



Between Physics and Metaphysics Does neuroscience really make a difference to psychotherapy?

Lecturer: Dr. Elya Steinberg

Seminar date: 17 July 2009 Friday

Time: 10:00 am – 14:30 end of seminar

Cost: £45

Venue: LSBP, 25 Bickerton Rd, London N19 5JT

For decades psychotherapy was conceptualised as metaphysics because its subjective methods and outcome were un-measurable by the standards of scientific objective methodology. Following developments in the last 2-3 decades in the theoretical horizon, and in measuring tools and methodologies in neuroscience, science, medicine and in quantum physics, new bridges are evolving. These links between subjective experiences and objective methodology start to bridge the historical divisions made in the human being (such as the mind/body split as presented by psychology versus medicine or different biological systems: cardio-vascular system, respiratory system, immune system, endocrinological system or neurological system).

We have learnt in current neuroscience and psychotherapy (Van Der Kolk) that most experiences are automatically processed on a sub-cortical level. i.e. by “unconscious” interpretation that takes place outside of awareness. Insights and understanding have only limited influence on the operation of these sub-cortical processes when addressing the problems of traumatised people, who, in a myriad of ways, continue to react to current experience as a replay of the past. There is a need for therapeutic methods like Biodynamic Body-Psychotherapy that do not depend exclusively on understanding and

cognition, but on perception of self through sentient (body) awareness and the physiological ability of the body to process stress and emotions.

During the Biodynamic Body-Psychotherapy sessions, we explore past traumatic responses at different developmental levels, as well as the treatment implications of these findings. Traumatic memories are often dissociated and may be inaccessible to verbal recall or processing. Therefore, in Biodynamic Body-Psychotherapy, close attention is paid to the development of inner resources and resilience to deal with dysregulation and helplessness, as well as the careful timing of the exploration and processing of the traumatic past and present.

For example, in a Biodynamic Body-Psychotherapy session, we may support integration of sensory input with motoric output to enable effective movement and action in perceived life threatening situations, instead of being trapped in non-effective helplessness and hypoarousal states. Another example for direction in a Biodynamic Body-Psychotherapy session can be finding an internal framework which enables self-regulation of the hyperarousal state on a bodily level using, for instance, Biodynamic Massage (as a mean for vagal nerve stimulation), as well as translation of the experience into communicable, verbal language.

In the lecture, and in the following seminar, we will discuss how trauma and stress, particularly when recurring, may leave emotional, mental and physiological residue, produce neuro-anatomical (i.e. micro and macro anatomical changes to the brain) and eventually reduce a person's resilience.

We will explore some Biodynamic Psychotherapy methods in the light of the growing body of evidence showing that uncontrolled exposure to trauma affects children's health and may delay optimal mental and physical development, as well as the child's ability to become a healthy and positive member of society.

Registration on our website or:

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Or directly to elya.steinberg@virgin.net

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