**The Ambiguity of Good Soup**

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**Abstract**

This paper addresses the ambiguity of trauma as well as the tendency of the mental health profession to totalize domestic violence survivors and their experiences. Emmanuel Levinas’ ethical concepts of infinity, totalization, and enjoyment provide a valuable framework to discuss the unethical nature of such tendencies as well as to aid mental health professionals in remaining open to the de-centering nature of working with survivors of domestic violence. Viewing the complexity of domestic violence in light of Levinas’ concept of infinity can help to prevent mental health professionals from making assumptions about the client, their experience in the home, and their relationship to their abuser. Instead, this paper calls mental health professionals to honor the ambiguity and subtle nuances of a client’s relationship to traumatic events and those involved. Further, this paper will delve into the importance of Levinas’ concept of enjoyment as the foundation of nourishment and resilience, and the possibility that some clients may retain positive memories of their abuser as part of this foundation.