NEUROSCIENCE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION: This course introduces the student to some basic concepts derived from neuroscience that are particularly applicable to the psychoanalytic, interactive process. It is intended to expand the range of interventions available to the clinician and to provide further scaffolding for conceptualizing therapeutic action. Students are encouraged to "play" with these concepts in their own clinical practice and bring them to class for discussion. Some may find these concepts irrelevant to clinical practice. If so, objections are also welcome for discussion. The debate about the relevance of neuroscience for psychoanalysis is very active in contemporary psychoanalysis with strong proponents on both sides of the argument. Each year the acceptance of the validity of neuroscience as a discipline that can refine psychoanalytic concepts is exponentially increasing. This course is designed to expose candidates to some of the basic concepts so that each person can make an educated and informed decision about his/her perspective. Moreover, knowledge of the concepts allows one to enter into the dialogue about the relevance of neuroscience to psychoanalysis from an educated perspective rather than an ideological one.

Each class is organized around a particular subject. There will be one or two required readings that will be discussed in class. The OPTIONAL readings are included in the event that a particular subject captures a student's interest and s/he wants to pursue it at a later date. If you want to buy ONE basic book on Neuroscience, buy:


CLASS # 1 MEMORY AS PROCESS: CONNECTIONISM

The first 15 minutes of this class will be devoted to a brief presentation of the brain. It will be limited to an overview that we will need in order to orient to the readings.


CLASS # 3.  THE EMBODIED MIND


Since this is a lot of reading, attend more to Chapter 8 (the theory). You can skim Chapter 9. The chapter describes The Iowa Gambling Experiment, that Damasio uses to “prove” his Somatic Marker Hypothesis. I will go over the experiment in class.

CLASS # 4  THE EMBODIED MIND – Clinical Applications


CLASS # 5  OTHER FACETS OF THE MIND – BODY CONNECTION AND AFFECT THEORY -


CLASS #6  THE NEUROSCIENCE OF FEAR

CLASS # 7  THE NEUROSCIENCE OF FEAR (CONT')


CLASS # 8  INTEGRATING THE NEUROSCIENCE OF FEAR AND THE CLINICAL PROCESS OF TRAUMA. BOTTOM UP VS. TOP DOWN PROCESSING


CLASS # 9  MIRROR NEURONS: READING THE OTHER


CLASS # 10  THE NEUROSCIENCE OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY