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Dear Colleagues,

Please can you read the following in preparation for the seminar on
“Bion’s Perspective,” Saturday 8th November 2025.

First Seminar

In this opening session we will aim to get a handle on some of Bion’s core concepts before moving on to a more detailed text in the second seminar.

Please read Nicola Abel-Hirsch (2019). *Bion: An Introduction to His Life and Work*. Routledge. As you read, try to focus particularly on Bion’s ideas of container/contained, alpha function, reverie, attacks on linking, working without memory or desire, his symbol O for ultimate truth, and the notion of negative capability.

Second Seminar

In this session we will turn to an original paper from Bion, one that seems particularly relevant when working with borderline patients and where the boundary between psychotic and non-psychotic states becomes central.

Please read Bion, W.R. (1957). “*Differentiation of the Psychotic from the Non-Psychotic Part of the Personality*.” *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 38: 266–275. This paper is also reprinted in *Second Thoughts*.

I would also like you, if possible, to watch the film *A Monster Calls* (2016, directed by J.A. Bayona). It provides a powerful illustration of a young person moving between psychotic and non-psychotic states in the context of overwhelming emotional pain.

I look forward to linking these readings and reflections with your own clinical experiences in the afternoon seminar.

Warm wishes,

Shane Sneyd