



Ottawa Psychoanalytic Society
Société psychanalytique d'Ottawa

Scientific Program meeting, Presenter: Dr. Joseph Fernando
October 22, 2022 – Saturday – 10:30am to 12:30pm, via Zoom

Please RSVP to scientificchair.ops@gmail.com

Title: Trauma, Guilt, and Conspiracy: The Zero Process and the Superego

Abstract:

This paper explores the links between trauma, guilt, and the superego, and through this exploration, attempts to make some additions to our understanding of group regression and group delusions. The author first describes his concept of the zero process as the form of mental functioning that is a product of the breakdown of the construction of the present moment during trauma. These unconstructed bits and pieces memories exist as present experiences or future expectations. From time to time, in relation to traumas that are either individual or developmental, inner objects which have the quality of immediate presences form — we usually call them introjects. The paper will argue that these are best conceptualized as zero process structures in having many characteristics of the zero process, and that the obligatory connection between trauma and guilt, and the manner of transmission of culture and the superego, and of conspiracy theories and other group delusions, can be better and more deeply understood once the part that zero process structures play in all these phenomena is brought into focus.

Bio:

Dr. Joseph Fernando is a training and supervising analyst at the Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis, and Director of the Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis. He has been in private practice of psychotherapy and psychoanalysis for over 30 years in Toronto. Dr. Fernando has published papers on guilt, narcissism, and the character of the exception. His book, *The Processes of Defense*, won the 2010 Gradiva prize for a book on psychoanalytic theory. His second book, *A Psychoanalytic Understanding of Trauma: Post-Traumatic Mental Functioning, the Zero Process, and the Construction of Reality* is in production with Routledge as part of the IPA Ideas and Applications series. He is presently at work on a book on the deeper links between trauma, guilt, and the superego, which attempts to throw some light on issues of cultural transmission and group delusions. He has presented widely on his ideas in North America and abroad.

Reference Texts:

For reference, two of Dr. Fernando's previous papers on the concept of the zero process ("Trauma and the Zero Process: Theoretical Considerations" and "Trauma and the Zero Process: Clinical Illustrations") can be found and downloaded (open-source) at:

http://www.jkapa.org/journal/list.html?pn=search&s_t=&s_a=Fernando&s_k=&s_v=&s_n=&x=0&y=0

Please note that there is a \$40 fee for participants who are not CPS members or OPS Guests:

By cheque:

Send a \$40.00 cheque made out to "Ottawa Psychoanalytic Society" to:

The Treasurer, OPS
c/o Louise Morel
2089 Orient Park Drive
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By e-transfer:

We deal with RBC. The e-mail address associated with our account is ottawaps@yahoo.com. Your payment will be automatically deposited into our bank account; there is no need for a security question / answer.

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Meeting ID: 817 6892 3106

Passcode: 304234

This event is an Accredited Group Learning Activity (Section 1) as defined by the Maintenance of Certification Program of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and approved by the Scientific Chair of the Ottawa Psychoanalytic Society. Attendance will be recorded.

Learning objectives:

After attending this presentation participants:

1. Will be able to describe the basic characteristics of the zero process, and identify them in their clinical work.
2. Will be able to describe how zero process characteristics manifest in such internal structures as introjects and the superego.
3. Will be able to describe how the zero process aspects of the superego explain it's intergenerational transmission and its connection to shared group delusions.