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**time and money in psychoanalytic
psychotherapy**

Dr Barry Keane

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Why?

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Having completed a psychodynamic, psychoanalytic training, and a cognitive behavioral therapy training, there was virtually nothing in these trainings about the clinical fee

Some discussion around money and this was usually presented within a pathological framework to do with the patient

No discussion about the clinical fee with my training peers and there has been very little with my professional colleagues since qualifying or in supervision

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Money has been written about in psychoanalytic literature, but little about the clinical fee and even less about the analyst's relationship with this important aspect of the therapeutic dyad

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An Exercise!

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The Research Question

Are Issues Around the Clinical Fee an Area of Difficulty and, if so, What are the Dynamics About the Fee that Make it so Difficult?

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Questions for us to think about

Is the clinical fee associated with primitive thoughts and feelings regarding money, and consequently avoided?

Is there an absence of open and transparent discussions on this significant aspect of the therapeutic frame?

Are we as Clinicians above this aspect of the therapeutic frame?

Is the fee simply just an administrative issue?

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In 2008 the American Psychoanalytic Journal “the candidate” Perspectives from an Evolving Psychoanalytic Community gave over an entire Volume (3) to the issues of money and fees because

‘We were struck, as were many analysts, by the relative dearth of literature on this topic. We often found ourselves wondering why there is a tendency to avoid the topic of money. Inspired by this absence in literature, we set out to create a volume that would encourage analysts at all levels to write about what has been relatively lacking from analytic discourse’

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Managing the clinical fee in my private practice has at times been challenging and while on occasions this might be countertransference, a lot of the time it is not – **have you had similar experiences or perhaps not?**

At times, managing the clinical fee has generated a wide range of feelings in me – **what are your feelings regarding this?**

I developed a “hunch” that I was not alone in this and also wondered why it is an area is rarely spoken or written about – **do you discuss your fees openly with peers and professional colleagues?**

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The Research

I used semi structured interviews to gather my data as I felt this was the best way to address my research question

I interviewed twelve psychoanalytic psychotherapists across the UK

Six women and six men across a diverse age range, those just qualified, those mid career and those just retiring

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I used a Thematic Analysis to analyze the data I gathered

According to Braun & Clarke (2006) Thematic Analysis is ‘a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises your data in (rich) details. However, frequently it goes further that this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic’

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**A Glimpse at Some
Literature and Findings**

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Freud

Over a century ago Freud (1913) wrote ‘ money questions will be treated by cultured people in the same manner as sexual matters, with the same inconsistency, prudishness and hypocrisy. [The analyst] is therefore determined beforehand not to concur in this attitude, and in his dealings with patients to treat money matters with the same matter of course frankness that he wishes to induce in them towards the matters of sexual life’

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Research Participant

“And I think it’s fascinating, truly fascinating that as therapists we can talk about incest, sex, relationships, affairs, violence, but money is by far the hardest thing and I don’t think I am alone in that”

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Freud again!

Earlier Freud (1909) established the connection of money with psychopathology when he linked it with anal character traits and obsessional neurosis in the Rat Man case and went on to suggest that psychological involvement with money starts with its most familiar form, coins, and that interest in these derive by a displacement from interest in faeces. Furthermore Freud (1917) discusses the unconscious connection of money through the transformation of the instincts, with penises, babies and gifts

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Chused

Chused 1996 states the issue of fees is positioned to be an arena ripe for conflict and intense emotion given that money is both a symbol imbued with multiple meaning and a concrete necessity for living in this world. That we depend so directly on our patients for money presents a myriad of issues for the analytic dyad, all of which shape the analytic relationship. Exploring issues around money in the treatment provides the analytic dyad with an invaluable, arguably unique, opening to work in an important area in which needs, desires and wants are negotiated between patient and analyst

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Ferrenzi

Ferrenzi (1914) further developed Freud's ideas into different individual behaviours and attitudes towards money from the miser's hoarding to the spendthrift's self-destructive carelessness which represents varieties of anal eroticism

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Arnaud

Arnaud (2003) summing up Freud tells us ‘that initially the child’s pleasure in defecating (the first phase of the anal stage), they subsequently discover around the age of three or four, that they can obtain a more intense excitation by holding back their stool (the second phase of the anal stage). This is the source of the pleasure adults take in holding onto money, valuable objects (as shown by the character-traits of avarice and parsimony, as well as the pleasure of hoarding or saving), in accordance with the equation of money and excrement’

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Research participants

“Well, I think the equation of money with anality I think raises the question of how able people are to part with what they’ve got is a complicated thing”

“Filthy lucre, anal stuff, so for a lot of people it is equated to something to do with anality and one has to tease it out with them and I mean in our society it’s sort of a bit distasteful to talk about money isn’t it?”

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Dimen

Dimen (1994) notes that ‘nevertheless, our forebears, themselves uneasy about money, recognized the deep desire for its dilemmas to simply vanish

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Research Participant

Well I think in me it's about my avoidance, my wish to avoid difficult feelings, unpleasant things, conflicts, ambivalence and I'd prefer the therapeutic stuff to sort of worldly-wise conflict. I prefer it".

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Trachman

Money can also be seen as a taboo in the profession and thus avoided. There is what Trachtman (1999) calls the Money Taboo where 'A Cultural Taboo regarding discussion of money affects psychotherapies as well as the lay public. As a result, the psychological literature regarding money is sparse while issues relating to money are seldom addressed in our training, our self-analyses or the treatment of our patients'

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Research Participant

“I come from a background where you don’t talk about money. It’s the most vulgar thing in the world. It’s more taboo than sex now. It’s more taboo. It’s the taboo”

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Krueger

Krueger (1991) tells us ...'many have learned to talk more easily about sex, but remain seclusive, embarrassed, or conflicted about discussing money. Money may be society's last emotional taboo. A patient in psychoanalysis expressed it very clearly. "You know, Krueger, it's a lot easier for me to talk about dead people and bad dreams than it is to talk about my feelings about handing this money to you every month'. This patient quoted might be seen to have more openness about his relationship to money than the psychoanalytic profession

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Research Participant

“Well, I think one side of the taboo is actually facing what the meaning of the clinical fee is and in having a professional exchange this has to be in the open rather than via a bill as you might get when you go to the dentist or something. I think it does generate feelings of one’s own deprivation and therefore the fear of greed around money if you ask too much”

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Haynes and Wiener

Haynes and Wiener (1996) state ‘Of the three major taboo subjects; sex, death and money, money is the least likely to be spoken, or written about. The theoretical literature on this subject is generally thin and rumour and secrecy about analytical practice abound’

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Research participant's image of the fee

“It’s like a child hiding his exercise book in school so no one can copy from him, his arm around this book”

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Another Exercise!

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Difficult Feelings About The Fee That Emerged

- Anger
- Greed
- Envy
- Hate
- Avoidance
- Dependency
- Frustration
- Anxiety, Conflict, Battle

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Some Images Of The Fee That Emerged

- **Dung Heap**
- **Mountain**
- **Minefield**
- **Envelope**
- **Rock**
- **Loud Speaker**
- **A Pair of Scales**
- **A Coin Broken in Half**

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Discovering Something New

I had not expected to discover that therapists had also positive associations with the fee

- Respect
- Self Worth
- Professionalism
- Value of Self
- Fairness
- Ethical, Assertiveness, Trust, Feeling Good

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Questions?