

# **OBJECT RELATIONS THEORY**

[Object relationship is associated to a range of] clinical psychopathological phenomena, on what Anna Freud has called developmental disturbances, which the developmental flux of energy may even out during later development, or which, in certain instances, may be precursors of infantile neurosis or middle range pathology. In rare cases, in which the subphase development was severely disordered or unsuccessful, we found, as did others such as Frijling-Schreuder, Kernberg, and G and R Blanck, that borderline phenomena or borderlines states, and even psychosis may result. Mahler, 1975

## **Borderline Personalities**

1. A pervasive pattern of instability of interpersonal relationships, self image, and affect
2. Marked impulsivity
3. Frantic efforts to avoid real or imagined abandonment

**Melanie Klein**  
**Otto Kernberg**  
**James Masterson**  
**Margaret Mahler**

[Mahler uses] *identity* to refer to the earliest awareness of a sense of being, of entity—a feeling that includes in part, we believe, a cathexis of the body with libidinal energy. It is not a sense of *who* I am but *that* I am. Malher, 1975

## **Separation or Separateness**

### **Developmental Stages**

#### **The Normal Autistic Phase**

(0 to 3 Months)

#### **Normal Symbiotic Phase**

(3 to 4 months)

#### **Differentiation (“Hatching”)**

(4 to 6 Months)

#### **Splitting**

#### **Practicing Phase**

(5 to 16 Months)

#### **Rapprochement Phase**

(15 to 22 Months and Beyond)

Toddler phase(**separation anxiety**)

#### **Object Constancy**