the candidate connection
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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Konstantinos Taliouridis, Ph.D., Psy.D., MBA

What It Means to Be President of the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsA) Candidates' Council (CC) in Turbulent Times

As I step into my role as President within the American Psychoanalytic Association (APsA) Candidates' Council, I am acutely aware of the profound challenges we face in a world marked by turmoil and uncertainty. This position carries significant responsibility, demanding commitment to the core values of our discipline, especially in a climate where psychoanalytic understanding is more vital than ever.

In this era of political unrest, social injustice, and widespread mental health challenges, our collective role is to advocate for the needs and voices of candidates. Anna Freud aptly stated, "The child is not a vessel to be filled, but a lamp to be lit." This perspective emphasizes the importance of nurturing the unique insights of our community, allowing our voices to shine brightly in discussions. In these turbulent times, we must create an environment where all candidates feel empowered to express their thoughts and feelings, fostering a culture of openness and support that resonates with the principles of our field.

The current landscape presents unique challenges for those of us entering the field of psychoanalysis. Reflecting on Donald Winnicott's wisdom, "There is no such thing as a baby," reminds us that each candidate comes with their own unique experiences and contexts.

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We must advocate for robust professional development opportunities that resonate with our individual needs. By addressing the complexities of training, graduation, and the integration of new technologies, we equip ourselves to navigate our professional journeys with confidence.

In these turbulent times, the necessity of inclusivity and diversity within our ranks cannot be overstated. Wilfred Bion emphasized that "the task of psychoanalysis is to make the patient feel safe enough to explore the emotions that have been repressed." By fostering a diverse community, we create a safe space for exploration and understanding. It is crucial that our Candidates' Council reflects this diversity, actively engaging individuals from varied backgrounds to enrich our collective understanding and enhance our ability to address the complexities of human experience.

The challenges we face can lead to feelings of isolation and despair. As members of this community, we must strengthen our connections with one another. Harry Stack Sullivan emphasized the importance of interpersonal relationships, stating, "We are all of us a little more human than we would like to be." By recognizing our shared vulnerabilities, we can cultivate a sense of belonging and solidarity among candidates and established members alike. I envision regular forums and networking events that facilitate meaningful interactions, reminding us that we are not alone on our journeys.

In the face of adversity, we must hold fast to the core values of psychoanalysis: empathy, understanding, and commitment to human experience. Heinz Kohut, a pioneer in self-psychology, stated, "The goal of psychoanalysis is not to make the patient sane but to help him live with his insanity." Additionally, Otto Kernberg highlighted the importance of understanding our emotional realities: "The task of the therapist is to help the patient to see and understand the underlying meanings of his or her feelings." We must remain steadfast in our commitment to these principles as we navigate the complexities of our world. Together, we can foster a culture of respect, curiosity, and compassion within the Candidates' Council, ensuring that we are not only skilled practitioners but also empathetic individuals who embody the essence of our field during challenging times.

In conclusion, being part of the American Psychoanalytic Association Candidates' Council during these turbulent times is both a profound honor and a significant responsibility. It is a call to action for all of us to support one another, promote inclusivity, and uphold the values that define our profession. Together, we can navigate the challenges ahead, champion the next generation of psychoanalysts, and contribute meaningfully to the discourse on mental health and well-being in our society.

I look forward to this journey with all of you, united in our shared mission to advance the field of psychoanalysis and support one another in these trying times.

I promise that my virtual door will always be open. Whether you have feedback, constructive criticism, demands, ideas, or simply a wish to share a virtual cup of coffee or tea, my inbox is ready and waiting. Just remember, if you request a latte, I may need to escalate that to my coffee machine!

Thank you for your trust and support.❖

Konstantinos Taliouridis,
Ph.D., Psy.D., MBA
APsA Candidates' Council President

APsA Candidates' Council
American Psychoanalytic Association

Navigating Chaos: The Candidates Leader's Journey

In chaotic times, a leader stands,
With vision clear and steady hands.
Through storms of doubt, they navigate,
In an uncertain world, they set the fate.

An ExCom strong, with voices loud,
Yet in their midst, the leader's proud.
To balance strength with gentle grace,
To foster trust in every space.

With words like bridges, they communicate,
Ensuring all can relate and create.
Adaptability, their guiding star,
They pivot swiftly, near and far.

Amidst the chaos, they lift the team,
With hope and spirit, they dare to dream.
They recognize the weight of fear,
And spark the flame of courage here.

A vision forged in unity's name,
With every heartbeat, they fan the flame.
Through conflict's shadow, they find the light,
Building consensus, making it right.

Empowering voices, spreading the load,
Together they journey down the road.
For in these times, both tough and grand,
A leader's touch can help us stand.

The APsA that we want to see!

EDITOR'S NOTE

Neha Gupta, MD

I am deeply saddened by the loss of Jonathan Lear on September 22, 2025. Despite his illness, he wrote for the newsletter. He also handpicked his own picture for the newsletter. With him in mind, I share the latest edition of our newsletter, **"Love in Psychoanalysis."**

This issue brings together diverse perspectives connected by a single thread: love—not romantic, but a steady, disciplined care expressed through presence and consistency. When an analyst creates a safe, predictable space and holds faith in the patient's capacity to grow, their quiet reliability—waiting, listening, containing—becomes a silent form of love.

In a world of quick fixes and fast interventions, psychoanalysis reminds us that true healing is deeply relational. At its best, it is love made durable—a steady light that allows change to take shape.

In this issue:

- **Jonathan Lear** reflects on love, the death instinct, and mourning, asking whether love is ultimately a choice.
- **Atsumi Minamisawa** draws parallels between psychoanalysis and the Japanese tea ceremony, showing how attention to detail creates safety and reflection.
- **Jing Li** explores training as a psychoanalytic candidate and how idealization evolves into realistic appreciation, where love embraces both strengths and imperfections.
- **Nishi Ravi** shares how love in analytic setting fosters safety and trust, dissolving self-doubt and confusion.

Enjoy! ❖

What's Love Got to Do with It?

By Jonathan Lear

Tina Turner made that question famous, but as she sang it, it wasn't really a question. It was an angry, hurt, knowing cry. And an invitation to all who heard her to join in with their own anger, knowing hurts. "What's love?!", she continues, "but a second-hand emotion?" And she concludes with the central non-question: "Who needs a heart when a heart can be broken?!" It seems to me that a goodly part of psychoanalytic work is to help analysands turn those questions into questions.

If one reads through Freud's writings, it is difficult not to notice how often he changes his mind. He tries out hypotheses, later sees how they don't quite work, and then makes revisions. His honesty as a thinker shines forth in his restlessness. One should not be surprised, therefore, that his last theory of the drives—in which he postulates *love* and *death* as fundamental—is unfinished business. When Freud first postulated a death drive, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he provoked strong, if divided, reactions. Some were shocked, others irritated or disgruntled, some were enthusiastic. It is Hans Loewald who told us that "the death instinct is really nothing new, not a conception that should have taken psychoanalysts by surprise."[i] Freud's early theories of drives equated stimulation with unpleasure; and getting rid of this excitation was a primary aim of the psychic system. There are differences here and there, but the overall aim is the same with the death drive: the reduction of tension. What was really new in Freud's theory was his postulating *love* or *eros* as the complementary drive. He did not work out the theory, but his legacy is to point us in a direction. In effect, he invites us to notice something remarkable about human beings: that when we are placed in a nurturing environment—the paradigm is early parenting, but other instances include the psychoanalytic situation—we tend to develop in psychic complexity. The human psyche is itself a psychological achievement. How could it be that in the face of psychic complexity, loving nurture, differentiation, integration and maturity, we respond by ourselves becoming more complex, differentiated, integrated and mature? If you look at this question from the right angle, you will see that something marvelous is going on. Freud gave the name *love* to this characteristic tendency of the human psyche. Figuring out the inner workings of such a principle is important unfinished business of psychoanalysis.

In his classic essay, "On the Therapeutic Action of Psychoanalysis", Loewald tells us that in psychoanalysis, "the ghosts of the unconscious are laid and led to rest as ancestors whose power is taken over and transformed into the newer intensity of present life."[ii] How does this transformation come about? Love, understood as a drive, has everything to do with it. As Turner belts out her song, it is the angry cry of ghosts. The refrain must be repeated over and over; no answer is allowed. Nothing can change. Nothing can develop. This is the voice of the death drive. Turner asks, "Who needs a heart when a heart can be broken?". The answer is, *we* do. It goes to the heart of who we are that our hearts can be broken. We are finite, vulnerable creatures. We make loving attachments to others—and thereby make ourselves vulnerable. Our loved ones are themselves vulnerable: they too may fall ill, die, must leave. They may lose interest in us. Living with this kind of vulnerability is our condition. The idea that we could just toss our heart—'who needs a heart?'—as though it were an appendage that was doing us more harm than good. This again is the voice of the death drive. It is an appeal to do away with ourselves.

In discussing how psychoanalysis helped him, Bruce Springsteen said, "In analysis you work to turn the ghosts that haunt you into ancestors who accompany you. That takes hard work and a lot of love, but it's the way we lessen the burdens our children must carry. … I work to be an ancestor."[iii] It is uncanny that Springsteen used the very same words as Loewald. Perhaps he heard them from his own analyst, who read Loewald and was influenced; or perhaps Springsteen made them up himself. We will never know, but either way, the words rang true, and they stuck. Turning ghosts into ancestors is the activity of mourning. It is a *loving* way to deal with experiences of loss and separation. Not just to how we relate in memory to lost loved ones, but also—in terms of love as a drive—how we use the occasion to develop our own imaginations and internal world. When we are living well, we react to inevitable loss by developing in psychic depth and internal complexity.

Notice Springsteen's emphasis on intergenerational transmission. It is by turning *his* ghosts into ancestors that he does what he can to serve as an ancestor *for his children*. He makes this point explicit in a conversation he had with Barak Obama:

> "The trick is you have to turn your ghosts into ancestors. Ghosts haunt you. Ancestors walk alongside you and provide you with comfort and a vision of life that's going to be your own. My father walks alongside me as my ancestor now. It took a long time for that to happen."[iv]

Here we can see the work of love, understood as a drive, tightly connected to love as we ordinarily understand it. Out of love for his children, Springsteen feels responsibility to turn himself into someone—a good parent—who will later be able to function as an ancestor, rather than a ghost, for his children. He can succeed in this project only if he turns his ghosts into ancestors. In analysis, he was able to return to his father, exorcise the ghost and welcome the ancestor, in imagination and memory. Love has everything to do with it.[v]

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Footnotes

[i]Hans W. Loewald, "Book Review and Discussion: Review of "The Regulatory Principles of Mental Functioning by Max Schur", *Papers on Psychoanalysis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 62.

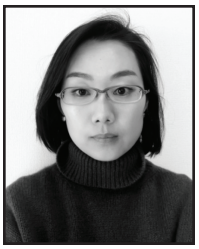
[ii]Loewald, "On the Therapeutic Action of Psychoanalysis", *Papers on Psychoanalysis*, p. 249.

[iii]Bruce Springsteen, *Born to Run*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017), p. 503.

[iv]"Springsteen and Obama on Friendship and Fathers: 'You have to turn your ghosts into ancestors", *The Guardian* (UK) online: October 23, 2021.

[v]"Springsteen and Obama on Friendship and Fathers: 'You have to turn your ghosts into ancestors", *The Guardian* (UK) online: October 23, 2021.

Jonathan Lear is author of Radical Hope: Ethics in the Face of Cultural Devastation and Imagining the End: Mourning and Ethical Life. His book Freud was named the number one book on psychoanalysis by The Guardian Newspaper (UK). He was a Professor at the Committee on Social Thought at The University of Chicago. He served on the faculty of the Western New England Institute for Psychoanalysis and at the Chicago Institute. ❖



Love Within the Setting

By Atsumi Minamisawa

During my psychoanalytic psychotherapy training at the Tavistock Clinic in London's public sector, I was struck by how severely disturbed many patients were. Although they were not required to pay for psychotherapy (offered one to three times a week, depending on assessment), the waiting list was long, and resources were limited. Interpretations were often rejected or misunderstood, as patients frequently functioned from a paranoid-schizoid position. In such circumstances, the therapeutic setting was crucial, particularly for patients who struggled to remain in the room and reflect for the full 50 minutes. The term "Brick Mother" was often used to emphasize the importance of a firm, reliable environment. Henri Rey first introduced this term to highlight the safety the hospital could provide for patients who feared psychological breakdown (Henri Rey, in Steiner and Jackson, 2001).

At first, I was skeptical about whether patients could truly benefit from therapy or develop through it. However, I learned much from my supervisors and by hearing about my colleagues' cases. I came to realize that even when sessions were filled with turmoil, the therapist's deep care for the patient—was always conveyed through the simple act of maintaining the therapeutic setting. The more negative or unbearable the sessions became, the more essential it was to uphold this structure. I believe that even patients primarily functioning within the psychotic part of the personality cannot ignore this fact, though it may take time. Even after storming out of a session or cancelling repeatedly, they found their therapist waiting for the next appointment. Through many painful sessions with my patients, and in my own personal analysis, I recognized something like an aspect of Japanese culture I had known before training in London: The Japanese tea ceremony.

The Japanese tea ceremony is one of the best-known aspects of Japanese culture. Its decorations are simple, and the procedures follow a set form. Yet, within this structured simplicity, the changing seasons are reflected through the room's interior, enhancing the interpersonal exchange between host and guest. The ceremony, developed to its current form by Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591) during the Azuchi Momoyama Period (circa 1550–1600), emerged in a time of frequent warfare. Participants were required to leave their swords outside the tearoom—an act ensuring safety within the space and allowing attention to turn inward. This practice also symbolized equality within the room, as the sword was a powerful emblem of noble rank and authority.

Parallels Between the Tea Ceremony and Psychoanalysis

In the tea ceremony, the setting refers to the carefully orchestrated world of the tearoom: the spatial design, the arrangement of utensils, the selection of scrolls and flowers, and the host's attentiveness to both the season and the guest. This is more than an aesthetic presentation—it is a deliberately crafted environment meant to evoke a sense of separation from daily life and encourage inner reflection.

A 4.5-tatami mat tearoom represents an intimate, minimal universe, deliberately set apart from the external world (one tatami mat is approximately 1.62 m^2, 171 cm × 85.3 cm). The tea ceremony emphasizes "一期一会 (ichigo ichie)"—literally "one opportunity, one encounter"—a reminder of the preciousness of each moment and an invitation to be fully present.

Similarly, the psychoanalytic setting refers to the space provided and consistently maintained by the analyst. Regularity in time and place creates safety and predictability. The analyst remains measured and receptive, acting as a container for the patient's free associations. Each session, though structured, remains unique.

What unites both practices are their shared aim: to create a distinct state of consciousness through a carefully maintained setting. Whether seeking inner stillness through tea or exploring the unconscious in analysis, the firmness of the framework supports the work.

Although these firm settings may initially appear restrictive, they foster freedom.

In the tea ceremony, within the simplicity of the space and the choreographed gestures, the host attends to the guest's five senses and heart. Careful thought is given to what and how to prepare for a particular guest or occasion.

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The guest becomes more aware of the season upon entering the room, as each element is chosen to express the beauty and uniqueness of that time. Every detail reflects a silent, nonverbal form of care.

In psychoanalysis, the analyst's quiet yet active presence, and restraint from unnecessary intervention, embodies a form of care and focused attention beyond words. Preserving the analytic setting itself becomes an act of unconditional affirmation. Actions carried out within this structure are, in fact, expressions of free and sincere affection. Likewise, as with the meticulous preparation behind a tea ceremony, countless hours of seminars, supervision, and clinical discussions support the analyst's work. All these elements form part of the setting, and I believe patients perceive and understand this on an unconscious level.

Atsumi Minamisawa, M.D., Ph.D., is a candidate of the Contemporary Freudian Society (Washington, DC branch) in private practice and a Visiting Associate Professor at Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine in Kyoto, Japan. She has completed her training as a psychoanalytic psychotherapist both in Japan and London at the Tavistock Clinic. With a background of four different countries, her area of interest in psychoanalysis is immigration and culture. ❖

Why Is Idealization Necessary?

By Jing Li

During my analytic training, I received an unexpectedly critical evaluation that left me discouraged. Although my instructor later acknowledged the poor phrasing, the incident made me reflect on why positive evaluations matter so much to me. I realized that, beyond grades, I long for signs that senior clinicians hold good hopes for me. This reflects both my long experience as a student and my deeper need, as an immigrant, for affirmation that my efforts are recognized.

Analytic training is emotionally demanding. According to Michael Parsons, its core purpose is not only the development of clinical skills but also the growth of the candidate's personality. For me, encouragement from instructors symbolizes their passion for psychoanalysis and their faith in candidates. At times, I recognize my own inner child in this longing—a child eager for parental approval and reassurance. Thus, criticism can feel alienating, particularly when linked to language. Despite living in the U.S. for over two decades and achieving near-native English proficiency, being told that I did not express myself clearly revived old doubts about belonging. It left me wondering whether my efforts as a non-native speaker were overlooked.

These vulnerabilities are compounded by challenges unique to candidates: financial strain, difficulty securing control cases, and slower progress toward graduation. I have accepted compromises—such as forgoing a local in-person case or delaying plans to return to China—to sustain my training. What I cannot compromise, however, is the belief that my institute holds auspicious wishes for me. That idealization sustains my faith in psychoanalysis and motivates me to persist, even when circumstances are difficult.

Conversations with a classmate and advisor highlighted different perspectives. My classmate affirmed the necessity of idealizing our institute simply to endure training, while my advisor reminded me that such idealization must eventually be relinquished. I believe both are true. Idealization may ultimately give way to a more realistic stance, but in the meantime, it provides vital support. Like many relationships, the one between a candidate and their training institute begins with idealization. Though fragile, it carries great potential and deserves care from educators and supervisors.

My own faith in psychoanalysis has been nurtured by dedicated people who have taught, supervised, and analyzed me. I hope that every candidate can experience similar encouragement, for it is this atmosphere of hope and idealization that enables growth and sustains our shared psychoanalytic journey.

Jing Li, LICSW is a Psychoanalytic Candidate at the Boston Psychoanalytic Society & Institute. She is also a writer and translator. Her collection of essays titled Expressions of a Heart was published in January 2025 in China. ❖

The Quest

By Nishi Ravi

Introduction

When I moved to the U.S. in 2021 to pursue a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology, I found myself navigating an entirely new clinical landscape. While I was learning statistics, psychological testing, and neuroscience, I was bereft of spaces that nurtured my passion for psychoanalysis.

My master's degree from the United Kingdom had steeped me in psychoanalytic thinking—the kind that lived not just in textbooks, but in the very structure of our learning. Psychoanalysis was not just taught in theory but embodied in the way our lectures were structured. Each week, I sat in a circle with colleagues; attended multiple process groups exploring the unspoken; and discussed clinical material in Balint supervision groups.

But I soon found that American clinical training operated in a different key—grounded in a narrow definition of what constituted "empirically rigorous," structured protocols, and measurable outcomes. I had to trade the embodied, scholar-practitioner seminars of my analytic master's program for a landscape of behavioral therapies. The loss was visceral: once fantasizing about my analytic calling and channeling my inner quest for analytic education, I was now in a world that valued manuals, acronyms, and worksheets.

To me, psychoanalysis had become more than just a theoretical framework; it was a way of being and a means of finally connecting with myself. As I squinted through the tiny fonts of several hundred pages of original texts by Freud, Winnicott, Fairbairn, and Klein during my master's degree, these writings made me fall in love with psychoanalysis. They were written from the soul, and I felt they connected with mine. For the first time, I was reading pieces that gave language to my ineffable parts, offering me space to sit with patients (and myself) in the uncertainty of becoming. Now, in the U.S., I felt untethered, aching for the intellectual and emotional resonance I'd once found in psychoanalytic thinking. That ache led me, one desperate evening, I scoured the internet for a connection to the analytic world I missed—until I discovered psychoanalytic external student scholarship, buried on the sixth page of a Google search, and decided to apply.

The scholarship acceptance letter arrived like an unexpected gift, proof that the analytic world I loved still existed, and that there might still be a place for me in it. I attended my first psychoanalytic conference—the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Psychoanalytic Association. Immersed in the analytic atmosphere and surrounded by like-minded people, I found a thread to the self I had imagined I would become. I felt alive again, realizing the self I had deemed "lost" hadn't disappeared after all—I was just remembering who I had been before I learned to apologize for thinking psychoanalytically.

But this relief made the conference's end even more devastating. I dreaded the impending absence of this analytic world I had just rediscovered, unsure how I could return. I shared my feelings with Dr. Peter Rudnytsky, one of the mentors associated with the scholarship. He noticed the poorly concealed grief in me—the grief of someone about to lose something precious—and said the words that would change everything:

"You should apply for the 2024–2025 APsA Fellowship Program. Heck, I'll write you a letter right now."

His suggestion was compelling, but I was uncertain.

"I don't know, Peter… I haven't even practiced psychodynamically or read analytic work for so long. The Fellowship feels too far out of reach, even impossible. After listening to some of the talks this week, I'm not convinced I even know what psychoanalysis is."

I was caught in the dialectic of love and insufficiency. I loved the fantasy of psychoanalysis, its promise of depth and meaning pulling me in. Yet my awareness and shame about how much I still did not know left me hesitant and afraid. What does it mean to love a discipline so deeply and yet feel so far from truly knowing it?

Peter met my eyes and said, "It is of the essence of our 'impossible' profession that, in a very singular way, we do not know what we are doing." In perfect synchronicity, we looked at each other. "Nina Coltart," he smiled. "In 'Slouching Towards Bethlehem'!" I responded, smiling back. Peter then gifted me the same book as a symbol of taking a leap of faith to do impossible things and reclaim my fantasy of analysis.

As I stood at the precipice of my analytic identity, Peter's recognition of my passion was both exhilarating and disorienting. As an immigrant, I knew too well that love for this work was never enough. The gates to these spaces do not swing open for passion alone; they demand credentials, knowledge, and experiences I did not yet have.

I felt as though I was entering a room without a map, drawn forward by an almost gravitational pull toward the field, still unsure if I belonged. The invitation to apply for the Fellowship shifted my dialectic, cutting through years of hesitation. Peter's outstretched hand—his "come in"—suggested that perhaps love itself was credential enough to cross the threshold. I decided to take the chance and apply.

The Fellowship Experience

A year later, I stood at the 2025 APsA Meeting as an official APsA Fellow—a reality my seventeen-year-old self in India could never have conceived. The Fellowship granted me access to privileges I had never dared claim as an immigrant: monthly mentorship with an analyst; exclusive conference sessions; and even the simple, startling joy of being introduced as "one of our promising Fellows". Hearing that "our" didn't erase my dialectic between loving psychoanalysis deeply while fearing I'd never know enough, but rather, it cradled that tension. Hearing that "our" felt as though the field was telling me, in its quiet way, that my dialectic tension wasn't an obstacle to belonging, but proof of it. To be analytic was to live in this space between knowing and not-knowing. I did not receive an absolution

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from my uncertainties, but permission to let them coexist with my right to take up space in this field.

One of the highlights of attending the 2025 APsA conference was being able to attend a session by and meet Dr. Usha Tummala-Narra. As a South Asian woman psychoanalyst, her work on migration, caste, cultural dislocation, and colonialism recalibrated what I thought possible for my own professional trajectory. For the first time, my fantasy of psychoanalysis had a South Asian face, body, and voice that refused to shrink. I especially resonated with Dr. Tummala-Narra's discussion on adapting psychoanalysis for patients from racial minorities impacted in the clinic. I was struck by how she loved psychoanalysis enough to critique its blind spots, and was simultaneously noting its shortcomings, while expanding its possibilities. I realized that accumulating analytic knowledge alone was insufficient to calm my dialectical tension when my love for analysis remained uncritical. I realized that truly loving psychoanalysis demands not reverence alone, but the rigor to challenge and reshape it.

Attending the 2025 Meeting took on an even deeper significance as I was invited to speak on the CPI (Committee on Public Information) panel about psychoanalysis. With the support of mentors, I confronted my self-doubts and shared my journey, from practicing in India and the UK to now training in the U.S.—developing and trusting my analytic instincts. As I spoke, I began discovering my voice, with all its hybrid inflections and uneasy questions, which helped expand the discussion around psychoanalysis. While I believed my knowledge was "not enough", I slowly began to recognize that it was just different. And difference, I was learning, could be its own kind of rigor.

What was most touching to me, during this session, was seeing other APsA Fellows sat in the front row, their quiet presence speaking volumes. Despite my insistence that they skip my talk to attend talks by 'more established' speakers (read: literally any other lecture), they instead embodied an unspoken commitment to show up for one another, not out of obligation, but because this work ultimately thrives in our community with each other. In that moment, the dialectic once again shifted: my apprehension didn't vanish, but it no longer strangled the love.

Conclusion

For those with multiple identities, "home" can be elusive. Yet APsA and the Fellowship have become my analytic home. Here, I am encouraged to lean into struggle, supported by a community that amplifies questions rather than silences them. Psychoanalysis, once a passionate side-study, has become my professional calling—one I hope will shape my clinical work, scholarship, and teaching for decades to come. I aim to pursue formal analytic training, not to replicate tradition, but to help evolve it into something more capacious. Most importantly, I want to hold space for future outsiders who might assume this field is not for them, and beckon them in, just as I was invited.

Psychoanalysis demands that we tolerate ambiguity, dwell in uncertainty, and reach for connection even when it feels out of grasp. What makes it survivable is the collective commitment of individuals leaning in together. The connection I found through APsA did not just sustain me; it reshaped my perspective. Where I once saw a frustrating chasm between love and knowledge, I now see a generative tension. That dialectic is not an obstacle but the very ground of analytic progress. For this, I remain profoundly grateful to APsA and the Fellowship—and I wholeheartedly recommend it to anyone drawn to the rich, impossible work of psychoanalysis, to let it surprise them too.

Nishi Ravi is a doctoral candidate in Counseling Psychology at Marquette University and a 2024-2025 APsA Fellow. Before her PhD, Nishi completed her master's training in Scotland and returned to India to establish a private practice. Her current research focuses on the archetype of the wounded healer in psychology trainees, investigating how trainees develop and clinically use the self-awareness of their own vulnerabilities. Nishi received the APA Division 39 Scholar's Award (2024) and pursued analytic fellowships with WBCP, ICP+P, and the Contemporary Freudian Society. Following her doctorate, Nishi plans to pursue formal psychoanalytic training and re-establish her private practice. ❖

Poetic Reflection

In turbulent times, we gather as one,
In the heart of the APsA, where healings begun.
With shadows of chaos that loom ever near,
We rise to the challenge, our purpose made clear.

As advocates of voices, we dare to ignite,
Anna Freud whispers, "Let's shine our own light."
"A lamp to be lit," not vessels confined,
Nurturing insights, the truths we unwind.

In this realm of the psyche, we seek to explore,
Winnicott reminds us, "There's so much in store."
"There's no such thing as a baby," he said,
Each journey unfolding, where past fears are shed.

Diversity beckons, a chorus of souls,
Bion's wisdom echoes: "In safety, it rolls."
To delve into depths where repressed feelings dwell,
We weave a rich tapestry, each story to tell.

In connection, we flourish, our hearts intertwined,
Sullivan speaks gently, "In closeness, we find."
A shared sense of being, in vulnerability's grace,
Building a refuge, a safe, sacred space.

Upholding our values, we navigate strife,
With empathy guiding the rhythms of life.
Kohut's soft murmur, "Help them to see,"
The layers of meaning, where self can be free.

In this sacred endeavor, we honor our craft,
With curiosity open, on pathways we draft.
Together we champion the next generation,
In the dance of the mind, we find our foundation.

So, here's to our journey, let us rise and engage,
In the psychoanalytic embrace, we'll turn the page.
With trust as our compass, we'll forge on ahead,
In these turbulent times, united, we tread.

By Konstantinos Taliouridis