Introduction to Interpersonal Psychoanalysis:
The Contributions of Harry Stack Sullivan
and Other Interpersonal Pioneers

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In this course we will study the origins and foundational perspectives of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis as these are represented in the work of Sullivan and other Interpersonal pioneers. We will focus on the historical and clinical contexts in which this work took place and on defining metapsychological, developmental and clinical ideas. The readings include selections from the writings of these forebears, as well as papers by more contemporary authors whose work extends and develops their ideas. The effort will be to consider how the contributions of Sullivan and other early Interpersonalists continue to be influential and have become part of the tapestry of contemporary psychoanalysis.

The objectives of this course are to foster awareness and appreciation of the theoretical and clinical foundations of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis and to encourage a critical engagement with its traditions. I think of this course as an instance of participant-observation. That is, we will not only study theory but will also make our contribution to its evolution and transformation. As we read and talk we will join an ongoing conversation that interprets and therefore transforms the traditions we consider.

Those papers accessible on PEP-WEB are so indicated. All other papers will be distributed when we first meet.

Week 1. Defining and Distinguishing Features of Interpersonal Psychoanalysis

Levenson, E. (1985), Chapter 4: The interpersonal (Sullivanian) model. In Models of the Mind: Their Relationship to Clinical Work, 49-67. (PEP)
Week 2. Ferenczi: Trauma, Mutuality and Clinical Experiments.


Ferenczi, S. (1933), Confusion of tongues between adults and the child. In: Final... 156-167.


Week 3. Radical Experiments: Mutual Analysis.


Week 5. Sullivan: Metapsychology.


Week 6 (cont.)


Week 7. Sullivan: Clinical States.


Mendelsohn, E. (2005), Rules were made to be broken: Reflections on psychoanalytic education and clinical process. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 22:* 261-278. (We will focus on the case example on 270-75, but I won't object if you want to discuss the entire paper.) (PEP)


Week 9. Thompson: Understatement, Directness and Clarity


Thompson, C. (1956), The role of the analyst's personality in therapy. In: Green, 168-78.


Week 11. Looking Back and Ahead: Where We Are

No readings. A splash of wine.