PRESENTS ITS BIENNIAL ETHICS WORKSHOP

Irwin Hirsch, Ph.D.

Coasting in the Countertransference: 
The Ethical Dilemma of the Psychotherapist’s Self-Interest

Saturday, April 9, 2011

Registration 8:30 a.m. • Conference 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Davis Auditorium, Fletcher Allen Health Care, Burlington, Vermont

This workshop will focus on self-reflection as a foundation for ethics in psychotherapy. Although the therapeutic frame of psychotherapy is designed to align the interests of patients and their psychotherapists, significant conflicts of interest inevitably persist. In his book, Coasting in the Countertransference, Dr. Hirsch advances the thesis that the psychoanalyst’s interest in maintaining a comfortable emotional equilibrium often conflicts with the patient’s interest to have countertransference used actively in order to advance treatment. Acknowledging one’s own propensity to act in self-serving ways is both a cardinal function of the ethical mind and an indispensable clinical tool. Presentations will focus on ethical considerations around therapeutic impasses, conflicting financial interests, and decisions pertaining to self-disclosure. Dr. Hirsch invites us into difficult topics by painting vivid portraits of his own clinical work with unstinting intellectual and emotional honesty. Attendees will be encouraged to participate with their own clinical stories.

Objectives: • Participants will understand how the inevitable human propensity to avoid emotional pain often impedes the therapist’s active examination and use of countertransference, creating an ethical conflict with the patient’s interest in receiving an optimal therapeutic interaction. Participants will become more aware of this conflict of interest in their own clinical work.
• Participants will understand how the psychotherapist’s financial self-interest may conflict with the patient’s treatment goals. Participants will be better equipped to assess the ethical implications of the financial incentives that can influence treatment decisions.
• Participants will obtain an ethical framework to evaluate whether the psychotherapist’s personal disclosures to the patient have therapeutic value. Participants will use this awareness to make their decisions about self-disclosure in a more effective and judicious way.

Registration Form:

Name _______________________________________________
Address _______________________________________________
Phone _______________________________________________
Email _______________________________________________

VAPS member? Yes________ No________
Student? Yes________ No________

Students, please indicate program: ______________________

Cancellation Policy: No refunds after April 2, 2011.

Fee Schedule: Before April 2: After April 2:
VAPS Member $120 $135
Non-Member $140 $155
Student $60 $75

Registration fee includes lunch and refreshments at breaks.
Directions from Interstate 89:
Take Exit 14 West onto Main Street in Burlington.
Turn right onto East Avenue, then left onto Carrigan Drive.
At the top of the hill, turn right at the traffic light onto Beaumont Avenue. Follow Beaumont Avenue to the underground parking garage, entrance on your right.
Conference attendees will receive a coupon for parking; please park on Level L (Green) or Level LL (Purple) to leave room for patients on upper levels. From the parking garage, go to Building Entrance on Level 2 (Orange).
The conference will be held in DAVIS AUDITORIUM, located on Level 2 at the far end of the building. Follow signs to Davis Auditorium.

Schedule
8:30 a.m. Registration
9:00 a.m. “The Sometimes Failure to Use Countertransference Productively”
10:30 a.m. Break
10:45 a.m. “The Problem of Money and the Self-Interest of the Therapist”
12:00 p.m. Lunch: McClure Lobby Conference Room
1:00 p.m. Reconvene and Small Group Discussion; groups will be self-assigned
2:15 p.m. Break
2:30 p.m. “The Controversial Question of Self-Disclosure”
3:45 p.m. Large Group Discussion and Closing Remarks
4:30 p.m. Closing

About the Presenter:
Irwin Hirsch, Ph.D., has a private practice in New York City, where he also supervises and teaches at a number of psychoanalytic institutes. He is author of Coasting in the Countertransference: Conflicts of Self Interest between Analyst and Patient. This book won the Goethe Award, presented by the Section on Psychoanalysis of the Canadian Psychological Association to honor the year’s outstanding contribution to the field. In addition, he holds the title of Distinguished Visiting Faculty at the William Alanson White Institute. He is the former director of the Manhattan Institute for Psychoanalysis; he teaches and supervises in that program and the Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis at New York University. Dr. Hirsch serves on the editorial boards of Psychoanalytic Dialogues, Psychoanalytic Perspectives, and Ricerco Psicoanalitica, and he is co-editor of the Psychoanalysis, Arts, and Culture section of Contemporary Psychoanalysis. He has published over seventy articles, chapters, and reviews and he has presented extensively and internationally.

VAPS 2011 Ethics Conference
The Ethical Dilemma of the Psychotherapist’s Self-Interest
with: Irwin Hirsch, Ph.D.
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VAPS Membership Information: The VAPS Membership year runs from September 1 to August 31 annually (new bylaws). To join VAPS or to renew your membership, go to www.vapsvt.org to obtain your Membership Application Form for 2010-2011. Mail your completed form & dues payment to: VAPS, c/o Mika Barker-Hart, 184 Painter Hill Road, Middlebury, VT 05753. (Questions: Susan Lillich, Membership Committee Chair, 876-1100 or slillich@vapsvt.org).