SUBLIMATION Occurs when desires are diverted towards new, non-sexual and socially valued aims. The main types of activity described by Freud as sublimated are artistic creation and intellectual inquiry. Freud contrasted sublimation with *idealisation, which has to do with altering the perception and value of a particular object.

Freud saw sublimation as a satisfaction without *repression – a change of object for the drive. Lacan claims that in sublimation the object of desire is seen anew, elevated to the level of *the thing (das Ding), that is, to the level of the estinate point beyond language and the law of *signifiers. Sublimation therefore is transgression. What is crucial here is that this process does not concern the subject, only the object. For instance, in courtly love, the loving subject always maintains a distance from the ultimate object, an object that is deliberately maintained beyond the reach of the subject’s desire. When the subject takes the place of the thing, Lacan speaks of *perversion, which he frequently illustrates with quotations from the Marquis de Sade.

See also: compromise formation; defence; extinguivity

SUBJECTIVITY, SUBORDINATED The analysing subjectivity is a continuously active and influential component of the co-created analytic process. While it may be characterised as subordinated subjectivity, it is nonetheless essential. From the perspective of love, the analytic process may be regarded as an engagement of the subjectivities of patient and analyst addressing the problem of love, resulting in the enhanced actuality of love and self in both parties.

See also: intersubjectivity


SUBSTITUTE FORMATION When the wishful impulses that originate in response to pressure from the drives are repressed, they may find substitute outlets in symptoms, phobias, *somatic conversions, *obsessions or *sublimations. Substitute formations bind the anxiety that might otherwise arise from the conflict between impulse and prohibition.

J. A. Ber.

SUGGESTION Freud equated the power of the *transference with the analyst’s ability to influence the patient through suggestion. However, he noted that in psychoanalysis, suggestion is employed to get the patient to engage in analytic work, rather than being used as the method of cure, as was the case with hypnotic suggestion.

Lacan’s entire teaching is aimed at clearly distinguishing psychoanalytic practice from the use of (hypnotic) suggestion, basing this distinction on the following grounds: clinically, a suggestive interpretation obstructs desire and favours *identification; epistemologically, it nourishes the sense rather than the Real of non-sense; and ethically, it constitutes an abuse of power.

J. A. Ber. / R. M. W.

SUICIDE The act of killing oneself. It remains a major cause of death among all age groups, being the third most common cause of death in those aged fifteen to thirty-four. Suicide has proved difficult to investigate reliably because of historical and theological taboos, but twenty-first-century research methods have allowed better identification of associations and risk factors. More commonly in men than women, it is known to be associated with increased rates of unemployment, divorce, homicide and alcohol abuse. Other known associations include: season – most common in spring; social class – higher in lowest groups; occupation – most common among lawyers, doctors and bar owners; religious belief – a protective factor; age – increased incidence; and, imprisonment – greatly increased risk.

In both deliberate self-injury, a related behaviour, and completed suicide, it can be difficult to determine the intention behind the act, and the absence of international standardised criteria for the reporting, defining and measuring such behaviour, with a historical tendency to underreport, has led to difficulty comparing rates across time, and between countries. Suicide rates

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