

Memorandum on a reform of psychoanalytic education. *International Psychoanalysis* 8:33-35, 1999

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Memorandum about a reform of the psychoanalytic education¹

The following proposals for a reform of the psychoanalytic education within the realm of the IPA are the outcome of discussions with many colleagues from all IPA-regions. The critical exchange between teachers and students, and a mutual evaluation based on scientific criteria, are at the centre of our proposals for a reform of the education of future psychoanalysts.

Prognosis and self-fulfilling-prophecy

The prognosis for the future of psychoanalysis in the vision of former presidents (W. Gillespie, L. Rangell, S. Lebovici, R. Wallerstein, J. Sandler, H. Etchegoyen) and of the present president, O. Kernberg, will not materialize as a self-fulfilling-prophecy. Only if the IPA supports favourable conditions for a radical reform of the education of the next generations will change occur.

We now have to create the conditions for the "future attractiveness of psychoanalysis to the brightest intellectuals and future students in bringing about the flourishing of psychoanalytic profession as well as of psychoanalytic science" (Kernberg 1998). Indeed, the IPA has already introduced under the leadership of R. Wallerstein and J. Sandler, innovations which in the long run will attract creative minds: in view of the long neglect of systematic research, the establishing of a "Standing Conference on Psychoanalytic Research" and of a "Research Training Program" (Fonagy & Emde, 1997), and the funding of research projects by the IPA, are definite marks of progress.

Unfortunately, the effects of these measures on the training and on the practising analysts will be minor and very slow ones. Most researchers work outside of their local or regional institute, and their influence on the training of candidates is consequently peripheral or non-existent. Although this disturbing situation has come about for all kind of reasons, the most important one is the structure and function of the tri-partite training model as such. In the traditional system of training analysis, supervision and courses, the teaching of contemporary research methods and findings is mostly missing.

The substitution of the tri-partite system by the triad of teaching, treatment and research. In order to modernize the training, fundamental changes are necessary. Therefore we ask the IPA to introduce the classical triad of teaching, treatment and research as the leading model for psychoanalytic institutes. For historical reasons in psychoanalysis, this academic triad has been missing from the beginning onwards. The unfavourable consequences for psychoanalysis as a science were not obvious during the period of the great discoveries; but in times of psychoanalytic pluralism, and in view of the scientific obligation to justify and to validate various theories, the future of psychoanalysis depends on systematic research and the teaching of scientific principles.

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Most institutes do not promote the interdisciplinary standing of psychoanalysis by inviting experts from other fields, and any interchange with applied psychoanalysis (Esman, 1998) is usually missing. We support Sandler's (1998) proposition: "Such corresponding members (finding the right name is difficult) should have ample opportunity to meet with psychoanalysts, and to exchange ideas with them. I believe that such a modification of the IPA ... will broaden its base in the intellectual community..." (p. 46).

Without a replacement of the tri-partite model by the classical triad, research will not gain an influential role in psychoanalytic institutes. In a time of pluralism, and the need to compare various theories and techniques, our common ground should be critical investigations according to modern standards.

The principles summarized by D. Tuckett (1998) for the assessment of papers submitted to the Journal make a good starting point for the evaluation of the work and the knowledge of candidates as well as of members.

After fifty years of complaints about the negative aspects of the tri-partite model, especially about the double-edged function of the training analysis and the irreconcilable problems it causes, a fundamental change is overdue. At a panel chaired by Pulver on "The training analyst system: asset or liability?" (Reporter C. Masur, 1998) a majority was in favor of a re-design of the entire system. Simultaneously, and as a consequence of the disturbing existence of "many psychoanalyses" (Wallerstein 1988) and their diffusion into the dynamic psychotherapies and into the psychotherapeutic universe in general there is a strong tendency to cling to outdated structures and regulations.

Historical changes and the expansion of psychoanalysis

After the collapse of communism and the liberation of many countries from dictatorships, psychoanalysis faces an extraordinary expansion. We share the concern of the Executive Council about training standards and about the essentials of psychoanalysis; however, we are still convinced that our proposals will raise professional as well as the scientific standards, and further the growth of psychoanalysis world-wide. It is fortunate that pioneering times occur now and then, and that these bring about innovations. The experience gained by pioneers becomes particularly important at the present time, because in the recently unified parts of Germany, in the East European countries, and in the former USSR the interest in psychoanalysis will take a great leap forward in the next few years. In these countries, as has always been the case, psychoanalytic self-made men and women will go their own way, even if they are rejected by the IPA on account of a short training analysis.

Irreconcilable contradictions of the therapeutic and training analysis

Our appeal for innovations is based upon the deficiencies of the present model. Reform could make the kind of questions recently expressed by A. Sandler (1998) should become superfluous. In the British Society, we learn

"it is not rare to accept people who have been in analysis for a decade or more. As our training requires the candidate to be in a training analysis until his graduation, a minimum of another four or five years has to be considered, and this would truly be a minimum. We have to pose the question of why we tend, generally speaking, to keep our candidates on our couches for such a long time? Why do we often appear to be disregarding their analytic experience prior to starting their training analyses? Is it because we think that it

takes so long to transmit the essence of the analytic method? Or is it that nowadays we see a lot more pathology in our candidates because we have learned more about the importance of analysing early disturbances? Are we in fact saying that unless these early disorders are thoroughly analysed our candidates could not, in our view, function properly as analysts? Or could it be that we, as training analysts, find it difficult to know when our candidates are ready to start work with patients?" (p.73).

A straightforward answer to these questions is in place: It has been known for decades that the training analysis (or, in the open system, the personal analysis starting long before the application) is supposed to work as a "supertherapy" (M. Balint, 1948) and as the core of the tri-partite model. It should "transmit the essence of the psychoanalytic method." The therapeutic and didactic function create a squaring of the circle and paralysing conflicts. It is an astounding fact that against better knowledge the "core" of the model is heavily overstrained. Candidates and analysts are permanently overburdened as a result of the two tasks of the "Lehranalyse", opposing each other. To find a solution we have to look for reforms.

Our proposals decentralize the training analysis and limit the right of the institute to prescribe an analysis with an acknowledged analyst, be he/she an appointed training analyst or a member of the institute. We plead for a complete disconnection of the personal analysis from the main body of the psychoanalytic education.

The introduction of the didactic analysis as a necessary self-experience and an essential part of a professional career belongs to the great innovations of psychoanalysis. It is indispensable for an analytic therapist to experience for himself/herself the effects of unconscious processes on transferences and defenses in a intersubjective exchange. From the didactic point of view, the therapeutic changes a candidate is able to observe in connection with transference and resistance are unwitting by-products. For patients and for the candidates as suffering human beings, the therapeutic by-products of the "experiment in free association" for which he/she is volunteering are of course the essential goal.

Although it is possible to distinguish only in the abstract between the therapeutic aspect of a candidate's analysis and its indirect didactic function such a differentiation has to be made. Otherwise the dilemma of the training analysis with its supposed two functions will continue to impede the future of psychoanalysis.

The problems of the institutionalized training analysis as the core of the tri-partite model have been well known for decades. Almost all of nearly one hundred publications dealing with the training system surveyed by Thomä (1993) refer to the dilemma brought about by the fact that training analysis is overstrained. Most of those authors, however, are reluctant to draw consequences from the negative side of their evaluation. Similarly in a series of nine articles in the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* (1988, 1989) by prominent analysts about the future of psychoanalysis, an imbalance of the curriculum is at least implied. Often professional politics lead to the adoption of diplomatic language: for instance, A. Freud (1971) succumbed to institutional pressure and against her conviction called her request for a full-time psychoanalytic education including research an "utopia".

It is true that, consciously or at least unconsciously, most of us went into analysis with therapeutic reasons, hopes and goals in mind. But the right of an institute to request a training analysis is based exclusively on the didactic aspect of the "Lehranalyse". The confusion is expressed in the slogan "back to the couch" as a solution for controversies

about clinical matters. In the power-games between the schools and between individuals that slogan connects the right "psychoanalytic spirit" with the idea of a long and good enough, high-frequency training-analysis.

It makes no difference if the personal analysis starts before the application. In the "closed" and "open" models alike, and in the "reporting" and the "non-reporting" (Wallerstein 1985), the dilemmas are due to the destructive fusion of making a professional career dependent on a very personal treatment.

Freud's (1937) position is still valid from a didactic points of view : the training analysis is supposed to give "the apprentice a firm conviction of the existence of the unconscious, if it enables him, when repressed material emerges, to perceive in himself things which would otherwise be incredible to him, and if it shows him a first sample of the technique which has proved to be the only effective one in analytic work"(p.248). (We render Freud's original "Lehrling" as "apprentice", instead of "learner" as Strachey did.)

The following solution seems to be a reasonable one: Psychoanalytic Institutes are only entitled to request a strictly defined amount of analytic sessions (say 200) as "Lehranalyse" (with a didactic-analyst). Afterwards candidates should be free to decide, without having to inform the training committee, whether and with whom they want to continue their therapeutic analysis.

If our reform is introduced we assume that many candidates will continue their analysis with their former didactic analyst, depending on the goals they have in mind and the gains they expect from a long enough therapeutic analysis.

Our proposal takes into account the right of an educational institution to request a self-experience for professional reasons only. At the same time it secures the autonomy of the candidate as a suffering human being with regard to his/her therapeutic analysis. This solution guarantees both institutional and personal rights. It is quite different from the so-called personal analysis (any analysis with its therapeutic and professional aspects is, of course, 'personal'!) of the "open" system as practised for instance in the French and Swiss Societies. According to the "open" model, people who want to choose psychoanalysis as a profession have to be in "personal analysis" an undefined length of time (open-ended) until they are allowed to apply for training. Only retrospectively and after many years of analysis (at graduation at the latest), can the trainee be sure that he has had enough therapeutic analysis. Clearly the would-be candidate is put into the position of a patient whose cure is as uncertain as are the criteria for passing the application interviews. The lack of reliable and valid criteria looms heavily upon the application, and upon the very subjective evaluation of the interviewers (Kappelle 1996). In many instances, it is impossible to arrive at a somehow reliable evaluation before a student presents cases, and himself in seminars. All kind of uncertainties remain, especially with regard to the student's self-evaluation. Many prominent analysts confess afterwards that it took them decades to feel at home in our professional community. From the beginning onwards and for all kind of reasons, the career of analysts is burdened with the most difficult and anxiety provoking examinations: It is a continuous evaluation of the person who does not know for sure what really is examined - after years of being left in the dark. How can a "personal analysis" work under conditions which permanently undermines the patients self-security? The statutes of the Swiss Psychoanalytic Society proclaim that the worth of the personal analysis as core and basis of the training can only be evaluated afterwards. To quote: "At an appropriate point in time (the personal analysis) will be supplemented by the experience of supervised treatments and accumulation of theoretical knowledge" (our

translation of the statues). In view of the risks which a young person, usually with an academic background, is facing, the recommendation given to her/him makes sense: Work in another profession at least until that uncertain "appropriate" moment has come. But from the point of view of furthering the professional growth of a young intellectual who wants to become a psychoanalyst, such a recommendation and the form of the statutes themselves are absurd. Isn't a radical reform overdue?

If a candidate is free to do what she/he wants after the fulfilment of the required period of "didactic" analysis, the often tragic consequences of a mismatch between analysand and training analyst are alleviated. There are an unknown number of candidates who remain in analysis for hundreds of sessions because they are afraid of the repercussions of a terminated or interrupted analysis on their career. Even if only 5 - 10 percent of training analyses suffer from a poor fit, between analysand and analyst, a change must be considered. Kantrowitz (1993), on the basis of the Boston follow-up studies, concluded that what most important in a successful outcome of analysis was the match or fit between two participants.

The slogan "one analysis for the institute, another one for myself" demonstrates a very unhealthy dominance. For instance Ernest S. Wolf in his autobiography (1998) calls his interrupted analysis with Maxwell Gitelson a "disaster". Many other analysts will agree that Wolf's experience is not unique (Lichtenberg 1998; Menaker 1995). In order to avoid such unfavourable consequences of a mismatch between analysand and analyst, when the strictly limited amount of sessions for "didactic" reasons have been completed it must be left to the candidate, to decide what he wants to do on account of personal considerations. We mention two points for deliberation: If he/she has not experienced the power of unconscious motivations by then, a further "Lehranalyse" is not advisable. If the candidate as patient does not feel any improvements, then it is likely that there has been a mismatch, and a change of analyst should be considered for therapeutic reasons.

Improvement of the master-apprentice relationship

Instead of overburdening the "training analysis" with contradictory tasks, the psychoanalytic method should be transmitted through the exemplars of experienced analysts presenting their cases. In our master-apprentice-model, the role of teachers is emphasized. In addition, the form and content of supervisions have to be intensified. Taking up Freud's statement of the "first sample of the technique", the supervisory experience may well serve to provide variations of technique (Szecződy et. al 1993).

Besides the lack of research, it has been a serious shortcoming in the traditional training that the candidates had only very limited opportunities to learn by observing experienced analysts at work as closely as possible.

The recent survey by Morris (1992) "Psychoanalytic training today", supports our proposals for reform. Among the "least expected findings" from Morris's research questionnaire is the following: "In none of the 28 institutes of the American Psychoanalytic Association is it the practice to have training analysts or even junior faculty ever present in continuous case conferences, though faculty may present brief vignettes of clinical material in their other courses. Rather it is always the practice that candidates present recent or current material in such conferences, and no institute reported having the goal of

following a single case from start to finish. Thus, the only completed analysis that a candidate experiences longitudinally is his or her own" (p. 1200).

Morris regrets that Loewald's (1956) "encouragement for experienced faculty to present their case material to students has not become a reality, but also current candidates have less and less opportunity to participate in and benefit from continuous case discussion or supervision of a case through termination" (p. 1209).

If candidates have access to the work of senior colleagues as early as possible - even before they begin with their own analysis - the master-apprentice-model will fulfil a most fruitful function.

We hope that the Executive Board of the IPA realizes that our proposals are intended to increase the standards of psychoanalytic education.

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Memorandum

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