

# psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut** represents a significant development within the field of psychodynamic therapy, emphasizing the role of self-psychology and the therapeutic relationship in fostering psychological growth and healing. This approach, pioneered by Heinz Kohut, diverges from traditional Freudian psychoanalysis by focusing on the development and maintenance of the self rather than solely on unconscious drives and conflicts. Central to Kohut's theory is the concept of empathy as a critical tool for understanding patients' inner experiences and addressing deficits in self-cohesion and self-esteem. Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut integrates these principles to address a range of psychological difficulties, including narcissistic vulnerabilities, identity disturbances, and relational problems. This article explores the theoretical foundations, clinical applications, and therapeutic techniques associated with psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut. It further examines how this approach fits within the broader context of psychodynamic treatments and its relevance to contemporary psychotherapy practices. The following sections will provide a detailed overview to enhance understanding of psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut and its clinical implications.

- Theoretical Foundations of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Kohut
- Core Concepts in Kohut's Self-Psychology
- Clinical Applications and Therapeutic Techniques
- Empathy and the Therapeutic Relationship
- Comparison with Traditional Psychodynamic Approaches
- Contemporary Relevance and Criticisms

## Theoretical Foundations of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Kohut

Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut is grounded in the self-psychology theory developed by Heinz Kohut in the mid-20th century. This framework represents a paradigm shift from classical psychoanalysis by prioritizing the self's structure and functions over instinctual drives and conflicts. Kohut proposed that the self is formed and maintained through relationships with empathic selfobjects, which provide essential psychological functions such as mirroring, idealization, and twinship. Failures or disruptions in these selfobject experiences during development can lead to deficits in self-cohesion and a fragile sense of identity. Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut

aims to repair these deficits by recreating empathic selfobject experiences within the therapeutic relationship, thereby fostering the restoration of a cohesive and resilient self.

## Origins and Development

Kohut's self-psychology emerged as a response to perceived limitations in Freudian psychoanalysis, particularly its emphasis on intrapsychic conflict and drives. By focusing on the self and its needs, Kohut introduced a relational and intersubjective dimension to psychodynamic theory. His clinical observations of patients with narcissistic personality disorders highlighted the importance of empathic attunement and the role of selfobjects in psychological development. Over time, psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut evolved to incorporate these insights into a therapeutic approach that values empathy, validation, and the gradual rebuilding of self-structure.

## Key Theoretical Contributions

Some of Kohut's key theoretical contributions include:

- **Selfobjects:** External figures or experiences that fulfill essential psychological functions for the self.
- **Empathy:** A foundational therapeutic tool and mode of understanding the patient's subjective experience.
- **Developmental Arrests:** Failures in early selfobject experiences that result in vulnerabilities in self-cohesion.
- **Narcissistic Pathology:** Conceptualization of narcissistic disorders as stemming from disruptions in self-psychology rather than solely from defensive mechanisms.

## Core Concepts in Kohut's Self-Psychology

Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut revolves around several core concepts that elucidate the structure and dynamics of the self. Understanding these concepts is essential for comprehending the therapeutic process and goals within this approach.

## The Self and Its Structure

Kohut conceptualized the self as a complex psychological structure composed of multiple components, including the grandiose self, the idealized parental

imago, and the twinship self. These elements represent different self-representations that require empathic validation and support from selfobjects. The grandiose self relates to ambitions and aspirations, the idealized parental imago represents ideals and values internalized from significant others, and the twinship self reflects a need for sameness and belonging. Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut focuses on strengthening these self-structures to create a stable and cohesive identity.

## Selfobjects and Their Functions

Selfobjects are crucial external sources that serve psychological functions necessary for maintaining self-cohesion and self-esteem. Kohut identified three primary selfobject functions:

1. **Mirroring:** Providing validation and affirmation of the self's worth and accomplishments.
2. **Idealization:** Allowing the individual to merge with a powerful, admired figure and internalize strength and calm.
3. **Twinship or Alter Ego:** Offering a sense of likeness and belonging, reducing feelings of loneliness.

Failures or absences of these selfobject experiences in childhood or adulthood can lead to vulnerabilities that psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut seeks to address.

## Empathy as a Method and Goal

Empathy occupies a central role in psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut, functioning both as a therapeutic technique and as an objective of therapy. Kohut emphasized the therapist's empathic immersion to understand the patient's inner world fully and to facilitate the repair of self-structure. This empathic engagement differs from traditional psychoanalytic neutrality, focusing instead on attunement and responsiveness to the patient's needs.

## Clinical Applications and Therapeutic Techniques

Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut has been applied to a variety of clinical populations, particularly those with narcissistic and identity-related disorders. The approach is tailored to address deficits in self-cohesion and to promote psychological resilience through a supportive therapeutic relationship.

## Assessment and Formulation

Assessment in psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut involves identifying the patient's selfobject needs and mapping the structural deficits in the self. Clinicians evaluate the presence of mirroring, idealizing, and twinship deficits, as well as the patient's capacity for self-reflection and affect regulation. This formulation guides the therapeutic focus and interventions to be employed.

## Therapeutic Stance and Techniques

The therapeutic stance in psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut is characterized by empathic attunement, validation, and responsiveness. Some core techniques include:

- **Empathic listening:** Deeply understanding and reflecting the patient's subjective experience.
- **Selfobject transference interpretation:** Exploring how the patient's selfobject needs manifest in the therapeutic relationship.
- **Mirroring interventions:** Providing affirmation and validation to strengthen the grandiose self.
- **Idealizing transference work:** Facilitating the patient's experience of merging with an idealized figure within therapy.
- **Facilitating twinship experiences:** Encouraging identification with the therapist or therapeutic group to foster belonging.

## Therapeutic Goals

The primary goals of psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut include the restoration of a cohesive self, enhancement of self-esteem, and improvement in affect regulation and interpersonal functioning. The therapy aims to repair developmental deficits by providing corrective selfobject experiences, enabling patients to develop healthier ways of relating to themselves and others.

## Empathy and the Therapeutic Relationship

Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut places the therapeutic relationship at the heart of the healing process. Empathy is not only a tool for understanding but also the means through which selfobject needs are met and psychological growth occurs.

## **Empathic Attunement**

Empathic attunement involves the therapist's capacity to immerse themselves in the patient's subjective experience without judgment or premature interpretation. This attunement allows the therapist to respond authentically to the patient's selfobject needs and to facilitate the gradual strengthening of the self.

## **Selfobject Transference**

In psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut, the therapeutic relationship serves as a platform for reenacting and repairing early selfobject failures. Patients project their unmet selfobject needs onto the therapist, creating a selfobject transference that can be explored and worked through. The therapist's empathic response helps to fulfill these needs and supports the integration of fragmented self-states.

## **The Role of Validation**

Validation is a key element in psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut, reinforcing the patient's sense of worth and contributing to the rebuilding of self-cohesion. Through empathic validation, the therapist helps patients experience themselves as valued and understood, which is often a corrective emotional experience for those with narcissistic vulnerabilities.

## **Comparison with Traditional Psychodynamic Approaches**

While psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut shares foundational elements with classical psychoanalysis, it differs in its focus, methods, and therapeutic stance.

## **Focus on the Self Versus Drives**

Traditional psychoanalysis emphasizes unconscious drives and intrapsychic conflict as central to psychopathology. In contrast, psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut centers on the self's structure and its developmental needs, particularly the role of selfobjects in maintaining self-cohesion.

## **Therapist's Role and Stance**

Classical psychoanalysis often advocates for therapist neutrality and abstinence, encouraging patients to work through transference conflicts independently. Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut advocates for an active,

empathic therapist who responds to the patient's selfobject needs, creating a more collaborative and attuned therapeutic environment.

## Understanding Narcissism

Whereas traditional psychodynamic theories viewed narcissistic pathology primarily as a defense mechanism or fixation, Kohut's approach conceptualizes narcissistic disorders as stemming from developmental deficits in self-cohesion. This reframing influences both diagnosis and treatment strategies within psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut.

## Contemporary Relevance and Criticisms

Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut continues to influence contemporary psychotherapy, particularly in the treatment of narcissistic and identity disturbances. Its emphasis on empathy and relational dynamics aligns well with modern relational and intersubjective psychoanalytic trends.

## Contributions to Modern Psychotherapy

Kohut's work has contributed significantly to the broader understanding of personality development and pathology. His concepts have informed various therapeutic modalities, including relational psychoanalysis, attachment-based therapies, and trauma-informed approaches. Psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut's focus on empathic attunement resonates with current emphasis on therapeutic alliance as a predictor of treatment outcomes.

## Criticisms and Limitations

Despite its contributions, psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut has faced criticisms, such as:

- **Lack of empirical validation:** Some critics argue that self-psychology lacks sufficient empirical research to substantiate its claims fully.
- **Conceptual complexity:** The abstract nature of constructs like selfobjects and self-cohesion can be challenging to operationalize clinically.
- **Potential for therapist over-involvement:** The empathic stance may sometimes blur boundaries, requiring careful management to maintain professionalism.

Ongoing research and clinical refinement continue to address these concerns, ensuring psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut remains a vital and evolving

approach in the psychodynamic tradition.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is Kohut's contribution to psychodynamic psychotherapy?**

Heinz Kohut developed self psychology, a branch of psychodynamic psychotherapy that emphasizes the development of the self and the importance of empathy in therapeutic relationships.

### **How does Kohut's self psychology differ from traditional psychoanalysis?**

Kohut's self psychology focuses on the restoration of a cohesive self through empathic attunement, rather than primarily analyzing unconscious conflicts and drives as in traditional psychoanalysis.

### **What are the key concepts in Kohut's psychodynamic psychotherapy approach?**

Key concepts include the self, selfobjects (people or things that are experienced as part of the self), empathy, and the importance of mirroring, idealizing, and twinship needs in psychological development.

### **How is empathy used in Kohut's psychodynamic psychotherapy?**

Empathy is central to Kohut's approach, serving as a tool for the therapist to understand the patient's subjective experience and to facilitate the repair and strengthening of the self.

### **What types of psychological issues are best addressed by Kohut's psychodynamic psychotherapy?**

Kohut's approach is particularly effective for treating narcissistic personality disorders, self-esteem issues, and difficulties related to self-cohesion and identity.

## **Additional Resources**

### *1. The Analysis of the Self*

This seminal work by Heinz Kohut introduces the foundations of self psychology, a branch of psychodynamic psychotherapy. Kohut explores the

development of the self and the role of narcissism in psychological health and pathology. The book emphasizes empathy as a crucial therapeutic tool and reshapes traditional psychoanalytic theory to better address disturbances of the self.

## 2. *How Does Analysis Cure?*

In this influential book, Kohut delves into the mechanisms through which psychoanalytic treatment effects change. He challenges classical drive theory, proposing that the restoration of the self and the repair of self-object relationships are central to therapeutic success. The text offers a profound rethinking of transference, empathy, and the therapeutic process.

## 3. *Self Psychology and the Humanities: Reflections on a New Psychoanalytic Approach*

This collection of essays expands on Kohut's self psychology, linking its concepts to broader humanistic and cultural issues. It highlights the relevance of self psychology beyond clinical settings, including literature, art, and philosophy. The work provides insightful reflections on the interplay between self-experience and societal influences.

## 4. *The Restoration of the Self*

A comprehensive overview of Kohut's theories and clinical applications, this book discusses the restoration and maintenance of psychological cohesion. It presents case studies illustrating the therapeutic techniques used to address narcissistic injuries and deficits. The text is essential for clinicians seeking to understand the dynamic processes involved in self repair.

## 5. *Empathy, Self-Objects, and the Therapeutic Relationship*

Focusing on the central role of empathy in psychodynamic psychotherapy, this book elaborates on Kohut's concept of self-objects and their therapeutic significance. It discusses how therapists can use empathic attunement to foster patients' self-cohesion and growth. The book bridges theory and practice, making it valuable for both students and experienced therapists.

## 6. *Transformations in Narcissism: Theories and Clinical Practice*

This volume examines the evolution of narcissistic pathology and its treatment through the lens of Kohut's self psychology. It integrates contemporary research with clinical insights, addressing complex cases and diverse patient populations. The book offers practical guidance on managing narcissistic disorders within a psychodynamic framework.

## 7. *Kohut's Legacy: Contributions to Self Psychology and Psychotherapy*

A tribute to Heinz Kohut's enduring impact, this book compiles essays by leading self psychology theorists and clinicians. It explores recent advancements and applications of Kohut's ideas in various therapeutic contexts. Readers gain a comprehensive understanding of how self psychology continues to influence modern psychotherapy.

## 8. *Psychodynamic Approaches to Narcissistic Personality Disorder*

This text provides an in-depth analysis of narcissistic personality disorder from a psychodynamic and self psychological perspective. It draws heavily on

Kohut's theories to explain the developmental origins and clinical manifestations of narcissism. The book offers treatment strategies designed to enhance self-cohesion and emotional regulation.

#### 9. *Self Psychology in Clinical Practice*

A practical guide for therapists, this book translates Kohut's theoretical concepts into effective clinical interventions. It covers assessment, formulation, and treatment planning based on self psychological principles. With numerous case examples, the book is an essential resource for applying Kohut's ideas in real-world psychotherapy settings.

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**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: Psychotherapy After Kohut** Ronald R. Lee, J. Colby Martin, 2013-05-13 Hailed as a superb textbook aimed at introducing psychoanalytic self psychology to students of psychotherapy (Robert D. Stolorow), *Psychotherapy After Kohut* is unique in its grasp of the theoretical, clinical, and historical grounds of the emergence of this new psychotherapy paradigm. Lee and Martin acknowledge self psychology's roots in Freud's pioneering clinical discoveries and go on to document its specific indebtedness to the work of Sandor Ferenczi and British object relations theory. Proceeding to readable, scholarly expositions of the principal concepts introduced by Heinz Kohut, the founder of self psychology, they skillfully explore the further blossoming of the paradigm in the decade following Kohut's death. In tracing the trajectory of self psychology after Kohut, Lee and Martin pay special attention to the impact of contemporary infancy research, intersubjectivity theory, and recent empirical and clinical findings about affect development and the meaning and treatment of trauma.

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: The Evidence for Psychodynamic Psychotherapy** Kevin McCarthy, Carla Capone, Liat Leibovich, 2025-04-16 This book delivers a concise yet comprehensive introduction to the evidence for psychodynamic psychotherapy through explanations of research organized around therapy processes relevant to practicing clinicians and informed researchers. Each chapter presents an event within dynamic therapy, from interpretation to termination, along with a narrative to help readers understand the why and the how of the process. Written in accessible and engaging language, each short chapter is a synthesis of findings in each topic area, going beyond subjects interesting only to researchers to aspects of practice relevant to therapists of all schools of thought. *The Evidence for Psychodynamic Psychotherapy* is written for therapists to pick up and put down between clients, for mental health researchers to quickly find support for a point they wish to make, and for educators to assign brief readings to bolster students'

confidence in dynamic therapy.

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: A Clinical Guide to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy** Deborah Abrahams, Poul Rohleder, 2021-01-19 A Clinical Guide to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy serves as an accessible and applied introduction to psychodynamic psychotherapy. The book is a resource for psychodynamic psychotherapy that gives helpful and practical guidelines around a range of patient presentations and clinical dilemmas. It focuses on contemporary issues facing psychodynamic psychotherapy practice, including issues around research, neuroscience, mentalising, working with diversity and difference, brief psychotherapy adaptations and the use of social media and technology. The book is underpinned by the psychodynamic competence framework that is implicit in best psychodynamic practice. The book includes a foreword by Prof. Peter Fonagy that outlines the unique features of psychodynamic psychotherapy that make it still so relevant to clinical practice today. The book will be beneficial for students, trainees and qualified clinicians in psychotherapy, psychology, counselling, psychiatry and other allied professions.

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: Empathic Attunement** Crayton E. Rowe, David S. MacIsaac, 1989 Empathic Attunement captures the essence of Kohut's contributions to self psychology and the mental health field. Straightforward, accurate, and practical, the authors introduce student and experienced clinician alike to the synthesis of Kohut's major concepts and their clinical applications. The authors highlight Kohut's emphasis on the empathic mode of data gathering from within the patient's experiences. Kohut considers empathy--the capacity to think and feel oneself into the inner life of another person--to be the major tool of therapy.

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: The Analysis of the Self** Heinz Kohut, 2022-12-22 A major achievement, this monograph on treating NPD shows . . . a high level of integration of clinical experience and theoretical sophistication ( Psychoanalytic Quarterly ). Psychoanalyst, teacher, and scholar, Heinz Kohut was one of the twentieth century's most important intellectuals. A rebel according to many mainstream psychoanalysts, Kohut challenged Freudian orthodoxy and the medical control of psychoanalysis in America. In his highly influential book The Analysis of the Self, Kohut established the industry standard of the treatment of personality disorders for a generation of analysts. This volume, best known for its groundbreaking analysis of narcissism, is essential reading for scholars and practitioners seeking to understand human personality in its many incarnations. Kohut has done for narcissism what the novelist Charles Dickens did for poverty in the nineteenth century. Everyone always knew that both existed and were a problem. . . . The undoubted originality is to have put it together in a form which carries appeal to action. — International Journal of Psychoanalysis

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: Psychodynamic Psychotherapy** Deborah L. Cabaniss, Sabrina Cherry, Carolyn J. Douglas, Anna R. Schwartz, 2011-06-13 Psychodynamic psychotherapy offers people a chance to create new ways of thinking and behaving in order to improve the quality of their lives. This book offers a practical, step-by-step guide to the technique of psychodynamic psychotherapy, with instruction on listening, reflecting, and intervening. It will systematically take the reader from evaluation to termination using straightforward language and carefully annotated examples. Written by experienced educators and based on a tried and tested syllabus, this book provides clinically relevant and accessible aspects of theories of treatment processes. The workbook style exercises in this book allow readers to practice what they learn in each section and more “actively” learn as they read the book. This book will teach you: About psychodynamic psychotherapy and some of the ways it is hypothesized to work How to evaluate patients for psychodynamic psychotherapy, including assessment of ego function and defenses The essentials for beginning the treatment, including fostering the therapeutic alliance, setting the frame, and setting goals A systematic way for listening to patients, reflecting on what you've heard, and making choices about how and what to say How to apply the Listen/Reflect/Intervene method to the essential elements of psychodynamic technique How these techniques are used to address problems with self esteem, relationships with others, characteristic ways of adapting, and other ego functions Ways in which technique shifts over time This book presents complex concepts in a clear

way that will be approachable for all readers. It is an invaluable guide for psychiatry residents, psychology students, and social work students, but also offers practicing clinicians in these areas a new way to think about psychodynamic psychotherapy. The practical approach and guided exercises make this an exceptional tool for psychotherapy educators teaching all levels of learners. This book includes a companion website: [www.wiley.com/go/cabaniss/psychotherapy](http://www.wiley.com/go/cabaniss/psychotherapy) with the Listening Exercise for Chapter 16 (Learning to Listen). This is a short recording that will help the reader to learn about different ways we listen. Praise for *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy: A Clinical Manual* This book has a more practical, hands-on, active learning approach than existing books on psychodynamic therapy. Bob Bornstein, co-editor of *Principles of Psychotherapy*; Adelphi University, NY Well-written, concise and crystal clear for any clinician who wishes to understand and practice psychodynamic psychotherapy. Full of real-world clinical vignettes, jargon-free and useful in understanding how to assess, introduce and begin psychotherapy with a patient. Extraordinarily practical with numerous examples of how to listen to and talk with patients while retaining a sophistication about the complexity of the therapeutic interaction. My trainees have said that this book finally allowed them to understand what psychodynamic psychotherapy is all about! —Debra Katz, Vice Chair for Education at the University of Kentucky and Director of Psychiatry Residency Training This volume offers a comprehensive learning guide for psychodynamic psychotherapy training. —Robert Glick, Professor, Columbia University

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut:** *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, An Issue of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America* Laura Prager, Michelle Chaney, Craigan Usher, 2025-07-28 In this issue of *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics*, guest editors Drs. Laura Prager, Michelle Chaney, and Craigan Usher bring their considerable expertise to the topic of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy. Top experts discuss the various therapies in psychodynamic psychotherapy such as play therapy, parent work, and family therapy. Articles also highlight approaches to specific conditions such as substance use disorders and personality disorders. - Contains 14 relevant, practice-oriented topics including historical perspective; evidence-based practice in psychodynamic psychotherapies; psychodynamic psychotherapy for treatment of individuals with substance use disorders; sexual identity and gender identity; and more - Provides in-depth clinical reviews on psychodynamic psychotherapy, offering actionable insights for clinical practice - Presents the latest information on this timely, focused topic under the leadership of experienced editors in the field. Authors synthesize and distill the latest research and practice guidelines to create clinically significant, topic-based reviews

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**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut:** *How Does Analysis Cure?* Heinz Kohut, Paul E. Stepansky, 2009-02-20 The Austro-American psychoanalyst Heinz Kohut was one of the foremost leaders in his field and developed the school of self-psychology, which sets aside the Freudian explanations for behavior and looks instead at self/object relationships and empathy in order to shed light on human behavior. In *How Does Analysis Cure?* Kohut presents the theoretical framework for self-psychology, and carefully lays out how the self develops over the course of time. Kohut also specifically defines healthy and unhealthy cases of Oedipal complexes and narcissism, while investigating the nature of analysis itself as treatment for pathologies. This in-depth examination of "the talking cure" explores the lesser studied phenomena of psychoanalysis, including when it is

beneficial for analyses to be left unfinished, and the changing definition of “normal.” An important work for working psychoanalysts, this book is important not only for psychologists, but also for anyone interested in the complex inner workings of the human psyche.

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**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut:** *Long-Term Psychodynamic Psychotherapy* Glen O. Gabbard, M.D., 2017-02-13 This new edition continues the tradition of exposing beginners to the basic features of the psychodynamic approach while also challenging them to think in a sophisticated way about the complexities of their patients. Each chapter has been revised to reflect advances in the field and the new data relevant to the practice of dynamic therapy. Therapeutic topics are brought to life through accompanying videos, which have been expanded for this edition, providing students and residents a visual reference to the text through case study vignettes of a senior clinician at work. In addition to trainees, training directors will find this edition helpful in evaluating competency in their educational programs. -- Publisher.

**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut:** *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy* Jon Frederickson, 2013-10-28 *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy* is the first book designed to teach therapists how to listen and intervene from multiple perspectives. Through study and analysis of session transcripts, the reader learns how to listen and formulate interpretations from four different perspectives: reflection, analysis of conflict, analysis of transference, and analysis of defense. Each listening approach is introduced with a brief chapter illustrating the rules of intervention followed by therapy transcripts, which the reader studies and analyzes. By studying the transcripts, answering the questions in the material, and comparing his answers with those provided by the author, the reader will learn how to reflect, analyze conflict, interpret the transference, and analyze the defenses. Beginning therapists can use this book to acquire listening and intervention skills. Advanced therapists will enjoy studying and comparing listening approaches from a meta-theoretical perspective. *Psychodynamic Psychotherapy* provides a framework for studying how each approach focuses on a different analytic surface, and uses different rules for timing and content of interpretation.

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**psychodynamic psychotherapy kohut: Introducing Contemporary Psychodynamic Counselling and Psychotherapy: the Art and Science of the Unconscious** Alistair Ross, 2019-06-07 Dr Alistair Ross is a University of Oxford academic whose previous work has been described by Ruby Wax as 'very, very smart'. This new introductory book strikes an easy balance between theory and practice. It takes the reader from the field's Freudian roots to its contemporary applications, skills and insights. Over the last 30 years, important new theoretical ideas, skills and clinical practices have emerged in counselling and psychotherapy. While key Freudian concepts like transference, counter-transference and the influence of the past on the present remain vital to psychodynamic work, research drawn from infant development, neuroscience, the role of the sacred, and intersubjective approaches to relationships has changed the way therapists understand and work with clients. Either in its own right or as part of an integrative approach, psychodynamic counselling and psychotherapy have an important role to play in developments to come. The book's features include: • A re-discovery of the importance and relevance of Freud for present-day therapeutic relationships. • An encounter with the breadth and depth of our understanding about, and experience of, the unconscious. • An introduction to research that has evolved after Freud, revealing new ways of applying his ideas. • A contemporary perspective on traditional counselling and psychotherapy skills, illustrated by vignettes and personal insights from Alistair Ross's professional practice. • An encouragement to develop new skills for relating at depth with our clients' past, present and future, motivated by revealing how life-changing therapy can be. This book is a must-read for trainee and practising (psychodynamic or integrative) therapists who want an overview of new thinking and practice or might benefit from greater insight into psychodynamic practice, applying Freud's theoretical world to improving the lives of real people today. 'It is good to see Alistair, a valued student of mine and now an equally valued colleague, taking up the torch for psychodynamic counselling and psychotherapy for a new generation. He has written a book that collates much of the valuable writing to date and at the same time adds new dimensions that should not be overlooked.' Michael Jacobs, Visiting Professor, University of Leeds and Bournemouth University, UK

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