



EVENING MEETING PROGRAMME 2025

The meetings will be held in the Cranbury Room at The Hilt, Hiltingbury Recreation Ground, Hiltingbury Road, Chandlers Ford, Hampshire SO53 5NP and jointly via Zoom. They are open to anyone interested in any of the topics, including students.



Meetings open at 19.15. Presentations from 19.30 – 21.00

Identity

For our 2025 programme, Wessex Psychotherapy Society will be focussing on the theme of identity.

What do we mean by identity? Who are we? Is this about how we become ourselves as separate individuals, or which groups we belong to? Is our sense of ourselves always escaping us?

The term identity is not used very much in articles relating to psychoanalytic thinking, as found on Pep-web, before Erik Erikson begins to write about it in the 1950s.

Since then writers have equated identity with a sense of the self that is recognisably consistent through time and yet at the same time can develop, suggesting an ability to accommodate change. A Kleinian viewpoint, whilst not directly referencing identity, would encompass the integration of the self through taking back projected feared and unwanted aspects of ourselves, such as our hate and our vulnerability, allowing us to become whole and thereby to experience ourselves as separate, though alone. This is seen to be a huge developmental task.

Many of our patients arrive with similar difficulties and for us to be helpful as therapists, we understand the need to examine our own challenges in relating and to continue this as a life-long endeavour.

As well as “Who am I as an individual?” questions of identity can involve seemingly the opposite striving: a desire to avoid separateness, or an adopting of identifications in order to avoid the depressive anxieties inherent in being separate and alone. Much of today’s so-called identity politics also falls into this category: so much safer to be feel part of a group than to experience the persecutory anxieties of feeling on the outside, or perhaps the reality of being on the outside, as a member of a minority group.

Our speakers this year will help us to think about this topic from a variety of perspectives. We hope you feel inspired to come along and lend the group your thinking, to further our understanding in this area.

Wed 15th January 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">AGM</p> <p>Our annual meeting to present the business of the Committee. All are welcome to contribute to the discussions but only members can vote on decisions. This meeting is also an informal opportunity to socialise with the Committee and fellow members, to discuss this and the previous year's programme, and, amongst other things, to bring your thoughts for speakers or topics that you would like to hear in the future.</p> <p>Our programme this year will start with a discussion of the idea of identity with reference to Chapter 4 of <i>Playing and Reality</i> by D. W. Winnicott – <i>Creative activity and the search for self</i>. In this paper, Winnicott introduces the idea of the potential space of experiencing between subject and other, and the idea that it is through creativity and play that the individual can discover the self. He also points to the paradox to be tolerated between our inner reality and how we experience the external world as one-among-many. This chapter is available on PEP Web, or a copy can be made available on request to WPS.</p> <p>A second paper from <i>The Divided Self</i> by R.D. Laing may also be referenced – <i>The embodied and unembodied self</i>. In this paper Laing outlines what can happen when we become disembodied from our sense of being, drawing upon Freud's original idea of the ego being "first and foremost a bodily ego" (<i>The Ego and the Id</i>). A copy of this chapter can be made available on request to WPS.</p>
Wed 12th February 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">Conor McCormack - <i>identity and social change</i></p> <p>Conor McCormack practices psychoanalysis in Bristol, UK. He also teaches and writes. Prior to this, he made films.</p>
Wed 12th March 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">Rima Hawkins - <i>sexual identities and relationship diversities</i></p> <p>Rima Hawkins is a British-Indian queer sex and relationship psychotherapist, traumatologist and a supervisor, practicing online from London. Rima works with an integrative style, using various humanistic models and theories. She is an EMDR accredited therapist.</p> <p>Rima initially trained as a teacher, followed her career in the NHS working in Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), including HIV with adults and young adults. Rima developed and led the national programme of the Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) in England and Wales working with the government and local services in partnership.</p> <p>Rima works with queer identity clients (individual & couples/polycules), with special interests in diversity, cross cultural relationship issues, intersectionality, and domestic and sexual violence. She's written articles and chapters on sexual and gender identities and relationship diversities and how power dynamics work.</p> <p>Rima's talk will include break-out discussions of case material - please bring your own thinking of how sexual identities have manifested in your practice.</p>
Wed 9th April 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">Aaron Ballick - <i>The Digitally Mediated Self: How Social Media, Algorithms, and AI are Redefining Identity.</i></p> <p>In this talk Dr. Aaron Ballick delves into the profound impact that digital technologies have on our sense of self. It explores how social media, algorithms, and AI are reshaping identity, amplifying differences, and increasing polarisation in ways that challenge social cohesion. This talk invites</p>

	<p>psychotherapists to consider the psychological and social implications of digital mediation, exploring how these forces impact the self and influence relationships in a hyper-connected world.</p> <p>Dr. Aaron Balick is a psychotherapist, clinical supervisor, and honorary senior lecturer at the Department for Psychoanalytic and Psychosocial Studies at the University of Essex. With over 20 years of clinical and academic experience, Aaron specialises in applying psychoanalytic ideas to contemporary culture, with a particular focus on the impact of technology on identity and relationships. His pioneering text, <i>The Psychodynamics of Social Networking</i> is widely regarded as a seminal text in its field.</p> <p>Aaron is passionate about expanding the reach of psychotherapy thinking in a variety of innovative and accessible ways. He is a media contributor and international keynote speaker specialising in applying insights from depth psychology in accessible ways for personal growth and cultural understanding. He is the author of two self-help books, <i>Keep Your Cool</i> for teens and <i>The Little Book of Calm</i> for adults. Based in Shoreditch, East London, Aaron runs a private practice offering psychotherapy for adults and teens alongside psychological consultancy for individuals and organisations.</p>
Wed 14th May 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Our identity as therapists</i></p> <p>A screening of one or two episodes of the US series <i>Couples Therapy</i>, shown on the BBC, followed by an open floor to think together about what it brings up for us: perhaps how the analyst shown practises compared with how we practise and what these differences may signify; how we see Orna Guralnik and how this may cause us to reflect on how we may in turn be seen. This also gives us the chance to be curious not just about this analyst's practice, but also her supervision, including peer input.</p>
Wed 11th June 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">Dr Sharon Numa - <i>The Sense of Identity - A Kleinian View</i></p> <p>Dr Sharon Numa is a Fellow of the Institute of Psychoanalysis.</p>
Wed 10th September 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">Professor Michael Rustin - <i>Identity or Identification? Why the Difference Between These Concepts Matters</i></p> <p>Professor Michael Rustin is an Associate of the British Psychoanalytical Society, Visiting Professor at the Tavistock Clinic, and Professor of Sociology at the University of East London</p>
Wed 8th October 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;">Nick Spinks - <i>The link between internalised homophobia and suicidality in sexual minority men</i></p> <p>Nick Spinks is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist and member of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). Nick has experience of working in both NHS and private practice, and is especially interested in gender, sexuality, and those who identify as non-binary and/or are exploring their sexuality.</p>
Wed 12th November 19.30-21.00	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>TBC</i></p>

No charge to Members.

Annual membership £70.00 (£35.00 Students/Retired Members)
Non-members £20.00 per meeting (£10.00 Students/Retired Members)

1 ½ hours CPD per meeting

Payment can be made by Bank Transfer:

A/C Wessex Psychotherapy Society

S/C 60-18-46

A/C No: 21217866

Enquiries: T: 07976 289496 E: wessexpsysoc74@gmail.com

For Full programme details go to our website: <http://www.wessexpsychotherapysociety.com>