

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS BOOK IS about my work with a wide variety of patients, in various states of distress and growth, and about my own struggles in finding the best way to assist them interpretively. The practice of psychoanalysis is about this delicate and complex journey, a therapeutic focus specific to each case. Once truly engaged with a patient and earnestly exploring his or her private internal world, it is easy for any analyst to see why Sigmund Freud, Melanie Klein, and many others viewed psychoanalysis as first and foremost a clinical venture. Psychoanalytic theory provides the base for understanding the human condition, but it is the moment-to-moment work with patients that brings the theory to life. In this regard, I wish to thank my patients for helping me see the true clinical value of psychoanalysis and its place in the healing arts.

Theoretical, political, academic, and organizational debates are sometimes necessary or helpful. However, I believe psychoanalysis should always be defined by what goes on in the therapeutic setting. I am grateful to have had the chance to establish a meaningful therapeutic process—an analytic contact—with individuals, couples, and families who are working to better their lives. It is a privilege to be a part of their desire for change and evolution. All case material has been disguised, altered, or censored in a manner that maintains confidentiality.

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