

# ***INSTITUTE for the PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY of SUBJECTIVITY***

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ADVANCED PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDIES AT IPSS;  
A ONE-YEAR DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM  
2025-26

## **PSYCHOANALYTIC PROCESS: NARCISSISM, SUBJECTIVITY, AND THERAPEUTIC ACTION**

Instructor: Arthur A. Gray, Ph.D.

Class Dates: Oct 27; Nov 3, 10, 2025

Time: Mondays, 10:00am-11:30am EST

### **Syllabus**

This course provides a contemporary, psychoanalytic, self psychological approach to treating patients effectively. The approach presented evolves from the history of psychoanalysis; and is built not only on self psychological formulations, but also subjectivity theory, infant research, dynamic systems theory, and a theory of affective engagement. The term narcissism has indeed outlived its value. However, recognizing how it has evolved can enrich the understanding of psychoanalytic treatment. And, considering the present emphasis on diversity, the course illustrates the rich diversity in contemporary self psychology. It is diverse in that it can prescribe how to effectively treat the full spectrum of psychological organization that individuals can exhibit in treatment.

### **First Class (10/27/25) – Exploring the Functional Definition of Narcissism**

Reading:

Stolorow, R. D., & Lachmann, F. M. (1980). A functional definition of narcissism. In *Psychoanalysis of developmental arrest* (pp. 9-27). Madison, CT: IUP.

Optional Reading:

Freud, S. (1914). On narcissism. In *Standard Edition*, 14, 69-102. London: Hogarth Press, 1957.

### **Second Class (11/03/25)—Treatment as a Process of Transforming Narcissism**

Reading (I recommend Lachmann's book for your library):

Lachmann, F. M. (2008). The process of transforming. In *Transforming narcissism: Reflections on empathy, humor, and expectations* (pp. 3-21). New York: The Analytic Press.

## Optional Reading:

Kohut, H (1966). Forms and transformations of narcissism. *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 15, 243-272

**Third Class (11/18/24) - Therapeutic Action and Affective Engagement**

## Reading:

Gray, A. A. (2012). On the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis. *Issues in Psychoanalytic Psychology*, 34, 55-61.

Gray, A. A. (2015). Affective engagement improvised: Response to Cole and Ringstrom discussions. *Psychoanalytic Dialogues*, 25, 762-766.

## Optional Reading:

Lichtenberg, J.D., Lachmann, F. M., & Fosshage, J. L. (1996). Ten principles of technique. In *The clinical exchange* (pp 87-112). Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES  
 ADVANCED PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDIES AT IPSS;  
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1. The students will be able to explain that Freud's 1914 paper "On Narcissism" is a crucial contribution to self psychology, and psychoanalysis in general.
2. These students will be able to recite the functional definition of narcissism.
3. The student will be able to discuss the value of understanding psychic organization in psychoanalytic treatment.

4. These students will be able to explain how the human qualities of empathy, humor, creativity, transience, and wisdom evolve in the treatment process.
5. The students will be able to explain the concept therapeutic action.