

Postdoctoral Education and Training Standards for The Specialty Practice of Psychoanalysis in Psychology

Definition of Psychoanalysis in Psychology

The Psychoanalysis Synarchy recognizes the specialty practice of psychoanalysis as a means of understanding human emotion, motivation, and behavior based upon the discovered understanding of experiences outside of a person's awareness. Psychoanalysis concerns both the scholarly study of and the therapy of the human psyche. This depth perspective toward psychological experience emphasizes the nature of the relationship between analysand and analyst. This relationship is necessarily intense, and continues over some extended time, since an understanding of this relationship often requires reactivations of life experiences in the history of an analysand, which then informs the psychoanalytic process leading to a reduction of an analysand's distress.

Particular experiences in the process, such as working with dreams, daydreams, slips of the tongue, fantasies and other symbolic material, the frequency of sessions per week, the use of a chair or a couch, or the degree of neutrality of the analyst, or the emphasis on the fundamental rule of free association, may be regarded as important for work with a particular analysand, but may not be equally necessary for all psychoanalytic work. What distinguishes psychoanalysis from other psychological therapies is both the intensity and the duration of the analytic process, which allows an analysand to become more consistently conscious of motivations and desires of which s/he was only partially, or completely unaware, before the analytic process. Increased awareness often allows an analysand to achieve a greater degree of inner harmony and balance, and can free an analysand to live a more creative, productive, satisfying, and conscious life.

The psychoanalytic process requires a sensitivity, respect, and knowledge of human diversity in order to understand and appreciate the strong influences on an individual analysand by factors such as race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, personality style or type, disability, trauma, class status, education, religious/spiritual orientation, and other psychological, social, and cultural influences.

The psychoanalytic process is necessarily entirely private, protected, and confidential. The success of any psychoanalytic process relies upon an analysand's confidence in the protection of their privacy, anonymity, and autonomy during the analytic process.

Competencies for the Specialty Practice of Psychoanalysis in Psychology

The Psychoanalysis Synarchy recognizes the following competencies as fundamental core practice activities of the specialty practice of psychoanalysis: These examples are not exhaustive and may be modified in keeping with the theoretical and technical approach of a psychoanalyst and as a result of ongoing theory, research, and practice developments within the specialty.

Functional Competencies

Assessment: Competency in the specialty of psychoanalysis includes a conceptualization of an analysand's core problems, strengths, vulnerabilities, issues, and goals from a psychoanalytic diagnostic perspective. Interview methods, observations, attention to the analysand's history and adaptive or character styles are the major areas of the early and continuing process of assessment. Evaluation is directed by the analyst toward the analysand's degree of psychological mindedness and ego strengths as well as psychopathological enactments, and qualities of the analysand's patterns of relating to others and their discontentment with self and their level of comfort or discomfort with feelings. Evaluations should be consistent and coherent with the analysand's personality structure and developmental history. The candidate's knowledge of transference, countertransference, dream analysis, defensive resistance, and other technical and theoretical concepts are necessary for a competent psychoanalytic assessment.

Intervention: Competency in the specialty of psychoanalysis includes the application of skillful and flexible treatment as well as the knowledge and proficiency to provide specific psychoanalytic interventions. Specific therapeutic interventions that promote change for the analysand are the analytic transference/counter-transference relationship, interpretation to promote insight and understanding, dream analysis, thought or word association, and various techniques to improve cognitive and affective recall and re-integration, affective release, and the amelioration of self-defeating patterns. Interventions appropriate for the analysand and integral to the psychoanalyst's theoretical foundations guide the interventions that encompass the process of psychoanalysis as well as addressing the analysand's primary concerns.

Consultation: Competency in the specialty of psychoanalysis requires supervision of psychoanalysts in training and in practice and requires evidence of mastery of the above competencies. Consultation and supervision have become a significant area of practice for the specialty of psychoanalysis.

Application of Research and Theory: Knowledge of the research and theory of the specialty of psychoanalysis is necessary for the competent practice of contemporary psychoanalysis. Practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis requires an understanding of theory and research specific to issues of personality development and diversity, including ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and family cultural issues.

Foundational Competencies

Application of Ethical and Legal Standards: Competency in the practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis includes awareness and appropriate exercise of ethical and legal standards according to the APA Ethical Principles and current national, state or provincial statutes, and case law precedents applicable for the protection of the interests of analysands, families, groups, organizations, the profession, and society.

Individual and Cultural Diversity: Competency in the practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis includes awareness and sensitivity in practice with diverse individuals, groups, and communities who represent various cultural and personal background and characteristics.

Interpersonal Interactions: Competency in the practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis includes the ability to relate in practice effectively and meaningfully with individuals, groups, and/or communities.

Professional Identification: Competency in the specialty of psychoanalysis includes meaningful involvement with the profession of psychology in general and the specialty of psychoanalysis in particular. This is demonstrated by membership and participation in local, state, national, and international psychological and psychoanalytic organizations.

Education and Training Standards for the Specialty Practice of Psychoanalysis in Psychology

The Synarchy recognizes psychoanalysis as a postdoctoral practice specialty in professional psychology that is a means of understanding human emotion, motivation, and behavior based upon the discovered understanding of experiences outside of a person's awareness. Psychoanalysis allows an analysand to achieve a greater degree of inner harmony and balance and can free an analysand to live a more creative, productive, satisfying, and conscious life. As a depth perspective toward psychological experience, psychoanalysis emphasizes the nature of the relationship between the analysand and analyst, a relationship that is necessarily intense and continues over some extended time. Postdoctoral education and training in psychoanalysis consists of a personal psychoanalysis, extensive postdoctoral course work, and long-term supervision of the psychoanalyst's practice of psychoanalysis with analysands.

Training programs will ensure that candidates in training in the specialty of psychoanalysis shall have a personal psychoanalysis of sufficient frequency, depth, intensity, and duration to provide a deep psychoanalytic experience, and that their psychoanalysis with their analysands during supervision will have similar characteristics. The Synarchy recognizes that different educational and training traditions in psychoanalysis have evolved during the development of the specialty, and there has been a parallel development of standards regarding how the provision of a psychoanalysis can best be accomplished. Particular education and training standards may be more specific or broad but may not be less than, or in conflict with, the core standards delineated here.

Selection of Candidates for Psychoanalytic Training

Selection of candidates for postdoctoral education and training in the specialty of psychoanalysis involves eligibility and suitability. Education and training programs will have in place a process by which to evaluate these factors. Candidates will not be excluded based upon race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, gender, sexual preference, or physical disability. An anti-discrimination clause will be prominently displayed in official publications of each education and training program. For a psychologist to be eligible to successfully complete education and training in the specialty of psychoanalysis, the candidate will have earned a doctorate degree in psychology including education and training leading to licensure for independent practice. Educational and training programs in the specialty of psychoanalysis will verify the credentials of all candidates. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to diagnose mental disorders. S/he will be capable of making a differential diagnosis and establishing bio-psycho-social and psychodynamic formulations leading to individual treatment plans. S/he will have basic awareness of organic mental pathology and treatments, and will know when and how to use consultants in areas outside of his or her scope of practice. The candidate will have sufficient psychotherapy practice experience. S/he will have had close supervision of individual cases, preferably supervised experience with a broad spectrum of cases including patients who suffer from severe and persistent psychological disorders. Some psychotherapy supervision by a psychoanalyst is recommended. Candidates will have didactic and/or practical experiences that provide a broad

understanding of the cultural, economic, ethnic, religious, and racial backgrounds reflective of patients in the general population.

Suitability for Psychoanalytic Education and Training

Suitability refers to the personal characteristics of the applicant that are deemed necessary for education and training in the practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis. The candidate will show evidence of integrity of character, maturity of personality, evidence of the capacity and the motivation for self-reflection, psychological mindedness, clinical aptitude, and sufficient intellectual ability. Education and training programs will have in place procedures by which they will judge these attributes. Evaluation of these capacities will be carried out through interviews with members of the education and training program's faculty. Programs may require additional studies and examinations for all candidates or for those about whom evaluators have specific concerns. Candidates may proffer such studies or examinations in support of their program. An ethics violation disclaimer will be part of the admission procedure. If a candidate has been found by a recognized professional or governmental body to have committed an ethical violation the training program shall be responsible for reviewing the finding and documenting its conclusions and actions. If there is an ethics or malpractice case pending against a candidate, the training program may defer its decision on the training until the case is resolved.

Psychoanalysis of Candidates

Education and training programs will ensure that candidates in training have a personal psychoanalysis characterized by sufficient depth and intensity, occurring at a frequency and for a duration that will assure the candidate's optimal immersion in the psychoanalysis process. The psychoanalysis of a candidate is expected to be conducted in person at a frequency of two to five sessions per week, on separate days, for a minimum of forty weeks during a year and for a minimum of three hundred (300) hours. This criterion may be modified to accommodate candidates who are physically handicapped or who live and work at a compromising distance from an appropriate analyst. Such exceptions shall be reviewed by the education and training program and its decision shall be documented.

Educational Philosophy

Training programs shall demonstrate an open, critical approach to the developing literature of psychoanalytic theory, research, and practice. The general orientation of the training program shall be that of a community of scholars, respectful of the knowledge, experience, and opinions of both faculty and candidates. Each training program will encourage candidates to become knowledgeable about the major historical and contemporary perspectives in psychoanalysis. Students and faculty shall be encouraged to develop new knowledge through scholarship and research. Each training program shall have a published mission statement and each training program will engage in ongoing self-evaluation to assure that it is achieving the goals outlined in its mission statement.

Curriculum

Training programs' curriculum will emphasize the primary elements of the process of psychoanalysis which include (1) supporting the discovered understanding of experiences previously partially or completely outside a person's awareness, including those in the realms of emotion, motivation, and behavior, (2) understanding and working with necessary reactivations of life experiences in the history of an analysand, which then informs the psychoanalysis and leads to a reduction of an analysand's distress, (3) appreciating and understanding the strong influences on an individual analysand of factors such as race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, gender, age, personality style or type, disability, trauma, class status, education, religious/spiritual orientation, and other psychological, social, and cultural influences, (4) working with transference and counter-transference phenomena and with specific techniques aimed at expanding the analysand's self-understanding, (5) helping the analysand to achieve a greater degree of inner harmony and balance, and (6) helping the analysand to live a more creative, productive, satisfying, and mindful life. The didactic curriculum will contain integrated sequences covering the history of psychoanalysis, normative and pathological psychological development, psychoanalytic theories, and psychoanalytic techniques from the beginning of the specialty to the present. Conferences and continuous case seminars will be provided to broaden the candidates' clinical experience and help support the integration of diverse theoretical perspectives with the clinical practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis.

Supervised Specialty Practice

During their training, candidates will participate in the supervised psychoanalysis of at least two to three analysands. These analyses will be characterized by the same frequency and intensity as those of candidates in the training program. Whenever possible, each candidate shall have supervised experience treating analysands from diverse populations in an ongoing psychoanalysis. A training program may add requirements that candidates have experience treating analysands from specific populations, e.g., men and women, in supervised psychoanalysis. All supervision will occur with senior psychoanalysts who have been formally recognized as such by the training program. One or more cases will be supervised for at least two years and one case for at least one year. Supervision will consist of a minimum 150-200 hours. When possible, candidates receive supervision from supervisors of different theoretical orientations and of both genders. A candidate's personal psychoanalyst may not be his or her supervisor. Candidates shall be in psychoanalysis during a significant period of their supervised practice. Candidates will receive supervision for the major phases of a psychoanalysis and demonstrate the capacity to establish, understand, facilitate, and terminate a psychoanalysis.

Evaluation

The training program will be responsible for evaluating the candidate's education and training experience at each successive phase of the education and training process. A progress evaluation committee shall monitor the progression of each candidate. The training program shall have procedures in place for the ongoing evaluation of the candidate's clinical work. This evaluation process shall include the academic and supervised practice of candidates, but not their personal analysis.

Records

Records will be maintained of the candidate's educational courses and training program progress with provisions made to ensure necessary confidentiality. Records are to be maintained in conformity with applicable local, state, and federal laws.

Ethics

The ethical standards appropriate for psychologist-psychoanalysts will be prominently and continuously emphasized in the educational and training program. There shall be a course or seminar on psychoanalytic ethics for candidates. Training programs will have in place a process for receiving and acting upon any allegation of ethical violation by faculty and students.

Faculty Development

Each training program shall ensure that opportunities to attain teaching and supervising faculty status, to psychoanalyze candidates, and to supervise candidates will be based solely on merit. Training programs shall not engage in discrimination based on an individual's professional affiliation or specific demographics during faculty development or appointment processes. Training program leaders shall work cooperatively with recent graduates to assure that their graduates and junior faculty are provided training opportunities and are supported to prepare themselves for promotion to higher positions within the training program. These opportunities may include teaching within the training program and in other appropriate programs and in the provision of psychotherapy supervision for mental health professionals. Training programs shall have an established procedure in place to provide evaluation and feedback of such experiences. Seminars or study groups that provide instruction on teaching methods and further opportunities for peer review of ongoing psychoanalysis and other encouragement of scholarly and research activity are encouraged.

Each training program shall develop and document procedures and criteria used for the selection and retention of supervisory psychoanalysts and psychoanalysts of candidates. Each training program shall apply its criteria uniformly within each category to all who seek or are invited to be appointed to such positions. Each candidate's personal psychoanalyst will have demonstrated a high level of expertise in the practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis through a process of certification by an independent specialty certifying board such as The American Board of Psychoanalysis in Psychology. Training program leadership shall have significant clinical experience in the practice of the specialty of psychoanalysis. A training program may set specific criteria for evaluating clinical experience. Program leadership shall have a demonstrated commitment to psychoanalytic practice, training, education, and scholarship. Each training program shall document the criteria by which it will judge such commitment. A training program shall have the option of recognizing its own members to serve as supervisors or as psychoanalysts of its candidates or of allowing candidates to work with psychoanalysts from other training programs that meet the standards of the training program.