Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology
The Graduate Center of the City University of New York

Practicum IIIC: Advanced Child Practicum
Spring, 2012

Professor: Steve Tuber
Day & Time: Thursdays 2-4 PM, Room 8/132 NAC
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Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:
This is a course that builds on your initial experiences of being a child therapist, as well as a supervisee in child psychotherapy. While we will briefly review “how to”: meet a patient in the waiting room; begin a session; end a session; set a fee; deal with sibs; work with parents; work with fellow therapists; work with schools and work with supervisors, we will spend the bulk of the semester working toward a more nuanced view of yourself as a child therapist and what the process of child therapy is all about. By the end of the semester, the overarching goal is that each of you will have a much clearer notion of how to create, nourish and maintain a viable treatment alliance among you, your child patient and his or her parent(s). As I am wedded to the time-honored concept that accurate diagnosis is the very backbone of viable treatment, I will push you constantly to link what you do with a patient to how you understand where they are diagnostically. Thus the class is as much a class on child diagnosis as it is on child treatment.

Course Objectives:
By the end of the semester, you will be more proficient in:
1. Forging and sustaining a treatment alliance among you, your child patient and their parent(s).
2. Enhancing the child’s psychological mindedness and embracing techniques that foster this enhanced capacity for self-reflection in the child.
3. Understanding the relationship between supervisor and supervisee and how this works in parallel with the treatment of your child patient.

The logistics of this class are simple. I will assume that you are actively engaged with a child treatment case and have been for a minimum of six months. I will expect that you will get permission from the parents to have your sessions audiotaped. You will be expected to present an audio tape with a transcript each time you present. If you would like me to hear the tape and read the transcript before your presentation, I will do so gladly. If not, that’s OK too. As I am also interested in developing your supervisory skills, you will be paired with another student for your presentation. That student will read your transcript ahead of the class and will provide a brief, written and oral commentary on your session in class just before you present your case. We will then use the class to comment on process and content, with your “buddy’s” comments as our guide. Each student will present twice: once with a child session and once with a parent session for that child. Linkages between the two sessions will also be a major aspect of the class discussion.

Requirements and Grading:
It is an extremely complex question as to how to grade a course like this and a strong argument can be made for having the class be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. The degree of trust and faith that a presenter must have for an optimal learning experience to
occur is profound and being graded on the presentation of your first, audio-taped efforts at being a child therapist can be quite trying without a “grade” hanging in the balance. Competent work, resulting in a grade of B+, B or B-, will therefore be awarded for a tactful, respectful approach to your patient and to the work of your fellow students that both does no harm to the patient and shows the potential for greater attunement to the experience of the child. Quality work, resulting in a grade of A or A-, shows an enhanced capacity to understand the process and content of the child’s play and narrative and to provide interventions that foster a continued investment by the child in the session. Outstanding work, resulting in a grade of A+, will be awarded for work beyond that of an “A” that reveals interventions that enhance the child’s experience and understanding of him or herself in the session and/or enhances the performance of fellow student’s in the class. Not yet competent work, resulting in a grade of C through F, will be given for either ethical or behavioral lapses in the session that are harmful to the patient and do not improve substantially over the semester and/or an inability or unwillingness or insensitivity to contribute to the work of your fellow students in class discussion.

**Required Readings:**

Readings are not corresponding to particular class sessions but should be read over the course of the semester, except where noted:

Books:

Articles on Supervision (to be read in first three weeks of class):

**Weekly Reading Assignments and Class Topics:**

Weeks 1: A theoretical and practical overview to psychotherapy with children and adolescents
Week 2: Developmental considerations
Week 3: Working with parents; Building a treatment alliance and helping the child be his/her own therapist.

Readings:
Tuber and Caflisch, Ch. 1; Brems, Chs. 1-4;
Santostefano, Ch. 1; Altman, et al., Chs. 9 & 11; Chethik, Ch. 3 and Haworth, Chs. 1, 5 & 6.
Clinical work: Tuber and Caflisch, Chs. 3, 7 and 11.

Weeks 4 – 15: Audio-taped sessions of students with their child/parent patients. Readings from the above books will be assigned based on the particular issues raised by the demographic, clinical, cultural and/or developmental vicissitudes of each individual case on a week to week basis.