



Fragile hope Civil society claws back governance



Above: The Cederberg's rooibos tea farms are world famous.

by Carol Richards

In the two previous editions of this newsletter I have shared a perspective on our family life and how my husband Ruben's choice to enter local politics, albeit as the head of a non-threatening residents association, has elicited the ire of traditional politicians.

Ruben was soon voted out as executive mayor via a motion of no confidence - on unfounded and baseless allegations of fraud and corruption. He was even accused of land-grabbing.

The deadline for the conclusion of the investigation into Ruben's alleged wrongdoing was the end August 2022, a deadline that was missed by the municipal investigation committee.

In fact, Ruben still awaits being formally charged for whatever crimes he is alleged to have committed. Now it looks like it was all a ploy to discredit Ruben just prior to the by-election in Lambert's Bay which took place in the second week of October.

At the same time, and after the municipality ignored letters from Ruben's attorneys trying to resolve matters, he took the extraordinary step to lay a charge of *crimen injuria* at the local police station against the chief protagonist who is a sitting councillor who orchestrated his removal as mayor. That process will now run its course.

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Launching the SAPI College

by Nicola Dugmore

The SAPI Psychotherapy College and the new training in adult psychoanalytic psychotherapy were officially launched at an online Open Evening on Thursday, 6 October. It was enormously gratifying and exciting to host the well-attended event and to receive so many celebratory messages from members of the broader psychoanalytic community before, during and after the evening.

Elda Storck, President of SAPI and SAPA, delivered the opening address. She described the historical context in which the idea of a psychoanalytic psychotherapy training was conceived, linking it to the initial wish to establish an accredited training in psychoanalysis and then to the need to create a mutually dependent relationship between psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Neither can flourish in the absence of the other.

In her presentation Elda named and thanked the pioneers and many role players - past and present - who took up key, contributory roles in arriving at this moment. Elda also described the series of events that culminated in realising this dual existence of a new training in psychoanalytic psychotherapy alongside the existing training in psychoanalysis.

CONTINUED ON PAGES 3 AND 4

Let us keep hope alive as more and more ordinary citizens join forces to fix our broken municipal systems, one municipality at a time.

Ruben's coalition comprises the Cederberg Eerste (First) Residents Association in partnership with the Democratic Alliance (DA) and Freedom Front Plus (FF+). The coalition made history by agreeing to put up only one, but the best candidate, for the Lambert's Bay by-election, instead of each party putting up its own candidate which is how things are normally done.

The local medical doctor of Lambert's Bay for the past 35 years, John Hayes, a DA member, was identified as the best candidate and he won the by-election with a convincing majority against the African National Congress (ANC) and the Patriotic Alliance (PA). This means that the CE/DA/FF+ coalition will be reinstated as the governing party and Ruben will be re-appointed as mayor.

Interestingly, the CE/DA/FF+ coalition now comprises a private tax consultant, a rooibos tea farmer, a citrus farmer, a lawyer and a local medical doctor – none of whom need this municipal job. If that is not a sign of hope then nothing is. Highly qualified residents are saying "enough is enough" and are willing to roll up their sleeves and get involved in rescuing their municipality.

The by-election victory for the CE/DA/FF+ coalition is a sure and certain sign that civil society is slowly clawing back governance from unbridled and unprincipled politicians who unashamedly will attack one's reputation to gain control.

The hope one nurtures here is fragile and things can change rather quickly given the unscrupulousness which bedevils local government elections. Let us keep hope alive as more and more ordinary citizens join forces to fix our broken municipal systems, one municipality at a time.

The sea and its bounty (top), abundant spring flowers (middle) and citrus (bottom) are among the riches of the land here.



SOME SAPI NEWS

This SAPI News is published with the help of all on the current Exco: Vossie Goosen, chair; Vanessa Dantas e Sá, vice-chair and SAPA-SAPI liaison; Zamo Mbele, secretary; and Teboho Monyamane, treasurer. Former SAPA-SAPI liaison Mary-Anne Smith, who is the SAPA president-elect taking over from Elda Storck at the end of 2023, is no longer on the Exco.

After our fees remained the same for three years we have now hiked them by 3%. Full membership is R4 115 (for clinical seminar groups facilitated by analysts), Intergenerational Transfer of the Trauma of Apartheid (ITTA) groups and SAPI Jhb Group 5's fee is R2 060 and SAPI members in the Low Fee Service (LFS), if only in this group, as well as Simply SAPI members and members on a leave of absence pay R1 135.

FACULTY 2023



Georg (Gyuri) Fodor
FREUD



Nicola Dugmore
COLLEGE DIRECTOR



Armien Abrahams
KLEIN



Diane Sandler
HIST. OF PSYCHOANALYSIS



Anthony (Tony) Hamburger
HIST. OF PSYCHOANALYSIS SA



Mary-Anne Smith
PSYCHOTHERAPY TECHNIQUE



Zamo Mbele
RACE



Yael Kadish
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

continued from "Launching the SAPI College"

The story began with the return to South Africa of Mark Solms and Karen Kaplan-Solms nearly twenty years ago and their engagements with local psychoanalytically oriented organisations. In 2005 the South African Psychoanalytical Initiative (SAPI) was formed. Four years later the South African Psychoanalytical Association (SAPA) was recognised by the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) as an IPA Study Group. (There are recent developments regarding SAPA's status that are reported on elsewhere in this newsletter - see page 9). SAPI is the first organisation to be recognised by the IPA as an Allied Centre. The SAPI Psychotherapy College benefits from this affiliation.

The formation of the umbrella South African Psychoanalytic Confederation (SAPC) in 2010 - of which both SAPI and SAPA are member groups - evidenced a determination across the many psychoanalytic groups and organisations in South Africa to cohere around common goals. As Elda said of the establishment of the SAPC, "It was also a vote of confidence in the future of psychoanalysis in this country and a reflection of the wish to normalise the local situation in an international context". The SAPC held a goal to have psychoanalytic practitioner/psychotherapist recognised as a legal category. With the launch of the SAPI College and the adult psychoanalytic psychotherapy training, the first step towards manifesting this wish has been taken.

Central to the College's vision is the resolve to extend the application of psychoanalytic thought and practice throughout and across South Africa, making psychoanalytic psychotherapy more accessible. This means training more psychoanalytic psychotherapists. Towards this end we have designed an online, flexible but rigorous training programme that is proudly South African but meets international standards. After Elda's address I, in my role as College Director, presented and described the training programme to the nearly 80 people who had responded

to the invitation to attend, many of them clinicians interested in hearing more about the training programme.

While acknowledging the discriminatory forces that have frustrated access to professional qualifications for most South Africans, and while saluting the many lay practitioners who in spite of this make critical contributions in the mental health field, we do have to work within the Health Professions Council of South Africa's (HPCSA) regulatory guidelines. Nationally registered psychologists, psychiatrists or social workers are immediately eligible for the training. We have begun engaging with the HPCSA regarding art and occupational therapists. We are committed to advocating for psychoanalytic psychotherapy to be recognised as a registration category, but this is not likely to be achieved in the short term and will require a concerted and collective effort.

Applications to the training are open. Interested trainees can email sapi.college@gmail.com to get the application link and the prospectus.

In 2023, beginning end January, we will be offering the Core Theory Modules, a total of 32 online seminars organised into seven modules that can be taken independently. All seminars will take place via Zoom on Thursday evenings from 19.30-21.30. I was very proud to announce and introduce the 2023 Faculty: Diane Sandler, Tony Hamburger, Gyuri Fodor, Armien Abrahams, Mary-Anne Smith, Yael Kadish and Zamo Mbele. The Elective Theory modules will be offered in 2024, also on Thursday evenings via Zoom. The other three pillars of the training programme - Infant Observation, Clinical Training and Personal Psychotherapy - are described in the prospectus. On registration students will be guided towards meeting the requirements of these training components.

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COLLEGE COMMITTEE



Yvette Esprey



Clinton v d Walt



Frances Williams



Zama Radebe



Katharine Frost



Vanessa Dantas e Sa



Thomas Burkhalter



Tanya Wilson



Liane Durra

continued from “Launching the SAPI College”

A College Committee has been established to consider those applications that include a request to recognise prior learning (RPL) across the five pillars. I am very grateful to the members of the Committee - Clinton Van der Walt, Frances Williams, Katharine Frost, Liane Durra, Tanya Wilson, Thomas Burkhalter, Vanessa Dantas e Sá, Yvette Esprey and Zama Radebe - who have made themselves available to safeguard the integrity and the credibility of the training while supporting the more experienced members of the psychoanalytic community whose applications require careful consideration. Applications and questions regarding RPL will need to be made through the general application link available from sapi.college@gmail.com, and not directly to College Committee members. During the Q and A session at the end of the evening, the College Committee were able to hear and begin to anticipate some of the questions many of you have about the training requirements.

Vossie Goosen, Chair of SAPI, had the honour of officiating the third aspect of the evening. She announced and introduced the psychoanalysts and senior psychoanalytic practitioners who have been grandparented in a once-off process as psychoanalytic psychotherapists and the first Fellows of the SAPI College of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy (FSCPPs). These 68 people from the broader psychoanalytic community are acknowledged by SAPI and recognised and rewarded, quoting Vossie, for “their selfless and self-motivated dedication to psychoanalytic learning over the years and for the contributions they have made in the field”. The names of the first FSCPPs were read out and a certificate was awarded virtually. The actual certificate will be distributed before the end of the year.

The College is grateful to these FSCPPs, many of whom will serve the College by making themselves available as teachers and as psychotherapists and supervisors of the students who

register for the training. All future graduates of the training will become FSCPPs themselves and will enjoy the status this signifies. We hope too that as future Fellow psychoanalytic psychotherapists (and supervisors) they will contribute further towards the College’s endeavour to extend psychoanalytic psychotherapy as an accessible intervention and a valued training opportunity in our country.

To receive the application link or for any College or psychoanalytic psychotherapy training related query, please email sapi.college@gmail.com



SAPI 2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BEYOND WORDS

LANGUAGES AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

25TH - 26TH
FEBRUARY
2023

IN PERSON, CAPE TOWN
VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED

SAPA
SOUTH AFRICAN
PSYCHOANALYTICAL
ASSOCIATION



SAPI
SOUTH AFRICAN
PSYCHOANALYTICAL
INITIATIVE

Necessary conversations



by *Hopolang Matee*

It is a few weeks since I presented at this year's SAPI Education Day.

It was important for me to take time – it felt like a moment - to reflect.

Perhaps it will be judicious to start at the beginning of the process.

One experiences enormous anxiety and nervousness when asked to present at such an event.

You wonder, why you? Why now? Do I have something to say? How do I deliver the message in the best way possible?

I was specifically approached because of my duality as a practitioner, as a sangoma and clinical psychologist. This is a role that I am still very cautiously navigating.

So, my immediate feelings were of anxiety, dread and excitement. I thought to myself, "Finally you get to contribute to the conversation in a meaningful way".

However, as the weeks passed by, as I prepared, I started to feel immense pressure.

For weeks I struggled deciding which case to present, thinking through why I wanted to present that case.

I struggled to decide what exactly it is that I want to achieve with the presentation.

What made it even more challenging was my anxiety around the audience. One would think that it will be easy and comforting to present to colleagues and peers.

I was nervous about whether the audience is ready for this nuanced conversation involving psychoanalysis and traditional dynamics.

I wondered whether there will be a big push back against ideas that are different from the norm, concepts that are unknown.

I also wondered whether the attendees will be able to sit with a certain level of discomfort. Or any discomfort at all.

If there is discomfort, will we all be able to think about it, voice it out, tolerate whatever arises?

All of this made it difficult to choose a case. In my mind the case would determine the degree of discomfort, how to think about it and voice it.

It was helpful when Conferences Committee members offered their time to help think through all the anticipated pressures. They read through the case and offered constructive feedback.

I could bounce off my ideas in a few discussions. Here I felt tension similar to what I experience as a dual healer: conflict and sometimes frustration.

At times I feel compelled to choose: tradition or psychoanalysis?

I'm constantly cautious to not betray either.

Often I felt psychoanalytic thinking gets left behind.

This is because, for me, I identify as a traditional healer first. Everything else follows.

Yet, this feeling, this thought, how I express it does not always translate itself in my actions as a traditional practitioner. I find it easier to default to a western way of practicing, adhering to western ethics and regulations. I then feel I betray my calling.

I believe this is so because African spirituality is still suppressed in many ways. It is still finding its way back to its rightful and respected place.

This tension came up numerous times in my discussions with Board members.

Until I reached my own conclusion: the presentation was not so much about advocating for traditional healers' frustrations, conflicts or about change.

Differently put, it was not about seeing these things occur in real time, in the presentation.

I decided presenting is about starting a conversation.

Education Day is a psychoanalytic conference, not a political one.

The case was well suited for this year's theme, Ethical Dilemmas. It was nuanced.

We had the opportunity to think through how one navigates duality as a practitioner.

We discussed how tradition presents itself in the room, how tradition and psychoanalysis complement and contradict one another and our responsibility to our patients as healers.

We also looked at the pace of the therapy, issues of disclosure and ethics.

In my opinion my presentation as well as the entire day, including the keynote lecture and panel discussion, yielded very thought-provoking and fruitful dialogue.

What niggled, though, is that with regards to tradition people were somewhat able to voice out their questions and thoughts, leaving one with a sense that many could not and did not speak.

I wondered if this was out of fear and what that fear was.

I was aware no one disagreed audibly and visibly with the direction the conversation took.

This, too, I found interesting, wondering about it.

My hope is that more such discussions happen so that, as a community of diverse practitioners and healers, we can create thoughtful and safe spaces to continue to think and evolve.

Invitation to join an analytic, reflexive writing group

By *Thomas Burkhalter and Clint van der Walt*

The process of writing is often lonely and difficult. In the practice of this complex task there are technical as well as emotional factors that inform the creation of a clear, authentic authorial voice.

In our experience, the author's emotional connection to the writing is a primary factor that enables or inhibits voice. Without a third presence, in the form of a listening other, this emotional weave of conscious and unconscious threads can be difficult to understand.

In the psychoanalytic writing group, we aim to arouse and reflect the emotional ties to the written work, using the group as a listening container. We understand the group as a mechanism that reflects and magnifies these emotional connections to writing. We also understand the importance of the group as a safe community which provides holding during the elucidation of the author's desire.

We are in the process of reconstituting an analytic, reflexive writing group in which the aforementioned aspects of the writing process can be thought about in relation to the group members' writing projects. The group would be a small (approximately six), closed, psycho-dynamically orientated entity that meets on a monthly basis. It would be a fee-based group in which each participant may present their work as well as read the work of others.

Each participant would be required to have a specific, formal writing task in mind. It will be facilitated by Thomas and Clint, both of whom have doctorates from Wits. The group members should be prepared to commit for a year.

Depending on the composition of the group, and location of the group members, we may work online or in-person.

During the presentation of work the technical, conceptual and emotional elements of the writing process will be examined for the purposes of supporting each group member's specific writing task. If you are interested please contact Thomas (thomb@mweb.co.za) or Clint (psypractice@mweb.co.za) for further information about the establishment of such a group.

Thomas works predominantly as a psychotherapist within a psychoanalytic orientation. He also writes, has published both locally and abroad and has a particular interest in the development of South African voices in psychoanalytic psychosocial writing. His PhD focussed on masculinities and fatherhood through a reflexive psychoanalytic lens.

Clint is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist. He has published both locally and internationally in the areas of violence, psychopathology, psychoanalysis, reconciliation and public health. He is also a musician and singer-songwriter. Clint's PhD focussed on the application of psychoanalytic notions of thirdness to clinical work with violent patients.



British psychoanalyst and clinical psychologist Alessandra Lemma was the keynote speaker at our Education Day on Saturday, 3 September 2022. She spoke on *Ethics in Practice*, a topic she covers in a book, *First Principles: Applied Ethics for Psychoanalytic Practitioners*, Oxford University Press will publish next year.

Alessandra has published extensively on body image disturbances, gender identity, trauma, the impact of virtual technology, adolescent development and applied ethics. Her publications include *Transgender Identities, A Contemporary Introduction*, published by Routledge in 2021.

Psychoanalysis at the Margins

Care and Clinics for All: Welcoming Marginalized People to Psychoanalytic Treatment

Saturday 5 November 2022, 2:00pm - 5:00pm GMT

Online seminar £12-£36 | [Book here](#)



Elizabeth Ann Danto

Elizabeth Ann Danto, PhD, is professor emeritus, Hunter College of the City University of New York. She is an international lecturer and prize-winning author of *Freud's Free Clinics - Psychoanalysis & Social Justice, 1918-1938* (Columbia University Press 2005), *Historical Research* (Oxford University Press, 2008), and co-editor of *Freud/Tiffany - Anna Freud, Dorothy Tiffany Burlingham and the 'Best Possible School'* (Routledge, 2018).

Kristen Hennessy

Kristen Hennessy, Ph.D. is a licensed psychologist in private practice in rural Pennsylvania where she treats traumatized children from a Lacanian framework. She is co-editor of *Psychoanalysis, Politics, Oppression and Resistance* (Routledge, 2022) and her work appears in *Lacanian Psychoanalysis with Babies, Children, and Adolescents: Further Notes on the Child* (Routledge, 2017).

Chris Vanderwees

Chris Vanderwees, PhD, RP is a psychoanalyst and registered psychotherapist at St. John the Compassionate Mission where he treats people who are struggling with homelessness, addictions, psychosis, and other extreme states. He is the co-editor of *Psychoanalysis, Politics, Oppression and Resistance* (Routledge, 2022) and co-author of *Psychoanalysis and the New Rhetoric* (Routledge, 2023). He is also an affiliate and research guest of the Toronto Psychoanalytic Society and a member of the Lacanian School of Psychoanalysis.



UBUBELE CASE CONFERENCE INVITATION

Ububele cordially invites you to our 2022 case conference, where our educational and counselling interns will be presenting their clinical work.

TIME

9:00-16:30

DATE

4 Nov 2022
Friday

PLACE

Ububele Trust
1 Tenth Rd, Kew,
Johannesburg.

For more information contact Sable at
sable@ububele.org

OUR INTERNS AND THEIR TIMES TO PRESENT



Siyathokoza Mbanjwa
Educational
Psychologist
intern

09:00



Sheree Adamas
Educational
Psychologist
intern

10:15

LUNCH WILL BE AT 12:30



Leandra Abreu
Counselling
Psychologist
intern

11:30



Rosemary Picas
Counselling
Psychologist
intern

13:00



Dineo Sibanyoni
Counselling
Psychologist
intern

14:15

FREE ENTRANCE AND REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.

Liaison Committee visit

by Vossie Goosen

Saskia von Overbeck Ottino and Fakhry Davids, the current Liaison Committee (LC) of the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA) which is helping SAPA to become a component society of the IPA, met with our Exco at Coombe Place on Friday, 14 October 2022.

SAPI is an allied centre of the IPA and our members fees and income from events are used to pay for the LC visits.

Fakhry is South African by birth and has been a training analyst in the United Kingdom for years. Saskia is a psychiatrist and analyst from Switzerland who has been working in many countries in Africa, including Senegal and now Rwanda and Cameroon.

Both Fakhry and Saskia are versed in the hybrid mode of working that it still new for many of us. SAPI treasurer Teboho Monyamane and I were with Saskia and Fakhry at Coombe Place. Incoming chair Lunga Nene and College director Nicola Dugmore joined us in Zoom while SAPI secretary Zamo Mbele, SAPI vice-chair Vanessa Dantas e Sá and incoming vice-chair Cheryl Baker joined the meeting from the SAPA library in Kenilworth.

Fakhry and Saskia's interest in our work and our activities was so alive and supportive. We could tell them about our leadership transition and the induction plan that Vanessa and SAPA president-elect Mary-Anne Smith drew up and will implement over the next while.

Lunga, Cheryl, Nicola (as a co-opted member), Teboho, Hasmita Hardudh-Dass (who takes over from Zamo as secretary) and Vanessa will also receive leadership training from an organisational expert. This and most of the SAPI news we shared with Fakhry and Saskia received an enthusiastic nod. "Robustly conceived" is how Fakhry described the College plans which Nicola introduced in a short presentation.

We described how SAPI's financial position improved during Covid when we had to switch to online work. This also made it possible for us to keep our membership fees the same for three years.

Fakhry and Saskia were especially interested in the outreach work that both Cape Town and Johannesburg do in the Low Fee Services (LFS). They could also appreciate how groups like the LFS, the Intercity Community groups and Intergenerational Transfer of the Trauma of Apartheid (ITTA) groups are portals of entry into SAPI. Of course, the College will take a centre space in this regard from now onwards – we are already receiving applications for SAPI membership and space in our clinical groups from aspirant College students.

Vanessa and Nicola sent Fakhry and Saskia reports on the induction and College. I sent a short report with remarks on my time as chair in SAPI and Teboho a short outline on SAPI's financials. We also made the statistics that our admin person, Tye Wootten, produces for the Exco available to them.

DARK CONTINENTS PSYCHOANALYSIS AND COLONIALISM REVISITED

Speaker Ranjana Khanna and
respondent Anshu Srivastava

Saturday, 10 December 2022,
3:00pm - 5:00pm GMT

Online seminar • £12 - £24

10.12



[BOOK HERE](#)

Organised by the Race & Culture
Committee of the Guild of
Psychotherapists

Ranjana Khanna's work is wide-ranging and engages in particular questions of sexual difference and colonial legacies, looking to conceptualise a psychoanalysis which is genuinely postcolonial and emancipatory.

Her book *Dark Continents: Psychoanalysis and Colonialism* (2003) was one of the first to comprehensively investigate the influence of colonialism and racialisation on the theory and practice of psychoanalysis and related therapies.

In this seminar, Ranjana reconsiders some of the theories and observations of her path-breaking book and we will discuss the clinical and social implications of these still-relevant ideas. More broadly, can they help psychoanalysis and other talking therapies embody an anti-racist approach in their clinical practice and theorising?

For further event details, speakers' biographies and booking options please see the [event listing](#).

Low Fee Services

Bringing psychoanalysis to a larger community

by *Nonhlanhla Mngomezulu*

In 2008, when SAPA training analyst Sue Levy shared her dream of starting the Low Fee Clinic, I couldn't conceptualise how psychoanalytic thinking could be applied to our work with the poor and with underprivileged communities. Ten years later, in 2018, she invited me to join the Johannesburg Low Fee Service (LFS) which started two years earlier, providing low fee/pro bono services to individuals and families struggling to access mental health services.

Although the thought of taking a psychoanalytic way of working into the community was still inconceivable, I did not hesitate to join as I had been consciously aware of the lack of psychological services for the poor and low-income earners. Psychology has been known to be an elitist discipline that is not accessible to the wider, less privileged groups who lack financial means. It is a painful reality, watching communities struggle with mental illness. A rising number of people require these services post-Covid.

Starting small, the Johannesburg LFS team has grown to a dedicated team of 26 clinicians who generously give their time to provide weekly pro bono/low fee psychoanalytic psychotherapy services to the less fortunate members of our community.

Whilst only a small segment of the community benefits from the services of the LFS, being part of the team has been so rewarding. The weekly supervision provided by Sue is just the most valuable experience. It provides a rich learning opportunity for us, therapists.

We use the space to reflect on our work and to share our experience, knowledge and skills. In addition, Sue facilitates free monthly academic seminars to hone our knowledge and skills in psychoanalytic psychotherapy, race, trauma and to keep abreast with theoretical developments.

Being part of the team optimises learning, professional development and, most of all, learning how to bring psychoanalysis to a larger community that continues to bear the burdens of apartheid. A community that has not had access to deep psychodynamic work as well as no means to engage in long term psychoanalytic therapy.

Using Winnicott's notion of a holding environment, the supervision space feels very safe and containing. The supervision sessions are not only limited to client material. The weekly check-ins provide space to share concerns about our diverse realities and some challenges in our private practices.

The services that the team renders are quite impactful.

Being part of the team has proven beyond doubt that psychoanalysis has a great deal to offer the community and that patients from every background have a right to receive this kind of treatment.

During our work I gained insight into directly applied psychoanalytic concepts while working in disadvantaged populations. It afforded me the opportunity to see clients consistently for two years and to



work with their unconscious conflicts, defences, resistances while taking cognisance of their external realities.

I want to thank all my colleagues in the team, and especially also our very seasoned supervisors, most of whom are psychoanalysts, for making all of this possible.

Meet the Johannesburg Low Fee Service (LFS) Leadership

by *LFS head Sue Levy, Vossie Goosen and Teboho Monyamane*

- The Johannesburg Low Fee service is a virtual psychoanalytic clinic offering a pro bono or low fee service to people who are in need of psychotherapy and are unable to afford this. We began as three colleagues in 2016 and now, in 2022, the service comprises 26 clinicians.
- We have treated 43 patients this past year, including one patient in four times a week analysis and four patients in a twice weekly psychotherapy. Overall, since 2016, the Johannesburg Low Fee Service (LFS) has assisted more than 100 patients.
- Our service operates solely on a volunteer basis. Some colleagues have more than one patient, but the predominant model is that clinicians offer treatment to one patient, weekly, pro bono, and receive group supervision and theory input pro-bono in return.
- The matter of payment is decided between patient and therapist. Some patients pay up to R400 per session but most patients are treated pro bono or pay a very reduced rate. All earnings are paid to the LFS (not to the clinician) and are ring-fenced by SAPA for LFS usage. This has allowed the LFS to employ Tye Wootten who maintains our virtual filing system and keeps track of all of our correspondence.
- In 2020 we limited our weekly psychotherapy service to a maximum of two years. This is, of course, not ideal but given our limited resources we have adopted this model to maximise what we offer to the community.

- We have, however, recently adopted a group psychotherapy approach which we believe will be a central part of our service going forward. We are planning (from 2023) to offer people who have ended their two-year treatment a place in a longer-

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Low Fee Services

The team builds confidence

by *Hasmita Hardudh-Dass*

To say that I joined the Low Fee Service (LFS) out of pure civic mindedness would be an untruth. For many years I offered several pro bono and low fee slots in my independent practice in the south of Johannesburg, holding these words of Freud (1923) dear:

“If psychoanalysis, with its scientific significance, has value as therapeutic method; if it’s in conditions to assist suffering beings in the struggle for the achievement of cultural requirements, this help must be also available to the multitude of human beings who are too poor to reward the analyst for his hard work.”

When I heard about the LFS it appealed to me. It came at a time when I was grappling with several concerns associated with being in private practice. Firstly, I had been feeling very isolated from regular intellectual stimulation. Secondly, I practice both in a private hospital setting and I have rooms attached to a busy medical practice.

My work mostly focuses on the clinical management and care of patients who are often also seen by a psychiatrist. As my practice became more established over the years I felt more and more distant from the competencies synonymous with psychotherapy. As a result I felt increasingly unfulfilled and afraid of losing the something that had attracted me to training as a psychotherapist: depth psychotherapy.

I heard about the LFS via an email circulated to a group and joined towards the latter part of 2018.

I immediately felt welcomed, stimulated and connected to the work.

I was much more aware of my shortcomings but also confident that I was in the right space to address them.

The thinking and safe holding space generously offered – initially by Sue Levy and Vossie Goosen – helped put me at ease. Later on I also benefitted from supervision with Mary Ann Smith, Tony Hamburger and, more recently, also Mary-Ann Tandy.

We attend a weekly supervision. It was held at Ububele for many years. Sue Levy also offered a monthly reading group which took place in the evenings, initially in her home and later at colleagues’ practice in Parkwood. We share vignettes from work with our LFS patients so as to better understand the depth of the theory.

Meaningful weekly engagements with psychotherapists from across the province is significant in sustaining the LFS and the growing demand for its services.

continued from “Meet the Johannesburg Low Fee Service”

term psychotherapy group. Sue and Teboho will facilitate this first group. The hope is that this will be a template for the service going forward and that there will be more than one group running as people end their individual treatment.

- There is currently no formal Assessment Service in the Johannesburg LFS as we simply do not have the person power to offer this resource. Thus far we have used a rudimentary assessment tool via our Questionnaire which every patient is asked to complete. On the basis of this form, and also on the basis of the information from the referrer, we refer patients to an LFS colleague for weekly therapy. At times, but not often, we have had to decide that a referral is not appropriate for our scheme but typically we are able to accept the patients who are referred to us. We are hopeful that as we grow we will have a formal assessment wing, but for now this system has been successful.

- The LFS is also able to refer patients for psychoanalysis to the Johannesburg South African Psychoanalytical Association (SAPA) candidates. With the assistance of our Questionnaire we refer specific patients for assessment, not treatment, with a view to analysis with a SAPA candidate. The formal assessment then happens via the candidate and supervisor. If the potential patient is not considered suitable for analysis they are returned to the psychotherapy waiting list.

- The LFS offers a weekly supervision group on a Friday from 10.30am to 12pm. The supervision group is centrally important to the life and heart of the LFS. We discuss cases and think about psychoanalytical theory in relation to them. We have a strong narrative around the broader socio-economic and cultural contexts of our society. We also think about who we are as therapists and psychoanalysts and also who our patients are. Issues of race and racialisation, gender and gender norms, poverty and its relation to shame and violence, as well as belief systems - from Christianity to sangoma practises - are all part of what we think about and try to engage with in our Friday meetings. We foster a climate of openness and safety for people to share their views and their difficulties in the work. At the same time we remain fully committed to understanding the unconscious transference relationship between patient and therapist, whatever the setting may be and whatever the underlying beliefs and contexts are that are true for our patients. Sue Levy facilitates the group three times monthly and Tony Hamburger facilitates on the last Friday of the month. Sue also offers individual supervision via email for any colleagues who may feel the need for extra input.

- We are thrilled to announce that Mary-Anne Tandy is now the official Ububele liaison person in the LFS. This is a hugely important position which will strengthen our ties with Ububele. We remain very committed to the model of community psychoanalysis and we remain committed to and grateful for Ububele which provides us with a home for our service.

- The Low Fee Service is currently in discussion with Ububele regarding offering further support and input to the Ububele clinicians.

- In the medium term we have hopes and plans to create a dedicated full-time service that offers Applied Psychoanalysis to the poor whatever their race or background.

The extracts above are from reports compiled for the SAPI mid-year general meeting (MGM) and the Liaison Committee (LC) of the International Psychoanalytical Association (IPA).

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

Low Fee Services

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continued from "Meet the Johannesburg Low Fee Service"



The often-intense supervision addresses the everyday struggles of the South African person living in impoverished and often overwhelming and under-resourced social situations.

It is a deeply humbling but also overwhelming experience. Often in the supervision I have to confront my own preconceptions or prejudices and my limited understanding of human subjectivity which embraces psychological, social, political, economic and other dimensions.

Patients present with issues that transcend the internal dilemmas often faced by those in private settings: poverty, unemployment, poor support, limited access to necessary resources, gender-based violence and numerous other traumas.

All was progressing well until March 2020 when we were confronted with Covid-19. The depth of this trauma will only be studied and understood many years from now.

The complexity of the patient and therapist sharing this imposing, life threatening external reality impacted significantly on the weekly psychotherapy and supervision sessions.

When patients and therapists experience anxiety it provokes uncertainty. Suffice to say anxiety prevailed all round. Much of our supervision was a debriefing of sorts.

Maintaining the frame and keeping the basic principles of psychotherapy at the forefront of my mind became a challenge in the therapy space.

To ensure the ongoing nature of the work the LFS supervision and therapy sessions moved to remote, online or telephonic platforms.

Resistances arose in both therapists and patients alike as initially the work felt disembodied and often strained.

A technophobe like me was not spared any discomfort and disruption.

It became a special challenge not to express frustration at times, to manage unavoidable obstacles which accompanied online work: poor connectivity. "Can you hear me?" and "Please unmute" are the litanies that accompanied the work.

Patients trying to find or create a safe space for the work was at times a challenge. Entering patients' homes (and cars) and then entering my home felt intrusive at times but also gave rise to curiosity on both sides.

One of my patients used a broken-down car parked in her back yard from which to attend our sessions. Here she could cry and shout and feel safe. She would, however, periodically comment on missing the warmth and containment of my therapy room.

Keeping the therapeutic frame and maintaining the psychotherapeutic dyad had to prevail. But, maintaining the frame when patients presented with ongoing or worsening social situations inflicted by lockdown and level restrictions became a challenge.

As someone who doesn't do well with long phone calls it was sometimes especially difficult hearing a patient screech or wail into your ear via the ever-present earphones. It felt discombobulating and annoying.

Other times, through my active attentiveness, I felt like I had access to a depth of what the patient was sharing. Interestingly this happened most often when our videos were turned off. I had to attend to more than just the manifest content.

At times it was an incredible challenge as I was blinded from experiencing the patients fully in the *room*. I was inhibited by having to contain my hand gestures. Silences had to be shortened lest the patient thinks that I disappeared or was disconnected.

Attending supervision became a challenge too as many of the therapists experienced burnout with online work. It was with great difficulty and struggle that the members of the LFS, me included, persevered and overcame.

Today we continue to meet regularly, online.

The group membership has doubled and there is a waiting list for the service.

My time at the LFS is still in its infancy stages and I am eternally grateful that I had this external support during the challenges with all things Covid.

My confidence and competence - fingers crossed - have improved significantly and I look forward to many more symbiotic years as a member of the LFS.

Low Fee Services

I want to address the historical lack of access

by *Coletta Canale*

Twenty odd years ago when I began my practice I offered Hospice two free sessions a week.

My first two patients were young boys. One's mother was imprisoned while his father was dying of cancer. The other boy lived in the direst of circumstances.

It goes without saying that I learned so much from these therapies. I also learnt if you provide a service for free it's not as valued and often misused.

The children were both under the care of social services whom they relied upon to get them to appointments. Eventually, I was also picking them up for their sessions. So, boundaries and the frame were compromised.

Like many of us in this profession I've kept at least two sessions at a lower fee. Therefore, it felt like a natural step to join the SAPA-SAPI psychoanalytic service when it first began.

It feels good to be part of a group of colleagues who are thinking about how to extend and provide psychoanalytic services to people who would not have easy access to them.

As with any service we evolve and adjust in accordance with need and resources.

In our recent meeting we thought about the name *Low Fee Service* as well as how much time we offer to each person.

There was much to debate. We thought about the finer and subtle meanings of words. We were also wondering if shorter therapies can be as beneficial as open-ended ones.

When I joined I had in mind that the service would be offered to people of colour. It's not always the case.

I've some discomfort about this. My hope and wish are to broaden the availability of the psychoanalytic experience, to take account of the historical lack of access to such a service and not to just reduce economic barriers to us.



A wild dream

by *Anna Varney-Wong*

I feel passionate about the idea of psychoanalytically oriented psychotherapy becoming widely accessible in South Africa. However, in many ways this is a wild dream.

In South Africa there is a drastic shortage of mental health workers. In an article in the *Mail and Guardian* dated 13 April 2020 Shahana Rasool indicated that mental health workers form 0.58% of the population. Moreover, the majority of the population is not in a position to afford the fees of psychotherapists and psychoanalysts.

In the face of this impossibility it is important not to be impotent but to plant the seeds which can be planted. Against this background the Cape Town SAPI Low Fee Service (LFS) attempts to remedy this stark reality by using a sliding scale model to provide therapeutic services rather than offering hand outs from a position of privilege.

Of course, as a psychotherapist I am in a position of privilege. I am part of a privileged group. We are a small group, each offering our services to a few clients.

The question is how can psychotherapy or psychoanalysis be part of everyone's options rather than being an exclusive, precious gem available to a few. We still need to find a solution to the question of how to make our work widely available. Incorporating methods such as group work may be helpful. In the documentary, *Psychoanalysis in El Barrio*, which is available on YouTube, Patricia Gherovici points out that "in the analytic exchange" a person who is "unemployed, unproductive, becomes somebody who works and who produces. And occupies a different social position, in that sense. And that's why I think it has political potential".

I have found this to be true. In some sense, showing up for the work of therapy sessions seems to contribute to the progress of clients. Some clients share that they speak to friends and family members about their therapeutic experience who in turn are curious to find out more.

Perhaps too, and hopefully, some of the clients of today will be inspired to become psychotherapists or psychoanalysts themselves.

Low Fee Services

Growing a South African mind

by Tanya Wilson

When I finished my training in the mid-1990s – a hopeful time in South Africa – I found myself weighing up whether to wait for a public sector position or to start a private practice. I was aware of a chasm between the choices. Between the realities of those who made use of public health facilities and those who could afford private treatment. Between the disruption and burnout of work in the public sector and the containment and potential depth of work in a private practice.

I had a strong wish for a part-time position in the public health sector. I wanted to remain in contact with South Africans in different realities for my own sake, as much as to be helpful, and, at the same time, to explore my intense interest in long-term psychoanalytic work.

At the time it really seemed that these two things had to be in separate realms.

As my private practice grew, I felt the chasm grow and, although I did bits and pieces of work outside private practice, they were lonely, often split off from the psychoanalytic community I also operated in.

My psychoanalytic work in private practice has been immeasurably rich but, fifteen years in, I could see that I had been right to be concerned about its alienating effects.

The Cape Town Low Fee Service (LFS) began around this time, 20+ years into our democracy, when the deep and difficult impact of South Africa's history on our national psyche and individual minds was becoming increasingly apparent – yet, access to psychological treatment in the public sector had worsened.

For me the LFS provided a place from which it became possible to do a tiny bit of repair work and some badly-needed personal integration.

As a Cape Town LFS committee member I have been lucky to be part of a group of creative thinkers taking the first steps towards building this psychoanalytic service which, at any given time, now treats approximately 35 patients in psychoanalysis or psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

Beyond the treatment structure, the LFS sub-committees reflect on clinical questions that arise, as well as offer seminars that link to theory and multicultural psychoanalytic practice elsewhere in the world.

Many countries have been grappling with similar issues: difference, race, patriarchy, poverty, colonial legacies, inferiorisation and superiorisation.

Several have expanded psychoanalytic theory in original ways to help us all to think, and think again.



It has been exciting to learn about this.

But, most significant is the chance, through the LFS, and through what transpires in our own consulting rooms, to develop a textured South African psychoanalysis, fledgling though we may be.

Personally, the LFS has been a place of important integration, one which has reconnected me to my own social justice concerns.

It has helped to heal a split inside in which psychoanalytic work was separated from such concerns.

It has been a true work-in-progress kind of place where, together, patient by patient, meeting by meeting, we are developing ideas for how such a service should be structured, restructured, thinking actively about the clinical dynamics – and power dynamics – in the work.

It has been a place where a dialogue between psychoanalytic thinking and South African experience – in all its forms – is possible.

One of the biggest challenges facing the LFS is finding more clinical hours for LFS referrals so that more people can be treated.

My own clinical contribution to the LFS has been minimal: one patient a week. As it turned out, the same patient for nearly four years.

It has been difficult work. I have learned a huge amount about daily life in a part of the city that would otherwise have been inaccessible to me. And, whilst I cannot reveal much about the therapy itself, what I can say without a doubt is that a psychoanalytic transformation has occurred within me, through this clinical work and LFS committee work, in relation to my place in this racialised, polarised, infuriating, beloved country.

It remains an aim of mine to create more space for this work, perhaps my very own *part-time position* in our home-grown *public sector* that is the LFS.