

The unanalysed race complex

by Frank Lowe

Saturday 16th October 2021

10:30am to 1:00pm

Venue: tbc

Racism has played a major role in the development of western societies, and although there has been progress towards racial equality, it remains a repressed organising principle in our culture and forms an unconscious part of our psyches, identities and relationships. This paper contends that as a result of this history there exists within the psyche a complex about race that is usually hidden and largely unanalysed.

Although psychotherapy has tools that can develop our understanding of this complex, psychotherapy has historically failed to think deeply about race and racism in the training of therapists. Consequently, a therapy culture has been inherited, in which race within the psyche is a largely unthinkable subject and an unanalysed part of most therapists' minds.

In this paper, I will draw on clinical material to illustrate the race complex and propose that our profession needs to create a non-judgemental environment where resistance towards thinking about race and racism in oneself is better worked with in order that understanding and practice regarding race can be improved in our therapeutic work.

About the Speaker: Frank Lowe is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist at the Tavistock Clinic. He has written several papers on race and edited the book *Thinking Space: Promoting thinking about race, culture and diversity in Psychotherapy and beyond*.

About the chair: Susannah Izzard is a psychoanalytic psychotherapist living and working in Suffolk and is a director of FiP.

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