Kohut’s (1971) early conceptualization of the self and selfobject matrix contributed to the yet emergent paradigm transformation from intrapsychic to relational field models. This early relational foundational structure that all psychological phenomena emerge within a relational field became articulated even more abundantly when in 1984 Kohut emphatically wrote: “self-selfobject relationships form the essence of psychological life from birth to death” (p. 47). The purpose of this course is to delineate Kohut’s model and the subsequent and ongoing evolutionary changes in that model that have contributed to what we now call, “Relational Self Psychology.” Cutting edge topics will include: epistemological and field (systems) theories, formation and transformation of the organization of experience, evolving concepts of self and selfobject, key clinical implications of the organizing model of transference, the use and impact of the analyst’s subjectivity with empathic and other
listening/experiencing perspectives, and the analyst’s expanded participation in implicit and explicit processes, enactments and therapeutic action. We will highlight major contributions of relational self psychology, at times comparatively with those contributions of other relational approaches. While theoretical, clinical implications, augmented with clinical vignettes and case presentations, will be central throughout the course.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**Class 1: Summary of Kohut’s Contributions**


**Class 2: Transference as Organizing Activity: Repetitive and Selfobject Dimensions**


**Class 3: Listening/experiencing Perspectives and Countertransference, Clinical Vignettes**


Optional


Class 4: How Theory Shapes Technique: Perspectives on a Self-Psychological Clinical Presentation


Class 5: Discussants of the Case of P and Analyst’s Reply


Optional


Class 6: Intersubjectivity Theory, A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation

Class 7: Intersubjectivity Theory and Treatment, A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation


Class 8: Self and Motivational Systems. A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation


Optional


Class 9: The Concept of Aggression in Self Psychology. A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation


Class 10: An Evolutionary Perspective. A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation

**Class 11: Trauma**


**Class 12: Love in the Analytic Relationship. A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation**


**Class 13: Theories of Therapeutic Action**


**Optional**


**Class 14: Contextualizing Self Psychology and Relational Psychoanalysis; A Candidate’s Clinical Presentation**


Class 15: Contextualizing Self Psychology and Relational Psychoanalysis and Closing Discussion

Initially, my understanding of clients and my clinical work were heavily influenced by Freudian theory and ego psychology, but during the course of my career, I became conversant with other psychodynamic and psychosocial theoretical frameworks and their practice applications. I shall always be grateful to Dr. Otto Kernberg for affording me the opportunity to work closely with him when he was conducting research on borderline disorders.