Authors:
George Bermudez, Ph.D., Psy.D.
Rossanna Echegoyen, LCSW

Title: Community Psychoanalysis: An Emerging Paradigm.

In the words of Psychoanalyst Francisco Gonzalez, (2019) , who advocates as the authors of this paper presentation do for a new, more expansive and inclusive paradigm –a "community psychoanalysis": "The established order has been wracked by tectonic forces—globalization, convulsive capitalism, climate change, unprecedented migrations, technological accelerations." At a keynote speech (2019, Division of Psychoanalysis Conference, American Psychological Association), Dr. Gonzalez expanded his vision and articulated a call, in response to our global crises (moral, socio-political, and environmental), for social justice, advocacy, and community building, which would mean a radically transformative socio-centric turn and application of psychoanalytic principles.

The Community Psychoanalysis paradigm proposes a path toward the dismantling of disciplinary and communal walls. Can it be the future of psychoanalysis as Twemlow & Parens (2006) rhetorically inquired in their seminal article in the journal, Psychoanalytic Psychology? This presentation proposes that the paradigm may be the integrative path forward with which psychoanalysis can contribute robustly to multidisciplinary strategies to addressing the multivalent "wicked problems" (Kreuter et al, 2004), which are challenging our global communities.

"Wicked problems" have no definitive formulation: problems which in a seemingly infinite regress are symptoms of other problems; problems which involve multiple stakeholders who like the proverbial blind men and the elephant have divergent and often incommensurable perceptions of the problem and its causes; problems which generate attempted solutions which in turn generate unintended consequences and new problems; problems with no objective right or wrong , requiring reliance on human judgment, subjectivity, and collective wisdom.

This presentation will summarize the theoretical and practice foundations of "community psychoanalysis" and provide examples of their application to bullying in schools; to addressing dysfunctional authority in municipalities; and enhancing the capacity for reflective functioning ("mentalization") in a community (Twemlow et al, 2005) . In addition, the presentation will describe several contemporary contributions, applications, and expansions of the paradigm:

- "Social Dreaming" explorations of the social unconscious [American Xenophobia; Whiteness; LGBTQ; Religion; and Climate/Biospheric Emergency (Bermudez, 2018; 2019)]; (Lawrence, 2003; Manley, 2014).
- "Open Space " (Harrison Owen, 1997) ; and
- "Future Search" (Weisbord & Janoff, 1995)
- "Thinking Spaces" (Lowe, 2014)

These are powerful large group methods for accessing unconscious, collective dynamics and provide a process for conscious formulation and productive action—extensions of contemporary psychoanalytic complexity theory (Coburn, 2014) and meeting criteria outlined by Mersky (2012) for effective psychoanalytic open systems interventions.

Mersky (2012), in her review of large group interventions for surfacing and acting on unconscious dynamics in organizations, delineated three characteristics that she felt are essential for success:
● They promote the emergence of the collective "unthought known" (Bollas, 1989), either through direct dream sharing or associations and amplification.
● They include two activities that Bion postulated were essential for productive thinking and action: (a) generation of thoughts, associations, feelings, etc. and (b) a process for productively coping with the emergent "unthought known" (a capacity for reflection and mentalizing).
● They focus the intervention via a theme; however, Mersky (2012) cautioned that although a theme is critical for a sense of direction and as a stimulus for unconscious thinking, it must not promote a position, or discourage creativity or encourage splits in the group.

In addition, to summarizing the work and future directions of community psychoanalysis --a model which promotes the synergistic integration of psychoanalytic principles, collective reflection and action, and multidisciplinary parttnerships. While concepts/strategies of intersubjectivity, mirroring and unformulated experience inform these strategies/models, consideration is also

given to how reflective space can collapse, triggering enactment of the very thing we are talking about (oppression, othering, racism, misogyny, heterosexism). The presenters will discuss their experiences in being part of such groups, offer strategies for an inter-group dialogue, and close with an experiential exercise.

Lowe et al (2014) in "Thinking Spaces: Promoting Thinking About Race, Culture and Diversity and Beyond" provide us with a blueprint to start with ourselves, offering a glimpse into group dynamics and getting to know the "other" on multiple levels (unconscious/ pre-conscious/conscious) around areas of difference and mastering inter-group dialogues with each other. In his keynote speech, Francisco Gonzalez offered a plea to analytic practitioners to abandon our 'analytic identity' by embracing the vulnerability with each other in these inter-group dialogues. These group experiences are transformative and necessary as an "analytic collective" that can build a bridge towards a community psychoanalysis whose foundational practice is social justice.

REFERENCES:
Bermudez, G. (2018). The social dreaming matrix as a container for the processing of implicit racial bias and collective racial trauma. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy,* 68, 538-560.

Bermudez, G. (2019). Community psychoanalysis: A contribution to an emerging paradigm. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 39:5, 297-304.

Lowe, F. (2014) *Thinking space: Promoting thinking about race, culture, and diversity in psychotherapy and beyond*. London: Karnac.

Kreuter, M. W., De Rosa, C., Howze, E. H., & Baldwin, G. T. (2004). Understanding wicked Problems: A key to advancing environmental health promotion. *Health Education & Behavior*, *31*(4), 441–454. https://doi.org/10.1177/1090198104265597

Lawrence, W. (2003.). *Experiences in Social Dreaming*. London, UK: Karnac.

Mersky, R. R. (2012). Contemporary methodologies to surface and act on unconscious dynamics in organisations: An exploration of design, facilitation capacities, consultant paradigm and ultimate value. *Organisational & Social Dynamics*, *12*, 19-43.

Owen, H. (1997). *Open space technology: A users guide.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.

Twemlow, S. W. & Parens, H. (2006). Might Freud's legacy lie beyond the couch? *Psychoanalytic Psychology*, *23*, 430-451.

Twemlow, S. W., Fonagy, P., & Sacco, F. C. (2005). A developmental approach to mentalizing communities: I. A model for social change. *Bulletin of the Menninger Clinic, 69*, 265-281.

Twemlow, S.W., Fonagy ,P., Sacco, F.C. (2005). A developmental approach to mentalizing communities: II. The Peaceful Schools experiment. *Bulletin Menninger Clinic. 69, 282-304.*

Twemlow, S. W. & Parens, H. (2006). Might Freud's legacy lie beyond the couch? *Psychoanalytic Inquiry, 23*, 430-451.

Weisbord, M.R. & Janoff, S. (1995). *Future search.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.