Outline: Introduction to Infant Research

1. Historical Orientation

- Infant research, attachment theory, and self psychology all shift PSA from drives and intrapsychic conflict toward **bidirectional, mutually influential interpersonal processes**.
- Analyst becomes a **participant-observer**, engaging in a collaborative, intersubjective dialogue rather than maintaining abstinent neutrality.
- Increased emphasis on **healthy developmental strivings**, selfobject needs, and "developmental transference"

2. Relationship Between Infant Research, Attachment, and Self Psychology

- Kohut emphasized explicit parental responsiveness; infant research reveals **implicit, microprocess relational patterns** shaping development.
- Attachment theory: repeated caregiver interactions → **internal working models** (procedural representations of self/other), ways of organizing experience
- Secure vs. avoidant vs. anxious/ambivalent strategies reflect early emotional regulation patterns.
- Infant research shows *how* these patterns form at the micro level.

3. Key Findings From Infant Research

- **Microanalysis** of 2.5 minutes of mother–infant interaction predicts attachment at 12 months.
- Infants are born with **presymbolic representational intelligence** and capacity for cross-modal matching.
- Dyads co-create patterns of attention, affect, rhythm, orientation, and touch
- These moments support early empathy, twinship experiences, and the "dialogic origin of mind."
- Repeated interactions form **expectancies**, "emotion schemas," and procedural memories—*"interiorized interactions."*

4. Principles of Salience (Beebe & Lachmann)

- **Ongoing regulations**: predictable interaction patterns; parallels transference/countertransference and the idea of a "holding environment"

- **Disruption and repair**: mismatches followed by reconnection; supports Kohut's optimal frustration but with greater emphasis on empathic repair
- **Heightened affective moments**: intense shared states that become structuralized

5. Attachment, Affect Regulation, and Selfobject Function

- Secure attachment arises from caregivers who soothe, follow the infant's lead, and modulate affect.
- Supports Kohut's view that children "borrow" regulatory capacities from caregivers before "internalizing" or developing these capacities within themselves.

6. Interactive Contingency

- Degree of mutual responsiveness: how each partner anticipates affecting and being affected.
- **Mid-range contingency** predicts secure attachment; too high or too low predicts insecurity.
- Example: anxious dyads with "chase-and-dodge" patterns.

7. Application to Adult Treatment

- Mutual regulation + **self-contingency** (each partner's internal regulatory patterns) shape therapeutic action.
- Therapist's shift from high to mid-range self-contingency increases the patient's sense of knowing and being known.
- Treatment can modify expectancies and support "earned security."

8. Summary

- Mind and subjectivity emerge from **dyadic systems**.
- Both **mutual** and **self-regulation** shape development and treatment.
- Patterns of engagement, affect sharing, and repair form the basis of internal self structure across the lifespan.