

Contemporary Psychodynamic Practices



Aims

- To reflect on contemporary practices in Psychodynamic counselling
- Brief introduction to contemporary approaches
- To consider how far we have travelled since the early days of Freud.

Question?

- Which elements of Psychoanalysis/Psychodynamic thinking do you think are still relevant today?

Since Freud



Carl Jung



Erich Fromm



Theodore Reik



Harry Stack Sullivan



Alfred Adler



Anna Freud

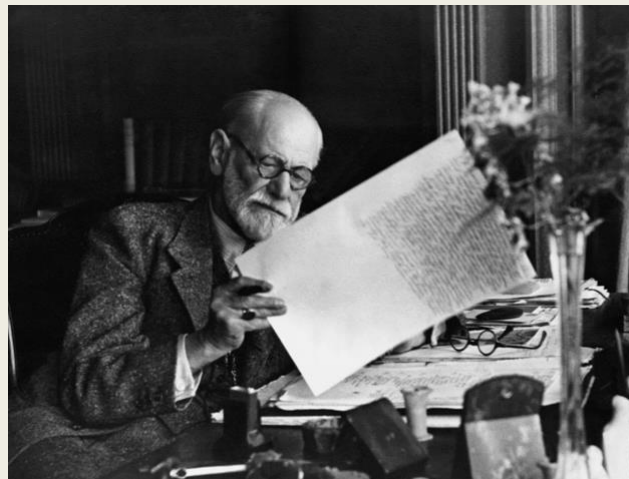


Karen Horney



Melanie
Klein

- Long been criticised
- Today there are many different schools
- No longer about the analyst and the couch
- Growing body of evidence regarding the efficacy of psychodynamic work



What is psychodynamic thinking today?

- Learning about oneself
- Managing difficult feelings
- Integration of other approaches
- The central goal
- Bringing together different experiences
- Most behaviours, thoughts, feelings, symptoms have meaning

Basic Tenets of Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling

- Safe environment
- Highlighting avoidance
- Importance of relationships
- Client's sense of self
- Therapeutic relationship
- Patterns of behaviours
- Exploring unconscious meaning



- Talking Therapy/Cure
- Recognising/Expressing and Understanding
- Therapist listens for resistance
- Exploring and supporting defenses



Why do clients come for counselling?

- Repetition of past mistakes
- Relationship difficulties
- Employment issues

Psychodynamic Therapy

- Focus on expression and the affect of emotions
- Exploration of suppression of difficult thoughts and feelings
- Discussion of past experiences
- Exploration of recurring themes and patterns within relationships and life
- Exploration of the relationships within the client's life
- Focus on the therapeutic relationship (transference)
- Exploration of fantasy life.
- Therapy explores insecurities, in a space where it feels safe to do so.

Contemporary psychoanalysis

- Object Relations Therapy
- Self Psychology
- Interpersonal Psychotherapy
- Brief psychodynamic therapy
- Neuro-Psychoanalysis

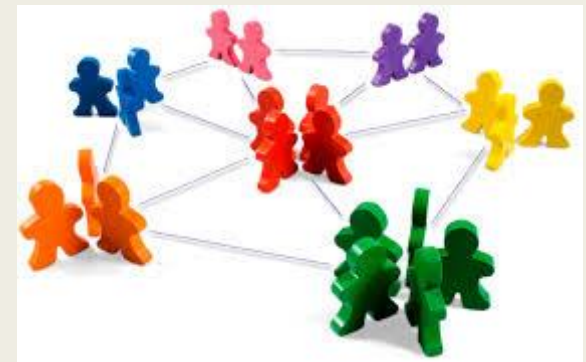


Object Relations Theory

- This theory emphasizes the importance of interpersonal-relations, mostly within the family and particularly between the mother and the child.
- The term “Object” actually means a person e.g. the significant person in the child’s life
- Relations is the interpersonal relations that occur.
- Object Relations theorists will want to explore how the client sees themselves and how they interact with the other.
- Key Theorists: Melanie Klein, Ronald Fairbairn and Donald Win

Self

- Exploring the self
- Interpersonal relationships
- Exploring patterns of behaviour
- Recognising recurring themes
- The importance of the “Holding Environment”



Interpersonal Psychotherapy

Horney and Stack Sullivan

- Time-limited and structured
- Therapeutic relationship
- Attachment theory
- Coping Strategies
- Psychological symptoms can be understood as a response to difficulties in relationships

Principles of Brief Therapy

- Weekly sessions
- Careful screening of clients
- Looking at past and present
- Specific treatment goals
- Ego Functioning and defense mechanisms
- Use of other approach techniques
- More confrontive and direct
- Empirical Studies

Psychoanalysis and Feminism

- Juliet Mitchell: *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*
- Freudian theory criticised for assumptions that women are inferior to men/
- Societal Expectations at the time of Freud's writing.
- Freud did encourage women to become analysts.
- Woman's role just to be the mother?

Neuro-Psychoanalysis

- [Where Brain meets the Mind](#)

Conclusion

- Different world
- Advances in neurology, social sciences and psychology
- Abandonment of the couch and instinct motivation
- Movement towards briefer therapy