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What is the function of faith and trust in psychoanalysis ?

Unlike other concepts such as illusion, capacity to tolerate frustration and libidinal investment, the concept of faith has not yet found a well defined position in psychoanalytic theory. Bion focused on faith and placed it in an unusual context: scientific work. Through the *Act of Faith* a researcher can give some consistency to certain ideas, hunches or intuitions that may appear during observation, though he cannot represent them by existing theory. Through the *Act of Faith* an analyst can 'see', 'hear', and 'feel' those mental phenomena the reality of which lives no practicing psychoanalyst in doubt, even if he cannot represent them by current formulations. The main purpose of this paper is to expand Bion's proposals into the clinical and therapeutic fields. The first part will examine how faith and trust overlap and how they depart from each other. I give just an example: faith possesses an igniting and driving force which trust doesn't have to the same extent. The second part looks at F as a psychic function of the analyst's which aids him in supporting a depressed and hopeless patient while he is waiting for the return of the patient's desire to live. The final part focuses on F from the patient's point of view and studies the transformations of F that may occur during an analysis.

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