



## Master of Arts in Psychology Issues in Psychotherapy PSYC 523-01 —Winter, 2012

This course addresses the following MAP Program Goals:

- Introduce you to an understanding of human experience rooted in philosophy and the humanities.
- Help you identify and explore the therapeutic and research implications of this tradition's emphasis on lived experience.
- Provide you with strong clinical training that values ethical awareness and sensitivity to underserved populations in the community.
- Encourage you to develop in-depth reflectivity and self-understanding, especially in the context of psychotherapeutic work.
- Prepare you for further graduate study and/or eligibility for Washington State licensure.

This course addresses WAC 246-809-221 content areas:

- Ethics/law
- Counseling individuals
- Multicultural concerns

**Instructor: Steen Halling, Ph.D.**

**Class Hours: TTh 345-500 PM, ADM 323**

**Office Hours: TTh 2-3 pm; and by appointment.**

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*Even a scientific enterprise cannot begin vis-à-vis an indeterminate nothingness. It can take for its subject only something it has already perceived as being something.... Every science is therefore necessarily--and thus always--based on prescientific premises.*

Medard Boss (1979), Existential foundations of medicine and psychology, xxvii.

*Truth, we must constantly realize, is not an object, on analogy with the objects of nature, but the subject of our lives, the self which we share with others as they share it with us. Interpretation, we must constantly realize, is not a method among other methods, but it is the method of our lives, the method by which we engage other selves as they engage us.*

Brayton Polka (1990), Truth and interpretation, p. 322.

## I. READINGS:

1. Fadiman, A. (1998). The spirit catches you and you fall down. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux
2. Todd, J. & Bohart, A.C. (2006). Foundations of clinical and counseling psychology (4th ed.). Long Grove, IL: Waveland.
3. Course reader: Available from SuperCopy, Seattle University. Cost c. \$ 21
4. Other readings are available online (see end of syllabus).

## II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND STRUCTURE:

### Description:

Although this course presupposes a basic knowledge of major theories of personality, its focus is more on clinical issues than on these theories per se. We will study five selected therapeutic issues, four of which are closely associated with major personality theories. Thus unconscious phenomena as well as transference and countertransference are of particular interest to psychoanalysis, dreams and dream interpretation are central to psychoanalysis and analytic psychology, and the healing relationship is at the core of client-centered therapy as well as interpersonal approaches. Cross-cultural issues are, of course, of significance for all approaches to psychotherapy.

The overall approach of the course is existential-phenomenological in three senses:

- (1) As suggested in the quotation, above, from Medard Boss, existential-phenomenology as a philosophical and foundational approach is especially concerned with the question of how the presuppositions of any science (or theory) both provide access to and obscure the phenomena being studied. As we look at how various personality theories conceptualize clinical issues, we will consider how their assumptions affect how they understand and explain these issues.
- (2) We will examine the contributions of existential-phenomenological psychology and psychiatry to an understanding of the five clinical issues.
- (3) We will relate our own discussion, as far as possible, to descriptions of the phenomena and issues that we are studying. We cannot escape interpretation (see quotation from Polka, above), but we can ground it in an ongoing dialogue with experience.

### Structure:

**Overall:** We will discuss the readings in depth in class, relating them to each other and consider how helpful they are in providing insight into human experience and giving direction to

clinical practice. The discussions will be supplemented by presentations that I will give; starting with topic 2, these presentations will be coordinated with the reports of the working groups (see below).

Working Groups: Each member of the class will join a collaborative working group (4-5 members, meeting regularly throughout the quarter) with a particular topic as focus. I will meet with each group at least twice during the quarter and will be available to consult about content and process at any point during the term. The first three readings and the class discussion (January 8th) on dialogal phenomenology are intended to give some guidance and direction for the groups, but are not meant to be taken as a prescription for how the groups must function. However, it is essential that groups write or obtain **descriptions** of the phenomenon in question so that there is an experiential focus for their discussions. For most topics, the group should obtain descriptions from people outside of the group to supplement their own descriptions (One description per group member is fine).

Each group is responsible for a class presentation on its topic and will also act as a resource when its topic is under consideration. Do keep in mind that the group presentations are intended to be **reports on work in progress**, not perfectly polished end products. The presentations are not graded, but I expect that they will be carefully prepared. As the work of the groups moves forward, the members of each group should decide if they want to write a collective paper or individual papers. Regardless of the decision reached, I hope that the group meetings will provide a place for collegial discussion, sharing of literature, and exchange of ideas about the course material and about the major paper for the course.

Do approach the work in your group in the same way as you would approach your work with a client or a group of colleagues in a work setting. That is, be mindful that your peers depend on you to show up, to carry out your share of the tasks, and to be willing to work out solutions to problems that may arise.

Below are brief commentaries on each topic. The topics are loosely defined. Hence one of the first tasks for the members of each group is to decide how they will define and approach their topic.

**Topic 1. Unconscious Phenomena:** I will take responsibility for this topic, and will share with you phenomenological reflections based on my reading of the descriptions on unconscious phenomena that you will submit (see assignment # 3). If one or two people are willing to share their descriptions with the class as a whole, we can do a phenomenological analysis together.

**Topic 2. Transference/Countertransference:** These concepts refer to realities that therapists and clients contend with much of the time, but transference also occurs outside of therapy even though the persons involved may not call it that. Although it makes sense for the group members to start with a preliminary look at related personal experiences, they should collect descriptions from those outside of the group (e.g., by interviewing therapists about their experience of and approach to transference or counter-transference). This is a sensitive and emotionally difficult domain; all the more reason to keep your project as simple as possible. The topic itself is bound to show up in your relationships to each other and will complicate the task of working together. For this reason I will work especially closely with the members of this group.

**Topic 3. Dreams and Dream Interpretation:** Specific foci might be phenomena such as “dreams that brought about change,” or “how a listener helped me to make sense of a dream.” I would suggest that each member of the group write a description of a dream that he or she has had so there is an experiential touchstone for your discussion, and then get some descriptions from outside the group.

**Topic 4: Cross-cultural Issues:** This is more like a broad arena rather than a specific topic. Basically, we are looking at issues that may arise when therapist and client, or any two people, are not from the same background in terms of nationality, class and income, ethnic or religious tradition. Along with these differences there may be conflicting expectations and beliefs about the nature of the helping relationship, well-being and disturbance. Within this arena, look at a topic or phenomenon that is personally significant to you. In the past groups have looked at the experience of being an outsider, empathy across cultural divides, and the process of learning first-hand about a new culture. These experiences are relevant to the kinds of questions that are typically raised in regard to cross-cultural issues in therapy– (e.g., what difficulties may arise for therapists and clients if their backgrounds are very different? how can therapists best prepare to work with clients with backgrounds different from their own? are there specific methods or approaches to psychotherapy that are more effective in working with clients from a specific cultural or ethnic background?) Thus you do not need to force your chosen question or experience to relate to psychotherapy directly. And, with this topic, it is especially important to ground your work in your own experience so you do not get bogged down in theoretical discussions.

**Topic 5: Healing relationships** are not restricted to therapy, so all members of the group can describe and reflect on the nature of relationships as healing within the context of a relationship. The focus can be on healing in or outside of therapy, on healing moments, on what characterizes a healing relationship, or whatever else is of greatest interest.

III. **LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of the course, you should have gained:

- 1) A solid theoretical grasp of the five issues that the course addresses.
- 2) A beginning understanding of the role these issues play within a therapeutic context and of ways in which they can be approached constructively.
- 3) An understanding of the critical role that the presuppositions of any psychological perspective play both in providing access to and obscuring phenomena.
- 4) A solid understanding of how interpretation (in the hermeneutical sense) is foundational to the practice of psychology.
- 5) Knowledge of specific ways in which the E-P tradition has contributed to the theory and practice of psychotherapy.
- 6) Awareness of your own strengths and limitations as a member of a small collaborative research group.

7) Basic knowledge of the theory and practice of dialogal research.

## V. REQUIREMENTS:

1. Participation in the class and in the working groups, and completion of assigned readings (see schedule of topics and readings, below). 15%
2. Two take-home tests. Each should be 4-6 pages in length (6 pages is the maximum), double-spaced, typed. For each test, I will give you 2-3 questions a week before the class day that the test is due: February 16 and March 6. The questions will focus on class readings and discussions. 35% for both.
3. A detailed description of an experience that falls within the rubric of unconscious phenomena: unconscious motivation, Freudian slips, the return of the repressed, and defense mechanism are examples. The description can be either of your own experience or of the behavior of another. If it deals with your own experience, it would obviously have to be an example of a realization of something of which you had previously been unconscious.

The paper is graded on the basis of the quality of the description. At the end, discuss (in about a page), why you chose this experience as an example of an unconscious phenomenon. Suggested length: 4-6 pages, double spaced, typed. Indicate if you would be willing to share your description with the class (this is completely optional). Due January 10. 10%

4. A major paper related to the topic that your working group has taken responsibility for, that is, topic 2, 3, 4, or 5. The paper could be a group paper, one that is written and collectively submitted by all the members of your group, an individual paper, or one that is written by two or more members of your group. See Section VII for suggested format.
 

The paper is due on Wednesday, March 14 by 4 p.m. Suggested length is 12 or more pages for individual papers, and 14 or more pages for papers with more than one author. Your bibliography should include at least six sources (e.g., articles, or chapters) beyond the required reading for the course. Include an explanation of the phenomenon you decided to study, a discussion of your method and of the group process (what was it like to work together as a group), a presentation of your findings, and a conclusion that relates your findings to the findings of others. Use APA format (not a format that vaguely resembles it!) for references and footnotes. 40%

## VI. SEQUENCE OF TOPICS & READINGS

**BOLD= in Course Reader; *Italics=available online***

**See end of syllabus for overview of readings and links**

Class # and Date	Topic and Assignments Due	Readings (approximations)
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1. January 5, Thu	1. Introduction to the Course	
2. January 10, Tue	2. On Working Collaboratively	<b>Halling et al, (2006) Emergence of the Dialogal approach.</b> <i>Halling (2005), When Intimacy and companionship...</i> <i>Gendlin (1974). The role of knowledge...</i>
3. January 12 Thu	3. Getting groups started <b>Description of “Unconscious phenomenon” is due</b>	<b>Halling (2008) Themes in E-P Psychology...</b>
4. January 17, Tue	4. Looking at theories phenomenologically	Todd & Bohart, 125-133
5. January 19, Thu	Topic 1: <b>Unconscious Phenomena</b>	<b>van den Berg (1971) What is psychotherapy</b> <b>Weiss (1994). The analyst’s task</b> Todd & Bohart, 137-157
6. January 24, Tue	Topic 1 continued	<i>Gendlin (1964). A theory of personality change</i>
7. January 26, Thu	Topic 1 continued.	<b>Stern (1983). Unformulated experience</b> Todd & Bohart, 158-192
8. January 31, Tue	Topic 2: <b>Transference &amp; Countertransference</b>	<b>Mendelson (1991). Transference...</b>
9. February 2, Thu	Topic 2, continued	<b>Sampson (1991). Experience and insight</b>
10. February 7, Tue	Topic 2 continued	<b>Ogden (1979). On projective..</b> <b>Offerman-Zuckerberg (1998), Contact, care and..</b>
11. February 9, Thu	Topic 3. <b>Dreams and Dream Interpretation</b>	<b>Lippman (1998). On the private and social nature of dreams</b> <b>Craig &amp; Walsh. (1993). Phenomenological challenges..</b>
12. February 14, Tue	Topic 3 continued	<b>Scott (1977). On Medard Boss</b> <b>Boss (1977). Dreaming and the dreamed</b>
13. February 16, Thu	Topic 3 continued <b>Test 1 Due</b>	<i>Gendlin (1977). Phenomenological concept..</i>
14. February 21, Tue	<b>Topic 4, Cross-cultural Issues</b>	Fadiman , preface - p. 180 <b>Blair (1991). Strangers in a strange town</b>

15. February 23, Thu	Topic 4, continued	Fadiman, to end <b>McCarthy (1992). Empathy..</b> Todd & Bohart, 397-414
16. February 28, Tue	Topic 4, continued	<i>Sue &amp; Zane (1987). The role of culture and cultural</i> <i>Smith (2005) Psychotherapy..</i> <b>Karon &amp; VandenBos (1977). Psychotherapeutic technique</b>
17. March 1, Thu	Topic 5, <b>Healing Relationship</b>	<b>Buber (1951). Distance and relation</b> <i>Rogers (1973). My philosophy of</i> Todd & Bohart Ch. 9
18. March 6. Tue	Topic 5 continued. <b>Test 2 Due</b>	<b>Dialogue Buber/Rogers (1957);</b> <b>Margulies (1984). Toward empathy</b> <i>Gendlin (1964) Schizophrenia</i>
19. March 8, Thu	Topic 5 continued Conclusions	<b>Shaw (2003). Therapeutic action of love</b>
March 14. Wed	Final Paper Due by 4 pm	

## VII. SUGGESTED FORMAT FOR FINAL PAPER

Make sure that you address the areas listed below, but feel free to change the headings.

Topic: *(how topic was chosen, interest in topic...)*

Overview of Literature: *(usually included here); keep in mind that the syllabus (p. 4) suggests that you look at six or so sources beyond the course readings for the topic.*

Method: *Research Question(s), How was data collected, in what form (descriptions or interviews), and from whom?*

Process: *What was it like to work together? What were the highlights or “legs” of the journey?*

Results: *(overview of descriptions, that is, the stories you collected)*

Analysis: *(themes, implicit meanings). Do connect the analysis to the data via quotes or brief reference back to the specifics of the descriptions/transcriptions that you are working with*

Discussion: (*relate to relevant literature*)

Conclusion: (*this could be relatively brief; if you discuss implications for psychotherapy it might be longer.*)

References: **Remember---APA format!**

NOTE: **If** your group shares your paper with other members of the class, make SURE your Appendixes are **NOT** included in any version that you share.

Appendices: (*interview transcriptions, group members' descriptions, meeting minutes*)

**Final Note: Edit and proofread carefully to make sure the final manuscript is well written and coherent.**

## VIII. READINGS by TOPIC and LINKS

**Bold= in Course Reader**

### By Way of Introduction

**Halling, S., Leifer, M. & Rowe, J. R.. (2006). "Emergence of the dialogal approach: Forgiving another."**

Halling, S. (2005). "When intimacy and companionship are at the core of the phenomenological research process."

<http://www.ipjp.org/index.php?>

[option=com\\_jdownloads&Itemid=25&view=view.download&catid=18&cid=81](http://www.ipjp.org/index.php?option=com_jdownloads&Itemid=25&view=view.download&catid=18&cid=81)

Gendlin, E. (1974). "The role of knowledge in practice."

[http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol\\_all\\_index.asp](http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol_all_index.asp)

### Looking at Theories Phenomenologically

**Halling, S. (2008). "Themes in existential-phenomenological psychiatry and psychology."**

### Unconscious Phenomena

**van den Berg, J. H. (1971). "What is psychotherapy?"**

**Weiss, J. (1994). "The analyst's task."**

Gendlin, E. T. (1964). "A theory of personality change."

[http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol\\_all\\_index.asp](http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol_all_index.asp)

**Stern, D. B. (1983). "Unformulated experience: From familiar chaos to creative disorder."**

Transference and Countertransference

- Mendelson, M. D. (1991). "Transference: Theoretical conceptions and clinical approach."**  
**Sampson, H. (1991). Experience and insight in the resolution of transferences."**  
**Ogden, T. H. (1979). "On projective identification."**  
**Offerman-Zuckerberg, J. (1998) "Contact, care and countertransference: Some critical incidents."**

Dreams and Dream Interpretation

- Lippman, P. (1998). "On the private and social nature of dreams."**  
**Craig, E. & Walsh, S. J. (1993). "Phenomenological challenges for the clinical use of dreams."**  
**Scott, C. E. (1977). "Medard Boss."**  
**Boss, M. (1977). "Dreaming and the dreamed in the Daseinsanalytic way of seeing."**  
 Gendlin, E. T. (1977). "Phenomenological concept vs. phenomenological method: A critique of Boss on dreams."  
[http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol\\_all\\_index.asp](http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol_all_index.asp)

Cultural Issues

- Blair, L. (1991). "Strangers in a strange town."**  
 Sue, S. & Zane, N. (1987). "The role of culture and cultural technique in psychotherapy."  
<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=9&hid=108&sid=cfc5ff6a-4a2c-4b84-8de2-a8aadf200864%40sessionmgr111>  
 McCarthy, M. (1992). "Empathy: A bridge between."  
 URL: <http://proxy.seattleu.edu:2048/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rh&AN=ATLA0000852938&site=ehost-live>

Smith, L. (2005). Psychotherapy, classism, and the poor: Conspicuous by their absence."

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=058ac219-b1bf-4d43-9094-e307e389c8d1%40sessionmgr11&vid=4&hid=7>

**Karon, B. & VandenBos, G. (1977). "Psychotherapeutic technique and the economically poor patient."**

The Healing Relationship

- Buber, M. (1951). "Distance and relation."**  
 Gendlin, E. (1964). "Schizophrenia: Problems and methods of psychotherapy."

[http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol\\_all\\_index.asp](http://www.focusing.org/gendlin/gol_all_index.asp)

Rogers, C. R. (1973). "My philosophy of interpersonal relationships and how it grew."

<http://jhp.sagepub.com/content/13/2/3>

**Dialogue between Martin Buber and Carl R. Rogers, 1957.**

**Margulies, A. (1984). "Toward empathy: The uses of wonder."**

**Shaw, D. (2003). "On the therapeutic action of analytic love."**