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Death and Fallibility in the Psychoanalytic Encounter: Mortal Gifts (Psychological Issues)

Ellen Pinsky

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Death and Fallibility in the Psychoanalytic Encounter considers psychoanalysis from a fresh perspective?the therapist's mortality, in at least two senses of the word: the therapist can die, and the therapist is fallible. These can be seen as necessary or even defining components of the therapeutic process. At every moment, the analyst's vulnerability and human limitations underlie the work, something rarely openly acknowledged.

Freud's central insights continue to guide the range of all talking therapies, but they do so somewhat in the manner of a smudged ancestral map. That blur, or degree of confusion, invites new ways of reading. Ellen Pinsky re-examines fundamental principles underlying by-now-dusty terms such as "neutrality," "abstinence," "working through," and the peculiar expression "termination." Pinsky re-considers, in some measure hopes to restore, the most essential, humane and useful components of the original psychoanalytic perspective, guided by the most productive threads in the discipline's still-evolving theory. Freud's most important contribution was arguably to discover (or invent) the psychoanalytic situation itself. This book reflects on central questions pertaining to that extraordinary discovery: What *is* the psychoanalytic situation? How *does* it work (and fail to work)? *Why* does it work?

This book aims to articulate what is fundamental and what we can't do without?the psychoanalytic essence?while neither idealizing Freud nor devaluing his achievement. Historically, Freud has been mis-read, distorted, maligned or, at times, even dismissed. Pinsky re-appraises his significance with respect to psychoanalytic writers who have extended, and amended, his thinking. Of particular interest are those psychoanalytic thinkers who, like Freud, are not only original thinkers but also great writers?including D. W. Winnicott and Hans Loewald.

Covering a broad range of psychoanalytic paradigms, *Death and Fallibility in the Psychoanalytic Encounter* will bring a fresh understanding of the nature, benefits and pitfalls of psychoanalysis. It will appeal to psychoanalysts and psychoanalytic psychotherapists and provide superb background and inspiration for anyone working across the entire range of talking therapies.

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