

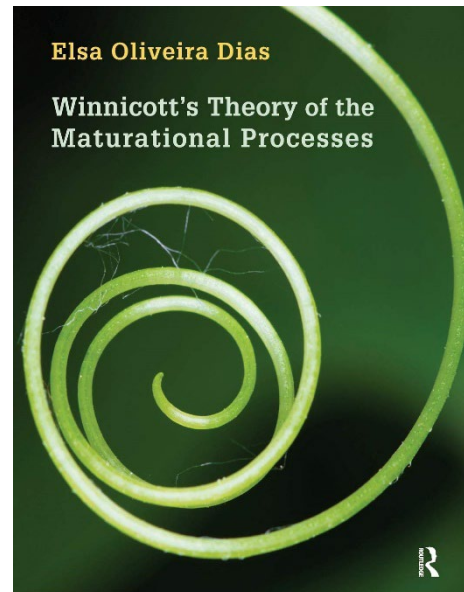
**Dias, E. O. (2016). *Winnicott's Theory of the Maturational Processes*.
London: Karnac.**

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A central theme of Winnicott's writings and formulations is *integration*, yet a criticism of him has been that he either failed to develop an integrated theory or failed to present his theory systematically. Dias set herself task of demonstrating that Winnicott did in fact develop a core theory in the form of a process of maturation which "begins at some point after conception and continues throughout the individual's life until his natural death". It is a theory which is fundamentally rooted in the psychosomatic nature of being. It emphasises that there are that not only necessary and sufficient *contributors* but also necessary and *sufficient external accompaniments* in the form of relationships and the other ingredients necessary for continuity of physical existence and a sense of purpose in living.

The Maturational Processes are described as leading from absolute dependence through relative dependence to relative independence. They unfold through the combined influences of the internal possibilities and probabilities contained in the individual's personal endowment both as they were in the original genetic contribution, and as they have become, formed through the presence or absence of a Facilitating Environment. Dias sets the scene for Winnicott in relation to other psychoanalytic theories and debates before setting out, in Chapter 2, the key concepts she perceives in his theory. Chapters 3-5 expand on these by considering in detail the stages of absolute dependence, relative dependence and relative independence.

Dias achieves her aim of presenting the argument that there is an integrating theme, the *Theory of Maturational Processes*, in Winnicott's writing and that this should be noted as an important and significant contribution when considering health, disease and illness. Her exposition is detailed and comprehensive in relation to DWW's original papers and there her extensive end-notes for each chapter to expand on the core text. It is an important contribution to both the understanding of theory and to its application. It should be essential reading to psychoanalytic practitioners and other professions wishing to explore the application of Winnicottian principles in mental health, education and social welfare settings across the life span.



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