Psychoanalytic infant observation

Tu-S-335
The role of attention and containment in infant development of mind and clinical intervention
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Babies can be a source of learning thanks to the specific kind of training in infant observation that Esther Bick’s method provides: weekly observation sessions in the infant’s home environment, from birth until 2 years of age. The three different phases of the procedure can be seen as a methodological model for the thought processes it involves: after the weekly home observation session with baby and family, the observer writes out an observation, which is then read to a seminar group led by an analyst trained in the method. This is a process that, in emphasizing and sustaining the observer’s attentiveness and containing function, also strengthens them. Unlike other observation methods, the principal aim of training in this instance is the development of the observer’s own capacity for attention, reflection and containment. We discuss how this method is a highly precious instrument for professionals in different field of mental health.

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Tu-S-336
Negotiating anxieties in vulnerable parent–infant relationships: Psychoanalytic observation, early interactions and containment
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This paper draws on observations of vulnerable mother-infants, weekly, between birth and 2 years. Qualities of containment are characterised by parental containing “shape” and infants’ “grip relations”. The negotiation of experiences of intense anxiety contribute to early patterns of relatedness; particular consistencies up to the end of the second year are recognised as demonstrating the continuities of these patterns internalised to form an important aspect of the infant’s development. Examples from the observations illustrate some vivid manifestations of relational continuities. These include the internalisation of an aspect of the early relationship as a bodily quality, play which shows the baby’s preoccupation with characteristics of the early relationship and the babies’ relating to ordinary separations and absences of parents. Links between knowledge generated by the infant observation approach, emotion regulation and attachment theory will be discussed.

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Tu-S-337
How soon a baby will recognize his parents as different? The longitudinal development of specific relationships in an infant observation
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Infant observation with Esther Bick’s method can support research with a unique case and allows the study of longitudinal development of relational patterns within a family trough repeated observations every weeks. Theories about the beginnings of the father’s role within the mother-infant dyad are still submitted to discussions. Recent research shows the babies’ early aptitude to create a differentiated bond with each parent, at least at a phenomenological level in a research setting (McHale et Fivaz-Depeursinge, 2008). As psychoanalysts, we are also interested with the scaffolding of identity structure and trying to grasp at best the internalization processes including the contribution of both parents. Furthermore, we wish to understand the way the young child will differentiate and interpret caring as maternal or paternal.

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Emotion regulation from infancy to adolescence

Tu-S-338
Emotion regulation in early infancy: Individual differences and their correlates
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Effective regulation of emotions has been viewed as an important developmental task that serves as a prerequisite for several other developmental tasks (Lewis, 1998). Children with deficits in emotion regulation have an increased risk for the development of emotional and behavioral problems (Briggs Gowan et al., 2001, Lengua 2002). Many studies show an inverse association between maternal psychological stress load and their children’s competence in emotion regulation. On the other hand, little is known about biological risk factors that influence infants’ adaptability. Therefore, the presented study examines to what extent emotion regulation in infancy is predicted by newborns bio-behavioral adaptability and if maternal biological stress reactivity as well as mental health status moderate this association. Infant self-regulation capacities, a precursor of the emotion regulation has been assessed between day 10 and 14 using the Neonatal intensive Care unit network Neurobehavioral Scale as well as at the age of 6 months during the Face of paradigm. Maternal stress reactivity has been assessed during a laboratory stress test (TSST). Maternal symptoms of depression have been measured by the Edinburgh Postnatal depression Scale. Regression analyses point out, that the emotion regulation in infancy can be predicted both by biological stress reactivity of the mother and behavioral adaptability of the newborn child. Furthermore, results suggest a mediating role of maternal mental health status. Based on the presented results, it can be derived that newborns self-regulation capacities (apart from given maternal resources) have an impact on emotion regulation in the early childhood.

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Tu-S-339
Emotional and behavioral adjustment in children: Associations to birth conditions and sleep patterns
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Emotion regulation from infancy to adolescence

The aim of the study was to assess differences in sleep patterns in preterm born children and their relation to cognitive and socioemotional development. We hypothesized that preterm children show lower scores in cognitive tests, have more socioemotional problems, and lower sleep efficiency than term born children. We also expected that sleep efficiency is more strongly rela-
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Effective regulation of emotions has been viewed as an important developmental task that serves as a prerequisite for several other developmental tasks (Lewis, 1998). Specifically, unregulated emotions have the potential to disorganize and disrupt multiple psychological processes. Individual differences in capacities of emotion regulation carry over from childhood into adulthood, where they influence coping styles, problem solving, social support processes, relationship quality, and mental and physical health (Repetti, et al., 2002). Children with deficits in emotion regulation have therefore an increased risk for the development of emotional and behavioral problems (Briggs Gowan et al., 2001).

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Tu-S-340
Facial mimicry of dynamic emotional facial expressions in adolescents with non-suicidal self-injury

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Facial mimicry (FM) is the tendency by which people in social situations imitate or mimic the facial expressions of others. In social interactions FM is highly important as it encourages relationships and empathy. Non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI) can be seen as an inadequate strategy to regulate negative affects. Social conflicts often precede NSSI. Youths with NSSI experience interpersonnal communications as problematic and distressing. Therefore, FM is of particular interest in youth with NSSI. In the present study, facial reactions to dynamic emotional expressions were measured using facial electromyography. The participant’s current mood state was controlled using brief film clips evoking a negative and a neutral mood state. So far, 15 female adolescents with NSSI, 10 clinical and 15 healthy controls were investigated. Recruitment is ongoing. Preliminary results indicate that adolescents with NSSI respond inadequately to positive and negative facial emotional expressions, especially when they are in a negative mood state.

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Tu-S-341
In middle adolescence, emotion regulation and emotion recognition, but not emotion recognition, is related to sleep deprivation

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The problem of street children is a serious issue in Turkey as it is all around the world, growing progressively and which comprises a multiple causality. In Istanbul, a part of the street children that can be taken under care and protection are placed in institutions called “Centers of Children and Youth”, whereas a small part of them who — due to their various psychological problems — can not adapt to the functioning of these institutions, are transferred to another institution called “Observation Center”. In this article, after making a general description of the question of street children in Turkey, information will be given on the