

Psychoanalytic Freedom under Lock and Key: “Oh, you’re here to stop me being violent?” “No, I’m here so you can choose”.

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Organizational Details

Expected Duration: One and a half hours

Number of Rooms: One

Expected Number of Participants: Estimate based on average over the years, 45

Content

Abstract:

Patients in secure psychiatric hospitals and prisoners do not have freedom as we would understand it. They are locked inside institutions and have to follow daily rules and regulations. However, even within these environments, psychoanalysis can have a role in enabling a psychical freedom to develop. Disturbed individuals who have acted out violently can be offered a chance to understand what happened to them, why they did what they did, and why they might choose not to in the future.

In this workshop, we will present cases of patients and prisoners who are locked up but have nevertheless been able to develop a sense of psychical freedom, only because they were confined within a ‘brick mother’. This psychical freedom can lead to them being well enough to resume living freely, as we do, without risk to them or others.