

Psyche and Soma: The Body in Psychoanalysis

Jacqueline A. Carleton, Ph.D.
115 E 92nd Street #2A
New York, NY 10128
Email: jacarleton@aol.com
Phone: (212) 987-4969

Psyche and Soma: The Body in Psychoanalysis

IFPE Conference, Toronto, October 19-21, 2007

ABSTRACT

Neuroscientific research is making it increasingly clear that psychoanalysis can benefit from taking more account of somatic processes than has traditionally been stressed. Authors such as Daniel Siegel and Louis Cozolino, and especially Allan Schore, have been clarifying the significance of the unity of the psychosoma in explorations of topics such as the role of implicit/procedural memory in the development of the healthy individual as well those whose symptoms bring them to our treatment rooms. Utilizing the research of attachment theorists as well as clinical research has opened new vistas in treatment possibilities. Much that we have done intuitively has been validated by this research, but it has also opened the way for the incorporation of new techniques in the treatment of the person as a psychosomatic unity.

This paper briefly traces the traditional view of the body in psychoanalytic thought from Freud to the present as well as the parallel development of body psychotherapies, often initially in opposition to, but more recently in conjunction with, psychoanalytic theory and research.

The author draws on her thirty years of experience practicing, teaching and writing about both psychoanalysis and body psychotherapy to present a somatic understanding of such topics as:

- the relationship between the unconscious and implicit/procedural memory;
- the relationship between what Daniel Stern has characterized as the observed and clinical infants utilized in the treatment of adults;
- how understanding bodily attitudes and affects can illuminate transference and countertransference;
- specific techniques from body/somatic psychotherapy to facilitate the exploration of the dynamic unconscious in the intersubjective analytic space.