



**COMMUNITY**  
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNITY  
FOR PSYCHOANALYTIC THERAPIES

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## **Syllabus:**

### **Introduction to Intersubjective-Systems Theory, the Phenomenological, Contextualist Perspective in Psychoanalysis**

Speaker: Alyson Kepple, M.D.

Date: March 4, 2025

Time: 6:15 pm – 9 pm

Seminar

2.75 CE Credits

Fee: Free to Members; Pay-What-You Can Model to Non-Members per our  
Seminar Series Guidelines

**For general programming questions email: [inquiries@wpacommunity.org](mailto:inquiries@wpacommunity.org)**

**Description:** So far in this block, you have been revisiting some of the major analytic perspectives and theorists covered in the first year, going a little deeper into the material, and focusing on modes of therapeutic action. In this first of a three class series, I will introduce Intersubjectivity Theory, integrating some familiar and related concepts that were addressed in the first year classes on embeddedness and infant research as I outline the intersubjectivist perspective. In the next two classes you will learn more about Self Psychology as well. Both Intersubjectivity Theory and Self Psychology emphasize empathy and affect regulation and these key modes of therapeutic action will be the main focus of the three class series. Please note the podcast I have asked that you listen to in preparation for class along with the primary reading. There is no requirement for a written reflection for this class.

#### **Program Objectives:**

At the end of the program, participants will be able to:

1. Describe phenomenological contextualism and how this way of thinking has been adapted to psychoanalysis in the form of intersubjectivity theory.
2. Define and apply the concept of organizing principles within an intersubjective framework, contrasting this approach with more classical conceptions of transference.
3. Consider some of the clinical implications of “emotional dwelling” as described by Stolorow.

## References/Readings:

### Required:

1. Please listen to part 1 of the podcast, "The Conversation" by Daniel Goldin and Daniel Posner on the subject of "Otherness"  
<https://the-conversation.simplecast.com/episodes/otherness-part-1>  
and come prepared to share your questions and reflections. Hopefully this will start to jog everyone's memory a little as we will be integrating concepts from earlier classes on embeddedness, infant research and attachment.
2. Stolorow, R. D. (2014). Undergoing the situation: Emotional dwelling is more than empathic understanding. *International Journal of Psychoanalytic Self Psychology*, 9(1), 80–83. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15551024.2014.857750>

### Recommended:

3. Stolorow, R. D., & Atwood, G. E. (1996). The intersubjective perspective. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 83(2), 181–194.
4. Bugliani, A., & Rowlandson, B. (2023). The Therapist's Struggle to Hold Hope When All Seems Lost. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 33, 351 - 367.
5. Ferguson, H. (2023). Searching for Embodied Connection in the Age of COVID-19. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 43, 629 - 640.

**The Speaker:** Dr. Alyson Kepple earned her medical degree from the University of Virginia School of Medicine and completed her psychiatry residency at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic at the University of Pittsburgh where she served as Chief Resident for Psychotherapy Training supervising and teaching psychiatry residents and medical students. She completed her psychoanalytic training at the Institute for Contemporary Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis (ICP+P) in Washington, DC and is a recipient of the 2021 Early Career Professional Award presented by The International Association for Psychoanalytic Self Psychology (IAPSP). She maintains a private practice focusing on psychoanalytic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis treating patients in Virginia and Pennsylvania. She volunteers teaching psychiatry residents at the University of Pittsburgh, providing psychotherapy supervision through a local low-fee clinic, the Clinic Without Walls, and is an active Faculty member at the Western Pennsylvania Community for Psychoanalytic Therapies where she teaches psychoanalytic theory and technique.

For additional information on the background and experience of the speaker, or to request the speaker's CV, please contact [inquiries@wpacommunity.org](mailto:inquiries@wpacommunity.org) or see our faculty section on our website at [www.wpacommunity.org](http://www.wpacommunity.org)

**Who Should Attend and Instructional Level of Activity:** Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counselors with interest in advancing their understanding and application of contemporary psychoanalytic concepts. Instructional level is suited for practicing mental health clinicians. Intermediate level of instructional programming.

**Continuing Education Credits: 2.** *The Western Pennsylvania Community for Psychoanalytic Therapies is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Western Pennsylvania Community for Psychoanalytic Therapies maintains responsibility for this program and its content.*

**Attendance:** To receive continuing education credit, you must sign in and be present for the entire seminar. You will be asked to complete an evaluation at the end of the session.

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*There is no commercial support or potential conflict of interest for this program.*