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Distinguishing identification in the field of psychosis: On transference psychosis and psychotic transference

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Learning Goal:

To distinguish transference phenomena from reality elements in relationship with person suffering from psychosis. Special attention should be paid regarding transference psychosis and psychotic transference.

Abstract Text:

Psychotic processes that are intertwined in the transference have some constant features: repetition compulsion, the object on which the emotions are transferred, projection with transferred emotions, transference situation and regression. The characteristics of the transference are its inadequacy, intensity, ambivalence, instability and persistence. The patients showing this kind of phenomena are not communicating with a coherent, integrated ego and do not seek to establish a working alliance but the direct contact with various introjects.

Transference includes three persons: the subject, the object from the past, and the present object. In essence, the matrix of transference relationships is the primal union of mother-child.

The transference phenomena are based on two elements: the capacity of differentiation between self and the world of objects, and to transfer emotional reactions from object representations from then past to the present object. The more the transference is regressive, the more space will be occupied by aggressive instincts. Psychotic transference means not only a repetition of the past, but also the real relationship which conceals the new beginning.

In this symposium I will present some experiences from the psychodynamic point of view, representing the mentioned features and how they appear in the dynamic of psychotherapy with patients suffering from psychosis. The special accent will be put not only on transference and countertransference features of the kind, but also on transference psychosis and psychotic transference.

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