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**Are you an Analyst? Self Directed Education in Psychoanalysis: Escape? Encounter? How about Escapade**

Defining what a psychoanalyst is by means of criteria created by bureaucracies or via social norms risks undermining what is prized by the scholarly discipline of psychoanalysis as opposed to the profession of psychoanalysis. If we understand that there is a subversive quality to listening to individuals while striving to understand unconscious meanings, then it is contradictory to only aspire to define *what is an analyst?* by criteria created by the state or other institutions, no matter how involved *psychoanalysts* are in creating such criteria. This paper offers self-directed education in psychoanalytic thinking as an *escapade*. From the Latin *excappare*- "to get out of one's cape; to leave a pursuer with just one's cape." An escapade means to engage in adventuresome activity that runs counter to socially approved conduct. How does the analytic community respond to those who engage in escapades, such as self-directed study in psychoanalytic work? As rascals, perhaps? Can those who engage in escapades garner respect in the analytic community and should they want to? What do the self directed pursuers desire? What are the dangers of self directed study? Does self-directed mean alone or without others? Must it mean escape from legitimacy? Might those who engage in self-directed study perform a service for those who pursue the more traditional institute training, namely to encourage the *legitimate* analysts to truly encounter psychoanalysis? In order to address the central themes, the paper will be partly autobiographical, using pictures from the presenter's childhood, dressed as superman with cape.

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