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

Practicum IIA: Child Psychotherapy  
Course # 80108.16180  
Fall, 2011  

Professor: Steve Tuber, Ph.D.  
E-Mail: steve.tuber@gmail.com  
Phone: 212-650-5672  
Day & Time: Thursdays 9:45 – 11:45a.m.  
Office Hours: By appointment  

Course Description:  
This is a course of opposites. On the one hand, I assume you know precious little of how to be a child therapist. To that end, we will speak at length on “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, work with supervisors etc. etc. By the end of the semester, the goal is that you will have a beginning but solid capacity to perform all the above tasks. On the other hand, I will expect that you know a lot about being a person with another person. And on the third hand, I will expect that you know a lot more about diagnosis and prognosis than you are willing to admit. I will push you constantly to link what you do with a patient to how you understand where they are diagnostically. After 2-3 weeks of speaking conceptually about the nature of play therapy, the remainder of the course will consist of listening to transcripted recordings of your sessions with your child patient. Each student will present at least twice this semester and will provide a typed transcript for all of us while we listen along to a taped therapy session. The session can and will be stopped systematically to discuss both the theory and technique of child psychotherapy.

Course Objectives:  
By the end of the semester, you will be expected to:
1) have improved in your ability to link diagnostic considerations to the process and content of your work with children.
2) better understand the meaning and nature of a child’s play, both in terms of its diagnostic meaning and in its link to developmental/cognitive considerations
3) be better able to link work in the therapy room to work with parents and school personnel.

The logistics of this class are simple. Those of you who have begun with patients already will be set up in a rotation to present your case to the class. I will expect that you will get permission from the parents and assent from the child 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. Those of you who do not yet have a case to present, please let me know as soon as possible what is in the way of getting
one. As an important part of the class is the mutual “supervision” you will help provide one another, pay particular attention to the readings below on the supervisory process.

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.

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

Required Texts and Articles:
**Articles on Supervision:**

**Weekly Reading Assignments and Class Topics:**

Weeks 1-3: A theoretical and practical overview to psychotherapy with children and adolescents: developmental considerations.
Readings:  Sandberg & Spritz, Chs. 1-4 Chs. 1-4; Santostefano, Ch. 1;Altman, et al, Chs. 9 & 11; Kazdin, Ch. 3., Siskind, Chs. 1,2 and 9; Chethik, Ch. 3, Haworth, Chs. 1, 5 & 6, Tuber & Caflisch, Ch. 1, Blake, Chs. 1-3.
Clinical work: Transcript of Tuber Play therapy Session.

Weeks 4 – 15: Audio-taped sessions of students with their child 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.