

MODEL 3
THE
INTERSUBJECTIVE
PERSPECTIVE
OF CONTEMPORARY
RELATIONAL THEORY

1

THE LOCUS OF THE THERAPEUTIC
ACTION IN THIS RELATIONAL
MODEL ALWAYS INVOLVES
MUTUALITY OF INFLUENCE –
BOTH THERAPIST AND PATIENT
CONTINUOUSLY CHANGING
BY VIRTUE OF BEING IN
RELATIONSHIP WITH EACH OTHER

2

CLASSICAL PSYCHOANALYSTS
SPEAK OF SUPEREGO INTROJECTS
A CRITICAL SUPEREGO INTROJECT
 (A HARSHLY PUNITIVE SUPEREGO INTROJECT)
WHERE ONCE THE ABUSIVE PARENT HAD RAILED AGAINST THE CHILD, NOW THAT
 DYNAMIC GETS PLAYED OUT – INTERNALLY – BETWEEN SUPEREGO AND EGO
 – WITH THE SUPEREGO RAILING AGAINST THE EGO –
BUT SOMETIMES IT IS MORE CLINICALLY USEFUL TO CONCEIVE
OF SUCH PATHOGENIC INTROJECTS AS EXISTING IN PAIRS
CRITICIZER AND CRITICIZEE / VICTIMIZER AND VICTIM / SEDUCER AND SEDUCEE
AND AS GIVING RISE TO “DYSFUNCTIONAL RELATIONAL DYNAMICS”
THE THERAPEUTIC ACTION IN MODEL 3 THEN BECOMES A STORY
ABOUT NEGOTIATING THE TURBULENCE THAT WILL INEVITABLY
EMERGE AT THE INTIMATE EDGE OF AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT
BETWEEN THERAPIST AND PATIENT ONCE THE LATTER DELIVERS
– BY WAY OF PROJECTIVE IDENTIFICATION –
HER “UNMASTERED RELATIONAL TRAUMAS” INTO THE TRANSFERENCE
WHERE ONCE THE ABUSIVE PARENT HAD RAILED AGAINST THE CHILD, NOW THAT
 DYNAMIC GETS PLAYED OUT – RELATIONALLY – BETWEEN THERAPIST AND PATIENT
 – WITH BOTH ULTIMATELY RAILING AGAINST EACH OTHER ONCE THE
 THERAPIST IS INDUCTED INTO WHAT THEN BECOMES A MUTUAL ENACTMENT –

3

**THE RELATIONAL MODEL
CONCEIVES OF THE PATIENT
AS AN AGENT
AS PROACTIVE
AS INTENTIONED
IN HER ACTIVITIES
- EVEN IF UNWITTINGLY -
AND AS THEREFORE
ACCOUNTABLE
AND EMPOWERED
- ACCOUNTABILITY GIVING RISE TO EMPOWERMENT -**

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**IN FACT
THE PATIENT'S ACTIVITY IN RELATION
TO THE THERAPIST IS SEEN AS AN
"ENACTMENT"
THE UNCONSCIOUS INTENT OF WHICH IS TO
ENGAGE THE THERAPIST IN SOME FASHION
WHETHER BY PLAYING OUT WITH THE THERAPIST
AN UNMASTERED "RELATIONAL DYNAMIC"
OR BY GETTING THE THERAPIST
TO EXPERIENCE FIRSTHAND
AN UNMASTERED "INTERNAL DYNAMIC"
ENACTMENTS INVOLVE UNMASTERED EARLY - ON
EXPERIENCES THAT ARE SOMEHOW "KNOWN"
BUT HAVE NOT YET BEEN "THOUGHT"
CHRISTOPHER BOLLAS'S "UNTHOUGHT KNOWN" (1989)**

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