

The zoom application after Covid. State of play?

During the pandemic, which swept through the world in this historic and disrupted period, what a boon to have been able to benefit from a new device for remote and visual communication. Thank you progress and the new generation of engineers!

Previously, I was reluctant to accept even a telephone session (except in exceptional cases). But in this particular period, when we were all confined to the same (distanced and anxious) bath, fortunately, like many of my psychoanalytical colleagues, I was able to observe that the telephone cures (despite the absence of the bodies) went particularly well. Sometimes we even managed to have exceptional sessions (perhaps it was the auditory proximity)? This impressive impact, against all odds, forced us to rethink our technique and to advance analytic theory.

The psychoanalysts who refused the telephone device, thinking that face-to-face analysis was untouchable by a contaminating Virus which was nonetheless very real, have, it seems to me, lost a great deal of the opportunity to grasp what an "analytic act" is. Forced to extract ourselves from our well-oiled device, by becoming more attentive to the unusual of a situation that impromptu imposes itself on us, we realize that the unconscious filters everywhere, in every interstice of life. And that a demanding and very 'framed' device is not necessarily necessary... The transference, in itself, sets the framework. And therefore, it can be set anywhere!

This is one of the lessons the Covid brought to psychoanalytic thought.

Throughout this period, the online visual also had something exceptional: an air of freedom, while remaining locked up in one's home. All relegated to the same place, digital technology allowed us to keep in touch with family, friends and colleagues. As a result, the seminars continued to take place, bringing together many more listeners than in person, happy to share a word on the psychoanalytical themes proposed. And what was particularly new was to share this word with an audience in the provinces and abroad. The working groups were also adapted to the screen and were even eagerly awaited. New ones were created. The

meetings multiplied. Exchanges, a little shy at first, became fruitful, easy, indispensable. Not to mention the festive moments, which, at first, had difficulty finding their mark from a distance, but eventually became organized and ritualized. Even the colloquiums that were invited in the zoom mosaic, gathering psychoanalysts from all countries, from all continents (thanks to adapted translation systems). What a joy, despite the isolation, to have been able to share these moments of internet, of visual communication, these moments of long-awaited reunion, which have become almost indispensable rituals, which we could no longer do without.

The confinement paradoxically brought us together, but also kept each of us in an intimate comfort zone, like a protective shell, a familiar space distanced from the outside world, where direct confrontation with the other is deferred. As a result, contrary to the Parisian custom, we become accustomed to less stress, with tension kept to a minimum... A sort of enjoyment of "standing still". How did we proceed before the Covid? Obviously, it becomes more complicated to leave the benefit of this Eden within reach of everyday life, to resume the course of our life before.

And finally, nothing is the same as before! ...Well, almost.

On the whole, the patients are back on the Divan. The analytical practice continues as before through its cures. The sessions imposed by telephone have become rare again, and have lost their analytical impact, 'specific to the confinement device'.

But some patients have acquired a taste for the remote and persist in being absent, because they are tired or ill, because they are busy or teleworking, and they continue to demand sessions by telephone. Whereas these reasons were hardly admissible before the pandemic. Especially since patients who used to travel from the provinces to meet their analyst in Paris now offer to alternate their sessions with the video formula. It is true that it is less expensive and less tiring, but the analysand loses the strength of his transference on the way. And the analyst's desire atrophies in terms of style and dynamics, with, in the end, the work of analysis tending to slow down, if not sometimes break down... because in the end too much distance, too long, frays the analysis. In the same way, the patients, who were used to

travelling from abroad - a journey which, by its geographical distance, helped to reinforce the transference - have acquired a taste for this ease of communication, and are pushing to maintain it.

And it is true that, since the experience of confinement, the digital has gained ground on the human encounter, on the transference impact, bypassing the important role, pointed out by Lacan, that 'the presence and displacement of the psychoanalyst's body' can have in the session. Online Visio blurs the 'senses', such as the voice (which (deformed), touch (no longer possible), look (distorted). WhatsApp, Skype and Zoom applications have changed the game. They have transformed human relationships and behavior.

Of course, this evolution in communication gives us the advantage of extending our practice to new patients, those living on other continents (such as China or America). This could hardly have been envisaged a few years ago. But does this process, by interposed screens, really allow the implementation of a cure over the length of the device? What allows us to affirm that we are exercising an analytical practice in this type of session? I supervise analysts who have patients at a great distance and whom they never meet. Their work seems closer to psychotherapy than to an analytical treatment.

So, today, we are beneficiaries of this vast planetary opening... I am grateful for this immense technological progress. Meeting the other (expatriate, foreigner) facilitates friendship, private and public conversations, working together. At night, when I have insomnia, I sometimes talk with my Brazilian or Argentinean friends... We talk about ourselves, about foreign policy, about our respective associations, we supervise each other, we remake the world.

In the past, we hardly thought of phoning each other (too expensive, poor communication). E-mails were the only way to meet the challenge. But the task was tedious and the answers long in coming. Before e-mails, there was the postal service, which meant that exchanges between continents were perilous and rare. Now we are, so to speak, in proximity.

This new mode of communication, rather welcome in terms of distance, friendship and punctual work, requires that we be able to distinguish between different things. Despite the

open-mindedness that Freud recommended, this online device does not represent, concretely and ethically, a possible new technique for psychoanalysis. If the unconscious can interfere in the opening of a new situation, I think that the moment of its seizure, during the sessions, is blocked in the long term because many clues, thoughts, spontaneities escape us...