



## Decoding Psychoanalysis

**For Prelims:** Psychoanalysis

**For Mains:** Ethical Aspects Involved in Psychoanalysis, Psychoanalysis and Criminal Rehabilitation

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### Why in News?

Recently, the **Delhi Police** revealed that six individuals accused in the **Parliament breach** incident underwent **psychoanalysis** to decipher their motives.

### What is Psychoanalysis?

- **About:** Psychoanalysis is a **set of theories and therapeutic techniques** that treat mental disorders.
  - It aims to treat a range of mental health issues by investigating the **relationship between the unconscious and conscious elements** of psychological experience.
  - It was pioneered by **Sigmund Freud**, a Viennese psychiatrist, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- **Key Aspects Related to Psychoanalysis:**
  - **Unconscious Mind:** Freud proposed that much of human behavior is influenced by **unconscious desires, fears, memories, and conflicts**, often stemming from early childhood experiences.
    - Psychoanalysis delves into the unconscious mind, exploring how it shapes **thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and personality**
  - **Id, Ego, Superego:** Freud introduced a structural model of mind comprising the **id (driven by instincts and pleasure), ego (mediates between id and reality), and superego (internalizes societal norms and values)**.
    - This model helps understand conflicts within the mind.
  - **Psychoanalytic Therapy:** It involves verbal exchanges between the patient and therapist, aimed at exploring unconscious conflicts and gaining insight into one's emotions and behaviors.

### What are the Ethical Aspects Involved in Psychoanalysis?

- **Informed Consent:** The patient must be fully informed about the nature of psychoanalysis, its **potential benefits, risks and alternatives** before beginning treatment.
  - This is crucial because the process often involves delving into personal and sensitive topics.
  - Furthermore, obtaining informed consent also safeguards against potential **violations of Article 21**, as highlighted in the **Selvi vs State of Karnataka & Anr Case (2010)**.
- **Confidentiality:** Maintaining patient **confidentiality is paramount in therapy**. However, in some situations, therapists may face ethical dilemmas, such as when a patient poses a danger to

themselves or others.

- Balancing confidentiality with the duty to warn or protect can be challenging.
- **Transference and Countertransference:** Both the **patient and therapist can experience strong feelings or reactions toward each other** due to past experiences or unresolved issues.
  - Managing these emotions ethically to ensure they don't interfere with treatment or professional boundaries is important.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Therapists need to be **culturally competent and aware of their biases** to ensure they provide appropriate care and respect diverse perspectives.

## How Psychoanalysis can Help in Criminal Rehabilitation?

- **Developing Empathy:** Psychoanalysis can foster empathy by helping individuals **understand the impact of their actions on others.**
  - Through self-reflection and insight gained in therapy, offenders can develop a greater understanding of the consequences of their behavior, leading to increased **empathy.**
- **Impulse Control:** For individuals with **a history of violent or impulsive behavior,** psychoanalysis can assist in understanding and managing these tendencies.
  - By **exploring deep-seated emotions** and unresolved conflicts, individuals can learn to better regulate their emotions and impulses, reducing the likelihood of reoffending.
- **Preventing Recidivism:** By addressing the core motivations, individuals are better equipped to **break free from destructive patterns** and reintegrate into society in a meaningful way.

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