# Joe Goldberg Psychoanalysis

**This text was originally written in another language and translated by artificial intelligence and may contain errors**

**This analysis is my own and I am not a professional in this field and I may have made mistakes.**

The subconscious mind, a fundamental concept in Freud's psychoanalysis, has been proposed as the repository of repressed desires, memories and impulses that drive human behavior. Joe's obsession with Beck can be seen as a manifestation of subconscious desires rooted in childhood experiences. Kepnes points to a difficult childhood, marked by abandonment and the absence of stable, nurturing relationships. According to Freud's theory of psychosexual development, such early experiences can lead to obsessions and unresolved conflicts that can crystallize in adulthood. Joe's obsession with Beck takes on a distinctly Oedipal dimension, as he seeks to fully possess her and eliminate perceived threats to their relationship. According to Freud's theory, the Oedipus complex refers to a child's unconscious desire for the parent of the opposite sex and rivalry with the parent of the same sex. His possessive and controlling behavior towards Beck can be seen as a manifestation of unresolved Oedipal conflicts, as he seeks to assert his superiority and eliminate competitors for his affection. Freud's structural model of the psyche consists of three components, the id, the ego and the super-ego, and provides another useful framework for understanding Joe's behavior. The id represents the primitive, instinctive drives that seek instant gratification, while the super-ego represents the internalized moral standards of society. The ego acts as a mediator between the two, seeking to satisfy the id's desires within the bounds of reality and the moral demands of the superego.

In Joe's case, his id-driven desires for Beck exceed his ego's grasp of reality and transcend the moral constraints of the super-ego. His increasingly desperate and violent actions throughout the novel/series can be seen as a consequence of the collapse of his ability to maintain this delicate balance, as he exceeds his ability to regulate obsessive urges within socially acceptable norms. Freud emphasized the role of defense mechanisms in managing anxiety and protecting the ego from unconscious conflicts. Joe exhibits many defense mechanisms in the novel, particularly rationalisation and projection. He rationalizes his frequent stalking behavior as a manifestation of his love for Beck while projecting his negative impulses and insecurities onto others, especially the men in Beck's life. According to Freud, Joe's final violence against Beck can be viewed as a complete collapse of the ego between its unconscious desires and the demands of reality. His violent action against Beck amounts to a complete surrender to the impulses driven entirely by the id and a total disrespect for the moral and social constraints that previously kept it in check. Joe's exposure to domestic violence at a young age, particularly witnessing his mother being abused by his father, is an important factor in his psychological development. According to attachment theory, early childhood experiences play a crucial role in shaping an individual's patterns of forming close relationships with others. In Joe's case, the lack of a stable, nurturing relationship with his

primary caregivers led to the development of an anxious-ambivalent attachment style characterized by a deep fear of abandonment and a tendency to form intense, clingy relationships. Moreover, the traumatic experience of having to shoot his abusive father in defence of his mother after his mother handed him a gun is a pivotal moment in Joe's psychosexual development. From a Freudian perspective, this act of violence may have resolved Joe’s Oedipal conflict, as he eliminates the rival father figure and asserts his sovereignty. However, the psychological scars left by this experience, coupled with his mother's subsequent abandonment, may also have contributed to Joe's fear of losing loved ones and his willingness to resort to violence to protect his relationships. Joe's experiences in the orphanage and his subsequent adoption by his stepfather can be seen as further reinforcing his anxious-ambivalent attachment style and his desperate desire for love and connection. The lack of a stable and consistent caregiver during his formative years may have left Joe with a deep sense of emptiness and a belief that he was not worthy of love, which led him to seek validation and fulfillment through his relationships with others. From an object relations perspective, Joe's idealization and obsessive pursuit of Beck can be seen as a manifestation of his unresolved childhood trauma and his search for a mother figure who will provide him with the unconditional love and acceptance he craves. In this sense, Beck becomes a symbolic representation of the mother who abandoned him and his desperate attempts to control and possess her reflect his deep fear of losing her as he lost his mother. Finally, Joe's violent behavior towards those he perceives as a threat to his relationship with Beck can be interpreted as a re-enactment of the traumatic violence he witnessed and participated in as a child. By eliminating rivals and obstacles to his love, Joe seeks to assert control over his environment and protect himself from the pain of abandonment, just as he did when he shot his abusive father.