

# **THE FUNCTION OF ASSESSMENT WITHIN PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES**

**A PSYCHODYNAMIC VIEW**

KAMRAN GHAFARI  
AND  
LUIGI CAPARROTTA

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*Kamran Ghaffari*  
*Luigi Caparrotta*

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*To our wives, Farnaz and Sara*

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## *PREFACE*

The past few decades have borne witness to a proliferation of psychotherapeutic approaches. Over 450 variants of psychological therapy have been identified (Richardson, 1997), although most represent subclasses of a smaller number of major orientations. Each variant is based on different theoretical models, has different standards of training, different standards of practice, and different accrediting bodies and professional organizations. However, all have the common aim of alleviating psychological suffering.

Various theoretical models have placed different emphasis and importance on the role of assessment. We strongly believe that this first encounter not only has a prime and unique position in any form of psychological therapy, but often paves the way and sets the scene for any therapeutic process to develop.

The increased demand for psychological therapy, the formal recognition of its effectiveness and its role in the treatment of a wide variety of mental health problems, including severe and enduring illness, have rendered careful, accurate assessment crucial.

However, there is very little formal training in assessing patients for suitability for psychological therapy (Cooper & Alfillé, 1998).