning Programmes*) commissioned by The Department of Health, wherein social workers were encouraged and equipped to develop a research perspective in their work. This work (with Lesley Archer and Lesley Hicks) involved identifying and building on their own 'practice wisdom'. Another project, also sponsored by the Department of Health, was to do with good practice in residential child care. An expert group was appointed to steer this work and inevitably Dorrie was to the fore in this.

Despite her slender physique, Dorrie Whitaker was a robust figure, physically, mentally and interpersonally. On one occasion, when we were looking back at the setting up of a new university department, I commented on the opportunities there must have been for 'acting out', with competing agendas and personal rivalries. With a glint in her eye, she spoke of the benefits of having 'sharp elbows'; then, unbidden, she said "Stand No Crap!". Unsure I had heard right, I asked her to repeat it. She did, and I convulsed with laughter.

Recognisable, always with her shock of long white hair, she held fast to the dictum that 'old age is not for the faint-hearted'. Until relatively late in years, she was a determined cross-country skier and a keen sailor, with Galvin, going up and down the Norwegian coastline. She lived independently and, until a year ago, was to be seen driving down the narrow country lanes, travelling to Ripon for her shopping.

She was content with her lot in life - grateful for all she had, never pursuing what she did not have. The descriptions which people

turned to on hearing of her death were instructive: generous, inspiring, serious, with such a fine sense of humour, down to earth.

Truly a life well-lived.

She was pre-deceased by Galvin and is survived by Weem (her son), Katie (daughter-in-law) and Elizabeth and Alexander (grandchildren), to whom she was devoted.

Graeme Farquharson

Free Associative Gifts

Edited by Marcus Price

It was at a GASI quarterly meeting that Peter Zelaskowski asked me if I would be interested in being a Poetry editor for Contexts, and the first Free Associative Gifts was published in September 2017. One year down the line I thought it might be worth reviewing this experience.

Actually, I've had very little feedback and sometimes it does feel like throwing poems over a cliff. However, I have been touched by the generosity of those who have contributed, particularly Elizabeta Marcos and Angelika Goltz and I'm pleased to include a poem from each of them in this issue. I am also grateful to others who have shared poems, including Peter Zelaskowski whose piece about the struggles of his youth, writing and performing poems can be found in the March 2018 issue.

One or two of my poems have appeared in most issues too. The artist, Anne Westley, whose poems also featured in the March issue, has sent me a piece about my youth, which I thought might chime or maybe complement the experiences Peter described. Since Ann moved to Spain in the late 1990's I have seen very little of her although she evokes some fond memories in her rather flattering piece here. I follow Ann's piece with some examples of poems I wrote around that time.

By Angelika Goltz

Taking Turns

One turn
and lost in the maze
of omnipotent self-accusation.

As if I had created the world
and the misery,
and purposefully mislaid my instructions to happiness!

I had forgotten that you are there,
not sensed your look on me,
still and waiting for me to speak to you.

And with another turn
I bump into you.
And we laugh and play the game of hide and seek.

And it's only when I can't find you that I feel dazed.
And sometimes feel happy
just as long as I keep turning.

By Elizabeta Marcos

Once there was a train
as trains were before
grassy seats and clichés
of conversations to grow...
Please, in that train
bore me again
as wasn't in vain...
thou have never told you the score...
more.. more, more...
the wind in the window
cutting your speech
breaking my heartbeat
impossible to reach...
And the engine heat
hugging the air...
Stories you've sold
to each hair of my wear.

By Anne Westley

Marcus and I became friends in 1981. He had just finished school so must have been about 18 while I was about 32. He was very uncertain about a choice of career and seriously considered forestry which I thought would have suited him well. His poetry showed both a great sensitivity for nature as well as a deep empathy for the disadvantaged and oppressed in society. His first job was as a nurse in a nearby

Home for severely disabled people so caring for people rather than trees became his life's pursuit.

Marcus was simultaneously very serious and wildly funny. In his scruffy black leather jacket, old jeans and long hair, he exemplified the angry youth of the 80s when unemployment had begun to be a big problem for his generation. Before he found the nursing work that was to be the beginning of a life devoted to helping others, I made several drawings of Marcus.



I asked him to pose as if he was shouting at a passing limousine, to enact 'the out of work' boy yelling at a symbol of privilege passing him by. I have lost those drawings but discovered a woodcut print in a drawer created from the sketches. It is called 'School Leavers' and apart from a plump boy in the foreground, Marcus is distinctly recognisable as all the other characters in the print.

Some Poems from the 1980's by Marcus Price

The Clinker

Dry in shame the clinker sits,
Beneath the ground, its builders earned a pretty scene, it's broken
hull beyond their dream.

Once the river lapped your sides and now that saplings soar no
rowlock and ore can pride your streamline bows.

The river wind's by,
It's banks remember you and flood to say goodbye.

Certificate Presentation

Let this evening be 'organised informality'.

I'm bored already

Pickled rows of respectability

In judgement, and looking forward to their cigarette

Suits, perfumes, ties and facades

Every other life a wreck,

And crept from many simple homes, the tears, the worry, forgot,
unknown.

And the note which handshakes tell Englishmen,

Stand proudly before lighted Tory panels, live beneficially, lie,
ignore the lesser.

And become in your headmaster's phrase,

'Credible'

And may the world step back in educations praise!

'God bless'

Please stay for a cup of coffee,

Clap, clap, clap.

A day

I opened a box

It smelt of babies and dogs

It had an English dictionary a bible and television

I went home

Laid in rubble

And watched sunny squares on the floor.

I was led to another box, a stark cold figure of breathing brick.

Here inside was a lifetimes smell, neat objects, clean carpet, plastic trophies on shiny Formica.

I sat down

A foreign body filtering into the television

Nibbling junk food

Trying not to fart.

On leaving the sky was an awaiting world,

Red and bleak

Peaceful yet cold

And with falling evening, I passed it,

Towards the pub.

Please send your poems for publication in future Contexts' issues to **Marcus Price** e-mail: lbwplumb@gmail.com

The Visitors

A Psy-Fi Tale

By Mike Tait

Part IX

Chapter VI / III

Space

‘The mind is not a thing which exists but a series of events, moving and proceeding all the time.’

[‘The Group as a Matrix of the Individual’s mental Life’, in SH Foulkes Selected Papers: Psychoanalysis and Group Analysis, Karnac, 1990, p. 224]

What was it that the Visitors had asked about space? When they had begun, most of those present had thought that they might be talking about intergalactic matters and about to reveal information about where they had come from. The warder had quickly twigged that they were asking about something else – the space between people. That was when they’d asked whether research involved exploring the forces that powered volcanoes - or only if their discharges could be blocked - a feature of the thinking about crime that they’d observed. They then discovered that volcanic soil could be fertile which led to a further expansion of the metaphor. Were they imagining that crime performed a creative social function?

Their questions expanded everything - particularly terms they regarded as pejorative. Judicial officials and medical staff had found themselves being described as perpetrators of sentencing and treatment - with the implication that prisoners and patients might be seen as victims. Delegates then reluctantly decided against the use of these words. The difficulty was that without them, explanations took so much longer. It became difficult to find a location for any crime, psychiatric illness – or act of terrorism – everything seemed to hover uncertainly in the space between people. It was becoming clearer that this was the place that the Visitors line of questioning identified as the logical location of judicial action and treatment.

Why had there been no introductions? What point were the Visitors making? Why blame the Visitors? They could have all introduced themselves – but they hadn’t. What difference would it have made? The warder didn’t mind too much. He doubted whether being known by his name would have contributed much to his sense

of being known. Being defined by his work had helped him to see how much it permeated his existence. The only name they had discovered was of someone who was more likely to be known by his crime. It was as if Jason had received a gift – discovered as it was at a time when he elicited compassion rather than condemnation. But it wasn't only Jason – they'd all had a gift with the discovery of his name at that time. It was as if a different space had been created within as well as between them.

The warder found himself wondering about what occupied the space between himself and people he'd known. He thought of it as an atmosphere or a mood. Sometimes it involved strong feelings. In the prison hurt and boredom were never far away – but mostly there was familiarity in relation to a predictable routine: neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Currently he felt a less familiar kind of vitality - which included moments of fear, anxiety, pleasure and curiosity. This seemed in a kind of dance with the people in the group with whom he made eye contact. Was it this dance that the Visitors were asking about? It had been a different dance – more wary circles - with those who looked away. He noticed that looking away happened increasingly rarely.

An assortment of the Visitors' questions tumbled through his head. Could you sentence a community rather than an individual? What was an individual? Was it true that you always saw yourself in the mirror of a current or previous gaze; that even a mood carried the traces of an earlier interaction; so nothing was truly personal?

Could joining be avoided? If you refused to join a new group did that freeze your membership to old, often forgotten groups? If you joined a group, was it possible to return to the individual you had been before? Was the idea of a self to return to illusory? Did self-awareness require remembering the unremembered others with whom you remained in interaction? Without that awareness, was there only a previously booked ticket on a repetitive journey?

The warder remembered the conversation about the horizon. Prisons depended on routine and yet – what he now enjoyed - was the sense that something more responsive was being created. He puzzled about whether it was possible to run a prison if criminality wasn't clearly located. Surely they could see that locking up the successful and the unsuccessful together would never be tolerated!

Almost everyone was still known by their role and yet the challenge to this form of identity had been there from the first contact with the Visitors. The warder's role of excluding criminals from society had been redefined by the arrival of society in the prison – not

to mention the questions which followed. In the psychiatric hospital, the questions had punctuated the dogmatism associated with current practices. The manager was uncertain what role she could return to with any confidence.... A murderer, provoked into violence by memories of abandonment, had been steadied by a current interaction provoking sadness and more hopeful memories – and altering how he was viewed in the group. Then the terrorist had been displaced as the location of evil by an unexpected impulse to protect - which the manager had apparently relinquished. For several group members, internal conflicts were no longer externalized, albeit in search of opponents to condemn or victims to protect. Uncertainty, particularly not knowing who the Visitors were, had kept everyone on edge. Nothing could be taken for granted. Roles, despite their professional trappings, had come to seem primarily ways of keeping people apart. Could something new really be created between people?

What would happen if they all lived on the same street and continued to meet regularly? Would it be a bit like going to church – without the familiar rituals or the Supreme Being – unless they considered the Visitors in such a light? Would they develop rituals and lose their current uncertainties, or would anxieties just keep evolving into other anxieties? On a practical level, the warden couldn't imagine the wealthier members of the group being willing to accept a similar standard of living to the poorer members – let alone the disruptions of living next to unpredictable and poorly socialized individuals. He could imagine the reaction if he suggested such a thing to his family. They would say he was bringing work home and that such things should be kept separate.

How deep were the changes? There was hope and gratitude in Jason's eyes. Nobody could think that hope – or gratitude – outweighed murder. Nobody said that aloud. The Visitors would expand the metaphor until society shared the weight.

Chapter VI / IV

Motivation

'I said, 'Why not tell him that you know that when he steals he is not wanting the things that he steals but he is looking for something that he has a right to; that he is making a claim on his mother and father because he feels deprived of their love.' I told her [the mother] to use a language which he [the son] could understand.'

[From 'The Anti-Social Tendency,' 1956, D.W. Winnicott]

It was hard to know why he did what he did. He didn't need the money. In the prison he'd said that he was just greedy but then the Visitors had questioned the evolution of greed. They refused to imagine 'just' anything. They were curious about the motivation that lay behind anything he had ever done. They were less interested in actions or 'obeying the law' than they were in how such things came about. *'What is the impact on a relationship when apparently identical behaviour is motivated by a loving impulse rather than the anticipation of gain?'* This was a question that they'd asked him in the prison and was back in his mind as he looked at the politician, surprisingly untroubled by his proximity to Jason. Why had they asked him that question? Why had they invited him to conduct the group? Was he becoming as interested in motivation as they were?

Strangely, since the invitation, his inclination to use the situation to his advantage had ebbed away. At times, he hardly recognized himself. He'd become interested in people's stories. He didn't feel altruistic; he felt fed by the interactions. He particularly liked the eye contact he made with others when they were talking about fathers: his loneliness was shared – some kind of internal pond became less congealed and good memories slipped through a previously impermeable filter. He was intrigued by the evolution of the politician who'd been so absent from his daughter and seemed to have had so many affairs. He'd found the interaction between Jason, the terrorist and the nurse extraordinary. He'd felt fond of Jason when he'd given up his chair to the woman who heard voices.

It was very different than the buzz he got from a scam. That was more of an instant hit: this offered less familiar sensations. He felt more joined up. He felt warmed by his interactions with the men – awkward with the women. Initially images of interactions with his mother returned when the therapist or the manager looked at him in a particular way; the pond thickened and the filter closed the flow of memory and sensation. But increasingly, he was drawn in and even found himself caring about what happened to these strangers. He listened intently when others spoke about parents who'd been unavailable in ways he'd never thought about. He belonged when they were talking about loneliness and longing. Was everyone really deprived in some way?

But the Visitors didn't seem to tolerate insights where anyone could rest. What had they meant when they asked whether disturbances allowed for new possibilities? He tried to remember in sequence all the questions of the Visitors so that he had some sense of the order of things. Was this the familiar calculating part of himself?

But he wasn't thinking about profit – this was something else. He didn't feel in control. He was still surprised that he'd spoken aloud about that Christmas - and even more puzzled by the sequence of events that had followed.

He thought about the tenor of the Visitors' questions. They seemed to lead to the conclusion that many of his actions had been attempts to fill in a gap left by the absence of his father and to defend against the impingements of his mother. Yet, his background seemed much less chaotic than that of Jason and the schizophrenic woman. There had been a kind of sparse stability in his childhood years. He'd learnt to switch off and calculate around his father's absences and his mother's distress. He'd never let himself become overwhelmed.

Could his business practices really be traced back to a sense of infantile grievance?

Was his focus on accumulation in identification with his father's money-making?

Was thinking about the cost of presents a way of not being overwhelmed by his mother's distress?

Did anxiety fuel his greed? If the expression of this anxiety was shaped by the social context, was his crime a reflection of a social disturbance?

Did everything really make sense if you thought about it for long enough and traced its roots back far enough?

He couldn't shake off the worry that he might be just making excuses.

The manager had joined him in his silence. She wondered whether fraud was when you packaged a policy which was no longer in accord with the emotional needs of recipients so that it could be implemented without serious protest. But surely this was marketing. Was this a package she'd first unwrapped as an oldest daughter and then tried to deliver to others ever since? But not knowing what to do was unbearable. Trying to remain attuned to emotional reality, as the Visitors had seemed to advocate [or at least the answers to their questions had seemed to suggest], was a landscape with few points of stability. She'd initially felt attracted to the power of the politician and the calculation of the businessman which had seemed familiar. Now she felt attracted to their apparent vulnerability - which didn't. Had the Visitors predicted the direction of her journey? Was this why the Visitors were so interested in the fluidity of the communication between people and had seemed to regard enthusiasm for terminology as a refuge against change and development? Was knowing so much

different than discovering?

The politician was uncertain what to do next. He needed to spend time with his daughter: that much was clear. He also wanted to have sex with the nurse but that was no longer so simple. Awareness of motivation raised questions which delayed action.

How much could he change? If choice was always in a state of becoming, was he more able to choose now than he had been – or was he as much the slave of his beginnings as the murderer and the woman who heard voices? How long would it be before, with familiar structures around him, he returned to old habits? But if he couldn't choose to break a habit then what did this say about the assertions he'd previously made? And if you didn't understand the people who made apparent 'choices' - or on whom the 'choices' of others impacted – what did you understand? Without pro-actively stepping into the shoes of others was the notion of 'choice' a way of avoiding grappling with the complexity of interactions?

This was a very long silence. It was broken when the businessman/fraudster/conductor announced that his name was Alasdair. The politician was struck by how different it felt when you knew someone's life story before their name. Did roles get eroded when names were revealed in this way? He had been a guardian of morality – motivated by a sense of duty. This stature had crumbled alongside the memories he'd shared and the overtures he'd made. But to introduce himself would still feel disturbingly intimate.

Anyway, he was a well-known figure: those who listened to the news must have heard his name. Why had they not addressed him by it in the group? And, what would it mean to share his name when only the two sentenced criminals were known by their names – especially in this strange world where 'guilt' seemed less important than 'story'. Would he be implicated in some way?

The therapist wondered why she had not yet shared her name. She was used to her patients knowing little and imagining much - but this was something else. What it would mean to uncover her name in a difficult group of human beings which now included herself? Did she want her name 'discovered' in the context of these relationships?

Part X will be in the December 2018 issue

CONTEXTS' COLUMNISTS

Quantitative Unease

By Susanne Vosmer

A column dedicated to demystifying psychotherapy research – love it, hate it, or both...at least try to know what it's all about!

The Return of the Repressed

Just as the theory of repression was considered as one of the cornerstones on which the structure of psychoanalysis rests, the quantitative research paradigm was one of the building blocks, on which science rests. If Group Analysis (GA) was a science, it would then depend on the quantitative paradigm, wouldn't it? But is it true that GA is a science? Or is it an art, or even a religion, as someone has suggested? How can we decide? To say that GA is a science (or an art), only makes sense, if we can either confirm or reject these statements, from a semantic relativist viewpoint. This means that we need 'evidence' that makes us decide. But what kind of 'evidence'? And what counts as 'evidence'?

Over the years, 'evidence' has become synonymous with 'reality' in the same way as the repressed was a synonym of unconscious. This leaves us with another dilemma. What is 'reality'? From a truth-relativism point of view, the opinion that GA is a science, or art, can't be said to be simply true, but it's true only relative to a social practice or social group. There is an inherent paradox though, as we shall see: When Dalal suggests that GA is an art, it only means that it's an art for him. And when Foulkes argues it's a science, it's true for him. Consequently, when Foulkes believes that GA is a science and Dalal says it isn't, there's no contradiction between these beliefs. They're both true and GA could be a science and an art. Where does this 'truth' leave us in relation to what constitutes 'reality' and 'evidence'?

Nowhere. It seems to me that GA has been caught up in the battleground between positivist and anti-positivist proponents. We inherited the application of mathematical methods from 18th century Enlightenment that formed a happy relationship with 19th century positivism. The rational understanding of reality and with it, predictability and reproducibility, became an 'ego-ideal'. An ideal,

our founding father and some of his descendants aspired to achieve, or to adhere to. Not attaining this ideal, would therefore result in displeasure. Hence, the realisation that numbers don't hold all the answers and 'truths' to what we're examining, trying to measure or prove, may even cause some group analysts psychic pain. So, avoiding such displeasure, offers a motive to adhere to the quantitative paradigm, or at least, strive to do so. If taken to the extreme, they're in danger of forming an unhealthy attachment to this tradition. It relies on methodological monoism (unity of scientific method), an exact science, causal scientific explanation, with an emphasis on the mathematical ideal-type of science and general laws of explanation.

When no other alternatives are considered, the attachment to the positivist tradition could almost become like fetish (without the sex), a fixation and substitute object for certainty, which absorbs all their research interests. However, it means that a part of the 'research id' is repressed, out of allegiance with the ego, and detached from a reality that offers 'evidence' to the contrary: knowledge of other research traditions. Some may perceive this as a threat to the ego or to the research image of GA.

Luckily, we can treat this research neurosis. Even though, it bears the risk of the 'return of the repressed' (that other methods exist) and would result in displeasure. But by bringing repressed knowledge into consciousness, we can leave behind the fantasy, the fetish and unhealthy attachment, and form a more mature bond with the positivist paradigm. I'm not suggesting that we get rid of mathematics, number crunching, measurements and quantitative methodologies. Quite the opposite. We should embrace them. Because in practical terms, if we rejected the quantitative tradition, we would deny ourselves access to all the exiting methods and implications that arise from this paradigm. Why should or would we want to do this?

Before answering hastily, let's consider the purpose of methods. If we want to gain new knowledge of, or insight into, group psychotherapy, we need methods. Right? Methods can be valid and/or useful, both or neither. There isn't really a simple way to decide whether validity or usefulness are preferable. It depends on the question. If the question is whether we should reject quantitative methods, we may like to ask ourselves whether this would be useful for GA.

I suggest it's not. By rejecting this paradigm, we would deny ourselves access to multiplicity, wouldn't we? This would be like eating spinach every day, and who would like to eat these leafy greens seven days a week? Probably not many of you. So why would we in

GA insist on solely using the qualitative research paradigm and reject quantitative methods? It doesn't make sense to me. Unless, we've formed an unhealthy attachment with the hermeneutic paradigm - the qualitative tradition.

Like most things in life, excess or elimination, belong to the realm of the id and superego. For a varied diet of knowledge and a healthy ego, we need a taste of quantitative methods, too. Therefore, I advocate for the 'return of the repressed'. Food for thought. Cheerio.

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