Psychoanalysis and life

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The relevance of analytic work for people's actual lives is a vital issue. The formation of analytic goals requires a negotiation process between analyst and analysand, a negotiation influenced by the inherent conflictuality of goals for each partner, and colored by the dialectics of goals and goallessness. As a potential contribution to such negotiation, the author emphasizes the fuller understanding and evolution of self-other relations, both as inner object relations and in their actualized external versions, with the help of the analyst's complementary identifications, their self-disclosures when indicated, and a mutual intersubjective exploration when possible. The risks of an insular analytic process, uninvested in "external" reality and dealing exclusively with the analytic dyad, are discussed.

> *Every New Beginning has to take place in an object-relation.*
> (Balint, 1936, p. 213)

Not long ago, a world-renowned analyst presented a case in an analytic institute. The presentation was eloquent, the explanations of the analysand's psychopathology and transference patterns were fascinating, the audience was intrigued. Most of the lively and sophisticated discussion following the lecture focused on conceptual issues. Only one participant, somewhat hesitantly, asked a banal question: did the analysand's problems get any better?

The lecturer appeared a bit embarrassed by the unexpected question, and gave a tortuous answer, which most listeners translated to themselves as indicating that so far – after several years of analysis – the analysand did not improve. In the informal conversations many participants held later on, one observation was prominent: if not for this one irreverent question, the topic might have not come up at all.

Another world-renowned analyst, in a recent internet discussion of a paper he published in a major journal, responded to similar challenges: "To make people feel better? Isn't this what the pharmaceutical companies promise?"

Indeed, they do. And to my mind, the challenge they – as well as various shorter and cheaper psychotherapy methods – present to us, should be met head on, not scornfully dismissed. In a reality in which clinical psychoanalysis repeatedly comes under attack as dated and ineffective, as self-absorbed and cultish, we analysts cannot afford disregarding the issue, of how our work is relevant to people's lives.

Whose goals are these, anyway?

> *I know of no other adequate rational motivation for turning to*
> *analysis – and persisting in it through its deeper vicissitudes – other*
> *than the hope for relief of personal suffering.*   (Stone, 1984, p. 425)

Making the unconscious conscious; bringing the ego in where the id was; strengthening the ego so it could be more adaptable; making the superego less persecutory and more flexible; encouraging separation and individuation; helping in the transition from the

schizoid-paranoid position to the depressive position; striving towards greater cohesion of the self; deepening one's object relations, or moving from object relating to object usage; making one more comfortable and at home in one's body; these goals and many others have been offered during the past century as quintessential for clinical psychoanalysis.

Before we hasten to add our own formulations, I believe we need to address some preliminary issues: Does the concept of goals present any inherent difficulties for psychoanalysts? Should we strive to formulate universal goals, or are the goals in every analytic process unique? When a patient enters an analysis, who chooses its goals?

Let me start with the latter issue.

I have been editing recently a Hebrew edition of Freud's technique papers, and one aspect that struck me upon re-reading them was Freud's powerful paternalistic authority position vis-a-vis his patients, probably a characteristic position for a physician in his milieu. It is recognizable in the tone: "When there is a dispute with the patient whether or how he has said some particular thing, the doctor is usually in the right" (Freud, 1912a, p. 113); "One must be especially unyielding about obedience to that rule…" (Freud, 1912b, p. 119); and so on.

Culture has changed since then, and the awe towards physicians and other experts is much lesser. Many of our present analysands are not that obedient, and are much more critical of our authority. Financial arrangements which were acceptable in Freud's generation (such as charging a full fee for sessions cancelled in advance) may arouse angry protests today (Bader, 1997), and lead at times to an abandonment of the analysis if strictly maintained. The number of sessions per week, or the use of the couch, can no longer be simply imposed.

When Kernberg (1999) discusses the indications for psychoanalysis versus psychoanalytic psychotherapy, he does not make room for the possibility that many such choices are made nowadays mostly by the patients. In the experience of many Israeli analysts, at least, the major difference between patients in analysis and patients in psychotherapy is often not in any diagnostic criteria, but in the fact that the former consented to be in analysis (which most analysts are eager to practice) while the latter declined.

Analysands start analysis with goals of their own, both conscious and unconscious, and can be understood as having unconscious plans for achieving these goals (Weiss, 1998). Analysts also have their goals, and the issue of what will be the goals of the analytic dyad becomes a topic of interpersonal negotiation (Mitchell, 1993). This negotiation may have open, conscious components, and subtle, preconscious or unconscious components. It constitutes a lively continuous dialectic, which keeps evolving as long as the analysis lasts (and in the minds of both partners after its completion), though its peaks are likely to be at the opening phase and at the termination phase.

Failures in the negotiation process may cause this dialectic to collapse. One example would be a domineering analysand casting aside the analyst's agenda and demanding full devotion to his or her proclaimed agenda (be it the removal of a particular symptom, finding or divorcing a spouse, suppressing certain sensitivities, or the like). When the analyst feels intimidated, becomes reluctant to make certain interpretations because they will be scorned or dismissed, gives up on some topics as "taboo" for the analysand, this may indicate such a collapsed dialectic. Such rigidity usually also signifies a suppression of some inner voices in the analysand, an issue to which I will return; the intrapsychic and the intersubjective can never be fully separated.

The opposite kind of collapse appears when a domineering analyst imposes certain theoretically-derived goals, while the analysand's goals are interpreted away as resistant, concrete or shallow ("feeling good is what pharmaceutical companies promise"). A compliant analysand (Weiss, 1998) may acquiesce, but at the price of experiencing analysis as an authoritative setting requiring submission, not really one's own place. Paradoxically, this defeats one of the analyst's potential goals, of fostering personal autonomy.

The Freud-Ferenczi conflict can be conceptualized on the background of this question (Berman, 1996, 1999). Freud's emphasis on the universal scientific goals of psychoanalysis – an extension of his initial choice, after graduating medical school, to opt for laboratory research rather than for medical practice – made him see his patients, at times, primarily as a source of material to confirm, correct or elaborate his theoretical formulations. This focus played a role in his strong objection to any <u>furor sanandi</u> (Freud, 1915, p. 171). In Freud's writings we can find patronizing comments about patients "of only moderate worth" (Freud, 1912b, p. 119); and some of his blunt remarks in private ("Patients are a rabble… [they] only provide us with a livelihood and material to learn from"; Ferenczi, 1932, p. 93) made Ferenczi suspect that Freud – following certain disappointments with patients – became alienated from them, and started abusing his patients' trust (Ferenczi, 1932, p. 186) by pursuing his own goals irrespective of the patients' goals. This could be another example of a collapse of the negotiation process.

Psychoanalytic literature is mostly written from the analyst's point of view. Even though all analysts were also analysands, their subjective experiences as analysands (and those of other analysands) are very rarely discussed in writing, and the picture we get of the analytic process is therefore tilted (Berman, in press). While the present paper too is written mainly from the analyst's point of view, I also attempt to draw upon my experience as an analysand in two analyses, as well as on my cumulative impressions as a supervisor, and as a friend and colleague of dozens of analysands who spoke with me of their analyses throughout the years.

The analyst-analysand negotiation process is influenced, among many factors, by commonalities and variances in the values and beliefs of the two partners. Without going into the subtler differentiation of values typical of various analytic schools, one may say – as the simplest example – that psychoanalysts usually favor fuller expression and integration of inner experiences, and this value may be at odds with a goal a particular analysand may wish to achieve, of learning to more effectively suppress certain painful feelings and better repress some traumatic memories. An effective analysis brings about a developmental process, through which such gaps may be surpassed and transformed; but the analysand may need some deep reassurance that the analyst will not attempt to impose his or her values (including values relating to religion, politics, sexual orientation), before allowing the further evolution of such a process.

While open conflicts of value may become a striking obstacle in forming joint goals for the analytic dyad (goals which could be conceptualized as an aspect of a working alliance), this does not indicate that a commonality of conscious values and stated goals – as may be more widespread in training analyses, for example – is a guarantee against deeper and less visible difficulties in the process. One reason is the inherent conflictuality of goals, even if we were to momentarily limit their exploration to an intrapsychic level.

The inherent conflictuality of goals

> *The result is a plural or manifold organization of self, patterned*
> *around different self and object images or representations, derived*
> *from different relational contexts. We are all composites of*
> *overlapping, multiple organizations and perspectives, and our*
> *experience is smoothed over by an illusory sense of continuity.*
>
> (Mitchell, 1993, p. 104)

Talking of an interpersonal negotiation alone could be understood to imply that each partner in the dyad comes with a unitary and consistent set of goals; such simplistic assumptions are of no use. Notions of smooth coherence and inner unity are foreign to psychoanalytic thinking. Adler favored teleology, and believed in the central impact of unitary goals a person strives for, in shaping one's life; while Freud's causal models (and those of most analysts ever since) put conflict and overdetermination at center stage. This makes conscious goals an epiphenomenon, to be examined carefully, possibly pointing towards rationalizations and other defensive operations masking deeper motives that are harder to express, and inner conflicts about one's goals.

Another way to formulate this observation is to speak of the simultaneous operation of numerous goals, on different levels of consciousness, which may represent conflicting and unintegrated aspects of one's personality. Earlier literature might have discussed this multiplicity as "id goals" versus "superego goals", or as "libidinal ego goals" versus "internal saboteur goals" (Fairbairn), but all such divisions may be too schematic and reified to account for the unique inner dissociations and conflicts of a particular individual.

An intersubjective view indicates that the enormous complexity of any interpersonal negotiation results from the simultaneous and mutually interconnected operation of dyadic dynamics and of inner dialectics within each partner, whose inner conflicts are likely to have themselves evolved in the context of past relationships. The analysand's goals in analysis – as anybody's goals in any significant situation – are unavoidably conflictual.

For example, an analysand who consciously defines his initial analytic goal as overcoming guilt and inhibitions in order to be freer to have extra-marital affairs (a wish which could be interpreted as signifying a manic victory over his wife), may gradually disclose a preconscious yearning for a renewed sexual closeness with his wife (feeling reluctant to acknowledge this yearning which will make him more vulnerable to painful rejection); while his dreams make his analyst conclude that unconsciously he wishes to be relieved of the burdensome tensions of adult genital functioning, and be allowed to be held and caressed as a little boy once more.

The understanding and working through of such conflicts – in the search for newly-formulated goals – is unavoidably colored by the analyst's own countertransference (including personal experiences in marriage), theories (are extra-marital affairs conceptualized with a focus on aggression and deception, or on a search for one's true self as discoverable through fuller intimacy), and social values ("family values" or a greater emphasis on individual fulfilment). These different levels are interrelated, as a full self-analysis of ourselves should lead us to the emotional significance of choosing theories or identifying with ideologies.

While the inner conflictuality of patients' goals is widely noticed in analytic literature, its counterpart regarding the analyst's goals is not always acknowledged. In the situation I just described, the analyst's conscious goal, which would often be well-formulated in

theory-derived terms, may clash with "hidden agendas" which could only emerge in the analyst's own analysis, supervision (Berman, 2000b) or self-analysis. Such a secret goal may derive, for example, from a fantasy wish to test through the analysand the experience of extra-marital affairs which the analyst feels conflicted about, or from a hope to restore the analysand's marriage which can be traced back to the analyst's wish – as a child – to save the crumbling marriage of his or her parents. When the analysand becomes concerned about the analyst's bias, which may be expressed through interpretations manifestly promoting insight but latently encouraging or discouraging having an affair, this may indicate that secret countertransferential goals are indeed detectable.

In other cases, the goal of helping the analysand become more autonomous and eventually terminate may clash, for example, with an unconscious goal of keeping the analysand forever in a state of grateful dependency. Once we acknowledge the ubiquity of complex countertransference, being by no means more rational or controllable than transference, any expression of the analyst's goals must be taken with a grain of salt.

Let me give one more example, from a case study explored in detail elsewhere (Berman, in press). An attempt to decipher the apparent failure of a particular analysis pointed to the impact of discrepancies within the analytic dyad, both in conscious values (e.g., the analyst's investment in intimate mutual relationships, and the analysand's belief in the value of structured and guarded relationships), and in related unconscious transferential goals (e.g., the analyst's wish to recreate in the analysis aspects of his egalitarian relationship with his father, and the analysand's wish to find in him a stricter father who – as in her childhood – will protect her by his firm rules from the chaotic world of her mother). While in that case much insight was achieved after the premature termination, an earlier opening-up and working through of such intersubjective dynamics, combining the analyst's self-analysis with a fuller exploration within the analysis itself, could potentially prevent the collapse of the unconscious negotiation of goals within the analytic dyad.

The dialectics of goals and goallessness

> *In doing psycho-analysis I aim at:*
> > *Keeping alive*
> > *Keeping well*
> > *Keeping awake*
> *I aim at being myself and behaving myself.*
> > > (Winnicott, 1962, p. 166)

Let me point to another common – possibly universal – conflict in the analyst: the conflict between goals (any goals) and goallessness.

Goal-directed behavior is predominantly experienced as linear, structured, oriented towards doing more than towards being. Spontaneity and relaxation, Freud's "evenly hovering attention", Ferenczi's "being natural", Winnicott's "being with" and playing, Bion's "without memory and desire", all imply overthrowing – at least momentarily – the tyranny of goals.

An analysis, it was once suggested, "does not naturally… proceed from A to B. Its course is something else – more like the course of a neurosis or a love affair" (Lewin & Ross, 1960, p. 52). The idea of goals tends to imply "proceeding from A to B", introducing a superego strain into our clinical work. The idea of goals, as any emphasis on <u>desiderata</u>, always runs the risk of being mobilized for utopian zealousness, leading to an

intolerance of the complexity and imperfection of actual reality which is constantly compared to desirable end-states (Berman, 2000a).

Wallerstein (1965), who may have been the first to pinpoint the dialectic of goals and goallessness, speaks of the paradox "between goallessness (or desirelessness) as a technical tool marking the proper therapeutic posture of analytic work and the fact that psychoanalysis differentiates itself… by positing the most ambitious and far-reaching goals" (Wallerstein, 1965, p. 749). He raises a crucial issue, but I feel that speaking of "a technical tool" is an understatement. All the varied notions I mentioned convey profound beliefs about the non-linearity of psychic change, about the value of open-ended situations which allow us to be surprised by ourselves and by the other: "Attunement… is 'aimless' in the sense that it cannot legislate in advance what will emerge from the playful and spontaneous encounter between therapist and patient" (Holmes, 1998, p. 237). These notions are therefore much more than technical tools.

When Winnicott humorously describes his aims as keeping alive, well and awake (while deliberately avoiding any metapsychological definitions of aims or goals), he also seriously tells us something substantial about the kind of presence and relating which could be used by the other to become more alive, feel well, and awake to the fuller potentialities of "being oneself".

Here too we may notice a change of <u>Weltanschauung</u>. In a generation dominated by metapsychology, by a belief in definitive causes and overarching objective organizing principles, the expectation to formulate theoretically-derived general goals for psychoanalytic treatment was natural. A generation which became more skeptical regarding general truths about human nature (the skepticism regarding Freud's metapsychology is matched by the decline of grand theories in other areas of the humanities and the sciences), and which gives priority to more modest clinical theories (Wallerstein, 1988), such universal goals do not fit as well, and may even arouse our suspicion as causing a fetishistic ossification of live processes.

While Renik is concerned that by relating change in analytic technique to the democratic or post-modern <u>Zeitgeist</u> "we dismiss it as determined by political aims or academic fashion" (Renik, 1999, p. 523), I believe that such connections are inevitable, whether we acknowledge them or not. We are all continuously influenced by our cultural milieu. Indeed, the "evolution toward less self-importance and more candid self-exposure by analysts… has been motivated by immediate, pragmatic considerations" (ibid); but our capacity to become pragmatic rather than doctrinaire has been strengthened by a certain cultural climate, and the analysands' capacity to benefit from our candid self-exposure has been equally increased by this same climate.

More modest and relative goals, better geared to unique – possibly transient – cultural and individual needs, sound more convincing to our contemporary ears, more suitable for a secular, pragmatic, realistic psychoanalysis. Still, even these may be counterbalanced by a critical deconstructive tendency, which exposes the limitations and inner contradictions of any goal (and any technique), subverting potential idealizations. This climate may explain the growing impact of Winnicott's work, in which paradoxes are not to be resolved.

Goallessness, however, may arouse guilt: "are we going anywhere, or are we wasting our time?" This conflict may appear in the analysand as well. "I realize I want to go on because it's nice to meet you, not for the analysis", or "sometimes it crosses my mind that it would be great to continue forever", are sayings that are likely to convey both warm appreciation and concern.

Although later on I express my own concerns about endless analyses, I feel that part of the yearning to avoid termination is related to the being dimension of the analytic bond, which makes it to some extent into a goalless relationship, or – in other words – turns the closeness into a goal by itself, as may happen in intimate friendship, in lasting romantic love, or in affectionate parent-child ties which outgrow the functional aspects of childrearing. Various theoretical notions of attachment, object relations or subject relations lend significance to the capacity to calmly enjoy this kind of closeness, without worrying about its "outcome".

More specific goals, which constitute the other end of this dialectical tension, cannot be the analyst's alone nor the analysand's alone; and they need not be universal. Proposing binding universal goals will never do justice to the unique personalities of analysts, analysands and analyst-analysand dyads. In the following parts of this paper I will therefore not propose what should be "The goals of analysis", but rather discuss some goals that I find personally meaningful to me, and which I often present – explicitly or implicitly – to my analysands, as part of the attempt to patiently negotiate what our joint goals may evolve to become.

On internal and external goals

> *Transitional space breaks down when either inner or outer reality*
> *begins to dominate the scene, just as conversation stops if one of*
> *the participants takes over.*　　　　　　(Phillips, 1988, p. 119)

A prominent characteristic of the psychoanalytic approach is its interest in what's beneath the surface, in what is not conscious, not openly formulated, not directly observable. Clearly, the goals of any analysis cannot be stated in behavioral or psychiatric terms, as we know too well that the same factual outcome (e.g., the analysand got married or divorced, became a parent, achieved professional recognition or quit a job) may have a multitude of inner meanings, some diametrically opposed to the conventional significance attributed to such an outcome.

At the same time, if this caution becomes transformed into a condescending attitude towards "external" reality, we are at risk. Winnicott warned against such dismissal: "fantasy is only tolerable at full blast when objective reality is appreciated well" (Winnicott, 1958, p. 153).

A belittling view of actual life realities may lend the exploration of goals a solipsistic quality. While external facts by themselves could never serve us as criteria for analytic success, substantial inner changes – changes in self experience, in one's inner object world, or in the rigidity of one's character armor and defenses – can and should be expected to have visible manifestations in the analysand's actual life, away from the couch: "A real change occurring in the absence of action is a practical and theoretical impossibility" (Wheelis, 1950, p. 145).

When an analysand's friends or family members consistently say that in spite of his or her claims for improvement they do not experience any change, this is – in the long run – a reason to be concerned. Undoubtedly, when an analysand quotes such complaints in the sessions this may be an indirect way to express the analysand's own ambivalence. But this does not preclude the possibility that the individuals quoted indeed entertain their own doubts, and that they may have a point.

An analysis which deals exclusively with what happens in the consulting room, and interprets all the analysand's reports of his or her outside life as indirect expressions of transference towards the analyst, poses the danger of a new reductionism. One of its unspoken implications may be that the analytic relationship is "between a highly important, omnipresent object, the analyst, and an unequal subject who at present apparently cannot feel, think or experience anything unrelated to the analyst" (Balint, 1969, p. 169). Such an approach may be ill-equipped to fully evaluate the outcomes of the analysis; "this idealization of process over outcome can sometimes hamper our ability to study how our technique helps people" (Bader, 1994, p. 254). In a self-contained process inattentive to outside life, we may be less capable to differentiate changes in the analytic relationship which can be gradually generalized to other contexts as well, from a dedication to the analysis which becomes a substitute to any other investment in life, a danger which I explore later on.

Numerous idealizations in psychoanalysis can become persecutory, contributing to a difficult atmosphere in many psychoanalytic institutes and organizations (Kernberg, 2000; Berman, 2000a). This trend may involve the uncritical belief in the universal value of interpretation, of empathy, etc. (Berman, 2000c). Another prominent example is the idealization of structural change as utterly distinct from an inferior clinical or symptomatic change. This distinction, I agree with Werman, "has outlived whatever usefulness it might ever have had" (Werman, 1989, p. 120). Wallerstein, summarizing an extensive follow-up study on 42 patients, also concludes that changes defined as analytic (structural) and as (merely) therapeutic were in many cases "quite indistinguishable" (Wallerstein, 1989, pp. 586-587). The difficulty in acknowledging such findings may indeed be attributed to "the tendency to neglect therapeutic aims in psychoanalysis" (Bader, 1994).

While any conception of analytic goals unavoidably involves some notion of achieving significant and lasting changes, many attempts to categorize or rank-order the quality of such changes appear to serve mostly a polemic-competitive need to glorify certain analytic theories and techniques and denigrate others ("my work is deep, your work is shallow"). The determination to keep psychoanalysis totally distinct from psychotherapy (Berman, 2000a) may serve such an agenda in internal professional politics, and in the self-image of analysts. The exploration of differences between psychoanalysis and psychotherapy is of interest, but in a social reality in which all the talking cures come under harsh attack, an overemphasis on such inner dividing lines may serve the narcissism of small differences while neglecting the crucial contemporary debate about the legitimacy and value of psychoanalytic treatment as a whole.

Self and others

> *Every neurotic symptom means also a distorted object-relation, and the*
> *change in the individual is only one aspect of the whole process.*
>
> (Balint, 1950, p. 121)

A good example of the inner-outer dialectic is the issue of object relations. One's inner object world, the patterning of one's lasting representations of the other and their affective coloring, is a major issue in psychoanalysis. Most of us would agree that this inner world is influenced by actual self-other ties in childhood (even if we disagree about the relative weight of such actual ties in comparison to inborn drive-fantasy formations), and that it influences in turn one's actual self-other ties in adult life. One of the potential expressions of substantial changes in an analysand's inner object world would therefore be changes in

the quality of actual relationships, with the analyst, and with significant others in the analysand's life outside the consulting room.

Numerous ideas have been put forward as to variations in the quality of self-other relations: Klein's transition from part objects to whole objects, from a schizoid-paranoid experience of objects to a depressive experience, and from magic reparation to realistic reparation; Winnicott's shift from object relating (toward "subjective objects") to object usage (recognizing "objective objects"); Kohut's evolution from archaic selfobjects toward mature ones; Benjamin's (and others') transition from objects to subjects. In all these divergent formulations, the more mature form of relating involves greater capacity for recognition of the other's uniqueness, and consequently truer mutuality.

Ogden (1989) speaks in this context of a "depressive" capacity for historicity, in which processes can be explored. Within such historicity, an object relationship can be understood as going through mutually-determined transformations. For example, the dead-end rhetorical question, "how could I have married such a monster", may be replaced by the painful real question, "what went wrong in our relationship so that we both became monstrous toward each other, and lost the good things that brought us together initially". Or, a preoccupation with who you want your child to be (leading to disappointment about the child's failure to comply with this yearned-for image) may be replaced by greater curiosity as to the child's actual personality, and the way it influences (and is molded by) your evolving relationship with this child. To deal with such questions, listening to the other becomes a necessity.

When such listening is still impossible, the other's point of view may be often distorted through projective mechanisms and scapegoating, dismissed out of self-righteousness ("what she says about me is crazy, manipulative, insincere"), anxiously disregarded due to an equation of recognition and submission ("if I understand him too much, I'll have to succumb to his wishes"), cast aside in a climate of entitlement, etc.

When such patterns gradually change, this naturally has enormous potential consequences for the other, whose point of view is eventually better recognized and taken into account. A dialogue becomes more attainable.

The particular aspect of understanding the other's point of view, which I wish to emphasize here, is understanding the other's view of me (Laing, 1961). One's well-being is often influenced not only by insight into one's own needs and motives, but also by insight into one's impact on significant others and one's reflection in their subjective experience. An analysis with an exclusive intrapsychic focus may go a long way towards bringing the analysand into closer contact with early memories and unconscious fantasies, and yet leave the analysand blind to her or his impact, which may be a key to the success or failure of one's actual relationships. When such impact is never explored, we may unwittingly reinforce the analysand's self-centeredness, a passive victimized self-image, or a sense of entitlement.

The intrapsychic and the intersubjective are of course closely connected; an unconscious fantasy – originally formed in the context of one's early relationship with one's parents – may determine one's attitude towards one's spouse or children, etc. But this connection is far from being so self-evident and malleable, so that the elucidation of the fantasy will by itself change present and future relationships. To the contrary, a direct exploration of these connections appears to me an inherent aspect of analytic work, and only analytic treatment can then supply the full picture of self-other relations in their multi-level, inner and outer, actual and fantasized, intersubjective complexity.

The capacity to observe a rich range of actualized object relations – and to figure out their subjective significance for both sides – is prominent in psychoanalytically-oriented group therapy and family therapy, where we can experience each patient's relations with numerous others, including family or group members, relations which always have transferential components indicating the impact of variable inner object representations.

In an individual analysis such a goal can be served in two complementary ways. One is close attention to the analyst-analysand relationship, to transference and countertransference in their broadest definition and in their fullest complexity. The other is close attentive listening to the analysand's descriptions of his or her central relationships outside the analysis, past and present, and to their subtle affective nuances and fluctuations. I do not see these paths as mutually exclusive; they may facilitate and enhance each other.

The broad definition I refer to implies seeing the transference- countertransference cycle as a comprehensive process of mutual influence; "transference is the expression of the patient's relations with the fantasied and real countertransference of the analyst" (Racker, 1968, p. 131). I do not assume that the analysand's experience of me is all displaced or projected, and I attempt to listen carefully to indications of the way my unique personality and unique countertransference also influence the process, for better and for worse (Gill, 1982).

In line with my assumption that I have a specific impact, I see no reason to assume that all my analysand's object-related issues will be played out fully with me alone. This is one of the reasons I am also interested in other relationships the analysand may have, in which other unique individuals (of different age, gender, and character than me) activate different relationship patterns in my analysand. A comprehensive understanding of an analysand's actualized relational world (including the analytic relationship, and all other central personal and professional relationships, past and present, which are emotionally significant) allows a fuller picture of the analysand's inner object world.

This fuller picture may become close to the picture that emerges in an analytic therapy group, in which the patient's various (vertical and horizontal) transferences combine into a meaningful pattern. Another example would be training analyses, in which we often discover unique transference patterns towards various faculty members, and splits between the various transference figures – including analyst, supervisors, teachers, etc. – in the candidate's life. In a particular instance explored more fully elsewhere (Berman, 2000b, pp. 283-284), an analysand's childhood experiences related to his parents' divorce were partially recreated – and subsequently understood and worked through – in a transferential matrix involving his analyst and one of his supervisors. I do not view these splits as primarily defensive or as indicating resistance (Berman, 1995), and I find their attentive analysis to be potentially quite fruitful.

Undoubtedly, in some instances extra-analytic relationships involve displaced aspects of the analytic transference; unexpressed or unacknowledged disappointment with the analyst may be split off and displaced to a supervisor or to one's spouse. Yet I see no reason to assume a-priori that this is always the case. To give the simplest example, some emotional dynamics which are specifically related to male-female relations may emerge in a cross-gender relationship while not emerging at all in a same-gender analysis, and their interpretation as a displacement may be presumptuous.

When we actually discover strong commonalities between different relationships, on the other hand, this could be evidence to powerful points of fixation in which the uniqueness of the actual other disappears under "the shadow of the (inner) object". When this is the

case, the analytic exploration of such common patterns, or elements of repetition compulsion, is facilitated by the analysts's capacity to pinpoint the pattern in several contexts simultaneously (in the consulting room, in the analysand's marriage, in a professional context, and so on) rather than putting all the weight on the analytic dyad alone.

Complementary identifications, intersubjectivity and self-disclosure

An analyst who is, as far as the patient can see and know, always
helpful, kindly and understanding, may seem to that patient to be a
wonderful man… [but] he may not have the feeling of having been
fully known. This analyst will not have <u>*lived through*</u> *the patient's*
childhood. This analyst will not feel the frustrations of the parents or
the destructive ability of the child who is furious with the parent.

(Bollas, 1987, p. 253)

Close attention to countertransference reactions is indispensable in understanding the full mutually-transferential cycle characterizing the analytic dyad. Racker has identified two major components in countertransference: concordant identifications, where we find ourselves "in the analysand's shoes", and complementary identifications, with the analysand's objects.

When he starts formulating this division, in 1948, Racker speaks of the "complementary attitude" (Deutsch's original term) as allowing understanding but preventing the analyst from reacting understandingly, which will become possible only when the analyst "has analysed and overcome" his reaction and "is able to identify himself with the patient's ego emotionally as well" (Racker, 1968, p. 124). In his major paper of 1953 he appears more tolerant of the unavoidable appearance of both kinds of identifications, but still relates empathy to concordant identification and to sublimated positive countertransference (ibid, p. 136). In a still later paper, in 1956, Racker emphasizes that through complementary identifications "the analyst acquires a further key of prime importance for the understanding of the transference" (p. 175). I would add that they are also a key for our fuller understanding of extra-analytic relationships, complementing their description from the analysand's conscious point of view.

Tansey and Burke pursued further Racker's line of thought, by emphasizing that the objects in one's life also represent aspects of one's self, and therefore "the potential for an empathic outcome also lies in the successful processing of complementary identifications" (Tansey & Burke, 1989, p. 58). While the complementary emotional state may be momentarily adversarial, "what the therapist is experiencing at a particular moment may very well be something that the patient himself has experienced", and therefore "the initial complementary identification serves as a vehicle for an eventual concordant identification" (ibid, p. 59).

This idea resonates with Ogden's analysis of "the formation of two new suborganizations of the ego, one identified with the self in the external object relationship and the other thoroughly identified with the object" (Ogden, 1983, p. 234). Ogden indeed concludes that Racker's complementary identification "involves the thrapists unconsciously identifying with the aspect of the patient's ego identified with the object" (ibid). The subjective experience of the analyst, in whom such identifications may arouse guilt as being unempathic and treacherous, is therefore misleading, as they do form a

potential springboard for a much richer and complex empathic understanding; "concordant and complementary countertransference identifications coexist and have an interdependent, dialectical relationship with each other, growing out of the empathic bond that arises when one person attempts to give care to another" (Feinsilver, 1999, p. 274).

An attempt to base one's analytic work only on concordant identifications – out of an idealization of empathic immersion, of "being at one with the analysand" – sidetracks this dialectical relationship. It is problematic for several reasons:

1. It is forced, and may lead to inner censorship of parts of the analyst's multifaceted spontaneous experience with the analysand, which is in its totality a major source of insight into the analysand's emotional life (Bollas, 1987). If aggressive reactions, for example, are cast aside by the analytic superego, we may end up with a depleted "prescribed countertransference" (Berman, 2000c).

2. Such determination may bind the analyst to certain aspects of the analysand's conscious self experience (e.g., being victimized by others), while cutting off denied and projected aspects of the analysand's inner world, which may be initially only expressed by proxy.

3. Subsequently, a full intersubjective exploration of the evolving dyadic relationship is undermined.

4. This artificial selection may reach the analysand's awareness, reducing her or his trust in the analyst's actual caring ("your empathy is just a technique, who knows how you really feel"), or contributing to a self-image as a weak, vulnerable child with whom one cannot be open.

5. The analyst's repressed or denied affects may find uncontrolled outlets in acting out, or result in an inner experience of distance or alienation.

Let me give an example: A supervisee reports that his analysand constantly blames him for identifying with his wife rather than with him; all his attempts to interpret this as a fearful projection are ineffective. Fuller discussion in supervision makes it clear the analysand has a point: in the countertransference, the analyst experiences his analysand as a bully, and the analysand's wife as a victim. This reaction turns out to have some sources in the analyst's life, but to also be molded by the analysand's projective identification. This analysand consciously depreciates his wife, but unconsciously invites empathy towards her much more than towards himself. It becomes clear that the analyst's past interpretations, which implied denial of the analysand's complaints, made the analysand confused and even more suspicious. On the other hand, a judicious acknowledgement of the analysand's perceptions could become a springboard to the new understanding of the analysand's marriage, not as the external battlefield he consciously portrays, but as the stage of an inner drama, in which many of his own dissociated experiences as a battered child are projectively expressed through his wife (Berman, 2000b, p. 275). Naturally, such a shift could facilitate a significant development in the analytic relationship as well.

This example introduces the issue of self-disclosure (Bollas, 1987; Aron, 1996; Cooper, 1998; Jacobs, 1999; Renik, 1999). The legitimacy of self-disclosure is related to my point, as I believe that the change in object relations which I strive to facilitate cannot be achieved while relating to an analyst who is idealized into a selfless container or a seamless selfobject, lacking separate subjectivity beyond the subjective willingness to be utilized according to the analysand's needs.

Of course, some analysands need such a state for shorter or longer periods, and it should not be disrupted. Ogden formulated this beautifully, in discussing one of his analysands: "I said to her… that I assumed that my own wishes to be experienced by her as human were a reflection of an aspect of herself, but that she did not at the moment feel she could afford this complicated luxury since she was so fully involved in fighting for her life" (Ogden, 1989, p. 63).

I do advocate, however, taking advantage of any signs of the analysand's interest in the analyst's subjectivity (Aron, 1996), as a springboard for a patient encouragement of the process which Winnicott described as a shift from subjective objects to objective objects (Winnicott, 1971, p. 94), while more contemporary authors may describe as a shift from object relations to subject relations. (The apparent contradiction in terms stems from the fact that Winnicott speaks of the observer coloring the other with his own subjectivity, while current usage emphasizes the recognition of the other's subjectivity).

The analysand's interest in the analyst's subjectivity is a welcome indication of progress in many analyses. Its recognition as such cannot coincide with the strict maintenance of anonymity (Renik, 1999). Such a combination may be experienced as inconsistent or even sadistic; attempted anonymity is consistent with an exclusive focus on intrapsychic processes, but not with an interest in intersubjectivity. Our new goals require thoughtful exploration as to the points in which the analyst's growing openness could facilitate this process of a joint exploration of the evolving intersubjective reality.

Let me add parenthetically that self-disclosures initiated unilaterally when the analysand is not ready for them, or interprets them as a sign of the analyst's weakness or loss of control, may – on the other hand – inhibit or block this process (Berman, in press). The idealization of self-disclosure, turning it into a universal technique, is as risky as the idealization of other techniques.

Self-disclosures of complementary identifications ("when the analyst describes his experience as the object"; Bollas, 1987, p. 210) may be particularly difficult for both partners; and yet they can markedly help the analysand in understanding what goes wrong in her or his relationships, and eventually – following working through in the analysis – in transforming them. Such self-disclosures can be effective, however, only in the context of a strong experience of investment and support, based on concordant identifications.

Our technique in this area is still in an experimental stage. A few examples of recent case discussions point to some of the issues involved.

Jacobs (1999, p. 173) offers the following example: "One day, when Ms. K's assault on me was particularly strong and unnerving, I must have responded by looking troubled. She asked me what was wrong. Before I knew what was happening, I found myself sharing some of my feelings with her… I told her that I felt attacked, that she was expressing a great deal of aggression toward me in a concealed way…" Jacobs's evaluation of this unplanned intervention is mixed: Ms. K's immediate insight was striking ("I guess I don't know what I'm doing or how I affect people. What you said just now is what my husband says"; ibid, p. 174), but some years later she told him that his response had frightened and inhibited her.

This example reminds us that at times self-disclosure is unavoidable. When the analysand has already noticed the analyst's reaction, a refusal to verbalize it may be mystifying and insulting. While Jacobs's specific formulation may have turned out in retrospect to have been too shocking, I am conviced that some attempt to convey what Jacobs conveyed to Ms. K was indeed vital. Ideally, fuller exploration of the impact of the

intervention shortly after it was made could have reduced its toxic influences and allowed further progress.

Another example is offered by Renik (1999, 525-527). In his attempt to show his analysand Anne that she tends to criticize herself instead of her husband, he used the words "I am confused". Anne noticed that he was being cautious with her, as the issue was not confusion but disagreement, and Renik confirmed her impression. Anne was intrigued by the realization that her analyst had been intimidated by her, and asked her husband "whether he worried about having her approval" (ibid, p. 526). He told her he did. Anne came to realize "that she could inadvertently intimidate other people by communicating her exaggerated sensitivities… she was too ready to assume that the people she cared about would treat her the way her mother did" (p. 527).

Actually, we see in retrospect, while the content of Renik's initial interpretation was determined by a conscious concordant identification, the words "I am confused" disclosed a complementary identification hidden underneath, which turned out to be particularly fruitful.

Cooper (1998) describes an interpretive style combining an interpretation of the analysand's outside relationships (his contemptuous attitudes, in that case) with self-disclosure as to the impact of related issues in the consulting room, seemingly drawing upon both complementary and concordant identifications: "I find myself in a dilemma. I want to help you understand… how you may feel critical at times that you are unaware of… I also know that when I bring it up, you are likely to feel self-critical or criticized by me…" (Cooper, 1998, p. 396). The missing piece in the puzzle, for me, is whether the analysand ever treated the analyst contemptuously, and how could such an element be utilized analytically.

If the joint exploration process is successful, the analysand's growing capacity to empathically perceive the other's subjectivity, while resorting less to denial or projection, will hopefully allow more gratifying relationships with others: spouse, children, colleagues, friends. This in turn could reduce experiences of rejection and loneliness, and enhance the analysand's well being and self esteem.

In and out of the joint cocoon

> *To understand everything to the point of doing nothing, rather than to*
> *understand enough to do something realistic, is a miscarriage of*
> *analysis.*   (Rose, 1974, p. 515)

The relative attention to the drama of the analytic relationship itself, and to other dramas going on in the analysand's life, is itself the topic of dialectical tension and needed negotiation. The analysand's complex needs may require different balances at different stages, and they also interact with the analyst's needs and opinions.

I can see certain risks both in an underutilization of the transference, when the analytic relationship is avoided, at times collusively; and in an overinvolvement with the transference, when the analysand's outside life disappears into the background.

A parallel and related issue is the risks in avoiding the here-and-now, as in the classical archeological emphasis (which may be experienced as implying "you are not mad at me, but at your father") and in avoiding the past ("you are not mad at your father, but at me"). Each of these trends, if pursued singlemindedly, may make the analysis too narrow,

repetitive and predictable, reducing its potential to become a transitional space in which all mental content (past and present, reality and fantasy, inner and outer, "here" and "there") can be verbalized and explored freely, without reductionism.

When analysts interpret all associations as expressing the transference, the analysand's subjective experience may be that much of his or her life is of no interest to the analyst and of no real importance in the analyst's eyes. The analyst may then be seen as narcissistically self-absorbed, as "a mighty omnipresent object" (Balint, 1968, p. 169), as a parental figure too self-centered to be curious about the child's life outside. A friend once told me, sarcastically: "I imagine that if I came into my session and said that my mother died yesterday, my analyst would say: 'You appear to experience my mothering of you as deadening'".

This tendency may go hand-in-hand with lack of interest in historical, social and cultural realities (including those of ethnicity, gender, war, migration etc.) that influence the analysand's life and become registered in his or her unconscious. Another aspect of "reclusive analysis" is the objection of some analysts to their analysands' wishes to attend group therapy, family therapy, or various workshops. Certainly serious exploration of the meaning of such wishes is in order (they may also signify a lack experienced in the analysis), but at times the combination proves to be productive; just as a well-contemplated decision to pursue one's studies or career elsewhere is at times a real step towards growth, not necessarily motivated by resistance to analysis. We must avoid a situation in which "we offer ourselves to our patients incessantly as objects to cling to, and interpret anything contrary to clinging as resistance…" (Balint, 1969, p. 175). Direct or indirect prohibitions regarding the analysand's plans and wishes color analysis in religious hues, and may be experienced as a commandment, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me".

I once heard of a supervisor advising a candidate never to use in the sessions the names of persons in the analysand's life (speaking instead of 'your older daughter', 'your boss', etc.), in order to emphasize the intrapsychic focus of analytic work. In my experience, the analyst's familiarity with these names, with the personality of these significant persons (even with their appearance if the analysand wishes to bring in their photographs), as well as with other details of the analysand's daily life, enriches the analysis, and contributes greatly to the analysand's growing experience of the analyst as a trustworthy ally and partner. Analysands who avoid names express at times distrust in the analyst's memory, interest and investment in them.

Indeed, there could be another explanation: instances of severely traumatized individuals, who are so painfully "involved in fighting for their life" that their object relations are severely impoverished. In such cases, it is possible that a longer period of "staying inside the (joint) cocoon" is crucial, requiring the analyst's tolerance for the analysand's avoidance of the other: both of outside figures as meaningful others, and of the analyst as an other. This may lead to a purer "mirror transference" of the kind Kohut described, or to a use of the analyst mostly "as a provider of time and of milieu" (Balint, 1969, p. 179). For other analysands, such a transient pattern may appear during periods of intense analytic regression, which must be respected.

Still, in my experience, pure "Kohutian" selfobject transferences, in which the analyst as a person is immaterial, are rare; and the more common phenomenon is the noteworthy appearance of their elements (e.g., mirroring needs, idealizations, twinship fantasies) in combination with other transference ingredients, in which the analyst as a separate person is better acknowledged. The latter ingredients are often heterogenous too, along the

spectrum from displaced childhood images ("Freudian transference"), through projections of one's inner reality ("Kleinian transference"), to instnces of perceptive curious recognition of the analyst's personal uniqueness ("intersubjective transference"). This complex admixture allows various interpretive strategies, and here naturally the analyst's theories, personal style and countertransference play a crucial role.

My point is not to make an absolute value judgement about the advantage of any one theory or strategy, but rather to point to the risks of their single-minded pursuit, and to the need to listen attentively to the significance attributed by the analysand to our choices. Is one analyst's attempt to maintain neutrality experienced by the analysand as thoughtfully respectful or mostly as avoidant and cowardly? Is another analyst's self-disclosure experienced by the analysand predominantly as honest and open, or as wild and upsetting? Is a third analyst's interest in the analysand's marital crisis experienced as empathic or as voyeuristic? And is the latter analyst's attempt to understand the the point of view of the analysand's spouse seen as a hurtful indication of betrayal, or as a sincere attempt to help the analysand figure out what went wrong?

These questions (which, of course, often have more than one answer) may prove more crucial than the analysts' theoretical rationales and conscious intentions in choosing their respective interventions. The open exploration of such questions may become vital in maintaining or restoring the value of analysis as a fertile transitional space, in which a mutual – though surely asymmetrical – new partnership can gradually evolve. In such a partnership the analyst could be subjected to critical scrutiny no less than the analysand.

It is possible that each analytic model, while sensitizing us to certain issues and opening new horizons, also carries with it unique risks, potential blind spots, which go unnoticed when analytic discourse becomes too partisan, polemical and defensive. Actually, fuller attention to the specific risks of each theoretical paradigm and each recommended technique could be of great value first and foremost to the adherents of this particular approach.

The significance of analytic themes and patterns is dynamic and shifting, and the analyst must be vigilant to recognize new challenges at different stages. Today's fresh insight may be tomorrow's cliche and resistance. The sheltered analytic cocoon, which at one point in time may be crucial to allow undisturbed expression and slow growth, may at another point turn out to have become a rigid defense against living "outside", a protected dependent relationship which justifies an avoidance of risk-taking in less protected settings. Ideally, the analysand's growing strength should allow movement forward; but the process may be sidetracked, and our attention to this risk is needed.

Freud made each patient promise him "not to take any important decisions affecting his life during the time of his treatment… but to postpone all such plans until after his recovery" (Freud, 1914, p. 153). This was an aspect of the recommended abstinence. It must be remembered, however, that at the time most analyses lasted – according to Freud – around half a year or a year. Today, the notion of definitive "recovery" may strike us as naive. Moreover, the gradual shift (contrary to the expectations of Rank and others) towards much longer analyses, while understandable in view of our fuller awareness of the complexity and earlier sources of emotional life, and our more realistic view of the pace of change processes, makes the formula "analyze first, live later" untenable.

During these contemporary longer analyses life goes on fully, crucial life choices and commitments are made, even though some of their motives and implications are only understood in retrospect. Ideally, the complexity of life enriches the analytic discourse, while analysis gradually improves life.

When I hear of long analyses during which life remains "on hold", I am concerned. When the analytic relationship is for many years the only meaningful relationship in the analysand's life, I wonder if the cocoon became too impenetrable. While it is quite possible that meaningful analytic work continuously goes on, did this work become so insular and self-contained that its implications for outside life became obscure? Did a strong emphasis on the dynamics of the analytic dyad leave the rest of life in the shadow? Or did the cozy familiar territory become an addictive object, a fetish (Renik, 1992) or a phobic retreat? With all the pain and anxiety involved, a gradual (and hopefully worked-through) termination in such a prolonged analysis may at times introduce fresh air into the analysand's life, and trigger more change than its indefinite continuation.

A related issue is breaks in the analysis. On the one hand, one hears of some analysts whose international career causes constant interruptions in the analyses they conduct, so that continuity and safety can barely be experienced. On the other hand, some other analysts are very worried about taking longer vacations, and limit their private lives considerably on this background. Such protectiveness, I fear, may signify a coconstructed fearful avoidant atmosphere. Rose commented: "Now that analysis and training are nearly endless it may be salutary to have periodic suspension of the analytic life with its passive expectancy, hypertrophy of thought and verbalization, and postponement of action" (Rose, 1974, p. 515).

Separations may indeed be painful and threatening (and for deeply regressed patients almost unbearable), yet some analysands end up making fruitful changes in their lives when their analysts are away. At times, the analyst's capacity to take time off, making the analyst's own needs into a legitimate reality, turns into a variation of "the analyst's act of freedom" (Symington, 1983), which is freeing for the analysand as well.

Hopefully, freedom and mobility have the upper hand in psychoanalysis, and such increased freedom could also be seen as a potential inherent analytic goal. "A psychoanalyst has the rare opportunity to live a life engaged in a form of work that affords him or her the possibility of entering into a sustained conscious and unconscious dialogue with another person, at a depth that holds the potential for each to free the other in significant ways from the confines of who each has been to that point" (Ogden, 2000).

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