

## THE ESSENTIALS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

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Psychoanalysis, as procedure, theory and therapy, is a unique activity centred around a special approach to a formalised intersubjective relationship. The phenomena of transference and counter-transference between analyst and analysand allow the emergence of a generative interplay between creative impulses struggling for expression and a persistent search for clarity by appropriate analytic interpretations and synthetic constructions of what takes place.

This paper proposes that the essentials of psychoanalysis are those parameters which make truth possible for both the method and the theory. The truth of the method rests on "negative capability" as an iterative procedure progressively opening the possibility of discovery and interpretation within the mutual field of the intersubjective relationship.

The understanding and formulation of what occurs, the "theory", requires the containment of a coherent metapsychology, as suggested by Freud. This in turn entails the containment of a coherent metaphysics such as the critical transcendental philosophy of Kant, immanent (but often obscured) in European philosophies of science.

Freud's "Copernican revolution" can be seen in essence as an extension of that claimed by Kant. By holding the nature of human consciousness (taken in its broadest sense) in focus, Kant combined empirical realism with a transcendental idealism. We simultaneously discover and construct the phenomena of the world we inhabit. Theory facilitates the discovery of, and enters into, our "facts". This is true for all science and especially psychoanalysis.

Ricoeur has brought out that the originality and power of Freud's theoretical formulations lies in the complex interaction of metaphors of energy and meaning making up a "semantics of desire". It is here that the force of life, with its sources in the physical world, intersects the structure and content of language. Kant's requirement for the a priori synthetic is met, in Ricoeur's interpretation, by prospective symbols which emerge as the "dawn of meaning".

Freud's encyclopedia articles [1] remind us of the need to be clear, in using the term "psycho-analysis", whether one is referring to (i) the "procedure for the investigation of mental processes which are almost inaccessible in any other way", (ii) the "method (based on that investigation) for the treatment of neurotic disorders" or (iii) the "psychological information .... accumulated into a ... scientific discipline." Historically, the method of treatment was forged by Freud out of clinical necessity, the clarification of the procedure followed. Both procedural and psychological knowledge became organised by the growth of theory. Method and theory combine in the therapy. From our present perspective, one can see that each of these aspects of "psycho-analysis" occupies a different position in a spectrum of human knowledge, which runs from metaphysics through pure and then applied phenomenology to science and finally technology [2].

The method (and its associated procedure) lies at the boundary between Husserlian phenomenology and science, one might say on the growing edge of science; psychoanalytic theory, as such, falls between phenomenology and metaphysics; while psychoanalytic therapy, as therapy, lies more towards the boundary of science with technology. Each of these components of psychoanalysis has its own essentials but, importantly, there is a dynamic interchange between the three. Method opens the possibility of seeing or rather, in the case of psychoanalysis, a particular receptive technique of listening. Theory shapes our formative attention ("gaze") in particular directions and clinical practice confirms or refutes our speculations. The circle of theory is closed by noting that these speculations (conjectures) have arisen

within the limits of possibility opened up by the clinical method, a method which also provides refutations or confirmations shaping the growth of understanding between analysand and analyst [3].

For any method, or any explanatory theory, to be useful (i.e. have heuristic value) it must be internally consistent and relevant. These parameters correspond to requirements for coherence and correspondence in relation to truthful statements (propositions). They can be mistakenly opposed to each other as "theories of truth" [4]. Both are necessary, simultaneously, to establish the possibility of valid and reliable judgements in Kant's sense.

To discover "essentials" one must explore the nature of the psychoanalytic method itself. One beginning is to take the view that "truth" is pursued either reductively (centripetally), heading towards an imagined centre or source, or expansively (centrifugally), seeking a containment, an enfolding. For example, logical positivists work out truth-tables which set out necessary conditions for truthful judgements of a reductive type, while mathematical philosophers like Tarski and Goedel have explored questions of meta-space which allow the possibility of such judgements, and in that directly follow Kant.

Psychoanalytic clinical science, which is idiographic [5,6] in so far as it follows a single line or theme, finds its truth in both directions. It seeks reductively the confirmatory coherence of sequential events disclosed by free association, aided by interpretations, and on the other hand the definitive containment of synthetic realisations, also through free association, aided by psychoanalytic constructions.

### **Ricoeur: Freud and philosophy**

Paul Ricoeur's masterly study, *Freud and Philosophy: an Essay on Interpretation* [7], follows this idiographic model. Ricoeur first explores and structures what is involved in interpretation. Then he shows how this leads him into a particular reading of Freud's major works. Finally he explores his own interpretation of this reading in relation to epistemology, reflection, dialectics and hermeneutics, carefully examining lines of criticism or attempts at reformulation from these various directions. In my view, Ricoeur succeeds in showing that "psychoanalysis is a unique and irreducible form of praxis". He concludes that it does not fall under any of the commonly used rubrics - observational science, phenomenology, hermeneutics - which distinguish the intentional focus of other disciplines. However it overlaps, draws on, contributes to these disciplines in its own special way. Ricoeur remarks: "... psychoanalysis is an arduous technique, learned by diligent exercise and practice. One cannot overestimate the amazing audacity of this discovery, namely of treating the intersubjective relationship as technique" [7, p.406].

Ricoeur may be taken as establishing our preliminary essentials: firstly, an acceptance of the uniqueness of psychoanalysis, and secondly, the centrality of the intersubjective relationship in directing its inner truth.

A creative view of living language runs through Ricoeur's work and an important aspect of this is summarised in an essay of 1978 [8]. This emphasises a special aspect of discussion or discourse. There is a tension, and hence interaction between ordinary and specialised languages. Ordinary language retains a core of openness, of ambiguity, which enables new moves to be made, new thoughts to emerge. Differences between people and between points of view can be explored and used as springboards for something new. Ordinary language and discourse in this way defend the possibility of creativity. By contrast specialised, for example scientific, language aims at eliminating ambiguity and hence bringing everyone to the same point of view. The possibility of creativity is sacrificed for clarity, for precision, for definition. Polarising the situation like this of course is to make a point. Each type, or style, of language is used to explore and clarify the other. The polarisation, in fact, draws attention to cross currents in the way language works.

The tension between scientific and ordinary language is, in part, an example of the so-called hermeneutic circle of interaction between the particular and the general. For instance, a word has the richness of many meanings -polysemy. It is narrowed and focussed in a special way in a particular sentence but also contributes to the sentence's possibilities, its ambiguity. Each side, the general and the particular (in this case, ordinary language and scientific language) enriches the other. Ordinary language with its closer ties to primary process and the possibilities of poetic inspiration opens the way to creative discovery. Definition shapes possibilities while particulars explore and test the relevance and validity of generalisations.

Our third "essential" is to underscore the generative interplay between the creative impulse struggling for expression and the persistent search for clarity by improving definition. Psychoanalysis develops and sharpens this generative interplay, firstly through the method itself, which defends ambiguity as a creative source, and secondly, by theoretical or definitory reflection.

Strachey [9] wrote that an "invisible ghost" - that of the aborted Project for a Scientific Psychology - haunts the whole series of Freud's theoretical writings to the very end. The power of this invisible ghost has its source, for Ricoeur, in the creative interaction of the metaphors of energy and meaning. Freud's work cannot be defined in relation to either of these dimensions alone. Ricoeur discusses meaning as an outcome of symbolic function. He asks "whether Freud was not mistaken in limiting the notion of symbol to common stenographic signs; are symbols merely vestiges, or are they not also the dawn of meaning?" [7, p.503] For it is at the end of his study of Freud that he discusses, under the heading of the "overdetermination of symbols", how "prospective symbols starting from multiple signification at the level of, ordinary language, become vehicles of new meaning". Ricoeur relies frankly on Kant in this discussion, which brings together Freud, structural linguistics and semantic theory. Elsewhere he quotes Kant's summary - "the symbol gives rise to thought". Like every innovator, Freud was doing more than he realised both in his use of his predecessors and in breaking new ground.

Our fourth essential takes up another point of Ricoeur's - the originality and power of Freud's thought lies in the complex interaction of metaphors of energy and meaning: a "semantics of desire".

### **Kant and Freud**

Wallerstein [10-12] comments in the first of a series of essays that being a psychoanalyst involves participating in "a high intellectual and emotional adventure" and adds that "what is gratifying and rewarding in psychoanalysis is, at least to most of us most of the time, intuitively deeply felt and in our sense of ourselves, more or less self-evident".

But he emphasises that self-evidence is not enough. Reliance on an unexamined subjectivity invites critical attack. We must turn from a reductive search for truth and, looking outwards, examine the matrix within which judgements of self-evidence are formed. The practical importance of metaphysics rests in this sort of enquiry. Metaphysics is by no means "a grandiose and futile philosophical daydream" [13, p.363]. It attempts to clarify and understand the nature of thought itself. It not only underpins psychoanalysis as a science but is immanent in the very nature of psychoanalytic enquiry. Despite various attempts to abolish metaphysics, for example by the logical positivists, the intractable questions which metaphysics tries to face will not go away and these questions provoke not only attempts at answers but, more importantly, attempts at clarification, or reformulation of the issues involved. Freud's metapsychology can be seen as a special offshoot or sub-division of metaphysics.

Kant occupies a special place as a great critical metaphysician in the history of philosophy [14-18;66]. Central to his thought was an inspired and painstaking enquiry into the foundations of reason, the will and judgement or interpretation. The hinge-point of his research became the question: "How is it that we can make a priori synthetic judgements?" How is it that in every situation, for example a psychoanalytic encounter, where we import a whole range of factors as human beings, as products of a particular inheritance and upbringing, as psychoanalysts of a particular background and training we can yet, sometimes, move beyond it in interpretations that create new possibilities? Kant's question means for us - How is it that mutative interpretations [19] are possible, sometimes, in the confines of the classical psychoanalytic situation?

In Kant's terms, for an interpretation to be mutative it must be synthetic and a priori, that is it must encompass something beyond what has been brought to the immediacy of the experience. Purely analytic interpretations are simply clarifications of what is already present, although perhaps hidden or obscure. Most psychoanalytic interpretations are in fact "analytic" in Kantian terms. They are "clarifications" in that they expose what is implicit in the situation, as for example in drawing attention to the transference. Probably most transference interpretations are of this type. However psychoanalytic work involves a search for something more, a mutative element that will break the closure of the "repetition compulsion" and enable a real move forward. This involves necessarily a synthetic judgement carried forward from the a

priori elements. Kant considered the presence of such judgements at appropriate moments a hallmark of the possibility of genuine "science".

Freud made respectful references to Kant on a number of occasions but when he claimed that psychoanalysis represented a Copernican revolution in thought, he repeated (or some would say extended), without acknowledgment, Kant's similar claim (for his critical transcendental philosophy) one hundred years before. Freud complained about the way his own work was ignored but may have shown all too human weakness in omitting to mention Kant in company with Darwin and Copernicus.

As Freud's major biographers have remarked [13, p. 128, 366; 20, p.448], and Freud himself repeatedly acknowledged, psychoanalysis evolved from the literary and philosophical past. Freud's step was to attempt to spell out some of the powers or influences that shape consciousness by inference from pathological distortions. In this he was following the observational method based on natural experiments. Thus the "Unconscious" is an inference from distortions of consciousness. What we speak about is always an aspect of consciousness, taken in the most general sense. Freud is supposed to have drafted a paper bringing together his ideas on "Consciousness" as such but then destroyed it. It would have been a formidable thing to undertake in the shadow of Kant's monumental achievement.

For Kant is widely acknowledged as having made an historically decisive move in focussing philosophical attention onto the active formative functions of human consciousness in itself. Kant offered a creative escape from the seeming circularity of metaphysical struggles with abstract notions of Mind and Matter [21, 470-682; 3, p. 175-183].

Our fifth "essential" is to bring into focus the background of thought from which psychoanalysis arose it is suggested here that Kant's critical philosophy has special, but usually unacknowledged, significance.

### **Kant's thought as matrix**

Kant called his systematic approach "transcendental" because it transcended or bridged what seemed at the time inescapable polarisations into Idealism and Realism, a division that can be traced back to Plato and Aristotle. A recent Dictionary of the Philosophy of Science comments that "Kantianism influences almost all contemporary non-positivist philosophies of science as well as formalist and intuitionist philosophies of mathematics" [22]. It does so through the thesis that the knowing subject imposes, in the most basic fashion, form and organisation upon the raw level of sense and sensibility.

It has been said that, as his mental descendant, one can think for or against Kant but it is in no way possible now to think without him. As Auden [23] was to write much later about Freud: "If often he was wrong and at times absurd, to us he is no more a person now but a whole climate of opinion."

For Kant's transcendental philosophy is so blended into the Western tradition that while one can now consciously support or argue against his viewpoint, its influence is inevitable. His "Copernican revolution" focused Western thought on human consciousness and its relationship to the inescapable forces of the unknown. As already noted, Freud's claim made a hundred years later, that psychoanalysis demonstrated that unconscious motivation deprives the ego of being "master in its own house", can be seen as an extension or clarification of Kant's thought. Kant's stature is such that this view neither reduces nor revises Freud's position; it simply places it in historical perspective.

The case being made in this paper is that, in Kulin's [24] terms, Freud's thought developed within the paradigm set by Kant. Freud made various respectful references to Kant but only openly acknowledged the influence of Schopenhauer. However Schopenhauer is widely seen as one of the great interpreters of Kant. Thus while psychoanalytic thought has refined and expanded many of the possibilities opened up by Kant, it has shied away from or toned down other possibilities. For example, the Unconscious is a reification of Kant's noumenal level of existence but it has been, more or less, constricted to human existence. Lacan, and others, restrict it further into the hidden influence of language as a "thing-in-itself. The intersubjective and defensive components of psychoanalytic theorising fit under the rubric of Kant's transcendental self (ego) in its synthetic interaction with the empirical self and the noumenal self. Freud's structural theory of ego,

super-ego and id, linguistically ossified in Strachey's translation, is less specific about the interactive processes that must be involved.

In summary, Kant's divisions separate ourselves as individual subjects within a phenomenal world, whose objects are formed by human interaction with the unknown - the noumenal level of "things-in-themselves". Kant's divisions are bridged by three levels of transcendental synthesis which take our interaction with the objective world back into our temporal ordering of inner, and spatial ordering of outer, experience. Kant's unknowable, noumenal, level is thus outside the experience of time and space. It is however the ever-present source of the intractable aspects of crude reality.

While there are "essentials" creatively developed or modified by Freud within the Kantian framework, the reverse is also true. Freud made good conspicuous gaps in the Kantian world-view, notably in encompassing the possibilities of human maturation, development and interaction, of defensive organisation, of regression and pathology.

In one direction, Kant's transcendental critical philosophy enables us to fill by conjecture a deficit close to the heart of psychoanalytic theory. Within psychoanalysis there is little development of any organised theory of what one might call "psychological digestion". Walter de la Mare wrote: "It's a very odd thing, it's as odd as can be, that whatever Miss T. eats turns into Miss T." Piaget [25], who refers to Kant as "the father of us all", gets close to an account of this with his interlocked concepts of "assimilation" and „accommodation" in relation to internal "schemata" [26, p. 141-52]. Kant allows for a richer approach. His pure a priori synthesis sets the framework for the subject's construction of a world and establishment of a "self" through the intuitions of space and time operating at the noumenal level of "things-in-themselves". These in essence remain outside consciousness. This world is organised at the phenomenal level as "objective", "qualitative", "dimensional" and "causal" by the categories of consciousness itself. In a creative circular fashion, through firstly contingent empirical synthesis and then necessary empirical synthesis, the subject is envisaged as feeding-back subjective affection by the self-created objective world to its own pure a priori synthesis. Aspects of stability in this feed-back system allow for the emergence of "identity". It could be loosely compared at the bodily level with circular processes, like the Krebs Cycle, governing the distribution of energy and with certain operations of the liver and other organs governing the maintenance of form under the guidance of the genetic code.

Freud's "super-ego" can be seen as a structural counterpart to what Kant named "the categorical imperative". Participating in the formative level of the categories, through which we give the world "objective" form and construct ourselves as "objects", the categorical imperative defines guilt as a move against the very fabric of personal being. Kant contrasted it with "natural imperatives" at the level of instinct and "hypothetical imperatives" at the level of social bargaining. Adaptive or accommodative difficulties at these levels give rise to experiences of frustration or fear or shame as distinct from true guilt. In one of his few comments on Kant, Freud [27, p. 167] argued that "Kant's Categorical Imperative is thus the direct heir of the Oedipus Complex" with the inference that the sense of guilt arises from the Oedipal struggle. But a Kantian would reply that the level of the Categories shapes consciousness itself, and with it the possibility of duty and hence guilt; therefore the Categorical Imperative is conceptually more primitive and the statement is true the other way round.

### **Self-evidence: negative capability: complementarity**

We now return to Wallerstein's comment about psychoanalysis and "self-evidence" and the question of the reductive parameter in truth-seeking.

One is usually convinced about new perceptual forms by direct experience, but in many instances the assistance of an instructor or supervisor is necessary for example, in the use of the microscope. Similarly what emerges during psychoanalysis that was previously unconscious is convincing to those who have experience of it. Explanatory metaphors devised by a supervisor may be necessary for the experience to be transmitted to another. But Ricoeur warns us that "before putting ourselves in the presence of a primary evidence, we must know what 'evidence' is and what is 'primary', and we must accept the obligation to seek out such evidence" [7, p.86].

In general terms, new experiences, at every level of biological organism, ipso facto are interesting, exciting or frightening. As Freud pointed out, if experiences cannot be ignored (in a broad sense, foreclosed) or be disposed of by some aggressive manoeuvre involving alloplastic changes in the environment, then one must make autoplasmic changes by accommodating the experience, using currently available internal structures, or assimilate the new experience to them [28, p.58-77]. Thus inner structure, or internal object relations, play a central role in ontology and epistemology, in personal identity and adaptation, but always within an interpersonal or social setting. Georges Devereux's important study *From Anxiety to Method in the Behavioural Sciences* [29] synthesises anthropology and psychoanalysis around this general theme.

Freud and Husserl attended Brentano's courses in philosophy and it appears that both took away with them a particular idea relating to a discipline of open mindedness. Husserl developed this painstakingly in a number of philosophical works [30] while Freud, with a dedication to practical action, developed it into a method of psychological investigation and therapy. In noting that Husserl and Freud are seen as Brentano's heirs, Ricoeur quotes Vergote's view that their common inheritance was that "the psychical is defined as meaning, and this meaning is dynamic and historical" [7, p. 379].

In the taxing setting of clinical reality, Freud developed his procedure of "free association" and "free-floating attention" to facilitate the meeting of two minds in mutual "Negative Capability", as Keats had put it much earlier [31].

The central truth of the psychoanalytic method rests therefore on a discipline of not-knowing: in being able to sustain "being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any reaching after fact and reason." This is our sixth "essential".

"Negative capability" is always at risk from attack, neglect or misunderstanding on the part of both partners. As far as the patient is concerned, this forms part of the "material" with which the analyst must work. But the analyst's attitude towards analysis itself puts negative capability at risk in special ways, firstly, by confusing the essence of the method with the ritual and the trappings: the couch, the fifty-minute hour, the number of sessions a week and so on. By shifting emphasis on to the level of ritual, contact may be lost with "being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts without any reaching after fact and reason." Secondly, by identifying with or becoming taken up by specific aspects of theory, we risk Keats' cutting jibe at "a Man who cannot feel he has a personal identity unless he has made up his mind about everything ... (and who) will never come at a truth as long as he lives; because he is always trying at it" [31]. The definitive "essence" of psychoanalysis might well be an acceptance that "Negative Capability" is an iterative process repetitively applied to its own product. It is like Descartes' methodical application of doubt to his own thought; but it is not doubt that we apply but openness. What emerges from an opening-up of intersubjectivity is allowed to take its own form and not have form imposed on it. I earlier mentioned Ricoeur's [7] writing of "the dawn of meaning" in relation to "prospective symbols". He implies that there is an unconscious substrate of symbolic life which allows new meaning to be created from the multiple significations of existing (traditional) symbols (p.504). The interplay between the living substrate of symbolism, where new meaning can be created, and the level of traditional symbols involves a transformational step held within a framework of complementarity [67].

### **Psychoanalytic theory**

Regarding theory: it may be worthwhile to remind ourselves that the axiomatic method in science may be seen as a distillation of the way all of us proceed in our daily lives, and have done so since infancy. Certain things are taken as self-evident, used as axioms from which are generated hypotheses which are then tested in action, being refuted or alternatively used as exploratory maps until some limiting boundary is reached; the "facts" established by these exploratory actions can then themselves be treated as self-evident in order to establish further axioms for the generation of further hypotheses and so on. What is lost sight of in this comforting procedure is its tautological component: what was taken as self-evident in the first place is built into the whole structure of knowledge that results. The flux of history may later reveal that the foundations themselves are shaky [32,24,33,67].

Thus, for example in the theory of the psychoanalytic method - the clinical theory, there are central issues in: firstly, what can be taken as axiomatic; secondly, in the maintenance of awareness of the contingency of

such judgements; and thirdly, in the maintenance of awareness of the tautological nature of the theoretical structures erected upon the judgements of self-evidence. Psychoanalytic theory cannot change creatively unless a way is found to break the threatened circularity of thought, this can only occur through a technique of persistent questioning of what is taken as axiomatic.

Ricoeur [7, p.33] commented that since Descartes we know that things are doubtful, and that since Marx, Nietzsche and Freud - the "masters of suspicion" - we also doubt consciousness. I am uncertain why Ricoeur here left out Kant as a key figure between Descartes and Freud, for earlier, in discussing the influence of Kant on Husserl he had quoted Kant's reference to an "... art concealed in the depths of the human soul whose true mode of activity nature is hardly likely ever to allow us to discover and have open to our gaze" [30, p. 184]. Kant was referring to an "... image (which) is a product of the empirical faculty of reproductive imagination, through which, and in accordance with which, images first become possible" (p. 183). Ricoeur here had found in Kant's philosophy the pre-history of Husserl's phenomenological method, the "phenomenological reduction" or "conceptual bracketing" which can be taken as the philosophical analogue to the quality of mind described by Keats [31] as "negative capability" or by Freud [34, p. 111; 35,p.208] as "evenly suspended attention" and "free association".

Ricoeur [7, p.385] comments on Freud's sketch, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* of the game of fort-da played by his grand-son. "By alternately voicing the two words, the child interrelates absence and presence in a meaningful contrast; at the same time, he no longer undergoes absence as a fit of panic massively substituted for a close and saturating presence." Ricoeur brings out that the child's mastery over privation takes place through signs: "... privation is signified and transformed into intentionality; being deprived of the mother becomes an intending of the mother... The manner in which mourning gives up the object as lost recalls (this) institution of signs, which are universally a giving up of brute presence and an intending of presence in absence." Ricoeur's analysis of the game in terms of "signs" links primitive experience to the later mastery achieved by language. Thus speech and language appear to have inalienable roots in separation, absence and presence, gaps and reparation.

Ricoeur comments that "... analytic experience unfolds in the field of speech and that, within this field, what comes to light is another language, dissociated from common language, and which presents itself to be deciphered through its meaningful effects - symptoms, dreams, various formations, etc." [7, p.367].

Ricoeur joins Lacan in observing that "... absence is not a secondary aspect of behaviour, but the very place in which psychoanalysis dwells." He fills out this statement: "For the analyst, behaviour is a segment of meaning. That is why the lost object and the substitute object are the constant theme of psychoanalysis... the absent object, the lost object, the substitute object are misunderstood by any reformulation of the metapsychology that does not take its start from what occurs in the analytic dialogue" [7, p.369].

Although instincts are the sources of behaviour, psychoanalysis is concerned only with how "they enter into the meaningful but distorted history that comes to be told in the analytic situation" [7, p.370].

Thus the point is made that psychoanalytic reality is not the one found by the experimental psychologist but is "... the true meaning the patient is to reach through the obscure maze of fantasies; reality takes on meaning in a conversion of meaning of fantasies ... The possibility of transference resides in the intersubjective texture of desire... It is because wishes are a demand on another person, a speaking to another ... that they can enter into a "psychosocial" field where there are refusals, prohibitions, taboos - that is, frustrated demands. The transition to the symbolic occurs at this crossroads, where desires are demands but unrecognized as such. The entire Oedipus drama is lived and enacted within the triangle of demand, refusal, and wounded desire; its language is a lived rather than a formulated language, but at the same time it is a short meaningful ... drama in which arise the main significs ... of existence" [7, p.371-2].

A psychoanalyst must "bracket", in Husserl's sense, the "reified ideals" of existing society for there is a false relationship between the profession of idealised beliefs and the reality of social interaction [7, p.373].

In summary, analytic experience calls more for historical understanding than natural explanation and, following Kant, the "concepts of analysis are to be judged according their status as conditions of the possibility of analytic experience, insofar as the latter operates in the field of speech. Thus, analytic

experience is not to be compared with the theory of genes or gases, but with a theory of historical motivation.... (which) limits its investigation to the semantics of desire . . . . One may speak of 'deduction', but in a 'transcendental' and not in a 'formal' sense; deduction is concerned here with what Kant calls the *quaestio juris*. The concepts of analytic theory are the notions that must be elaborated so that one may order and systematize analytic experience... " They are the conditions of possibility of a semantics of desire. They are not theoretical concepts for an observational science [7, p.375].

### **The Unconscious**

The Unconscious as a term has several levels of meaning: existential, instinctive, cultural, linguistic. At the most basic level, as living creatures, our intentional existence is confined to a narrow and unstable range of possibilities at the interfaces of the states of matter, that is the solid, the fluid, the gaseous and the ionic [36]. This narrow space in the physical world, defined by the states of matter or the distribution of physical energy, becomes reflected in internal divisions in psychical life of an energetic, symbolic or metaphoric nature. The discourse of some sufferers from schizophrenic illness appears at times to refer to the experience or threat of raw physical pressures at the limits of the possibility of conscious existence.

These primitive experiences point towards Kant's "noumenal" level, the level of "things-in-themselves", outside the world of "phenomena", the lived world which in Kant's vision we both discover and construct.

Gilbert Murray [37] can be said to have put Kant's view into ordinary language: "Man is surrounded by unknown forces of infinite extent and almost infinite power. It is man's consciousness of these forces, or shall we say, of the infinite extent of the Unknown compared with the small sphere of Knowledge in which we live, that constitutes the attitude towards life which we call a religious attitude... The essence of religion is the consciousness of a vast unknown. Call it Faith or call it Doubt: they are two sides of the same medal" (p. 156).

Psychoanalysis becomes constricted and demeaned if it loses touch with this approach of open-mindedness tempered by disciplined scepticism.

Freud hinged his original topographic model on "the property of being conscious or not .... our one beaconlight in the darkness of depth-psychology" [27, p.18]. His later structural theory derived from an analysis of conflict. The Id (It) as biological source of the drives, was also problematic for the Ego in its struggle with Ego-ideal, and (later) Super-ego, in their dealings with intractable reality. Finally Freud turned to a more sophisticated systemic approach, with the Unconscious brought up to date as the System UCS interacting with the System PCS/CS. These labels were not to be taken merely as abbreviations, for the "systems" were not necessarily connected with the qualities of "unconsciousness" or "consciousness". The systems were loosely conceptualised as containers for the Primary and Secondary Processes in their creative or destructive interplay.

Lacan saw the Unconscious as an inescapable part of human life as a "speak-being". Discarded signifiers (not used in the immediacy of secondary process language and thought) continue to be organised, largely by the primary processes of displacement, condensation and symbol formation. Thus Man, unlike other species, has a parallel, unconscious, inner life dominated by associational patterns and symbolic expression. Lacan's Unconscious is "structured like a language" [38].

A seventh "essential" then is that psychoanalysis should not be restricted to a reductive view of the unconscious. Kant's "noumenal" - the unknowability of "things-in-themselves" - provides a background against which more speculative concepts can be situated.

### **The instincts and developmental theory**

In conceding Ricoeur's point about the centrality in psychoanalysis of a semantics of desire one cannot avoid reflection on the biological origins of desire and its structural containment. Freud [39, p.39] saw life as emerging from inanimate matter and returning to it. He saw the conservative side of instinct as assuring that an organism tends to follow its own path to death by warding off any possible ways of returning to inorganic existence other than those immanent in the organism itself. The teleological end-point of the

organism is "to die only in its own fashion". Taking "instincts as tendencies inherent in living substance towards restoring an earlier state of things" [27, p.40-41], the death instinct becomes that tendency in the organism which holds it to its own life pattern and appropriate death. To speak of "appropriate-death instinct" would keep the point in view.

The species instincts give rise to sexual behaviour with associated compulsion and necessity. But also written into the genetic code are capacities equipping the individual with a range of responses, related to dimensional variations in the expected environment, mapped during the evolutionary history of the species. These instinctive capacities present the individual (but not the species) with choice and thus with the power of decision. The individual finds in these instinctive capacities the power of lateral expression, of unique development. On Saussure's fundamental axes [40], the species instincts are diachronic in nature. They are the thread supporting and linking genotypes. By comparison, the individual instincts are synchronic in nature. They defend the phenotypes and are related to the species instincts like chord to melody.

On the structural dimension, a central thread in development has been teased out by Piaget from a Kantian position in which the interplay of assimilation and accommodation lead to epigenetic constructions, organising internal structures which are progressively governed by self-regulation or equilibration [26]. Piaget's insights have been linked with those of Freud [41].

In parallel with the onward march of myelination of the nervous system, the sense of the body and its surround moves from part-object relationships to more integrated whole-object relationships [42]. As Klein [43,44] pointed out, the regressive threat of the part-object (paranoid-schizoid) organisation remains as a back-drop to later maturation as do primitive projective and introjective identificatory mechanisms. Early symbiotic fusion results in a baby-mother unit [45-48]. The work of separation-individuation, a task for both mother and infant, leads towards a "psychological birth" [48] with associated risks of partial failure and disablement [49]. Attachment, a need more insistent than nutrition, is an organising force throughout life, with separation, loss and incomplete mourning probably the most common reasons for psychological illness and suffering [49-52]. Autistic barriers in infancy, a special example of attachment failure, may result in specific, often intractable, problems, then and later [53,54].

To clarify this issue, our eighth "essential" states that, for clarity about origins, it is necessary to return to Freud's primary distinctions between the instincts and their place in human development.

### **The psychoanalytic frame and second level of transference**

That the psychoanalytic clinical procedure works in the sense of producing "psychoanalytic material" is self-evident to those who use it. This "material" is an intersubjective product of two minds. The strength of the method of "Negative Capability" is that, properly applied, it guards against the weakness of "self evidence" as a source of belief underlying the analyst's interpretations.

For it is important to acknowledge that the most serious threat to psychoanalysis comes from within itself, not only from a retreat into, or sheltering behind, the trappings of psychoanalysis and the mystique of the psychoanalytic hour but from omnipotent belief in the power of psychoanalytic interpretation derived from a conceptual system whose limits may be ignored or avoided.

The struggle between analyst and analysand can move from a level of interaction where the transference, instead of being treated as a vehicle towards the recovery of memory and as an aid to working through, disappears from the analyst's view into an unseen but faithful repetition of the child-parent relationship. This may have followed an over-emphasis on the immediate transference and its confrontation; subsequent interventions unwittingly becoming didactic or moralistic although still being regarded as analytic. Without realising it the analyst can be edged into, and can accept, the position of a substitute parent who is claiming to be able to do better than the original. Like the original parent, the analyst becomes quite unable either to see the manner of his/her involvement or to change it.

Thus an analyst, committed to a particular set of beliefs about "psychoanalysis" and "professionalism" can all too easily explain what is happening at this second level of transference by the use of terms such as

"resistance", "negative therapeutic reaction" and "unanalysability". But the change required may be in the analyst.

Since unquestioning conviction is a trap for followers of any school of thought whatever, enlisting the aid of a supervisor with the same commitment may not save the situation. The analyst's own resistance, shared by his/her "thought-collective", may show itself in externally directed vociferous defences of psychoanalytic purity in the politics of the group.

The difficulty in retaining flexibility of mind is complicated by the fact that the conceptual and clinical reach of any viewpoint, any school of thought, is a function of personal dedication. But when people commit themselves fully to a viewpoint they usually begin to feel that there is no other and indeed find a special safety in selective blindness.

At the level of group life, the debate as to what is central in psychoanalytic practice and where psychoanalysis stands as a science may find expression in a polarity between "open-mindedness" and "dedication". This emerges in political divisions with suspicions of triviality on the one side and reductive fallacies, or obstinate constriction, on the other [55].

Our ninth "essential" is that we should discover the necessity in the clinical situation of analysing "the psycho-analytic frame" itself to lessen narcissistic distortions on the part of the analyst [56].

### **Psychoanalysis: its contribution to psychotherapy**

Psychotherapy is a wide field and many other approaches apart from psychoanalysis are effective. The contempt that some analysts show towards other approaches to psychotherapy is inappropriate. Analysts can learn much from, and contribute much to, other forms of individual therapy, to group and family therapy, to therapeutic and hospital communities, and also to drama, art, music and literature and their therapeutic application. The richer the interaction with these fields the richer the rewards, provided always that analysts don't lose sight of the essence of what they bring to them. It should be possible to interact openly and creatively with other "schools" of psychoanalysis if there is agreement on the primacy of the method.

Therapeutic change probably involves as many modes and pathways as there are living dimensions within and between people. Freud defined his field of discourse by saying that any treatment which involved the systematic interpretation of transference deserved the name "psychoanalysis". He had earlier pointed out that while the phenomena involved occur universally they are intensified and made more obvious during treatment, the clinical setting being designed to facilitate its emergence, containment, interpretation and working-through.

Thus the nature of interpretation is central [6]. As already remarked, analytic interpretations (judgments) in a Kantian sense may disclose and clarify the presence of transference but something else is required, some synthetic move, some a priori synthetic judgement, for progress in a therapeutic sense.

Biologically, this may involve some change in the quality of attachment [50]; existentially, some growth in self-image or self-object construction [61]; some shift in the balance between primary and secondary processes [20]; structurally, some developmental shift in object-relations [62]; linguistically, some freeing of expression ("finding the words to say it"), some discovery of the location of neurosis in the gaps ("béances") of language [38]; logically some shift in the interplay between symmetrical and asymmetrical structures [63]; affectively, some shift in the balance between love and hate and reparation [43]; some softening of the rigidity of autistic barriers lying behind neurotic distortions [53]; and developmentally, some epochal completion [64]. There are many dimensions (in Kant's sense) to be delineated and the pioneers of those mentioned have not necessarily done more than clarify and expand Freud's original formulations [1,27,39,57,65].

The point being made is that some mutative step (of synthetic a priori form) is necessary to take the transference situation in the here-and-now beyond the merely analytic. This synthetic a priori judgement may arise either from analyst or analysand or from their interaction. The nature of the process of "working-through" essential to the steps of synthesis was brought into focus by Freud [57] in his paper Remembering,

Repeating and Working-through (1920) and then further explored in relation to the mourning process by many analysts from different points of view. Laplanche and Pontalis [58, p.489] draw attention to Freud's emphasis on "working-through" as lived experience, with an essential abreactive component. It is always treated as a type of work carried out by the analysand, but the analyst plays an essential role not only in providing a containment for the patient but in bearing, non-intrusively, the suffering involved.

To close the circle we return once more to the other essential parameter, the matrix which makes possible consistent moves in thought. This involves the centrifugal direction in truth-seeking.

Kant [59,60] focussed his whole philosophical system on exploring questions of "possibility". What can I think? What are the limits of thought? What can I do? What are the limits of action? What should I do? What are the limits of the moral life?

This approach offers a philosophical containment for psychoanalysis which attempts to sustain, both clinically and in theory construction, a different attitude of mind to more usual patterns of speculation or theorising: an attitude that seeks openness rather than closure. In the oceans of the psyche, psychoanalysis is a rare fish. A fish which needs protection from the forces of extinction in special ways. Swimming free in the sea - and here note the symbolic link with archaic notions of Mother - it is a symbol of the occult, of what is hidden: hidden by the reflections of the surface, by something interposed. It can be destroyed, poisoned, in a multitude of ways. We rightly see ourselves as guardians of a technique for working with this freedom, which is finally unconscious and occult.

If, in some global catastrophe, all the literature on psychoanalytic theory and therapy were lost, it could be reconstituted provided there remained some awareness of the possibility of a discipline of intersubjectivity based on "Negative Capability". Discipline implies some structural containment, and this must come from some philosophy like Kant's which transcends the divisions between perception and possibility, between the Ideal and the Real.

If this should be lost, all is lost. Guardianship of this talisman remains a group psychoanalytic task and gives psychoanalysts a clear identity.

Thus dedication to clarifying identity, strengths and limitations is the tenth, and final, "essential".  
APPENDIX

### **Kant's ontology - a valuable synoptic diagram**

The ontological theme of Kant's philosophy is contained within the detail of his three great Critiques - of Pure Reason (exploring the relationship between the understanding and empirical knowledge), of Practical Reason (extending this project into the interrelationship between reason and desire) and of Judgement (connecting reflection and feeling in the establishment of a "required harmony between nature and freedom") [15, p. 176-7]. The Critique of Pure Reason (1781) [59] is regarded as the key work. Kant worked on the background for his book for many years and then wrote it in a few months. After publication, Kant could find only one review and that both misinformed and destructively critical. However, as diligent as Bruce's spider, he set to and wrote another smaller masterpiece setting out his argument in much reduced and clearer form, the Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics that might consider itself a Science (1783) [60]. This became, and remains, the easiest entry into Kant's thought for anyone wanting to sample it at first hand. Kant incorporated the re-statements and developments he made in this book in a 2nd edition of his first Critique in 1787.

Peter Lucas (1953), in the Introduction and Aids to Study to his translation of Kant's Prolegomena, includes a chart which must rank as a minor masterpiece in the visual presentation of information. It is reproduced as Figure 1 with the permission of Manchester University Press.

Kant's exploration of the a priori reductively brought him to the conclusion that our experience of "time" in itself reflects our mode of ordering inner experience, while our experience of "space" is our way of ordering outer experience. The world we construct through these "pure intuitions" is further shaped by our powers of categorising the world in terms of quality, quantity, relationship and modality. Our detection of causal

relationships is a special example selected from the twelve categories Kant lists under these general headings.

Behind the "objects" we have so constructed, and behind ourselves as "subject", lies always the unknown, the noumenal, an awesome background of pure potentiality which approaches us in the possible and emerges in the contingent. The most primitive level of foreclosure thus lies in the active boundary between the phenomenal and the noumenal. We are poised on the uneasy edge of possibility in a species-specific world.

Kant's first Critique follows three main lines (Figure 1). His Transcendental Aesthetic traces the connection between the senses, sensibility, perception and the faculties of pure intuition through which we organise inner experience as the sense of time and outer experience as the sense of space. The Transcendental Analytic links the development of the understanding from sensations to ideas to concepts of objects through the synthetic action of immanent properties of consciousness which Kant called "Categories". The Transcendental Dialectic traces the organisation of ideas and concepts under the principles of reason and argument. These movements, the aesthetic, the analytic and the dialectic are brought into a unity, bridged laterally, firstly by what Kant termed "the transcendental unity of apperception" - that is, the framework which makes possible the consistency of perception itself - and secondly by the possibility of "synthetic judgements a priori" which, in their most explicit form, underpin pure mathematics, the natural sciences and metaphysics.

The three streams correspond, roughly speaking, to the Senses, the Understanding and Reason. Biologically one might draw the divisions by analogy, firstly to the possibility of animal intelligence in its broadest sense, dominated by sensation, action, and the primary process and intentionally organised around the sense of form (the Transcendental Aesthetic), secondly to the possibility of thought and primitive concept formation (the Transcendental Analytic) and thirdly, to the possibility of communication, discourse and language (the Transcendental Dialectic).

This schematic approach is given a dynamic quality through feedback connections linking the inner world of the subject, the experienced phenomenal world and the raw possibilities of "things-in-themselves" in the noumenal (See Figure 2). A contingent empirical synthesis enables the subject to assimilate the effects of the phenomenal reality which has arisen from subjective interaction with the things-in-themselves. The subject "submits its affection by objects to its own pure synthesis", that is to the "a priori synthesis" which operates within the subject itself as a "pure intuition" organising inner experience as Time and outer experience as Space. The circle is completed by the subject's accommodation to the phenomenal world which he/she has both discovered and constructed. The phenomenal world is repeatedly refrained to fit within empirical findings. From the psychoanalytic viewpoint, one can see that "defence mechanisms" can be understood as reactions to pressures threatening the stability of this intricate system (as in neurosis), while pathological "symptoms" or "signs" point to actual or potential distortions (as in psychosis). As far as physical cosmology is concerned, the search for ultimate particles or final truths comes down to determining what is the most useful way to think about the world and what are the limits of thought itself.

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