

Passions, Diversity and Fear – Is Neutrality Possible in the Large Group?

As psychoanalysts, we are trained to cultivate an attitude of dispassionate concern in our work with individuals. This discipline, and our investment in the therapeutic role, constitute a core part of our professional identity, personality and ethics. Yet what happens when we leave our consulting rooms and encounter tension, controversy and disagreement – in our scientific debates, in our societies, and in our institutional lives? What happens when violent war breaks into our clinics and consulting rooms? Can we still sustain a concerned, even-handed attitude? Faced with upheavals, divergent positions, tensions and controversies in today's world, is it really possible to remain “neutral” and loyal to our psychoanalytic stance?

This Large Group, embedded within the scientific program of the conference, offers a setting in which to reflect on and explore how the presence of many others – holding multiple, often conflicting perspectives – affects us: enriching or constricting our identities, mobilizing both threat and opportunity. The experience is intended to deepen and expand our participation in the societies and institutions to which we belong, and to open space for new thinking about our theory as well as professional beliefs, practices and truths.

The Large Group will be conducted by three consultants: Dorothee von Tippelskirch-Eissing (German Psychoanalytic Association), Julian Lousada (British Psychoanalytic Association) and Joseph Triest (Israel Psychoanalytic Society).