Human Relations

Chapter 7

A Whirlwind Tour...

- Object relations
  - Seeks to understand the relationship between intrapsychic forces and interpersonal relationships
  - Remember object as a component of Freud’s theory of drive
  - Here, object is the aim of relational needs in human development
  - Object relations are the intrapsychic experiences of those early relationships

Melanie Klein

- Splitting
  - Primarily because of conflict/anxiety over feelings of aggression
  - Split objects/feelings into Good and Bad
    - Mother (nurturance/acceptance vs. rejection/frustration)
    - Wholly value the good, integrate into self
    - Wholly devalue the bad, project onto others
    - Allows children to value a person as good when, in external reality, they are a complex mixture of good and bad

More Splitting

- Some frustration of needs is good \(\rightarrow\) individuation
- Goal is to integrate “good” and “bad” aspects of the self into a consistent whole
- Splitting can cloud objective/subjective perceptions
  - Distorted, maladaptive relationships with others

Heinz Kohut

- Self-Theory
  - Children need to be mirrored: to have accomplishments accepted and praised
  - Idealization: child’s belief that they are omnipotent
    - Idealize parents
    - Allows for the formation of goals
  - Ideal development
    - Nuclear self: bipolar core ambitions and goals (2y)
    - Autonomous self: growth of core self
      - Self-esteem, self-confidence

More Self-Theory

- Traumatic experiences during development lead to the delay and stunting of self-development
- Failures in parental empathy and mirroring leads to self-absorption, low self-esteem, inconsequential physical complaints, and a chronic sense of emptiness.
  - Narcissism
  - Addiction
Otto Kernberg

- Focus on borderline personality
- Poor introspection, insight, emotionally labile, splitting, extreme valuation/devaluation of others
- Defined etiologically (causality)
  - Not the DSM-IV definition
- Splitting is viewed as a failure to consolidate positive and negative experiences between the self and others
  - Swing between idealized good and bad views of others

Expressive Psychoanalytically Oriented Psychotherapy

- Therapist is active (3+ sessions/week)
- Complete transference neurosis not permitted to develop nor is it resolved through interpretation
- Therapist clearly describes/discusses distortions of reality in relationships
- 3 Stages
  - Clarification of the problems
  - Confronting patient with unconscious contradictions
  - Interpreting the meaning of these repression in the here-and-now and the there-and-then