

The Psychology of Couples



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Objectives:

1. Participants will be able to identify at least one aspect of importance for the therapist to be vulnerable to being affected by the couple.
2. Participants will be able to identify one aspect of the importance of how the “unconscious agreements” made early in the relationship determine the way the relationship develops in unconscious ways.
3. Participants will be able to identify at least one way the the “Shadow” can help the couple to Individuate.
4. Participants will be able to identify how at the core of the desire for intimacy and relationship with the “Other” is a desire to be loved and to love.

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- What is Image before me:
- Rainmaker Myth
- 50/50
- Overt/covert
- No blame
- Holding the tension-Alchemy-couple mind
- Neuroscience-dopamine effect
- Allow yourself to br infected-(Jung)
- Get the FOO history and link to current situation

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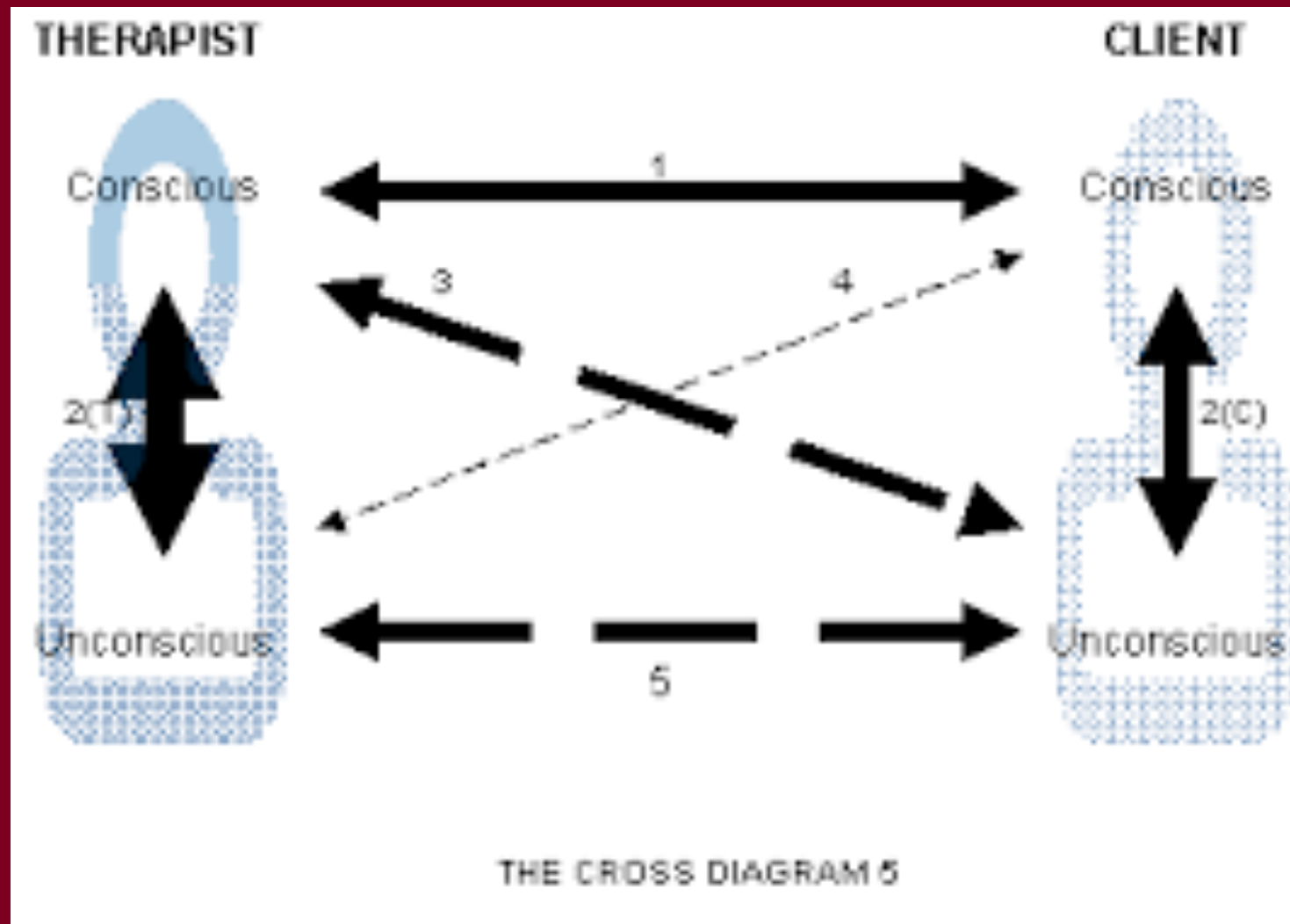
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- Jung “The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed!”
- Now add a third person to the mix
- Quantum physics-the observer and the observed
- Thermodynamics-friction/entropy (unavailability, lack of order and predictability)

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- Countertransference/transference
- Difficulties with this phenomenon
- Natural inclination/scapegoat effect
- My evolution with this
- Countertransference/transference let's you know how to proceed
- Drama triangle-persecutor-victim-rescue

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- **What I've learned about vulnerability**
- The wounded healer has the capability to facilitate healing. Heal your wounds.
- Understand the limitations of the situation. Often the riff between the couple has a deep history that they may know or not know. Which means you probably don't know!
- Get comfortable with not knowing and learn how to sit with the 5 A's: Ambiguity, Anxiety, Ambivalence, Annihilation and Abandonment

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- What I've learned about vulnerability
- Don't be afraid to jump in the “Soup”.
- Don't be afraid of the amount of grief you may experience sitting with some couples.
- Often couples don't stay in therapy as long as individuals do. This isn't necessarily a failure but empirical knowledge. (Colman)

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2nd Objective: Unconscious Collusions

Marriage is a ritual that really works we are different people before and after (picture on flyer) (Enchanted Cottage)

What is not said in the marital vows.

People will tell you right away who they are and where they will take you if you are paying attention (give examples)-we tend to marry someone who has traits we don't think we have.

Desires unknown to both.

Emotional blackmail-I won't grow and you won't grow because if we grow we will be attractive and invite others into our lives.

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“Will you promise to honor each other’s stuff?”

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3rd Objective Shadow

Without acknowledging the shadow we are only part and not working toward wholeness.

Shadow is more mundane than people usually conceptualize.

To be truly accepted and loved fully the shadow has to be integrated and not projected.

Blaming is often shadow play.

There is gold in the shadow-creative alive energy.

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4th Objective Love

The romantic myth can be very destructive when developing a loving relationships

What's love got to do with it? Explain?

When ideal and negative projections are withdrawn and as Jackson Browne says “when your perfect lover just looks like a perfect fool” the relationship is at a crucial point. Do I stay and try to develop a long lasting love or is the grass greener.

This is often where grief comes in and informs the couple of the possibility of deepening or ending the relationship.

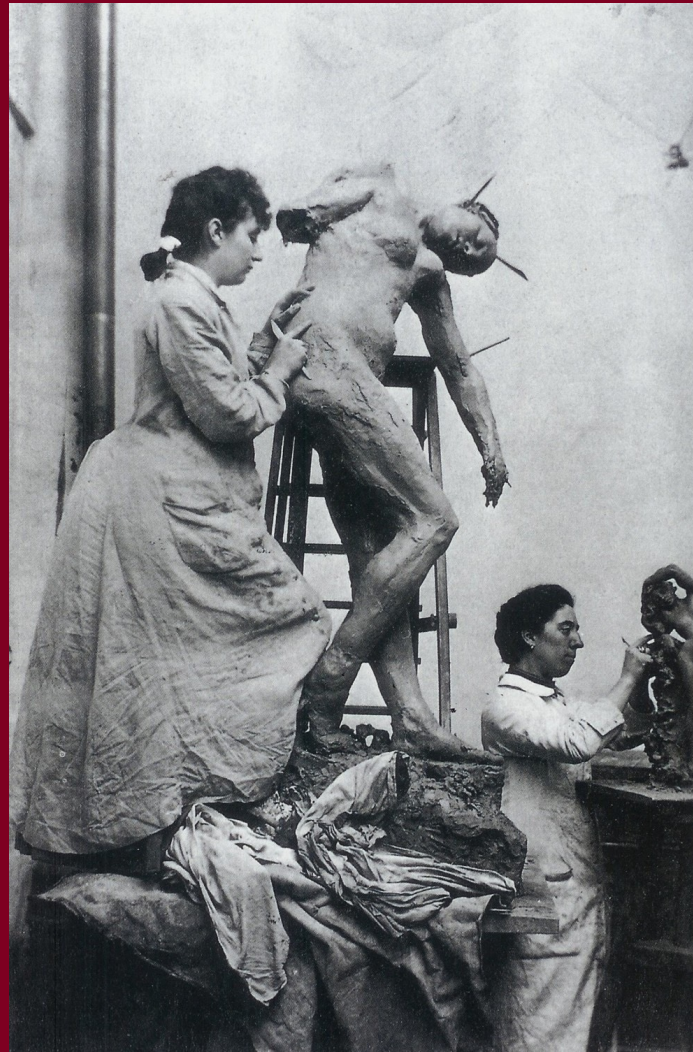
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Iain McGilchrist- Attention may sound dull, but it is an essential aspect of consciousness. In fact, it governs what it is that we turn out to be conscious of, and therefore plays a part in the coming into being of whatever exists for us.

C. G. Jung-It's the nature of love itself.” Finding out what love is, is truly a lifelong practice. “Everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves,”[3] wrote Jung, also saying, “where love rules, there is no will to power, and where power predominates, love is lacking.

Overhauling emotional knowledge is no spectator sport; it demands the messy experience of yanking and tinkering that comes from a limbic bond. If someone's relationship today bear a troubled imprint, they do so because an influential relationship left its mark on a child's mind. When a limbic connection has established a neural pattern, it takes a limbic connection to revise it.” **Thomas Lewis, A General Theory of Love**

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- “Love isn't something natural. Rather it requires discipline, concentration, patience, faith, and the overcoming of narcissism. It isn't a feeling, it is a practice.”
- — Fromm, Eric, The Art of Loving
- “Immature love says: 'I love you because I need you.' Mature love says 'I need you because I love you.’”
- — Erich Fromm

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- “The first part of emotional healing is being limbically known - having someone with a keen ear catch your melodic essence. (170)”
- — Thomas Lewis, *A General Theory of Love*
- On marriage: ‘I promise to be with you together forever even though I have a seeking system.’
Mark Solms, Neuropsychanalyst
- On love: ‘It’s a complicated thing.’ Mark Soms