

ASOCIACIÓN MEXICANA DE PSICOTERAPIA ANALÍTICA DE GRUPO, AC
MEXICAN ASSOCIATION OF GROUP ANALYTICAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

General Introduction

The Institution and its History

The Mexican Association of Group Analytical Psychotherapy (AMPAG) is a private institution whose central objectives are the study, teaching, research and dissemination of psychoanalysis, individual and group analytical psychotherapy, and group psychoanalysis applied to institutions and other non-therapeutic uses.

AMPAG was founded as a nonprofit autonomous and independent association 39 years ago and now has more than one hundred active partners. Its headquarters are located in the Chapultepec area in Mexico City, where it performs teaching, clinical, healthcare, research, and administrative activities.

At the end of the seventies and as an expression of its democratic stance, AMPAG decided to operate through a collegiate (joint) government with the participation of graduates and students. The government is divided into the following coordination divisions: teaching, clinical services, administration and finance, scientific dissemination, and a general coordination office, the latter of which is responsible for the institute's coordination with the exterior.

AMPAG's historical background dates back to 1945, when just a few Mexican neuropsychiatrists formed a study group on the work of Sigmund Freud. The group worked together for several years and then ended with the dispersion of its members, some of whom went to train as psychoanalysts in geographical areas that made said studies possible: Europe, the United States of America and Argentina. Some time later, in the fifties, after a long period (from six to ten years) of study abroad, they returned to Mexico and founded various institutions.

AMPAG's history began in 1961, when a group of psychoanalysts who were interested in group techniques – and would later become the founders of AMPAG – completed an intervention based on institutional psychoanalyses at the Benedictine Monastery of St. Mary of the Resurrection, in Cuernavaca, Morelos in response to the request presented by Gregorio Lemercier, Prior of the Monastery. The Institute completed the work through group techniques, which lasted until 1968 and at the time gave rise to major controversies in the fields of psychoanalysis, culture and religion.

In 1962, and in parallel with the aforementioned institutional activity, a call was issued to form a study group on group psychoanalysis, which was institutionalized in 1967 and became the Mexican Association of Group Analytical Psychotherapy. Its teaching

objectives began that same year with its first generation of students. The year 2006 marked the celebration of 19 generations.

In 1977, AMPAG opened a Community Clinic where psychotherapeutic treatment is administered – primarily through groups – at a moderate cost and research activities are performed. This service has now been expanded to include the opening of a second Clinic in Coyoacán, on the southern side of Mexico City.

In 2004, the association's psychoanalytic institute received the recognition of a Masters Degree in Group Analytical Psychotherapy from the Ministry of Public Education (registration number 2004382).

Teaching of psychoanalytic therapy at AMPAG

The Teaching Institute is the place where the Office for Teaching Coordination performs its teaching and research activities. This Office is responsible for the specialization course in Group Psychoanalytical Psychotherapy. It offers four-year degrees, which are divided into semesters, and receives new pupils every two years. The students must present a final dissertation to complete their course at the end of their studies.

The classes are taught under a complex system of four central elements and seven different types of learning processes:

1. Theoretical-technical seminars, which advocate learning through conventional forms of teaching: reading of the theoretical and technical references on individual and group psychoanalyses, with their subsequent discussion at seminars.
2. Personal experiences in therapeutic and non-therapeutic groups, that allow the students to get involved with the groups in a personal and direct manner, and facilitate the introduction of the following work models:
 - 2.1. Didactic analysis, which implies attending personal group psychoanalysis for several years, so that students can acquire the broadest and most profound knowledge they can obtain of themselves, since their personality will be a basic tool for their work as psychoanalysts.
 - 2.2. Personal experiences in non-therapeutic groups, which include among others: Balint groups, T groups, reflection groups, operational groups and socio-analytical assemblies.
3. Clinical practice and case supervision, based on theory and techniques they are taught in prior classes as a basis for reference, in sequences of complexity and gradual personal responsibility in various clinical fields, that lead to the application of the knowledge acquired.

- 3.1. Supervision (or control) of individual psychotherapy cases.
- 3.2. Attendance to a therapeutic group accompanied by an expert (joint teaching therapy).
- 3.3. Supervision of group psychotherapy cases.

4. Research.

General Objectives of the Course:

- A) Train specialists in the clinical application of individual and group psychoanalytic psychotherapy, who will be able to diagnose and treat emotional disorders.
- B) Train specialists in the non-therapeutic application of the group psychoanalytic medium, for example, concerning its application to teaching by experience, psychological intervention in institutions, labor training and community work.
- C) Train specialists in individual and group psychoanalytic psychotherapy, who are then able to carry out research in clinical and non-therapeutic fields with the application of group attention models.
- D) Train specialists in individual and group psychoanalytic psychotherapy who are then able to teach at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

Practice in Clinical Fields

Teaching and research require clinical fields for practical purposes. As mentioned earlier in this document, said practices were initially performed in diverse public institutions and in the associates' private offices.

Over time, and in pursuit of independence, the Clinic of the Association (1977) was transformed into a psychotherapeutic healthcare service for the population and a clinical field, which the institution itself uses for teaching practice and research purposes. However, this is not the only clinical space the Institute uses, as its students currently practice in three different spheres: 1) in the Association's clinic, 2) in the institutions where the students work, and 3) in their private offices.

Preparatory clinical practices, which are performed primarily at the AMPAG clinic, include the following:

- a) Watching videos of admission groups, and through direct observation or in a Gesell Chamber of admission groups (during the first five months of the third semester of the course).
- b) Observation in a Gesell Chamber (and immediate clinical discussion for 30 minutes) of a therapeutic group that last one year (conducted by the group technique teacher) to study its process: initial, middle and final phases, and management techniques, with

- emphasis on transfer-counter-transfer and on psychoanalytic interpretation.
- c) Participation of a specialized teacher who acts as a co-therapist, in the conduction of an analytical therapeutic group for a two-year period.

These preparatory experiences will allow the student to obtain his/her final objective of conducting an analytical therapeutic group on his/her own, whether at the Association's clinic or in his/her private office. The conduction of said group will be the object of clinical supervision by one of the Association's expert teachers, who will perform said supervision one hour per week for two years.

A similar process is followed with regard to individual psychotherapy, in which the practices begin with a psychodynamic diagnosis workshop throughout the course of the first two semesters of the master's course, with supervision over small groups (maximum four students) of students' clinical cases with the direction of an experienced teacher. This supervision of cases of individual psychotherapy continues throughout the course of the training.

The AMPAG Clinic

Serves more than 400 patients in more than 50 therapeutic groups. It also has two admission groups through which it receives first-time patients to establish their diagnosis and refers them to therapeutic groups or to the type of treatment they require. Most groups are comprised of male and female adults who work together for two years. There are also certain special groups for children, teenagers and couples, and for sexual disorders (particularly female anorgasmia and premature ejaculation). Some cases are also treated in individual, family and couple therapy. This blend of diverse population sectors has also caused the clinics to become an interesting space for different types of research, including dissertations in some cases.

Admission Requirements

- a) Hold a degree in medicine with a specialization in psychiatry, individual psychoanalytical psychotherapy, psychoanalysis or family psychotherapy.
- b) Hold a degree in psychology or some other health-related degree, with a master's degree in clinical psychology, or a specialty in psychoanalysis, individual psychoanalytical psychotherapy, or family psychotherapy.
- c) Understand English.
- d) Pass three selection interviews with members of the Admissions Committee.

The new course began in February 2006. The next summons for courses will be issued from September through December 2007, and the course will begin in February 2008.