

## INQUIRY AND FREE ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2019

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### SYLLABUS

Though class will not start for a few more weeks please consider volunteering to present some clinical vignettes from your current patients. Our emphasis will be on a microanalysis of these vignettes to see how our detailed listening and inquiry may deepen the patient's introspection. We will revisit the somewhat abandoned technique of free association to see if it may still play a role in facilitating our patient's treatment. The seminar will also explore how we may consider applying free association, however defined, to the unpacking of dreams. Looking forward to meeting March 5th and please feel free to email me if you have any questions.

Below are two vignettes that may be instructive about the challenges of listening to our patients.

1) *I have, I am aware, told this 'story in a very rambling way so that it may be difficult for anyone to find their path through what may be a sort of a maze. I cannot help it. I have stuck to my idea of being in a country cottage with a silent listener, hearing between the gusts of the wind and amidst the noises of the distant sea, the story as it comes. And, when one discusses an affair--a long, sad affair--one goes back, one goes forward. One remembers points that one has forgotten and one explains them all the more minutely since one recognizes that one has forgotten to mention them in their proper places and that one may have given, by omitting them, a false impression. I console myself with thinking that this is a real story and that, after all, real stories are probably told best in the way a person telling a story would tell them. They will then seem most real.*

from ***The Good Soldier***, by Ford Maddox Ford

2)

*.....Are all autobiographies, all life narratives, not fictions, at least in the sense that they are constructions?*

*(#1)... "When I was eight my father hit me with a tennis racket," says a subject. "Not true," says his father. "I was swinging the racket and accidentally hit him." Is the boy's or the father's memory of the event correct? I call it a memory, but that is an oversimplification: it is a memory-trace that has been subjected to a certain interpretation. I might even say that it is a memory-trace that has been subjected to an interpretation behind which lies a certain will to interpret (in the boy's case, perhaps a will to give the event the darkest available cast; in the father's, a will to give it a harmless one). Is it possible — philosophically but also neurologically — to speak of a memory that is uncolored in this way, pristine?*

From *Lives by Omission*

By *J. M. Coetzee*

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## **March 5th**

### **Introduction**

Four very short readings:

Freud, S., (1925) An Autobiographical Study, pp. 40-45

Freud, S. (1920) A Note on the Prehistory of the Technique of Psychoanalysis, pp. 263-5

As a thought experiment try applying Schiller's technique (described in p.264 in the Freud article of 1920) to one of your own dreams, or daydreams, or random thoughts. For privacy's sake we are only interested in your *reaction to the process* and not your *content* of your associations. (You may opt out of this exercise if you wish.)

Brenner, C .Psychoanalytic Technique pp.190-4

Moses, I. (1992) The Analyst's Questions pp 300-8

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## **March 12th**

### **Free Association: What it is; What it is not**

Lear, J. The Fundamental Rule and Fundamental Value of Psychoanalysis 2015, pp 511-526

Lear, J Freud, pp. 126-133

Edelson, M. What is the Analyst Talking About, pp. 99-101,136-141

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## **March 19th**

### **What do you hear?**

Akhtar, S.Ch.1: Four Kinds of Analytic Listening & Ch. 3 Listening to Actions

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**March 26th**

**The Importance of Being Superficial**

Wachtel, P. The Surface and the Depths 2003

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**April 2nd**

**Think about it**

Antonovsky, A. The Thinking Cure 1978 pp 388-403

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**April 9th**

**Curiosity or Holding**

Hopkins, L.B. (1998). D. W. Winnicott's Analysis of Masud Khan: A Preliminary Study of Failures of Object Usage. *Contemp. Psychoanal.*, 34(1):5-47.

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**April 16th**

**Unpacking inner experience**

Blatt, S. The Patient's Contribution to the Therapeutic Process 2013

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**April 30th**

**Avoidance of Looking Inward**

Gray, P. On Helping Analysands Observe 1994

Gray, P. The Capacity for Viewing 1994

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**May 7th**

**Problems with Inquiry**

Bush, F. Why Do We Ask Questions 1994

Bush, F. Creating a Psychoanalytic Mind 1994

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**May 14th**

**Inquiry into Acting Out**

Casement, P. The Search for Space: An Issue of Boundaries. Chapt 9, Learning from the Patient  
158-179

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