

## Understanding Intersubjectivity

**Instructor: Stephen Prior, Ph.D., Psy.D.**

8 Friday meetings: January 4, 11, 18, 25 & February 1, 8, 15, 22, 2019  
1:30 to 3:00PM

Location: 354 Washington St., Wellesley, MA

Enrollment limit: 6 participants

In this Seminar we will look at intersubjectivity through three lenses: psychoanalysis, research psychology, and philosophy. The nature of intersubjectivity is far from obvious, and we will use literature from these three domains to expand our grasp of intersubjectivity, and use this greater awareness to more deeply understand the clinical process. To provide relevant focus and detail, we will ground our study in the human capacity to know the intentions of others, and the dyadic ability to signal what we want the other person to attend to. What happens, and how does it happen, for example, when an infant is able to signal his mother that he wants her to attend to something that is important to him? And wants her not simply to respond, but to 'get it' that he is signaling and that he has a particular wish? We will look as well at something important to Klein and Winnicott, namely how does it come about that we are not (always) trapped in a paranoid/schizoid solipsism? We will read about the notion of an 'analytic field,' and its historical origins in work by philosophers. Readings will include texts by Michael Tomasello, Dan Stern, Donald Winnicott, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.

### Learning Objectives:

1. Describe specific differences between psychological, psychoanalytic, and philosophical perspectives on intersubjectivity.
2. List specific texts and authors who are essential for understanding intersubjectivity in the modern context.
3. List specific differences between human intersubjectivity and primate awareness of the other.
4. Explain humans' capacity to recognize the intentions and feelings of others.
5. Define and discuss the capacity for compassion and the capacity for love.
6. Recognize the anxieties that afflict people who suffer serious remoteness or dissociation.
7. Utilize the clinical impact of personal recognition in therapy.
8. Explain current neuroscientific research into intersubjectivity.

### Bibliography

Beebe, et. al. "On Knowing and Being Known in the 4-month Origins of Disorganized Attachment: An Emerging Presymbolic Theory of Mind." (In Metcalfe and Terrace, 2013.)

Damasio, Antonio, *Self Comes to Mind*: New York, Random House, 2008.

Gallager, Shaun, "Direct perception in the intersubjective context," *Consciousness and Cognition* 17 (2008) 535–543.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, "The child's relations with others," *The Primacy of Perception*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964. (Published in France in *Cours de Sorbonne*, Paris, 1960.)

Metcalfe, Janet, "'Knowing' that the Self is the Agent," (in Metcalfe and Terrace, 2013)

Metcalfe, Janet, and Terrace, Herbert S., *Agency and Joint Attention*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Stern, Daniel N., *The Present Moment In Psychotherapy and Everyday Life*. New York: Norton, 2004.

Tomasello, Michael, *The Cultural Origins of Human Cognition*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

Tronick, Ed, *The Neurobehavioral and Social-Emotional Development of Infants and Children*, New York, Norton, 2007

Tronick, Ed, and Beeghly, Marjorie, "Infants' Meaning-Making and the Development of Mental Health Problems," *American Psychologist*, 2011.

Zahavi, Dan, *Subjectivity and Selfhood*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005

**Stephen Prior, Psy.D** is a graduate of MIP, where he currently serves on the faculty and the Academic Outreach Committee. He is the author of *Object Relations in Severe Trauma* (1996), an analytically oriented study of traumatized children and primitive anxieties. He has a private practice in psychoanalysis for adults and psychotherapy for children, adults, and couples. He has an interest in philosophy, the evolution of psychoanalytic theory and technique, and the study of resistance.

### **Continuing Education Credits**

**Physicians:** The Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis, Inc. is accredited by the Massachusetts Medical Society to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis, Inc. designates this live activity for a maximum of 12 AMA PRA Category 1 Credit(s)™. Physicians should claim only credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

**Psychologists:** The Massachusetts Institute for Psychoanalysis (MIP) is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. MIP maintains responsibility for this program and its content. This educational activity offers 12 CEs.

Per APA requirements, psychologists must attend 100% of a course in order to be eligible for continuing education credit.

**Social Workers:** This program has been approved for 12 Social Work Continuing Education hours for relicensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. Collaborative of NASW and the Boston College and Simmons Schools of Social Work authorization number D 80064-4.

Per NASW requirements, social workers must attend 80% of a course in order to be eligible for continuing education credit.

**Licensed Mental Health Counselors:** When an LMHC attends a CE event that has not been approved for CE, an *individual* may seek approval retroactively by meeting the criteria for approval outlined in the MMCEP LMHC Consumer Guidelines and the CMR 262 Regulations for LMHCs. With Retroactive Approval, the CEs can be applied to the CE requirement to renew a license. Visit <http://www.mamhca.org/mmcep/lmhc-ce-guidelines/> for information.

The course is free, however non-MIP members pay a flat fee of \$150 for CE. LMHC seek credits directly from MaMHCA.