

The Therapist as Artist – an Exploration of Aesthetic Form in PBSP

Jon Chapman, M.A.

Workshop (optional)

Saturday, 28 September 2019, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

This workshop will provide practical exploration of the role of creativity and aesthetic expression in PBSP.

In the workshop we will:

- exchange experience and best practice in the balancing of technical and aesthetic requirements during PBSP structures,
- provide a space for PBSP therapists to explore their own creative sources.

In an interview with Albert Pesso in 2009 at Strolling Woods, I asked what made a good PBSP Therapist. He replied that in his opinion the best PBSP therapists, in addition to having a sound theoretical and working knowledge of the techniques embedded in PBSP, had an artistic practice of some kind. This, he said, enabled them to appreciate the aesthetic archetypal form of a PBSP structure, its flow, rhythm and shape, and to work more intuitively than mechanically with what emerged from the client.

The art historian R. G. Collingwood held that the difference between 'proper art' and 'decorative art' was that the former involved the artist connecting with and expressing some 'inner perturbation' which then resonated with their audience's own inner perturbation, resulting in a cathartic experience for both artist and audience, whereas decorative art was merely the skilled application of techniques.

I believe there is an interesting parallel between this relationship between artist and audience and the relationship between the PBSP therapist and the client: both involve the cathartic exploration of perturbation in a ritual space, and the co-creation of a meaningful resolution based on archetypal forms. Increasingly in contemporary art audiences are actively involved in engaging with the artist and their work.

In this workshop we will discuss the challenges that this presents to PBSP therapists in a world which increasingly requires therapy to be measured and defined, both in training and practice. Where is the scope for creativity, improvisation, intuition and aesthetic appreciation? This will be explored using creative exercises.

Jon Chapman, M.A. (UK)

Jon Chapman is a PBSP therapist practising in the UK in London and Cambridge. He is registered with the UK Council of Psychotherapy as a Body Psychotherapist. He has been practising since 2006 and was certified as a Pesso Boyden Therapist in 2008. He has also undertaken a Pesso Boyden Supervisor Training Programme. His creative practices include creative writing (poetry and prose) painting, photography and music.

