

## **About the SAPC**

The SAPC unites under one organization groups of practitioners from diverse professions whose therapeutic work is informed by psychoanalytic theory and its application. This approach concerns itself with the relationship between conscious and unconscious mental processes as well as with the relationship between the clinician and the patient or group. It is a therapeutic process which helps patients understand and resolve their problems by increasing their awareness of their inner world, its relation to their historical context, and its influence over their lives and past and present relationships. Psychoanalytic approaches are concerned not merely with symptom alleviation but with self-discovery and maturation. It aims for deep-seated change in personality and emotional development.

Professionals in South Africa adopting the analytic attitude in their clinical practice include colleagues from different training backgrounds. This includes psychologists, social workers, nurses, priests, occupational therapists, lay counsellors, as well as analysts, some of whom qualified internationally. All these professions are represented within the SAPC. This is in line with widespread international practice and is based on the profession seeking to maintain its own high standards of on-going training. The SAPC is founded on the belief that the common analytic attitude unites professionals across diverse backgrounds and provides a widely acknowledged treatment for people suffering from mental distress.

## **What is the Structure of the SAPC?**

The SAPC functions as a confederation and is thus an organisation made up of component member groups. Individuals cannot join the SAPC by themselves and must either first form and join as a group or join through a group that is already an existing member. A minimum of three people are considered as constituting a group. Once a member, each group maintains its autonomy and elects a representative(s) to stand on the group representative body.

## **Which Groups may join?**

All groups that are interested in psychoanalytic practice and any of its diverse attitudes and

applications are welcome to join. Some examples of the groups that make up the SAPC include but are not limited to psychoanalytic reading groups, study groups, clinical seminar groups, journal clubs, study institutes, educational institutions such as university courses and non-governmental and non-profit organizations applying psychoanalysis in their thinking and practice.

### **What about Fees?**

Each group that meets separately pays a group fee that is calculated by multiplying the members of the group by the fee rate per member. This rate is fixed annually by the Executive Committee and is currently R30.00 per member (2011). Fees cover the running costs of the organisation and are put towards achieving the outlined tasks. The SAPC annual budget is open to the scrutiny of all members.

### **Why join the SAPC?**

Joining the SAPC demonstrates a commitment to developing a first class South African psychoanalytic identity and offers an opportunity to take part in guiding the future growth of our psychoanalytic community. It links members through a national network of psychoanalytic practitioners and allows access to workshops, meetings and conferences. Joining also allows the members of the group to access a subscription to [www.pep-web.org](http://www.pep-web.org) (an enormous online archive of journal articles and classic books for a considerably reduced subscription rate).

All SAPC member groups enjoy added legitimacy by being associated with a formal structure and being accountable to a formalised constitution and code of ethics that values psychoanalytic principles. All SAPC members have access to a non-punitive ethics committee that has been designed to help practitioners work through ethical dilemmas and not to punish them.

### **What is Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy?**

The term psychoanalysis refers both to a body of knowledge and a particular long-term and an

especially intensive type of therapy which involves meeting with a psychoanalyst 4-5 times per week for a number of years. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy and practice on the other hand refers to a wide range of therapies and interventions that are informed by psychoanalytic theory and experience but don't take the same intensive form as psychoanalysis. Essentially any intervention that undertakes to first understand a situation by applying psychoanalytic principles and to then formulate an intervention based on that understanding is a form of psychoanalytic practice. This can be carried out in a variety of settings including community work, couples counselling, group therapy and even work with organisations. Although each of these settings warrants its own description and while much of this article can be applied to these settings this article focuses primarily on the individual setting i.e. one therapist and one client.

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