

Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy as Education

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(book review)

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With the book *Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy as Education*, Nebojša Jovanović brings to a close several decades of work on the development of O.L.I. Integrative Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, while at the same time returning to one of the oldest yet least elaborated questions of psychoanalysis — the question of what actually happens in the therapeutic process and why it may be understood as a form of education. Drawing on Freud's idea that psychoanalysis is an “education in truthfulness toward oneself”, the author consistently frames psychotherapy as a subsequent, corrective education — above all as a form of the intellectual and moral education of the adult human being.

The central thread of the book is the tension between truth and the good — between intellectual education, understood as the cultivation of the capacity to seek and defend the truth about oneself, and moral education, understood as the formation of values and of one's relation to “received morality”. Starting from the concepts of the pleasure principle and the reality principle, the author shows how the discrepancy between human nature and the demands of morality gives rise to a dread that, on his understanding, is the fundamental driving force of all education; the key question then becomes how this dread is to be “used creatively”.

The opening parts of the book analyse the psychoanalytic situation and the relationship between analysand and analyst, before turning particular attention to work with the superego — the path “from a conscience of fear to a conscience of love” and the notion of the “new-normal superego”. The author then reads the foundational psychoanalytic concepts — free association, resistance, transference and the working alliance — as instruments of moral education, linking the therapeutic relationship to the development of the capacity for mature love. There follows a comprehensive account of the psychoanalytic understanding of the development of morality and of the capacity to perceive reality — from Freud's path, through the contributions of Melanie Klein and object relations theory, to Edith Jacobson — thereby building a bridge between developmental theory and the theory of therapy.

In its second great arc, the book introduces the author's original concepts: the “vertical unconscious” and new defense mechanisms, together with the social influences on their formation. From there it develops the transition “from defense mechanisms to emotional competencies”, along with the concepts of secondary gain and

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counter-developmental skills. The core of the O.L.I. model — the eight basic emotional competencies (neutralization, mentalization, object integration and object constancy, tolerance of frustration and of ambivalence, will and initiative) — is here placed within the broader framework of intellectual and moral education and underpinned by the integration of the four psychoanalytic psychologies: classical drive theory, ego psychology, object relations theory and self psychology.

The value of the book lies in its rare combination of theoretical erudition, philosophical parallels and clinical usefulness. The author moves with assurance in linking the psychoanalytic tradition (Freud, Klein, Jacobson, Kohut, Winnicott) with philosophy, ethics and pedagogy (Marcuse, Piaget, Fromm, Aristotle), without ever losing sight of concrete therapeutic work and its technical implications. An extensive bibliography of more than four hundred entries, together with a systematic yet accessible writing style that remains dynamic throughout — and is not infrequently infused with the author's distinctive humour — make the book at once a reference work and a genuinely readable one.

Although theoretically demanding, the book is intended for a wide readership: psychotherapists in training and in practice, supervisors, but also anyone interested in a deeper understanding of the relationship between psychotherapy, morality and human development. Its concluding thesis — distilled in the sentence that psychotherapy is not treatment but education — is no mere provocative turn of phrase, but a considered invitation to understand the psychotherapeutic process as an ethical and developmental endeavour, in which the client is helped to transform dread into a force for his or her own development. In this way, *Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy as Education* represents a valuable contribution to the Serbian and regional psychotherapeutic literature and a logical culmination of the author's work to date.