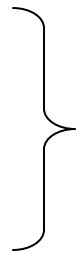


# The psychologist's role

Natacha Espié

Saint Louis réseau sein

Psychologist  
Psychoanalyst  
Psychiatrist

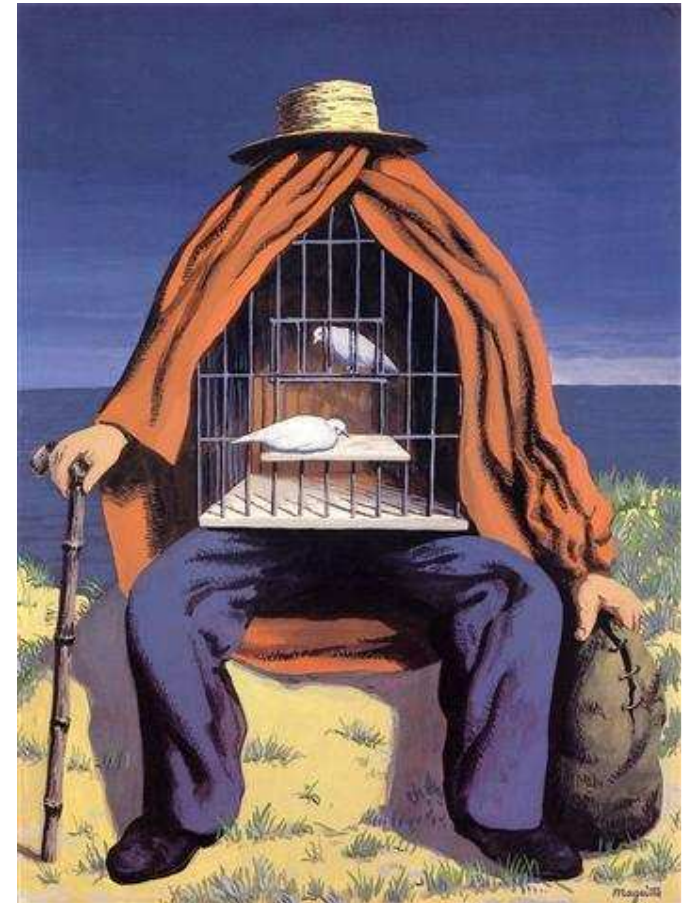


Psychological support to women



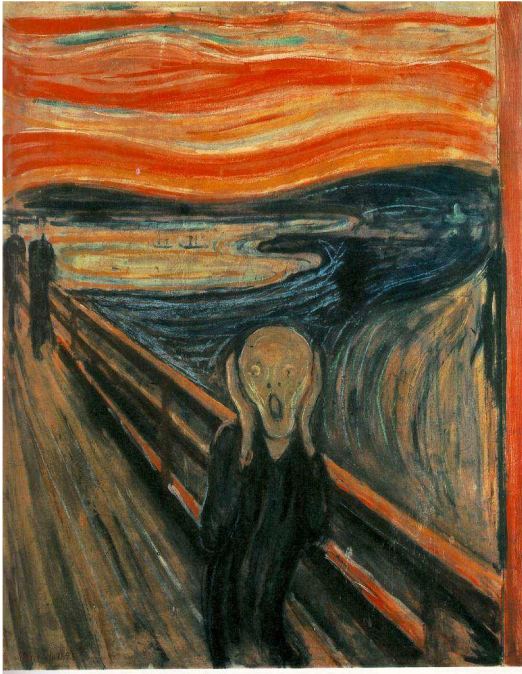
Psychoanalyst → all-powerful chaman

Psychoanalyst → incompetent



Cancer bluntly  
conjures up the  
notion of death





There used to be a « before »



Sideration

Will there be an after?



Anxiety

Physicians  
Psychologist  
Nursing staff



We all have an unconscious mind





Patients will have to get over a double shock:

- The diagnosis
- The treatments offered



Physicians should realize

- The information they give
- What they do

Have effects on their patients





Understanding :

→ what is being played within ourselves

→ how we are played

→ what we can figure out about what's happening in the other's mind

Physician  $\neq$  Psychologist



Listening  
Supporting



Agreeing to listen to the plurality  
of the patients' reactions ≠  
seriousness of the medical treatment



## Cancer

- psychic life gets shattered
- sense of identity faltering
- capacity for thought freezing



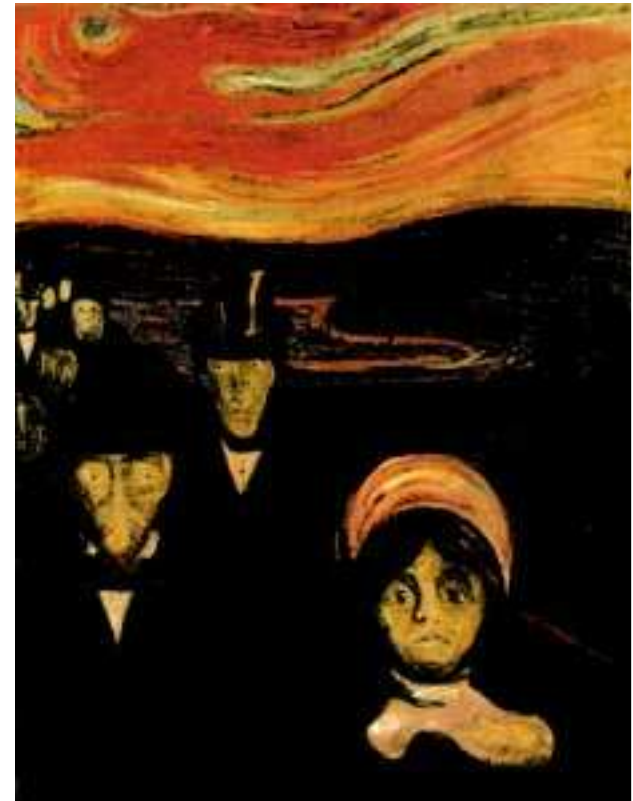
- Surgery
- Chemotherapy
- Radiotherapy



- Affect the body
- Bite into the psyche



Announcement of the disease → violent fits of crying,  
outburst of distress and sideration

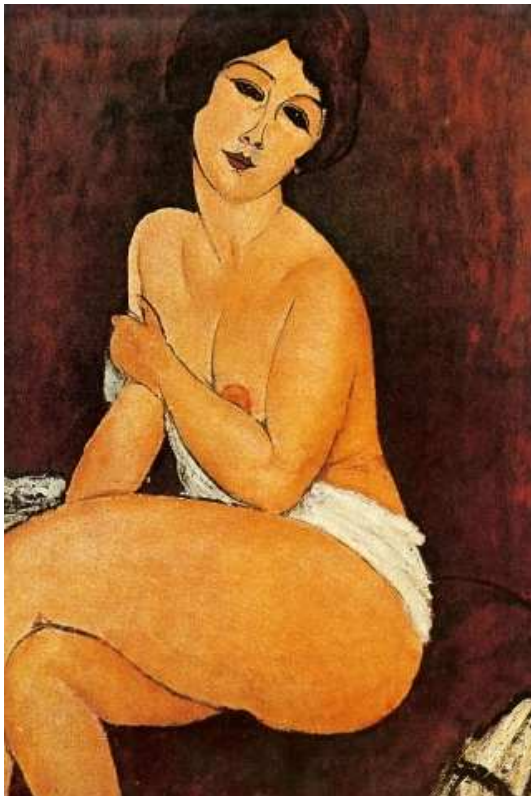





Each patient → to emerge from the shock of diagnosis

To find the psychological means :

- to come to the surgery
- to follow the treatments
- to live on with the disease
- to put up with the threat of recurrence
- to maintain relationship with friends and relatives



Unconscious mechanisms → denial  
→ rationalization



will develop

Psychic working at each stage of the disease and treatments



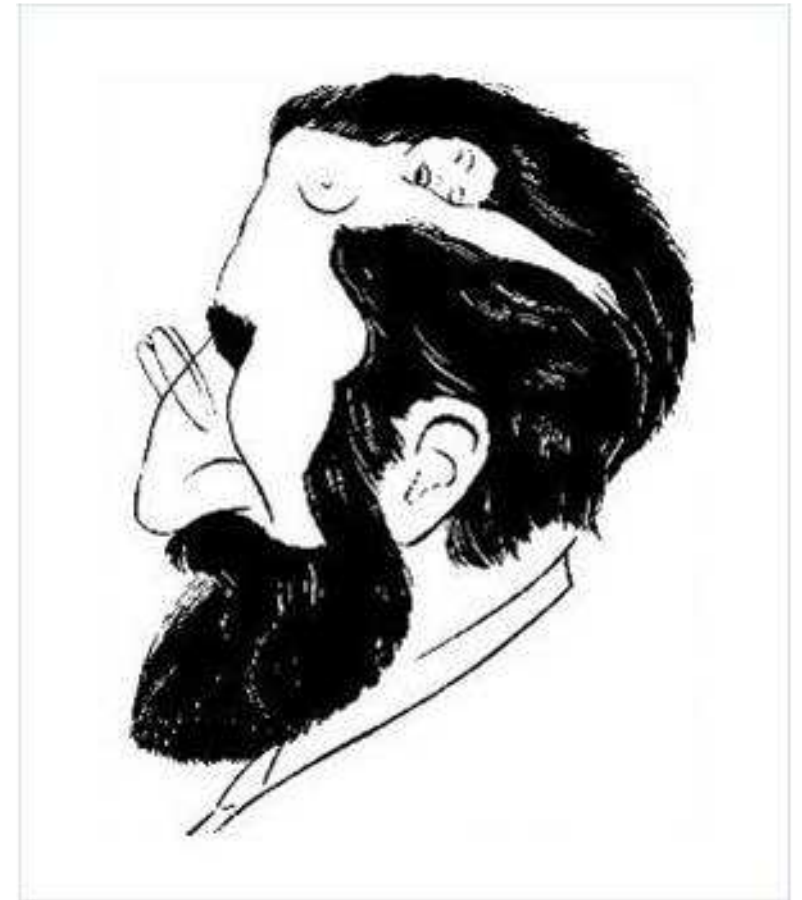


Offer of counselling may  
arouse anger in patients

How to distinguish the normal from the pathological  
Answer of psychoanalysis in term of:

- quantity
- degree
- too much

Freud → what prevents us from  
enjoying a normal life  
and acting inner conflicts likely to  
stop or break off  
the elaboration working



Losses related to cancer revive other traumas experienced in a former life and repressed since then





Patient's psychological experience

→ unique

→ not transposable

Physicians  
Psychologists



- Joint thinking
- Putting experiences and practices together

When should a patient  
be referred to a  
psychologist?

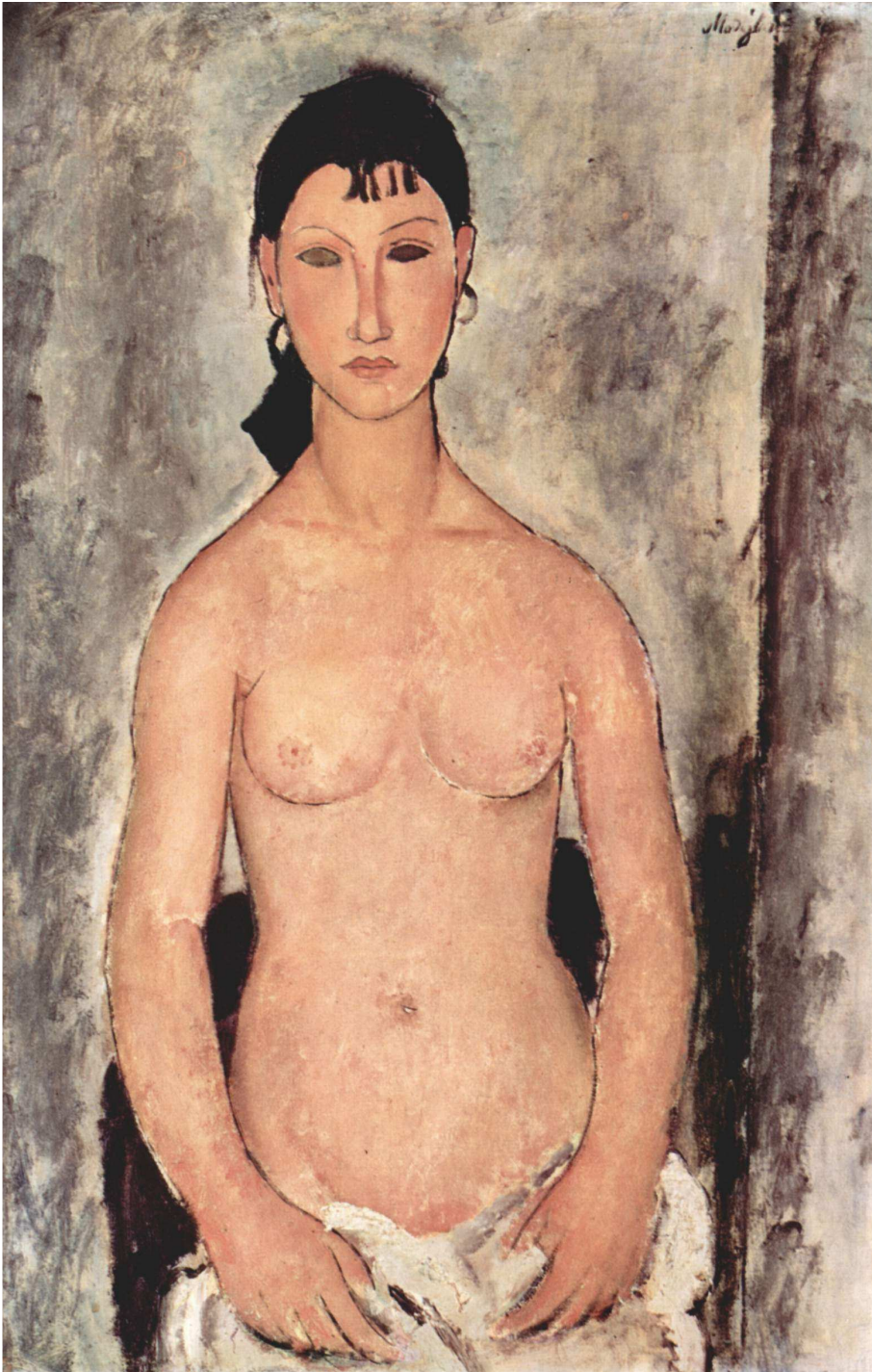


Inform patients that a psychologist is available in the unit





Time of the diagnosis not the best time



Some patients may feel anxiety at termination of radiotherapy, be depressed during chemotherapy, but may also dread seeing the oncologist only once a year

Listening persistent pain  
vomiting before drip

May be signs of depression





Awareness that cancer spins its web in the body,  
bridling the life urge....  
But may also be a life incentive





Psychoanalysis → a practice making for the freeing of vital forces from the psychic conflicts confining them

Cancer → brings about a personal revolution



The disease  
sometimes  
restores life  
urge



Psychologist's role: → listening  
→ decoding the unsaid  
→ giving support till recovery



# Thank you very much

