



MAGNUM OPUS: CITRINITAS

Module 3: Transference and Counter Transference
Part 2

QUOTE

“Among these contents the relation to the parent of the opposite sex plays a particularly important part, i.e., the relationship of son to mother, daughter to father, and also that of brother to sister. As a rule this complex cannot be integrated completely, since the doctor is nearly always put in the place of the father, the brother, and even (though naturally more rarely) the mother. Experience has shown that this projection persists with all its original intensity (which Freud regarded as aetiological), thus creating a bond that corresponds in every respect to the initial infantile relationship, with a tendency to recapitulate all the experiences of childhood on the doctor. In other words, the neurotic maladjustment of the patient is now transferred to him.”

*“The practice of psychotherapy”
C.G. Jung p. 170*

Transference and Countertransference
Part 2

Compiled by The Centre for Applied Jungian Studies

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Transcript

This is a transcription of a live recording of a lecture to the CLP focus group on Transference – countertransference (part 2)

Dialogue key:

All plain text is Stephen,

A: Allan,

B: Bernie,

Br: Bruce,

Dh: Dahlia

R: Ryan

G: Gabriel

H: Hanlie

K: Karen

Recap of the transference-countertransference module part 1

This is part two of the transference countertransference module. I'm going to recap, briefly, some of the important points that we touched on in our last class, before going on to discuss the alchemical metaphor in the transference dynamic.

Alright, so just some key points: - the idea is that we're talking about an unconscious dynamic when we talk about transference, and when we talk about countertransference we are talking about a transference that occurs as a result of the transference that is happening; I am transferring onto you and as a consequence of the transference I have onto you, you counter transfer onto me. It could be a sympathetic countertransference or it could be an antipathetic countertransference, but it's something that's provoked by my transference.

And then we are also talking about the phenomena of embodied transference. The idea of embodied transference is that I transfer something onto you and as a consequence of my transferring it onto you, you experience it in yourself. Okay, so I transfer onto you the hero, or the villain, or the father, or the mother, or whatever it may be and you start to experience those feelings in yourself. We're relying to some degree on the findings of analysts who believe that they're able to differentiate between their content and the content that belongs to the client; so they start to experience things - in their inner world, that they believe - is not their property, per se.

That a reasonably common experience that we've all had is simply that you often find – or not often, but you may find at times - that in the company of certain individuals you have a very strong emotional reaction. And maybe not only an emotional reaction but you may find that you have some sort of an imaginary reaction as well if you are perceptive enough. In other words, you may find that certain fantasy material; certain images start to come up when

you are in the company of a particular person. That is this idea of embodied transference.

So we're talking about unconscious dynamics then, in relation to the other, and we spoke about three levels that the phenomenon happens on: - It happens at the level of feeling or emotion, so transference has this emotional affective character; it happens at the level of fantasy and imagination, so the idea is that - we don't quite know how it happens but the idea is that - frequently images that live in my unconscious may come to exist in your unconscious when we are in dialogue as a consequence of the transference dynamic. And we spoke about the mundis imaginalis as a way of trying to explain that – and I'll talk about the mundis imaginalis again briefly now. And then the third thing is behaviour; that the transference can include behaviour. So I behave towards you in accordance with my ...

[At this point one of the students, Alan, enters the class late and takes a seat. Stephen gets up to adjust a light that seems to be “blinding” Alan as he sits down]

Are you being blinded?

[Alan now gets up and moves to Stephen's chair]

A: Ja, I'll sit here?

Sorry – you're in my chair!

A: Oh.

[Alan moves back to his original seat]

It was a good move though. Now that's interesting, in terms of what I was just saying. Did you get that?

That was the transference in action!

Did you see what just happened? That's really interesting. When we talk about transference and behaviour that is what we're talking about. So he's blinded in his chair, I get up to help him and he takes my chair. Why did he take my chair? Is it meaningless? Now, psychoanalytically, it's never meaningless. That is the point, okay? That's the key thing that we get from Freud, is that behaviour is never random; behaviour is never meaningless; it is meaningful. So consciously we are processing a certain amount of data; we're processing a certain amount of intentionality, but unconsciously we're processing a lot more. And when we do something that doesn't fit in with our conscious intentions or it is against our conscious intentions, it has an unconscious meaning; from an unconscious perspective it is meaningful. This is this idea from Freud of the parapraxis.

So that was significant; that was very significant that he took my chair. Infer from that what you will. So that is what we're talking about when we talk about behaviour; that's the idea.

So let's go back to the idea of, "I'm projecting my father onto you" okay. I start to behave towards you the way I behaved towards my father; I feel a similar – maybe there's a sort of a similar - sense of respect, but there might

also be a similar sense of frustration; anger. And when you start – let's say you're my analyst and now you start – to ... maybe I perceive that in the analysis you are somehow being patronising or you're saying something that touches a particular vulnerability in me, I now respond to you with the same sort of frustration that I responded to my father. "Why do you say that?" or "Why're you behaving like that? What point are you trying to make? I feel that you're undermining me." It's that same dynamic that I had in relation to my father that I felt castrated by, that I'm now experiencing in relation to you because I've transferred the father onto you.

And – sorry, I'm repeating familiar territory here, but it's worth saying, and - and of course, where it starts getting into this really interesting area is, that you can start feeling like the father and you can start behaving like the father, as a consequence of my transference.

B: How do analysts control this? I mean they must be subject to so much transference from various patients and that, and I mean they must become aware of it and then they have to deal with what must be almost like a multiple personality disorder from this constant transference they're getting from patients.

In terms of their countertransference? Because of what they experience?

B: How do they deal with it?

This gets quite technical, and it gets a little bit out of my depth – not being a clinician - but there're two broad ways in which it is dealt with. The one is that

it becomes a very useful tool in the hands of the analyst, because if the analyst has sufficient self-knowledge to differentiate between her own inner world and what she's experiencing in relation to her dialogue with you, or in a session with you, for example, then she's able to – just by virtue of what she's feeling and by virtue of what she's starting to sometimes imagine or even to feel somatically, okay, she's able to - understand things about what is going on in your inner world that you are either unwilling or unable to express. Okay? And that is not as sort of amazing or mysterious as it sounds, because actually we all do that all the time. We don't only go on what you're saying but typically, if I'm able to feel something when I'm with you, I have a sense that there's something going on between the two of us that I might even say to you, "I don't know what it is but since you sat down I'm feeling anxious" or, "I'm feeling a bit uneasy." So we often – even as lay people we are often able to pick up that there's a response to you. But it is a tool in analysis that helps the analyst to then have insight into unspoken material.

The other key thing is for the analyst not to react. So because it's your analysis, and it's your stuff, and it's your session, essentially they're trying to be a mirror, so they're just trying to mirror back to you what it is that you're bringing. Hopefully I don't start to behave – hopefully I'm able to hold myself well enough so I don't start to behave - like your castrating father. In normal social encounters, typically, if you project the castrating father onto me I'm going to behave like him because I don't feel the need to hold myself back; if I start to feel like the castrating father I simply start to act the castrating father out. But in therapy the idea is that I can hold myself ...

B: Assuming that the analyst is always aware of the transference because you say it's an unconscious thing.

It's an unconscious thing and it's imperfect – I mean this is obviously a very imperfect process, but these are the aspirational ideals that analysts are aiming at.

A: This kind of ties in with what I've spoken a lot about the synchronicity that happens in my life, and this kind of ties in with –that I'll be dealing with someone with clocks and then I'll attract a lot of people who have a lot to do with – I'm using a stupid example, with - clocks for that time being, so there's an energy that I'm putting out that's coming back. For me it feels like that synergy that happens to me.

Br: Wouldn't that be like, that – you've spoken about it last week, that - there's an inner outer transference that's happening?

We're getting into very opaque territory here where we're left with speculation rather than rigorous understanding, but yes from the Jungian perspective it's an interesting thing that's going on. From the Jungian perspective this takes us into the idea of the *mundis imaginalis*, it's not only to do with our personal content; so I have a complex; you have a complex, and those unconscious complexes are in communication with each other, but the Jungian theory is that there is an archetypal root to that personal experience. And that archetype is something that transcends our personal dialogue, and transcends our personal conscious and unconscious minds.

And Jung has this idea of course, of synchronicity; that the events in the outer world start to mirror, or start to map themselves, onto the inner process. So you are – as you say, you’re – dealing with someone with clocks; there’s an awareness of clocks, and all of a sudden you seem to encounter clocks and people with clocks much more. Now of course there’s a very kind of reductionist idea which is just, well this just happens; of course you’re always dealing with clocks; you’re just aware of it now. There’re too many reports of this; the reports are too widespread; people talk about it too much, for us to kind of reduce it in that way. It really does seem as if somehow the archetype of what you are dealing with is constellated, and it becomes present in your life; it is activated.

Going back to this incident – sorry, I just want to make this point, going back to this incident that happened with the chairs now –it was very synchronistic, that as I got to the point of speaking about behaviour, that particular thing happened. Why did it happen at that point in time? Maybe it’s random. But you’ll notice that often in a lecture. I’ve noticed this in storytelling as well. I’ve noticed it often in a lecture that something happens in the lecture or in the dialogue that mirrors the content of the dialogue. So the storyteller is saying, “And the wind blew and door opened” and then sure enough the next thing you see is the blind blowing and the door opening or it’s a moment of high tension and something drops on the ground. So it’s often as if the events that are happening somehow map onto the content of the conversation.

Sorry Dahlia?

Dh: Universal consciousness, that's what I wanted to say; consciousness of the universe; we are connected; I attract, whatever suits me, unconsciously.

Yes, well one might say, you attract what you are dealing with. Sometimes it may suit you; sometimes it may not suit you.

Dh: Something that I want or something that I had to work on.

Or something that you are aware of, or something that you're unconsciously dealing with.

So okay let's go on. We spoke about this idea of the mundis imaginalis, and I'm not going to go through it again in great detail but very briefly then, the idea of the mundis imaginalis that comes from the French theologian and scholar, Henri Corbin, and he takes it from the [Sufi](#) doctrines – Islamic mysticism –, and it's this idea of the mundis imaginalis, and Jung talks about something similar, in a way. There's a slight difference between Jung and Corbin, but the idea essentially is that there's another dimension of experience which is not the physical, material world or the abstract, spiritual world. In other words it is not pure rationality. So when we speak about spiritual in this sense, you mustn't think about spiritual in a religious sense, but what is meant by spirit here, is mind; pure mind; pure abstract mind.

There is this dimension of the imagination or of the imaginal, and this is a mediating dimension, and we referenced in our last class how Jung talks about this mediating dimension, and Corbin speaks about it, and it was borrowed by Hillman as being the location of the archetypal. Make of that what you will,

but what was interesting from our perspective really, is that Andrew Samuels uses the idea as a means of trying to understand the phenomenon of transference countertransference and embodied transference. So there was a kind of mechanistic thinking around the transference phenomenon which saw it as, I sort of serve a Ping-Pong ball to you and then maybe you serve it back to me. It's as if something is passing from my mind into your mind and this kind of idea of the physical world that we have.

This idea of using the mundis imaginalis is that at some level we are embedded in a mutual shared world of images, imagination etc., and we have access to similar imaginary content. And so when it's activated for me it's – I mean, look, of course Samuels is unable to explain exactly how it happens, but the idea is that somehow when I access it in the imaginal world you are also able to access it if we are in contact with one another.

The idea from Emanuel Swedenborg, the Christian mystic, is similar; Swedenborg's idea is that - when he talks he doesn't talk about the imaginary realm he talks about the spiritual realm, but his idea is that in the spiritual realm there are no lies; that there is complete honesty. Whatever you are feeling, whatever you are experiencing, whatever you are thinking at a spiritual level – although we might say something to each other in conversation, we may not be entirely honest; we may keep things from one another, but on a spiritual level - our spirits, if you will, communicate completely honestly.

And once again, not a very difficult idea to swallow because it's a very common sense or typical experience that we have, that very often when you meet

someone you see their mouth moving but you don't believe what's coming out of it. They're making the right noises but you just don't buy it because at some level it just doesn't resonate. So it's this idea of, one differentiates between the congruent – when one believes that someone is congruent and what they're bringing is kind of, an authentic expression; an honest expression, of who they are – and the incongruent.

So that is that, on the mundis imaginalis.

B: So the mundis imaginalis is sort of universal imagination?

Yes.

B: Would that be the same sort of thing as – I mean, I swear that it's happened to me a couple of times – that when you get an idea, as soon as you start talking about it or bringing it to life or as we always say, you put it into the ether and it happens every time; within a week or two you find that somebody else has had the same idea and the thing suddenly has come to light.

B: Is this the kind of thing that they're talking about?

I don't know. I mean that's a reasonable connection to make. I don't think that Corbin specifically speaks about that phenomenon but ...

B: I mean, is he talking about something that's in close contact or ...

No, no. It's universal. We're not talking about something that's localised. That's the whole point. And Corbin makes that point; you see he talks about a

place that's got no topography; it's no 'where'; it's everywhere and it's nowhere; it cannot be located in the physical world.

B: So you could describe it as the universal imagination?

Very much so. It's very much the idea of a universal, cosmic, imaginary realm.

B: It's the collective unconscious?

Well ...

B: It's something else?

It's something else as well; it's an expression of the collective unconscious, whenever we talk about the mundis imaginalis it's specifically to do with – images and imagination.

Let me explain it like this, let's take something like quantum physics. Now you've got this phenomenon called quantum physics or quantum mechanics and it is supported by various mathematical formulae; there's certain work that's done in the laboratory, there's a certain physical phenomenon that occurs. Now that phenomenon that occurs, occurs at a scale that is invisible to the human eye. So when they talk about what a photon is doing, no one has actually seen the photon; they are inferring from certain effects that this is what the photon is doing. So when the scientist or the researcher is engaging with this phenomenon, okay, he or she is developing certain imaginary images with which to apprehend and comprehend what is going on. There's a

distinction between, the images - the imagination - of the scientist, and what is going on in the physical world.

But let's say that, presumably if someone is a physicist and their area of speciality is quantum mechanics and they're working with it on a day to day basis, even their imaginary faculty has a reasonably close mapping or relationship onto the physical phenomenon. But then we talk about the fact that quantum mechanics has now become a populist, new age idea that is used to, let's say, support every crazy new age theory. So there's an imaginary idea, "Well, quantum mechanics, it defies all the laws of Newtonian physics, and quantum mechanics means this, and quantum mechanics means that". So there is an imaginary reality that is what we, as lay people, mean when we talk about quantum mechanics, that is vastly different from the actual physical phenomenon of what is going on at a quantum mechanical level. So the way that we deal with it; the way that we engage with it, is through our imaginary faculties.

Now the idea is that in a sense, everything in life is mediated through that imaginary faculty. The best example – well it's a very good example, but not everyone has this experience, but it's a very good example – is that when somebody very well, what happens is that, in fact, you stop seeing them physically. What you see is an image of the person that you hold in your mind's eye. How I've noticed this personally is that I have a – I don't know if it's some sort of a neurological problem, I suspect it may be, but what happens to me sometimes is that I'll have a complete loss of memory for a second, so

sometimes I'll have the experience where I'll encounter someone and for a few seconds I've got absolutely no idea who I am looking at – I could know the person very, very well. So it's in an unexpected setting and so I get up, it's the last place in the world that I expected to see you and all of a sudden I bump into you, and it will happen to me, not often but it happens to me that I've got no idea - that I'm looking at you.

So now I see this person, okay; I just see this person that I don't know. And then a second or two later I realise, "Oh my God! That's Alan." The person that I saw, before I realised it was Alan, looked completely different; completely different, because your mind works like that. You don't need to see the person fresh every time. You've seen them enough; you've got a composite image in your mind, that every time you see them – boom! – You just see the image there. And then if you see them in an unexpected situation the image of the person, is completely different because it's un-contextualised.

So this imaginary contextualisation; the way we mediate content all the time, at least from Samuel's perspective - I mean Corbin is really interested in the more mystical element of it; I mean he's going a little bit further than, for example, Samuels is. But Samuels is using the metaphor of the mundis imaginalis to say that we're living - we exist - in this imaginary realm. And that is Jung's idea as well. And our imagination mediates the space between, pure reason; pure spirit, and physical reality. That space is not – I mean, unfortunately I can't quote the Latin but as Jung puts it, it's not - physical reality and it's not mind; it's something else; it's the third dimension, and it's

this dimension of the - what Jung refers to as the - imaginary, but Corbin refers to as the imaginal. The reason Corbin uses the word imaginal rather than imaginary is that he believes that the imaginal is absolutely real. He doesn't like the idea of the imaginary because the imaginary suggests for us that there's something unreal about it. He's saying no; it is absolutely real.

Going back – to the example that I was using with Alan: - this is an interesting idea because it's something that I've been encountering as well in works of Hegel and Žižek. The idea is that I know Alan, okay; I've got a relationship with Alan, and I form an imaginary composite of Alan, alright. There's a way of thinking about it that suggests that at some level that composite is more real than the physical. In other words one doesn't have to deify physical reality, and say no, it's not the imaginary composite that's real; this is what's real[i.e. the physical being]. What Lacan suggests is that the imaginary is often more real than the real. So if you go with that, the idea is that – this is Corbin's idea that – just because it's in the faculty of the imagination one mustn't think about it as being a lesser reality. It's a different reality, but psychically in a sense – certainly psychically – because the point is that the person I am engaging with when I meet you, is the imaginary composite that I have of you. Let's leave aside the problems of projection etc. etc. for the time being, okay. But it's this imaginary composite that I am in relationship with. In other words, in a sense we live in a virtual reality that Corbin is referring to as the mundis imaginalis. Anyway, that's a bit tangential, but I just wanted to make that point.

Before we go on to the alchemical metaphor I want to read you something from Andrew Samuels; so this is from a chapter written on the alchemical metaphor by Andrew Samuels in his book called “The Plural Psyche”. I really regard Andrew Samuels very highly; he happened to be one of my teachers, but he’s also one of the leading Jungian academics in the world today. He’s an academic and an analyst. Okay, so this is what he says,

How does a relationship between two people lead to internal change in one or both? How does internal change affect relationships? To answer these questions requires a deeper understanding of Jung’s alchemical metaphor.

Sorry – just something; I know it’s obvious but let me just make the point; immediately you can see he talks about “How does internal change affect relationships?” So clearly now, the relationship is seen as being a product of the intra-psychoic dynamics of both people, not only the interpersonal dynamics.

Persons who appear in analytical material have a symbolic dimension that is often the crucial factor.

And we’ll talk about that; the symbolic dimension.

Persons who appear in analytical material have a symbolic dimension that is often the crucial factor. That is why it is necessary to challenge our habitual distinction between the interpersonal and intrapsychic and why the interaction of patient and analyst may be understood as placed firmly within an imaginal realm. As we saw in the previous chapter, our delineation of what is

interpersonal may also be expanded so that internal imagery becomes the link between patient and analyst (two persons), fostering their relationship and mediating their exchange.

So he's building on this use of this idea here, of the mundis imaginalis. Consciously we have the sense of, there's me and you, okay, and we are two independent, integrated, sovereign beings and there is some sort of an exchange; I speak to you, or I shake your hand – you I give a hug and a kiss, but there's some physical interaction; I speak, you speak, etc. But what is being suggested here is that on an unconscious level the degree of interaction or of – not interaction, but of – mixing; the elements are becoming mixed on a more profound level whereby the sovereignty of the two people is questionable. In other words, what I mean by that is, this sense of independence that we have, from one another, unconsciously those lines blur and that our psyches mix together, and that our unconscious imagery mixes together, and that's why he uses the metaphor "the mundis imaginalis"; it's like we get embedded in an imaginal field where we are communicating with each other on a level that goes beyond what we can see, and hear, and understand, in our normal conscious dialogue.

When we talk then about transference and countertransference, I've got certain unconscious content, okay, and somehow you become aware of it - not necessarily through anything I've said or done - because there's this mingling. If we accept this idea that there's this mingling of what I'm carrying unconsciously - look, of course on some level consciously you become aware of

it, typically other people have got a far better view on you than you have on yourself, obviously. So there are certain things that you are unconscious of but I'm conscious of. You bring them; you don't realise you're bringing them; obviously I can see them.

Typically others see us in a far more objective light than we see ourselves; they've got a better view on us than we have on ourselves.

But beyond that; beyond what we see consciously, the unconscious, let's say, activity is much more acute, so yes, you see certain things about me consciously, but unconsciously you become aware of stuff that I am bringing. Now this unconscious awareness that happens is what we call – that's what we mean when we talk about – transference. It's that awareness; you've become aware of what I'm bringing on an unconscious level. And then obviously your reaction is countertransference - your unconscious reaction. Because unconsciously, you become aware. So consciously you are aware of some of it but unconsciously you are aware of other stuff, and you respond. Your unconscious response is the countertransference.

The alchemical metaphor

This is a four-step process that Andrew outlines. He outlines it – these are Jung's ideas though; this is fairly classical Jungian stuff. And we're going to look at the alchemical metaphor in this sense, very simply he's making suggestions that we can analyse a relationship as having four typical stages.

The number four is very significant for Jung and in Jungian psychology. Jung's belief is that four is the number of wholeness or completeness.

This is from his analysis of mythology; four is the number of completeness; three is the number of movement and four is the number of completeness. There's a very, very famous alchemical saying from a woman called [Maria Prophetessa](#),

“One becomes two, two becomes three and three becomes four as one”.

I'm not quite sure, but the basic idea is that four is a unity; it's like one.

There's a strong relationship – so this is a movement, and then when you get to four you've reached completion. So that's a unity once again.

So the stages are:

1) the **fermentio**, there's a fermentation process; something is brewing, okay. So the idea is that when I – I'm so narcissistic; I use myself all the time, let me try to avoid that, so let's say that when you meet someone and there is some sort of attraction; there's something about this person that intrigues you; that attracts you; that draws you to them, and typically maybe vice versa. So we're talking about not where it's pure projection but where there is some genuine relatedness; some sort of eros going on, okay. So this is the process of fermentio; this is the process of fermentation. It's the idea that something is brewing. There's something we've met ...

The idea is not that this is just a casual, I mean, I go to (I can't help using myself, I'm sorry) I go to – Sweat 1000; it's a new gym at Nicolway and I really

don't have roving eye. You won't believe that but I don't, but anyway, there are some really attractive women there. And as a man obviously, I mean I'm not blind. So obviously I've seen them and you know if you're Lebanese and you're like me you kind of give a stupid grin, this kind of a grin; like very lecherous and stupid. But basically what it's saying is, "I think you're sexy". And then sometimes of course they have to smile back because it is kind of embarrassing if you don't respond. So there's a moment there; obviously there's a connection; there's a moment of, there's something; there's like a little something,

But this is beyond that. So this is not [just] that smile. Something actually starts to take place; we enter into some sort of conversation - some sort of dialogue.

R: There's an attraction.

There's an attraction, but it's an attraction that is acted on. Eros takes place. It's beyond that casual glance or whatever. So you're at a pick up joint and there's ... (I mean, I've never been but I've heard about these places; I mean I've been but it was long ago), but anyway, so now you see someone (this is sort of a place Karen frequents, okay), you catch someone's eyes on the other side of the bar; so it's not just the catching of the eyes; so the fermentio is that now the person comes up to you, "Can I buy you a drink?". So now you strike up a conversation, so now all of a sudden it does – that's a very nice way of explaining it – move beyond the pure physical into, there's a sort of an eros;

there's a relatedness; there's something going on, okay. So that's very simply the simple idea of the first stage, that of the fermentio or the fermentation.

2) Now **nigredo**; in alchemy refers to a very unrefined state; a coarse state; a state prior to any chemical process, in a sense, okay. And used as a metaphor for psychology, Jung intended for it to refer to the state of unconsciousness. You might also say that it could refer to a pathology or a neuroses, so when one is in the grips of a pathology or when one is in the grips of a neuroses or a complex the nigredo metaphor would apply; this is the dark night; unconsciousness has dominance; unconsciousness is in control.

R: Now in terms of a relationship?

So in terms of a relationship, okay, Andrew sort of just teases us by saying – he talks about “a darkening of mood”. Now we can interpret that different ways. So obviously one way would be to suggest that the initial attraction starts to wane; that initially what caught your attention - what intrigued you, made you engage the person - starts to wane and initially it was all sunshine, and roses, and kisses, and chocolates, and – I don't know – all the romantic stuff; teddy bears and stuff, and now maybe things are not going so well anymore; so now it could be that some sort of conflict comes in; some sort of disagreement; some sort of seeing the person not through rose-tinted glasses, that initially you saw them in this very idyllic light and now you start to perceive them in a more ...

H: Almost like reality?

Well I don't want to say reality; no, in fact definitely not reality. Sometimes the perception is that it's reality, but if we're following this, then this does not refer to reality per se.

H: So this is more like doubt?

Yes, it's more like there's doubt; there might be some conflict; there might be some tension; there definitely might be some disappointment ...

G: It's not 'it'?

No, not yet. You've jumped ahead. "It's not it" comes just now; we're not at the "not it" point yet. This is still at the point of, "Everything was beautiful, and wonderful, and we were very happy, and now things are not so perfect."

H: It's like having second thoughts. It's some kind of an illusion. You begin to think, "Ja, he's nice but he's not that nice". You're more critical of the relationship; it's not that you've left it.

No, no; you're also ahead of the curve. The nigredo's before the disappointment and disillusionment.

H: Is it not like having second thoughts?

No, it's like... I meet this beautiful woman alright, and the soft lights of the night club or whatever, with her hair, and the make-up, and the perfume, and I've had a few drinks and it's just all very romantic. Maybe it's also sort of quite physical as well; it could be quite lust driven but it's happening at a very specific level; maybe quite a superficial level, okay. And maybe we go home

and have sex. And then a week later I take her out, and we go out, and we dance, and blah-blah-blah

Dh: In the morning?

It could be the next morning, but let's imagine that, that sort of thing happens over a few nights; this absolutely idyllic, romantic time.

H: It's falling in love – what we call it?

Not even; not even, it's just something – attraction. I'd never say falling in love. But now something else happens; it's like now there's a moment of recognition – look, there's another human being here, you see; this is another person; this is not just my fantasy – there's actually another human being here. And this human being has got feelings, and has got thoughts and ideas, and has got a life and a life path, and responsibilities etc., and something is going on between the two of us and I'm not sure if it's all good. I feel a little bit anxious; I feel like maybe I've gone in too far; I don't know where this is going; some things that she says to me, I'm a little bit ambivalent about. So this has gone beyond the honeymoon, that there's a deepening; Andrew refers to it as a darkening of mood.

But also we're talking about it in terms of saying that some of the illusion wears away, or you start to be in a dynamic with a person that is not purely joyful [and naive]. But the point I want to make is that I don't think we must mistake this purely as an antagonistic element in the relationship; in other words the darkening of mood can also be a deepening of passion. So, it goes

beyond the casual flirtation to a real deepening of passion where the spirit — moving beyond the physical into a much more emotive – spiritual sounds a bit trite here ...

R: Plane; emotional plane.

Yes, it's an emotional plane; it's more of a feeling plane; it's a relatedness on a more profound level.

K: Of the soul

Soul; soul! Thank you. That's right; not spirit but soul. Now we're moving from the body to the soul. That's very nice, okay. So that is this move; moving into the level of soul.

R: I know that I accept you; I know that I have the potential to accept you.

No, don't go there; not that I have the potential to accept you; no, it's not that. It's the recognition that there's another human being in the relationship with you, with all that, that means. So what I mean; in other words, initially it was just projection; it was just like, I see you – and, I don't actually see you; I see my projections; pure illusion. But at this stage there's this darkening; there's this recognition that, "Look, this is actually another human being here; I'm in a relationship with another person".

H: It's less idealised.

Far less idealised and it's more profound; it's more felt, but it's also more challenging. It's a bit more scary. At the state of fermentio it's not really

another human being that you're in a relationship with; it's almost like you're in a relationship just with a...

Dh: It's a fantasy.

It's a fantasy. It's the objectification of the other. Now, the sexual act is pure carnality; it's like we have sex where we are like two animals; there're not two human beings; it's very, very primitive. You see, let's just take it outside of a sexual metaphor in a sense as well, because obviously we're using sex as a metaphor here. It's the idea that, you see there's a point of our relatedness; there's a point where we can relate, where fundamentally I'm objectifying you. What I mean by that is, I perceive you as having a commodity value. I want to go for lunch with you, or I want to interact with you, or whatever it is, because you represent a specific commodity to me.

Dh: I will get something from you.

I'll get something. Absolutely. It's all business.

H: People come to therapy at that point.

Say that again.

People come to therapy at that point of wanting a contractual relationship.

Of wanting a contractual relationship, ja. That's a nice way of putting it; it's very contractual, okay, and there's an objectification of the other, a de-humanisation of the other. Now the nigredo, is when that initial, very clean objectification or contractual – but you see 'contractual' already somehow

suggests that there's a level of, sort of, sophistication to the thing, so even if you just think about it as purely that I objectify or commoditise you.

But at the point of the nigredo the commoditisation starts to crumble and there's something else going on; you're affecting me in ways that I didn't previously anticipate.

H: I don't get from you, what I want anymore.

I don't get from you what I want, or it comes at a price, or things start to deepen. Let's not labour it too much because sometimes if we labour it too much the clarity will invert into becoming more opaque.

3) Now the **mortificatio** – I don't know if my Latin pronunciation is quite right, but something like that –, mortification, obviously. This is the point of the death of the projection. So you were speaking about – a few of you mentioned – disappointment. So this is the stage of the disappointment now. This is when the projection really dies. We see this word 'disappointment' a lot; disappointment; disappointment. Boredom; boredom. 'Fizzles out', okay. Before you got here ...

I mean disappointment obviously comes up, but Gabe as well, always has this thing of being stuck; of feeling stuck, right. That's the mortificatio; that's the death, okay. In other words, there's the recognition now, that what initially I projected onto you - when I objectified you I projected something onto you; I saw you as having a specific commodity value, okay; I saw you as an object that

would please me in some fashion, okay. Like I'm a baby with a toy; I see you as a toy; it's a new toy; a new rattle or whatever.

Now once there's this darkening of mood, so now there's sort of the dawning of "Hang on a second, actually there's another human being here, it's not just a fantasy", and a sort of a deepening of awareness and relatedness in relation to the other and idea here is that it leads to this death of the projection, or using the alchemical metaphor, this mortificatio which is the death, okay?

Mortification.

Br: Always negative, at this stage?

Ja, this is negative. This is the idea that ...

H: Disappointment?

Ja, this is a profound disappointment. So this is the realisation that, that which I perceived when I initially encountered you is, in fact, an illusion.

G: What about if a person – he's already fifty – which every woman he has is ...

Then we call him a Batchelor. Confirmed - confirmed Batchelor, ja. Karen's met a few of those; you can ask her about them – she can tell you.

So the idea is that this is not untypical, okay. So we mustn't think of this as somehow – it might seem, on the face of it -, slightly pathological or neurotic but the idea is actually that this is completely normal. What Jung is trying to point out here is that this is, in fact, what a relationship actually looks like; this is not just a relationship that's gone wrong; this is what happens if you stay in a

relationship long enough. That which you initially thought - that sort of fantasy that you were in relationship to - dies. And so – I mean going back to the romantic metaphor, that’s probably the easiest, so – initially when the lovers met she saw in him the knight in shining armour that she had dreamt about since she was a teenage girl, and that was going to come and rescue her, and was going to look after her, and was going to make love to her, and was going to teach her, and was going to protect her – definitely protect her, and also - I want to say - sort of, like idealise; like hold her up on a pedestal, and treat her in a really romantic kind of beautiful way. So there was this idea; this idealisation of the masculine, let’s say, in the classical gender sense, okay.

And of course he had this idea that he is meeting a princess; that she’s pure as driven snow; that she thinks only the highest of thoughts; doesn’t have a bad bone in her body; beautiful, innocent, virginal (obviously) – even if he knows at some level maybe she’s not a virgin, in a sense she’s virginal - she hasn’t met *him* before, it’s ‘like a virgin’ as Madonna will let you know. And she’s almost a replacement for his mother, obviously - but that’s on an unconscious level - but she’s one better because obviously he can have sex with her, and she can bear him children. But she’s as pure and good as his mother was.

So that’s the idealisation, and then the idea is that as we move from steps one to three, there’s a recognition that, “Hang on a sec: this person is flawed; this person is not all good; this person is not all wise; this person is not all knowing; this person is not all loving; this person is selfish; this person leaves their fucking socks on the bathroom floor; this person – whatever – has got a lot of

irritating habits; this person – there’s a strong feeling of ambivalence in relation to this person.”

So finally leading to the mortificatio; to the mortification, in other words the recognition that, that which I perceived; that which I “fell in love” with, is no longer there. It was an illusion. It was all packaging. There’s a person there; there’s a human being there. I don’t know if I love them or not, but it’s certainly not who I thought I was engaged with when I fell in love with them.

G: Stephen, that all sounds very, very familiar - like my life story. I’m just wondering, “What’s new?”

I don’t know. That’s a good question. We’ll try and go a bit further. It’s a fair question. Bear with me okay, we can try and drill down into it; hopefully something new will emerge but I don’t guarantee it, okay.

B: We’re talking about the course of events in an even good relationship?

Ja, this is the typical course of events. Yes, that’s right. We’re not talking about only where things have gone wrong; even when things haven’t gone wrong this is what happens.

Now, it’s what happens next. You see, that’s the key thing. You see, that’s the point; that’s really the answer to your question. That is predictable - the big question is: what happens next?

4) Okay, so now Jung talks about the **putrefactio** – the putrefaction.

B: I thought it was purification?

No, it's not purification. It's that the dead body now decays. Now the putrefaction is the idea that the original body – and we can look at it obviously as the body of the relationship, okay – dies; it's died. Like anything that dies, it now starts to putrefy; it breaks down, okay. Its physical integrity – existence – is destroyed; it breaks down; it erodes; it crumbles, it decays; it putrefies and when it putrefies – I suppose this happens when something putrefies in the physical world but certainly in terms of the metaphor we're using here – it gives off a vapour, okay; that as that physical body is destroyed it gives off a vapour. Sort of a spiritual substance, if you will, rises up from the body.

Now just to take a step back before we talk about this, I like this quote from the Bible – I've always told you, I'm really a frustrated evangelical preacher so where I can put Biblical quotes in I like to use them -, so this is from Romans 8:13, and it reads,

"... if you live after the flesh, you shall die: but if through the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live."

This is the idea here, that when the physical body of the initial projection dies; when the illusion dies, alright, in the death of that illusion or in the death of that body, and in its putrefaction, an opportunity exists; an opportunity to cross a threshold. And maybe, coming back to ... I mean - I don't who spoke about reality - you might say - I'm still hesitant to use the word 'real', but you might say – a step into the real, in a sense; in a sense, okay. I use that with some trepidation but it's the idea certainly that, that initial illusion dies.

There's the recognition that okay, so you are not this fantasy object that I perceived you to be; you are a human being, like me and not only that you have vulnerabilities and follies like me, but of course, the part of the pain is that in recognising your follies, and your vulnerabilities, and your shortcomings, and your finitude, I have to become acutely aware of my own if I'm going to stay in a relationship with you because I mean, if I really still perceive myself as perfect; as immaculate, then you're not the right person for me; it just doesn't make sense; you can't be my soul mate. I mean, you're flawed – I'm not flawed. Maybe at another stage of evolution we might be able to have relationship, but right now we can't. If I'm going to remain in relationship with you despite the recognition that you are as flawed as you are, at some level it means the very, very painful recognition that I too am flawed, and finite, and imperfect.

So there's this opportunity; the putrefaction offers this opportunity. So in alchemical terms they talk about the transubstantiation of elements, so it's the move from the physical to the genuinely spiritual; it's the move from body to spirit and in psychological terms it's the move from being in a relationship with a projection with – in Freudian terms you speak about a part object so I see you as - an object; an object of my satisfaction. I still haven't seen you as a human being. But at this point; at this point of four, where the putrefaction happens, I mean of course usually what typically happens is that the relationship crumbles. Usually that's the point of the relationship fizzling out; that's the point of the relationship coming to an end; that's the point of, "Well we tried. It seemed like a good idea at the time".

Dh: It doesn't match.

It's not a match.

And in terms of the coniunctio this is where we would just start redoing the circle.

Absolutely right. This is the coniunctio; this is going back to "why?" [continue with the relationship] Exactly, just start again. "Thanks, it's been real".

B: I think what Romans is saying and I think how I feel about this is that at this point, if you go beyond the worldly thing and you seek a spiritual – either a spiritual relationship or a spiritual something in your life if you're dealing with goals or -

Let's just - for the sake of simplicity let's just - keep it in the metaphor of the relationship for now.

B: In terms of a relationship, for example, if you now start actually getting with each other on a spiritual level, and going beyond just the physical, and your day to day, and the bodies, and blah-blah, I think that's where you can now go beyond just going back to square one in the relationship

Yes, that's absolutely right. And the psychological reading's no different here really. The one is speaking in sort of spiritual, biblical terms; one is speaking in psychological terms but essentially the thing and the dynamic is the same.

Hanlie, you were going to say something?

H: I think it's about the level of commitment but it's not something you can fake, or say, "Well now I'm going to connect with you at this spiritual level". There's something that really needs to die.

Yes that's a very nice point you brought there; that's right, something needs to die. Look, something dies in the relationship here, okay; at the mortification. I mean, the projection dies, but that's right; something actually needs to die in you as well. Something needs to die in you; the illusion needs to die. That's very nice because it's not only a death in the outer but in order to get beyond this there has to be an inner death; there has to be a letting go of expectation. I mean the nicest way I could put it is like –I remember a time when I was young, believe it or not, and I was never a great romantic but I did quite like romance. I liked the idea of romance, the idea of the first date, and of getting to know a person, and that romanticised and that wonderful feeling of, like butterflies in your stomach, and the excitement of a new relationship, and there's something sort of beautiful, and innocent, and child-like, and joyful about that.

K: Some people still like that.

Some people still like that?

Some old people.

Oh really! I don't know, but anyway, in my own case, I remember, there was a time. And then I met a woman and at some point in my life I had to cross a threshold where I said, "I if I stick around with this woman any longer then my

romantic encounters are going to come to an abrupt and rather violent end. And now I'm actually going to have this human being in my life, who is bloody difficult and who's anything but romantic." I mean this is my particular case and my wife really isn't romantic. In order to stay, something had to genuinely die, like part of my identity was related to the idea of romance; of ...

Dh: Chivalry?

No – not chivalry, but 'meeting'; that first encounter, that first kiss, that wondrous sort of unwrapping of a new present that, as a man, is part of your identity and it's probably the same if you're a woman, I guess. So it's that sort of thing, you see; something fundamentally has to die. It's like I have this dream of what a relationship is and then you realise that, Okay well – this is not that dream.

G: So is the illusion necessary?

I think it is. I do think it is.

Does it need to go on [for] both people?

Does it need to go on both people, you say?

Ja. For the relationship to continue? Because Ryan was saying his illusion dies before hers does, usually. And then when he leaves she's then dancing with the bones of a skeleton.

No, I don't know if it has to happen at the same time or for both people.

There's something very personal about it. It's like this: I have this dream; I

have this fantasy; I'm living in this illusion, and then I realise that it is an illusion. So now for me – for me – either the illusion dies or the relationship dies but the relationship can no longer sustain the illusion. So if I'm going to remain in the relationship then I'm going to have to remain in the relationship with the recognition that the dream has died.

G: But again, if I can't come to the stage – and I've been in this game for many times - and now I said, "I don't want this anymore; I want to go straight to stage four. So I don't want illusions anymore. I'm relating on that level straight away. Is it possible? In other words, do you have to have an illusion first before you can come to ...

You do, yes. That the attraction is an illusion; it seems to necessitate illusion. And also another thing one might say is that maybe in a relationship as well, I suspect that one doesn't go through this process only once I don't think it's a once-off, so it's a nice but flawed idea that once can sort of jump straight past it and be in the sort of real and the spiritual.

Maybe what you might say is that with maturity, some of the naiveté and the illusions that you had twenty years ago – when you're grown up, you're not a child anymore; you see things – you've got a capacity, and a sensitivity, and a maturity, but still I do think it is a process that, in a sense, the deeper levels one can go through again, and again, and again. It's not like, "Oh now we know each other. Okay so now we can get on with the business of –". No; it just doesn't work like that. There's a level of knowing, there's a level of relating that's got to change as it evolves.

R: Can I ask just two technical questions? Please they're technical – they're important to me. Is any mention ever made of the difference between stage and phase? Because for me there's a difference; a phase is longer, so you get a step – step one – that's too short; stage which is a step but it's not quite a phase and a phase talks much more to a continuum. I know it's semantic; I know it's technical, but in your reading do you get a sense that it is much more phased, or is it staged, or is it short steps?

That's a very semantic question but if I had to I would say a stage.

R: I would say a stage is at a point and a phase is more prolonged.

But having said that, okay; having said that, this is something that could happen over a weekend or it could happen over twenty years. It could happen BOOM; very, very quickly, or it could be a long process of slow dissolution.

H: I think once you've got your first notch and you're prepared to actually go and find some other aspect to idealise then it becomes a phase in the relationship, and it's the next phase, and the next.

Ja, that's quite nice. So there're stages in each phase. So that actually a nice way of putting it; so maybe you could say that each phase contains these four stages. Actually that would be quite a nice way of putting it, so this would be an initial phase and then there'd be another phase, and each phase would have those stages.

G: Maybe also what you're asking is are these things separate or do they go, together? Do they bleed into each other or is there sort of a definite mark?

Definitely, they bleed into each other. This is just an attempt to try and take a relationship which is so unbelievably convoluted, and complicated, and involved, and has forward and backward movements, and try to say, Look okay– but if we look at it there're four distinct stages. Yes of course, but it's never that neat. So this is very much an "as if". And that one can sort of move between the phases a bit as well, but it definitely has a distinct sense of progression from the fermentio to the nigredo to the mortificatio.

I think you've sort of answered my next question which is, is there any intra-stage movement, so that you may move back to fermentio, for example?

No, I don't really think so. Just think about it; just think about your own practical experience. So, you meet somebody, you're attracted to somebody; there's an initial attraction, okay. And then when you get to that darkening – that darkening of mood; that nigredo – you just can't step back from it. You can never recreate that initial moment; the initial moment only happens initially. One can never step back to the initial moment so basically, although they definitely bleed into each other I don't think one can really go back.

Br: I have a question on exactly that I want to bring up, but in these dynamics – I mean we're not talking about mind-set here, it's not like a mind-set that you ... this is actually going right to the core of the nature of the beast; of yourself; of your dynamic. These are the dynamics that have ruled, like I said, ...

These are primary dynamics, yes. Nicely put.

So, it's a primal dynamic so you could say, I'm an elephant and you're a tiger or whatever – you going to behave like the tiger behaves throughout your whole life and I'm going to behave like an elephant. And unfortunately, ja – this is actually the point because we can sit here and then somebody who's– I'm sitting here as an elephant and I'm looking at Gabriel and he's a tiger and I'm going, "No ja, Gabriel. Listen man, don't be such a nice guy. Why're you being such a nice guy?" But you see, the problem is that you end up in that paradox because (of who you are). Exactly. You see, by being the person who does get stuck, you have to get stuck to be yourself. If you take my advice, and you tell "her" to duck – I mean I do that easily – then you're not you anymore, and then you're not happy either. So, there's the paradox there.

Okay, so I hear exactly what you're saying which is a nice point. So in other words that's right, you see, you're touching on something very important. So there's a way of thinking about this that you have the idea that look, we're dealing with problems that are behavioural problems, or they're developmental problems, or they are issues where we've sort of got confused or lost the plot a bit, and all we need to do is to sort of recalibrate the compass and then we can find our way again. But that is definitely not Jung's way of thinking about it; Jung's way of thinking about it is exactly what you're talking about, so in other words, the problem is essentially indicative of the person.

And in fact to go even further – into a Lacanian perspective – is there is no person independently of the problem. The very idea that you are you outside of the problem is the illusion. The reality is you are the problem. But there is

hope; well, Jung believes there is hope and I'd lean towards that perspective, so you touched on it earlier on when you said, "Look, is it not my very nature to be a liberator?" That's the point, you see. So you can't unlearn; if you had to unlearn being a liberator then naturally, of course, you could never individuate, okay. But the idea is that there are ways of being a liberator; there are some ways of being a liberator in the world that are going to serve you far more meaningfully and far more profoundly than other ways.

You see, that's the point. So you've got the archetype; the archetype can build or break down. The idea is that it doesn't necessarily need to break down.

Br: You see I've got a question here relating to that; I think he, in effect, ultimately does both on a certain level that's your life, you've got a role to play; you're the bus driver and that's your talent; you're going to drive the bus; that's your necessary role. Or you're the lion; your necessary role is to cull the buck. So that's the necessary role, but the painful side of it, where it's actually hurting you rather than building you is where you recognise consciousness of your role. Then surely that takes it to a new level where you start to witness yourself operating in the world.

Yes, yes, you're right okay, but it's not only about witnessing. So in other words, you could say, Look, life – we could take like almost a Buddhist approach, I mean not that I know anything about Buddhism, but we could take the Buddhist approach in the sense that we could say, "Look, to live is to suffer" okay. And there's nothing that we can do to change that, okay. The very recognition that we are suffering is, in itself, liberating. It's accepted; it's

the nature of my life that I'm going to suffer – I recognise that, and in recognising it I accept and there's a degree of liberation, okay.

But individuation goes further. Individuation calls on you to change the very coordinates of your existence in the world. So, it's the idea that is expressed best from Rudolph Steiner where he says, "Man needs to complete himself." So that's the difference between you and the lion; the lion can only act in accord with its nature – nothing else. But the idea is that you've been given a gift of choice.

Br: But, I mean, there's a whole thing about that choice and that's a whole subject that we've discussed before as well, but are you saying that you can change your nature?

No.

Br: You can't?

You can't change your nature, no. That would be inauthentic. But the way you choose to actualise your nature in the world is a choice. So, there's a way in which you can liberate so that, that liberation serves your individuation project, and serves the world. And there's a way that you can liberate that just causes chaos. And there's a choice; that's the choice. You've got these cards, but how're you going to play them?

D: But can I just ask one thing?

Who're you asking? Bruce?

D: Gabriel. I really think he presented something that is common to all of us. Not a lion or a leopard or whatever, but a mammal, okay. And it's the journey; and we're on the journey – we can get distracted here and there, and it's not it; that's not it. We have to do that. There's something pulling us forward, that's who we really are. We don't want to waste our time. And a lot of what's behind it is I think our generations are genetic murmurs that are saying "You've got a chance, like my grandmother's telling me that I don't have to have a baby every nine months; I have an opportunity. Go for it, go for it, be yourself, be better, progress in society – or whatever it is. And I feel these pushings and urgings, and I do drop things if I feel that I'm going off - it doesn't serve me in some way. And a whole lot of time it's just feelings, so I think that what he described is common to all of us.

It's common but it can be horribly pathological.

Oh absolutely.

Okay ja. I agree with you; it's a universal impulse, but it's managing that bloody impulse that is ...

G: What do you mean horribly pathological?

Well it's just the idea that you can't build horizontally; you need to build vertically so I put a brick here and then a couple of bricks and then of course I move and I put a few bricks and of course, you're going to end up with a line of very short structures. But to create value, to create meaning, to create excellence, there's only one way and that's commitment.

Dh: You have to do the work.

You have to do the work, but not only do you have to do the work, you have make a terrible choice and you have to say, I'm going to do the work here; I'm going to do the work with this person; I'm going to do the work this way. That is an unbelievably painful choice because, it's a recognition of our finitude; it's a recognition of our mortality. It's a dreadful, dreadful choice, but life is so short that if we don't make it – it's gone.

Application

Please read the blog below to familiarise yourself with the transference and countertransference identification tool. Please note that there is a video series as well to help you identify your transference. The link to that series is at the end of the blog post.

A tool to identify your transference: understanding your unconscious communication in relationships

Transference- countertransference, Lacan, Jung

Transference as a technical term in depth psychology describes the process whereby unconscious content is shared between patient (analysand) and analyst in the context of their therapeutic relationship (analysis). Although used to refer to this specific relationship dynamic in analysis, transference is a very real dimension of all social interaction, it is by no means limited to the analytical couple (analyst and analysand).

This is the third in a series of three short articles I have written on transference – countertransference. The other two can be found by following these links:

[Transference: The Saviour, The Madonna and the Slut](#)

[Countertransference: The Obscene Other](#)

In this article I want to share a tool with you that you can use to identify what your transference is, i.e. what it is you are transferring (unconsciously communicating) in your relationships. This is something worth knowing as it provides a very clear insight into why people respond to you as they do in your relationships. The transference is a virtual instruction manual to the other as to how you should be treated. There is an old aphorism that says something like, “Don’t wear your heart on your sleeve.” The rather uncomfortable truth though is that is exactly what we all do and there is absolutely nothing we can do to avoid this. Before you say a single word, or do a single thing in fact before you have even met the other you have already exposed your heart to them. Your heart is fully transparent in all its beautiful hues and ugly blemishes.

Not only is it transparent to the other, but far more so than it is to you. What is opaque to your inner gaze is clearly visible to the gaze of the other. So before we begin then please understand that this is the simple (if awful) truth that every psychoanalyst has known for the last century or so; and many mystics before them. There is nothing I can offer you that will change that. What I can offer you is something that although more modest can be nevertheless quite useful – the ability to see in yourself what the other sees, to understand the content of your unconscious communication. Continuing down this path of full

disclosure let me add that knowing what your transference is most definitely does not imply being able to magically change it. I can also almost guarantee you that you will not like much of what this tool will show you – assuming you apply it with honesty and some imagination.

What you transfer, according to the reams of research done in psychoanalysis, is typically a primal relationship dynamic. That is the relationship with your primary care giver's (usually your parents of course); and this is not subject to change by pure force of will. It is not governed by your conscious will or self, it is rather, in the spirit of depth psychology an unconscious dynamic and one very deeply rooted in your psychology. So I can say with a fair degree of certainty that this will resist the best transformational intentions of the weekend workshop industry in its various guises and affiliations.

You may reasonably enquire what the point of such an exercise is exactly, if what is discovered is not subject to change by your (conscious) willing. This is a fair question and let me attempt a fair answer. Whilst the recalcitrant nature of the transference is undoubtedly true, there are both immediate benefits in identifying it and also it is subject to intentional evolution if you are willing to do the work of intense self-reflection over an extended period of time. It would be true to say here that many roads lead to Rome; any system of rigorous and intensive self-reflection in an open and self-critical system can enable an evolution of this primary wound. The typical way, and still possibly the best, to approach this, is to enter analysis – and in this respect I am non-

partisan, it doesn't matter whether you end up with a principally Freudian or Jungian analyst. We, The Centre for Applied Jungian Studies, offer an online programme called The Conscious Living Programme.

Beyond that, as mentioned, there is an immediate benefit in knowing what your transference is:

1. Knowing what it is will help you to better navigate your relationships, both in terms of managing yourself and in managing your expectation of the other and the relationship's outcome or Telos (its destination, target trajectory etc.).
2. Also you cannot overvalue the immensity of consciousness, being conscious even when it is not of a Promethean nature (the magical ability to use consciousness to change reality) is an immeasurably better position to be in than the original unconscious state. That is to say consciousness has infinite value in itself, independent of any practical utilitarian value that it may offer.

The Tool

The tool I am going to share with you is one we developed at the Centre; it is an adaptation of a Lacanian idea. Although our primary influence is Jungian¹

¹ Carl Gustav Jung (1875 – 1961) founder of analytical psychology.

we are also utilise the work of Freud² and Lacan³ to create a system of applied psychodynamics. In this case we are applying a model developed by Lacan in his work on The Four Discourses⁴. We will proceed in three steps, step 1 introduces the original Lacanian model that has been adapted to create the tool; step 2 shows the first part of the adaptation and justifies why such an adaptation can be made; part 3 reveals the tool itself and the guidelines on how to use the tool. My suggestion is that you read all three steps very carefully before attempting to apply the tool to your own case.

Step 1

The model was developed by Lacan as a way of representing certain typical forms of social interaction, specifically the discourses (organisation of communication) of the Master, the University, The Analyst, and the Hysteric⁵. This model that very usefully asks the question: what is the “truth” of each of these communications, what desire (primary motivation) drives these discourses.

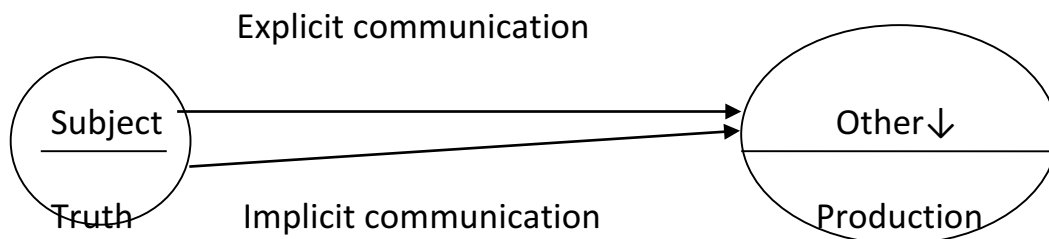
The model from Lacan looks like this:

² Sigmund Freud (1856 – 1939) father of psychoanalysis.

³ Jacque Lacan (1901 – 1981) the French psychiatrist and psychoanalyst

⁴ Lacan, Seminar XVII, 1969

⁵ Lionel Bailly, (2009), ‘Lacan’, pp. 153 - 162



- The **subject** is the protagonist in the discourse; in this case it serves as a placeholder for you. You are the subject.
- The **truth** is the actual reason you are in the discourse; it cashes out as your desire, what you desire from the other.
- The **other** is simply the person you are in the discourse (relationship) with.
- The **production** is what is produced by the discourse, where does the discourse lead? How is your desire met or not met. It is produced by the combined effect of the explicit and implicit communications by the subject on (directed towards) the other.
- The **explicit communication** (represented by the horizontal arrow between the subject and the other) is what you say you want/mean/intend etc. Your conscious communication.
- The **implicit communication** (represented by the bottom arrow between the Truth and the other) is the actual reason you are in the discourse – what you really want.

So as an example when “the master” is placed in the place of the subject he addresses the other as a “slave” and his discourse, irrespective of its explicit content, is designed fulfil his desire. The other is dehumanised in as far as they are seen strictly in their functional role, not as a person. The desire “the truth” has to do with the other (the functionary) fulfilling their function which is the production of some service for the master. Here of course any one in a hierarchical contractual or employment situation in discourse with an employee is an easy way of understanding this.

I as master retain your services as slave (functionary) to fulfil my desire, the job I have employed you for; but social protocol often disguises this very clear hierarchical situation. So in other words frequently the explicit discourse is not: “do your job and thereby fulfil my desire”, but something along the lines of: “take pride in your work”; “you are doing so well....”; “you can do better/more/faster etc.”; “this is an important job”, and so on.

Now in the example of the master’s discourse it is important to understand that the presence of the “truth” does not deny the significance of the explicit communication. So just because the master’s implicit communication is the fulfilment of his desire by virtue of the production of the functionary (the other), does not invalidate the significance of the spoken explicit content - both are valid and both serve to further the desire of the subject in this case the master.

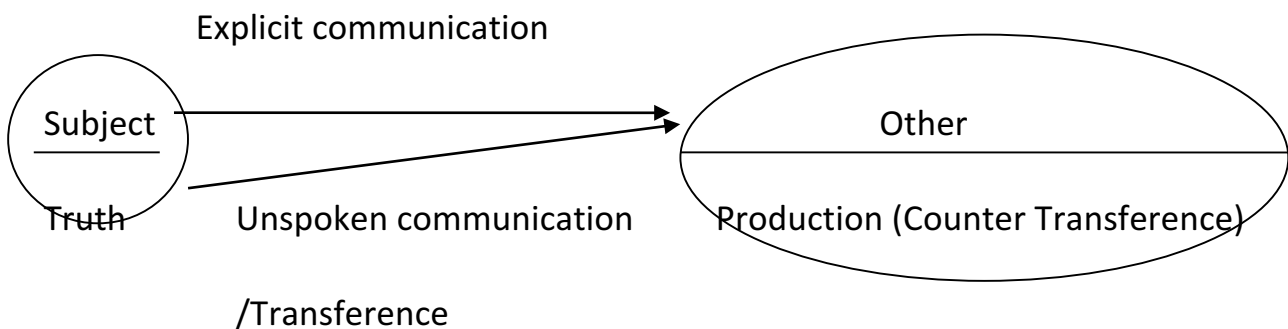
Step 2

We have adapted this model as a means of getting at the transference in any social encounter. The logic behind this adaptation is quite simple:

- The “truth” is always an implicit (unspoken) form of communication that needs to be arrived at inferentially. When one is in a discourse with the Master for example there is an implicit (or inferential) understanding of the Master’s desire, irrespective of the exact content of his communication. This is the same as the transference in that the transference has to be inferred it is not explicit, it is an intuiting or inference of the desire (or truth) of the subject in relation to the other.
- The truth is occupied in the Lacanian model by desire; the transference mirrors this in that the transference is also an expression of unconscious desire.
- The truth may or may not be unconscious (the transference is typically, although not always, unconscious). However there is strong resonance between the unspoken implicit desire contained in the “truth” and the transference. The “truth” is socially and institutionally repressed in that it remains unspoken (it become a silent truth) this is very much the nature of the transference.
- There is frequently compensatory relationship between the explicit and implicit communications in the Lacanian model. There is a form of compensation in the explicit communication of the Master that disguises his (avaricious) desire, it may be friendliness, politeness, or even anger but all of these disguise (compensate) in some form his desire. The transference shares this feature; conscious communication is typically a

compensation for the contents of the unconscious which are populating the transference.

The adaptation then of the Lacanian model to reflect the transference-countertransference dynamic looks something like this.



So very simply what we see here is:

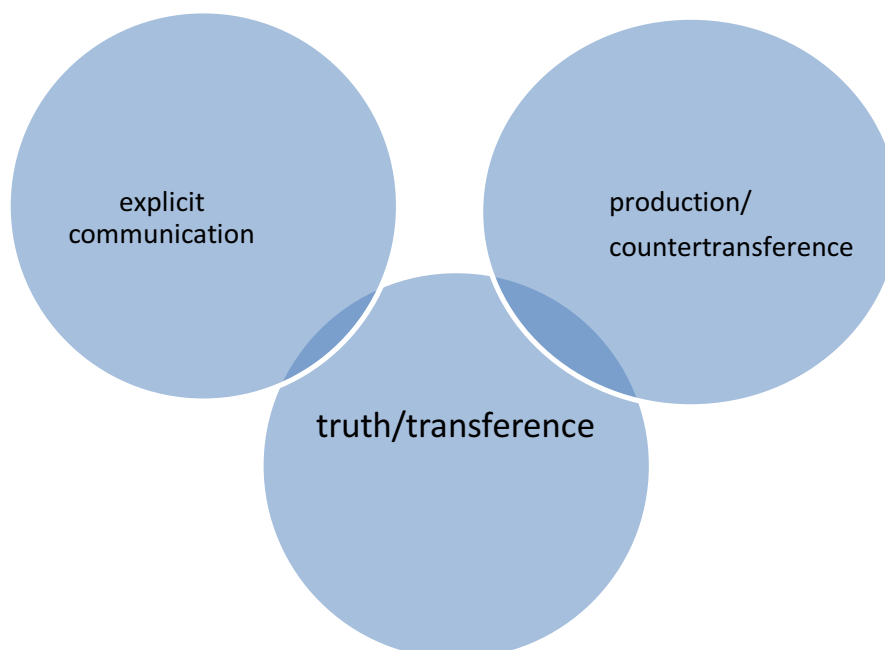
- The “Truth” becomes a synonym for the transference,
- The reaction by the other (the Production) is the countertransference. The countertransference is the response by the other to the contents of your combined explicit and implicit communication, what you say and what you transfer.
- The above being noted, in psychoanalysis we typically believe that the transference acts as unconscious communication which speaks with far more authority in terms of your relational expectations than what you actually say. Hence the word “truth” there is telling – the transference

tells the other the “truth” of your desires irrespective of what you are saying.⁶

Step 3

The way in which we use this model to construct our tool is through a triangulation of two known’s and one unknown. What we know is the explicit spoken communication and the production (where the relationship leads) which is the countertransference. What we do not know but want to get at using this tool is the transference – our unconscious communication.

The tool then looks like this:



⁶ Obviously this does not grant any right per se (or certainly not any legal right) to the other to ignore your explicit communication. Although, as we all know, typically what happens people do not listen as much to what we say as what we really feel (the proverbial content of our heart).

The first thing you do is populate the production/countertransference field. Then once you have done this you need to populate the explicit communication field. These are the two known's that you have to work with and from which you will infer the third field which is the truth/transference field. So this is a 3 step process:

Step 1) describe in a few clear and concise sentences what the result of the relatedness is, where it leads, which is (in this model at least) the countertransference e.g. let us imagine a discourse taking place between a married couple where the production is one of discord, conflict, unhappiness, criticism and a general lack of love and kindness by the other towards the subject.

Step2) as before describe in a few clear and unambiguous statements what is explicitly communicated. Going back to our example in 1) let us imagine that her subject explicitly communicates to her partner, her desire for asks for love, kindness, and a peaceful coexistence.

Step 3) is to populate the last field, the truth/transference field. This is done through a process of combined logical inference and creative imagination⁷. The

⁷ Psychology being both an art and a science.

creative imagination you will need to bring to the party, I can help you draw out the inferences. The principal clues the model provides are:

- The contrast between your explicit communication and the production or countertransference. Assuming you are considering a challenging relationship dynamic the chances are that the reason it is challenging is that there is a stark contrast between your expressed (explicit) desire in the relationship and what actually happens (the production or countertransference). Using the example of the married couple in an unhappy relationship. Seemingly there is something counterintuitive in the contrast between the expressed desire of the subject (let's say in the example the wife) and what actually happens. In this case the product is the opposite of her stated desires and intentions. This suggests immediately that the transference is fundamentally different from the explicit communication. We don't yet know what it is, but that contrast is strongly suggestive of it being quite distinct and possibly opposite to the explicit communication.
- The second clue is that the transference is typically a far more authoritative voice when it comes to telling the other what the nature of your desire really is. Once again I do not mean to dismiss the authority and significance of the explicit communication, but not only psychoanalysis but everyday experience teaches us that we pay far more attention to the authority of the transference (the unconscious communication) than we do what is said.

Imagine for example someone is trying to sell you a product, consider how you evaluate the sales pitch. Is it what the salesperson says or is it what you feel, sense, intuit, whilst you are listening to their sales pitch. Two salespeople could approach you selling the exact same product and use not dissimilar sales pitches and yet you are far more inclined to buy from the one than the other- that is the authority of the transference. So in terms of the applying this tool you can reasonably infer that your transference will map onto the product (the countertransference) with a greater degree of congruence than any other pairing in the triangulation i.e. explicit communication-product; or explicit communication-transference.

- Another clue is the principle from psychoanalysis of compensation. What we know from psychoanalysis is that the unconscious – conscious minds share a compensatory relationship with each other. This has the implication that much of what we say and do is done in order to compensate for an unconsciously experienced opposite. This is seemingly quite perverse but it is a cornerstone of psychoanalytic theory. A joke that Freud would tell was of the patient who arrived at her first session and blurted out, “We can discuss anything but my mother!” One need hardly be a psychoanalyst to recognise that she has identified exactly where the analytical conversation needs to go, which quite obviously is the exact opposite of what she has said. In terms of the

application then you can reasonably assume that there is a relationship of compensation between your explicit communication and your unconscious desire that populates your transference. Now it is not an exact one to one opposite. The compensation can be quite subtle, so this is where a certain degree of imagination and sensitivity is required to identify exactly what it compensates for in you. In our hypothetical example of the married couple we might speculate that although the wife claimed she desired love, kindness and peaceful coexistence an unconscious impulse in her actually desired the opposite which was (at least partly) responsible for the product of discord and unhappiness. This “wound” would typically have a developmental origin being traceable back to one or more of her primary relationships as a child.

- The transference typically expresses a desire, so bear that in mind in your analysis of your own transference. Desire here though can be subtle in that one can well desire misery as much as one may desire happiness, unconscious desires have this perverse element about them.
- The language of the unconscious does not share the sophistication of your conscious spoken communication it expresses itself in simple often quite crude terms. So when trying to identify your transference avoid subtle “clever” phrasings and favour blunt expressions.

Conclusion

I hope that I have provided you with enough to apply this very powerful tool to your own situation and relationship challenges. It is not I must admit the easiest of applications but I assure you that it is one worth putting some effort into. The insights it can provide can quite literally change your life and help you better navigate relationship challenges that have been frustrating you for years. If you find yourself simply unable to effectively penetrate into the transference my suggestion is to recruit partner for the exercise; and even if the exercise comes quite easily for you there is always a benefit in doing it with one or two others.

As I said at the beginning of this article recognising the transference does not entail its transformation. If you want to change the transference this requires serious reflection and work on the nature of the transference. It is however the critical first step on the road to more meaningful and satisfying relationships.

Here is the link to the first video in the transference and counter transference video series. From this video page there are links to progress to the next phase.

<http://appliedjung.com/video-1/>