



Mother-Infant Attachment and Psychoanalysis: The Eyes of Shame

By Mary Y. Ayers

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Winner of the 2004 Gradiva Award from the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis.

The issue of shame has become a central topic for many writers and therapists in recent years, but it is debatable how much real understanding of this powerful and pervasive emotion we have achieved. *Mother-Infant Attachment and Psychoanalysis* argues that shame can develop during the first six months of life through an unreflected look in the mother's eyes, and that this shame is then internalised by the infant and reverberates through its later life. The author further expands on this concept of the look through a powerful and extensive study of the concept of the Evil Eye, an enduring universal belief that eyes have the power to inflict injury. Finally, she presents ways of healing shame within a clinical setting, and provides a fascinating analysis of the role of eye-contact in the therapeutic encounter.

This book brings together a unique blend of theoretical interpretations of shame with clinical studies, and integrates major concepts from psychoanalysis, Jungian analysis, developmental psychology and anthropology. The result is a broad understanding of shame and a real understanding of why it may underlie a wide range of clinical disorders.

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Editorial Review

Review

This is an incredibly rich book, with much to mention in so little space. It touched this reviewer very much and I am in support of her theory. I feel readers would agree that Ayers does justice to the beginning of a more thorough examination of shame. - *Mary Powell*, Journal of Religion and Health, Winter 2004

About the Author

Dr. Ayers is a Graduate of the University of Maryland School of Social Work, and received her PhD in depth psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara, California. She currently divides her time between being a mother to her four children, and a private practice in the suburbs of Washington DC where she specialises in analytic work with children and adults.

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come on its identified as reading friends.

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