

## The Management of Desire

A one or Two Day Workshop for Psychotherapists, Counsellors and Trainees

'One of the central experiences of being alive is the phenomenon of desire. So long as I am alive, I want, I long for, I lust, I covet, and I yearn for. I experience hunger. My contention is that this experience is essentially one of sensory pleasure. I see this as an organic phenomenon, bound up with my fundamental aliveness and as such provides, in itself, one of the most fundamentally meaningful phenomena of being.

To desire is a core, positive, ontological experience, irrespective of whether I go on to possess the object of my desire or not. As a subjective intrapersonal, sensational experience it becomes one of the things that can make life worth living. It gives meaning to a meaningless life. Unfortunately, as I hope to demonstrate, the common habit of coupling the free movement of desire to the need to possess, the need to acquire my desires, is one of the most pernicious factors in the subjugation of our fundamental aliveness.'

Waterston, J. (2001) *Can Desire be the Opposite of Death?* AHBMT Journal

The workshop will explore our responses to a fundamental dilemma of existence – that of the infinite nature of desire and the finite nature of being and having. Quite simply, we will ask the vital question – what do I do when I can't have that which I desire?

During this workshop participants will have the opportunity to explore their own strategies for managing this inevitably painful situation. This workshop will explore the difficulties presented by the dual nature of infinite desire and finite possibilities. In particular, it will examine the many strategies we have for dealing with the frustration and distress which appears to be an all too common feature of life. During the workshop, it will be possible to engage with our own life stories and relationships, and with personal strategies, in addition to a more general investigation of what human beings might do when they do not get what they desire. Can it be possible to remain fully alive, expectant, vital and desirous in the absence of any guarantee that we may possess the objects of our desires?

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