



Guiding Analysis by the Analyst's Associations and Self-Analysis by Saul Haimovich

In this article, my purpose is twofold: On the one hand, I present a further step in Freud's method of analyzing his own associations and suggest basing psychoanalytic work on research of the analyst's associations;¹ on the other, I attempt to solve those problems of the classic model caused by its foundations in the investigation of the analysand's associations. Among those problems are that of objectivism and, most fundamentally, the faulty implementation of the basic rule of the analytic method, free association. Different streams, generally unified under the rubric *post-classical*, have turned to subjectivist and intersubjectivist theories when endeavoring to solve these problems; I, however, argue that these revisions do not solve the model's basic issues.

Over the past few decades, highly significant changes have transformed the world of psychoanalysis. These changes have stressed the cardinal importance of the analyst's subjectivity and associations as well as their effect on patients and on the analytic process. My aim in this article is, therefore, to contribute to these developments and to guide them one step further. I am convinced that the most fruitful direction for promoting the development of the analyst's therapeutic capacities hinges on the broadening and deepening of data collection through the investigation of the analyst's associations as described below. This investigation provides the most direct and accurate means for evaluating the analyst's subjectivity, his perceptions of his analysands, the type of interactions he favors and his influence on the therapeutic process. By following this route, we can 'close the circle' and continue along the path Freud marked when studying his own dreams and parapraxes. After Freud's impressive exposition of his own associations and self-analysis in *The Interpretation of Dreams* and *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, he halted the process. Although Freud's biographers have suggested that he continued his self-analysis throughout his life, very few of his conclusions saw light after publication of his initial revolutionary works.² Nor did he elaborate his

¹ In the following, terms such as analyst, analysand, patient and so forth refer to both genders.

² See Anzieu (1986: 555-560) and Jones (1972: 360). Contrary to the opinions of these researchers and common knowledge, I am convinced that Freud made little progress in his self-analysis after 1901. My conclusion is begged for by his inability to examine his thirst for power and authority (Barratt, 1993: 12-13; Gay, 1988: 197-243; Grosskurth, 1991: 15-17, 36, 41, 53; Rudnytsky, 2011: 3-6). This desire caused significant distortions in his scientific work (Haimovich, 2010, 2017) and negatively affected the social and educational structure of the Psychoanalytic Association (Efron, 1977; Haimovich, 2001). In any case, from a scientific perspective, the point is that he stopped publishing and ceased to contribute to the analysis of his own associations.

instructions on the conduct of this type of research beyond what he wrote in the previously mentioned works. He also refrained from indicating how the normal phenomena experienced by analysts, other than dreams, slips of the tongue and mistakes, should be studied. This paucity of details should be compared with the meticulous instructions he elaborated on the conduct of analytic treatment and research on patients.

Numerous psychoanalysts have pointed out the importance of their associations and experiences as well as their effect on patients (see for example Anderson, 1992; Bollas, 1987: ch. 12-13; Ferro and Basile, 2004: 659; Hoffman, 2006: 47-50; McLaughlin, 1981; Mitchell, 1997; Ogden, 1994; Renik, 1993; Sonnenberg, 1991). Subjectivity and the therapist's influence are central issues in every 'post-modern' approach; but they have not, however, changed the basic model, as argued, for example, by Calder (1980: 5-6), Beiser (1984: 3-4), Bollas (1987: ch. 13), Eiferman (1987: 247), Mahony (1987: 16), Griffin (2004: 694-695), Bacciagaluppi (2010: 712-713), and Levin (2011). Many concepts, such as counter-transference, projective identification, subjectivity, inter-subjectivity, the analytic third, reverie, and so forth, have been used to deepen our knowledge of our associations; but, as will be shown, they also limit their study and observation.

After presenting examples of my own associations as related to my patients and my work, I will present methodological considerations and reflections on my work, and introduce an essential aspect of the method, which is the analysis of psychoanalysts' characteristic defenses, left unanalyzed until now. I first turn to examples of my associations. In these excerpts, I refer to two patients, one male and one female, as well as to myself, in situations ranging over a two-year period.

Notation of the Analyst's Associations

The basic methodological element of the work described here is found in the manner in which the analyst notates his associations. When doing so, he should avoid trying to recall what occurred during sessions with his analysands, to describe their personalities and troubles, or direct of his associations according to the fixed concepts he endorses. The crucial feature of notations is that they be transcribed as they arise, when writing them, without distinguishing between associations related from those unrelated to his work. Should the analyst wish to publish his associations in a professional journal, he is limited to focusing mainly on those associations directly related to his work and his analysands. At times, we might present associations related to one analysand; at others, those related to several at once. On some occasions, those associations can be connected to one or another aspect or problem arising in our work or in our personal life. On others, even some concept or theory may direct their emergence. These descriptions must, however, retain a free-associative character. In any case, it is crucial that we bear in mind the difference between our notations of free associations and the descriptions we prepare for the purpose of teaching or publication.

Example No. 1, 22 October 2016

Whenever I 'stole' some of my mother's love, somewhat after my brother's birth, I felt disgusting. Just as I feel when I wait for some recognition from Noa. Nothing that I give her is enough. It's not that it is not enough; it's not important. I don't know how long I will be able to continue treating her; her pain is so enormous and I don't know if I can contain it and the damage she is doing to herself in order to avoid feeling that pain, just as I couldn't contain my mother's tremendous pain during the days following my brother's birth. She, a little girl, full of the joy of life, has become a worn-out rag doll within a patriarchic family.

4 November 2016

I slept very badly last night. It was hard for me to fall asleep; I repeatedly woke up and then slept. I felt terrible pain as well as anxiety over her. She has become a wreck, brought about by physical, verbal and sexual abuse. This pain is guiding my work. It doesn't matter what I say. I constantly feel it. She finds it difficult to feel, always blurred and listless.

My goal is to make her capable of feeling her pain because, on the basis of experience, I assume it will strengthen her. I am willing to commit to this idea, beyond the methodological considerations. This idea is, in effect, inherent in the concept of repression. It appears to me that the notion guiding my work is the view that pain accumulates throughout our lives, and that we adopt every type of action possible within our associative world in order to avoid feeling it. We don't allow ourselves to feel it.

12 November 2016

Her condition is very frightening. She's very disconnected. She exhibits some type of indifference, a lack of concern about her sad state, and she allows herself to float within an unending space lacking stable objects to hold on to. She neglects herself and her meager home. Everything's falling apart. Everything is negative, hopeless; she has no good word to say to herself or about herself. What am I to do? I talk to her with loving firmness and give her homework: think in positive sentences, especially about being able to get out of this situation. No interpretation, no silence, no reverie, no waiting. I need to work energetically. Her condition stresses me and drives me to constantly search for some effective remedy. And if nothing I say to her is enough, I'll send her to a psychiatrist who will increase the very low dosage of the medication she's taking. I feel that her medication isn't affecting her at all. She has no source of support. Is the feeling that I can help her over-blown, exaggerated? I worry if I may be deceiving myself because of my ego, and that I really cannot help her. It calms me, the fact that over the years I have learned to be very cautious, that I am alert to any sign of anything that might bring on a suicide attempt.

I'm frustrated that I still don't feel that I am helping to sustain her. The lack of confidence I feel with her isn't very strong. What's the source of this feeling? Two possibilities: Either I feel that she really is capable, or something unconscious in her doesn't want me to feel that she is already committed to our relationship.

19 December 2016

Yesterday I felt wonderful with her. I felt that she is letting me help her, that she's really thirsty for my help. I now regret not telling her what I feel. I thought about it but rejected the idea because 'it is not good to share our feelings with the patient', especially if they're positive toward him. I'm frustrated today because I didn't tell her that I'm glad that she's allowing me to help her and that she's allowing herself to be helped by me. This was after she told me that she had found it difficult to miss a session (I was on vacation).

The association arising in my mind is of my mother allowing me to help her get out of her depression. Memories of my mother, when she was young. I was very important to her, but it didn't help her. Bitterness and anger had overwhelmed her. And I suffered for her. In contrast, with Noa, it took only a few months to create a warm relationship between us, which she fully takes advantage of. She does so to reach concrete results, but also in order to understand the sensations and emotions she had previously been afraid to confront.

Example 2: Associations related to two patients.

22 December 2016

Yesterday. I now find it difficult to recall the experience I had yesterday during the session with Yair. I'm in the middle of a very busy period, working very hard on the article. I felt that I had understood something about him and that this understanding is helping me to understand my feelings towards Noa. She has endless internal happiness, she has something that is very difficult for me to grasp, that crosses my perceptual boundaries. I'm very excited about the changes in Yair, which became stronger from the moment I began joking about the persistence of his feelings of failure. Until I stopped joking and told him: You are stuck because you can't think about the sentence 'I am a failure'. You can say it, but you can't focus on it and keep it in your mind for any length of time. You escape through all sorts of tricks that you play on yourself. He laughed at me and said that I sounded like a stupid old man who enjoys his own idiotic jokes. I felt that this was the first time in our long history together that something I said was engraved in his mind.

I had made these remarks 2-3 sessions ago. Yesterday he spoke about his achievements and his progress in his job. I felt something while he was talking that connected me to Noa. I think that it's the difference. It's the long time that it takes me to work on his passivity and the very short time (3-4 months) that it took Noa to gather herself together, to organize herself and begin moving forward. I sense very deep feelings of cooperation. She is gradually coming to understand that I appreciate her, that I am impressed by her, by her sensitivity and intelligence. In the past, she felt that people didn't recognize her abilities; without this recognition, she felt that those abilities did not exist.

I, in contrast, have no problem emphasizing them, feeding her narcissism. I feel as if I'm being construed in her internal world as some kind of strong and stable supportive pillar that she can take advantage of and use as she wants, without being afraid of any sexual intentions on my part. Someone, a client, had asked her how she was, how she was doing, and she felt that this was a sexual question, that he had sexual intentions, that he had crossed a limit. Something had happened with me, at

the beginning; it was so difficult for me to see her desperate condition that I offered to extend our session by a few minutes because I had the time; she asked me if I was trying to seduce her. In our latest session, after she had related her sexual fears of men, she suddenly became quiet. She had nothing more to say and I, after having lost interest in her sexual episodes a few minutes earlier, thought about her professional and intellectual progress. I asked if I could ask her something else, unrelated to what she had talked about. The thought had occurred to me that it would be good for her if I showed her that I wasn't interested in talking about her sexuality, that her intellectual development was more important to me. There will be time to talk about her sexuality once this area was less loaded. I told her that it seemed to me that she was sufficiently ready to think about returning to her studies. Without stopping, I went on to ask if she had thought about it, too. She drinks much less, but still smokes a lot (grass).

Example No. 3

17 November 2015

Yesterday I wrote well about my work, on my general approach to work. Today I'm stalled. I'm incapable of creating continuously. I don't live in a world of theories but of feelings and sensations. Why don't theories interest me? My father spoke angrily about all those people who talk a lot, meaning politicians. His statement is etched in my mind; perhaps it's the reason why I focus on methodology and not theory, that is, on the issue of how to work better and more precisely.

When I work, when I find myself before a patient or when I think about him, I see structures. I don't understand why, but as I write this I feel proud of myself. I'm proud that I see them. In primitive, unscientific terms, I would say that I see 'psychic' structures.³ In more precise language, I would say that I see structures comprised of the connections between words, sentences and pictures that I sense and feel. In general.

In terms of less-abstract generalization, I would say that I seek connections between his (Yair's) passivity, which is essentially a complex behavior, and his mother, a figure who awakens unpleasant feelings in me, and between the panic attack he experienced as a child because he thought he was seriously ill. What is the source of this unpleasant sensation I feel regarding his mother? If I didn't want to explain myself to my readers, I wouldn't pause on this sensory explanation. I prefer dealing with identification of the correct emotion rather than with explanation. The need to explain arises at this moment because I am writing for readers. Perhaps I feel what Yair is unable to feel. It's unclear to me why but I think-feel that his mother unconsciously used her son to fulfill her emotional needs when she was acutely frustrated by her relationship with her husband. This description is somewhat difficult for me; it seems to me that something similar happened to my mother with respect to me and my father. I think that what makes this unpleasant for me is the mother's unconscious exploitation of her son.

³ For the meaning of the quotation marks around the word 'psychic' see: Haimovich, 2017, Chap. 5; see also Derrida, 1967: 247.

His [Yair's] passivity, for me, is the greatest problem in his life; it is what's hardest to crack open, to decipher in his analysis. I think I reached a breakthrough three weeks ago. I always 'knew' that this passivity was an expression of accumulated and blocked depression. Despite all his progress – in only a few years he was able to overcome the difficult depression for which he had sought therapy, as well as find employment and love – I always felt a sort of dissatisfaction with his achievements in treatment.

10 April 2016

It upsets me that I don't know where to take my self-analysis. I have started along a very difficult path. Perhaps I will simply have to abandon it.

Why does his name arise recently, every time that I think of writing about my analysands? Because he feels frustrated, abandoned, contemptuous of everything, of all life. He is also contemptuous of treatment. Is this an expression of anger? He is a very delicate person, well-mannered; he wouldn't openly attack or challenge me. But he silently attacks himself. He feels a failure. I don't want the same thing to happen to him that happens to many people reaching their 50s or 60s, even their 40s, who feel that they have wasted their own lives. I'm not expressing myself accurately. How can I get him out of his passivity? At this joint I have to avoid the theoretical association that his passivity flows from homosexual tendencies. This association has great power over me because Freud said so. This analysand comes up all the time recently, together with a sense of helplessness. A similar feeling about my self-analysis, which I can't further, just like I'm unable to further him.

What guides me in the analysis is difficult to explain. I want the best for my analysands, but that's obvious. That's what every analyst wants. I have a good feeling when I transcribe my feelings, my associations, even though I haven't solved the problem of what guides the analysis. Perhaps I am approaching a solution. It seems to me that at this stage I am missing an example of a treatment that ended well. In truth, I can cite a stage in therapy as an example. I can thus show what is guiding me and how I solve the problem.

9 May 2016

His greatest fear is that he will feel unpleasant emotions, that he will feel his depression in full. His passivity is a substitute, a compromise between life and depression. There are no good feelings, no joy, but also no pain. Irony is the maximum expression of joy for him, with a bitter smile appearing on the left side of his mouth. Another compromise between joy and sadness. Yesterday I gave him explicit instructions to focus on his unpleasant feelings, on sadness, pain, depression. That he should try to remain in touch with these feelings as much as possible, even if only for a few seconds. The longer he can extend his time with these feelings, the better it will be for him. The time spent with pain is empowering. People fear and thus flee pain. People fear that if they give themselves the opportunity to stay with their pain, their fears, they will never pass. But it is exactly the opposite. What makes depression chronic is the battle with unpleasant feelings that have become stuck, making our knowledge about them and their catharsis impossible.

I recall another patient who, when I told him to stay with his depression, shook and left treatment with the encouragement of his highly anxious mother, who feared I would harm him. I could understand them because I was still unable to work skillfully with his depression. The public's standard approach is that the correct way to rid oneself of depression is to fight it; there are even therapeutic approaches of this sort. To go out, to do something else, not to think about it, to go to a party. Against the escape from pain I propose accepting and staying with one's pain. The strong person is the one who can stand up to the pain of loneliness, helplessness, traumatic childhood memories and the strongest physical-sensory pains (I'm not referring to purely organic pain).

9 November 2016

I'm happy, but maybe my happiness is premature. Yesterday during our session, the association 'burst of energy' came to mind. I felt that something new was starting to happen. He takes on many projects. He fears that he won't succeed. But these words arose after he told me something about his feelings that I can't recall just now. He spoke about his feelings but he also felt them. What was it? During a family get together he felt that everyone was faking, that they behaved as if nothing sad occurs in the family. He felt that he doesn't love his family. I finally felt that my remedy – staying with painful feelings – was starting to bear fruit.

23 December 2016

'You're a failure, Yair', I said, in an ironic tone. He understood that I said so with affection. I told him that besides focusing on painful, difficult feelings, it's important that he think directly about the sentence 'I am a failure'. I explained why I'm asking this of him. I explained that I identify this sentence as structural, the original sentence on which his personality and internal experiences are based. His entire life is built on this sentence, from which he is constantly fleeing. He finds it difficult to even think about it. And the price he has to pay – be it depression, stagnation in his life, interminable sadness, a sense of dullness – doesn't seem to matter to him. He'll do everything necessary to avoid thinking about it.

Some Methodological Considerations and Reflections on My Associations

As thoughts and reflections on my work and patients appear together with feelings and sensations in my associations, I sometimes do not feel any need to further reflect (associate) on them. My learning about myself and my work is part of my associative processes (for my enlarged concept of 'association', see below). At other times, I read my first associations, and new associations and insights emerge, which I again notate. I consider this to be a new associative event, different from the usual kind of psychoanalytic learning in which experiences are conceptualized. As I avoid to guide theoretically my associations, I also avoid elaborating them according to fixed concepts because this procedure retrospectively determines their emergence. Therefore, I use quotidian language when notating them, which in my case also includes many remainders and fragments of theories. Due to the fact that almost any sentence of my previous examples may initiate new associative events (including

theories, concepts, and reflections), in the following I limit myself to elaborating only on a few selected associations so as to show how I 'think' (associate) on them.

1) "Whenever I 'stole' some of my mother's love, somewhat after my brother's birth...just as I couldn't contain my mother's tremendous pain during the days following my brother's birth. She, a little girl, full of the joy of life, had become a worn-out rag doll within a patriarchic family."

My mother, she is always present in my work. To help others, man or woman, is trying to help her. To feel their pain is to feel her-my pain. Perhaps that is the origin of my will to help others. Do I need to learn something else? Something theoretical? Have I to further explain my associations? Are these associations concepts or preconceptions? Are they α or β elements? Now I begin to speak with an imaginary reader who asks me: What are you learning about yourself out of all these associations? Here a new chain of associations related to my criticism begins to appear. I will not follow it. I will only answer him with a short fragment of that associative chain: Is this paper, my work, the method itself, a monument to my mother? It seems that working on the original associative event led me, surprisingly, to a deeper acknowledgement of the overall presence of my mother in my work.

2) Other than my stated goal of striving to enable Noa to reduce her need to attack herself and be more in touch with her horrible pain, I learn that there is another association, to which I had not paid much attention when writing it, that was guiding my work with her. On the session with myself of the 22 December 2016, I wrote: "I feel as if I'm being construed in her internal world as some kind of strong and stable supportive pillar that she can take advantage of and use as she wants, without being afraid of any sexual intentions on my part." Reflected here was what I considered to be an important discovery toward understanding how I cope with self-destructive, confused, almost suicidal analysands. I became aware that my work strived to be a "strong and stable supportive pillar", with something extra, something hard, that does not allow fear to invade me. This association opens the way toward many new chains of associations (my childhood tree, playing with my brother under that tree, the prolonged drought and its disastrous consequences for our crops when I was 8 years old, and other, sexual associations, that I will not present here). That is, I began a new session with myself, letting new associations (including theories, concepts, feelings, intuitions, etc.) emerge, what in my case occupies the place of theorizing.

3) At different moments in Yair's treatment I felt that we were reaching an understanding and resolution of his passivity, what I considered to be his main problem. He had made a lot of progress in his path towards activity but time and again I had deceived myself into thinking that the problem was finally solved. After each deception I focused again on his passivity, thereby opening new associative worlds.

Reading the previous example led me to a new understanding. Suddenly an entirely new association came to mind, not easy to describe, beginning with a question: What if I am looking into the wrong place, in the wrong direction? What if my focusing on his past relations is fooling me? Until now, following accepted

theory, I had looked for the sources of his passivity in his relations with father and mother-- depression, submission, secret rebellion, anger--and along the active-passive, masculine-feminine poles. When he was 9 or 10 years old, he selected his profession, to be a musician. Now he does not know how to do anything else. I am beginning to think, what if his passivity is entrenched in the fact that today he cannot change his profession? He is not able even to think about that possibility. He does not feel that he had chosen it, that he was led to it by his early successes. Could his physical difficulties when trying to play his instrument, the hardening of his muscles, be expressions not of a conflict with his mother but his persistent anger with himself, a cause of his arrogance? And now he is trapped. This association brings me again to the past: Why he was blinded by praise? Why did he surrender to it? I still do not have enough material to answer this question. Only an assumption: Again, his deep feeling of worthlessness. I feel that to offer him this interpretation would prematurely end his searching. Why hadn't I thought before of the possibility of his changing profession? Now I understand that my turn to theoretical interpretations reflected my difficulty with fully feeling his passivity and then dealing with it, as if both were bogged down in some murky marsh. Here ends this associative event, part of my permanent analysis of myself and my work.

Although it may already be clear, I want to emphasize that to understand this paper we must bear in mind that it is intended primarily to teach a method for the study of our own associations. While I believe this method has important implications for our work with analysands, I indeed do not intend to give instructions to analysts on how to work but mainly on how to research ourselves. As already stated, the most important aspect of this method is the notation of associations that relies on the analyst's commitment to describing his sensations, emotions and thoughts as experienced *at the time of writing* as well as to identify his defenses. For various reasons, this type of notation has many important benefits in comparison with the common notation of what occurs during the therapeutic session. The notation I propose takes place during the experience itself and is not meant, as said, to recreate the therapeutic session; it nevertheless allows for more precise comprehension of the conscious as well as unconscious thoughts, emotions and sensations at the foundations of what is said and the interactions taking place during the sessions. In contrast to the 'objectivistic' description of analysands, sessions, and supposed interactions, all these events will be reflected in our own associations. Under these circumstances, whatever is said is raised in combination with what was left unsaid, what had remained unconscious during the session. This type of notation thus reveals how the analyst works in practice and with himself, in a way free of the conceptual and theoretical confines.

When writing my associations, my purpose is to expose a picture, to "see", as accurately as I am able, what I feel and think at the moment of writing. My aim is not to demonstrate theories or concepts. This may be very frustrating for analysts accustomed to understanding and learning about themselves and their analysands through explaining or interpreting according to concepts, theories and schools; or to present their associations and work as illustrations of a theory or a concept.

Which theory, which concept should I use to conceptualize my work and my associations? Which is the best among all the possible concepts and theories? Or would it be preferable to use a theoretical compound, conceptualizing some events and interventions with one theory, and others with another, and so on; or the same event and intervention with many theories in parallel? I consider following any of these routes would be defensive on my part. The concepts, theories, explanations and interpretations that appear in my examples are not intended to form part of a theoretical construct; they are part of my associations, testimonies of what I have learnt throughout my life. The theories I use are, at most, sources for creative ideas to support the analysand's development; they are not devices to direct the therapy or the examination of associations.⁴

Avoiding efforts to understand and elaborate experiences by means of theories and concepts at the moment of writing can deeply improve the ability of analysts to be fully connected with themselves, what consequently influences their capacity to be with analysands at the moment of speaking. Analysts will become able to perceive more accurately what is going on in the session and in the analysand, decide what is the appropriate intervention and prepare the exact automatic reactions desperately needed when analysing patients in danger (e.g., suicidal). Patients will be benefited by internalizing their analysts' deep capacity to be with their associations and imitate the uncritical research the analyst is conducting.

Before revealing the second aspect of this method, I present some additional considerations. First, I would stress that this method demands that we understand the concept 'association' in its broadest terms, as relating to every mental act, spoken word, or written phenomenon, to every product of what we call primary or secondary processes.⁵ There is no need to differentiate between those elements as if some were associations and others reflections, the products of intense effort, because the concept 'unconscious' applies to any kind of process, including those that we consider the most developed products of reflective thinking.

Second, from the previous examples we can clearly discern that two concepts, that of the repression of painful and unpleasant feelings and that of the unconscious, repeat themselves in my associations. Although their use contradicts my recommendation to avoid directing work and notation by fixed concepts, that contradiction is easily resolved by recognizing that my recommendation does not apply to these two fundamental concepts, which I view as the only two required by research according to the Freudian method. Else, I suggest using the term

⁴ See: Young 1986: 28-29.

⁵ I am referring here to how Freud used the term in his *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (1895). Glover (1937: 300) maintains that not all associations are free. He states that the omission of conscious ideas, for example, is not an act of free association. In contrast, I argue that repression as well as intellectual processes are associations whose unconscious meanings are to be investigated. As I show in a paper in preparation, a broad sense of the concept association is also necessary to understand Wittgenstein's 'therapeutic method' and Derrida's deconstruction as partial applications of Freud's method to the study of philosophical, mathematical, physical and other texts.

“unconscious” only in its descriptive sense (referring to what results from people’s need to repress painful feelings and thoughts), what allows us to avoid referring to the common substantialist-topographic approach.

Third, among the most important and problematic features impeding the analyst's notation of his associations is narcissism. In effect, every instance of self-revelation threatens the author’s narcissism. Despite the view of narcissism as a completely normal phenomenon, the psychoanalytical literature deals only with what is considered pathological narcissism. Few analysts have offered instances of their own personal narcissism. One such example is given by Judith Chused (2012). I only wish to mention that in her article, Chused complains that no research has been undertaken on the analyst’s narcissism.

The notation of associations as described here directly deals with the analyst’s narcissism to one or another degree. This is not to say that the analyst will not be defensive but that his defensiveness will be personal, free from the need for external legitimation, for instance, by theory. When presenting my own associations, my narcissism is expressed, for example, in positive and supportive sentences that I repeatedly tell myself, my pride in how I perceive structures, or by noting what problems have been solved or the analysand’s progress. When I conceal my narcissism, I indicate doing so as to the limits of my awareness of this act.

From the beginning and simultaneously with notating and studying my associations, I reached the conclusion that the therapist’s narcissism does not only lie hidden in his theories, as Freud stated (see below), it is also concealed elsewhere – in the beliefs and technical, educational and social conventions that he adopts – whether general or professional. The analysis of these defenses, as I describe below, is the second essential element of my proposal.

Analysis of Analysts' Collective Defenses

I believe that my previous exposition of my associations, in which I take special care to free their emergence from any theoretical guidance, would not have been possible if it were not accompanied by an analysis of analysts' professional defences. These defences, expressed in the various dimensions of psychoanalysis as it has developed until this very day, resulted from their fixation and the belief that they are essential to psychoanalysis. They impede, in my consideration, a thorough observation of our associations; their study *must become a crucial preliminary stage in the psychoanalyst's formation*. Because I am referring to features common to the analytic community in general, I term them *collective defensive associations*. Freeing himself of these collective defenses, which may be cloaked in his beliefs on the appropriate way to practice psychoanalysis and the concepts he employs when referring to his work and his analysands, will allow the analyst a deeper and amplified observation of his feelings and thoughts. By turning to all the analyst’s associations, we will be able to steer the analytic process according to those associations in place of the theoretical concepts commonly used today.

The views that an analyst internalizes are the very same that obstruct investigation of his associative world. Over the years, in order to cope with this

problem, I have adopted the practice of investigating not only my own personal associations (e.g., spontaneous thoughts [*Einfälle*], dreams, mistakes, conflicts, fantasies) and my various social relationships, but also the theories and techniques I learned during my studies and my early work, as well as their effect on me (Haimovich, 2002, 2003, 2010, 2017). I have since realized that the psychoanalytic research and treatment methods developed by Freud and his students are defensive to a considerable degree. In this article I exemplify the investigation of collective defensive associations, by analyzing three of their features: first, common notation; second, the conduct of analysis according to theories and concepts; and third, the defensive character of the concept transference.

Analysis of Other Kinds of Notations

This analysis will help to clarify my proposed notation technique and contribute to a more-precise presentation of what happens within the self-analytic process. I begin by pointing out that my analysis of common notation is partially based on Wilfred Bion's critique of the notation methods widely employed. When presenting his own method, which he calls 'a stylized description of emotional experiences' (1962b: ix), Bion states that his notes are much less falsified than those produced by other methods. In his opinion, the common methods of exposition allow the entry of falsities into the encounter per se, in a manner similar to the picture obtained when a photographed object is 'muddied', blurred by the photographer and his camera. However, from my perspective, Bion's 'stylized description' also 'muddies' the events taking place in psychoanalytic encounters as well as the presentation of the analyst's free associations. This occurs because Bion does not transform his own associations into the subject of his research, nor does he take the sole begged-for methodological step to enable their analysis, meaning the scientific (not autobiographic) notation of the analyst's (i.e., the researcher's) associations.⁶ In his polished notes, Bion does not present the emotional experiences he underwent. These notations, he states, are abstractions of his emotional experiences and not expositions of the experiences themselves. Bion considers the experiences themselves as realizations of those same abstractions (i.e., theories, 1962a: 306).

Despite the fact that Bion repeatedly states that experiences are more important than theories, he strikingly gives priority in his writings to theory over empirics. This preference is expressed, among other things, in the grid, his reduced, constricted system of symbols and signs, according to which we are to perceive, note and catalogue our emotional experiences, but also in his proposal to understand them according to 'selected facts' (1963: 14, 43, 83).⁷ Notation of phenomena according to the system of signs that Bion suggests translating reality and its perception according to an a priori theoretical framework rooted in metapsychology and philosophy

⁶ We should differentiate between the autobiographic presentation of memories, favored by Bion, and the scientific analysis of the analyst's free associations for the purpose of accuracy.

⁷ By "selected fact", a term Bion borrowed from Poincaré, he means "that by which coherence and meaning is given to facts already known but whose relatedness has not hitherto been seen." (1963: 19).

(Bléandonu, 2000: ch. 20). Instead of noting associations, the analyst describes what happened by means of mathematical signs. To paraphrase Bion, we can say that his sophisticated notation is an ‘instrument’ for ‘muddying’ what takes place during analysis. By doing so, Bion reintroduces philosophy, from which Freud attempted to distance himself in his early writings,⁸ into the psychoanalytic encounter.

As stated, in place of Bion’s stylized system, I propose direct notation of the analyst’s associations. In addition to the benefits stated above, this method enables direct confrontation with the main problem afflicting psychoanalytical description: the analyst’s self-exposure. This problem, I believe, which Freud left open, prevents the progress of psychoanalytical research. Instead of the common escape into theoretical debate, I suggest directly confronting this issue, a path that will open the door to attempts to locate diverse solutions appropriate to the degree of the analyst’s shyness and the level of threat arising from the specific association.

I, myself, delayed the publication of my work as conducted with this method for some time in fear of exposing personal details. I was not particularly troubled about exposing my analysands because my approach is based on my associations, not theirs. This approach does not require repeating details from their life stories; it does emphasize the most accurate as possible description of my own associations and experiences. By using this method, we can delete most of the details regarding our partners in this conversation without seriously damaging the information provided, a condition necessary for scientific description. A most-important element here is how the analysand is reflected in the analyst’s associations.

And yet, notation of this type allows for more-meticulous examination and use of our perceptions of the ‘other’ because it does not demand substituting what we think and feel about other people with intellectualized theoretical formulae (as is the case, for example, with the concept of the analytic third, which I analyze later). In fact, this quality of the notation makes it even more revealing. Although fear of exposure is a real problem, Freudian analysis cannot continue to avoid research of the analyst’s associations.

Analysis of Psychoanalytic Theoretical Work

During my research endeavors, I discovered that the way in which psychoanalytic theoretical work is conducted impairs research of the analyst’s unconscious and his free associations. This occurs because our theoretical knowledge is not considered part of the sum of the analyst’s human experiences; hence, that knowledge is transformed into an impervious, apparently objective defense, impeding the analyst’s ability to investigate himself. Instead, as I propose here, the very notion of the *unconscious* allows and even requires us to explore the theories themselves as inherent to human phenomena.

⁸ With respect to psychology and philosophy, a detailed description of the development and revolutionary meaning of Freud’s early research approach appears in my book (Haimovich, 2017). There, I also describe Freud’s retreat from his revolutionary scientific proposals in his later speculative meta-psychological writings, on which Bion based his own work.

Freud fully understood the defensive character of theories in the case of his opponents, such as Adler and Jung, and indicated those places in their theories that contradicted the cornerstones of psychoanalysis (1914a: 50ff; Roazen, 1976: 202-211; Weber, 1982: 8-16). He also understood the defensive character of intellectual and social phenomena such as philosophy and religion (Freud, 1900-1901: 490; 1913: 77, 94-95). Samuel Weber has noted that Freud viewed the tendency for speculation and the construction of theoretical systems as an attempt to perceive the entire world as one unit from a single standpoint, as expressions of animism and narcissism (1982: 13-14). And yet, Freud did not apply those same arguments to his own theories. He saw himself as free of the tendency toward narcissistic theory construction (1982: 8-16). Furthermore, Weber wrote that Lacan and Derrida had raised questions regarding the status of the Freudian discourse when they applied psychoanalytic concepts to that discourse, thus performing a 'psychoanalysis of psychoanalysis' (1982: xvi). And yet, the approach taken by Derrida, and especially Lacan, is not very different from that of Freud because they, too, did not analyze their own theories, nor did they apply the analytical method to their own thinking. That is, the latter theorists as well did not overcome the same impasse that Freud had reached when failing to solve the conundrums arising when he questioned while simultaneously adhering to the traditional scientific discourse.

This feature of psychoanalytical work flows from Freud's scientific paradigm, the research approach belonging to the natural sciences that Freud had learned in the laboratories directed by Karl Claus, Ernest Brücke and Theodor Meynert (Gay, 1988; Haimovich, 2017). The central feature of this research model is located in the distinction between the empirical and the theoretical, between phenomena, their explanations and interpretations (on the deep identity between explanation and interpretation and between positivism and hermeneutics see: Davar and Bhat, 1995; Haimovich, 2017, Introduction). This model is appropriate for research on external and inanimate subjects and for those natural sciences that do not embrace human phenomena (Bion, 1962b: 47-48).

We can be certain that this method is unsuitable to cases of self-analysis when the phenomenon and the person investigating it are identical. In this model, hypotheses direct the research of empirical phenomena; hence, Freud did not view theories as subjects for analytical study. Here, the traditional scientific model concurred with his defensive needs. Throughout his life he developed explanatory and interpretive theories, viewed as the goals of scientific research. This he did despite his declarations regarding the primary place of meticulous observation of empirical phenomena versus the secondary place of theory in research (1914a: 57-58; 1914b: 77; 1915: 117; Weber, 1982: 17-21). At a later stage of his theorizing, the tendency to focus on theory construction and philosophical speculation intensified (Barratt, 1993: xiii). In earlier phases of his work Freud, as I show in my book (Haimovich, 2017), succeeded in overcoming numerous scientific issues in the human sciences, the main one being the body-mind dichotomy, although from only practical, operational and methodological perspectives. He was, however, generally unable to offer any theories appropriate to his research methodology and original approach regarding the empirical phenomena that he studied (Derrida, 1967: 247-248; Haimovich, 2010, 2017).

Nevertheless, to my understanding, Freud's methodology is of greater importance than the fact that he did not elaborate a fitting theory.⁹ His partial success and the lack of any associated theory have created huge problems due to his inability to suitably explain his findings and innovations. As a result, he was unable, despite his numerous attempts, to halt the control exerted by the various academic, psychiatric, philosophical, neurological and psychological streams over his work, expressed in the changes they introduced, suited to their own interests. Freud in fact fiercely criticized the erroneous understandings of his ideas (e.g., his objection to becoming part of psychiatry, or the faulty philosophical interpretation of his work; see Freud, 1925: 217; Jones, 1957: 309-23; Reik, 1948: 24-29). His critiques are rooted, I propose, in his intuitive understanding that his discoveries do not comply with the structure and nature of academic knowledge. I am convinced that Freud's reluctance to further develop his intuitions stemmed from his anxiety that continuing in that direction would damage the spread of his movement.

Analysis of the Concept 'Transference'

In addition to the analysis of how psychoanalysts think and employ theories, the analysis of specific concepts also has an important place. These concepts have been considered almost self-evident throughout the history of psychoanalysis. One such example is the basic view that the investigation of the analysand's transference rests at the heart of his personal analysis. Implicit in this view is the objectivistic assumption that the analysand will recall the contents of his childhood in a similar way with every analyst, implying that the sole factor determining the transference is what actually occurred. This approach ignores several salient facts: (a) the analysand responds differently to every analyst given that the analytic process differs with every analyst; (b) not every analyst succeeds (or fails) with every analysand; (c) the same analysand will respond differently to different types of analysts – Freudian, Kleinian, relational, Jungian, Adlerian, and so forth. His responses will vary even more with therapists belonging to alternative streams – such as Buddhist, physical psychotherapy and so on; the particular importance that each therapist attributes to the transference will also influence the analysand's responses.

In view of these facts, intersubjective and relational psychoanalysts have developed an approach in which psychoanalysis encompasses a process shared by the analyst and the patient, an act of mutual creativity. I view this approach as progressing in the right direction, expressed in the plethora of personal associations that these analysts present in their clinical expositions. But the analysis of their associations is limited. As a thorough criticism of intersubjectivism is beyond the aims of this paper, I will only discuss briefly an outstanding example of this trend, Ogden's paper on the "analytic third". There, he presents an account of many associations he had during sessions with patients. I argue that his view of those associations as "contextualized by the intersubjective experience created by analyst and analysand", the "analytic third" (1994: 8), limits his access to his own associative world because he is directing their observation by this concept.

⁹ "Certainly, Freudian discourse--in its syntax, or, if you will, its labor--is not to be confused with these necessarily metaphysical and traditional concepts" (Derrida, 1967: 248).

We can therefore ask: What does contextualization and intersubjectivity add to his associations? Is it not possible to consider that his avowed detachment from his patient (his attention falling on an envelope on his desk or his worry about his car) is related only to himself and not a result of the interaction? But limiting observation by an omnipresent and fixed concept is not his most serious problem. Ogden does not realize the momentous difference between the moment of writing his associations and the moment of the session. As this attitude is ingrained in accepted psychoanalytic practice, and because psychoanalysts are not prone to examining their assumptions (other than to develop them or make some adaptive changes when anomalies are detected), it seems that there is no need to assign any importance to the moment of writing. When writing down the associations he had during the session, Ogden thwarts the emergence of many associations because he focuses on remembering, thinking and conceptualizing what allegedly happened during the session. He transforms thinking, one among many other kinds of associative processes, into the entirety of those processes. At the moment of writing (remembering) what happened in the session, he is not in the "here and now" of his writing, freely associating in every possible direction; he is (normally) dissociated from himself. It is possible to ask if an analyst trained to dissociate from himself will not repeat this habit in the "here and now" of the session?

Though Ogden differentiates the intersubjective approach from the concept of countertransference (1994: note 3), the view that the analyst's associations are the product of interaction with the patient's attributes continues to feed the classic model's problem by ignoring the decisive influence of the analyst and his views on the patient and the therapeutic process. These effects can be analyzed only when the analyst's associations (within and outside the therapy) become the focus of analytic research. In addition, the notion *patient's transference* remains untouched within Ogden's and, in general, relational and intersubjective writings, alongside their new concepts.

Contrary to Freudian and post-classical approaches, the approach based on the analyst's associations views the analysand's transference to be secondary; to a considerable degree, that transference is perceived as the product of the analyst's transference onto the analysand. The understanding that the analyst's transference (expressed primarily in the approaches learned, adopted and applied in his work) conditions all aspects of the analytic process stresses the fundamental importance of examining the analyst's associations, especially those of an intellectual and institutional nature. Hence, within this framework, the analysand is the 'personal analysand' of his specific analyst.¹⁰ Another analyst will grasp and experience the same analysand in a different way. During the analysis, the diversity and uniqueness of every human being and his experiences is decisive; the approach I am suggesting offers the best means for revealing and responding to this diversity.

The analysis of collective defenses I propose here raises new core problems, which I will delineate shortly.

¹⁰ This is not my original insight. The innovation that I am attempting to describe here is found in the transformation of this insight into a general methodological principle.

Analysis versus Self-Analysis

Could it be possible to introduce the analysis of these defenses in the personal analysis of candidates and analysts in general at the present stage of psychoanalysis? It seems to me that this would be very difficult due to their considerable strength. The only way I imagine for accomplishing this objective is by going through a stage in which some analysts or readers with a deep understanding of Freud's revolutionary writings analyze their own defensive assumptions.

Should an analyst who has been occupied for many years in personal and didactic analysis, who was schooled according to the principles upheld by psychoanalytic institutions, wish to begin investigating his own associations, he will face a complicated problem. We can describe this problem by means of the following question: Will this analyst, after having internalized his teachers' interpretations, behaviors and approaches, theoretical perspectives and beliefs as well as the practices accepted in his institute, and after identifying with all these factors over the years, be able to investigate himself, to be open to his own associations? Or, will he be satisfied with gaining understandings shared with his colleagues and compatible with their ideas? Will the gratification he feels from agreement with his colleagues and the similarity of his intuitions with the accepted techno-theoretical schema, what Bollas (1987: 238) calls the 'psychoanalytically kosher', not induce him to believe that his own self-analysis has come to an end?

Expressions of this pervasive problem can be found in the few descriptions of self-analysis appearing in the psychoanalytic literature since its beginnings (Pickworth Farrow, 1942; Horney, 1942; Kramer, 1959; Engel, 1975; Calder, 1980; Gardner, 1983, 1993; Beiser, 1984; Eiferman, 1987; Sonnenberg, 1991, 1993, 1995; Anderson, 1992; Orgell and Gombert, 1994; Griffin, 2004; Bornstein, 2011). That is, the independent investigation of the analyst's associations ceases as soon as it confronts the generally accepted theoretical beliefs and technical rules.

The practice of investigating my (our) personal and collective associations in order to avoid filtering the associations, experiences and defenses that usually hide behind diverse elements of the profession raises important questions about the neglected status of self-analysis in psychoanalytic literature.

On different occasions, Freud praised self-analysis and those who adopted this method; he even encouraged his closest students to apply it (Freud, 1911: 145; 1914a: 20; 1915-1916: 114; 1922: 562; 1926: 280). Yet, with the growth of the psychoanalytic movement, his tendency to impede the self-research of our own associations only intensified; instead, he urged relying solely on the assistance of another analyst. This approach, I argue, grew out of his defensiveness in his confrontation with the difficulties of performing self-research; he also defensively exercised his authority for political purposes, that of maintaining control over his movement, a goal that grew in importance as the movement expanded. With the movement's institutionalization, self-analysis and research into the analyst's associations began to lose their significance.

But more; self-analysis began to be increasingly viewed as threatening the movement's development and the position of its leaders. Heinz Schott (1985), the leading researcher of Freud's methodology for self-analysis, found that this method played no role in psychoanalysis nor exerted any significant influence over its foundations. The subject was, in fact, tabooed by psychoanalysts. Schott further maintains that the method's criticism emerged from the fact that psychoanalysts felt threatened by the method. Schott likewise found a very close connection between the movement's institutionalization and the critique of self-analysis, the latter becoming bitter at times, as in the case of Jung and Abraham (Schott, 1985: 43-60, 111-12; 171-197).¹¹

Analysis conducted by another, as distinguished from self-analysis, is very important but this should not cause us to ignore the fact that we are talking about two different types of research and self-awareness (Reik, 1948: 28-29). Although I concur with the belief that self-analysis is more difficult to perform than is analysis conducted by another and that it requires us to seek assistance to arrive at deep understanding of ourselves, I remain unconvinced about outright rejection of the self-observation of internal processes without the mediation of another person, the analyst.¹² Psychoanalysts certainly understood the great importance of self-analysis; there is also widespread agreement about personal analysis instilling in the analysand the ability to observe and understand himself, his associations and his experiences (Freud, 1937: 248-49; Kramer, 1959; Feldman, 1960; Meltzer, 1967: xiii, 39; Ticho, 1967; Baciagalluppi, 2010; Busch, 2010). Although the literature usually depicts these two methods as contradictory, with overt and subtle suggestions of self-analysis viewed as threatening the position of ordinary analysis, I would suggest that analysts have perceived analysis by another and self-analysis incorrectly. As to myself, I do not view them as contradictory but as different and complementary. Moreover, as Reik emphasized, a much deeper experience, achieved only through self-analysis, is required for us to work as psychoanalysts (1948: 28-29).

Guiding Research and Analytic Therapy

If our concepts, theories and techniques are among the phenomena we mean to investigate, the question becomes: What guides the analysis of the analyst's associations, like that of others? Psychoanalysts belonging to all streams apply the same traditional scientific model: there are theories and there are empirics. Therapies and the empirical research that confirm or refute those theories are themselves guided by theories and concepts.

¹¹ On the influence of the movement's development over Freud's thinking, see: Marinelli and Mayer: 2003.

¹² Contrary to the common assumption that self-analysis is impossible, various examples can be found of patients who were forced to analyze themselves in order to solve serious problems. See Ferenczi, 1932: 137, 204-206; Pickworth Farrow, 1942; Gay, 1988: 579; Rachman, 1993: 93-94; Bornstein, 2011.

In contrast to the approach by which analyses are conducted according to theories, what I propose is an a-theoretical, methodological solution to the problem: work according to Freudian scientific principles as guided by the analyst's associations.¹³ This approach therefore demands a detailed examination of our associations so that we can select the appropriate guides for our work.

I should stress here that the sole dictate emerging from this approach is not theoretical but methodological: each analyst must work in his own way, according to his own associative world, in which he is to locate the associations that will guide the analysis. (We should stress that this search must be accompanied by the cleansing of our collective defensive associations.) This dictate is an outcome of the basic psychoanalytical rule that an analysis begins with the investigation of the analyst's free associations. The need to adjust our examination of our associations and our work to the guidelines of major theoreticians (Freud, Klein, Bion, Kohut, Lacan, and Winnicott, among others), to schools or to supervisors, remains part of our associations and must be acknowledged; that is, we need to analyze their roles, significance and influence upon us. Even if our associations appear trivial or lacking in theoretical value, or insufficiently important when compared to dreams or our teacher's instructions, they remain our associations and worthy of our recognition and examination. When our work relies on that of others, no matter how important they are in the field, without exploring their influence upon us and the reasons for our acceptance of their positions, a mismatch arises between our associative world and our research capacities, a situation damaging our therapeutic work. We can therefore conclude that in terms of the suggested approach, every analyst embodies a school in himself.

Educational and Social-Organizational Implications

Before concluding, I want to briefly sketch some institutional implications of my new approach.

- a. **The educational dimension:** I suggest that analysts teach the method to students for the purpose of exposing the latter to their personal views, intended to guide their work following clarification and refinement. That is, analysts, as mentors, are to liberate themselves from the habit of inculcating theories and techniques and from their authoritarianism, a tendency contradicting the spirit of free scientific analytic research and free association. In addition, they should help students develop their own personal language, as Bion (1987: 242), for example, suggests.
- b. **The social-organizational dimension:** Analysts should intentionally refrain from participating in and establishing any formal hierarchical organizations. We should search for an organizational approach that will not interfere with the method's implementation, that is, with the analysis of the unconscious through

¹³ Barnaby Barratt has likewise identified the significance of free association (1993: 19-47). However, although his proposal involves a methodology similar to my own, it does not free analysis from its regulation by concepts and theories, nor does it examine his own associations. Rather, it remains tied to an examination of the analysand's associations (see for example his description of a treatment fragment and the related discussion; 1993: 26-27).

free association. For example, we might train veteran analysts in sessions conducted by younger, less-experienced analysts, or hold group training sessions attended by analysts of varying seniority and experience, with discussions adhering to the principle of equality. This stratagem may have the additional effect of helping to minimize the transformation of the analysts' narcissistic tendencies into collective defenses, described above.

- c. **The Communication Dimension:** Analysts should develop their capacity for open communication and cooperation regarding acceptance of different theories, techniques and educational approaches as well criticism.¹⁴ This approach is manifested primarily through the development of one's ability to respect the personal language of each analyst and his capacity to comprehend other personal languages, achieved through conscious efforts and persistent aspirations aimed at avoiding complicity in the widespread pressure to create a common language, acceptable to all. Contrary to what happens in other scientific fields attempting to achieve this goal, the field of psychoanalysis should be more interested in encompassing numerous languages, techniques, as well as educational and organizational outcomes.

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¹⁴ This attitude significantly differs from what took place in the initial years of the Wednesday meetings at Freud's home. See Gay (1988: 173-79, 579) and Roazen (1976) for descriptions of the hostile and disparaging atmosphere reigning over these meetings. The effect of this atmosphere on the educational and social structure of psychoanalysis can be felt to this very day.

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