

# Free Associations

## A Newsletter for the PSP Community

...dedicated to excellence in learning, teaching and application of psychoanalytic knowledge

Volume 2, Number 8 – August, 2021

**NOTABLE QUOTE:** “Discovery consists in seeing what everyone else has seen but understanding it for the first time.”

– Albert Szent-Gyorgi, Nobel laureate in Physiology or Medicine

### OUTSIDE NEWS & VIEWS

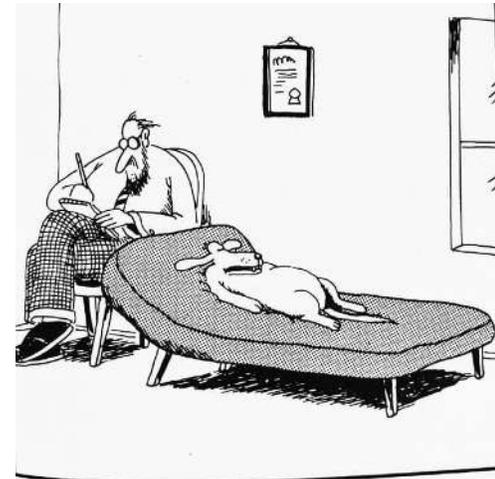
A federal advisory panel has recommended that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) ban the painkillers Percocet and Vicodin because of their damaging effects on the liver. The two popular painkillers combine acetaminophen with a narcotic. High doses of acetaminophen are believed to cause liver damage. The panel noted that, over time, people who take Percocet or Vicodin need to take higher and higher doses of the drugs to receive the same effect. At least seven other prescription drugs that combined acetaminophen with narcotics also would be banned if the FDA follows the panel's recommendations.

### THE THERAPIST'S THESAURUS

*Developmental continuity.* A sequence in which later events are a continuation or extension of earlier events.

*Projective tests.* Instruments that measure aspects of personality functioning by asking subjects to interpret ambiguous stimuli.

*Constricted affect.* Reduction in intensity of feeling tone that is less severe than that of blunted affected.



“They never leave anymore. I miss my ‘me’ time.”

### PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

#### Attachment and Development

*Attachment* originated in the work of John Bowlby and can be defined as the emotional tone between children and their caregivers and is evidenced by an infant's seeking and clinging to the caregiving person, usually the mother. By their first month, infants usually have begun to show such behavior, which is designed to promote proximity to the desired person. Bowlby pointed out that attachment

constitutes a central motivational force and that mother-child attachment was an essential medium of human interaction that has important consequences for later development and personality functioning. Attachment develops gradually; it results in an infant's wanting to be with a preferred person who is perceived as able to reduce anxiety or distress. Attachment thus gives infants feelings of security. The process is facilitated by interaction between mother and infant; the amount of time together is less important than the amount of activity between the two.

### TECHNIQUE OF THE WEEK – *Establishing the Preliminary Alliance*

While it is impossible to establish a true working alliance with a potential patient in one interview, much anxiety or fear can be reduced if the effort is made. A one-time meeting, however brief, can enhance the patient's transition into the treatment process, thus increasing the possibility of more responsiveness to treatment. An alliance with the therapist will decrease the likelihood of a TDR occurring because of the intensity of the feelings that are triggered by the regressive pull to terminate treatment. An alliance is especially important if a patient has had no prior psychotherapy experience.

In one study it was found that it is the patient who has never been exposed to individual psychotherapy who is most likely to prematurely drop out of treatment. In another study the awkwardness of the management of the early hours of treatment was the most significant factor contributing to premature dropouts and treatment failures.

If you cannot keep the patient in treatment, there is little chance they will have the opportunity to improve.

**INTERESTING QUOTE:** “When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change.”

-Dr. Wayne Dyer