The Strange World of

THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND
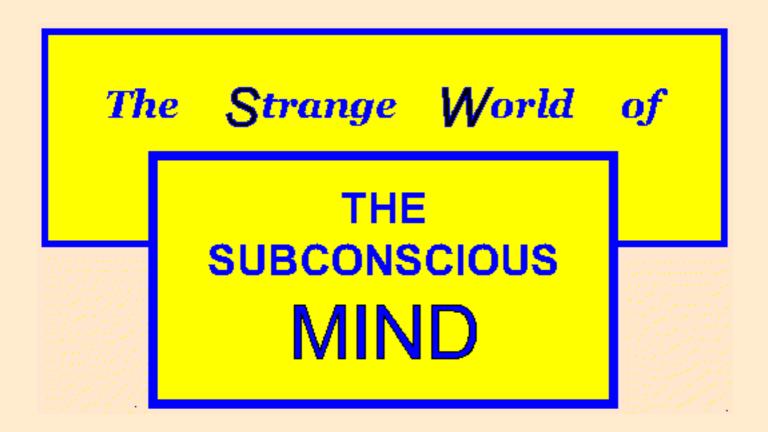
Emotions : what they are and how to identify them.

The new ideas on this website explore the roles of
emotions and subconscious beliefs
in
character development,
and in
the generation of mental confusion.

The world of emotion is a strange world, and the key which unlocks its
meaning is psycho-dynamic psychology.

Welcome

to a World of Strangeness

There are two principal articles on this site, one on emotion (in three parts) and the other on the process of abreaction (in five parts).

I use a traditional model of consciousness, which I bring up to date in order to enable me to define what an emotion is. Then I show how to identify emotions. Once this identification is accomplished, the process of abreaction can then be detected and analysed. Abreaction is a major source of the confusion and conflict of everyday life. In addition, it complicates psycho-therapy.

These two articles are the basis of the other articles on dynamic psychology (or depth psychology). I describe the characteristics and process of psycho-analysis, along with some methods used to attain character transformation. In addition, I explore the patterns and roots of personal identity.

Come and join in the exploration of self and strangeness.

Introduction
Overview. Background to the two principal articles.

EMOTION

ABREACTION

MORE IDEAS
Articles on psycho-analysis and identity

OTHER SITES
Links, plus Previews of my other Websites

This site was put on the internet in Spring 2002.

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Introduction

Everyone experiences emotions, but few people can accurately identify them, except for some intense ones such as fear and anger. This inability to identify them has several effects:

- It results in a lack of self-awareness and so inhibits the full development of self-consciousness.

- It creates confusion in our relationships and hinders the achievements of our aims and ideals.

- It is a major source of self-deception in theories of human nature, especially in theories that centre on understanding morality and sources of conflict and violence.

I point out that the ability to identify accurately our emotions enables us to directly explore questions concerning truth and falsehood and questions concerning ethics. Then we can derive realistic answers from our experience instead of resorting to speculation. I look at the role of anxiety in the mind, and then give a precise definition of what a psycho-analysis achieves.

I have also analysed the process of abreaction. This process is a group of four main sequences of emotions that invariably link together excitement with sorrow, and positive attitudes with negative ones. Abreaction mixes together morality with immorality, purity with degradation. It makes a mess of traditional ideas on ethics and responsibility, and is the primary source of confusion in the mind. **These ideas on abreaction lead to the deduction that there are two laws of social change.**

Understanding the nature of emotion and the process of abreaction enables a person to begin to construct more skilful theories of consciousness and of ethics, and to handle better the problems of everyday life. This understanding has profound implications for all forms of psycho-therapy, and even for psychiatric drug therapy.

Many thinkers have guided the construction of my ideas. Especially, I have deep affection for Nietzsche and Freud (and for Paul Brunton, in my philosophy book). The framework of my exploration of consciousness has been the spirit of existentialism. However, I do not necessarily use ideas in the same way that past thinkers have done.

Ideas evolve, just as people do.

This website has been developed as a source of articles on psycho-analytic theory.

Anyone with interesting ideas on dynamic psychology or philosophical psychology or psychological spirituality is welcome to e-mail me and I will add their website to the links pages on my various websites.

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The NATURE of EMOTION

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Introduction

The analysis of emotions has been ineffectual up till now since they are very difficult to identify, except for a few such as fear and anger. Many years ago I began an intense psycho-analysis (which I did on my own). It took me five years of constant awareness to finally identify the range of emotions that I usually experience.

This article is the first of three on emotions.

The peculiarity of any particular emotion is that, whilst it is just an emotion, it is nevertheless intimately associated with specific mental attitudes and ideas that have become characteristic of that emotion. In general, I found that each emotion acts as a nucleus for pre-set ideas about the world. This fact gives rise to a notable phenomenon. As one emotion fades away and the next one is generated, so the ideas in a person's mind *automatically change* : the fresh emotion brings with it its associated ideas.

A person is always experiencing some emotion at any time, since when the present emotion fades away so another emotion will take its place and be felt by him / her. No single emotional response can be permanent. When any emotion, such as anger, is experienced the person can stay angry only for some time; eventually the anger will fade away and a fresh emotion will arise.

Many people orientate on feeling responses to the world: an abundance of good feelings, and emotional satisfaction, become the criteria for a successful life. However, emotions present problems for the ego. When emotions become intense they neutralise intellectual concerns. In fact, common negatively-valued emotions such as self-pity, fear, anxiety, as well as moods like depression, actually tend to inhibit rationality – in particular, intense anxiety seems to produce a mental fog in one's mind, making it impossible to study.

Understanding the nature of emotions has profound implications for psycho- therapy. In this set of three articles I present my ideas on emotion. In the subsequent set of five articles on abreaction I focus on their relevance to psycho-therapy and the development of self-awareness.

Feelings

One area of confusion is that feelings are often loosely equated with emotions. This is all right for colloquial use. I can ask a friend how he is feeling today; it would be awkward to ask him how emotional he is being today. Some people might take offence if they were thought to be emotional, whereas it is acceptable for them to show feelings. However, there are fundamental differences between feelings and emotions.

There are just three feelings : the pleasant one, the unpleasant one, and the neutral one. This is the Buddhist understanding and I verified this fact directly during the time when I used to practise meditation. In the past, some moral theorists believed that the neutral feeling is only an equal mixture of both pleasant and unpleasant feelings, so that the net effect is zero. But meditational awareness disproves this assumption.

Model of Emotions

Emotions are partly derived from feelings. To explain how this derivation occurs I use a model of consciousness that is a traditional one: **consciousness has three modes, those of will, mind, and feeling.** Past variations on this model substituted action for will, and emotion or sensibility for feelings. In this model I distinguish between consciousness and mind. Consciousness is the totality of the person, whilst mind is only one feature of it. However, my model has an innovative feature: the three modes are separate, but they interlock by the production of desires and emotions.

In this model, mind has two aspects, intelligence and intellect. Intelligence links to will and to feeling, and intellect is the source of

abstraction. *The former expresses the activity of the mind, whilst the latter is an indication of the degree of maturity of the mind.* [This view is described in more detail in the article '**Reverie and Dreams**']. Mind is the key to consciousness. Mind, in fact, is the 'cement' that keeps all aspects of consciousness together.

Now the mind helps to produce desires and emotions. In this aspect of mind we use ideas or concepts.

I give definitions of desire and emotion that brings out their reliance on concepts.

Will is a pure striving, an undirected effort. When will is united with mind, it generates desire. **Desire is the activity of will directed into a mental concept.** The concept governs the use of will. The concept directs the will.

For example, will plus the concept *'social status'* gives rise to the desire to achieve social status. Will plus the concept *'fame'* gives rise to the desire for fame. Without the presence of desire it is very difficult to sustain the use of will; if a person tries to renounce desire then he / she is quite likely to become lethargic.

When feeling is united with mind, it generates emotion. **Emotion is the activity of feeling directed into a mental concept.** The feeling energises a conceptual response to a stimulus. Feelings are primarily either pleasant or unpleasant; rarely are they neutral. Hence there are two possible conceptual responses to any stimulus, which in turn leads to two possible emotional responses.

For example, feeling plus the concept *'domination'* gives rise to the emotions of anger and fear: anger arises because the pleasant feeling

makes domination of others acceptable to me, whereas the unpleasant feeling makes fear arise when I become subject to domination by others. For another example: feeling plus the concept *'identity'* gives rise to the emotions of love and hate. Here the pleasant feeling makes a social identity acceptable to me, since I am the same as everyone else: identity produces love. The unpleasant feeling makes me reject a social identity – I prefer to be different and have an individual identity: difference produces hate.

The mental concept that is associated with an emotion actually creates the boundaries of that emotion. If the mental concept changes, the emotion does not change; instead, it fades away and a different emotion arises, one that fits the current mental concept. The mental concepts of emotions are not normally a part of our awareness. Emotions are not unique to any particular individual, so the mental concepts that underlie them come from the unconscious mind. Since the mental concepts are unconscious they are extremely difficult to identify. The mental concept is normally unconscious, so I call it an unconscious concept or an unconscious idea.

> At this point I need to clarify my usage of two important terms.
>
> I use the term '**subconscious mind**' for what is personal to the individual, and the term '**unconscious mind**' for what is general to humanity.

The use of these terms is illustrated in the article **Characteristics of a Psycho-analysis**.

An emotion is not unique to any particular individual, so the mental

concept that underlies it comes from the unconscious mind.

Now an unconscious idea has two values : it is good or it is bad. The good value generates the pleasant feeling, the bad value the unpleasant feeling. This division leads to two choices. One choice gives rise to one emotion, the other choice to its complement.

In general, the definition of an emotion is that it is an unconscious idea powered by either a pleasant or an unpleasant feeling.

Influence of Value

No feeling is permanent. There is a constant oscillation between the positive and negative feelings. Emotions are constantly changing, in part because feelings change, and in part due to the constant stream of ideas that flow in the unconscious mind. At the conscious and subconscious levels of mind we can focus on an unconscious idea and use it to pursue a trend or theme about something that interests us at that moment. Hence we can make an emotion last whilst we follow that trend.

The difference between the flow of ideas at the conscious and subconscious levels is mainly related to the issue of change. The conscious flow is easy to change, especially when we are in social company, but the subconscious flow seems to have a life of its own and is highly resistant to conscious attempts to change it. In social company or if we are idealistic we can give preference to our conscious ideas, and hence control our conscious emotional response. But on our own, without the influence of idealism, the subconscious mind usually exerts

priority in emotional response. If the conscious mind is not dominant, that is, if we do not value what we are doing at any particular moment, then the subconscious mind is dominant (and so we may become subject to uncontrollable moods).

As I show below, emotions can be grouped into complementary pairs. I call these pairs 'binaries'. A few lines above I used two examples of binary emotions. I paired anger and fear together, and then love and hate together. Another binary is vanity and self-pity. What determines the choice of either emotion in a pair? For example, what governs a person, at a particular moment, in their selection of either anger or fear as their response to something? The choice is not a random one. The choice revolves around the dominating influence of value.

We put a value on emotional experience. By either liking or disliking things, relationships, situations, etc we put a value on them. At any particular moment we may either like or dislike something; but this liking and disliking can take many forms. For example, the way that we like that something may lead us to choose between anger, love or vanity as our response. Anger allows us to dominate the situation; love enables us to harmonise with other people; vanity lets us feel important. The way that we dislike it may focus on fear, hate or self-pity.

So at any particular moment we are focusing on a trend of thought, with a relevant emotion being experienced. Then there is some change in the situation that needs an emotional response from us. Sometimes we can consciously choose our response, particularly if the situation is a pleasant one. But more often than not we act subconsciously. The value that we place on the situation at that moment determines which emotion will be felt. For example, if we are feeling discontented, we will place little positive value on our present experience ; then when we have to respond to something we are more likely to choose some form of hostile or fearful response.

As well as putting value on our situations, we also put value on our thoughts and ideas. Now an unconscious idea has two values: it is good or it is bad. The good value is supported by the pleasant feeling, the bad value by the unpleasant feeling. This division leads to two choices. One choice gives rise to one emotion, the other choice to its complement. Hence emotions can be grouped into complementary pairs, or binaries.

In general then, if we are free-wheeling in our thoughts, we can let our emotions be positive or negative according to whether the feeling is positive or negative. Otherwise, by placing value on our experience, we can generate positive or negative emotions as we choose. However, the generation of a positive emotion is often difficult if the feeling that is current is the negative one, and vice versa.

The unconscious idea enables all emotions to be arranged in pairs of complementary opposites. The one exception is that the neutral feeling is unique, it is not part of a binary. It is the basis of **equanimity**, the ability to be unaffected by any kind of stress. Equanimity should not be confused with indifference or even peace **;** indifference is a protective mechanism of withdrawal from responsibility and is underpinned by fear, whilst peace is achieved by repressing internal conflict (that is, conflict that is within the mind of a person).

In psychological language, equanimity is the state of mind which denotes the absence of projection and introjection. When a person uses the mechanisms of projection and introjection, they are making value

judgements about the characteristics of other people that they admire or dislike. When they cease making such value judgements, they thereby cease to desire anything of a personal nature. [¹]

I list some emotions which are binary to each other :

> fear - anger
> love - hate
> jealousy - narcissism
> pride - guilt
> vanity - self-pity
> resentment - bitterness

Some emotions have an additional complexity: they are compound and consist of two simpler emotions. I call such compound emotions '*doublets*' and each of the separate emotions within a doublet I call a '*mode* ' of that doublet. For example, guilt comprises the two simpler emotions of self-pity and self-hate. So guilt is experienced as guilt (in the mode of self-pity) or as guilt (in the mode of self-hate).

I list some doublets and then I give a table of unconscious ideas that determine emotions.

TABLE 1   **DOUBLETS**

Guilt = self-pity + self-hate.
Pride = vanity + hatred of other people.

Narcissism = love + vanity.
Jealousy = love + self-pity.

Resentment = guilt + idealism.
Bitterness = pride + idealism

Repentance = regret + guilt (mode of self-pity).
Sadness = regret + jealousy (mode of self-pity).

Paranoia = fear + pride (mode of vanity).
Anxiety = fear + vanity.

In the doublets of guilt, pride, narcissism, and jealousy, only one mode is felt at any one time – they are never experienced simultaneously. For example, guilt is felt as either self-pity or as self-hate.

How do I know that some emotions are compound ones? Guilt was the first one that I identified. Once I learned to detect guilt by empirical awareness I became puzzled by the fact that it seemed to exhibit contrary impressions. Then I realised that this difficulty could be explained by postulating that guilt consisted of two factors. It then became an empirical task to see if I could detect these two separate factors – and I did.

Now guilt equals self-pity plus self-hate. This arrangement of the two emotions within guilt has three other possible combinations, by taking the binaries of self-pity and self-hate. So if my factorisation of guilt was

correct then three other doublets should also exist, with their factors being:

self-pity + love

vanity + love

vanity + hate

Eventually I realised through intuition that these compound emotions represented jealousy, narcissism, and pride. Then again I empirically verified that my theorising was correct. The hallmark of a compound emotion is that it produces ambiguous responses ; the ambiguity always falls into two categories, thus indicating that two factors are present and need to be separated.

For example, in sadness there is sorrow (from the regret) plus a sweetness (from the jealousy). When the jealousy factor is highlighted, then I always find that sadness is a lovely emotion in which I often like to linger, whereas the sorrow element makes sadness unpleasant.

Unconscious Ideas

Now I turn to unconscious ideas. Deriving them was not easy. Some emotions occur three times ; for example, self-pity occurs on its own, as a mode of jealousy, and as a mode of guilt, and each one produces a different response. To work out the underlying idea, the overall theme or motif of the emotion needs to be considered, that is, what the emotion is trying to express. Also, in a doublet, one unconscious idea needs to be

harmonious with the other one. Below are the results that I derived.

I use the word *'implies'* to indicate the central idea that determines a particular emotion. These ideas are focused on relationships. When a relationship is not the issue, then different responses may occur. For example, the vanity mode of pride, when applied to crafts, produces the satisfaction of doing good work.

<div style="background-color: yellow; border: 2px solid navy;">

TABLE   2   **UNCONSCIOUS   IDEAS**

</div>

The motif of guilt and pride is punishment / humiliation
Guilt is self-punishment
> self-pity mode implies life is punishment.
> self-hate mode implies I deserve punishment.

Pride is punishment / humiliation of other people.
> vanity mode implies you are inferior to me.
> hate mode implies I despise you / I will punish you.

The motif of jealousy and narcissism is responsibility
Jealousy is social responsibility.
> self-pity mode implies I need a reward (from other people).
> love mode implies I reward other people.

Narcissism is self-responsibility.
> vanity mode implies I will do it my way.
> love mode implies I do not depend on anyone.

The motif of self-pity and vanity is help

Self-pity implies I need help.

Vanity implies I do not need any help.

The motif of anger and fear is domination

Anger implies I need to dominate other people

Fear implies the world is dominating me.

The motif of love and hate is identity

Love implies I am the same as everyone else.

Hate implies I am different from everyone else.

The motif of envy and greed is the need to acquire importance

Envy implies I become important if I can get what you have.

Greed implies I become important if I possess things.

The motif of resentment and bitterness is disgust

Resentment implies people are repulsive.

Bitterness implies life is repulsive.

The motif of paranoia is the betrayal of trust

Paranoia implies I trust no one.

The motif of anxiety is a sense of oppression by one's conscience or by other people

fear mode implies do as you are told / control yourself.

vanity mode implies I am uneasy in the presence of other people.

Depression arises from self-pity ; there are three forms of the latter, so there are three forms of the former.
The most common type arises from jealousy (mode of self-pity) and is the depressive stage of manic depression. Guilt-based depression (or

'*endogenous*' depression) has its source in the infant's traumatic experience of parental relationships and represents a response to the feeling of being rejected. Depression that arises from self-pity may be seen in political refugees denied asylum, and in anyone who is a victim of injustice.

The motif of manic depression is victimisation
>   depression mode implies I am a victim.
>   mania mode implies I help victims.

The motif of guilt-based depression is self-denigration
>   Depression implies I am a sinner.

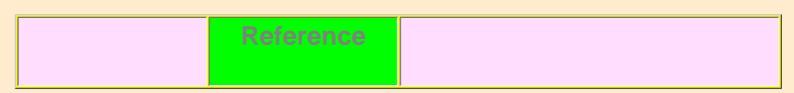**The motif of depression based on self-pity is the absence of equity or fairness**
>   Depression implies there is no equity, no fairness in life.

These ideas enable me to state how motivation is usually handled by the subconscious mind.

> *Subconscious motivation usually means the influence of the current subconscious mood and its associated ideas.*

By dwelling on an associated idea, an emotion becomes prolonged into a mood. Since moods change frequently, this form of motivation is short-term. Long-term subconscious motivation requires a subconscious desire, but unless this desire is powered by idealism it is likely to be much weaker as an influence on the ego than any mood.

The specific mental attitudes and ideas that have become characteristic of each emotion are the subject of the next article: **Emotion 2**.

	Reference	

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1]. To understand the ideas of projection and introjection, and how they form a mental loop, read my article '**Projection & Introjection**' on my website **discover-your-mind.co.uk**, see Links. [1]

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The Subconscious Mind

New Ideas in Psychology

List of articles

on Psycho-Analysis

The two basic abreactions of guilt and pride are described in the articles on abreaction. The remaining two abreactions, those of narcissism and jealousy, are described in the article **The Conversion Experience**, on my website **Patterns of Spirituality**. See **Links** page.

Section 1   The **P**sycho-**A**nalytic **E**xperience

Characteristics	*introduces the issues that feature in a psycho-analysis.*
Character transformation	*the sequence from instability to stability to flexibility. Limitation to analysis.*

Section 2   Method in a Psycho-Analysis

Section 3   Roots of Identity

Section 4   **Patterns of Identity**

Section 5   **A**breaction as **T**herapy

Effects on identity   *function of abreaction ; effects of fear and confusion on identity ; stages.*

Examples   *descriptions of intense abreactions.*

Creative illness   *exploring the mind can produce illness ; pain of insight, and handling the ego.*

Section 6   **F**rom the **O**ld to the **N**ew

Justification   *from old identities to new ones ; causality and motivation. The place of existential writers.*

Reversal of Values   *catharsis reverses values ; disjunctive states of mind, and the ideal mother image.*

Button design from DeKnop button manager - see **Links**

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About Me

I daydreamed my way through most of my childhood. Then drifted through adolescence and into college. I had no particular drive activating me at that time.

I have an academic training in physics and maths, graduating in 1967. After a few months in computing, I dropped out of professional life to become an anarchist in politics and an existentialist in everything else. This was my hippie and social activist period.

In my 30s, I went on the traditional 'soul search', doing the rounds of various groups, but eventually realised that traditional values and beliefs (whether eastern or western) did not answer my needs – even though I did not yet know what my needs were. I was just confused.

In 1985 I spent a month in India, living in an ashram and visiting temples. When I returned I ended all my associations with psychic groups and went into intellectual isolation. For many years I read everything that I could on all aspects of human nature ; the local library

seemed like my second home, since I spent so much time there.

[Interestingly, the two original thinkers that I most admire, Nietzsche and Freud, also produced their ideas in intellectual isolation. When new psychological ideas are being created, which often means that the thinker has become very sensitive and vulnerable, premature criticisms by outsiders will crush the thinker. Hence solitude is an absolute necessity for facilitating the free flow of inspiration].

During that period I extensively studied dynamic psychology (the way that the subconscious and unconscious minds work), whilst at the same time intensively analysing my own problems. This was the time of my psycho-analysis, which I did on my own, without the help of any therapist. (So I call it my **self-analysis**).

I went through periods of intense stress, which brought me intense self-awareness. I explored the dark side of the mind, including madness, and learned some of the hidden ways by which it functions. Eventually this understanding enabled me to formulate original ideas about faith, ethics, spirituality, and the origins of violence and confusion.

> Looking back,
> the major direction of my life from my 30s to my 50s was an exploration of healing ways. It was a journey from physical healing *(herbalism, plus a training in swedish massage and osteopathy)* to psychic healing *(or 'spiritual healing')* and then to psychological healing *(psycho-analysis)*.

This journey was, in its essence, a spiritual dialogue between myself and my soul.

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The Subconscious Mind

New Ideas in Psychology

LINKS to Other Sites

plus

Previews of my other Websites

Psychology links come first, then

Philosophy links

Spiritual / philosophical links

Portals, directories, and search engines

I.T. Resources

Previews

Highly Sensitive People.com is a website which focuses on the trait of high sensitivity. How to successfully navigate the unique situations and

challenges that arise for highly sensitive people and their partners.

http://www.highlysensitivepeople.com/index.html

Learn about surviving adversity in a world that is not fair. Some people survive, cope, and thrive better against misfortune when they develop their inborn abilities. **ThriveNet** has features on resilience, overcoming job loss, serendipity, and more. At

http://www.thrivenet.com/

The Wounded Healer Journal is a website for psychotherapists, survivors and others who have experienced the devastation of traumatic experiences, including child abuse. At

http://twhj.com

Highly Sensitive Persons is a site for people who are usually shy, introverted and socially inhibited. Such people are often acutely aware of other's emotions, find a career to be challenging, and yet have a greater capacity for inner searching. Counselling, coaching, mentoring and guidance with Thomas Eldridge. At

http://www.sensitiveperson.com

SelfGrowth.com is a guide to information about self improvement, personal growth and natural health on the internet. It is an organised directory, with articles and links. At

http://www.selfgrowth.com

The **National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** (PTSD) focuses on the science, diagnosis, and treatment of PTSD and other stress-related disorders. It is an educational resource, providing fact sheets, articles and videos. Articles include topics such as self-help after disasters, relationships, community violence, sexual assault, and severe mental illness. At

http://www.ncptsd.org/

One Spirit Project is a website for facilitating personal growth and spiritual development through commentary and discussion. They encourage new perspectives that will help you find meaning and purpose in your life. Large resource directory, with artistic delights such as mandalas, and an e-zine. At

http://onespiritproject.com

SagePlace contains news, articles, books and quotes related to the healing and wholeness of the mind, body, spirit, and environment. At

http://sageplace.com/

Anxiety Self-Help.com is a directory for all types of anxiety and other mental problems with products, chat rooms, bulletin board and book store to help you. At

http://www.anxietyselfhelp.com

PsychNet-UK is an independent psychology website developed as a jump-off point, thereby allowing mental health professionals to access other psychologically based sites quickly and easily.

http://www.psychnet-uk.com

Mental Health Matters supplies information and resources to mental health consumers, professionals, students and supporters. At

http://www.mental-health-matters.com

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Philosophy links

TPM Online is The Philosophers Magazine on the web. It showcases a mixture of news, reviews, features, interviews and new philosophy.

http://www.philosophers.co.uk/index.htm

Spiritual / philosophical links

Paul Brunton was a rare combination, being an accomplished practitioner of eastern meditational techniques, yet also having a western philosophical and analytical mentality. He wrote many books on spiritual themes, including one on philosophical idealism.

A website devoted to him is the Paul Brunton Philosophic Foundation, at

http://www.paulbrunton.org

The **Exceptional Human Experience Network** Inc. (EHEN) is an educational, research, and information resource organization studying all types of anomalous (out of the ordinary) experiences, such as meaningful coincidences, telepathy, precognition, spontaneous healing, out-of-body experiences, near-death experiences, desolation, and mystical experiences.
After clicking on the link below, navigate from the site map.

http://www.ehe.org/display/splash.cfm

Portals, directories, and search engines

Healthlinks Directory is a complementary resource site for healthcare consumers and professionals and provides links to services and products, alternative health, education, dental and medical resources, healthcare publications, mental health and much more.

http://www.healthlinks.net/

Zenzibar is a directory and portal to alternatives to western mainstream culture, at

http://www.zenzibar.com/index.asp

The **Global Soul Search Net** is a quality directory on alternative health, aromatherapy, hypnosis, meditation, new age, self help, and other aspects of personal growth.

http://www.globalsoulsearch.net/

Search Europe is a search engine and directory dedicated to Europe and everything European. At

http://searcheurope.com

Search Europe

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I. T. Resources

Graphic buttons
Button design from DeKnop button manager, by Sam Franke, at

http://home.hccnet.nl/s.j.francke/deknop/deknop.htm

Xenu's Link Sleuth (TM) checks Web sites for broken links. Link

verification is done on "normal" links, images, frames, plug-ins, backgrounds, local image maps, style sheets, scripts and java applets. A free download, at

http://home.snafu.de/tilman/xenulink.html

ImageForge is a complete painting programme for creating or editing images, retouching photos, assembling slide shows or picture albums, and more. A free download from CursorArts Company, at

http://cursorarts.swmirror.com/

or review and download from 1000files.com at

http://1000files.com/Multimedia_and_Design/Image_Editing/
ImageForge_4403_Review.html

This website is just an introduction to my ideas.

Previews of my other Websites
The descriptions of the sites are further down the page.

My oldest website has been re-modelled and is the best site to view as an introduction to my ideas. It is called

The Strange World of Emotion
http://website.lineone.net/~ian_heath2

There is an underscore (_) between "ian" and "heath2".

* * *

I have a website on dynamic psychology at

Discover your mind
http://www.discover-your-mind.co.uk

* * *

Another site is on philosophy of science, at

Relative Mind, Relative Matter
http://www.relative-mindmatter.co.uk

* * *

I have a website on the problems of the spiritual life at

Patterns of Spirituality
http://www.dawndreamer.co.uk

* * *

My website on general philosophy is

A Modern Thinker
http://www.modern-thinker.co.uk

* * *

My newest website is on mental disorder.

The site is **Patterns of Confusion**, at
http://www.mind-fragments.co.uk

All these sites can be accessed through *Ask Jeeves*. If you do not have *Ask Jeeves* as one of your search engines, then the search box will take you to it.

To access the sites, type in the addresses.

Got a question? Just type it in and click "Ask."

-

Ask Jeeves is at   http://www.ask.com/index.asp

The site **The Strange World of Emotion** contains articles on dynamic psychology from several of my other sites. It also contains a section on sexual themes, such as bonding, gender, symbolism and violence. The articles give a panoramic view of the usefulness of this kind of psychology for handling a wide range of difficult issues.

The site **Discover Your Mind** is my site on dynamic psychology and idealism. It also contains the basic articles on emotion and abreaction. Here I extensively apply my ideas on the mind to an exploration of the

emotional dynamics that underlie many fields of individual and social activities. This exploration often opens new avenues for understanding old problems. Most articles in this section range between sexuality, belief and ethics, aspects of identity, power, attitudes, relationships and idealism.

The site **Relative Mind, Relative Matter** is on philosophy of science. It features ideas on the nature of relativity and proposes a solution to the wave-particle paradox in atomic physics. No maths are involved. The difficulty in conceptually understanding what happens within the atom is due to semantics. Western thinkers have consistently mis-understood the meaning of relative concepts. The boundaries between the three concepts of *subjectivity, objectivity*, and *relativity* have not been clearly dis-entangled.

The site **Patterns of Spirituality** portrays the major trials and landmarks of the spiritual journey, and proposes explanations of why these trials occur. The difficulties, crises and goals of spiritual development are highlighted. Most of my ideas are original ones, and give a mental map that is suitable for a psychological explorer in modern times. It also contains an article on the abreactions of jealousy and narcissism - *The Conversion Experience*.

The site **A Modern Thinker** contains some traditional themes of philosophy: the pursuit of truth, belief and morality, mind, semiology and sign systems, language, metaphysics, handling paradoxes (especially in atomic physics), and my view of relativity. Overall, the ideas explore meaning in life and the way that consciousness makes sense of reality. No ability in logical analysis is required - only a wide view of life is needed. Many of my ideas are original and reflect my understanding of

the subconscious mind. Come and look at new ideas in philosophy.

The site **Patterns of Confusion** features analyses of various forms of madness, confusion, violence, creative illness, and psycho-somatic disorders. The unconscious ideas that produce such states of mind are explained. In the articles on this website I only consider the causes and effects of psychological conditions on people ; I do not consider any possible physiological or genetic causes.

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Characteristics

of a Psycho-Analysis

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

What is a psycho-analysis?

Sub-headings
Memory
Levels of mind
Motivation & determinism
Self-deception
Quality of beliefs

What does it achieve?

Psycho-analysis is called the 'talking therapy'. It would be more accurate to call it the 'thinking therapy'. The results of this therapy are not consistent, and the reason for this is that people spend varying lengths of time in analysis, and their commitment to personal change is just as variable.

I consider that I have gone further into analysis than anyone else has ever done, and the results of my psychological explorations are given in the articles on my websites. I know both what psycho-analysis can do for a person, and what it cannot do.

The short answer to the question 'what does it achieve?'

is that it removes confusion from the mind.

The articles on my websites are written with two purposes in mind.

The first purpose is to propose that the mind is organised into structures, processes and patterns of thinking. The structures are independent of content, whilst the patterns are learned responses. Abreaction is a process. An example of structure is the loop of projection and introjection [1]. Examples of patterned thinking are forms of madness and forms of sexuality (which will be detailed in future websites).

Many people experience some form of personality disturbance during their life. So the other purpose of this book is to put forward some ideas as to why this disturbance happens. Such a disturbance can radically affect a person's sense of identity

I start with a consideration of the influence of memory on a person's character. Then I lead into the influence of motivation and determinism.

Memory

Some aspects of a person seem to be fixed, and other aspects seem to be fluid. Beliefs can be either: fluid beliefs are open to deliberate change, whilst fixed beliefs seem to be impervious to such change. Fixed beliefs (which include prejudices) help to generate the person's character, which is that aspect of their consciousness that remains constant despite the ups and downs of life.

Whatever kind of character that a person has, that character has its roots in the past. The past is the province of memory. The way that a person remembers their past experience governs the manner in which their character traits have been formed and consolidated. So memory is very important for producing a person's character. Experience plus memory help generate the person's fixed

beliefs that underlie his character.

Why is the memory so important? Our memories are laden with positive and negative valuations about events. Memories that we enjoy pose no problems, but memories that we dislike have a restraining influence on our present attitudes to life and on what we can achieve in life. The more negative the valuation that we place on a memory, the more likely it is that it can lead to personality disturbance when we find ourselves in situations which evoke that memory. The memory may be conscious, or it may be exerting its influence whilst remaining below the threshold of consciousness. When negative memories are not very intense, such personality disturbance often produces behaviour that is deterministic and outside of our control; when the intensity is extreme, we may experience madness.

> In general, therefore, we put values on our memories. Problems arise when any negative valuation of a memory influences our present behaviour and activities. This is the realm of determinism, and exploring determinism is a central feature of a psycho-analysis.

Levels of the Mind

Before proceeding further I need to define two terms that I use to denote domains of mind that are below the threshold of consciousness. My use of the terms '**subconscious**' and '**unconscious**' are as follows.

> '*Subconscious*' *refers to those aspects of mind that are particular to a person.*

> '*Unconscious*' *refers to those aspects of mind that are general to all humanity.*

The subconscious mind has several 'levels' or departments.
For example:

- **We can have that which is just below the threshold of awareness, what Freud called 'the preconscious'.**
  This is illustrated by 'tip-of- the-tongue' phenomena, when we try to recall a person's name or a particular word.

- **We can be affected, at a subconscious level, by other people: by their moods, attitudes and behaviour.**
  If I am in a good mood and then sit for some time next to another man immersed in depression then I am likely to pick up his depression, while he absorbs some of my gaiety.
  I might like or dislike an older woman if her character traits subconsciously remind me of my mother.

- **We can have two or more personalities (or psychological identities).**
  Only one of these is conscious at any time, the others being subconscious.

- **Memories of psychological traumas that were experienced in childhood.**
  These are at a deeper level in the subconscious mind than the examples above.

- **Past-life influences (within the perspective of reincarnation) are often very powerful.**
  These arise from the deepest level of the subconscious mind.

- **There are subconscious boundaries to the way that the person controls his / her behaviour.**
  This is the region of social and moral conditioning (that is, behaviour that is controlled by reward and punishment, and not by the exercise of free choice).

The unconscious mind also has several 'levels' or departments.
For example:

- **Emotions originate here.**

- **The process of abreaction operates from here.**

- **The psychological effects of symbols derive their power from the unconscious level.**

- **There are unconscious boundaries to the way that the mind operates.**
  People at different stages of evolution will have different boundaries. Boundaries reflect constraints on the power of the mind, and so they change as this power develops through personal evolution.
  For example: a mythical absorption in reality is a typical aspect of aboriginal populations, and this gradually fades as the intellectual capacity of the mind develops.
  Also, some people can access the higher regions of mind and have extra-sensory capabilities.

The rationale for boundaries is that they enable a person to function reasonably well in a world of chaotic and complex sensory impressions.

In the early months of the infant's life it has no ego and only experiences its subconscious mind reacting to sensations. Once the ego is in the process of creation then conscious life begins. The problem that faces the infant is that life is just too complex in its totality; therefore this complexity has to be restricted in some way in order to manage at least some part of it. The subconscious and unconscious minds have few natural boundaries, so the only way to make sense of the multitude of sensory impressions is to create boundaries. Such boundaries enable the mind of the infant to manage the sheer complexity of life that it is witness to.

> *The difficulty of trying to understand the multitude of sensations when boundaries are absent is illustrated very clearly by taking any powerful hallucinatory agent such as LSD.*

The concept of boundaries comes within the moral workings of fate and destiny (what is called 'karma' in the Eastern world).

Motivation & Determinism

A psycho-analysis focuses on psycho-dynamic psychology, on psychology which explores the dynamics of the subjective factors of personality. The most important subjective factor is that of motivation. Ordinarily the average person assumes that they know what their major motivations are. However, a deep psycho-analysis shows that this assumption is usually incorrect. A person's major motivations are subconscious ones. Psycho-dynamic psychology is primarily a theory of subconscious motivation, motivation that the person is not usually aware of, motivation that is below the threshold of awareness. When such motivation becomes compulsive and influences normal activity then we have determinism functioning.

If you were to make a list of your major motivations, that list would seem to be eminently reasonable. However, once you begin to analyse your moods, actions, likes and dislikes, etc, you begin to discover that your list of motivations are usually only secondary ones. Your primary motivations will come as a surprise as you begin to discover yourself, and often you will find that these new motivations that you are discovering are unpleasant, even nasty, ones. And this is usually the reason that you were not aware of them. Any unpleasant features of our personality we prefer to ignore, and bury them (that is, repress them) into the subconscious region of our mind so that they no longer appear to trouble us. What a psycho-analysis proves is that these buried motivations still affect us even when we have no more awareness of them.

Now something unpleasant can motivate us, without our being aware of it. If the motivation is compulsive then we become deterministic in our behaviour. In other words, once we begin to explore motivation we immediately come up against the problem of determinism.

Determinism can be both subconscious and unconscious. Unconscious determinism I include in the concepts of boundaries and of abreaction, which are almost unchangeable during the course of a single lifetime. Subconscious determinism seems to be what troubles most people, since it is more obvious than unconscious determinism. Subconscious determinism means that a person

cannot change their behavioural responses when they are under stress, because they cannot change their motivations. When the motivation stays the same, then so too does the behavioural response. The difficulty is that since the person is not aware of their subconscious motivation so therefore they cannot deliberately change it; they can only deliberately battle against it.

Examples of subconscious determinism are:

- **Repeatedly checking that doors and windows are locked before going to bed.**

- **Being obsessed with cleanliness.**

- **Often an introvert finds it very difficult to show affection to another person, especially to his or her parents.**

- **The psychology of drug addiction (typical drugs being alcohol, tobacco and heroin).**

- **Inability to control sexual responses, such as frigidity and impotency.**

The problem that faces most people is that of subconscious determinism, of being unable to change their behavioural responses when they are under stress. How does subconscious determinism arise?

To answer this question we first have to ask: '*how does subconscious motivation arise?*'

When motivation is subconscious it is because it arose in situations which the person has now forgotten, or it arose in situations when they were confused.

a). **The forgotten situations.**
These are usually past-life situations. When a person reincarnates back to Earth

they do not bring memories with them but only attitudes, abilities and character traits (their strengths and weaknesses). The attitudes and traits help to produce similar motivations in this life that they had in the previous life on Earth. Such attitudes and traits have become independent of memory, and are very difficult to change.

b). Confused situations

These usually indicate the influence of early childhood, especially the first three years of life. The child learns by trial and error. Learning is made more difficult since the child initially has no conscious ego. The ego is that aspect of consciousness that relates to the present, rather than to the past. [A simplified view of consciousness is that it consists of present plus past, or the ego plus the influence of memory and determinism]. The ego of the previous life on Earth is now permanently subconscious, along with its abilities, attitudes and traits. From all this subconscious material a new, conscious ego has to be created. Any mistakes that the child makes in its learning are likely to be incorporated in the emerging ego. The more important mistakes occur through the wrong interpretation by the child of its relationships to its parents and to other significant adults. An interpretation that produces a sense of unhappiness is likely to induce fear and anxiety and guilt in the child.

Examples of mistaken interpretations are:

- **The mother may get angry with the father, and then console herself by attending to the child.** The child feels the mother's anger and thinks that she is angry with it.

- **A parent who is either introverted or strongly moralistic may not be able to give much affection to the child.** The child feels this lack of affection and thinks that the parent is rejecting it.

It is the child's understanding of its situation that matters, since this understanding governs its response. Irrespective of whether the parents are good or bad parents, if the child thinks that its situation is bad then it reacts accordingly. If it thinks that it is to blame for the bad situation then it becomes confused.

Confusion produces mental pain. So the child becomes motivated to avoid the pain, to avoid the confusion. If the confusion is regularly prolonged then the child seeks to avoid or to neutralise the situation by developing a fixed pattern of thought and activity as a shield against fear, anxiety and guilt. **So determinism is created, the determinism being the fixed pattern of response that is acting as a shield against psychological pain.** The determinism is a response to a subconscious motivation to avoid mental pain. If the determinism is not resolved in adulthood, then it will carry over to the next incarnation on Earth.

My view of the origin of determinism is that it arises from confusion. In some incarnation, a person (perhaps as a child) mis-understands the situation that he or she finds themself in. So an emotional response arises, resulting in an attitude to that situation. Whenever that situation repeats itself in the experience of the person, so the attitude repeats itself. This attitude, and the belief that sustains it, becomes part of the subconscious mind. And the attitude carries on from one life to endless other lives. This repeated emotional response to a situation produces determinism, but it arose in a specific situation in the forgotten past.

> I generalise this view.
> All subconscious determinism can be attributed to specific events at some times in the past, even in previous incarnations, where mis-understandings arose in particular situations.

One aim of a psycho-analysis is to explore a person's attitudes to one or more problems and to try to understand the causes of those attitudes. All subconscious determinism arises from some motivations that the person is not aware of. Therefore the motivations themselves are also subconscious. What psycho-analysis has proved is that if any particular subconscious motivation is brought into consciousness then that motivation loses the power to effect the person's behaviour. In other words, the effect of understanding the reason why a person acts the way that they do in a particular situation leads to the end of the compulsion to act in that way.

Understanding a problem has the result of ending determinism, and the problem ceases. This is the rationale of psycho-analysis.

To be more specific, a psycho-analysis changes the negative valuation of memories into positive or neutral values. Experience plus memory help to generate the person's fixed beliefs that underlie their character traits. By changing the values attached to memory so thereby a psycho-analysis transforms the person's system of beliefs. And the transformation of memory and beliefs enables the person to accept their past life, blemishes and all, even any people who have been oppressive to them. Determinism is replaced by choice. The person acquires greater freedom to be what they want to be in any situation. *This is what a long psycho-analysis achieves.* [²]

Self-deception

A variation on confusion is self-deception. In both states of mind, a person's subconscious mind can be at variance with their conscious mind. Quite often a person will say one thing and then act in the contrary way. The contrariness is caused by subconscious motivation. In confusion, the person cannot understand their actions; in self-deception, the person offers an explanation for their actions. Self-deception brings in the topic of rationalisation: the person attempts to justify their contrariness so as to ease their conscience. The self-deception here is that the person deceives themself in order to avoid blaming themself. Self-deception is the means, the rationalisation is the belief, that pacifies conscience.

When many beliefs are tied together to form an overall pattern of rationalisation, then the person has become attached to an ideology.

When no rationalisation is offered then this indicates confusion rather than self-deception. A person's general attitudes to life, and his / her purpose for existing, are not usually well thought-out but are based on vague ideas and clear prejudices. All such general attitudes and all such ideologies (whether religious or secular) involve self-deception and confusion, and therefore indicate a low degree of self-consciousness.

The problem with self-deception is that if we deceive ourselves then we will also deceive other people. And other people, in their self-deception, will deceive us. Hence we can end up manipulating people but denying that we are doing so. And we may be manipulated by other people who likewise deny that they are doing that. Hence self-deception has a powerful effect on personal relationships. Personal relationships become based on misconceptions and confusion rather than on reality, and conflict is more likely to occur than harmony.

One of the aims of a psycho-analysis is to eliminate self-deception and confusion, so that the person can clearly articulate what they believe and understand why they believe it. The process of eliminating self-deception and confusion requires the development of both awareness and insight (or intuition), and results in the gradual unfoldment of self-consciousness.

My definition of self-consciousness is:

Self-consciousness is the combination of awareness and knowledge of one's conscious and subconscious motivations.

This definition implies that an ordinary person has only a little degree of self-consciousness, since subconscious motivations remain hidden from view. Even the problem of determinism is denied by many people. So past views on self-consciousness were little more than an acknowledgement of awareness, that is, that the person can observe themself, whether thinking or acting. These views are insufficient, since they cannot explain self-deception and the origins of conflict. The unfoldment of self-consciousness requires an understanding of

psycho-dynamic psychology. Without such an understanding a person will always be a stranger to themselves.

My own psycho-analysis I call my self-analysis, since I did it on my own without any therapist to help me. It happened spontaneously, without any deliberate decision on my part. At the start of it I had hardly any self-awareness. I was not even sure what was an emotion and what was not. Seven years later, by the end of my self-analysis, I had acquired enough information about how the subconscious and unconscious minds work that I was able to discover some hidden laws of their operations (the laws of abreaction). I obtained this knowledge by the practice of awareness, plus a sufficient flow of intuition and reason. [3]

Quality of Beliefs

The degree of maturity or immaturity of an adult is heavily dependent of the beliefs about oneself and the world that one holds. These beliefs are influenced by, or even created by, childhood experiences. When a child interprets its relationships it creates beliefs about them. If it feels the relationships to be happy ones then its beliefs are positive or good ones. Such beliefs are changeable when new situations arise; changing beliefs causes no problems and so they can be updated quite easily in order to fit the new situations.

However, if the child feels that its relationships are bad ones then its beliefs become negative or bad ones too. Negative beliefs become associated with fear, anxiety and guilt. Such beliefs cause a major problem: it becomes very difficult to change them. To change them would mean facing up to the associated fear, anxiety and guilt. In effect they become fixed beliefs. Because they are unpleasant beliefs the child switches off awareness of them, and they become subconscious.

The advantage is not always with the happy child. Happiness can cause its own problems. Consider a child who has a pleasant childhood. It creates beliefs about its world and the situations that it experiences. As it grows older these beliefs are modified to suit new situations, or even replaced by more realistic ideas. Because the beliefs are good ones they remain conscious. This is a continuous process and ends when the child becomes an adult with a mature outlook on life. Its beliefs are now fairly set, even rigid, and produce a fixed frame of mind. In other words, the mind of a mature adult is structured by fixed beliefs, beliefs which are usually conscious ones, beliefs which the person is aware of. Such people do not change very much in later life unless they experience some form of crisis that shows them that their beliefs are now defective. Most people find it a stressful, even distressful, task to adapt to change.

Now consider a child whose childhood is far from pleasant. If it experiences fear and intense anxiety in any particular situation then its beliefs about this situation remain fixed and do not alter. As it grows older it represses these fears and associated beliefs instead of correcting them; these fears and beliefs become a permanent part of its subconscious mind. The subconscious mind has no sense of time, so nothing gets diluted in it by the passage of time. Anything that is put into this aspect of mind stays in it unchanged, even when the child has become an adult. Hence the childhood way of handling fear produces effects on the adult character.

Suppose that as an adult it finds itself in a situation which mirrors an unpleasant childhood one; it now feels itself acting from its childhood subconscious fears and associated beliefs instead of from its mature mind. This means that although it is an adult it can act childishly in situations that it finds unpleasant. Usually the person cannot do otherwise. This is how determinism is created, by childhood fears (and anxieties and guilt, etc). The more fears that a child experiences, as it grows up, the less rigid will be its mature, conscious mind. Its subconscious mind will contain conflicting beliefs based on these fears. The more conflict that exists in its subconscious mind the more unstructured, the more changeable, the more amorphous will be its character as an adult.

The happy child has fixed beliefs at the conscious level of mind. It can lead a

fulfilling life in a stable society. But it finds it difficult to change when society changes. The unhappy child has fixed beliefs at the subconscious level of mind. Its quality of life is poor in a stable society. Yet it can change, when necessary, as society changes.

Descartes

In general, our character depends on our system of significant beliefs. If our beliefs are non-contradictory then we will have a stable character; if our beliefs are conflicting then we will be unstable in some degree. In effect, the beliefs determine the person. The importance of these views on beliefs is fundamental to understanding the results that therapy achieves. Significant beliefs are only forms of fixed ideas.

The French thinker Rene Descartes formulated his philosophy as: *I think, therefore I am.* From my experience of life I transform his viewpoint into a more modern formulation in order to give a definition of the modern person.

His expression becomes:

I think ideas, therefore I am.

This leads to:
I have fixed ideas, therefore I am.
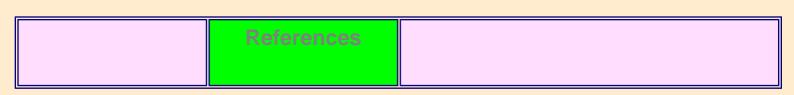
This leads to:
I believe, therefore I am.

Finally, we end with:

Each person is the sum of their beliefs and fixed ideas.

Some thinkers have defined a person to be what they do, to be their actions.

This view was understandable when psychology was in its infancy. But it is an erroneous view for today. A person does not change themself by changing their actions. The person changes themself only by changing their thinking, by changing their beliefs. Changing a person's definition of themself will automatically change the quality of their life.

The whole rationale of psychological therapy is to facilitate this process.

	References	

The number in brackets at the end of each reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1]. The loop of projection and introjection is decribed in the article **Projection & Introjection** on my website **Discover your mind**. [1]

[2]. There is a more general article on **Determinism** on my websites **A Modern Thinker** and **The Subconscious Mind**. See **Links**. [2]

[3]. In these articles on psychology I treat insight and intuition as equivalent terms. However, I separate them in the article **Reason & Intuition** on my philosophy website **A Modern Thinker**. See **Links**. [3]

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Character   Transformation

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Two Tasks

Sub-headings
Negative to positive
Limitation to analysis
End results

Psychological therapy has two broad categories. We can examine our past – this is primarily the province of psycho-analysis. And we can examine our present capabilities and future goals – this is primarily the province of existential and humanistic theories.

Therefore psychological therapy has two overall tasks:

1). For an adult with a lot of subconscious fears and conflict:
the aim of therapy is to remove those fears and enable the adult to stabilise his / her character. This will improve the quality of his / her life.

2). For a stable adult with conscious fixed beliefs and prejudices:

the aim of therapy is to enable that adult to change those beliefs and prejudices. This enables the adult to become more mentally flexible. This is the way that his / her quality of life is improved.

Therefore we see that if an adult is unstable in parts of their character, therapy will enable them to stabilise themself. Whereas if the adult is too fixed in their state of mind, therapy will enable them to acquire mental flexibility. Flexibility is very different from instability. Therapy is always a process.

The process of therapy is a movement from instability to stability to flexibility.

In task (1) the therapy of choice is psycho-analysis, since the subconscious mind is the centre of attention.
In task (2) the best therapies will be existential and humanistic ones, since now the conscious mind is being developed.

In both cases, the object of psychological therapy is to produce character change, character transformation.

Negative to Positive

A long and deep psycho-analysis has the function of removing weakness and subconscious conflict from the person's character. Confusion and self-deception are gradually eliminated. So too is violence. Violence that is directed to relationships and the environment is merely the expression of violence that is repressed within the subconscious mind. Repressed violence is the result of subconscious conflict; repressed violence is internal violence.

External violence has its source in internal violence.

Violence reflects a person's negative self-image; the more negative the person's

self-image is, the more prone to violence he / she will be. As negative belief systems fade, the propensity for violence fades as well. The effect of removing negative beliefs is to strengthen the person's will. This overall process produces character change by unmasking and removing **negative features of mind**. The person moves from instability to stability.

When the person has gone as far as he or she can with analysis then he or she needs to switch to existential and humanistic therapies. The person proceeds with character change by emphasising and developing the **positive features of mind**. The person moves from stability to flexibility.

In my view, when a person has decided to commit themselves to character transformation the preferred course of therapy is to start with task (1) and graduate to task (2). To use positive therapies without having undergone a prior psycho-analysis is to develop abilities upon an existing base of confusion, weakness and self-deception.

Understanding the importance of beliefs enables a person to choose between therapies, especially between the multiplicity of *New Age* ones. Whatever therapy a person explores, that therapy will only have a lasting effect if it enables the person to change (or manage) some of their beliefs. If the therapy does nothing more than induce good feelings then its effect is transient, and will end when the good feelings end. However, such therapies may be ideal for gently introducing a person to the idea of therapy; once he or she loses their fear of exploring the mind then they can graduate to deeper therapies.

Limitation of Psycho-analysis

In practice, these ideas are an ideal depiction of therapy. Some of the problems that a person has do not originate in the present life, but in previous lives; these problems can be called karmic problems. They are extremely hard to overcome, especially when they are emphasised by traits of character (for example, attitudes to authority). In fact, it may not be possible to overcome them and

they have to be handled differently; the person has to learn to manage them. So there is a place in the therapy spectrum for other forms of therapy, such as cognitive behaviourism.

This brings me to a limitation to psycho-analysis. Problems can be viewed under the format of **form and content**. The form is the particular type of belief or attitude that is generating confusion or conflict. The content is the number of actual occurrences of this problem in a person's life. A psycho-analysis, if deep enough, can eliminate all the anxieties and guilt that have arisen from the content of a problem, but the psycho-analysis cannot eliminate the form. The form is karmic, and has developed over many lifetimes. A person reincarnates with the form of his problems but not with any content to them.

For example: a person may have a negative attitude to external sources of authority. This is the form of the problem. As life goes by, he / she will come into conflict with external authorities, perhaps many times – this is the content. When he / she goes into a psycho-analysis, the effects of the actual occasions of conflict can be dissipated. But he / she will leave therapy still possessing a negative attitude to authority. The form of the problem has to be handled by other means.

End Results

What is the end process of a long and intensive psycho-analysis? There are two polarities for a person: they can orientate themself as an individual, or they can choose to be defined in a social context. I call the first orientation **the individual identity**, and the second one **the social identity**. This means that we can centre ourself on our individual identity or on our social identity, depending on the situation. A psycho-analysis eliminates weakness from the person's character. So we become less socially dependent on other people and achieve more self-reliance: our individual identity is strengthened. And we can adopt a more mature social role, without dependency: our social identity is strengthened too. By eliminating the subconscious conflict the analysis enables the person to be more honest, harmonious and realistic in their personal relationships.

The person's total consciousness is their own production, based on their experience of life. This includes the organisation and contents of their subconscious mind. Therefore each person's consciousness is unique to themself. Each person's relationship to the subconscious mind is unique too. Each person's investigation of themself will depend on this relationship. Therefore each analysis is unique. These ideas only say that everything is unique: the person, the mind, the analysis (and the therapist).

A psycho-analysis does not produce followers but individuals. In the journey through the subconscious mind there are no leaders and no led.

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List

The Process of Psycho - Analysis

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Unpleasant Memories

Sub-headings

1st Rule

More limitations

Two ways to change

Unpleasant memories from childhood affect us more than unpleasant memories generated in adult life. Unfortunately, negative memories from childhood do not fade away; instead they get represssed since they are not valued.

Memories that are negatively valued can lead to personality disturbance, because such memories become combined with anxiety. The anxiety is usually kept under control by ensuring that the memory is kept repressed and relegated to the subconscious mind. In order to remove the causes of personality disturbance these unpleasant, subconscious memories have to be brought into full consciousness: this process ensures that the accompanying anxiety is released and dissipated. This procedure is not a pleasant process, and gives rise to a rule, which can be called the first rule of dynamic psycho-therapy.

The first rule of dynamic psycho-therapy

In order to make a small, real change in a person's character, that person as to wade through a great amount of psychological rubbish.

When a person injures a muscle, the pain that is experienced is out of all proportion to the extent of actual injury: a small injury causes a great deal of pain. So too, the extensiveness of psychological pain is created by a small trauma (small in proportion to the sorrow). This is especially true in early childhood, if trauma occurs when the fledgling ego has not yet achieved stability. Psychological pain distorts all relationships. To resolve such pain, the person has to work their way through the great extent of the sorrow that it has caused them. Much work on relationships has to be done before a small significant change is achieved.

For example, if the child has experienced rejection by significant people, it may tend to use rejection to sway it towards preferrring aloneness. Then as an adult it will usually resort to rejecting other people when relationships get difficult. To overcome the problem of rejection involves persevering in relationships that have become very oppressive; the person has to persevere till the intensity of the problem eventually begins to diminish. Then the problem has become manageable rather than oppressive. Working through sorrow means working through memories and anxieties, and this involves the process of abreaction.

More Limitations to Psycho-analysis

Memories may take three different forms. They may be visual ones. They may depend on sound and language, and so be verbal memories. They may be a cluster of emotions that seem to have become displaced or separated from an unpleasant experience in the past (in this case the person does not get upset if he remembers the experience).

In all these three forms, memories in the subconscious mind link together by association of similar themes or ideas, and not by any rational bond. Therefore in order to reach into the subconscious mind so as to retrieve forgotten memories we cannot use reason. Instead what is required is insight. Ideas in the subconscious mind link together by association. Hence in order to explore any problem, the person has to follow a chain of associations back to the cause of that problem. So free association to ideas is the major method in psycho-analysis.

Since the memory that we wish to retrieve is subconscious, how can we locate it? A memory becomes associated with a negative valuation when we attach anxiety to it; most unpleasant memories indicate previous experiences that caused anxiety to us. In a psycho-analysis what happens is that we try to analyse the existing state of anxiety of the client. The anxiety indicates the presence of a subconscious unpleasant memory. The greater the intensity of anxiety the easier it becomes to locate the memory. Why is this? When a subconscious unpleasant memory 'rises' closer to the boundary of consciousness the person experiences an increase in the intensity of anxiety. This process facilitates insight: in effect, the more serious the problem that a person has, the easier it can be to penetrate to the cause – the intensity of the anxiety makes it easier for the association of ideas to be followed.

However, there are three major difficulties here that are likely to frustrate analysis.

- **The person may not have developed a sufficient degree of awareness**.

- **The intensity of anxiety may be more than the client can handle or is willing to face.**

- **The cause may not be believed by the therapist.**
  The cause may not be understandable within the therapist's theoretical views – for example, any explanations that involve the theory of reincarnation.

In a psycho-analysis the client has to use both insight and reason. To prefer one

at the expense of the other will cause problems. The strength of rational thinking is in the ability to examine and remove self-deception, rationalisations, and other defensive mental manoeuvres. But first the faulty thinking has to be brought out into the open, using insight.

A problem cannot be solved by intelligent guesswork (by the therapist). Even if correct, the guess will not release anxiety in the client and the problem will remain. **Only insight by the client releases anxiety.** Hence the client needs to explore the emotional dynamics underlying his / her attitudes and to delay a rational investigation of those attitudes themselves till later.

The difficulty with an analysis for a stable adult, who wishes to change but is not under any great stress or anxiety, is that the structured mind prevents insight. Reason is preferred to insight (or intuition). Only in times of acute anxiety, when the structure is breaking down, is insight facilitated. Personality weaknesses are revealed when the structure begins to break down. The unfortunate fact is that in order for the person to strengthen their character by being able to adapt to changing circumstances they have to experience deep sorrow; this is usually the only way to change the mind. Fixed beliefs produce stability of character, but mainly at the expense of flexibility of mind.

The difficulty with an analysis for an unstable adult having an unstructured mind is that the person finds it difficult to use reason as a means of checking unpleasant thoughts. He / she prefers daydreams and intuition to reason. This neglect of reason means that he / she too is often embroiled in deep sorrow.

The most effective results in therapy will occur when the person has some form of idealism, preferably one that is not centred on materialistic values alone. An idealism that focuses on improving the quality of one's life and relationships is the way to unite reason with intuition.

Two Ways to Change

We should note that there are two ways of changing the subconscious mind through a psycho-analysis. We can either bring the actual subconscious memory into conscious awareness in order to remove the anxiety that is attached to it, or we can relive the theme of the memory. The first way enables us to relive directly the past emotions associated with the memory, but it can deal only with memories of the present life. The second way deals with the motifs of memories of this life or of former ones, of former incarnations.

The theme is just a recurring unconscious belief that produces a dominant mood or a disposition to act in a predetermined way. In effect, an unpleasant event from a past incarnation changes from being **a subconscious memory** in that past life to being **a present unconscious theme** in this life.

For example, if in the previous incarnation the person had been betrayed in some situation, then in this life they will have a problem of learning to trust people – they will be sensitive to any suggestion of betrayal. The experience of betrayal will generate the theme: *I cannot trust anyone.* So past life memories are not important as such; it is what they signify that is important.

Memories can signify themes. This is the reason that religious and spiritual symbolism can affect a person so much: the symbolism represents unconscious themes, which in themselves often either reflect former memories (if they were good ones) or else reflect good aspirations which attempt to repudiate former bad memories (a process of compensation).

What we find in a long analysis is that a person's character is usually dependent on unconscious themes; individual unpleasant experiences will hinder our choices of living, but only themes can shape the way that we live. There are two ways to produce change. The difference between the first way and the second way is that isolated unpleasant experiences can produce neurosis. But themes generate character, either a 'normal' one or a psychotic one.

[In the article '**Emotion : E1**' I list the major themes, or motifs, of character in the *table of unconscious ideas*].

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Characteristics of Emotions

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Sub-headings
Jealousy
Guilt
Pride
Narcissism
Love
Hate
Vanity

Emotions, Beliefs and Character Traits

I turn to the differences between emotions. If I detect self-pity as my present emotion, how do I know whether it is self-pity alone, or the self-pity mode of guilt or of jealousy? Emotions and their modes have definite characteristics which help to identify them.

These characteristics are beliefs and attitudes that 'emanate' from the motif of an emotion like an aura (this tangle of attributes is the reason that the definition of an emotion has been such a confusing issue).

I list those characteristics that I have discovered.

These have been identified empirically, and not by using logical thought.

My method of investigation is quite simple. When I am aware of what the present emotion is that I am experiencing, I consider relationships, views of reality, of politics, of religion, ideas of morality, how I feel about my own needs, etc, and then note what influence the present emotion has on this inquiry. I was often surprised by what I found.

I start with jealousy.

Jealousy (= self-pity + love)

The self-pity mode of jealousy denigrates my achievements as an individual since it prefers to seek recognition and approval from other people; social (or group) conformity is the norm. Only social achievements are valued. I have to rely on others **;** if I have no support then I experience loneliness. Therefore this mode creates a dependency situation for me, so social ties are cemented by concepts of obligation and duty (in other words, concepts of obligation and duty are ways of handling this type of self-pity).

This mode of self-pity generates the need to be touched or to touch (in order to evoke a response from the other person) **;** ultimately, this kind of touch becomes the need for sexual intercourse. This mode also makes one homely **:** I may feel like baking a cake (when it has a social nuance, such as having tea with the neighbours), or I may feel like redecorating the rooms in the house where I invite friends.

The love mode of jealousy produces social involvement and a sense of caring. It encompasses all ways of making other people dependent on oneself. It leads to paternalism in social relations, and to 'enlightened despotism' in politics, and to the crusading drive of evangelists. It generates sexual love, but not to the desire for sexual intercourse **;** however, sexual intercourse may be engaged in as a way of fulfilling the needs of a partner. Touch is only used as a means of consolation.

Guilt (= self-pity + self-hate)

Guilt prevents me from seeing life as good, as worthwhile in itself ; it neutralises aesthetic enjoyment of the world. Guilt focuses on my failures in life.

The self-pity mode knocks out all meaning in anything and my motivation collapses; to survive it I become rigid and accept dogmatic rules. I become a perfectionist in my work. In this mode arises the need for psychological support, for a confessor or a confidante, and I embrace authoritarian methods of control. Without support, life becomes unreal. I practise a different form of homeliness from jealousy – I keep my house tidy.

The self-hate mode belittles me as a person, I am not worth anything. My motivation is retained but my self-image is pitiable. I have no value (either individually or socially). My faith in my own abilities becomes eroded. I romanticise the life of simpler, less intellectual (therefore more 'grounded') peoples as my life transforms into purgatory. To survive I develop concepts of purity and cleanliness ; only sexual practice that is 'pure' is acceptable. In my homeliness I keep my house clean. When self-

hate is intense I feel sick of my past life, my life is a wasted life ; I wish that I could forget my past so that I can start afresh.

Pride (= hatred of others + vanity)

The presence of negative thoughts about <u>other</u> people indicates pride, the vanity mode of which reflects a sense of superiority, and the hate mode originates destructive comments about them.

In the hate mode I seek freedom from social restraints ; I negate the value of social concepts and responsibilities since I value only my own independence. I prefer to be left alone ; if I am not, then I daydream of violence. I belittle the achievements of others. I see my past life as a dreary life, a life of obeying rules and regulations, a life of obeying other people.

In the vanity mode I judge all issues in black and white terms, I have no moderation, no flexibility and no toleration to opposing views. I am dogmatic. My views cannot be wrong.

Narcissism (= vanity + love)

Narcissism puts a gleam in my eyes: in love mode the gleam is of joy, whereas in vanity mode it is of excitement.

In the vanity mode of narcissism the quality of life is important, so I dramatise everything; life is a drama! I attune to heroism and romanticism. I act from philanthropic motives and desire to help other

people surmount their suffering **;** I help others to help themselves. I do not impose my views on them. However, I am sensitive to ridicule.

In the love mode I feel good, good in myself and glad for my life as a whole, even for the bad and sorrowful aspects of it ; I am glad for life itself – life is exhilarating. I become self-absorbed. I dance to my favourite music. I do not pass judgements on anyone. I prefer co-operation rather than competition ; in fact, competitiveness switches off the love mode.

Love

This type of love can also be called mystical love, or just pure love. It is much rarer than the other two types of love. Whereas the love mode of narcissism is directed to oneself, and the love mode of jealousy is directed to another person, love by itself has no object. It is just a flux, just a flow of enchanting emotion to everything.

Usually the only time that a person feels such love for any length of time is when the person falls in love with someone. Then the world transforms magically into a wonderland (really the person has fallen in love with the world, rather than with the other person) ; however, soon the magic fades, the mood vanishes and is replaced by the love mode of jealousy – now love is restricted to the other person.

When pure love is my current mood, I have the same value as everyone else, so differences in abilities or in character development are unimportant. Uniformity is the rule *(this should be separated from conformity, which is characteristic of the self-pity mode of jealousy)*.

Hate

Hate, as a mode of guilt or of pride, generates destructive thoughts (but at a lesser intensity than paranoia). Antithetical thoughts, when directed to other people, represent pride ; when directed to oneself, represent guilt. At a much lesser intensity of denigration, criticisms of other people represent jealousy, whilst criticisms of myself arise from my sense of idealism.

Hate by itself is the emotional dynamic of the ability to sustain long periods of concentration and meditation. It does not require an object to focus on (it mirrors pure love in this respect) ; it is a general-purpose tool for cutting positive attachments, especially in relationships (for example, pride in hate mode rejects another person, whereas hate by itself rejects any pleasant attachment to the other person). Hate produces clear thinking and strengthens a person's will power. It supports the desire for solitude. It cools the mind and may easily be mistaken for a mild sense of peace. It is likely to be the prevailing mood when a meditator claims that they are no longer acting from a sense of ego. The skilful way of using hate is to clear the mind of redundant attachments and desires.

Vanity

In the eyes of vanity, life is matter-of-fact, neither joyful nor dramatic. Therefore I have to give myself importance, either physically by the way that I dress or socially by my status or romantically by my destiny, or by

any other way. I desire fame, or to be a leader. I go my own way in life ; I am not a follower of anyone or any fashion. I prefer new horizons rather than traditional ones. Unfortunately I am sensitive to ridicule.

The three kinds of vanity all centre on the concept of importance.

- Vanity (as a mode of narcissism) implies the quality of life is important.

- Vanity (as a mode of pride) implies my world is important.

- Vanity implies self-importance.

Self-pity

Self-pity itself generates the inability to achieve anything. It differs from the other two modes in that I do not blame myself (as in guilt) nor am I particularly socially-orientated (as in jealousy). Also it differs from guilt in self-pity mode in that it enables me to identify with people who have made heroic efforts in life and yet have failed (for guilt, heroism is meaningless). Self-pity makes me sentimental. When self-pity is dominant I deny responsibility ; one way of achieving this is the desire for endless travel – so long as I travel I have no responsibilities.

In general,
endless activity is usually a hallmark of the flight from self-pity. Despite the activity the person is never satisfied.

For example:

- Self-pity leads to travel as the expression of endless activity.

- Self-pity (as a mode of guilt) leads to housework or business as the expressions of endless activity. [The workaholic person].

- Self-pity (as a mode of jealousy) leads to duty as the expression of endless moral activity.

This endless activity is the attempt to overcome the sense of failure.
That is:

- Self-pity implies **t**he sense of social failure.

- Self-pity (as a mode of guilt) implies **t**he sense of spiritual failure, or the failure of idealism.

- Self-pity (as a mode of jealousy) implies **t**he sense of personal failure, that is, the failure to be an individual.

Envy

Envy is not always easy to separate from jealousy. Envy is behind the worst forms of destructiveness. Envy prefers to destroy, jealousy (love mode) prefers to control. Both envy and jealousy make the person seek social company ; but whereas jealousy seeks social involvement, envy lets the person rest content with being a social observer. When envy is

dominant in me I like to have afternoon tea in a tea shop and watch the world go by (however, sometimes my mood then changes to jealousy in self-pity mode as loneliness arises).

In childhood, envy of the general character traits of a parent appears as a lack of attachment towards that parent (envy is one of the factors that underlie autism). The difference here between hate and envy is that hate can be considered to be a negative attachment, whilst envy destroys and neutralises any attachment so long as the child is in a position of inequality with the parent.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a cerebral emotion: when it is intense it 'fogs' the mind, producing mental tiredness and the incapacity for intellectual work. I feel it most in my eyes as a regular ache, which generates a sensitivity to bright light. When I am writing or typing under a bright light I control the eye-ache by regularly splashing my eyes with cold water, perhaps every half hour or so. Both the mental tiredness and the ache are intensified when combined with any mode of self-pity.

In social company, anxiety (in vanity mode) stimulates a compulsive need to speak (I get embarrassed by my silence) or compulsive behaviour (such as smoking, drinking alcohol, nail-biting, over-eating). When I have this fuzzy head at home I usually relax on the settee and doze. The cessation of anxiety can be quite sudden and produces an immediate clearing of the head – I 'wake up' from my semi-consciousness. The need for a long sleep time each night is usually due to the presence of anxiety or to a mode of self-pity.

Anxiety keeps the person focused on negative emotions ; if I am

absorbed in narcissistic joy or jealous love, then if anxiety arises I usually switch out of them into self-pity modes or even hostile feelings.

The fear mode of anxiety is generated by a dictatorial conscience, or the 'voice of authority'. This voice has two origins. It can originate from the family setting: the parents' commands become internalised into an oppressive conscience – 'do as you are told'. The voice of authority also comes from one's soul: the soul directs oneself to practise self-control (here the 'voice' is not a clear verbal one but more like an intuitive prompting). If I do something that my soul does not like, then I immediately feel a burst of anxiety in my eyes. However, this 'voice' is a subtle one and is unlikely to be noticed by a person who has not developed sensitivity.

In general, narcissism and jealousy are the two avenues to power, the two ways to express and achieve power. Pride and guilt are the two avenues to ethics. Resentment arises when the person's sense of idealism is restricted by guilt ; bitterness arises when idealism is restricted by pride.

What needs to be accepted is that emotions are not good or bad in themselves, but that the goodness or the badness lies in the context that we experience them and view them. However, since it is common practice to value things rather than contexts, I prefer to label emotions as either positive or negative, rather than as either good or bad.

How to identify emotions, and some notes on empiricism, are the subject of the third article: **Emotion 3**.

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Identifying Emotions

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Two Procedures

Sub-headings
Empiricism
Value of these ideas
References

Identifying emotions is very difficult. And what complicates the difficulty even more is that a person experiences two emotions at once, one being from his or her present consciousness (what I usually call the surface consciousness) and one being from the subconscious mind. To these two we can add a third one that is often present as well, that being anxiety.

My procedure for identifying my surface emotions had to be different from the procedure that I used to identify my subconscious emotions. The reason for this was that my subconscious emotions were hidden

from my normal state of awareness. I usually had to become familiar with my surface emotions before I had much chance of pinpointing my subconscious ones.

To identify **my surface emotions** I read biographies and autobiographies. I would compare the reactions and motivations of the persons being described with my own reactions and motivations. Rather than try to identify many emotions at a time, I would pick just one and try to correlate responses that seemed to be relevant. I would try to pinpoint the emotion underlying dominant attitudes and beliefs in politics, religion, sexuality, morality, etc. I would puzzle over which emotion these responses sprang from. Then intuition would lead me eventually to the correct identification of that emotion. Then I would understand the various ways that that emotion could manifest itself. But each intuition had to be checked and cross-checked in order to remove occasional errors. Then I would correlate the intuition against my own experience. In this procedure, empiricism backed up my intuitions.

When using biographies and autobiographies for the purpose of identifying emotional responses, it is essential to read about outstanding people, irrespective of whether they are good or bad. Such people have their emotional responses accentuated in their own particular speciality – this gives a 'sharp edge' to their personality, and reduces the choice of possible emotions that may be influencing them.

The procedure that I adopted to identify **my subconscious emotions** was to use a thesaurus or synonym dictionary. The subconscious mind would only let me get a vague approximation to what the present subconscious emotion was (after all, the contents of the subconscious mind are hidden ; easy identification is not to be expected). So I used the thesaurus to look up synonyms of the approximate emotion. An intuition

would then enable me to pinpoint the exact emotion. In this procedure, my intuitions backed up my empiricism.

Having identified an emotion I then looked for **body symptoms and mental attitudes** that are associated with that emotion. Once such correlations are found it becomes easy to determine my emotional responses : I can identify the emotion direct, or indirectly through the symptom or attitude that is currently expressing itself. Low-intensity emotions can only be identified indirectly.

For example : my nose produced regular colds and catarrhs for most of my life, at any time of the year. By repeated observation I found that my left-side nostril produced a runny nose when I felt hate (usually as a mode of pride) ; the right-side nostril when I felt self-pity.

Other examples: resentment increases blood pressure and usually causes a headache on the left side of the brain, whilst fear causes a headache on the right side of the brain; bitterness causes a headache at the rear of the brain, in the area where the skull joins the neck. Pride is one of the causes of neck pain, in the cervical vertebrae furthest from the skull.

There is no short-cut to identifying emotions.
It is a long and hard process of becoming more and more aware of the influences that are associated with important beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (minor beliefs, etc, do not carry much emotional weight and so will be exceedingly hard to examine). Insight / intuition is needed. And the development of insight / intuition is a slow process, requiring perseverance and single-mindedness. [1]

Empiricism

As an example of empiricism I give an analysis of the effects of two common food chemicals.

I use caffeine to illustrate the influence that mood has on the ingestion of drugs, particularly mood-changing ones. Contrary to popular belief caffeine does not give energy ; caffeine just makes the person use up their reserves. By experiment I found that the effect of it on the nervous system depends upon the psychological mood of the person at the time of drinking the tea or coffee or cola.

- **If the mood is one of shock:** then caffeine is beneficial.

- **If the subconscious mood is fear:** then caffeine eases the fear, but drains the body of energy by inducing a low blood-sugar reaction, hypoglycaemia.

- **If the subconscious mood is pride (mode of hate):** then caffeine produces pain around the heart.

The intensity of the reactions above depends upon the amount of caffeine that is drunk and the intensity of the person's mood. For myself, when pride (mode of hate) is intense then two cups of moderately strong tea will often generate incipient heart pain.

The other food chemical that I experimented with was vitamin C. Many nutritionists consider that high level dosages (500 milligrammes or more) of vitamin C are harmless. This is not my view. During my 30s

and 40s my gums were always a problem: they were in poor condition, receding, and bled easily, often swelling up. This was in part a sensitivity to acid fruits and to vitamin C tablets. What confused me for a long time was that vitamin C is often recommended as a treatment for bleeding gums – but the more vitamin C that I took the more gum trouble I had. I found that drinking acid fruit juice upset my stomach and furred up my tongue. Apart from making my gums bleed, acid fruits and drinks and vitamin C (in excess of about 50 milligrammes) affected my biting pressure: chewing became painful. Once, on holiday, I breakfasted solely on a half litre of grapefruit juice ; when lunchtime arrived I almost cried with pain as I chewed my salad.

By experiment I finally resolved my gum difficulty. If I took too much vitamin C (100 milligrammes or more) the gums bled easily ; if my intake of vitamin C was insufficient then the gums became puffy and swollen, and my tongue became sensitive to the sharp edges of the teeth. A tomato a day was usually sufficient to keep my gums healthy, except in winter when I had to supplement it with the occasional vitamin C tablet (50 milligrammes). Then once my gums improved I found that I could tolerate a higher level of vitamin C, up to 250 milligrammes. Tomatoes remain the only citrus fruit that cause me no problem.

Therefore, high levels of vitamin C are only beneficial to the gums if the gums are already healthy. The poorer the condition of the gums, the smaller the dosage of vitamin C that is tolerated without harmful effects.

THE VALUE OF THESE IDEAS

What is the use in identifying emotions? By being able to identify our emotions we can begin to acquire first-hand knowledge of the mind's influence on the ego.

What is the value of identifying emotions? This knowledge is essential if we want to understand the meaning of sorrow and mental pain. So this knowledge lays the groundwork for clearing confusion and self-deception from consciousness.

Once we can identify our range of emotions we can begin to investigate, directly through our experience (that is, by empiricism), questions concerning truth and falsehood, and questions concerning ethics. We will then find that our empirical experience will challenge all traditional attitudes to these questions. G.E. Moore summarised a certain perspective in philosophy derived from Immanuel Kant (Moore, 1903) :

> ... *just as, by reflection on our perceptual and sensory experience, we become aware of the distinction between truth and falsehood,*
>
> *so it is by reflection on our experience of feeling and willing that we become aware of ethical distinctions.*

By considering what perception and sensation mean 'we may discover what properties the world must have, if it is to be true'. So, too, by considering what feeling and willing mean 'we may discover what properties the world must have, if it is to be good or beautiful'.
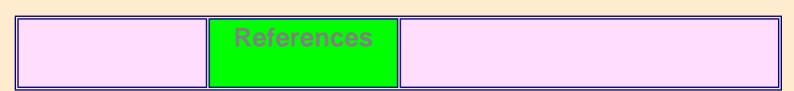
The way that I interpret this quotation is that the first kind of reflection develops self-consciousness, whereas the second kind of reflection develops a moral consciousness. [There is an additional comment to this view in the article '**Awareness**', same sub-heading].

More importantly for the therapeutic point of view, the identification of

emotions enabled me to establish that the unconscious mind works in deterministic ways. Some emotions flow in invariable sequences -- these sequences underlie the major problems that present themselves to consciousness during a psycho-analysis. A long psycho-analysis will bring into awareness intense states of resentment, bitterness and anger. The emotional sequences form part of the traditional concept of abreaction, which had not been clearly delineated till my investigations. The analysis of abreaction, and why it ends in resentment and bitterness, is the subject of the next article.

CONCLUSION

Emotions are just concepts which are energised by feelings. The concept introduces the factor of mind and so each emotion has its own cluster of ideas associated with it. Once a person learns to identify their full range of major emotional responses, then they can use them to clear confusion from the traditional debates about truth and goodness.

	References	

Moore, G.E. *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge 1903. (sections 78-79).

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1]. In these articles on psychology I treat insight and intuition as equivalent terms. However, I separate them in my article **Reason &**

Intuition on my website **A Modern Thinker**. See **Links**. [**1**]

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Self - Awareness

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Reclaiming Experience

Sub-headings

Awareness training

Value of these ideas

Will

Mindfulness

Variations on method

Feelings

To understand the methods used in psycho-analysis we first have to understand the problem that has to be overcome. And the problem is that we have never learned to handle skilfully the emotions that we do not like. Rather than learning to master unacceptable emotions, we prefer to deny that we experience them.

The traditional ways of handling unacceptable emotions are really self-defeating and self-debilitating.

Freud postulated that there are three ways of doing this.

- **The emotion is separated from the original experience and attached to a more acceptable or harmless one.**

The original experience is no longer troublesome to us when we remember it, since the memory is no longer accompanied by the disturbing emotions. This process is called **displacement**.

- **The emotion changes into another one, usually anxiety.**

- **The emotion is suppressed from consciousness.**
  If the suppression or inhibition is maintained, it becomes repression – the original experience is rejected from normal consciousness and becomes subconscious.

Repression is the major stratagem for most people. It shapes the person's opinion of themself. The use of repression arises in childhood and largely governs the way that a person remembers their past. As such, it is not important whether childhood memories are true or false; actual events are of secondary value. What is important is the way that a child experienced its life. This means that it is how a person sees their life that determines their conscious and subconscious reactions to it.

I put this view in another way: the child's subjective interpretation of its relationships to its parents and other significant people outweighs the importance of objective events. *Unless this is accepted, the origin of psychosis in childhood cannot be understood.*

Repression means the forceful denial of some parts of a person's consciousness, of a person's being. What are denied are usually some unpleasant aspects of either relationships or social situations (a social situation may have no existing relationships for the person, such as going to a party where he / she knows no-one). Hence the person can only harmoniously handle a relationship or a situation when these aspects are not present or relevant. When these aspects are present or relevant, then the relationship or situation becomes constrained for that person. The result is that the denial results in behavioural determinism in circumstances that the person finds unpleasant or restrictive.

The aim of analysis is to bring these repressed parts of consciousness back into the person's awareness so that they lose their power of controlling him / her.

The methods used in analysis, therefore, have the function of allowing repressed experience to rise into consciousness where it can be examined. I list the branches of method that I used.

- **Awareness training.**
- **The manner of using will and feeling.**

- **Reverie and dreams.**
- **Language and body.**
- **Psychological attitude.**

The first two methods are the subject of this article. The rest come into the next article.

Awareness Training

The practice of awareness means to become an observer of our own social relationships and of our own individual desires and attitudes and emotions. We observe what we are experiencing and how we are behaving. Why is this training needed? **It is the foundation for developing self-consciousness in a systematic manner.** Usually self-consciousness only arises when a contrast is felt between how something appears and what it really turns out to be. More often than not we try to patch over the difference; this tactic keeps us chained to confusion and self-deception. The real defect of this tactic is that when we deny something, then we cannot accept responsibility in the aspect of consciousness that is denied. So long as we remain in confusion over our 'vices' and limitations then we cannot become fully responsible people, we cannot acquire full self-responsibility (both for our successes in life and for our failures).

One meaning of confusion is that we have disconnected our experience from our behaviour.

***Our experience only becomes linked to our behaviour
once we have developed awareness.***

With this awareness we can monitor our behaviour so as to clarify and know our experience. Experience without awareness is rendered meaningless because that experience is inherently confused – motivation that is subconscious produces experience that is subconscious. If we are unaware of what we are experiencing, of how we are behaving, we cannot change voluntarily our pattern of response. Awareness is the key for eliminating confusion in our experience, by bringing the subconscious mind into consciousness. Then we can begin to act from choice and not from confusion or determinism.

The greatest difficulty in awareness training is the identification of emotions. Detecting emotions is difficult enough, except for a few obvious ones like anger and fear, but thinkers have produced conflicting ideas about what actually is an emotion. For example, emotions have been confused with attitudes, beliefs and aspirations; in particular, the most confusion has been exhibited over the issue of what love really is.

These difficulties are bad enough, but what complicates them even more is that a person experiences two emotions at once, one being from his / her normal consciousness (what I sometimes call the surface consciousness) and one being from the subconscious mind. So a person is under the influences of both a surface emotion and a subconscious one. To these two emotions we can add a third one that is often present as well, that being anxiety.

The way out of this maze of confusion is to use a combination of empiricism and intuition (or insight). See article on '**Emotion : E3**', **Identifying Emotions**.

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The Value of These Ideas

[This is an extended version of the same sub-heading in the article on '**Emotion**'].

What is the use in identifying emotions? By being able to identify our emotions

we can begin to acquire first-hand knowledge of the mind's influence on the ego.

What is the value of identifying emotions? This knowledge is essential if we want to understand the meaning of sorrow and mental pain. So this knowledge lays the groundwork for clearing confusion and self-deception from consciousness.

Once we can identify our range of emotions we can begin to investigate, directly through our experience (that is, by empiricism), questions concerning truth and falsehood, and questions concerning ethics. We will then find that our empirical experience will challenge all traditional attitudes to these questions. G.E. Moore summarised a certain perspective in philosophy derived from Immanuel Kant (Moore, 1903):

> *… just as, by reflection on our perceptual and sensory experience, we become aware of the distinction between truth and falsehood,*
>
> *so it is by reflection on our experience of feeling and willing that we become aware of ethical distinctions.*

By considering what perception and sensation mean 'we may discover what properties the world must have, if it is to be true'. So, too, by considering what feeling and willing mean 'we may discover what properties the world must have, if it is to be good or beautiful'.

The way that I interpret this quotation is that the first kind of reflection develops self-consciousness, whereas the second kind of reflection develops a moral consciousness.

> In the scenario of human evolution that I use, there are three kinds of consciousness.

1. **First, the person develops consciousness of the world.**
   This is an unreflective awareness of individuality in a world of external objects. This is the pre-social age of long ago, and is also the world of infancy.

2. **Then the person becomes a member of society and develops the moral consciousness.**
   The individual now predominantly defines themself to be a social being.

3. **Finally, the person is a member of society, who yet can separate themself from it, if necessary, by their individuality.**
   Now the person develops self-consciousness.

In this scenario, the development of self-awareness is the necessary condition for acquiring full self-consciousness. Awareness brings into the open our limitations due to determinism and confusion, and the ways that we act as a source of violence (mental as well as physical violence). We begin to realise what our deepest motivations are. We cannot change our limitations and our motivations until we become aware of them – without awareness, all we can learn is to be inhibited.

In this scenario, there are stages to becoming an individual. The progression is always away from a reliance on tradition. The person becomes able to use tradition and its values, without being dependent on it. This is perhaps easier to understand if I highlight the role of politics as one means of developing awareness of oneself and one's relationship to issues of power and dependency.

A person who defines themself to be a Conservative is still buried in tradition: their individuality is struggling to emerge. The Liberal is only partly an individual, since their limited degree of self-consciousness precludes the full adoption of self-responsibility. The Anarchist is more of an individual, since he / she does not desire power over other people.

However, a person's attitude to life is not always this simple. Sometimes life is easy, and sometimes it is hard. During the easy times a person may develop some individuality, but when times get hard he / she may retreat into conservatism again. The development of self-consciousness is always a zig-zag process.

In modern times, the conscious attempt to extend self-consciousness has usually been the preserve of the existentialist and psycho-analytic thinkers.

Will (or will-power)

In the practice of awareness in social situations the will presents a problem. To be able to identify my subconscious motivations I had to let them rise into consciousness. I had to minimise my will in order for this to happen; a strong will keeps the subconscious mind repressed. Hence I had to accept having a weak or vacillating will until I could identify my motivations. This vacillation can intensify anxiety to unbearable levels. The uncertainty of a weak will left me vulnerable to any hostility and ridicule from other people.

To identify my emotional response to a situation I have to use my will to stay on the threshold of the state of mind that I want to analyse. I do not repress my negative emotions, nor do I express them in any social relationship. I keep the unpleasant side of my character to myself, I do not socially enact my unpleasantness; I do not inflict my negativity onto other people. So if I am feeling hateful to others, nevertheless I am considerate to everyone. This procedure builds up anxiety to intense levels. Only my idealism gives me reasons for practising such self-control. *The saving grace is that intense anxiety facilitates insight.*

> The intense anxiety forces me to put my current problem into the centre of my awareness; the whole force of my mind revolves around the problem. Then when I am alone I embrace the emotion in my phantasies, I let my desires have full reign; in that mood I analyse my ideas on any social field, such as ethics, politics, sexuality. Each different emotional mood casts its own individual influence in these fields.

For example, my views on politics change as my mood changes: narcissism swings my views to the left, whilst resentment makes me conservative. By comparing different emotional responses the real roots of desires and obligation

can be determined. This procedure takes the confusion out of ethics and other contentious issues. Some emotions produce phantasies of violence and destruction, and others have sexual motifs. Analysing the drama of these phantasies enabled me to discover the roots of the psychoses and of sexuality.

Mindfulness

In difficult situations I used my will to stay on the threshold of the state of mind that I wanted to analyse. It is very hard to examine unfamiliar states of mind: repeated exposure to them is necessary. Initially we just become aware of the highlights of an unfamiliar state; the mundane aspects become noticeable only when the novelty has worn off. Usually, though, unfamiliarity means nothing more than that we were not aware of what we were doing previously; we had regularly engaged in some states of mind without having noticed them.

This procedure of exploration became hell itself when I had to analyse states of madness that my journey to self-consciousness put me through.

When the anxiety level becomes unbearable I practise **the technique of mindfulness.** The determined use of this method enables any amount of distress to be kept at bay, even madness itself. All emotions, all desires, rise and then fade away. No emotion, no desire, is permanent. Emotions and desires cause us pleasure or distress when we indulge in them or react to them. Mindfulness is the practice of trying to remain neutral whilst watching the present emotion or desire. We watch the emotion or desire arise, we watch it at its peak intensity, then we watch it fade away. Sometimes it may take only a few minutes to fade away, whilst at other times it may take hours. This watchful state neutralises our usual reactions to distress (or to happiness). Practising this watchfulness lessens anxiety to bearable levels of intensity.

The effect that mindfulness has on us is to develop the attitude of detachment. The Buddhist manner of expressing mindfulness in a neat way is:

In the seeing,   there is only the seen.

In the hearing,   there is only the heard.

In the touching,   there is only the touch.

In the smelling,   there is only the smell.

In the tasting,   there is only the taste.

In other words, **we avoid reacting to the situation from our usual value judgements.** The usefulness of mindfulness is that it is not necessary to identify emotions in order to practice it. The watchful, neutral state prohibits reflective self-awareness though – since we are avoiding evaluations, so we will not generate our customary desires or emotional responses. Therefore mindfulness is not needed in states of low-intensity stress.

Variations on Method

Anxiety in the subconscious mind is attached to unpleasant memories; in fact, in most cases anxiety is this unpleasantness. **A secondary source of unpleasantness is generated eventually by idealism.**

For the high-powered idealist the unpleasant memories denigrate his self-image, and the sense of denigration remains even when anxiety has been removed from them. The reason is that the usual idealistic response to denigration is bitterness, not anxiety. I used mindfulness primarily against anxiety. Errors produced by trying to live one's idealism are handled by learning to accept oneself. One's responses to social situations can be made value-free, but not one's idealism.

Now I can give my two variations on method in social situations.

First variation:

this is practised when I am still investigating emotions and motivations.

- **When the stress of a situation or emotion is too great :** I practise mindfulness until the anxiety level decreases to a bearable degree.

- **When the stress is bearable :** I follow the rule of neither expressing nor repressing any emotion or attitude; this way I can analyse it. The difference from mindfulness is that I am attentive to sequences in the emotional flow.

- **Finally, in solitude :** I embrace the emotion and watch the drama that it creates in phantasy. Then I investigate what attitudes (moral, social, political, etc) spring from it.

It requires repeated experiments with this method in order to detect all the nuances that any emotion can generate. New experiences cannot be analysed effectively; their novelty side-tracks the experimenter. Only when the person is thoroughly familiar with an emotion can he detect all its connotations. Unfortunately, this means becoming thoroughly familiar with all the variations of distress too.

Second variation:

I follow this method once a list of symptoms and attitudes corresponding to particular emotions has been developed, and my investigations have ceased to be interesting (either temporarily or permanently).

- **Identify.** Identify the emotion either directly, or else indirectly through a symptom or attitude. Then

- **Detach.** Become detached from the emotion by neither expressing it nor repressing it. In the seeing, only the seen, etc. Then

- **Let go.** Dis-associate from the emotional response; having noted it, just

ignore it, just cease to respond to it. To be able to let go of emotions like hate means to no longer feel guilty about having them, nor to need to justify them (that is, by blaming other people). It was always my idealism that enabled me to let go of emotions like hate and bitterness.

Feelings

One area of confusion in psychology is that feelings are often loosely equated with emotions. This is alright for colloquial use. I can ask a friend how he is feeling today, that is, is he happy or sad, etc; it would be awkward to ask him how emotional he is being today. Some people might take offence if they were thought to be emotional, whereas it is acceptable for them to show feelings.

Also, the word 'feelings' has a wide range of connotations – such as sensitivity, concern, susceptibility – which are relevant only in an informal sense, since they carry an aura of vagueness. To avoid such obscurity I need to be specific. In studying the mind, we have to accept that there are fundamental differences between feelings and emotions. For the moment I concentrate on feelings.

There are just three feelings: the pleasant one, the unpleasant one, and the neutral one. This is the Buddhist understanding and I verified this fact directly during the time when I used to practise meditation. In the past, some moral theorists believed that the neutral feeling is only an equal mixture of both pleasant and unpleasant feelings, so that the net effect is zero. But meditational awareness disproves this assumption.

Either feelings or will can be made the foundation of consciousness. Feelings help to give rise to emotions, and will to desires, with the mind being involved in both cases. Therefore the person's relationship to the world can focus on either emotions or desires. In older times, when the intensity of stress on the individual was much less than that of today, will was more important than feelings, in terms of motivation. Hence many traditional ideas on spiritual

development, found in religion and in meditational practices, focused primarily on the enhancement of will power (for example, the practice of duty requires will power). But now in modern times the stress on the individual is primarily caused by the intensification of emotional motivations, which depend on feelings.

Therefore, for the modern person:

Feelings are the foundation of consciousness.

Most of a person's repertoire of emotions arises from the two feelings of pleasure and displeasure. These feelings form a complementary pair, a pair of opposites, or what I call a '**binary**'. Hence all the emotions that spring from them can be arranged in pairs of opposites, or binaries, too.

By contrast, the neutral feeling is unique, it is not part of a binary. It is the basis of equanimity, the ability to be unaffected by any kind of stress. Equanimity should not be confused with indifference or even peace; indifference is a protective mechanism of withdrawal from responsibility and is underpinned by fear, whilst peace is achieved by repressing internal conflict. Equanimity denotes the absence of making value judgements, hence the absence of desiring anything. In Buddhist terms, equanimity means 'in the seeing, only the seen; in the hearing, only the heard', etc.

In psychological language, equanimity is the state of mind that denotes the absence of projection and introjection.

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ABREACTION

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Introduction

Sub-headings
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Definition of psychoanalysis
Subconscious determinism & motivation

A person's state of emotion is always changing. Whichever emotion is currently present in consciousness, eventually it fades away, only to be immediately replaced by another one. Hence a person experiences an endless flow of emotions.

Since emotions are transient, *what is the use of identifying them?* This identification is needed if we are to eliminate confusion from our minds. I have found that some particular ones flow in certain sequences.

This article is the first of five on the effects of these sequences.

Once I was able to identify my repertoire of regular emotions I discovered that these sequences form laws, so I call them laws of the unconscious mind. **They are laws of abreaction and are invariable in their operation.** Hence I consider them to be fully scientific. Since they apply to everyone, so they produce common social effects, and thus can be rated as social laws too.

To discover such laws were the elusive dreams of the nineteenth-century Positivists, like Herbert Spencer.

These sequences are one of the major causes of sorrow and distress in a human life. So by identifying our emotions and learning to understand these special sequences we can begin to control our reaction to sorrow.

These sequences are laws because they occur to everyone. They are laws of abreaction. The term '*abreaction*' was first thought up by ancient Greek dramatists to describe the purging or cathartic effect that the release of emotion gives. It was a major influence on Freud. However, neither the ancient Greeks nor Freud fully understood abreaction. They saw only the initial response and not the consequences. The consequences only became apparent to me once I learned to identify some emotions and thence could observe the way that they formed special sequences.

To understand these laws requires an understanding of the role of anxiety

in the mind.

The Role of Anxiety

When our self-image is weak it is usually associated with memories of ourself that we dislike. If most of our memories remind us of our failures in life, of the mistakes that we made, then our feelings about ourself are likely to be mainly negative ones. So one way to self-improvement is to improve our valuation of our memories. There are two factors that can apply to a memory of an event that has become negatively valued.

a.   The memory can be coupled with anxiety.

b.   The memory can be inharmonious to the person's sense of idealism.

Factor (b) - There are two components to this. The first component derives from guilt and the social aspect of myself, whereas the second component springs from bitterness and my aspect of individuality.

When my mood is based on my sense of being a social person, then the memory of any social activity that was below 100 % perfection is felt to be anathema to me – here it is guilt (mode of self-pity) that is temporarily dominant. The second factor is more intense in me. When the memory is of the way that I responded to some social activity by allowing social rules to control my behaviour or inhibit my independence then it is bitterness that becomes uppermost in my mind at that moment.

It is my sense of my own individuality that is being undermined by that memory. These valuations of memory are discomforting and lead to the desire to improve my ethical conduct, but they do not produce determinism in the way that anxiety does.

Factor (a) - In a psycho-analysis, this is nearly always the most prominent factor. So I take a look at anxiety. When anxiety is removed from the memory, that memory ceases to trouble the person, unless factor (b) is also involved. By removing that anxiety the psycho-analysis allows us to revalue our past experience. Past experience is the scaffolding which maintains all our various beliefs. Hence by allowing us to revalue past experience, the psycho-analysis enables us to transform our belief systems. This effect can be used as the basis of a definition of psycho-analysis:

A psycho-analysis is the method of intentionally removing anxiety from the subconscious mind.

Many people remove anxiety by the occasional flash of intuition, or even by psychic and/or religious experiences. But this result is sporadic and non-intentional.

Past experience is the scaffolding that maintains all our various beliefs. Hence by allowing us to revalue past experience, the psycho-analysis enables us to transform our belief systems. Beliefs arise from our experience. The sequence is that first we experience something, then we evaluate it, and then we construct a belief about it or use it to reinforce our existing beliefs. So the belief relates to our values. If we change our values then we can change our beliefs. It is very difficult to change our beliefs if we have not changed our values.

For example, if we are a smoker, and do not know why we first started smoking, it becomes very hard to give up smoking. The subconscious value that says 'smoking is a good thing' is still operating and this usually defeats the attempt to stop smoking. Perhaps we may have started smoking in adolescence because it gave us status with our peer group. If we try to stop smoking, the subconscious mind will interpret this as losing status, so it will fight against our conscious efforts.

> In general, we have beliefs that reflect our values, and our values are influenced by the memory of past events.

Subconscious Determinism & Motivation

When anxiety becomes attached to the memory of an event it causes the problem of subconscious determinism. Such determinism is predominantly learned in childhood. When a child has a problem, if it can work through that problem and the anxiety it feels about that problem, then it can assimilate the lesson to be learned and move on to other problems. If it cannot handle that anxiety, then it becomes motivated to avoid and deny that problem ; the memory becomes repressed. Now the problem remains permanently in the subconscious mind, even when the child has grown up. So an unpleasant experience in childhood becomes, in a similar social situation, an unpleasant experience for the adult. Why? Because the adult replays the anxiety that the child generated in that situation. The adult is still utilising avoidance and denial (though he / she no longer knows why, since the memory is repressed).

Subconscious determinism occurs because the motivation is compulsive

in anxiety-provoking social situations. And this motivation is itself subconscious. **Subconscious motivation** is the central issue of human life. Many of the major ideas or themes of Western intellectual thought have only been attempts to bypass this issue.

I list a few of the main themes of modern times:

Kant   was led to the concept of duty.

Stirner   was led to the concept of nihilism.

Schopenhauer   was led to world-hating asceticism.

Kierkegaard   was led to the leap of faith.

Nietzsche   was led to will and his superman.

Marx   was led to the reification of economics.

Bakunin   was led to ideas of destruction and creation.

Max Stirner was a nineteenth-century sceptic who explored narcissism, and is usually packed in with the anarchists and nihilists for want of a better classification. Michael Bakunin was a nineteenth-century anarchist, the major opponent of Karl Marx.

What is Anxiety ?

Anxiety is the sense of uneasiness that is experienced in the individual's relationships with other people (and in his / her relationship to their own conscience). In any situation where the person's vanity is undermined, fear arises. The conjunction of this fear with the vanity creates anxiety.

Anxiety has two modes, fear and vanity, and so can give two different responses. When a person is oppressed by their conscience, then the fear mode is accentuated. *This leads to the unconscious idea 'control yourself / do as you are told'.*

When the person is in a social situation which makes them uneasy, then the vanity mode becomes restricted and they wilt. The person becomes vulnerable to hostility, rejection or manipulation by others. *This leads to the unconscious idea 'I am uneasy in the presence of other people'.* [This mode of anxiety produces an affinity with paranoia, whose unconscious idea is 'I do not trust other people'].

[There is more description of anxiety in the article on **The Nature of Emotion : E 2**, under sub-heading '**Anxiety**'].

Anxiety increases the intensity of a person's reaction to any situation. Take a person as they are, without anxiety. They will have developed patterns of reaction to any situation. Generate anxiety in them and, though their patterns will not be likely to change, *the intensity of their reactions will change*. For an extrovert, the vanity mode of anxiety is emphasised. Therefore the person over-compensates in order to annul the uneasiness: they magnify their responses, even to the point of seeming to be theatrical. For an introvert, the fear mode of anxiety is emphasised and the person contracts and inhibits their responses, and may even appear to be 'wooden'.

Anxiety keeps a person de-stabilised. Can there be any meaning and

purpose to this? Can anxiety ever be useful ; can anxiety ever have a positive value? Yes. In my view, the evolution of personal consciousness (that is, personal evolution) is produced primarily through anxiety and secondarily through idealistic aspirations. Anxiety eliminates complacency and facilitates change. Therefore it provides the psychological spur for us to generate our ideals and to achieve something in life. Most ideas of a good life are generated as antidotes to an anxiety-ridden conventional life.

> *The meaning of anxiety is that it eliminates complacency.*

> *The purpose of anxiety is that it facilitates change.*

Incidentally, the idea of personal evolution has no meaning unless the reality of reincarnation is accepted. History shows that society evolves, but science has no concept of the evolution of the individual person.

Switching between Emotions

Now I consider how **some particular emotions switch between themselves.** All emotions (except equanimity) form into complementary pairs, or binaries. The binary nature means that one emotion can easily turn into its opposite. For example, vanity and self-pity form a binary ; if at any moment a person is experiencing vanity he may find that as soon as the vanity fades it is replaced by self-pity. This switch is facilitated if the person is subject to ridicule ; then the good valuation of the unconscious idea that generates vanity changes to the bad valuation.

The most important of the emotions listed in the article on **Emotion : E2**

are the quartet of guilt, pride, narcissism and jealousy, since in normal life they regularly link together. I repeat their factors for convenience. They regularly switch between themselves in certain sequences.

Guilt = self-pity + self-hate.
Pride = vanity + hatred of other people.

Narcissism = love + vanity.
Jealousy = love + self-pity.

Notation :

When one emotion fades away the next one arises. I use the phrase "leads to" to indicate this transition. Therefore the notation *'narcissism leads to jealousy'* means that when narcissism fades away then jealousy arises.

To illustrate how emotions can switch I give an example:
I may be currently experiencing guilt. This can change to pride or jealousy.

Guilt = self-pity + self-hate.

c). Suppose that the self-pity mode changes to its binary, vanity. Then I experience pride.
The sequence is:

(self-pity + self-hate) leads to (vanity + hatred of others).

that is, guilt leads to pride.

d). Whereas, suppose that the self-hate mode of guilt changes to its binary, which is love. Then I experience jealousy.
The sequence is:

   (self-pity + self-hate) leads to (self-pity + love).

   that is, guilt leads to jealousy

The difference between self-hate and hatred of others is only in the direction that hate is pointed, either towards oneself or towards other people.

   Some laws of the unconscious mind, and the universality of abreaction, are the subject of the next article: **Abreaction 2**.

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Laws of the Unconscious Mind

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

The Hell of Purgation

When we investigate empirically our range of emotions we will find that some emotions are linked together to form four kinds of invariable sequence, which are ways in which the unconscious mind operates. I discovered them by empirical awareness and then had to use reason to understand the mechanics of the linkages. In other words, the sequences are discovered by awareness, but why and how the sequences flow as they do have to be understood by using one's reason.

These invariable sequences can be called 'laws' since they are deterministic in their operation and are general to all humanity. These sequences, these laws, are four kinds of abreaction. Abreaction is the purging (cathartic) effect that the release of emotion gives. And the emotion that is released is anxiety. The four laws eliminate the anxiety that is attached to four other emotions, these being guilt, pride, narcissism, and jealousy. Anxiety is released in stages, and up till now only a couple of stages have been identified: these stages are those of excitement (in one law) and of tearful weeping (in another law).

I need to introduce a change in traditional terminology.
Up till now the terms 'catharsis' and 'abreaction' have been more or less synonymous. Since I need a new word to label the sequences, I have separated these two terms. I name the invariable sequences '*abreaction* ', and restrict the term 'catharsis' to the stage of excitement that begins just one particular sequence. Catharsis is now simply the first stage in the abreaction of guilt.

When anxiety is attached to a memory it helps to create determinism. The deterministic behaviour is the attempt to avoid re-experiencing that anxiety. The forcefulness of the determinism depends upon the intensity of the anxiety. Now the anxiety is removed from the memory by the process of abreaction. Abreaction eliminates determinism. After an abreaction has ended and been assimilated, the quality of life is improved to some degree, depending on how intense the abreaction was.

Unfortunately, abreaction can be hell itself to experience.

Note :
For the sake of brevity I write of the abreaction of guilt, pride, etc,

whereas in fact it is the anxiety attached to these emotions that is abreacted.

I work out in detail only the first two abreactional sequences (those which I label *guilt* and *pride*), since they are the most common of the four, and the easiest to recognise. In the sequences, the switching of emotions occurs when one emotion is replaced by its binary mate ; in both sequences the binaries that switch are '*vanity - self-pity*' and '*love - hate* '. [The abreactional sequences of *narcissism* and *jealousy* are difficult to pinpoint, and so I leave them to a future article].

Consider the abreaction of guilt, or moral abreaction.

This begins with catharsis and ends in resentment.
The sequence is:

> Narcissism leads to jealousy ; then jealousy leads to guilt ; then guilt leads to resentment.

There are four steps involved in a full sequence.

Step 1.
The excitement of catharsis represents the stage of narcissism in vanity mode. When the excitement ends, vanity transforms into self-pity, so jealousy is now present.

> Narcissism (= love + vanity) leads to jealousy (= love + self-pity).

Step 2.

The stage of jealousy usually produces sexual desire, because the self-pity mode is dominant and it is following the excitement. In the therapy situation, the client may fall in love with the therapist during this stage, that is, the therapist may become a suitable object for the sexual desire. When the sexual desire ends, the love mode of jealousy transforms into self-hate, so guilt now arises. The person hates themself for what they felt in the catharsis.

> Jealousy (= love + self-pity) leads to guilt (= self-hate + self-pity).

Step 3.

When guilt fades the final product is resentment ; the resentment occurs because guilt, with self-hate mode dominant, 'shrinks' the ego of the person. The change to resentment increases blood pressure and usually creates a headache (on the left-hand side of the brain ; headaches on the right-hand side of the brain are due to fear or anxiety). Sometimes depression follows the resentment, but this effect does not seem to be a regular reaction.

Step 4.

When the resentment has finally been worked through, the end result is detachment to the problem which originally caused anxiety. This stage is not always achieved ; it depends on how important it is for the person to hang on to their grievance.

Consider the abreaction of pride, or non-moral abreaction.

This begins with sorrow or sadness, and ends in bitterness.
The sequence is:

> Jealousy leads to narcissism ; then narcissism leads to pride ;
> then pride leads to bitterness.

There are also four steps involved in this sequence.

Step 1.
This abreaction usually follows the abreaction of guilt. The sorrow arises
when I reflect on the problem highlighted by the preceding guilt. The
sorrow requires the self-pity mode of jealousy ; when it ends, the self-
pity transforms into vanity, and narcissism is generated.

> Jealousy (= love + self-pity) leads to narcissism (= love +
> vanity).

Step 2.
The person now feels good after the previous sorrow ; when we have a
cry we feel better afterwards, but nobody noticed the sting that follows
the good feelings. When narcissism fades the love mode changes to hate,
and pride arises. Now hostility to others (especially to people in positions
of authority over oneself) is dominant ; hostility is felt even towards the
therapist.

> Narcissism (= love + vanity) leads to pride (= hatred of others
> + vanity).

Step 3.

Finally, as pride fades, bitterness is felt over the way that the sorrow and self-pity have limited my sense of individuality.

Step 4.

The end result is detachment. As in the previous abreaction of guilt, this stage of detachment is not always achieved.

Abreaction mixes together the subconscious and the unconscious minds. The sequence derives from the unconscious mind, but the content originates in the subconscious mind of the person.

In these two types of abreaction, the first one, focusing on guilt, usually concerns issues of morality and social conditioning. So I also call it '**moral abreaction**'. The abreactional process starts from an insight into the cause of a psychological problem. The second one, focusing on pride, concerns non-moral issues such as those of dependency and freedom ; hence I also call it '**non-moral abreaction**'. This process does not require any insight in order to initiate it. Simple reflection on the preceding abreaction of guilt is enough to trigger it.

Anxiety is attached to two modes of character, which are the person's sense of having a social identity and their sense of being an individual. In the abreaction of guilt, the stage of narcissism represents the release of anxiety from the sense of individuality, whilst the stage of guilt represents the release of anxiety attached to the social identity. In the

abreaction of pride, the initial stage of sorrow allows the person to release the anxiety attached to their social identity. Finally the stage of pride releases the anxiety attached to the sense of individuality.

End Stages

The hell of abreaction resides in the end stages of resentment and bitterness. The first few stages of an abreaction may last from an hour to a day, to a week, to a month, depending on how important and intense the problem is. But the end stages may last many months.

The intensity of these stages is proportional to the 'pressure' within the subconscious mind, that is, to the extent to which social, sexual and political mores have been internalised involuntarily. The subconscious mind will always attempt to reject any form of involuntary conditioning, so the stronger that the conditioning is, the greater is the effort to reject it. The length of time that resentment and bitterness are experienced depends on the length of time that is needed to assimilate the problems that caused the abreactions. The person has to re-structure their beliefs in order to accommodate to the elimination of anxiety from their subconscious mind. Changing one's fixed beliefs, especially bigoted and repugnant ones, is never a pleasant experience.

In the abreaction of guilt, anxiety is most intense during the stage of guilt (this is why the sequence gets its name). The anxiety makes my eyes ache. The combination of anxiety and guilt also produces sensitivity to bright light, especially in the mornings. The eye ache is always worse in the mornings as compared to the afternoons. The light sensitivity makes it especially difficult to work at a typewriter under a bright desk

lamp, or to work with a computer VDU screen.

In the abreaction of pride, anxiety is most intense during the stage of pride, but there is little accompanying eye ache.

Now I can explain a paradox of psycho-therapy that puzzled Carl Rogers (Rogers, 1984). He often noticed that a client would leave a therapy session really excited, believing that he/she had finally solved a major problem. Life felt good. Then in the next therapy session a few days later the client would feel like a walking disaster -- everything seemed to be going wrong, a complete contrast to the halcyon hopes of yesterweek. This is the way that the abreaction of guilt affects the individual ; it is the guilt that collapses the hopes. There is nothing to be done but to persevere till the nightmare passes.

The intermediate emotions in the abreactions are not always easy to identify, with the exception of the stage of sexual desire that comes after the catharsis. When a person cannot identify their emotions they cannot verify the connection between excitement and resentment, or between sorrow and bitterness. The person beginning empiricism may simply see the period of the intermediate emotions as a 'lull' time between the beginning and the end emotions.

Universality of Abreaction

When a person walks the path of personal development, he or she has to come to terms with their unpleasant memories and the sense of guilt that

they induce. Guilt disturbs the person, and the anxiety that accompanies it helps to control him or her, since anxiety is one of the causes of determinism. Hence on the path of personal development the person will have to endure many periods of anxiety. If he or she wants to understand why, then they have to sustain a long psycho-analysis. This necessitates the repeated experience of abreaction.

Since abreaction is a very distressing experience, can a person avoid it and still practice personal development? A common alternative to the attempt to understand oneself is the focus on will power and the denial of whatever is felt to be unpleasant about oneself. So the development of will power, aided by denial and repression, is often the dominant theme in psychic practices such as contemplation and meditation, and even in forms of autosuggestion. This theme is just the need to control the mind, but the practitioner is using their will to achieve this, and not their understanding. Another variant is the practice of cultivating emotional ecstasies; here the practitioner is allowing themself to be swept away by their emotions – the very opposite of control. Are these a genuine alternative to abreaction? Unfortunately, the answer is no!

Neither will power nor emotional ecstasies offer adequate solutions to the problems of the world, and most of these problems have moral and ethical components to them. Abreaction forces a person to confront and face such components, no matter how much he / she may wish to avoid them. By eliminating anxiety and fostering understanding, abreaction enables a person to upgrade their current standards. So no devotee of personal development can avoid abreaction.

I give examples of different creative attitudes of mind and the ways that the effects of abreaction have been portrayed.

The mystic is subject to the ebb and flow of emotion: sometimes he / she seems to be walking in sunlight and at other times he / she sinks into darkness. Sometimes he / she is elated, sometimes he / she is in despair. This alternation of mood has been called *the hill and valley experience* that the mystic has to endure. So mystics, who usually have no desire to understand themselves, still experience intense periods of abreaction. The 'dark night of the soul' in mysticism is just a prolonged spell of abreactive resentment or bitterness. The dark night usually follows a period of exceptionally-good sentiments (the catharsis), and so is exceptionally bad. [Where the catharsis is absent, then the dark night should be classified more accurately as a 'trial', such as the trials of fire, air and water].

Philosophers experience abreaction. In '*Ecco Homo*', **Nietzsche** describes his feelings of joy when he was writing '*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* '. When the writing was finished he felt 'distress without equal'**.** So he wrote '*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* ' during a period of intense catharsis, and was afterwards engulfed in bitterness. In his book '*On the Genealogy of Morals* ' he provides many examples of bitterness in his aphorisms (an example, picked at random, is essay 3, aphorism 14).

Writers experience abreaction. **Hermann Hesse** spent some time in 1916-1917 going through a Jungian analysis. His sense of spiritual liberation led eventually to 1919 being his happiest and most productive year. The next year *'was the most unproductive and despondent year of his life'* (Hesse, 1985. Introduction). So 1919 was a year of catharsis, and 1920 a year of abreactive resentment and bitterness which stopped his creativity.

Even in psychological therapy that is not psycho-dynamic, such as forms of behaviour therapy, abreaction still occurs. The therapist may

sometimes find that the client falls in love with him/her. This emotional attachment to the therapist signifies that the client is experiencing the abreaction of guilt.

By reading biographies that feature the subjective states of mind of people we realise that abreaction is not limited to psycho-analysis. It is not limited to people who are aware of abreaction. Ignorance of dynamic psychology is no defence against abreaction. Each person engaged in the process of character development has to eliminate undesirable or immature emotional responses. This requires the elimination of anxiety. So each person following his or her own idea of evolution or fulfilment will, voluntarily or involuntarily, experience the trauma of abreaction. It cannot be bypassed.

The strangeness of catharsis and suggestion is the subject of the next article : **Abreaction 3**.

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Catharsis and Suggestion

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Reversal of Values

Sub-headings
Immoral compulsions
Morality & ethics
Sexual abuse of children
Suggestion
Examples

I explore catharsis in more detail. It usually has either a sexual theme or a theme of self-praise. The sexual theme is the more peculiar of the two, so I focus on it.

The usefulness of the sexual theme is that it highlights a feature of catharsis that does not appear to have been noticed in literature on psycho-therapy that I have read. **Catharsis reverses values !**

Catharsis originates from the repression of 'immorality'. Repression has

the function of removing from awareness unsuitable desires and attitudes and the memories of unpleasant events, and also of inhibiting the anxiety associated with those events, desires and attitudes. The anxiety indicates that an unsolved problem has been buried within the subconscious mind. The anxiety indicates that the unsolved problem is creating a little bit of determinism.

When the repression is dissolved by an insight into the cause of the problem, the stored-up anxiety bubbles up into consciousness, producing the excitement of the catharsis. In the past, usually as a child, the person had stigmatised the event or desire as being immoral and undesirable. Therefore when the catharsis begins its course its content is this immoral event or desire. The event may be an objective one, or a subjective experience (as, for example, in the child's interpretation of its relationship to its mother). Because of the excitement, the memory is no longer stigmatised. Now the peculiarity of catharsis is felt:

> *There is a reversal of values :*
>
> *it becomes fun to phantasise on the immoral, on the forbidden ; immorality is felt to be exciting.*

Immoral Compulsions

In the catharsis the person feels that he / she is breaking free of the constraints of tradition. The person's daydreams focus on overturning the social constraints on morality and sexuality. Naughtiness becomes compelling and compulsive in his / her phantasies. In fact there is definite emotional pressure to phantasise: this pressure creates the compulsion. This pressure is due to the release of anxiety. This pressure determines the intensity of the excitement. The greater the amount of

anxiety that is associated with a repressed memory, the greater becomes the excitement that is experienced and the more protracted becomes the fun phantasy of immorality. The greater the amount of anxiety that needs to be released, the longer will the catharsis last, even up to several weeks duration if necessary.

Only when all the anxiety is released can compulsion cease.

Because there is a reversal of values the initial starting condition has to be narcissism in vanity mode. Excitement needs vanity as a base, and a mood of narcissism enables a person to handle immoral attitudes without passing pejorative judgement. The imagination, which produces the phantasy, becomes free to use material that formerly was forbidden. A memory cannot be analysed unless it is allowed to rise into consciousness. So long as a memory is forbidden, it remains repressed and its associated anxiety restricts conscious choice. In the catharsis, a forbidden idea of childhood is now presented in full consciousness to the adult. The excitement neutralises moral judgements, the anxiety is released from memory, the confusion of the child is cleared up by the adult, and a little bit of determinism is eliminated.

As narcissism fades away and jealousy becomes the current emotion, so sexual desire adds spice to the immorality. Now the person becomes vulnerable to forming a temporary sexual attachment to anyone who may give him emotional support or who can make him feel good about himself (before the client can fall in love with the therapist, that client has first to experience catharsis).

When the excitement has finally evaporated, guilt arises and the backlash begins. Guilt feelings are generated as a reaction to the

immoral content of the phantasies. The person now repudiates what they felt in the catharsis. Disgust at themselves is produced, leading to resentment. Morality becomes emphasised ; the person decides to clean up their act. At last, when the resentment ends, a new balance is acquired. The immoral phantasies are neither repressed nor repudiated ; they simply cease to be compulsive. Choice is now available in an aspect of consciousness that was formerly forbidden. If the person so wishes, they can indulge in such phantasies without feeling guilty. But because the phantasies are no longer taboo they cease to have their former fascination. **Detachment is the fruit of abreaction.**

Since the adult mind contains a multitude of immoral thoughts from childhood and adolescence, so a multitude of abreactions are needed to completely clear the mind of immorality.

What catharsis achieves is that it allows formerly-repressed ideas to come back into association with the person's normal consciousness. In this way their consciousness is enlarged. Each catharsis gives a different theme to the phantasies. No catharsis is a duplicate of a previous one. Any problem may have several factors to it, and hence may require several episodes of catharsis to completely solve it. So in a long analysis the person finds that their problems regularly change as they slowly abreact the various factors of them. Any difficulty that does not feature in the catharsis is not affected by the tail-end state of resentment.

The excitement of the catharsis is really just a form of dis-orientation. The hallmark of a change in subconscious motivation is always an episode of dis-orientation. The reduction of anxiety alters the way that the person uses their will. And dis-orientation denotes uncertainty in the use of will; that is, the person is changing their use of will. This change is not always noticeable; it depends on the gravity of the problem.

Morality and Ethics

I also label the abreaction of guilt as moral abreaction. Once the final quiescent state is reached, when the resentment fades away, we see what has been achieved. This abreaction eliminates compulsiveness not only in aspects of immorality in our subconscious mind, but also in aspects of morality.

> *The abreaction of guilt eliminates the compulsiveness of both immorality and morality.*

This effect implies that the development of morality is not the final goal of humanity. Morality is just a stepping-stone to the production of full self-consciousness. Morality is a half-way house on the road of human evolution. But why is its compulsiveness eliminated? It is obvious that immorality is not desirable. What is it that is limited about morality?

Morality, considered as the unthinking acceptance of social values, is derived from the social conditioning of the child. Therefore the ego, and its values, cannot be changed without a corresponding change in the person's morality. Morality, based on social conditioning, represents standards of conduct that have not been developed by choice but by fear and punishment and guilt-induction. To put these ideas another way, consider the child. The resentment at having morality forced on itself is built into the subconscious mind. Hence morality is intertwined with immorality. So in order to abreact one the other has also to be abreacted at the same time.

I make a distinction between morality and ethics.
I consider ethics to be the critical evaluation of standards and values. On the road of human evolution all fears and all compliant rule-governed behaviour will eventually be replaced by choice. Choice allows the person to freely construct new ideas on ethics and values that are harmonious to his / her fulfilment. A psycho-analysis helps the individual to learn to choose freely what moral attitudes to uphold and what ones to reject. Morality then becomes personal choice.

The sequence of abreaction leads the individual along the path that is *'beyond good and evil'* (to use Nietzsche's classic phrase). Abreaction leads beyond morality. When a person goes beyond good and evil, psychology replaces morality. Psychological judgements supersede moral judgements.

Sexual Abuse of Children

Catharsis produces a reversal of values.

The real strangeness of this fact can be illustrated by the issue of the sexual abuse of children.

If a child is sexually abused by an adult friend, it will generate guilt in him / her. When eventually as an adult he / she abreacts that guilt, the original situation will transpose from being fearful to being exciting. In the catharsis the sexual values are reversed. It will now become exciting to relive in phantasy that abuse, even to desire such abuse. Exhilarating phantasies of sexual abuse will compulsively dominate the mind. The

desire to abuse other children may also arise. When the phantasy ends, the tail-end stage of resentment makes the person disgusted with themself. Eventually the person acquires detachment over the issue and ceases to blame their childhood friend.

The problem for the child (when it has become an adult) is that if he / she cannot restrain their emotions to phantasy then he / she may enact them in a real social situation by seeking to abuse young children.

Note:

If the child is abused by someone who is not a friend then the child can react by generating hatred of that person instead of feeling guilty about themself. Then when the child has become an adult there will be no compulsion to abuse other children. It is the creation of guilt in the child that causes the problem for him / her when he / she becomes an adult.

Compulsiveness is always a product of, or a reaction to, the conjunction of anxiety with underlying guilt.

However, sexual abuse of children may not be a product of compulsion. It may happen through the attraction of power, or because it is socially acceptable (as in the homosexual mores of ancient Greece).

The confusion within the subconscious mind has to be treated by psychological methods and not moral ones, if the aim is to heal the person. Confronting and resolving issues like sexual abuse cannot be accomplished if moral judgements are made the framework of therapy.

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Suggestion

So far I have considered the process of abreaction as the consequence of having an insight into the cause of a psychological problem. It is insight, and only insight, that removes the problem. Psychic practices and religious experiences may relegate a problem to comparative insignificance, but they do not remove it.

However, abreaction can be triggered by another factor, independently of insight. This factor is that of suggestion or short-term desire. Suggestion causes the generation of anxiety. This anxiety can be abreacted without needing insight. The limitation of this mode of abreaction is that, since there is no insight, there is no permanent elimination of anxiety.

Once a short-term desire arises the ego attaches anxiety to it. Excitement is generated when the desire is being fulfilled but that excitement is just catharsis. Once excitement is generated the sequence of emotions proceeds to guilt and resentment as usual and the anxiety is abreacted. But the absence of insight means that fresh anxiety begins to accumulate to the next arousal of that desire. Only insight can prevent a previous problem or a former desire from acting as a nucleus for the build-up of new anxiety.

In effect, all that happens with suggestion is that the person creates an exciting phantasy within the emotional sequence of abreaction. Since anxiety is not permanently eliminated so these phantasies can be replayed endlessly. The person follows the emotional sequence, with all its pleasure and pain, without getting the benefit of the eradication of anxiety. Because the phantasy is based solely on feelings rather than on insight it can be generated anywhere and at any time. I call suggestion **the feeling mode of abreaction**, **whereas therapeutic abreaction is the insight mode.**

The process of abreaction in feeling mode can be interrupted in only one way. At the stage of jealousy, the self-pity mode is dominant. If the

person is then given appreciation and emotional support by another person, such as a sexual partner, then the self-pity mode is neutralised. This neutralisation means that the following stage of guilt is prevented from occurring. Hence emotional support given in time stops the person experiencing guilt and resentment. This is the real value of having an harmonious relationship with a partner : each can take turns in helping the other to survive abreaction. However, the fact that many partnerships are not harmonious indicates that this neutralisation of guilt does not always work.

For comparison, when a person is going through abreaction of guilt in insight mode, the stage of guilt cannot be prevented. When the person is given emotional support at the stage of jealousy, the guilt is merely held back and delayed till the effects of the support wear off.

I give examples of short-term desire.

1) Masturbation begins with excitement and often ends in guilt.
The arising of guilt denotes that abreaction in feeling mode is occurring. Whilst the person may be aware of the subsequent guilt, he/she may not realise that the guilt is followed by resentment.

2) Sexual intercourse too begins with excitement.
If the sexual partner is pleased with the person's performance, guilt does not arise in the person. The person experiences only the stages of narcissism and jealousy : the self-pity mode of jealousy is neutralised by the partner's social approval. However, if the partner is unaffected or dissatisfied, guilt arises in the person and the full sequence of abreaction runs its course. Hence sexual intercourse can lead to feelings of

degradation and resentment.

3) On a holiday coach trip I sat next to an elderly woman.

For about three hours she talked incessantly. First she talked about what she found to be exciting (= narcissism); when these ideas ended she began to mildly criticise people that she knew (= jealousy). Her monologue was completed by the airing of her resentments. This was the abreaction cycle, in feeling mode. It has repercussions on communication. When a person is highly anxious and under pressure to talk, they will not listen to the other person but will follow the abreaction sequence. They have to continue talking until the anxiety has evaporated. Only when the abreaction sequence, and the compulsive need to speak, comes to an end can a two-way dialogue begin.

There is often a time scale to the compulsive need to speak. If time is plentiful the person will speak at a moderate pace, non-stop. As the time nears for the listener to depart, the person will increase the rate at which they speak. They act as though they have a quota of words to offload onto the listener before they can relax.

4) Often in psycho-analyses the clients fall in love with the therapists.

This attachment occurs during the abreaction of guilt, in the intermediate stage of jealousy and sexual desire. The therapist should avoid participating in a sexual relationship because after the jealousy stage ends, guilt and resentment are likely to follow if the client is unsatisfied. Any sexual relationship will now be felt by the client to be repulsive and the therapy may come to an end in discord.

5) New-Age encounter groups:

Here personal relationships are explored in a group setting within the atmosphere of a superficially-generated catharsis. The group interaction gives the impression that problems of relationships have been solved, or at least ameliorated. This might well be true if the group was a permanent reality, that is, encounter groups might be a good way to initiate communal living, when the group chooses the new rules that it will function by. But when this is not the case, when the person returns to the normality and dreariness of everyday routine then both resentment and the problems return as well – the artificial catharsis achieves little of permanence.

6) A physiological form of abreaction happens with drugs that are used to change mood.

Alcohol is usually drunk in order to free inhibitions (that is, to simulate catharsis); when over-indulged, it ends in a hangover. Likewise cannabis is smoked in order to become high; when over-indulged, the end feeling is usually lassitude. Both the hangover and the lassitude are physiological analogues of resentment, that is, they both represent the rejection of the cathartic mood.

This understanding of two common drugs puts a question mark over the usefulness of some psychiatric drugs. Any drug that attempts to induce a better state of mind in the person will eventually lead to some form of 'relapse'. The induction of a better state of mind usually means switching to narcissism, and the relapse probably indicates subconscious resentment. Therefore all mood-changing drugs that follow the abreaction pattern will end in generating subconscious resentment, and this must defeat the purpose for which the drugs are used. Such drugs are not an acceptable alternative to counselling (assuming that the client is receptive to counselling and can have insight into their problems). Mood-changing drugs are needed in emergencies. But their long-term use cannot solve problems ; the best that they can do is to help clients to

control problems.

In examples (1) to (6) the excitement is generated by suggestion, based on feelings. An alternative way of generating excitement through suggestion is by switching to mania. Hence there are three forms of excitement: two based on suggestion and one on insight. All forms relax the repression of subconscious memories and desires. But only in insight mode is the relaxation permanent, since anxiety is eliminated.

The euphoria of catharsis often centres on what is forbidden, whilst that of mania may centre on noble wishes or a desire to be socially benevolent in some way. The excitement generated by suggestion ends either in resentment or in the depressive stage associated with mania ; then the repression is re-instated. In episodes of mild excitement, often the only way to distinguish catharsis from mania is to see what follows it: resentment is always the hallmark of abreaction, whereas a depression usually indicates mania.

These ideas have implications not only for adult relationships but also for parent - child ones too. A parent who is recovering (that is, in the throes of guilt and resentment) from the party the night before is not likely to be accommodating to a child's demands. The process of abreaction is likely to be the main source of discord in a family, and the young child is the member least capable of bearing such conflict.

The problems created by resentment and bitterness are the subject of the next article: **Abreaction 4**.

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Resentment and Bitterness

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Removing Compulsion

Sub-headings
Purification and sensuality
Eliminating weakness
Social abreaction
Examples
Conclusion

In the subconscious mind, immorality is often associated with pleasure. Because such pleasure is socially forbidden, it becomes tied to anxiety. In turn, this anxiety helps to generate compulsion.

Therefore the process of purifying the subconscious mind involves both releasing this anxiety and bringing the immoral thoughts into normal consciousness. The function of resentment and bitterness is that they remove the attractiveness of forbidden ideas and vain phantasies.

In the abreaction of guilt, when the first two stages of narcissism and jealousy are worked through, the stage of guilt is reached. Now feelings of degradation arise concerning the immorality of the catharsis stage. The last stage, that of resentment, highlights the feelings of degradation and rejects all the previous excitement.

Prior to the catharsis, immorality was associated with pleasure (at a subconscious level of mind). During the catharsis this subconscious pleasure is raised to the conscious level of mind. When abreaction is complete the resentment and bitterness have dissociated the pleasure from the immoral thoughts. Anxiety was attached to the memories since to take pleasure in immorality is not socially acceptable. The final result is that both anxiety and pleasure are separated from the aspect of immorality that was the subject of the abreaction. Whence such immoral thoughts no longer bother the person because there are no longer any emotional dynamics in the subconscious mind attached to such thoughts.

In this way, the subconscious mind is gradually purified of compulsive immoral thoughts and the amount of determinism is reduced. The person may still call up immoral phantasies if he / she wants to, but they no longer retain their previous influence over him / her and so will not affect their behaviour.

Purification and Sensuality

Why does the purification of the subconscious mind produce so much distress? Why is the elimination of determinism so disturbing for the adult? The distress turns upon the links between determinism, sensuality and conformity. The young child desires support above all

else. It needs boundaries within which it can feel secure. If these boundaries are not supplied by the parents, or if the parental boundaries are inharmonious to it, then the child has to create its own boundaries as it grows up. Boundaries are created as a way of producing a safe haven. Why does the child, and the adult, need a safe environment? Because the person fears his freedom! *The fear of freedom, the fear of venturing into the unknown, underlies most human activity.*

The boundaries that the person accepts or creates are ones that offer the promise of happiness. He / she prefers to seek happiness and conformity rather than freedom. Happiness and conformity are safer options to the fear of freedom. And happiness is sought within forms of sensuality. Freedom is buried and denied by activities such as the over-indulgence in sex, alcohol, cannabis, television and by the pursuit of a nice respectable social status. This burial of freedom is characterised by the sense of alienation or by the sense of there being no meaning to life.

As the desire for freedom grows within the person, so he / she must devote more and more energy to repressing it. As freedom is denied more and more, so sensuality grows in intensity. The more that a person is dominated by any form of sensuality, the more compulsive becomes their behaviour, and the more difficult it is for them to cultivate broad-mindedness and flexibility. A psycho-analysis has the effect of eliminating weakness and determinism (though only if they were created in the current life, and not in past lives), and so enlarges the possibilities of freedom. Therefore a psychoanalysis always affects the sensuality of the person.

The fascination with sensuality is almost overwhelming for the great majority of people. And the few individuals who have traditionally denied sensuality (at least outwardly) – the mystic, the meditator, the solitary contemplator – do not practice a style of living that is appealing to other types of personality ; the advocacy of asceticism, or even world-

denial, is only for the few.

The problem for modern times is to learn to handle sensuality and conformity without being swallowed up by them; there is a place in a human life for both sensuality and conformity, but it is the over-indulgence in them that causes the problem. Relationships need to become based on harmony and quality of life, rather than on sensuality. This demands an attitude of mind that is very hard to attain: flexibility with depth of character. The Victorian mind had character but also rigid and repressive traits. Whereas it seems to me that many modern people have flexibility but little depth of character.

How does a person develop character? And how does a person switch from rigidity to flexibility? Usually by working through sorrow. Happiness does not motivate a person to change their way of life. Why should a person change when life seems good to them? But the demand of modern times is to develop the capacity to change, to become mentally flexible, to cast away inadequate beliefs, and in the process to develop character. Unfortunately it is only prolonged periods of resentment and of bitterness that force the person to achieve these abilities. Only prolonged periods of such unhappiness lead to the re-structuring of belief systems. The major obstacle in life is to surmount this unhappiness instead of being engulfed by it, which happened to those who embraced Fascism and Nazism in the 1920s onwards.

Eliminating Weakness

Only by working through the resentment and the bitterness is detachment attained. Despite the sorrow that they cause, both resentment and bitterness have a positive function. **Resentment and bitterness can eliminate weakness from the mind.**

Resentment focuses on removing degeneracy and degradation from one's character, usually in matters of sexuality and social behaviour. Resentment cleans up social traits and attitudes.

Bitterness focuses on removing dependency from one's character, usually in matters of authority. It is generated by the loss of romanticism and heroic ideals (both important issues within narcissism).

There is nothing noble in sexual immorality and degradation, so this is why the abreaction of pride usually follows resentment ; there is nothing idealistic about sex. Bitterness strengthens traits and attitudes of individuality.

If resentment and bitterness are not worked through then they lead to the production of long-term effects.

Resentment narrows a person's views of society.
Resentment facilitates the establishment of morality and a social conscience, plus the desire for a strong political leader. Such a leader may focus on either victimising or getting rid of the 'weak' or 'degenerate' sectors of society: for example, Hitler focused his resentment on socialists, gypsies, Jews.

Bitterness hardens a person.
Bitterness leads to the denigration of society and the cultivation of a

conscience of individual values; the person avoids helping other people since they are 'inferior'. Politically this view leads to the prejudice that other countries are 'inferior' to one's own (as in Hitler's view of the Slav countries of eastern Europe).

Social   Abreaction

The two common abreactions affect society just as much as they affect the individual. Therefore they lead to two social laws. The morality of an age determines what is good and evil, and these ideas form the content of social abreaction. The intensity of these abreactions depend on the rate of social change: the faster the change the greater is the effects of abreaction.

First Law of Social Change

The social abreaction of guilt starts from the excitement of catharsis and ends in resentment. The intensity of the former helps to determine the intensity of the latter. Politically the resentment generates Conservative, even Fascist, attitudes. Social change may start from left-wing views but always ends in a right-wing backlash. The euphoria of revolutions leads to political dictatorship.

Politically, resentment is used to establish control over people who have no self-control or who are weak, that is, those who are immoral, or who have no standards, or who are perceived to be degenerate (usually these criticisms are seen to be relevant only to the poor). Governmental social

care programmes are cut back as the poor are blamed and penalised. In addition, asylum seekers to Britain are re-classified as economic migrants who are seeking to sponge off state welfare ; this label allows the state to reject them as undesirables.

Second Law of Social Change

The social abreaction of pride starts from sorrow and ends in bitterness. This abreaction usually ends in forms of Nazism, such as police death squads, the Stalinist political show-trials of the 1930s, and political or sectarian genocide. Bitterness is always worse than resentment. So Nazism is always worse than Fascism.

Bitterness is used to reject claims of equality from other sectors of society. Such sectors are perceived to be inferior. Hence racialism, ethnic conflicts, and disputes between religions come to the foreground during social change.

Examples

Abreaction is not a new phenomenon of the twentieth century. It has existed from historical times, perhaps even from the first moment that primitive man created society. Therefore neither Fascism nor Nazism are new phenomena. It is only **the content** of social abreaction that changes as eras change ; **the process itself is invariable.**

In the person, these two abreactions can follow one another. So too these

two abreactions can follow one another in social abreaction. The difference between the change within the person and the change within society lies in the time that is taken to assimilate the abreactions. The effects of abreaction on the person may last for weeks or months, whereas the effects of social abreaction may last for years or even decades.

I give examples of dramatic historical change involving social abreaction.

1) The most decisive shift in ancient thinking occurred in Athens in the fifth-century BC.
Socrates switched philosophical thought from cosmological themes to themes of morality and virtue. This event took place in the aftermath of Athens's defeat in the war with Sparta. The change of fortune of Athens led to a change in philosophical reflection. Social abreaction was the backdrop to philosophical ideas that became centred on what is good in life and what is to be rejected because it produces weakness in character. Resentment underpinned Plato's criticism of art.

2) The French Revolution of 1793 illustrates both abreactions.
The first stage of change ended in the white terror (Fascism) of **Robespierre** and the Committee of Public Safety. This was then followed by the red terror (Nazism).

3) After World War II the British Labour government created the National Health Service.
This was a product of the catharsis generated by the end of the war. With hindsight we can see that if the Health Service had not been created at that moment then it would never have been created at all due to

unfavourable political conditions in modern times.

4) The 1960s were the era of the hippie generation.
This was a time of social catharsis. Inevitably the tail-end stage of resentment led to the flight into rigid social conventionality and respectability, and even into Thatcherism ; or else into conservative religion or religious cults. As an ideology, Thatcherism represented abreactive resentment aimed at sections of the population that were deemed to be degenerate, plus abreactive bitterness over the prospective loss of political freedom if Britain became too closely attached to a European parliament.

5) The break-up of the old USSR from 1989 onwards.
Initially the ending of communist party domination produced a social catharsis. When this ended it was followed by the rise of right-wing politics, an increase in anti-Semitism, and violence towards women. Always during abreaction society seeks scapegoats. And abreactive bitterness has propelled various political regions to declare their independence from Russia.

These two laws are laws of social change ; they are absent in times of social stability. Can the social turmoil be controlled, even ameliorated? Yes. The social catharsis (the jazz age) generated by the end of World War I. led to Fascism and then to Nazism. This meant that World War II was inevitable. Each defeated generation passes on its bitterness to the next generation. So why did World War III not occur?

The decisive factor that stopped the transmission of bitterness to the next

generation after World War II was the Marshall Plan, the economic rebuilding of western Europe funded by America. The lesson to learn from this result is that in an age of rapid social change it is essential for some degree of government funding into community projects to be established on a regular basis. This funding will ameliorate the worst excesses of economic and social de-stabilisation, and hence will soften the intensity of social abreaction.

Why does social abreaction happen?
When growing up, each child has to repress some of his/her potential. This is what is meant by social conditioning -- only some character traits and attitudes are deemed to be desirable. Then in a period of social change, when rules of social conduct have to be adjusted to the new situation, some of this repression is released. This change in social norms initiates the social abreaction.

CONCLUSION

Abreaction is a frequent experience of daily life. People seek excitement and joy, but end in finding resentment and bitterness. When a person has insight into the cause of a problem, then the abreactional process leads to the ending of that problem. But when there is no insight, problems remain and the unending craving for pleasure (including sexual pleasure) leads to unending unhappiness.

By understanding why unhappiness occurs, the person comes to realise that only by making relationships harmonious is there a chance of avoiding sorrow. To attain to harmony in relationships requires that weaknesses of character be eliminated from oneself. Unfortunately this is a very painful process.

The resolution of resentment and bitterness by the practice of forgiveness and acceptance is the subject of the last article on abreaction : **Abreaction 5**.

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Forgiveness   and   Acceptance

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Souring the Mind

Sub-headings
Emotional dynamics
Role of narcissism
Backlash
Stages of Resolution

If resentment and bitterness are not worked through then they lead to the production of long-term effects. Resentment narrows a person's views of society. And bitterness hardens a person. The result is a sour mind.

Why do resentment and bitterness have the power to sour the person? To understand this effect we have to look at the factors of these two emotions. It took me a long time to analyse resentment ; the difficulty is that guilt is inward-looking and resentment is outward-looking. How does this change of direction occur? In the abreaction of guilt the switch

from jealousy to guilt involves love leading to hate. Hence guilt is in the mode of self-hate ; this then leads to resentment. Resentment has an outward-looking factor that is conditioned by guilt. This factor is idealism. *It is idealism that gives power to resentment.*

So resentment arises when the person's idealism is shaped and narrowed by guilt in the mode of self-hate. Therefore the more intense that a person's idealism is, the more intense will be his / her resentments.

Bitterness also involves idealism. In the abreaction of pride the switch from narcissism to pride involves love leading to hate. So pride is in the mode of hatred of others. Bitterness arises when the person's idealism is shaped and made hard by pride.

Emotional Dynamics

The factors of these two emotions, or their emotional dynamics, are:

| Resentment | = guilt acting on idealism. |
| | = idealism + guilt (mode of self-hate). |

| Bitterness | = pride acting on idealism. |
| | = idealism + pride (mode of hatred of others). |

A long psycho-analysis generates resentment and bitterness repeatedly. When they are generated by abreactions in feeling mode, then they often fade away of their own accord since the problems that generate them are usually transient ones. But when abreactions are in insight mode, then resentment and bitterness are much more difficult to handle: they are prolonged because the contents of the catharsis and the sorrow feature

definite and long-standing problems. Bringing a problem into the open means that the person has to adjust his / her beliefs, and this adjustment takes time. And during this time the resentment and the bitterness remain; the person just has to persevere till he / she assimilates them.

The abreactions of guilt and pride are assimilated when two particular attitudes arise, those of forgiveness and acceptance.

Forgiveness dissolves resentment.

Resentment ends when we learn to forgive other people for what they have done to us in the past, when we forgive life itself for all our sorrows, and when finally we learn to forgive ourselves. The religious person seeks forgiveness from god. This is not enough to solve our problems. God does not remove personal responsibility from us. Most of my problems have been created by myself ; therefore I have to learn to forgive myself. As an existentialist, I am my own devil, judge, and jury ; hence it is only fair that I should be the one to forgive myself.

Forgiveness of other people who have hurt us is not a sign of magnanimity; forgiveness of others simply prevents their negative impact on us from continuing to influence our lives.

Acceptance dissolves bitterness.

Bitterness ends when I learn to accept life itself, when I learn to accept my present state of evolution even though it is far short of my ideals. Acceptance means that I can be glad for my memories, whatever they are like, whether they are happy ones or tearful ones. I accept that my present personality could only be formed under the impact of sorrow. I do not need to justify sorrow or to reject it; it is just a feature of life,

nothing more. A full acceptance has its base in narcissism, in the love of life.

Role of Narcissism

It is always narcissism that dissolves the pain of life. Narcissism has two modes, those of vanity and love. The vanity mode stimulates two major states of mind that partially dissolve sorrow.

First, the vanity mode sees life as drama – in this mode forgiveness arises, that is, forgiveness is an attribute of narcissism in vanity mode. Secondly, the same mode is responsible for the need to dramatise my pain, to romanticise the difficulties in life that I have had to face ; this romanticising helps me to partially assimilate the pain. The stage of romanticising the sorrow may take months to fade – it is not a continuous process but occurs piecemeal. *The romanticising of sorrow is just as compulsive as the stage of catharsis.*

Therefore, under the impulse of narcissism, the person first interprets life as a drama, and then inserts his own role in that drama. This predilection helps to generate forgiveness and assimilate sorrow.

Both these states of mind occur in the narcissism stage of the abreaction of pride. If the current problem features other people, then forgiveness of others is felt. Whereas, if I am dwelling on my own inadequate responses to life, then I am absorbed in romanticism and so facilitate forgiving myself.

Finally, bitterness is completely absorbed when narcissism switches to love mode: all pains and sorrows are dissolved in this state of mind.

Both forgiveness and acceptance occur in stages, each time going deeper into the subconscious mind. For example, the complete solution to a difficult problem may require several levels of forgiveness. First a shallow level of understanding of the problem is achieved, leading to an initial forgiveness. If then the person becomes immersed in a deeper aspect of that problem, and becomes hurt once more, so the previous forgiveness will be repudiated. The person now has to battle their way to a deeper understanding. If this is achieved then a new forgiveness is realised. If the person goes deeper still into the problem then the process replicates itself.

Forgiveness is always conditional on an adequate grasp of the problem. When the problem becomes too difficult to handle or to master then forgiveness cannot be maintained: the old psychological hurts return. Acceptance works in the same way.

Backlash

However, there is a major feature of forgiveness that the person needs to be aware of and to be wary of. Forgiveness occurs during the stage of narcissism in the abreaction of pride. Forgiveness always creates a backlash – the following stage of pride generates an intense degree of hatred, hatred against the very conditions or situations that forgiveness was felt towards. The deeper the feeling of forgiveness, the greater is the intensity of pride in its hate mode. And the subsequent bitterness is just as bad. It is best to avoid social company whilst the hatred and bitterness are being worked through.

For example, suppose that, in the past, someone had hurt me. In order to forgive that person and let go of the relationship with them, I have to live through the hurts, in all their intensities, that I had received from that person. Correspondingly, I have to work my way through all the hatreds that I had generated towards that person. Hence deep wounds may require many rounds of forgiveness to effect a total detachment from the relationship.

Alternatively, I may decide that now I am willing to improve a present relationship that is poor or bad. I am willing to abandon my veto on participating in that relationship. I forgive the person. Yet still when I switch to pride (in mode of hatred), I dwell on all the times that I have been hurt by that and other relationships. I feel the rejection and the pain that I have been subjected to. My mood becomes very unpleasant.

In general, any anti-social or individualist attitude that has 'hard' boundaries (that is, any rigidity in such an attitude) is a defensive manoeuvre to protect oneself from being psychologically hurt by other people. When such an attitude is replaced by another attitude which has 'soft' boundaries (for example, the attitude that one should be friendly or caring to other people) then there is normally a backlash. The backlash occurs because the person is now releasing the stored-up anxiety over becoming vulnerable.

Usually acceptance produces a backlash too, but sometimes it does not appear to. Acceptance does not always involve the resolution of past anxiety, as forgiveness does ; instead it often focuses on acquiring a realistic (instead of a romantic) self-image on which the person can base future idealism. If a backlash is produced, then it is not felt as severely as that which forgiveness produces.

Sometimes the stage of forgiveness seems to have been by-passed ; then the stage of acceptance produces a backlash as severe as would have been generated if the forgiveness had been passed through. The psychological pain that has been built into the person's character and identity cannot be reduced by avoiding stages of resolution.

Forgiveness does most of the work of resolving a problem, and is eventually followed by the acceptance of that problem as a learning stage in one's personal evolution.

> *The overall theme of sorrow resolution is that a romantic / dramatic view of the world is generated in order to facilitate forgiveness, and then acceptance removes the romanticism and produces a realistic world view.*

Stages of Sorrow Resolution

In order to fully assimilate a problem there are two separate approaches that the person needs to follow. These approaches can be labelled *'form and content'*. The form is the kind of problem that one is facing, and the content is the particular occurrences of that kind of problem.

For example, the form may be 'victimisation': this sets the framework in which personal experiences may be interpreted. The content is all the times that the person has actually been victimised.

Content approach.
In order to deal with the content of a problem there are often several

different levels of acceptance to work through, so that acceptance can be full or partial. It requires a spirit of **optimism** to create the conditions for a full acceptance. When the person is an optimist, then he / she can joyfully accept whatever disasters have happened to them in life ; the disasters were merely a challenge. The partial forms of acceptance occur when the person delves deeper still into the subconscious mind, and goes through the stages of **pessimism**. Now acceptance becomes negative, because it is accompanied either by fear or by hate. The partial levels of pessimistic acceptance may generate a backlash.

The lowest level of partial acceptance becomes based on over-riding fear, and turns into indifference. Indifference is the rationalisation of defeat. Now the person can accept their place in life (which curtails the possibilities of fame), accept the necessity for rules (which curtail freedom), and accept even the concept of duty (which curtails the possibilities of power). This generates a pessimism that is typified by an attitude of *'I don't care'* to the world and one's place in it. Heroism has departed for other pastures.

An intermediate form of partial acceptance occurs when fear is reduced and sadness becomes the dominant background mood. This is resignation or Stoicism. The sadness arises as the pain of existence for everyone (not just for oneself) is fully realised and not denied. The basis of making moral judgements evaporates: no one is to blame for their badness. Rationality replaces emotion as the basis of decision-making.

The highest level of partial acceptance is detachment. This centres on pride in the mode of hatred. Often the detachment will stimulate a desire for solitude, as the person feels world-weary. Detachment is attained after he / she has worked at forgiveness. Mindfulness is the technique for learning detachment: *'in the seeing, only the seen'*, etc.

Finally, perhaps, at a later period, acceptance returns to the optimistic mode as joy comes back ; however, this time the naiveté has been

reduced from the person's view of life. The reduction of naiveté is the function of pessimism.

As an ascending sequence of attainment, these steps are:

1. Indifference.

2. Resignation.

3. Forgiveness.

4. Detachment.

5. Full acceptance.

Form approach.
This approach needs to go hand-in-hand with the content approach. All that forgiveness and acceptance do is to annul the past content. However, future content is always possible. By this statement I mean that I may have resolved all the content of past victimisation, for example. But if tomorrow I am subject to new victimisation, all the anxieties associated with this form will re-awaken and arouse me once more. To prevent future arousal over victimisation I need to neutralise the form as well as the content. The form is handled by learning detachment to it, similar to practising mindfulness on content, but now emphasising the attitude that any unpleasant experience is *'just another experience'*. The purpose of detachment is to remove any kind of valuation from that experience, whether of content or of form – when an experience has no value for us, then it cannot affect us.

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Reverie and Dreams

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

From Feelings to Intellect

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Intelligence & intellect
Expanding consciousness
Notebook & journal
Intuition & reason
Dreams & phantasies
Antithetical dreams
Influences of media
Language & body

To develop the intuitive power of the mind the practice of reverie is very important. Reverie or daydreaming means that the mind is free-wheeling and is allowing feelings and desires to create phantasies. To facilitate my efforts to understand myself, I observed my reveries just as if I were an outside observer.

Reverie links ideas together by free association. My method was to take as a starting point any idea that interested me and then let my mind ramble on about any and all connotations associated with that idea. Quite often I would think of myself as a lecturer giving a talk about that idea – once started the talk took on a life of its own. My feelings about the original idea would sometimes generate novel ways of understanding it, novel ways of seeing how it linked to other

ideas; it is always intuition that makes this result possible, by linking feelings to ideas.

What is usual about an analysis is that the person begins it in a state of vague self-knowledge. All their ideas concerning life and the world are based on feelings and prejudices; they normally have little ability to articulate their problems.

> **What the process of psycho-analysis can do is to clarify and transform these vague ideas into intellectual understanding.**

In the previous article on *Awareness*, sub-heading '**Feelings**', I gave the view that the foundation of modern consciousness is feelings. A long and deep psycho-analysis changes this. The person moves the foundation of their consciousness from feelings to intellect – all the vague ideas based on feelings will be transformed into clear ideas that can be intellectually formulated and articulated. These clear ideas can then govern and direct his / her emotional motivations into creating an harmonious life.

Intelligence & Intellect

I go on a short diversion to compare two terms, '*intelligence*' and '*intellect*'. In the article on **Emotion E1**, I gave the distinction as follows.

> Intelligence links to will and to feeling, and intellect is the source of abstraction. The former expresses the activity of the mind, whilst the latter is an indication of the degree of maturity of the mind.

One way of defining intelligence is that it is the ability to learn from experience, the ability to apply logical thought to experience. Whereas intellectuality is a mental trait that is cultivated by applying that intelligence to problems in order

to generalise the answers. Intellectual capability is the intelligent application of theory, the ability to see beyond the immediate problem, the ability to think at the level of abstraction. Intellectual ability can transform sequential, logical thinking into pattern thinking. This distinction is required in order to discern the difference between knowledge and understanding. Knowledge is information that is passively absorbed; only by applying it to experience does it transform into understanding.

Each person attempts to construct an adequate (for them) understanding of reality, that is, each person desires to make sense of life. Each person's understanding of reality arises from the process of understanding their experience, which is only the process of self-discovery. This is an on-going process as they evolve over numerous incarnations. The ability to do this depends on the person's level of intelligence. The ability to passively handle knowledge has little effect on the existing level of intelligence, whilst the process of understanding one's experience has the effect of deepening one's level of intelligence.

I put these ideas another way.
The ability to absorb knowledge depends on one's existing level of intelligence – the major mental skills needed are logical ones. The process of understanding that knowledge then deepens one's level of intelligence – now intuition is the major mental skill needed. Finally the application of that understanding to other areas of thought cultivates intellectuality – inductive reasoning skills are required.

Therefore, since the process of psycho-analysis is a process of acquiring understanding of one's life, a process of self-discovery, so psycho-analysis can have the effect of deepening the person's level of intelligence; it can also develop the person's intellect if he / she is committed to acquiring a wide base of ideas. The results of psycho-analysis depend on the intensity of it and the length of time that it is sustained.

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Expanding Consciousness

In my view, one of the purposes of human evolution is the expansion of consciousness. Where does reverie fit in this view? Now the average person has only a vague self-knowledge, and such vagueness can produce only a vague self-consciousness. The process of developing self-consciousness goes hand-in-hand with the ability to intellectualise and articulate that state of consciousness. In other words, to develop self-consciousness means to expand the totality of one's consciousness. Reverie fits in here by facilitating the development of self-consciousness.

Consciousness has several factors, such as self-consciousness, beliefs, imagination, various abilities, etc. Of these factors, self-consciousness is the most important since it can give intelligent direction to the development and use of the other factors. The way to achieve the deliberate development of self-consciousness is through the cultivation of self-awareness.

Self-awareness requires the use of both intuition and rationality. Of these two factors, intuition is the more important, since there have been numerous intelligent thinkers who, nevertheless, had a low degree of self-awareness. The function of reverie is to facilitate this overall process of expansion of consciousness by fostering intuition. Intuition links feelings with the intellect. Therefore every intuition enables a person to understand a little better what his / her feelings want to express.

This overall scenario is:

Intuition (reverie) leads to self-awareness, which then leads to self-consciousness, which then leads to expanded consciousness.

Reverie requires the temporary reduction in the use of repression for controlling the subconscious mind. Therefore it is best practised either early in the morning after awakening, or at any time of day after a period of deliberate mental relaxation.

Notebook & Journal

At all times the individual should carry a notebook with them. Intuitions come at any time of day or night and should be written down as soon as they appear. It is no good relying on memory. No matter how sharp an intuition is, it will usually be forgotten after a few minutes in the hurly-burly of life unless it has been recorded.

When an intuition happens, the person should allow, if possible, free association to function immediately. This carries the intuition deeper into the subconscious mind, allowing more self-understanding to develop. The peculiarity of an intuition is that usually it carries conviction only at the time of occurrence. If the person puts off till later the investigation of the intuition then he / she finds that nothing will happen: the feeling has evaporated from the intuition and he / she can no longer use it to connect with ideas in their subconscious mind.

However, intuition is never completely dependable on its own since it works within the confines of a person's desires. Hence it is not infallible. What it does is to offer a better understanding of an issue than the person possesses at the moment, even if (in retrospect) it can be seen that the intuition was only partially correct. An inadequate intuition, if followed up, will sooner or later lead to the understanding of why it is inadequate; then it becomes easier to see what is a better view of the original problem.

During an analysis the pace of personality change seems so very slow. On a day by day basis it appears that hardly any improvement is occurring. However, if the person contrasts their present state of mind with how it was, say, six months ago, they can immediately see the improvement. Hence it is a fundamental requirement of a long analysis that the person keeps a journal in which they record all their important ideas and states of mind. They should note when they are exhilarated, when depressed, when bitter, when jealous, etc; *these states of mind will eventually enable him / her to see that some emotions follow each other in certain sequences.* It is the journal that will show the person the ways in which they are changing and the confirmation that they are becoming able to

express their own ideas in more and more coherent fashion. This verification of change strengthens their morale.

Intuition & Reason

In an analysis, both modes – intuition and reason – of the intellect have to be used.

Intuition or insight is usually inductive rather than deductive and centres on the psychological needs of the person. So the degree of intuition that is attainable into the problem depends upon the intensity of anxiety that the person can handle. Therefore any serious problem is attacked first by whittling it down, through having many minor intuitions into its separate factors. When its intensity is low enough it can then be tackled directly without causing unmanageable distress. [**1**]

Reason is used to check intuitions into a person's problem; only reason can detect self-deception. But reason is usually deductive; it is not easy to generate novel ideas by the use of reason alone.

An harmonious way of reflection is to use both inductive and deductive modes of intellect: intuition generates a new idea, and reason is used to examine it.

Intuition can be separated from speculation by a mental peculiarity. When I have a major intuition into a problem, then for several days I keep re-iterating the new perspective, rather like hearing a repeating track on an LP record when the needle has stuck. This goes on even at night and makes my sleep even poorer in quality than usual, since I get less of it. I only calm down when the excitement produced by the intuition has worked itself out (the excitement is a product of **catharsis**, which is explained in the article on **Abreaction : A3**). This intellectual mannerism does not happen with speculation.

Dreams and Phantasies

Dreams and compulsive phantasies or daydreams are another means to connect with the subconscious mind. Dreams are an absorbing phenomenon. Some function so as to allow the dreamer to project his / her own wishes into them, and others carry meaning for him / her. The meaning may be destructive (as in nightmares) or constructive. When dreams are used as a way of communicating meaning then they fit into the dreamer's requirements. If the dreamer likes to unravel long, complicated dreams then he / she will have long, complicated dreams. I paid attention only to short ones where the meaning was fairly obvious; I ignored complicated ones. Hence I usually have just short, fairly clear dreams.

Dreams are adequately covered in numerous books. I mention only a few points.

Recurring unpleasant dreams are quite easy to handle. If a person frequently dreams of being chased by a lion or by a sword-brandishing devil, then such dreams produce intense body reactions in terms of heat generation and sweating, as well as terror. To neutralise such dreams all that is required is to recognise that the dream is happening, then stop running and turn round to face what is chasing you. Let the lion eat you up or let the devil carve you into pieces. Then you find that nothing happens; no terror arises, no sweating is produced, so you can go back to sleep.

Once the person ceases to be afraid of such dreams then he / she can begin to analyse them. He / she needs to analyse both the reasons for trying to run away, and also the motivation of the pursuers. He / she will find that motivations in the dream usually revolve around anger, fear, paranoia, envy and guilt. For example, the motivation of any pursuers is usually envy, so this aspect of the dream signifies that the dreamer is turning his / her envy against themself (that is, the envy has become 'internalised' and destructive). [2]

The opposite polarity to the compulsive dream is the compulsive phantasy or

daydream. This denotes compulsion being channelled into the ordinary surface consciousness directly by the subconscious mind. If this compulsiveness is not explored, understood, and reduced or eliminated then it will be likely to manifest itself in social behaviour in suitable circumstances. The risk is that if the compulsiveness of the phantasy becomes intense enough then the person will enact it in their social relations, causing disturbance, perhaps even violence (physical or mental), to other people.

The way to use the phantasy is to let it act itself out during reverie whilst trying to be a neutral observer of it. The object is to determine what the motivation is, what the emotional dynamics of the phantasy are. Actually it is far easier to be an unbiased observer of a daydream or phantasy than of one's own social relationships. And in the phantasy the person can enact out all their anxiety and frustrations – the goal that the phantasy achieves shows what the person intensely desires. This is often some concept of individuality, seclusion/privacy, or freedom.

> Compulsive phantasies are attempts to reject and repudiate some forms of control and domination being exerted on the person, either from people or from social, political, or religious systems.

Antithetical Dreams

Antithetical thoughts are thoughts that are opposed to, or the antithesis of, other thoughts which the person prefers or which he / she intends to manifest in action. If a person is contemplating the good things in life, then antithetical thoughts may arise and evoke ideas about the nastiness of life. For example, if a man is being excited by some aspects of sexual desire, then when he sees a woman who is sexually attractive to him the word 'tart' may pop up in his consciousness – the pejorative word is the attempt to repudiate the sexual interest. In Freud's view these kind of thoughts occur to everyone, but are most marked in neurosis or in people suffering from nervous exhaustion. [3]

> Antithetical thoughts produce their own themes in dreams. So I call such dreams *antithetical dreams*. These are always derogatory and

persecutory: they denigrate my personal integrity or my sense of idealism.

The conflict that is produced by such dreams represents a conflict between the two halves of a person's identity : the individual aspect of identity is at variance with the social aspect of identity.

I use a house as a dream symbol for the mind: the upper storey represents idealistic aspirations, the ground floor represents the worldly consciousness, and the basement represents the subconscious mind. For years during my 30s and 40s I had many dreams where I was living in a derelict house, or merely had a derelict house as part of the landscape. At those times I was focusing solely on forming my sense of individuality, by valuing my own mind and rejecting the traditional religious demand of ego-denial. I interpreted such dreams to mean that my repressed social identity was trying to persuade me that my personal integrity (as the centre of my existentialism) was worthless and was ruining my mind. The dream wanted to inculcate a sense of guilt in me.

In contrast, when I activated my idealism in a social way, such as imagining myself as a teacher who is helping people, my individual identity generated a dream that tried to convince me of the hollowness of such aspirations. Then I might dream of being a bank robber (or, more usually, three bank robbers); the symbolism was that I was trying to attain spiritual gold by counterfeit means. [The occurrence of three people (myself and two companions) in a dream usually indicates that the dream is a comment on my spiritual hopes].

The situation becomes more complicated if there is dis-harmony between an idealistic ego and its soul. The soul is likely to encourage the disparaging dream comments from the repressed social identity. And in time the soul may become the chief critic of the individual identity. [The term 'soul' is ambiguous. I use it in the sense of being a 'higher self' to the ego. The ego uses the body as its vehicle for expression. Similarly, the soul wants to use the ego as its vehicle of expression]. [4]

Such dreams should be treated in the same way as antithetical thoughts.

The skilful way of handling such dreams is through the practice of mindfulness. In this practice the dreams are noted for what they are and what they represent, but **no value judgement is passed on them**. In this way the person learns in time to ignore them - they are an inevitable product of having a subconscious mind.

Influences of Media

Compulsiveness in dreams and phantasies denotes internal conflict, internal violence. This internal conflict can be reduced by periods of solitude and relaxation, or stimulated by the media (especially visual forms such as television). The media are potent channels for intensifying or changing consciousness, including the subconscious mind.

Whatever the person is interested in, whether by liking it or disliking it, will stimulate the subconscious mind; only material which is felt to be boring has no effect on the subconscious mind. This means that if the person frequently reads, hears, or sees sexual material then their internal sexual conflicts will increase in intensity, no matter what their conscious mind thinks about it. Similarly, the violence portrayed in the media will intensify the person's internal violence. Whether the violence is real (as in news reports) or merely fictional makes no difference to the subconscious mind. As in childhood, it does not matter whether the event that the adult is experiencing is real or just a phantasy – it is how the adult emotionally reacts that produces the effect in the subconscious mind.

The difference between reality and phantasy is just one of time: reality affects a person faster than phantasy, but given enough time, phantasy will produce the same intensity of affect on consciousness as reality does.

What needs to be understood is that the conscious attitudes of the person towards sexuality and violence have no effect on preventing that material from stimulating the subconscious mind (unless the material is boring).

Therefore, if a person regularly intakes material that features violence then they will slowly become more violent, including being sexually violent, in either physical or mental ways (as in domination by abusive speech). A person of strong will or moral control may successfully keep their violence repressed; yet they will gradually come to accept violence as a normal part of social life, and begin to fear people as they grow old.

Similarly, the regular intake of 'forbidden' or spicy sexual material will slowly alter the person's sexual mores in two ways. Taking an interest in spicy material indicates that the person feels that their sexual boundaries are too narrow. Alternatively, the sexual interest indicates that the person is using sexual excitement to counterbalance the dreariness and sorrow in their life. Either way, their subconscious mind will broaden their sexual boundaries, by incorporating, *without any discrimination*, both positive and negative sexual material into their character.

To be more specific about this process:
a personal experience, or an attitude to life, only becomes a problem stored in the subconscious mind when anxiety is attached to it. A film that features an aspect of violence that a person has never experienced may not have many negative effects on that person (though even in this situation, repeated viewing makes violence a part of a person's 'social learning' experience). But when a film scene echoes an unpleasant memory or theme in the subconscious mind then the person will find his / her anxiety level rising. If the intensity of anxiety that is aroused is greater than the person's moral control then it will result in some form of disturbing behaviour. Children are always more at risk than 'mature' adults are.

It is quite easy to prove my views on the effects of media violence.
If a person is willing to go into solitude or to abandon the media (including newspapers) for a few weeks or months then they will find that eventually they become emotionally placid. Once this state of mind occurs they can then watch a television film featuring violence and observe their own reactions to it in phantasy and dream. They will find that the violence portrayed in the film

becomes enacted in their own dreams (especially if they already have a problem with internal violence). Their subconscious mind has absorbed the violence. This was how I discovered the unpleasant effects of the media.

Language and Body

Long-standing body aches and symptoms usually have a psychological component to them. Language often indicates this. For years I experienced problems with neck pain. My attitude to irritating people was that they were a pain in the neck to me. A friend of mine had trouble with constipation – she referred to disagreeable people as a pain in the arse. If a person uses such figurative language then it points to the areas of the body where they store tension. Such symptoms will not disappear until the mental attitudes, which cause them, change.

In general, an important requirement in a long analysis is to examine all our bodily symptoms and pains. Part of the concept of self-responsibility involves assuming responsibility for our own physical health, where possible. So we need to recognise what state of mind is present when a symptom is being active. We note what is important to us, and how we think of life and society, whilst the symptom is in evidence. Many symptoms are associated with fixed attitudes and beliefs. Eventually we need to identify the emotion that is at the base of each state of mind; this will thereby give us the emotion that supports, even generates, the symptom.

A difficulty here is that joint pain and pain coming from the attachment points of muscles and ligaments often have a time lag – the pain finally comes when the supporting emotion is fading or has faded away (and so a different emotion is then present). Hence, for example, it is hard at first to make an accurate examination of intermittent rheumatoid arthritis pain.

If a symptom is serious enough to warrant professional treatment, then drug therapy alone is likely to be ineffective whilst the fixed belief that supports the symptom is still dominant in the subconscious mind. When medical treatment fails then psychological therapy is needed.

We can also explore body language to see how our body responds to social situations. Body posture reflects mental attitudes. When we are depressed our shoulders slump. By contrast, we can begin to change some mental attitudes by correcting poor body posture. Good posture counteracts the feeling that one is a wimp, that is, the decision to take control of one's posture also has a knock-on effect of helping to take control of one's states of mind. Control of posture can be achieved by using the Alexander technique.

A person also needs to train themself to relax. Yoga relaxation is excellent: the person lies down and effectively puts the body to sleep whilst remaining mentally alert.

Tunes

A tune or slogan may become associated with a particular state of mind and emotion, thereby becoming a mood indicator. Once we note the correlation we can use such tunes and slogans to identify the mood that we are switching into. After some trial and error in correlation I produced the list below; these tunes, when they occurred, enabled me to identify my current state of mind. These tunes are probably particular to me; other people's subconscious minds may pick other tunes.

When I started humming '*The Saint Louis Blues*' this heralded the switch to guilt in self-pity mode, or even to depression. In contrast, the self-hate mode of guilt gave rise to Ravel's '*Bolero*' as I again went round the endless cycle of sorrow. I celebrated jealousy in love mode (non-sexual) by the drinking song from '*The Student Prince*'; but the self-pity mode of jealousy sank me with the tune '*Bless 'em All*', with the line 'you'll get no promotion this side of the ocean'.

For narcissism in love mode I chanted the slogan *'Life is a song of joy'*. A victory over a social obstacle generated '*La Marseillaise*' and signified pride in vanity mode. The hate mode of pride produced the tune '*My world is such a beautiful world*' – the emphasis being on 'my world' (this tune confused me at first since

I thought that it pointed to narcissism).

Vanity was depicted by '*The Trumpet Voluntary*', the meaning being that I was blowing my own trumpet, exuding my own importance. Self-pity came up with '*Que sera sera, whatever will be, will be*'.

Psychological Attitude

What a long psycho-analysis can achieve is the replacement of moral judgements by psychological ones. A moral judgement means to judge someone from the perspective of my standards. A psychological judgement implies the attempt to judge a person from their perspective and standards or, if this is not possible, to be non-judgemental. However, this replacement process is an ideal depiction. There may well be a long intermediary period when moral and psychological judgements compete with each other. It takes a long time to let go of the compulsion to make moral judgement – the person has first to let go of the desire to feel superior to 'lesser mortals'.

The analysis of negative states of mind can induce in the person moral condemnation for their failures. The person needs to understand that their failures were caused by confusion in their childhood (including those of past incarnations). Hence they are not to blame. They still have to face the consequences of all that they have done, but they are not to blame for these consequences. An analysis enables the person to take on the responsibility for their life without needing to blame themself or other people for the past. A psychological attitude to life and to society facilitates the development of compassion, forgiveness, and tolerance. Morality, and the need to blame, is never the goal of life but only a half-way house to the full expansion of mind that psychology can help to produce.
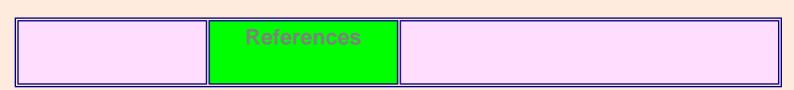
To facilitate a successful outcome to a psycho-analysis, the client needs a wide understanding of life. The corollary to this requirement is that the therapist too needs such a wide understanding. Otherwise the therapist cannot competently

discuss the relevance and significance of the client's insights.

In the client - therapist relationship, what is the essential core of it? What is the indispensable attitude that facilitates the therapy? It has to be the attitude of trust. Without this the analysis is not likely to get off the ground. Some therapists have thought that the primary attitude should be love. But love in a relationship usually means jealous love. Many clients will be afraid of being swallowed up by the therapist's jealous love, even if it is just a jealous sense of caring: such love may be overwhelming for the client.

Why is trust the essential attitude?
Only trust will dissolve the fears that will sooner or later arise in the client. And in addition, for the disturbed client, only trust can neutralise paranoia.

	References	

The number in brackets at the end of each reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1]. The differences between intuition and reason are discussed in the article '**Reason & Intuition**', on my website **A Modern Thinker**. See Links page. [1]

[2]. The process of internalisation and the type of dreams that it produces is described in the article **Internalisation of Mental States**, on my website **Discover your mind**. See Links page. [2]

[3]. Antithetical thoughts are described in more detail in the article '**Antithetical Thoughts**', on my website **Discover your mind**. See Links page. [3]

[4]. Ideas about the soul and its relation to the ego can be found on my website on spirituality - **Patterns of Spirituality**. See Links page. [4]

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Content

of a Psycho-Analysis

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3rd Rule

One way of getting a psychoanalysis started is to reflect on how you view other people. Note what faults and virtues you like in them. It is highly probable that the faults that you see in other people are reflections (or projections) of the same faults in yourself. And the virtues that you admire in people are usually ones that you also possess or would like to.

Then try to identify these attitudes in your own social relationships by learning to observe yourself. This is a process that takes time to mature, since we prefer to avoid facing up to any unpleasant aspects of our personality.

One major difficulty in analysis is that any problem is not usually restricted to one region of consciousness. Typical regions are those of ethics, politics, sexuality, religion, social relations, and mental disorder. A problem in sexuality will tend to spread into the person's attitudes to all other regions; problems of ethics are difficult to separate from politics and power. Solving a problem in one region of consciousness may not automatically solve it in other regions, though they will be affected.

For example, self-deception enables a person to restrict the problem of power to politics and to ignore its role within the family.

To attempt the elimination of a major problem means that attitudes to sexuality, politics, religion, ethics, social relations, even mental disorder, will all need to be explored. *The important point is that the person has to follow an insight wherever it leads.* If, for example, the person decides to refuse to explore their beliefs in any field, say religion, this will inhibit the analysis and prevent depth of understanding being attained.

Ideas in the subconscious mind link together by association. The association of ideas generates the association of beliefs. An inspiring religious vision may uplift one's attitudes to social relationships: the religious vision can generate noble beliefs that can then ennoble social beliefs. Conversely, a psychotic experience that originates from traumatic social relationships may give rise to psychotic religious views. A person's beliefs are not necessarily based on truth; any confusion that originates in one region of consciousness can spread into other regions, through the mechanism of association of ideas.

The Need for Ideas

What is required in order to eliminate confusion as much as possible is a wide study of life in general, rather than deep knowledge of a single speciality. *The*

person needs ideas, especially ideas on human nature. Ideas are needed in order to understand personal problems. Without such study a psycho-analysis may not yield many worthwhile results. The onus for making a psycho-analysis successful rests mostly on the client; the therapist is only a guide and occasional support. Hence the person should be encouraged to develop wide reading habits and to cultivate an extensive intellectual vocabulary.

The reading of biographies and autobiographies is especially helpful. The person begins to understand that their problems are not unique to themself and that people tackle similar problems in a variety of different ways. Biographies and autobiographies help the person to cultivate insight. If the book depicts a situation that is similar in some ways to their own situation, empathy and insight occur to link the associated ideas. Understanding the themes in the book helps the person to understand their own responses; they learn to use the book as a mirror to themself.

This broadening of one's perspective on life has a very important role: *it helps to strengthen one's ability to handle emotions.* To change one's fixed beliefs means to re-structure one's mind, and this produces confusion, distress and sorrow (the effects of abreaction). Therefore a person cannot change their beliefs until they are emotionally strong enough to withstand the stress of mental change. Premature realisation of one's weaknesses can be very damaging. So the person needs to avoid any therapist who has a reputation for aggressive confrontation.

Depths of Analysis

There are levels to the depth of analysis that is achievable. During an analysis a person may achieve a broad understanding of their problems, sufficient to maintain a moderate composure of mind in their daily living. The problems may seem to have ended. The person may then choose to end the analysis.

However, if they decide to delve deeper into their subconscious mind, the former problems reappear but at a lower level of intensity. But now that awareness is more acute the person finds that these minor troubles irritate

him / her almost as much as when they were major troubles, though his / her awareness was less sharp then. These irritations will only die down when they are worked through at that level of analysis. In other words, as the problems decrease in magnitude this is offset by his / her sensitivity to them increasing as well. The person finds that, paradoxically, even though the problems diminish, he / she is never free of anxiety about them. Anxiety about a problem only disappears for good when that problem is solved in all its complexity and subtlety.

Idealism & Will

A psycho-analysis is never a pleasant experience until it is completed. Negative memories and attitudes cannot be analysed until they are brought into consciousness. So the person is always focusing on the dark side of their character. To persevere in this procedure over a long period of time requires an intense idealism founded on strength of will. Idealism is as important as will power to the successful culmination of the analysis.

It is the person's idealism that enables him / her to integrate the distressful insights about themself that the analysis yields.

It is the person's will power that enables him / her to carry on the analysis, despite experiencing confusion and sorrow.

When the person's will power is stretched to the limit the analysis will usually have to end, either temporarily or permanently. If they go beyond their will power then their distress will overwhelm them.

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Re-structuring Belief Systems

A psycho-analysis takes a long period of time since the re-structuring of the

person's mind, which means *the re-structuring of their belief systems*, requires a long time too. After a major insight occurs, then the major re-structuring, major re-orienting, of their state of mind can take many months to work its effects throughout their consciousness.

For example, if, through insight, the person reduces their anxiety over the issue of power, then any aspect of power within their beliefs and attitudes about politics, sexuality, religion, morality, etc will be affected; and this change will take time to happen. Fixed ideas are not easily created nor easily dislodged – the subconscious mind is highly resistant to change. [The longest period of time that I needed to assimilate such a re-structuring was about ten months, when I understood and worked through some aspects of self-pity].

This time effect leads to another rule, which can be called the second rule of dynamic psycho-therapy.

The second rule of dynamic psycho-therapy

When a person changes a major belief through insight then it takes a long period of time for the effects of that change to work their way through the person's consciousness.

When a problem is solved, what characterises it? The absence of anxiety about it! Or the reduction of anxiety to an acceptable level if there are still subtle aspects of the problem left unresolved. This means that the memory that was disturbing the person is no longer doing so – the valuation of the memory has changed to neutral or to positive. Likewise, when an analysis reaches a satisfactory conclusion, the general level of anxiety has been reduced.

However, in any form of therapy, not just psycho-analysis, the complete elimination of anxiety is not possible. Anxiety is attached not only to memories, but also to desires. Anxiety can be eliminated when it is attached to memories, but not when it is attached to desires. This is explained in the section on abreaction.

In a psycho-analysis, repressed memories are brought out into the open. The bringing of hidden parts of the mind into consciousness has the effect of enlarging that consciousness. This effect can have a beneficial influence on the person's idealism: as he / she becomes aware of how easily mis-understandings

cause psychological problems, he / she becomes more tolerant, more accepting of human frailty.

Disappointments

When resentment and bitterness repeatedly occur over a long period of time, with a regular intensity, then they can lead to disappointments over the way that the psycho-analysis is going. Will it ever end?

Confusion, mental conflict and character weaknesses imply problems that affect the ego, and problems that affect the ego always generate abreaction. Therefore such problems always produce resentment and bitterness. When a problem is being worked through, the resolutions of resentment and bitterness do not occur piecemeal. Even though separate factors may be resolved, overall the resentment and bitterness still persist. However, as separate factors are resolved, the overall level of anxiety drops to some extent ; this drop may or may not be noticed (the drop may be camouflaged by other serious problems). These effects make it difficult to determine how near to a complete and successful resolution the person is. These effects make it difficult to evaluate a psycho-analysis that is still in process.

During a psycho-analysis a person's problems may get very difficult to handle. The psychological pain may be very intense. The analysis may appear to be going nowhere, despite the person's best efforts. Should he / she abandon the psycho-analysis? This is an issue that cannot be easily decided. A psychological problem never disappears gradually (if it did the person could see that he / she was making progress). It only disappears at the final piece of resolution, as the last piece of the jigsaw is put in place. Success comes at the end of the drama. It does not come piecemeal during that drama. Freud discovered this effect and my experience verifies it.

So a person never knows how near to final success he / she actually is whilst they are working out that problem. The person can still feel completely immersed in that problem even when success is only a few moments away. To use an athletics analogy, the runner may be inches away from the finishing tape,

yet still feel that they have many miles to run.

This effect gives rise to a principle, which may be called the third rule of dynamic psycho-therapy:

The third rule of dynamic psycho-therapy

When a person is working through a problem, there is no sure way of ascertaining how near he / she is to a successful resolution of that problem.

Group Work

A person can work singly with a therapist or in a group [to work on one's own, without any therapist, requires intense idealism and good intellectual capability]. A group experience is good as an introduction to analysis and to discover the hidden dynamics of family relationships, but never for advanced work. This is because any mental violence that is generated in a group, such as ridicule or anger or hatred, will cause psychological damage to anyone who is managing to develop sensitivity. Sensitivity is required in order to cultivate self-consciousness, but it is a major difficulty when the person is trying to assimilate distressful insights. Anger easily de-stabilises a sensitive person, even if that anger is not directed at themself; just being in the presence of an angry person is upsetting enough. A person's response to anger will be either fear or the generation of their own anger. It is the fear that does the damage.

There is an even more important reason for abandoning group work when undertaking an advanced analysis. In any group, whether therapeutic or idealistic or merely social, we soon establish an 'identity' which is 'us'. If after a while the person tries to change, the other members usually resist it; change usually upsets the group because its norms are being challenged in some way. How often have we heard someone say that a friend or a relative of theirs is acting peculiar !

If a person wants to experience thorough-going change in themself then they have to leave all their groups whilst they are undergoing that change. A group is mutually supportive, that is its function. Whereas the aim of an analysis is to enable a person to rely on themself as much as possible; but receiving support in a group prevents this. This lack of support produces the sorrow of loneliness, which can become very intense.

To clarify these differences:

In a group I experience the world (the world of relationships with other people).

But only as an individual can I experience myself !

In advanced work the therapist needs to be non-judgemental. This is because the client has to come to terms with their own ambivalence to authority. The concept of authority always generates subconscious conflict, and the client has to solve it to their own satisfaction and not to the satisfaction of the therapist.

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A Zig-zag Journey

through Change

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Dialectical Change

Sub-headings

Social change

Relativism

Summary

Reference

In what is called the Hegelian dialectic, change is a three-way process. First the initial idea or state is termed the thesis. Then this is counter-balanced by the opposing idea or state, the antithesis. Finally both are united and blended in a synthesis. The synthesis then acts as a thesis for a new round of change.

When change occurs in this manner, it is called 'dialectical' change.

Consider the abreaction of guilt.

First we have the excitement, and then we have the resentment that opposes it. Finally we have the steady state of detachment when the contents of the excitement and the resentment phases no longer interest us. This abreactive process is a dialectical one.

Consider the abreaction of pride.
First there is the sorrow, then the bitterness which is the reaction to it. Finally there is the detachment. This abreaction is a dialectical one as well.

These ideas mean that abreaction generates dialectical change. Abreaction releases anxiety from the subconscious mind during the processes of clearing confusion and of character transformation, and this release occurs by an oscillation between states of mind. Therefore the process of character transformation is a dialectical one, as is the process of clearing confusion.

> *The release of anxiety from the subconscious mind causes character transformation to occur in a dialectical manner.*

A psycho-analysis is dialectical in its progress. I see the progress of self-discovery as a zig-zag meander through a person's mind: sometimes one step forward, then one step back – at other times it is one step forward followed by two steps back ; finally the harmony.

Consider the process of forgiveness.
First I forgive someone or some aspect of life that has been oppressing me. A little later comes the backlash of bitterness. Sometime afterwards, and for a long time afterwards, I romanticise my past sufferings (thereby synthesising a more optimistic outlook on life) until finally there is the detachment from those sorrows. The process of forgiveness is dialectical because forgiveness focuses on the resolution of past anxiety.

The process of acceptance is usually dialectical too.

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Social Change

As with the individual, so with society: social abreaction generates dialectical social change. In my view, evolution is the slow process of character transformation, the slow process of acquiring and developing self-consciousness. Hence *evolution is not a linear progression but a dialectical one.*

Historical change induces social abreaction, which is a dialectical process. Therefore historical change is dialectical ; the intensity of the abreaction mirrors the intensity of change. The contents of the abreaction are the new ideas of good and evil. Social abreaction works with new ideas about values, about morality, and about the grounds of morality (that is, consciousness). Therefore any historical change which produces a permanent effect always involves moral reform.

Moral reform is the dynamic of human evolution.

The only effective historical components of Christianity, Judaism, Liberalism, Marxism, etc, were ideas that focused on moral and ethical values. The rival ideologies of different religions, or of different sects, or of different political systems, are always of secondary importance – the ideology serves only to underpin the morality that is followed. Political economy, whether Liberal or Marxist or Conservative, always derives its energy from underlying moral (and immoral) attitudes and desires.

Any social change that does not involve abreaction just ameliorates or intensifies existing social conditions and does not radically change social consensus.

Relativism

A major concept within historical thinking is that of **relativism**. Each era is relative or related to the era that comes before it and the era after it. Each nation's culture is relative to any other nation's culture. [1]

How does relativism gel with dialectics?
I put these thoughts into perspective by looking at the framework of historical change.

Historical change is dialectical, the content being new ideas. Therefore history is the history of ideas. But any idea has no necessary connection with other ideas. So all ideas are relative to each other. However, the idea affects a person, a society, or a nation in a dialectical way. **Dialectics means that the idea will generate opposition to itself** – this effect is produced by the good and the bad aspects of the idea, or the thesis and the antithesis. Both the good and the bad aspects of the idea have to be worked out before the idea's usefulness is assimilated and exhausted.

I put these thoughts another way. Every good idea will produce bad effects as well as good ones (for example, the introduction of new technology often results in an increase of misery for the working masses). Every bad idea will produce good effects as well as bad ones (the good effects are correctives aimed at preventing, or ameliorating, more badness). The final synthesis of an idea is the distillation from out of its goodness and badness of the lessons that it teaches.

I summarise these thoughts:

Each idea is relative to all other ideas.
and
Every idea unfolds its effects in a dialectical manner.

or

Historical change depends upon ideas that are mutually relative.
and
Historical change is the dialectical effect of ideas on mankind.

The number in brackets at the end of each reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[**1**]. I use the term *relativism* rather than *relativity*. I have found that the traditional meaning of relativity is usually confused with the associated terms *subjectivity* and *objectivity*. I explain the differences between subjectivity, relativity, and objectivity on my websites :

Relative mind, relative matter, in the article **Ego & Relativity**.

A Modern Thinker, in the article **Relativity of the Ego**.

See **Links**. **[1]**

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TRANSFERENCE

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Love and Hate

The conventional usage of the term 'transference' is the description of the client's interaction with the therapist in the counselling relationship. The client has transferred to the therapist intense feelings of affection, even love. Sexual thoughts and feelings are usually in evidence. Eventually this positive transference turns negative and the therapist is now regarded with hostility.

Love-hate relationships always indicate the presence of transference.

Freud thought that the stage of affection and sexuality was the start of a process, which then reversed itself to end in hostility. Perhaps this is why Freud thought that sexual urges, or libido, underlay all personal relationships.

In fact, the stage of affection and sexuality is the second stage in the abreaction of guilt. In this stage, jealousy in self-pity mode is dominant; this mode of jealousy means that the client is seeking some form of social support. The closeness of the relationship with the therapist means that the client's anxiety turns into sexual anxiety, and so sexual feelings are projected onto the analyst.

Factors of Bonding

This phenomenon of transference can be prised apart into three separate, but closely related, parts. **The whole process represents the usual form or pattern of bonding that a child has with a parent.** A child never grows out of the bonding process, so that the relationships that the child has with its parents are continued into its adult life in its relationships with other people. The three parts of bonding, of the 'transference' situation, are imprinting, identification, and true transference. All three parts feature mind, will and emotion, but the emphasis differs. **The emotion is always jealousy.** The basic way that I separate them is that, for a heterosexual boy:

- **Imprinting** centres primarily on **emotion** (together with desire) and the patterns of femininity in the mother and masculinity in the father. Later, as the boy grows up, the mother's femininity becomes the preferred pattern of beauty in a woman. The emotion is jealousy in self-pity mode; this mode creates a dependency state of mind, and so allows imprinting to happen.

- **Identification** centres primarily on **will** ; it reflects traits and attitudes of personal stature and temperament, such as poise, courtesy, nobility, dignity, and assurance, or friendliness, trust, benevolence, etc. These attributes reveal aspects of character (*'what I am'*). The emotion is jealousy in love mode.

- **Transference** centres primarily on **mind** ; it reflects beliefs, needs, sexual attitudes, moral attitudes, and behavioural traits. These attributes reveal aspects of identity (*'who I am'*). The emotion is jealousy in love mode. [1]

Transference itself can be split up into two broad factors, one focusing on sexuality and the other focusing on authority. Each parent is a source of both factors.

I give two definitions.

- **Sexual transference** is the pattern of the parent's sexual attitudes that is admired in other people.

- **Authority transference** is the admiration of the pattern of authority and morality that is exerted by the parent.

What do these views entail? When a man is acting from within his pattern of bonding (or the 'transference' situation) then at that moment his relationship with any woman is modelled on his relationship to his mother; similarly, he acts towards other men in accord with his relationship to his father.

Bonding means that the values and traits of parental character and identity that a child admires become the basis of the traits and values of adult character and identity that it will later, as an adult itself, admire in other people. All three factors carry through into adulthood and are involved, to some degree, in all forms of personal relationships.

Stages

In the stage of imprinting, the child will follow the parent around the house. Similarly, the adult man, during the jealousy stage of the abreaction of guilt, may follow a woman that he admires, or who has given him support. When the jealousy mode of self-pity is particularly intense in a man, then the phenomenon of *'stalking'* may occur. The same process is visible in some young females ('groupies') through their sexual obsession with and pursuit of rock stars.

The stage of imprinting is not always noticeable. The stages of identification and transference work together and they usually take the limelight.

The stage of identification is the crucial one. If it does not occur, then imprinting does not end in transference. This stage represents the influence of character. If a child does not like a parent's character, then it is unlikely to accept their values.

True transference is the final product of bonding. In this aspect of the

bond, minds overlap: the child is part of the mother, and the mother is part of the child. Similarly in the father - child relationship. Hence transference produces overlapping ego boundaries. In my self-analysis I had to investigate which part of me is me, and which part of me is mother. Transference bonding is mutual; not only did I have a love - hate relationship to my mother, but also she had the same relationship to me!

The transference is mutual. It is the interpretation by the infant of the parent's feelings and actions. It is the interpretation by the parent of the child's feelings and actions. In infancy it is the child's understanding that has paramount importance. In later childhood it is the parent's views that dominate the child, as that child becomes subject to discipline and rewards and punishments. **Transference is the transmission (or the transfer) of concepts of good and evil to the child** ; this process is both conscious and subconscious in its operation.

The parent transfers concepts of good and evil to the child. Therefore transference is moral dependency – the child assumes the moral values of the parents, who in their turn had assumed the moral values of *their* parents. When a teenager leaves home he or she becomes mentally independent but not morally so. Transference provides the inter-personal bonds that maintain social relationships. Hence society is cemented together by transference rather than by any self-chosen values.

It is transference that produces the apparent uniformity of social values in any community or nation. Yet there are different levels to transference. When society is class-based, the classes have different domains of conscious and subconscious values and attitudes, hence different domains of repression and internal conflict. So transference always has a class base to it. The same remarks apply to a society that is caste-based, or has any other rigid hierarchy to social status.

When a child rebels in some ways against its parents, then it is rebelling against aspects of bonding. The child needs to try and establish its own identity, perhaps by aligning itself with peer groups. It usually has to reject some of the transference values, and hence reject some aspects of identification too. This is a blind process, since the child has no clear idea of what it wants. Once it finalises a mixture of parental values and peer-group values then it usually re-institutes some degree of identification. During this process, the subconscious attempt to repudiate the influence of identification usually gives rise to the problem of hostile and aggressive behaviour. The reasons for this hostility often originate in the abreactional process. Each attempt to follow peer values instead of parental values institutes a catharsis; the consequent stages of resentment and bitterness focus on the restraints on freedom that the parental values are felt to have.

Negative Effects of Transference

The initial impulse that started my self-analysis was the desire to eliminate social conditioning. Social conditioning is an imposition of social rules that regulate social values and behaviour. In the backlash of resentment that is the tail-end of social abreaction, a new morality is created, along with a new sexuality. New moral and sexual values are created by social conditioning, and this conditioning, along with these values, is handed down through the generations by transference. Hence social conditioning has a factor of transference. In this situation, the

values of transference are being imposed on a child. Now transference becomes an unsettling mixture of parental values, some of which are admired and some feared. For a person of sensitive character the transference is a source of internal conflict. Moral and sexual values that are grafted onto the child without its consent are just second-hand values.

The parents transfer their moral and sexual values to the child. But this transfer is enmeshed in confusion, a confusion caused by repression. The parents' attitudes and emotional responses exist in two forms, those openly expressed and those which are repressed. The expressed ones represent acceptable (to the family's social network) moral and sexual values, and the repressed ones represent problematic, even immoral, values. The repressed ones, because they are considered to be undesirable in the existing state of society, are in conflict with the acceptable ones. If there were no conflict there would be no need for repression. But the repressed ones are still a source of motivation for the parent, though he or she is unaware of this motivation because it is subconscious.

Repression creates problems. Perhaps repression may work as a moral discipline in low-stress societies; in modern high-stress ones it is not very effective – repression will always fail when the level of stress becomes intolerable. When this occurs then the repressed attitudes and values rise, erupt, even explode, into the person's relationships. The function of repression is to reject a problem from awareness. This does not eliminate the problem. **The person just ceases to be aware of it.** This can mean that a person, using repression, may still express (to others) what he or she considers to be undesirable, but he or she is no longer aware that they do so. For example, an observer can see that a person is being motivated by hate, even though that person, if questioned about it, would deny the hate.

Whatever is repressed can reappear in consciousness in an unrecognised form. Repression means that the parent is usually unaware of when he or she is acting from a stimulus that is derived from their problematic values. For example: one common consequence of denying guilt is to become obsessed with non-stop activity. The person turns into a workaholic. Whilst such activity may be valuable, it still indicates confusion within the mind.

The young child is more receptive to the subconscious mind than an adult is, since the child has not yet built a superstructure of conditioning and rationality that effectively isolates its conscious mind from its subconscious mind. So the ambivalence and confusion in the parents' values produces ambiguous feelings in the young child, since it is aware of the parent's repressed emotions and attitudes, whilst the parent is not. If the child responds to the conscious attitudes of the parent, then it may be rewarded; but if it responds instead to the subconscious attitudes of the parent then it is likely to get punished. To ensure its own survival, the child has to learn to deny its awareness of the subconscious mind. The child becomes like the parent. **So the confusion of the parent is absorbed by the child.** Therefore, for each moral value that the child absorbs, it also absorbs the corresponding conflict.

Repression means that the parent is unaware of the ambivalence of their response; if the ambivalence is brought to the parent's attention then they will either deny it or else (if they cannot deny it) find some way to rationalise and justify it, rather than alter their response. For example, anger in the child will not be acceptable to the parent, yet the parent will often get angry with the child; or the mother will expect the child to be considerate to her, whilst she finds fault with the child. The parent sees

nothing contradictory in these responses, yet the child will be punished if it shows contradictory behaviour. This confusion, which the child has to deny and keep subconscious unless it wants to get punished, is a main source of conflict in the individual and in society.

I summarise the negative effects of transference:

In the drama of family life the child can detect the repressed aspects of the parent's consciousness, but it is forced to deny this awareness. So the subconscious internal conflicts and confusions of the parents are transferred to the child, and become a part of its subconscious mind too.

Transference and social conditioning have some positive effects. Even confused values may be better than no values. If there are few limits to the ego, then it will find it very difficult to establish an harmonious life in society. A life within society always requires rules in order to create tolerable boundaries in each person's relationships. But I am mainly interested in understanding the negative effects. Only by understanding the negative effects can the confusion be removed from ethical debate.

Origin of Transference

Transference is created during the early months of an infant's life, during the period when it is beginning to create an ego. I formulate the problem in the following way, using a perspective of reincarnation. The baby is very susceptible to the state of mind of the mother and her feelings

(assuming that it is the mother who initially cares for the baby). The baby brings with it into incarnation its desires and sensitivities and abilities and conflicts from past lives. Its sensitivities and conflicts form its previous pattern of anxiety, which it brings with it; this pattern then fuses with the mother's conscious and subconscious motivations to produce a new pattern of anxiety, generating new phantasies and giving a different emphasis to its subconscious conflicts.

During the early months of its life (before it creates its ego) the baby has no conscious mind; it only has a subconscious one. This makes it easy for the baby to attune to the mother's subconscious mind, and to her internal conflicts too. One reason for this is that the subconscious mind operates without the limitations of rationality and social convention: it functions through intuition. Her intuition enables the mother to understand what the infant needs, but also the infant's intuition enables it to attune to the mother's mind too. Another way of attunement occurs when two people are close enough (spatially) to each other : emotion can flow from one person to the other via the auras.

An adult is not usually adequately aware of their degree of social conditioning. So the conditioning is subconscious, and much motivation is therefore subconscious motivation. In my view the intensity of emotional factors in modern man, modern woman, is greater than the intensity of their conscious desires and intentions. Whence dominant desires and intentions become only a response to or a rationalisation of the subconscious motivations. The conscious desire derives its power from the underlying subconscious motive, either from harmony with it or from being antagonistic to it. Any conscious desire that is free from subconscious forces has no power to motivate a person consistently and regularly. For example, moral and noble ideals are usually a reaction against powerful subconscious feelings of self-hate (as a mode of guilt).

Can the undesirable effects of social conditioning be eliminated? Most of them can be; perhaps even all of them. But it is often necessary for the individual to work alone, since he or she will be involved in the process of examining, and perhaps changing, some or all of their values. Subconscious motivation is eliminated only by insight into its cause and never by the use of discipline or reason or suggestion (these three uses only enable a person to control their subconscious motivation). At a much lesser intensity of involvement, social conditioning can be changed (rather than eliminated), for better or for worse. The influence of friends, a partner, and new environments can effect change.

I turn to the emotional dynamics of transference.

Sexual transference is simply the effect of anxiety on sexual jealousy.

Jealousy = self-pity + love.

Anxiety = vanity + fear.

Therefore,

Sexual transference = fear + vanity + self-pity + love.
= (fear + love) + self-pity + vanity.

Since self-pity and vanity form a binary, they will cancel out each other when each is equal in intensity to the other one. When the intensities are

unequal then whichever emotion is temporarily greater in intensity will prevail, reduced in effectiveness by the intensity of the lesser one. Hence the simplest form of sexual transference is:

Sexual transference = fear + love.

Authority transference has the same factors of fear and love, since the only difference is that jealousy now focuses on authority rather than on sexuality.

This result means that if a relationship is harmonious, love is emphasised and so 'positive' transference is in the ascendant. Then transference consists mainly of admired values. If the relationship is inharmonious, then fear is emphasised and 'negative' transference holds sway. Now transference highlights the feared values.

It is through the emphasis on the fear factor that transference plays its part in **social conditioning**. By contrast, the admired values (if they are 'good' ones) can lead to **social learning**.

	References	

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[**1**]. The factors of 'who I am' and 'what I am' are given in the article **Acquiring Attitudes**, on my website **Discover Your Mind**. See **Links**. [1]

Freud, S. *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*. Pelican

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The Subconscious Mind

New Ideas in **Psychology**

Social Approval

&

Inferiority Complex

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Laing and Adler

Sub-headings
Summary
Separating the two needs
Two tests
References

R.D. Laing, in his book '*Self and Others*', discusses the concept of '**confirmation**'. Each person needs to be supported in his or her sense of self by the confirmation of other people. A person can also have his or her sense of self negated when subjected to social rejection. Laing explores the ways of confirming and disconfirming other people. We may confirm someone through a responsive smile, or a handshake, or an expression of sympathy. We may do this wholeheartedly or merely in a lukewarm fashion. We may confirm some aspects of the other person, whilst disconfirming other aspects that we do not like.

I prefer the term 'social approval' instead of 'confirmation' because it indicates better what the underlying requirement is. This need to have one's self confirmed and validated by other people, this need for social approval, means the existential requirement of a person to become socially integrated in an harmonious way.

The way in which I understand confirmation is that the person seeks that which was missing in their childhood. The infant needs love from the parents. If this is not forthcoming, or if it is not sufficient in quantity, then the infant is not confirmed in its social persona and its ego will become fragile and unstable. The less the love that the child received, the greater is the need for the confirmation of one's self by other people. It is usually through favourable, satisfying relationships that the person seeks to fulfil themself, existentially rather than pleasurably; the need for social approval is often more important than the pursuit of happiness.

This necessity for social approval is *a need*, not a desire. Hence it acts as a powerful incentive to become involved in social activities. This need arises within the self-pity mode of jealousy. [The motif of jealousy in self-pity mode is 'I need a reward from other people']. A person may often only need one other person to give him/her the required social approval. This is usually the function of a spouse or a partner.

A distinction is necessary here.
The need for social approval inculcates conformity in the person – this is the drawback. For comparison, love produces uniformity, since everything has the same value ; uniformity is the limitation of love. In social relationships, uniformity needs to be separated from conformity.

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Now I turn to another idea.
Alfred Adler introduced the concept of 'the inferiority complex'. This

feeling of inferiority is derived from physical disability or from faulty relationships. My interpretation of the complex is that it arises when a person finds themself in a situation where their abilities and attitudes are denigrated or rejected by other people. He / she then strives to develop themself according to their own standards and values. He / she strives to develop themself so as to provide their own justification of themself, to provide their own sense of satisfaction in their own worth as a person.

The inferiority complex is **a need** to validate one's self by oneself ; it is the need for individual accomplishment. *He / she does not seek social approval in order to do this.* He / she does not judge themself by the criteria of other people. The inferiority complex is an attribute of the vanity mode of narcissism. [The motif of narcissism in vanity mode is 'I will do it my way'].

Summary of these two needs

- **The need for social approval has the emotional dynamic of jealousy (self-pity mode).** It arises from the experience of insufficient love as a child.

- **The inferiority complex has the emotional dynamic of narcissism (vanity mode).** It arises from the experience of denigration as a child.

- **The need for social approval and the inferiority complex are binary needs.** This relationship ensues because jealousy (self-pity mode) and narcissism (vanity mode) are binary emotions.

The need for social approval and the inferiority complex are two ideas that require to be separated. Some writers have thought that when a person strives to attain a social goal then he / she is acting from an inferiority complex. This is not so ; the person is acting from the need for social approval.

One of the difficulties of being a creative artist or thinker is that the sensitivity that the person acquires is derived from a deep sense of inferiority. The inferiority can drive creative skills, but produces a barrier to the attainment of social skills. The artist or thinker finds that their creativity sets them apart from normal people. Then he / she begins to yearn for social approval.

Thomas Mann, in his short story '*Tonio Kroger*', describes the predicament of the artistic male who wants to reject his sensitivity because it produces an almost impassable barrier to normal relationships. He yearns for familiar human happiness, for the commonplace, the banal – in other words, the normal, respectable and admirable concerns of ordinary people. What the artist or thinker recognises belatedly is that the satisfaction of conquering the inferiority complex does not necessarily lead to the satisfaction of acquiring social skills in everyday relationships.

The failure of traditional social views is in the assumption that needs can cross-link. An individual may focus on achieving a difficult personal ambition; for example he / she may become a self-made millionaire. Then they hope that their money will buy social approval; but usually they attract only sycophants. Or a person may focus on cultivating social popularity ; but when fashion changes or the breath of scandal touches him / her, they are left in the cold and find that they have not achieved anything worthwhile within themself.

These two needs are separate and distinct, and have to be addressed separately if harmony is to be attained.

Separating the Two Needs

In the early 20th century, ideas about the hidden aspects of the mind were in their infancy. So what Adler did was to mix the two needs together - he only recognised the existence of one need. In my understanding, the inferiority complex refers to the need to be an individual. The idea of a distinct social need

came later, with R D Laing's concept of 'confirmation'.

What I have done is to improve on Adler's idea by separating the two needs. This is not as easy as it may first appear, especially when we consider social institutions such as schools. Schools often make a child feel inadequate and belittled. Which of the two needs is being activated?

The child may focus on his individuality. He may desire to attain something that he likes and is willing to put in the necessary effort long-term. If this desire is over-emphasised, he is likely to lose friends and become a loner. On the other hand, if he desires friends, he will put friendship and social attainments above personal attainments. He is likely to become a very sociable person. If this desire is over-emphasised, his individuality becomes eclipsed.

Now if circumstances frustrate his ability to attain his dreams, and he compares himself unfavourably to other people who have succeeded, then he will develop an inferiority complex. And if his attempts to be sociable are frustrated, he will develop the need for social approval.

At school these needs inter-twine. If he is bottom of the class in some subject that he likes, his inferiority complex will spur him to better himself. If he is bottom of the class in some subject that he does not like, he will not develop an inferiority complex (for that subject). Instead, he is likely to focus on his need for social approval by getting a name for himself, even if it is only as a trouble-maker.

If he does not have many friends, but has a close friendship with one or two others, he does not intensify his need for social approval. But if he does not have friends, then he does intensify his need for social approval. Since he does not have friends, he lacks social skills and feels awkward in the presence of his peers. It becomes difficult to make friends with the opposite sex. He becomes very lonely.

There are two tests for separating one need from the other.

First.
To understand the basic difference between the two needs, it will help if you can understand the difference between two terms : loneliness and aloneness. A person who focuses on individuality will at sometime feel aloneness ; at this moment he is a loner. Whilst a person who focuses on social approval will sometimes feel loneliness.

Second.
Your views about yourself can belittle you, and the criticisms of other people can also belittle you. This can make you dislike someone. The decisive test for separating the two needs is what person is your dislike directed to. **Who do you dislike ?**

> If you dislike yourself, then this implies the inferiority complex is dominant at that moment.
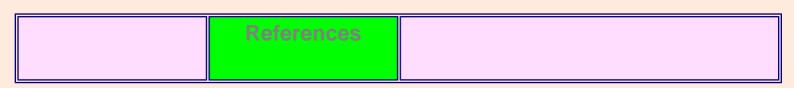>
> If you dislike the other person, then the need for social approval is uppermost at that moment (if it were not uppermost, then what that person said to us would not bother us).

These two needs can inter-twine. So sometimes you can dislike yourself, and at other times you can dislike other people.

Some children try to get round their problems with sociability by becoming brilliant at some particular subject in order to attract friends. But they fail in this. What they discover is that becoming brilliant in something (that is, being motivated by the inferiority complex) does not enable them to develop social skills. So overcoming the inferiority complex will not enable the child to get friends. The child gets friends by overcoming his need for social approval.

The inferiority complex is most problematic for youths, which is the prime time of narcissism. Most people don't know what narcissism means, but this does not stop them from experiencing it. Everytime you go to a party, feel excited, dance and have a good time, you are in a mood of narcissism. So the teenage years and early 20s are the prime years of narcissistic experience for everyone, and the prime years of bearing the burden of inferiority (as well as needing social

approval).

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Laing, R.D. *Self and Others.* Pelican Books, 1988.

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Absorption and Identification

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

The Ego needs Boundaries

In the early months of the infant's life it has no ego and only experiences its subconscious mind reacting to sensations. As the mind becomes consciously tied to the physical body so the ego begins to form. The body puts psychological boundaries on the mind. The emerging ego is simply the acceptance by consciousness of these boundaries. That is, the emerging ego is that aspect of consciousness that has boundaries. [1]

Once the ego is in the process of creation then conscious life begins.

Why are boundaries needed?

The problem that faces the infant is that life is just too complex to master in its totality; therefore this complexity has to be restricted in some way in order to manage at least some part of it. The subconscious mind (along with the unconscious aspect of mind) has few boundaries, so the only way to make sense of the multitude of sensory impressions is to create boundaries. Such boundaries enable the mind of the infant to manage the sheer complexity of life that it is witness to.

The difficulty of trying to understand the multitude of sensations when boundaries are absent is illustrated very clearly by taking any powerful hallucinatory agent such as LSD.

To help in the task of creating an ego the infant takes its mother as a role model. It identifies with the parental image. As the child grows up it changes its identification model several times, to father, to adolescent peers, to teachers. The resulting adult is a montage of different models, of different foci of identification. Identification can be viewed as a psychological union with an external source, with jealousy (mode of love) as the binding ingredient. [2]

A different drama is enacted by the narcissistic and introverted child (such as myself). Identification with an external source ceases to have any intensity beyond the parental models. The narcissistic child begins to take itself as its own model : it begins to identify with itself. A better way of expressing this identification is to say that the child becomes self-absorbed. Self-absorption is a feature of narcissism in love mode.

> Therefore, the growing child will tend to favour either jealousy or narcissism as the centre of its developing ego. Either way, the love modes can generate intense emotional experience.

A personal worldview

I indicate my attitudes up to the end of my self-analysis. From an early age, probably from when I was around six years old, my own internal world of phantasy was more important to me than my friendships with other children. Usually when school ended for the day, my absorption into phantasy began. Even today, I still need to spend a lot of time on my own; when I am at work I have to find ways of creating a breathing space. I have had to create the greater

part of my sense of identity from within myself alone. Self-absorption easily becomes self-perpetuating.

I rarely met anyone who shared either my views, or my existentialism, or my experience of life; hence I could do nothing other than take myself as my own reference point. The intense idealist leads a lonely life.

The intensity of my self-absorption was the reason why:

- I usually had little need to seek close friends, though I responded easily to friendship that was offered to me.

- I daydreamed so much.

- Emotion was usually more important to me than will power. My approach to new adventures was to 'jump in at the deep end', that is, to plunge into emotionally-intense experience.

Narcissism and Jealousy

When I was reading R. D. Laing's books one word that caught my eye was 'smothered'. Smothering is an aspect of what Laing terms 'engulfment', the process of being absorbed into the personality of another person. This process is also that of jealousy. I set up a binary:

Absorption in self   versus   **Absorption in another person**

(depends on Narcissism)   (depends on Jealousy)

Absorption in another person means almost the same as identification with that person. The only difference is that children and adolescents may feel identification with someone to be embracing, whilst the adult will view an identification that feels threatening to him / her as an engulfment.

It was this occasion when I when realised that narcissism is binary to jealousy. This binary sets up self-absorption against an identification with someone who is external to self.

I considered my relationships; they usually focus on intensity (a sure sign that absorption or identification is involved). I can choose either absorption in myself or absorption in another person. When I am centred in narcissism I do not need other people. Then I understood that **it is narcissism that propels the person towards individuality**. By comparison, **jealousy keeps a person socially defined**. Jealousy can also produce the manipulation of the person that one wants to be absorbed in (since possessiveness is an attribute of jealousy).

Absorption / identification can work in either direction. In an adult relationship, either adult can be absorbed into the other one. The same process works even in an adult-child relationship.

For example, I watched a mother who kept shouting orders to her child every few minutes ; she refused to let him play as he wanted. I could see the resentment in his face. This mother was refusing to let the child be independent ; she was controlling him when there was no need to. This is jealousy. This is the refusal to allow the child to become different in any way that is at odds with the mother's desire to mould him according to her views, her needs, according to her use of the child as a vehicle for her absorption. The idea that the parent becomes absorbed into the child is only another way of saying that the parent is going to use the child as a way of fulfilling that parent's ambitions in life, irrespective of what the child wants to achieve.

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Problems with Intense Experience

A long psycho-analysis can diminish and remove most, perhaps even all,

confusion from the mind. This process is enhanced by the person's ethical idealism. Therefore a long psychoanalysis reduces the importance of jealousy or narcissism (whichever is more dominant) and so helps to balance the person. This balancing brings out the differences between **self-absorption** and **self-consciousness**: the person's ethical idealism (as a product of self-consciousness and not self-absorption) is the factor which pushes him or her towards being balanced.

All spiritual practices that aim to develop meditational or mystical ability also develop self-absorption and so have the effect of intensifying narcissism. Narcissism responds easily to emotional ecstasies. But meditation and mysticism have their limitations. Self-absorption does not of its own accord produce self-consciousness – psychological understanding is not usually found amongst the talents of meditators and mystics. Yet in order to achieve the highest degrees of self-consciousness then self-absorption is a necessary way station or state of mind that has to be experienced sometime in one's life.

However, there is a socially undesirable spin-off to habitual self-absorption : it may become impossible for the person to form social relationships of any depth. The budding introvert or the budding mystic desires intensity of experience. For a man, when he desires deep absorption in his own reality he can control the process. However, to form a deep social relationship means to become identified in some ways with the other person. Now the introvert's narcissistic love has changed to jealous love, and this kind of love he cannot control. Jealous love confuses ego boundaries by removing the sense of separateness. The introvert can handle, in a fashion, his own intense emotions ; what he cannot handle is being subject to intense emotions, even affectionate ones, from someone else. The likelihood of being in a close social relationship engenders fear, the fear of the loss of his unique identity that is so precious to him. The only way to eliminate this fear is to base relationships on equality and trust.

The introvert or the budding mystic desires intensity of personal experience (but not social experience). In my 20s I tried to escape from my limitations within relationships by focusing on intensity of political experience. Intense experience is not deliberately sought or known by the majority of the members

of society, except by the military and by youth. Soldiers know that the conditions of warfare produce an intensity of experience which is beyond the comprehension of the civilian.

The only route for such intensity in today's youngsters is through drugs or dangerous sports, since much political activity was criminalised in Britain by the Conservative government of the 1990s. The thirst for mind-changing drugs will never be eliminated within a nice, safe materialistic world which lacks political or spiritual idealism, which lacks adventure and challenge. Therefore it is more important to oversee the proper use of drugs and to give guidelines for interpreting their effects on the mind than in being punitive to users.

Union

How does absorption function?
Consider meditation. Suppose that a meditator focuses his / her concentration on an object. For the practitioner of sufficient ability the knower and the known become one. The perceiver and the object of perception become one. The meditator links his / her mind to the mind within the object.

To illustrate what absorption means I give an example from my 20s. On one occasion when I had taken the drug LSD, I hallucinated a caterpillar (or more correctly, my consciousness was transported to where that particular caterpillar happened to be). I seemed to become one with that caterpillar – I could feel its feelings. A kind of temporary one-sided symbiosis (I do not know if that caterpillar was aware of me, or of my feelings). The knower and the known became one. What in fact occurred was that my mind came into union with the mind of that caterpillar, so enabling me to know it.

Absorption indicates the union of two minds. In self-absorption the individual takes their own idealism or their own mystical aspirations as their object ; the two minds are those of their own ego plus their idealised image of themself. So in self-absorption, the person effectively identifies with their own

idealised image of themself.

When an inanimate object is used as the focus of concentration, the mind that the meditator unites with is some aspect of the mind of the immanent consciousness within the object. [My view of the material universe is pantheistic in the broad sense, that is, the world is part of god but god is more than the totality of the universe].

For many poets and artists, absorption can take the form of absorption into Nature. R.D. Laing, in '*The Divided Self*', page 91, gives a description of an experience by James. James began to feel a tremendous oneness with the whole world. This both amazed and terrified him. He wanted to be absorbed into infinity, yet was afraid to do so since it meant losing his self. There is no half-way stage to absorption : the person either becomes absorbed into himself or absorbed into Nature.

This longing for absorption is a characteristic of a mentality which is narcissistic. ***Absorption is the quintessence of feeling.*** It is the entrancement with emotion. The person becomes absorbed into love, even though it is usually self-love.

I sum up these ideas on identification and absorption.

The ego functions through identification. Evolution is a gradual process of changing identifications, and of reflecting identification back onto itself to produce self-absorption. Once the infant has exhausted all the possibilities inherent in identification with the sensual body, then to support its continuing evolution the ego progresses to identification with the mother, then to the father, to peers (or to itself), to teachers. Eventually it graduates to identification with its own idealised mind. In the course of time (a scenario presupposing a time scan of countless incarnations) it will progress to some degree of identification with the mind of the absolute reality (or god).

Laing, R.D. *The Divided Self.* Pelican 1987.

The number in brackets at the end of each reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1]. The differences between consciousness and ego are described on my website **A Modern Thinker**, in the section on **Sign Systems**. See **Links**. [1]

[2]. Identification features jealousy in love mode. See the article on **Transference**. [2]

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Infancy Trauma

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Desolation of the Will

Sub-headings
Childhood wounds
Subconscious emotions of parents
Two strategies
Reference

Towards the beginning of winter in the second year (1988) of my self-analysis I was plunged into a state of catatonia.

Subsequently when I abreacted, some years later, the origins of this state of mind my experience showed me that catatonia in the adult is just a replay of trauma suffered in infancy, during the time when the infant is creating its ego. [1]

In the lead up to this event in 1988 I had embarked on a deep search for meaning in my life. I examined everything that I had ever done. Looking into my past, I examined my involvement in local politics, my social and sexual relationships, my practice of yoga and Buddhism, my standards of ethics.

Over a period of some weeks I gradually found that meaning was absent or non-existent. I had already discovered, in my 20s, that there was no meaning in science. Now I reached the conclusion that meaning was merely an ethereal will-of-the-wisp. According to the predilection of the person, so science, religion, sex, etc may seem glamorous, but there is nothing underneath that glamour. I gradually understood that all religious and secular doctrines, ideas and practices were nothing more than a hollow panacea over a black hole of meaninglessness, a black hole of nihilism.

This inquiry had been predominantly intellectual in manner, but in November 1988 I followed it through to its psychological termination. I was sitting in my living room at home, looking vacantly out of the window into space – this attitude facilitates reverie and intuitive thinking in me. I was thinking about the complete absence of meaning in life, when all of a sudden my intellectual understanding was transposed into a totally intuitive one and I experienced the emotional impact of that understanding. The transposition was instantaneous and devastating.

In the twinkling of an eye I went from sanity to insanity. The speed of the transition was unbelievable. There was no possibility of defence. My whole being was filled with fear and self-pity (as a mode of guilt). I was petrified. I could not move my body. My will collapsed completely. I just sat there, staring out of the window, immovable, in utter desolation. I had never before experienced such mental pain – the totality of the desolation is indescribable.

The pain was so intense that I could not endure it. Slowly I resurrected my will and withdrew from that state. This experience had profound and lasting effects on me, among which it instantly deepened my level of self-awareness.

Catatonia is a state characterised by the complete collapse of the will: the adult becomes petrified, his mind overwhelmed by fear and guilt (mode of self-pity). I call this state '**the desolation of the will**', or 'DOW' for short. The central core of a person's being is his / her will ; when it collapses, the resulting state of mind is one of complete desolation. It is unimaginable to anyone who has never experienced it.

However, catatonia is not the original infancy trauma itself but a particular response to it. Another response to the original infancy trauma is schizophrenia:

the person creates an outer mask in order to shelter his fragile inner self, now made unstable by the trauma, from the external world of sorrow.

Childhood Wounds

The original infancy trauma can generate infancy catatonia. I attribute this effect to the infant whilst recognising that its collapse of will is not obvious. The distressed infant hangs on to the mother's will, and this manoeuvre gives it the appearance of near-normality. In other words, the infant is not in a position to become truly catatonic because of its identification, its bonding, with the mother. My mother often told me that she was baffled as to why I, as an infant, cried so much, much more than infants normally do. My constant crying indicated the destruction of my internal world.

When, during my self-analysis, I abreacted the childhood states of infancy trauma I experienced devastating intensities of psychic pain. This pain proved to me that *time does not heal childhood wounds*; the wounds are only banished to the subconscious mind, where they exert a permanent yet unrecognised influence on the ego. (I use the term 'psychic pain' to indicate pain that is felt by the ego and its mind, and not pain that is generated by the physical body).

In my view, every sensitive and creative person experiences infancy trauma in some degree, ranging from mild to severe. The trauma may not always produce psychosis (catatonia or schizophrenia). Apart from these possible severe reactions the trauma always generates a long-term response: it deepens the intensity of hatred within the child. Hate can be used in two ways: it can be directed at oneself or it can be directed at other people. These responses of hate lead to guilt and pride respectively.

> The child desperately needs to withdraw from hate, especially the self-hate. So it flees into either identification or self-absorption.

Subconscious Emotions of the Parents

Identification revolves around a central difficulty, which is that people are unaware of their emotional motivations and responses to life. This lack of awareness in parents can produce severe problems for the infant, especially if the parents are strong-willed or moralistic. In such parents, the stresses of materialism and the stresses of relationships are usually kept repressed and hence are subconscious. The mother passes these subconscious stresses to the infant, as it introjects her emotions.

The mother, rather than the father, usually handles and cares for the infant. The regular close-proximity of the mother and infant means that the infant is regularly within the mother's aura : this situation allows the infant to introject the mother's emotions.

A parent may deliberately ill-treat a child. But this is not what I am attempting to analyse. In the following analysis I am assuming that there is no conscious desire to ill-treat a child. I am highlighting **the subconscious dynamics** of the mother-infant relationship.

The most unpleasant introjected emotions that the infant has to confront are forms of hatred, especially the hate mode of pride. In a moralistic or a strong-willed mother (as mine was) the morality or the strong willpower go hand-in-hand with a dominant sense of pride. Now pure hate is the emotional dynamic that sustains strong willpower (hate enables the person to cut out any irrelevancies and unimportant issues), and strong pride centres on its hate mode. These factors ensure that modes of hate are a regular occurrence for the mother – though primarily it is the mode within pride that distresses the infant (whereas in a weak-willed mother the subconscious hatred is not so intense).

The mother is also likely to be experiencing abreactive hate regularly. When a marriage partner has a strong will or a strong sense of pride, there is likely to be little emotional support happening between the couple; so the effects of abreaction will be felt more intensely. Her moralistic stance will intensify her resentments, since resentment is the ground of social morality. And when she

gets angry, her anger just intensifies the infant's problems (in an ideal world, when the mother is angry or feeling hateful she should avoid handling and feeding the infant).

The infant absorbs the mother's subconscious hatred whilst it is trying to construct its ego. The hatred has the effect of de-stabilising the ego whilst it is in the process of formation. In a mother-infant relationship, oscillating between love and hate, the infant cannot be neutral or calm. It has three choices: the first two focus on hatred, and the last one on self-pity. In the first two choices it can either accept the mother's hate and become distressed ; or it can refute that hate by generating its own hate, thereby becoming aggressive and rebellious. These choices lead to guilt and pride. In the third choice, it can become depressed and filled with self-pity ; this alternative can lead to masochism and sadism, and will be the subject of a future article.

> When the infant accepts the mother's subconscious hate, it experiences it as being directed at itself ; this turns the introjected emotion into self-hate. The infant is plunged into trauma.
>
> **Its primary belief is that it has been rejected.**

It creates guilt as its long-term response to the mother. But even guilt (mode of self-hate) is a terrible emotion, especially for the infant. It 'escapes' from its predicament by identifying with the mother. Identification is the primary form of bonding, and results from the need to flee from guilt and from rejection.

Two Strategies

There are two common strategies that attempt to accommodate to the pain of infancy trauma – those of schizophrenia and catatonia. These strategies orientate around the two ways that a person can define himself: he can either centre on his social identity or on his sense of being an individual (his individual
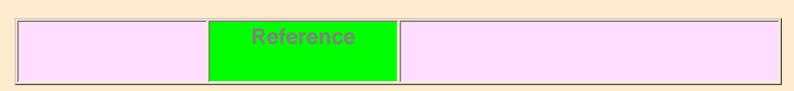
identity).

The hallmark of schizophrenia is that it refutes the social identity, whereas the hallmark of catatonia is that it refutes the individual identity.

When the person is an adult, the situational pressures may create anxiety of sufficient intensity to de-stabilise the ego. De-stabilising the ego means that the use of the person's will becomes problematic and vacillating. In this circumstance, the person's willpower can no longer keep repressed the most potent aspects of the subconscious mind, and so the pain of infancy trauma begins to rise from the subconscious mind into normal consciousness. Then either schizophrenia or catatonia may begin to emerge.

The person who gravitates to schizophrenia tries to deny the social identity and affirm the individual identity, but without success. **Schizophrenia is the effect of a denied social identity and a failed individual identity.**

The person who slides into catatonia tries to deny the individual identity and affirm the social identity, but without success. **Catatonia is the effect of a denied individual identity and a failed social identity.**

Like emotions, mental disorders are centred on unconscious ideas.

	Reference	

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1]. I explore catatonia and schizophrenia in more detail on my website that explores mental disorders : **Patterns of Confusion**. See **Links**. [1].

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The Subconscious Mind

New Ideas in **Psychology**

BONDING

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Imprinting and identification

Sub-headings
Imprinting
Mechanics of imprinting
Identification & infancy trauma
Mechanics of identification
Effects of envy

The focus is on the interaction between a mother and a male child.

The birth of a baby is part of physical creation, the creation of a physical body ; however, the baby's mind is still in 'the unconscious'. Higher creation, for me, means making conscious what is unconscious. So higher creation is the production of an ego for the infant: a joint process involving the mother's life experience and the infant's innate dispositions.

I call this joint process the 'mother transference'. The mother transference is the matrix that shapes the reincarnating ego. The mother transference is

a joint creation between mother and infant ; it is the interaction between mother and infant as seen from the infant's point of view.

The infant's ego is a fusion of:

- **Emotional dispositions and attitudes from the mother.**

- **Emotional dispositions and attitudes from the infant, carried over from the previous incarnation.**

- **The infant's will.**

The infant's ego is built in its basic form during the first eighteen months of its life; from then on it develops this form as time goes by. In this initial period the mother's influence is more important than the father's influence, assuming that it is mainly the mother who cares for the infant.

In producing its ego through the bonding process, the two main factors acting on the infant are imprinting and identification. I examine each factor in turn.

Imprinting

The infant can introject the mother's emotions. It needs to do this ; if it is left unattended for long periods of time, as was the fashion in hospital maternity wards some time ago, then it experiences deep distress. But if

it introjects unpleasant emotions from the mother then it also becomes distressed.

The infant introjects the mother's emotions. Both the mother's emotions and the baby's emotions include sexual ones. As the baby experiences emotions, it cannot distinguish their source. It cannot distinguish between sexual emotions that arise from within itself from the sexual emotions that are introjected from the mother. This is how the infant experiences sexuality ; it fuses its sexuality with the mother's sexuality. Since the infant cannot verbalise its feelings, it may take its cues on sexuality from its mother's attitude to sexuality. The child may have to wait till late childhood or even puberty before its own sexuality develops.

I put these ideas another way.
The infant introjects the mother's sexual feelings and attitudes, without being able to distinguish them from its own ones. The mother is a more powerful figure than the baby is. Her attitudes become the signposts and boundaries which guide and shape the ways that the infant can explore sexuality. Therefore the mother establishes the pattern within which the sensitive infant can form his sexual attitudes, that is, these attitudes are his responses to his mother's pattern of feminine sexuality.

At puberty these attitudes are now externalised and projected outside the family. So from then on his sexual attitudes find harmony with a woman who reflects his mother's attitudes, his mother's femininity. *Hence the mother imprints on the sensitive infant his sexual identity*, and this becomes his pattern of sexuality when puberty forces him to externalise his desires. As an adult he can accept this pattern or choose other modes of sexual relationships ; the choice depends on how he handles sexual anxiety.

Mechanics of Imprinting.

The infant needs love, and it is this need that causes imprinting to occur. This need presents itself when jealousy, in its self-pity mode, is currently dominant in the baby. What the infant receives from the mother is jealous love. When imprinting occurs, the flow of love is from the mother (jealousy in love mode) to the infant (jealousy in self-pity mode). The self-pity mode indicates dependency; hence imprinting signifies the dependency of the child on the mother. But since this mode of jealousy is also associated with the introjection of the mother's sexual feelings, so imprinting also signifies sexual dependency. Imprinting is a sexual form of bonding.

Why does the sexual imprinting occur?
The existential reality of rebirth is that everything is subconscious : this is to say that there are no signs or mental landmarks for the crystallising ego to anchor itself to. The infant is on the receiving end of an endless succession of sensory stimuli which it does not know how to interpret. The psychological attachment to a parent, usually the mother, is the only possible response that the infant can make. In the total sensory confusion of the infant, the mother is the only 'sign' in a signless world.

What the infant takes from the mother is the experience of her emotions : the regular repetition of pleasant emotions becomes the first 'sign' that the infant can recognise. This is achieved through the medium of the auras. When two people are close enough together for their auras to blend then transference of emotion is direct from one aura to the other one. This actuality is the situation that the infant always experiences – it is usually held close enough to the mother to be able to absorb her emotions.

The infant's emotions include narcissism and jealousy. Which emotion will become dominant depends on the past life, the past incarnation. The infant can respond in two ways to the mother's sexual feelings. If a person in the previous life was centred on jealousy then in this life as an infant he will prefer sexual desire. Whereas a narcissistic infant will prefer sexual attraction. [1]. The infant then absorbs the mother's sexual feelings as usual ; the combination forms the child's pattern of sexual identity.

This difference between jealousy and narcissism explains why some young children are more interested in sexual behaviour and sexual desire than other children are.

Identification and Infancy Trauma

Identification only becomes possible once the crystallising ego can begin to separate its emotions and responses from those of the mother. It is a form of bonding which has both sexual and non-sexual components, whereas imprinting is a sexual form of bonding. I consider how they link up.

Identification revolves around a central difficulty, which is that people are unaware of their emotional motivations and responses to life. This lack of awareness in parents can produce severe problems for the infant. In the parents, the stresses of materialism and the stresses of relationships are usually kept repressed and hence are subconscious. The mother passes these subconscious stresses to the infant, as it introjects her emotions.

A parent may deliberately ill-treat a child. But this is not what I am attempting to analyse. In the following analysis I am assuming that there is no conscious desire to ill-treat a child. I am highlighting *the subconscious dynamics* of the mother-infant relationship.

The most unpleasant introjected emotions that the infant has to confront are forms of hate, especially the hate mode of pride. In a moralistic or a strong-willed mother the morality or the strong will power go hand-in-hand with a dominant sense of pride. Now pure hate is the emotional dynamic that sustains strong will power (hate enables the person to cut out any irrelevancies and unimportant issues), and strong pride centres on its hate mode. These factors ensure that modes of hate are a regular occurrence for the mother – though primarily it is the mode within pride that distresses the infant (whereas in a weak-willed mother the subconscious hatred is not so intense).

The mother is also likely to be experiencing abreactive hate regularly. When a marriage partner has a strong will or a strong sense of pride, there is likely to be little emotional support happening between the couple ; so the effects of abreaction will be felt more intensely. Her moralistic stance will intensify her resentments, since resentment is the ground of social morality. And when she gets angry, her anger just intensifies the infant's problems (in an ideal world, when the mother is angry or feeling hateful she should avoid handling and feeding the infant so that it does not introject these emotions).

The infant absorbs the mother's subconscious hatred whilst it is trying to construct its ego. The hatred has the effect of de-stabilising the ego whilst it is in the process of formation. In a mother-infant relationship,

oscillating between love and hate, the infant cannot be neutral or calm. It has three choices: the first two focus on hatred, and the last one on self-pity. In the first two choices it can either accept the mother's hate and become distressed ; or it can refute that hate by generating its own hatred, thereby becoming aggressive and rebellious. These choices lead to guilt and pride.

In the third choice, it can become depressed and filled with self-pity ; this choice is not the focus of this article. I am analysing the effects of hatred on the child.

When the infant accepts the mother's subconscious hate, it experiences it as being directed at itself ; this turns the introjected emotion into self-hate. The infant is plunged into trauma. **Its primary belief is that it has been rejected.** It creates guilt as its long-term response to the mother. But even guilt (mode of self-hate) is a terrible emotion, especially for the infant. It 'escapes' from its predicament by identifying with the mother.

During my self-analysis, as I worked through my problems with bonding, it became abundantly clear to me that it is the self-hate within guilt that creates identification – not love, nor the love within jealousy or narcissism, but guilt. Identification is established when the infant rejects itself and psychologically clings to the mother. And when the adult, during psycho-analysis, eventually faces the pain of infancy trauma, it is the issue of rejection that he has to resolve.

Mechanics of Identification

The ego is created by attitudes and beliefs that can support the will. Creating an ego means creating a consistent will, in the way that Nietzsche understood. Consistent attitudes and beliefs create a consistent will. Confused and conflicting attitudes and beliefs generate an uncertain will and thereby form an unstable ego. [2]

Identification requires will and emotion ; the preferred emotion is love, but pure love does not maintain attachments (pure love is just a flow without an object ; only the love within either jealousy or narcissism adheres to objects). Therefore, as it flees from guilt the infant uses imprinting as its route to jealous love. And it takes the model of the mother's will power as a surrogate for its own will. By focusing on will the child can orientate on jealous love, rather than on the dependency-creating self-pity mode of jealousy. In effect, the child uses will to switch the mode of jealousy from self-pity to love.

Now I can link identification to imprinting.

Identification **= will + sexual imprinting.**

= will + jealousy (mode of love).

During periods when the infant cannot sustain identification then it becomes a whining child. Jealousy remains in the self-pity mode.

Not all children are troubled to the same extent by identification. I

assume that the intensity of identification correlates with the intensity of the child's feeling of self-hate. The mother's subconscious hatred (of the husband, or of society, of her job, of life, etc) causes the child to respond by making guilt the essence of its relationship to her. *This is the tragedy of childhood : the child cannot separate the mother's hatred of husband, society, life, etc, from hatred of itself.*

This tragedy is the core of nearly all the psychological problems that the child will experience in life when it becomes an adult. I am not here dealing with deliberate abuse of the child by a parent – that is bad enough. I am trying to explain why a moralistic or a strong-willed mother, with the best of conscious intentions for the child, nevertheless creates the cross that the child will carry in life.

Effect of Envy

The child may identify with one or both of the parents. If a child does not identify with both of the parents then the likely explanation is that there was little or no occurrence of infancy trauma, so parent – child relations can be happy ones (happiness can lead to attachment, but not to identification).

If the child identifies with one parent but not the other one, then a different pattern exists. The lack of identification indicates the likely presence of a dominant sense of envy towards that parent. Envy prevents a child from forming any strong bond to significant adults (envy is a dominant factor in autism [3]). The difference between jealousy and envy is:

- **Jealousy facilitates bonding.**

- **Envy prevents bonding.**

If an infant does not experience any trauma in childhood, then its attachments to its parents may be genuinely positive and pleasurable ones. But there is a trade-off between happiness and trauma. Happy and pleasurable attachments will lack the intensity of the identification bond. So when the child becomes an adult its relationships to other adults are likely to lack intensity too.

Roles of the Parents

One woman writer presumed that for a female child the mother gives it the sense of nurturing and the father gives it the sense of social relationships. In my view this is only partly correct. Bearing in mind her ideas on the father - daughter relationship, I assume that for heterosexual children :

- **The child gets its sense of social relationships from the parent of the opposite sex to it.**

- **The child gets its sense of being an individual from the parent of the same sex to it.**

These ideas mean that for a boy his sense of individuality is a masculine one, whilst for a girl her sense of individuality is a feminine one.

Summary

I summarise my ideas for the period in life when the infant is trying to create its ego (from about seven months of age onwards). The infant assumes that the mother's subconscious hatred is the mother's feeling towards it. It experiences self-hate, which is then turned into guilt. It escapes from the guilt by developing identification with the mother – it changes self-hate into love, but this love is the love mode of jealousy. Jealousy follows guilt. Hence the sequence is:

Self-hate leads to guilt, which then leads to identification, which then leads to jealousy.

The jealousy may or may not be obvious, but the guilt is buried in the subconscious mind and so is not visible.

The mother had already imprinted her pattern of sexuality on the child. So now the child ties his jealousy to the mother's sexual feelings ; hence his image of her always has a sexual component. Through the stratagem of identification he ties his will to the mother's use of will ; this is his means of stabilising his own will. Finally, when he has become an adolescent he experiences sexual transference in social situations when anxiety acts on his jealousy.

The complete reaction from guilt to sexual transference is the Oedipus complex, as it relates to the child-mother relationship. The factor of identification within the complex generates intense feelings. The man will now find that for sustained passionate and intense sexual relationships to occur, his female partner needs to have traits of personality that are similar to those of his mother.

The number in brackets at the end of each reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[**1**]. The differences between my terms 'sexual desire' and 'sexual attraction' are explained in the article **Two Modes** on my website **Discover your mind**. See **Links**. [**1**]

[**2**]. Blackham, H. *Six Existential Thinkers*. Routledge, 1952 and 1986. A good description of Nietzche's idea of will and how it relates to values, attitudes, beliefs and character. [2]

[3]. Autism is discussed in the article **Depression and Autism**, on my website **Patterns of Confusion**. See **Links**. [3]

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The Subconscious Mind

Two Identities

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Two Ways of Handling Hatred

Infancy trauma always generates a long-term response: it deepens the intensity of hatred within the child. Hate can be used in two ways: it can be directed at oneself or it can be directed at other people. These responses of hate lead to the emotions of guilt and pride respectively. The child desperately needs to withdraw from hate, especially the self-hate. So it flees into either identification or self-absorption.

I look at both the ways of directing hatred. First I consider the flight from self-hate, and then I turn to the deflection of hate away

from oneself to other people.

The Flight from Self-Hate

The child's identification with the parent has, as its initial emotional dynamic, the self-hate within guilt. It is guilt in self-hate mode that produces the emotional bonding with the parent. The act of identification then enables the child to switch from self-hate to love ; now jealousy becomes the derivative or final dynamic of identification. The sequence of emotions that generate identification is:

Self-hate $\longrightarrow$ guilt (mode of self-hate) $\longrightarrow$ jealousy (mode of love).

The arrow can be read as 'leads to' and indicates the direction in which these emotions change, so that self-hate leads to guilt, and guilt leads to jealousy.

The identification with the parent enables the child to switch from guilt to jealousy. The child has created a breathing space for itself from the suffering of trauma. After trauma the child hates itself ; after identification it jealously loves the parent.

The pattern of identification with a parent lays the foundation for future episodes of identification with other significant people. Identification may bring with it excitement and passion, as when the young adult jealously follows his rock-star idols. But when a psycho-analysis probes

underneath all the veneer it reveals that identification is always a response to subconscious psychic pain.

The Deflection of Hate away from Oneself

After trauma the child directs its hatred at the mother, and generates pride. Pride in the mode of hate is not much of an alternative to guilt, since this mode of pride is always conducive to thoughts of violence. Now the child flees into self-absorption. *The initial emotional dynamic of self-absorption is pride in the mode of hatred towards others.* The act of becoming self-absorbed then switches this hate to love, so that narcissism arises. The sequence of emotions that generate self-absorption is:

Hate $\longrightarrow$ pride (mode of hate) $\longrightarrow$ narcissism (mode of love).

Again the child has created a breathing space from the suffering of trauma. After trauma the child hates the mother ; after self-absorption it loves itself.

Infancy trauma is a permanent reality for the sensitive infant. In order to survive, it has to originate long-term responses that can accommodate itself to this pain. Identification and self-absorption are the only responses that can do this and so in its ever-changing world the child swings between them. If these responses fail in later life, under the stress of social relationships, then the child (now become an adult) may slide

into periods of madness. Therefore infancy trauma has the effect of producing profound changes in the character of the child, the degree of change being related to the intensity of the trauma.

I consider that the period within which the infant is vulnerable to trauma is roughly from seven months to fifteen months of age. This is the time period for the creation of the ego – during this period the infant very susceptible to trauma. [1].

I put these ideas into diagrammatic form. The arrows indicate the direction in which these states of mind change, so that infancy trauma can lead either to guilt and thence jealousy, or to pride and then to narcissism.

Diagramme 1
Infancy   Trauma   Responses

Guilt → Identification with parent → Jealousy

Infancy trauma

Pride → Absorption in self → Narcissism

Infancy trauma always remains a subconscious dynamic for the adult (unless he / she can abreact it). No one of the two responses is final ; the adult can oscillate between jealousy and narcissism according to the current activity in the subconscious mind (whether that of identification or of self-absorption). But usually one response becomes favoured over the other one. The person either centres themself on jealousy or else on narcissism.

When I abreacted infancy trauma I created *diagramme 1* as a speculative way of explaining what happened to me. It ends in jealousy and narcissism (temporarily). I subsequently verified empirically that these ideas are true. When I examine my relationships from a perspective of emotional response, guilt always arises before jealousy, and pride always before narcissism. [However, when I examine my relationships from a perspective of desire then the standard patterns of abreaction produce different sequences].

The diagramme has to be continued to the right since jealousy and narcissism have two factors each. **In the presence of anxiety**, both jealousy and narcissism give rise to specific states of mind. Jealousy in self-pity mode leads to the need for social approval, and narcissism in vanity mode to the inferiority complex. The love mode of jealousy terminates in transference and the love mode of narcissism terminates in egoism.

Egoism usually has a bad name in Western moral thought. This is due to the negative influences of anxiety. However, in general, egoism means individuality. Transference is a social product, focusing on social happiness and social power. Egoism centres on the search for individual happiness and the power to be an individual, independent of society. Transference is the binary attitude to egoism. [2]

Diagramme 2
Terminations of Jealousy & Narcissism

Jealousy   **:** self-pity mode + anxiety →   need for social approval.

      : love mode + anxiety →   transference.

Narcissism   **:** vanity mode + anxiety →   inferiority complex.

      : love mode + anxiety →   egoism.

My interpretation of these results is that these sequences structure the person's sense of identity. *I split consciousness up into two factors, that of social identity and that of individual identity.*

Social identity leads to problems of transference and of dependency (that is, the need for social approval).

Individual identity causes problems with authority and with alienation.

The two identities usually conflict. Social identity requires the person to

lose his / her boundaries and become one of the group or the community ; consensus is needed. Whereas individual identity requires the person to remove confusion from his / her mind, thereby removing social dependency ; choice is desired. A person's life becomes the drama produced by the interaction between their two identities.
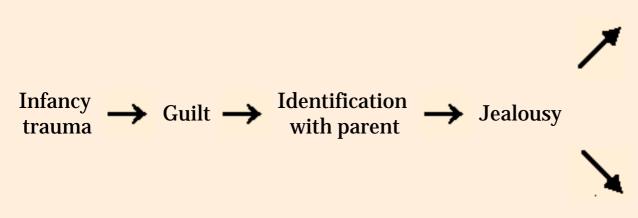
Social Identity

Social identity links identification with transference. For the child, transference is the preferred pattern of parental attributes. Sexual transference determines its preferences in sexual attitudes, and authority transference becomes the kind of authority that it admires in the parents. These preferences continue into adulthood.

The emotional dynamics of social identity are shown in the sequence that is given in *Diagramme 3a*. Here, infancy trauma ends by fluctuating between transference or the need for social approval.

Diagramme 3a
Social Identity

Infancy trauma → Guilt → Identification with parent → Jealousy → Transference

Consider a male heterosexual child.
He identifies primarily with the mother. Now examine half of this
sequence, which is that given in *Diagramme 3b*. Here, infancy trauma
ends in transference (that is, *the sexual form* of **Transference**).

<p style="text-align:center">**Diagramme 3b**
Oedipus   Complex</p>

Infancy trauma → Guilt → Identification with parent → Jealousy → Transference *(sexual form)*

This sequence, ending in sexual transference, is the psychological basis
for **the Oedipus complex** as it relates to the mother (the second part of
the complex, the relation to the father, is optional – my relation to my
father was more one of envy than jealousy).

Freud's postulation of this complex is not an imaginative fiction but a
psychological reality. It forms half of the person's social identity.
Assuming that a homosexual boy identifies primarily with the father then
the same sequence (but with the father replacing the mother in the

identification role) becomes his structure of sexual identity. I generalise this view: **the sequence from infancy trauma to sexual transference produces the child's sexual identity.** However, sexual identity may become uncertain and changeable when anxiety becomes too intense.

The authority structure of social identity is the sequence that is given in *Diagramme 3c.* Here, infancy trauma ends in transference (that is, *the authority form* of **Transference**).

<div align="center">

Diagramme 3c
Authority Transference

</div>

Infancy trauma → Guilt → Identification with parent → Jealousy → Transference *(authority form)*

The authority transference that is accepted by the child is the pattern of authority that is shown by the parent. Parental authority is usually ambiguous and variable. When it generates excessive anxiety in the child, then the child may swing between conformity and authoritarianism. Both responses are inharmonious methods of avoiding any feelings of self-hate rising into consciousness. In Western countries it is rather rare for a person to have a 'natural' and harmonious sense of social authority, based on respect for others.

Individual Identity

The emotional dynamics of individual identity are shown in the sequence that is given in *Diagramme 4a*. Here, infancy trauma ends by fluctuating between egoism and the inferiority complex.

Diagramme 4a
Individual Identity

Egoism

Infancy trauma → Pride → Absorption in self → Narcissism

Inferiority complex

Consider half of this sequence, as given in *Diagramme 4b*. This sequence is the psychological basis of a person's assertion of his own authority. On this basis he rejects authoritarian attempts to control him.

Diagramme 4b
Individual Authority

Infancy trauma $\rightarrow$ Pride $\rightarrow$ Absorption in self $\rightarrow$ Narcissism $\rightarrow$ Egoism

The factor of pride may give a 'hard' edge to this authority, and generate an attitude of intransigence to all social (and political) authority, including that which is merely incompetent. The inferiority complex may not be too troublesome to the child ; but when it generates excessive anxiety then that child may swing between a sense of failure and a sense of achievement and creativity.

> The difference between the two patterns of authority revolves around the issue of control. *Authority transference* makes a person want to control other people. Whilst *individual authority* enables a person to control himself / herself.

Summary

Putting these ideas together means that:

social identity is made up of sexual identity plus a preference towards either a sense of conformity or a sense of authoritarianism.

individual identity is made up of self-assertion plus an oscillation between a sense of failure and a sense of achievement and creativity.

Abreaction affects the person's values within both the conscious and the subconscious minds. For me, during much of my life, social memories were not usually important. I assume that for the socially-centred person, memories of individuality are not usually important. This pattern is not conducive to harmony.

The significance of abreaction is that it temporarily interchanges the relative importance of the two identities, so bringing character weakness and lack of conviction into awareness. Abreaction forces me, an individual, to examine my neglected social values. Whereas abreaction forces the socially-centred person to examine his / her neglected uniqueness. Also, any ideas that seem to be important during catharsis usually carry a lot of impracticality and naiveté with them ; the ensuing stages of resentment and bitterness help to make such ideas more realistic.

Now I can fit in the function of the two main types of abreaction, when the psychic pain that they produce is not excessive. Character weakness is removed by resentment and bitterness. [However, when the psychic pain is excessive, then undesirable attitudes such as racialism may be intensified ; this is a survival process, enabling a person to offload some of their distress onto other people].

Abreaction of guilt helps to strengthen social identity.

Abreaction of pride helps to strengthen individual identity.

The number in brackets at the end of each reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[1] . The time period for the creation of the ego is explained in the article **Creating the Ego**, on my website **Discover your mind**. Or in the article **Vulnerability of the Ego**, on my website **Patterns of Confusion**. See **Links**. [1]

[2]. Transference and egoism are binary states of mind. See the article **Projection and Introjection** on my website **Discover your mind**. See **Links**. [2]

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Effects of Infancy Trauma

Infancy trauma is not confined to the children of a few bad parents ; it occurs to most of humanity in some degree and has shaped the course of human evolution. It is one of the sources of the intellectual and artistic ideas that have been important to mankind.

There are five major effects of infancy trauma. The first three effects modify and even transform the person's character. And the last one shapes the person's sexual identity.

1). Infancy trauma creates the two identities.
Having two separate identities generates confusion ; usually the person will prefer one to the other. But once confusion is removed then he / she finds that they can be either an individual or socially-centred as the needs of the moment dictate. Infancy trauma is assimilated when the person has learned to balance the two identities.

2). Infancy trauma also bestows depth and intensity to

consciousness.

This effect is in proportion to its severity. This is the effect that enhances the production of intellectual and artistic ideas. A person who experienced little or no infancy trauma is likely to be an emotionally-balanced adult, but with little intensity to their character ; they will have little ability to understand the needs of other people. In general, it is only extreme sorrow, whatever its cause, that deepens consciousness. And there are few sorrows more extreme than infancy trauma.

3). The degree of severity of trauma in the infant can affect the degree of severity of abreaction in the adult.

If the child manages to contain trauma by establishing the processes of identification and self-absorption, then abreaction will be no worse than usual. But if in the adult these processes break down enough for episodes of madness to occur then life stays unpleasant even when normality is restored. Once madness brings the latent trauma into normal consciousness then the person's psychic pain threshold decreases. Trauma, when it is within awareness, sensitises the person to pain. From now on the pain of abreaction escalates to the point where little of lasting value can be attained in life – the need to avoid the backlash of abreactive hatred becomes greater than the need to achieve.

4). The person acquires the sensitivity to explore the hidden aspects of mind.

Ths effect follows on from the third one. The increased degree of sensitivity to psychic pain that is created by trauma enables a person to use the method of psycho-analysis to probe very deeply into the workings of the subconscious mind. The more psychic pain that a person has experienced in life, so the more deeply he / she can penetrate into the subconscious and unconscious minds. Extreme distress can bring extreme awareness. However, he / she also needs strong will power, an

ethical idealism and a dominant sense of survival. Hence psychoanalysis is not for everyone.

5). This is the construction of the Oedipus complex.

I summarise my ideas for the period in life when the infant is trying to create its ego (from about seven months of age onwards). The infant assumes that the mother's subconscious hatred is the mother's feeling towards it. It experiences self-hate, which is then turned into guilt. It escapes from the guilt by developing identification with the mother – it changes self-hate into love, but this love is the love mode of jealousy. Jealousy follows guilt.

Hence the sequence is:

Self-hate $\longrightarrow$ guilt $\longrightarrow$ identification $\longrightarrow$ jealousy.

The mother had already imprinted her pattern of sexuality on the child. So the child ties his jealousy to the mother's sexual feelings ; hence his image of her always has a sexual component.

Through the stratagem of identification he ties his will to the mother's use of will ; this is his means of stabilising his own will. The greater the effect of infancy trauma, the greater is the emotional attachment of identification.

Finally, when he has become an adolescent he experiences sexual transference in social situations when anxiety acts on his jealousy.

The complete reaction from guilt to transference is the Oedipus complex,

as it relates to the child-mother relationship. The factor of identification within the complex generates intense emotions. The man will now find that for sustained passionate and intense sexual relationships to occur, his female partner needs to have traits of personality that are similar to those of his mother.

[The only other way of generating intensity within sexual relationships is when they are based on the desire for power : the person uses sexuality to control and dominate the partner].

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The Need for a Stable Identity in a Changing World

A person's consciousness can be considered to be constructed around two major concepts: the search for identity, and the search for happiness and power. Which is primary? Above all else a person needs some form of stability in his life. And the most basic form of stability is to have a stable identity. Therefore identity comes before power and happiness.

In a stable society, or in a society that changes only slowly, a sense of identity is taken for granted and so the search for happiness and power takes centre stage.

However, in a rapidly changing society, a stable identity can no longer be built securely on external factors such as material possessions and a socially-recognised place in life. Only a person's own abilities – whether practical, creative, intellectual, ethical – can form the basis of a secure identity. Therefore, in a rapidly changing society, the search for meaning in life usually becomes directed into the desire to attain a stable identity.

The widespread discontent in Western countries has occurred because the fast pace of technological and social change has changed traditional roles that used to help determine a sense of identity. People who feel threatened by such change are having problems with their sense of identity ; those people who can ride such change can access feelings of power.

Everybody needs a sense of identity. An identity can take many forms: it can be psychological, social, sexual, individual, cultural, political, religious. So identities can be arranged in an hierarchy. A child begins at the psychological level (for example, 'I am the son of my parent'). As an adult, we work our way through the various levels, perhaps having a different identity at different ages. Which level we focus on at any particular time depends on how we subconsciously interpret our internal conflicts and sorrows, and on the order of importance that we put them in.

The manner in which we handle the greatest crisis, or crises, in our life will determine which level of identity is the most important to us. If we use religion for consolation, then our religious identity takes centre-stage. If we use community support, then our social identity takes the mantle of importance. If we rely only on our own abilities and strengths, then our individual identity is supreme.

In a stable society, problems are usually traditional problems, and have recognised means of resolving them. In a changing world, problems are often new ones, breeding new conflicts and needing new strategies for their solution. In a changing world, the attainment of a suitable identity

denotes that the person has resolved some important internal problems (that is, problems that exist within the mind). The attainment of a suitable identity means that some psychic pain has been released from the subconscious mind. Only when psychic pain is released is the person also released from the past, the past that the problems had kept him / her chained to.

Identities are often fragile and can be lost. A changing world implies that a person can lose an apparently stable sense of identity. For example, a political revolutionary, who believes in the necessity of violence to achieve his ends, will find it difficult to accept a peace process. The establishment of peace may mean that the revolutionary will lose his political identity.

The attempt to achieve a stable sense of identity in a changing world means that the person has to work their way through all the conflicts that the world throws at him or her. These conflicts become the content of the process of abreaction. In a changing world, new forms of conflict arise. Abreaction therefore throws up new ideas and beliefs, often with aspects of immorality attached to them. This means that a person seeking a new identity may be going into the unknown, and may be going into regions of consciousness that were traditionally considered to be forbidden.

For example, the sexual revolution in Britain and the USA from the 1960s onwards was a time of experimentation and diversity. This revolution threw up much sexual dross, but out of it came new and better attitudes to sexual expression and sexual identity.

In a world of change, how does a person create and stabilise an identity? Through the agencies of desire and emotion.

> *If I desire something of major importance to me, then that something becomes part of my definition of myself.*

A sense of identity is only a definition of oneself that is acceptable and realistic. The fulfilment of the desire helps to establish the identity. If the desire generates satisfactory emotional experience then an aspect of identity becomes stabilised ; if the emotional experience is unsatisfactory then that aspect of identity is likely to change or fade away. As more choice of desire becomes available to the person, so the possibilities for constructing a suitable definition of themself become more diversified. Hence choice is the basis of personal development.

Having established an identity, then the next step is to make it an harmonious one. The virtue of achieving an harmonious sense of identity is that it enables a person to achieve self-respect. Self-respect implies that internal conflict has decreased. Conversely, for a person to respect themself they must first achieve harmony in their sense of identity.

An harmonious sense of identity is necessary since at some time in the future the person will be likely to handle power. If an identity is not secure and harmonious then power will not be handled safely: the use of power will eventually reveal the areas of instability within the ego. Therefore the need for an identity comes before the need for power. Neither power, nor happiness, nor even wealth is an adequate compensation for a loss of identity.

In a rapidly changing world, a flexible individual identity is difficult to attain and a social identity can be precarious, and so the dream of a

permanent state of happiness becomes an elusive goal. Only choice has real value. The meaning of choice is that it enables a person to begin the attempt to construct his / her own sense of identity. Only when this is secure and harmonious is it possible for a person to handle power and happiness without being corrupted by them.

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Diagrammes

The diagrammes are collected together from the article '**Two Identities**' . They indicate the emotional dynamics of the two identities of each person.

Diagramme 1: Infancy Trauma Responses

Diagramme 2: Terminations of Jealousy & Narcissism

Diagramme 3a: Social Identity

Diagramme 3b: Oedipus Complex

Diagramme 3c: Authority Transference

Diagramme 4a: Individual Identity

Diagramme 4b: Individual Authority

Diagramme 1
Infancy Trauma Responses

Guilt → Identification with parent → Jealousy

Infancy trauma

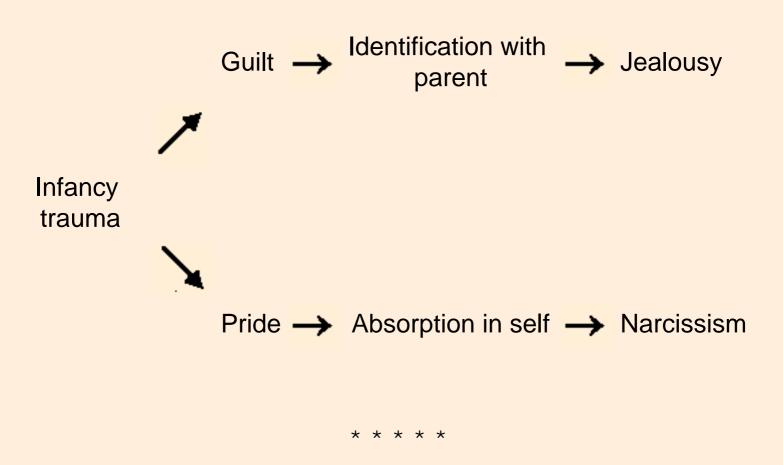Pride → Absorption in self → Narcissism

* * * * *

Diagramme 2
Terminations of Jealousy & Narcissism

Jealousy : self-pity mode + anxiety → need for social approval.

: love mode + anxiety → transference.

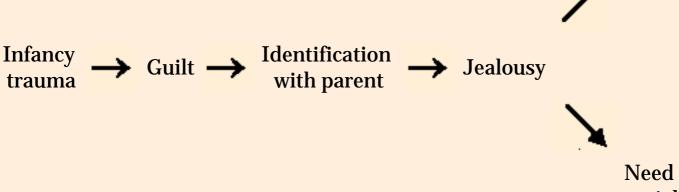Narcissism : vanity mode + anxiety → inferiority complex.

: love mode + anxiety $\longrightarrow$ egoism.

* * * *

Diagramme 3a
Social Identity

Transference

Infancy trauma $\longrightarrow$ Guilt $\longrightarrow$ Identification with parent $\longrightarrow$ Jealousy

Need for social approval

* * * *

Diagramme 3b
Oedipus Complex

Infancy trauma $\longrightarrow$ Guilt $\longrightarrow$ Identification with parent $\longrightarrow$ Jealousy $\longrightarrow$ Transference

(sexual form)

* * * * *

Diagramme 3c
Authority Transference

Infancy
trauma → Guilt → Identification
with parent → Jealousy → Transference

*(authority
form)*

* * * * *

Diagramme 4a
Individual Identity

Egoism

Infancy
trauma → Pride → Absorption
in self → Narcissism

Inferiority
complex

* * * * *

Diagramme 4b
Individual Authority

Infancy trauma → Pride → Absorption in self → Narcissism → Egoism

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The Subconscious Mind

Abreaction -

Effects on Identity

The links in the table on the left take you to sub-headings in this article.

Beliefs and Identity

Sub-headings
Fear and confusion
Function of abreaction
Advantages of instability
Stages to abreaction
Reference

People require beliefs. People cannot function harmoniously without beliefs that make sense of their lives.

The problem here is that beliefs gradually become inadequate and so need to be changed and updated. But people are not willing to change their beliefs. A process is needed which forces them to change. This is the role, the function, of abreaction.

In a stable society, when a person has achieved an harmonious lifestyle, underpinned by adequate beliefs, then abreaction may be a rarity. Each person

has learned how to satisfy his needs, which do not alter. He has no reason to change his beliefs.

Whereas, times of social change indicate that needs and opportunities are changing ; beliefs have to change too so that each person can meet the new challenges and continue to make sense of life. Abreaction becomes a regular aspect of human life in times of change.

Abreaction revolves around belief systems. Belief systems that are self-contradictory or are out of harmony with evolving needs will, sooner or later, generate abreaction.

As the child grows up, its immediate task is to create an identity for itself. It experiences different areas of life repeatedly – politics (of the family), religious beliefs (of the family), sexuality (both its own and the parents), social relationships, etc. These different experiences generate different beliefs, which may or may not be harmonious with each other. For example, its political beliefs may orientate around power, its sexual beliefs may orientate on fear, and its religious beliefs around guilt. [This is why I focus on systems, or patterns, of beliefs, rather than individual beliefs].

The child creates its identity by the way that it learns to put value on its systems of belief. In effect, an identity is an ideology, or a system of beliefs where some are valued more than others.

When a child has a happy upbringing, any belief is likely to be harmonious with the other beliefs. On this basis the child can construct a stable identity.

The outcome is different for a child who experiences dominant fear and anxiety during its early childhood. When fear and anxiety become dominant in one area of life, then the beliefs generated in that area are not harmonious with the child's beliefs in other areas of its life. Its identity is potentially unstable.

Fear and Confusion

Fear creates barriers in the mind. These barriers separate the mind into compartments that do not inter-act with each other.

Another complication is that due to confusion. Confusion produces the opposite effect to fear: it produces fuzzy boundaries between different needs and different beliefs. The child may not be able to separate its own sexuality from the sexuality of its mother and / or its father. It may not be able to separate its own needs from the needs of its parents.

Likewise, for example, the child's sexual beliefs may shape its religious beliefs. Beliefs that sexual activity should be free and unrestrained by social mores may stimulate religious beliefs that incorporate 'free love' in the community (such as the anabaptists of the 19th century). Beliefs on the grandeur of sexual purity may fertilise bleak and intolerant religious views (such as Puritanism).

> Confusion is the result of a lack of awareness: the child is not aware
> of the manner in which its needs shape its beliefs.

Overall, the child's sense of identity is fragmented and confused to the extent that its mind's contents are either compartmentalised by fear or blurred together by confusion. The unhappy child has a patchwork pattern of beliefs, and so has a patchwork identity. The happy child has a consistent pattern of beliefs, and so correspondingly his sense of identity is harmonious. In the modern Western world, a happy childhood is an unlikely event. Whence the difference between stability and instability is a relative one, depending on the intensity of fear and anxiety that maintain the barriers in the mind, aided by a lack of awareness.

Function of Abreaction

In the process of personal growth, beliefs that are no longer useful or productive

need to be dissolved and then replaced by more adequate ones. Since many important beliefs are subconscious ones, a process is needed to bring them into awareness. This is what abreaction achieves. Abreaction ensures that beliefs, whether conscious ones or subconscious ones, that are relevant to any particular current problem become susceptible to analysis and evaluation.

Abreaction gives the opportunity to update beliefs; this is an on-going process, since any belief is only adequate for a time. No matter how adequate and effective a belief is at the moment, sooner or later it will need updating. [This is why I classify beliefs as adequate or inadequate, rather than good or bad, true or false. Even present 'good' beliefs will eventually need to be replaced as the person evolves].

> In effect, personal evolution is a process of continually updating the person's sense of identity.

The child creates its sense of identity from its various patterns of belief. As the normal child grows into the adult, earlier patterns are replaced by more mature ones – this process is continuous and relatively free from difficult problems since fear is not a big barrier in the mind. The adult has learned to define his ego boundaries fairly clearly. Stability of identity has been attained because consistent patterns of belief create a stable structure of mind. Identity is always a construction that the ego has to achieve.

However, for the person who has experienced mental disorder this construction of a stable identity with clear ego boundaries does not happen ; the person can have access to all the past patterns of belief because he cannot disentangle himself from them. He is unable to face the fear. Past patterns remain a permanent feature of his subconscious mind. His ego boundaries may be blurred in situations that he finds difficult to handle. So in some situations of high anxiety the disturbed person will react from subconscious beliefs still anchored in his childhood, or even from a pre-verbal level of infancy.

A happy childhood and a stable identity are a sign of good fortune but not necessarily a sign of evolutionary blessing. A contented adult is likely to have a narrow horizon of ideals. Whereas the discontented adult has to keep moving, has to keep exploring regions of the mind as he seeks to surmount his sorrows and misery.

Advantages of Instability

I have had more than a fair share of sorrow in my life, and this has led me to develop my mental abilities. Once I embarked on the development of my intellect and self-awareness within the framework of a psycho-analysis I accessed innumerable instances of intuition and insight. *My schizophrenic mentality* has kept open to me all my previous patterns of belief. And *my introverted mentality* has given me the sensitivity to be aware of all the disharmonies. Hence in my reveries I could reach down into my subconscious mind and make contact with these confused responses of my childhood.

But there is also a disadvantage: **my schizophrenic mind is slow to understand experience**. To understand means to change the level of awareness from confusion to clarity, and this takes time, time in which the person still experiences psychological pain.

The mind of a schizophrenic person is more amorphous than the structured mind of a normal person. The normal person keeps his stability through his habitual desires and ambitions and fixed beliefs. But there is a disadvantage here. *The structured mind prevents insight and intuition.* The structured mind prevents the recognition of the need to change. Only in times of acute stress, when the structure is breaking down, is insight facilitated. My amorphousness is one of the main reasons that I have had more intuition than other, more conventional thinkers.

No one who is conventional, who is relatively stable, could have produced a theory of psychology similar to mine, since intuition would not have functioned to the extent necessary to penetrate the darkness of the confused mind. Only a schizophrenic person can understand schizophrenia, though the psychiatrists Harry Stack Sullivan and R.D. Laing did pretty well for their times.

> A stable thinker may have the occasional insight into a problem, but for regular periods of creativity, some degree of instability is required. This is a one-way relationship. A creative thinker (or artist)

needs instability, but many people who are unstable are not creative.

I came out of the old school: stiff-upper lip, never show negative emotional responses (keep them repressed), and keep yourself to yourself whenever possible. The irony here is that in order to journey to the end of a complete psycho-analysis (and I am probably the first person who has achieved this) I had to develop my subjectivity and live in full awareness of all my negative emotions.

In stressful social situations the adult can react from a pre-verbal level of infancy. What is the significance of this? It indicates that the person had suffered trauma, in some degree, in his infancy. The difficulties of childhood lie mainly in the first eighteen months, for it is in this period that trauma can occur most easily. [1]

Trauma in infancy indicates that it occurred before the establishment of a stable ego, before any significant range of verbal capacity existed. Such sorrow sensitises the child to abreaction (even children experience abreaction). Once the person has become an adult, he can use abreaction to bring up all the non-verbalised beliefs (and attitudes, desires, etc) so that they can be examined and conceptualised. The beliefs have been repressed. Therefore to initiate abreaction he has to establish contact with the feelings that maintain these repressed beliefs. Intellectual knowledge alone cannot do this.

Not all repression, and subsequent abreaction, originates during this early period of childhood. Nevertheless, infancy problems set the framework within which later difficulties are handled.

The tender ego of the child cannot handle conflict, so some childhood experiences engender guilt automatically. Upon this guilt, resentment (and right-wing attitudes) so easily arises when the child has become an adult. Only through understanding the cause can such resentment be surmounted. There is no one to blame. Neither the mother, the father, nor the child are to blame. Childhood is simply a problem to overcome. And the practices of compassion, forgiveness and acceptance are the only ways to overcome it.

Stages to Abreaction

Abreaction does not get rid of attitudes and beliefs and motivations, even if they are undesirable ones. What it does is to make them the centre of attention. Then it has to be complemented by two other aspects of mind - self awareness and idealism - in order to make one's pattern of beliefs more harmonious and consistent. Hence there are three stages to this process.

1. First focusing attention.
Abreaction highlights the current problem and the separate redundant or contradictory beliefs that flow into it. The mood of each stage of abreaction brings in its own set of beliefs about the problem. So beliefs change as moods change.

2. Then awareness.
The person needs to cultivate and use self-awareness. This enables him to work through the stages of abreaction. With awareness comes the likelihood of developing insight into his problem. This is the crucial step, since insight removes compulsion from an issue.

3. Finally idealism.
His sense of idealism facilitates the resolution of the conflict. He has learned to see all sides of the problem. He acquires a better understanding of himself.
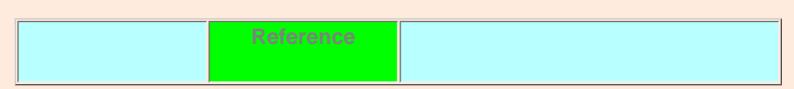
Insight gets rid of any form of compulsion that is attached to attitudes, beliefs, etc. It is important to realise that compulsion can be attached to good attributes of character as well as to bad ones. Even good attitudes and beliefs and

motivations are subject to the process of abreaction. After an abreaction has been resolved by insight, a person can effectively choose whether or not to continue to be influenced by the state of mind that has been abreacted.

However, a complex problem may have many factors to it, and each factor will generate its own abreaction. Hence many abreactions will be needed to completely resolve the problem.

If the person decides to leave behind the particular problem that has been abreacted, he will still occasionally return to it, but there will no longer be any compulsion attached to it. So it loses its power over him. Whence the intensity of that problem gradually fades away with time.

In the next article **Abreaction - Examples**, I give examples of abreactions that I experienced during my self-analysis.

	Reference	

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[**1**]. The time period for the creation of the ego is explained in the article **Creating the Ego**, on my website **Discover your mind**. Or in the article **Vulnerability of the Ego**, on my website **Patterns of Confusion**. See **Links**. [1]

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Examples of Abreaction

Abreaction has a simple structure. There are several types – the abreactions of guilt, pride, etc. And there is a gradation of depth or intensity. This gradation I divide into an ascending scale of minor, major, and intense experiences.

Minor abreactions can be difficult to detect in all their stages if a parent or a partner is not around to be a source of conflict. As conflict intensifies, so abreactions intensify too.

Major abreactions can last for many days, even weeks; their length allows deep insights into one's attitudes, beliefs and motivations to occur. Complex patterns of attitudes and beliefs and motivations need time for their exploration. When I abreacted my sense of idealism, the stage of bitterness alone lasted several weeks.

But it is the **intense abreactions** that can effectively change character, though they rarely last more than a few days.

I illustrate my experiences of the last type.

Example A .

I was on holiday in the autumn of 1991; my holiday reading was the books of R. D. Laing. I was analysing my thoughts on compliance, and this made my anxiety level increase over a period of a few hours. I was in a local café when the anxiety began to escalate beyond my ability to control it in public ; I had to retreat into the solitude of my room. The degradation of compliance was eating deeply into me. I thought of my job – the compliance of staying within materialistic rules and regulations for years, instead of having the courage to be free. I could not face my cowardice. Then wave after wave of bitterness swept over me. The psychic pain was almost beyond anything that I had ever experienced up till then – only catatonia had been a greater pain. I could do nothing but lay on my bed and cry.

What I was doing was abreacting my childhood attitude of compliance and the bitterness that it engendered in me. The intensity of my pain represented the intensity of the pain that I felt in childhood.

During this abreaction I at last solved the problem of what it is that rapidly ages a person – *it is bitterness !* Years later, during another intense abreaction, I felt the ageing process in the front part of the brain. Bitterness ages the frontal lobe.

The difficulty with understanding abreaction is that no internal voice tells you what is happening; figuratively speaking, no book of instructions comes with the experience. **The person has to make his own interpretation, depending upon the ideas that he was reflecting on before abreaction began.**

For three years I thought that the abreaction of compliance represented the elimination of the inferiority complex. Then I thought that it represented the elimination of my schizophrenic state of mind. Now I accept that it represented the elimination of the view that schizophrenia is a 'bad' state of mind. In some conditions, schizophrenia can be quite a useful skill, especially in the way that a person learns the value of privacy (by separating his internal life from social necessities).

This view of the abreaction of compliance does not mean that this abreaction

actually eliminated compliance; only that it eliminated compliance as an automatic behavioural response in states of high anxiety. I can still choose to be compliant if I want to. It is always some aspect of determinism that is eliminated by abreaction.

Why is such intense bitterness linked to crucial experiences of sorrow or failure in life ?

> *Whenever a child or an adult adopts a belief or persistent state of mind which demeans his sense of nobility or spiritual idealism then a counter-belief is always induced as well.*

> This counter-belief generates either bitterness or sorrow at the person's failure. So bitterness or sorrow always accompanies the abreaction of the demeaning belief.

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Example B .

My second intense abreaction occurred some fifteen months later. I was reflecting on the contrast between the romanticism and heroism of narcissism (which I identified with) and the attitudes of morality within jealousy (which I did not identify with). My thoughts turned to the need for social approval; some more analysis cleared up my ideas about it. I now understood that this need was more insidious that I had previously realised. I felt so humiliated by this need. Then the floodgates of sorrow opened. I became overwhelmed by grief and crying. As the tears poured out of me I felt my head and hands become bathed in tingling sensations: my astral friends (my friends in heaven) were giving me psychic help. In my grief I wanted nothing but to disintegrate my consciousness. I needed to reject everything.

This abreaction was difficult to understand. I seemed to have abreacted forms of self-pity, such as the need for social approval, the desire for oblivion, and perhaps autistic tendencies. This abreaction took the longest of any abreaction to work its changes in my consciousness – probably about ten months. The abreaction did not last this length of time. The abreaction took only about a day

or two, but the recovery from it is that which takes the time since the person is changing his beliefs.

During the time of change I was still susceptible to the need for social approval, but its intensity gradually diminished to a level that was much easier to handle. This need is perhaps too deep to be eliminated, since it is a part of a person's identity. What happens is that the person's attitude to it changes : the introvert no longer feels it to be degrading. When this change of mind occurs, then the need for social approval can be used in a beneficial way.

Example C .

Five weeks later, in February 1993, I was reading about the way that the eagerness and thirst for wisdom that some people show early in adult life ends by getting smothered and buried by the demands of materialism – the philosophic quest to understand life cannot usually transcend economic necessity. I thought of my own particular nightmares that the pursuit of wisdom had brought me. Soon I was crying over all the horrors that I have been through in my quest. Again I felt my scalp tingle as my astral friends gave me psychic help.

I am not completely certain of my interpretation of this abreaction. I think that I abreacted infancy trauma itself, but it was in no way as bad as the abreactions of compliance / schizophrenia and of the need for social approval. This view suggests that the abreaction of a trauma is less intense than the abreaction of the corresponding counter-belief that the experience of trauma generates.

Example D .

A year later I was reflecting on the difference between will power and idealism. I had just finished my long-running analysis of sexuality. There was an enormous yearning in me to go into solitude in order to develop my will. Yet sexual

analysis made the cultivation of will power impossible. The need to let my mind function through free-association precluded the possibility of developing one-pointed concentration. My idealism needed to understand sexuality, yet I found sexual analysis to be so degrading. My life was a conflict between my will and my idealism. Traditional spirituality (within the context of meditation and contemplation) requires intense will power. So I could not follow it. Then understanding dawned on me. Idealism always requires sacrifice; it is not an inferior mode of spirituality.

Floods of tears poured out of me. I could not stop crying. Again I felt my astral friends give me help as I went through an intense abreaction. Every time in the past when I had attempted to escape from my self-analysis, fate had blocked my way. Fate had kept me trapped in sorrow so that I was forced to think my way out of that sorrow. Now I could let go of the sense of inferiority at not being allowed to follow the classical yoga path. This sense of inferiority was very deep: it made me disdain tradition and conventional teachers. And now my tears were abreacting this stigma. I was abreacting my inferiority complex !

There was a challenging consequence to this abreaction. Next day the world became dead to me. Alfred Adler was right. All desire for achievement in the material world is simply a compensation for the inferiority complex. Eliminate the inferiority complex and there is nothing that a person needs to achieve within materialism. Eliminate the inferiority complex and the desire for power becomes valueless. Eliminate the inferiority complex and only spiritual development retains any meaning. (As previously mentioned, what is eliminated is compulsion; in this case it was the compulsiveness of feeling inferior, which in turn leads to the compulsion to achieve). For the spiritual idealist the purpose of life is only to collect experience in order to be able to help others to help themselves.

Example E .
My next intense abreaction took place in December 1994. I had ceased to take any intellectual interest in what was happening to me, as a way of trying to stop the seemingly-endless psycho-analysis (which began in late 1986). I considered that it was over. In this situation, where intellectual analysis is not present, then

intense abreactions produce symbolic imagery to indicate what is happening.

One night catharsis started. The following night the stage of guilt was reached. As I lay in bed I had to constantly swallow the saliva that my mouth was copiously generating. I was gulping every couple of seconds. I had to sleep with my head propped up. Obviously my throat chakra (which is the seat of problems with purity, especially those deriving from guilt) had gone into overdrive.

Towards morning I had two dreams. The first one lasted just a few seconds and was a scenario of explosion. It seemed as if the Earth itself had exploded; I was being propelled through space, with other debris, at a very fast velocity. The second dream explained the first one. It was a dream of sexual innocence. I therefore interpreted the first dream as indicating the demolition of my sexual guilt. After the dreams ceased my swallowing slowly ceased as well. This abreaction eliminated the compulsiveness of my sexual guilt. This result means that now when I experience guilt in self-hate mode I no longer need to resort to sexual phantasy as a compensation or escape.

Fear versus Anxiety

Abreaction does not eliminate any actual trait of character, even if the person wanted some trait to be purged from him. In fact, until the roots of fear are eradicated, no undesirable trait can be fully eliminated. Abreaction removes anxiety from association with traits, and anxiety includes a factor of fear. So abreaction reduces the influence of some traits, but that is all. Fear, when it is just by itself and not a part of anxiety, cannot be removed by abreaction and psycho-analysis; instead, the person has to learn to manage it by using other methods.

The difference between fear and anxiety is related to the issue of reincarnation. Most, perhaps all, problems that originate in a person's present life give rise to anxiety rather than fear. When a person dies his problems are put on hold whilst he sojourns in heaven. But these problems will re-appear once he reincarnates back to Earth. But now there is a difference. It seems that anxiety cannot be 'reincarnated' along with the person. Instead, the old

anxieties have transformed into fear. When the person is born once more on Earth his old problems are now associated with fear instead of with anxiety.

The difference between fear and anxiety shapes the boundaries of psycho-analysis. Psycho-analysis can treat the anxieties of the present life, but not the fears of former lives.

I give an example. Suppose that a person incarnates on Earth with a major problem concerning external authority: he prefers to rebel against all forms of authority because he fears it. During his life he will experience many situations of conflict because of this particular attitude. He will associate much anxiety with the memories of these conflicts. If the person eventually goes into a psycho-analysis, he can get rid of all the anxieties that these conflicts have caused him. But he will not be able to get rid of the actual fear of authority that he was born with. Hence any future conflict with authority is likely to generate anxiety again.

Problems can be viewed within the framework of *form and content.* The fear of authority can be considered to be 'form'. The actual experiences of conflict that this problem causes can be considered to be 'content'.

**For any problem,
psycho-analysis can get rid of content but not form.**

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Abreaction -

Creative Illness

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Originality and Psychological illness

Sub-headings
Loneliness
Pain of insight
Handling the ego
Reference

Henri Ellenberger, in his book '*The Discovery of the Unconscious'*, gives a history of modern psychology. He shows that many of the major ideas of Freud and Jung were already known to hypnotists and psychologists of the nineteenth century. These ideas were scattered round several experimentalists, till collected together by the French psychologist Pierre Janet, whom Freud and Jung met at the Salpetriere in Paris.

What Freud and Jung did was to reformulate (and re-discover where necessary) this knowledge, add their own insights, and then originate acceptable models of

consciousness for the twentieth century.

Ellenberger refers to the 'creative' illness of Freud and of Jung, the way that each one's interior journey gave rise to his particular theory. Their explorations of the subconscious and unconscious minds meant the exploration of the dark side of the mind, the realm of negative beliefs and attitudes.

Negative beliefs and attitudes cannot be analysed until they are brought into normal consciousness. This process does indeed create psychological illness. Whether it is creative or crippling depends upon the capacity of the explorer to withstand psychological shock, the shock of facing the unpleasant aspects of oneself. He has to use his will to prevent hasty retreat from this encounter. Ultimately everything depends on the strength of will of the explorer and on the way that the explorer uses that will.

The use of will requires meaning. There has to be a reason why the will should be used, why the person should face unpleasantness. He has to have an ideal. Where the desire for meaning accepts traditional values, then the person will only skim the surface of his internal darkness. Where the desire for meaning goes against traditional values, where the person is prepared to investigate revered values of tradition, then the person's interior journey may generate severe psychological shock. This will occur if age-old values are discovered to originate from 'immoral' sources.

In my view, Nietzsche went deeper into the mind's darkness than either Freud or Jung. I went deeper than Nietzsche. I survived my journey but Nietzsche did not survive his. I had greater will power and greater idealism than he had.

Where the desire for meaning is weak then the explorer's will is also likely to be weak – in this situation, ability to explore oneself in depth should not be expected.

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Loneliness

During most of my self-analysis I worked at a local hospital as a porter. My only companion was my mother, with whom I lived. I no longer had any local

friends. My problems were my own and I never discussed them with anyone, not even with my mother. Effectively I was in intellectual isolation for many years. Freud and Jung also worked much of their self-analyses in isolation too.

Isolation is necessary in order to prevent premature criticism by other people from interrupting, or even destroying, the internal evolution of self-consciousness. The first fruits of developing self-consciousness bring immature aspects of the mind into awareness. The explorer has to work his way through this immaturity; he has to be allowed to indulge in naïve phantasies that have sexual and violent themes, so that he can analyse them. He must not be stopped by the criticisms of other well-meaning but misguided people. So isolation cannot be avoided.

Unfortunately, this isolation brings loneliness as an automatic corollary to it. The isolation can be adapted to, but the loneliness is killing. This loneliness is inevitable because the explorer on his interior journey is going into regions of consciousness never previously explored at a cognitive level of awareness. By this statement I mean that there have been countless numbers of neurotic and psychotic persons in the past, but none of them understood what was happening to them. Hence there is no one who can help the explorer or *even understand what he is attempting to do.* **All he can do is believe in himself.** [Strange as it may seem, there were times during my interior journey when even my soul and my spirit guides did not understand what I was trying to do].

When the need for social approval is abreacted then loneliness dies down to a minimal level. Then the person can develop a mature attitude to society, which he neither rejects nor is dependent upon. Aloneness becomes the state of the unique individuality of the person. Loneliness arises from social identity and jealousy (mode of self-pity); aloneness is the burden of individual identity and is based on pride (mode of hate) controlled by idealism.

My attitude to society has gone through several phases. For the past few years I defined myself as being friendly but not social. Now I am beginning to orientate more towards being social.

Pain of Insight

An intense psycho-analysis produces long periods of resentment and bitterness. An intense psycho-analysis is a painful process. In my interior journey I travelled through states of madness. My pain was intense because the processes of madness needed to be understood, so I had to repeatedly experience these states of mind till I did understand them. That was my destiny. Before insight can occur, the relevant experience has to become familiar to the person. Strange experiences cannot be understood whilst they are still strange. Insight and understanding require familiarity. Hence insight required me to keep in the wilderness of pain. **Psychological insight is painful.**

The pain of insight arises because abreaction is dialectical. Even when I try to do good my efforts produce bad effects on me (as well as good ones). The spiritual journey is a meander through life, now two steps forward and one step back, then one step forward and two steps back. In the world of the idealist, the shortest distance between two points is a zig-zag.

The pain of insight arises because my phantasies of abreaction reveal my own degradation. This degradation smashes my self-image and I have to rebuild my integrity anew each time. Only my idealism enables me to do this. Hence idealism is needed to enable a person to withstand abreaction. Will power needs to be complemented by idealism.

> *The distinction between will and idealism is that will enables me to persevere, despite my distress, whilst idealism enables me to assimilate my distressful experiences.*

The pain of insight arises because the violence in a person is a product of all the sorrow that he has experienced. Abreaction brings this sorrow into consciousness. Only by living through this sorrow can the person finally achieve the state of non-violence. The necessity of ascetic self-control is that it enables this violence to be lived in phantasy instead of expressing itself in social relations.

Handling the Ego

There are two components to a person: his present state of mind and his past states of mind. His present state is the ego, and all the past states are his psychological and moral conditioning (his karma). In my 'creative illness' I formulated a view of my ego that was based on my empirical results. This view reflects the manner in which emotions are associated with complex patterns of beliefs and attitudes.

Each emotion carries with it a set attitude of mind. Any particular attitude or belief arises automatically when the relevant emotion is currently present in the conscious mind or is active in the subconscious mind. Where the pattern of belief and attitude is currently more dominant than the associated emotion, then the emotional response will last longer than usual – so this condition is a 'mood'.

A psycho-analysis reveals that the ego persistently identifies itself with its moods and desires. The ego orientates itself around its two identities. Some moods and desires are allocated to the individual identity and others to the social identity. Yet even this split is only a framework for further splitting. *Each of the moods within either identity acts like a sub-ego.* Hence each 'person' is functionally a multitude of sub-egos, of sub-personalities.

Because a person identifies his ego with the current sub-ego, there is no recognition of 'ego-switching' as the current mood changes – there is only a recognition that the mood has changed. There are no barriers between the sub-egos, so this is not 'multiple personality' disorder (where some sub-egos do not know of the existence of other ones).

> Do I feel the joy of life, or is it the narcissism-centred sub-ego that feels it ?

> Do I feel that life has no meaning, or is it the guilt-centred sub-ego that feels it ?

> When the desire for a sexual partner arises, is this my desire or is it just the jealousy-centred sub-ego generating it ?

I do not believe in the religious concept of ego-denial. My method of handling a troublesome sub-ego is to acknowledge it when it is present and then try to put it to one side. This procedure avoids identifying with it and its associated value judgements. This way I can learn detachment. I think of myself as being on a stage; I put my sub-egos in the front row. *I thereby recognise their right to exist and so avoid repressing them.* This procedure is a ceremonial interpretation of monad theory. The monad, as a self-sufficient being, has to project and introject amongst his own sub-personalities.

[This procedure breaks down when a psychological 'trigger point' is activated. A trigger point occurs when the person's regular response to a particular situation has become one of fear, rather than one of anxiety. Then the upsurge of fear may be so powerful that it might not always be possible to avoid identifying with it.]

Take away the moods and desires – what becomes of the ego ? A psycho-analysis reveals to the person how his mind works, but it cannot reveal who or what he is. Awareness takes the enquiry one stage higher: the person watches how his moods and desires interact. But even awareness does not reveal who or what he is, only what he is not.

      I am not my individual identity.

      I am not my religious identity.
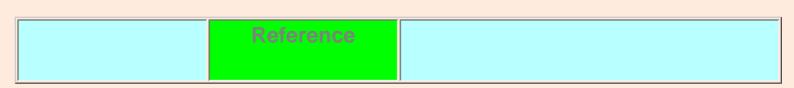
      I am not my political identity.

      I am not my sexual identity.

      I am not my social identity.

My idealism is not the same as the influence on me of my soul.
When I use my idealism to control my ego, who is acting on whom, or what is happening to what ? I do not know.

And I have not found any meaningful answer in any philosophical, religious or theosophical literature that I have read. For the explorer of consciousness, answers can only lie in the future.

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Justification
and
Existentialism

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The Age of Identity

Sub-headings

The old & the new

Motivation

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Effects on identity

The new age that Aquarius is proclaimed to be is new in a way that most people do not realise.

The previous age of Pisces lacked any deep understanding of the psychological side of human nature. This showed itself in the lack of interest in the issue of identity. Choice was a rarity in the Middle Ages, and only applicable to religion and politics, usually for the wealthy and the nobility. It could not be applied to the common person's sense of identity ; identity was a given from birth to death.

All that was available for people during Pisces were a few maxims and insights into character and relationships, from writers such as La Rochefoucauld and Montaigne. This lack is what the new age will address.

Aquarius will be the age of identity.

The movement from Pisces to Aquarius is the movement from the old to the new, from convention to choice, from old concepts of identity to new ones. In this movement, a few existentialist writers have played a major role.

From the late 18th century, psychological awareness began to develop in a few people. It can be debated who the forerunners were. In my view, the seeds of some modern thinking can be read into Rousseau's writings (particularly *Reveries of a Solitary Walker*).

However, two of the first modern writers that featured psychological awareness were Kierkegaard and Nietzsche in the 19th century. Kierkegaard wrote *The Sickness unto Death*, and Nietzsche gave a psychological critique of Christian values and morality. Together these two writers approached psychology from a perspective that has been labelled existentialism.

What drove them to expand their psychological awareness into an exploration of motivation is the subject of this article. In my view, it is the pursuit of justice, using the concept of truth as their intellectual scalpel. This is an event in history that is not fully appreciated, since the development of psychological awareness is extremely difficult to do on one's own as a solitary explorer.

The Old and the New

The peculiar essence of the 19th century was that it saw the conflux of two opposite aspects of consciousness: the psychic and the psychological.

The traditional spiritual path, whether seen as religious or secular, was based on moral and ethical development. There are many strands to this path, such as the practices of duty, devotion, or asceticism. The hardest strand is that which focuses on the psychic nature of consciousness. This revolves around harmonising and controlling the mind, using techniques of meditation, concentration and contemplation.

During the 19th century, awareness of the psychic nature began to trickle down to the Western masses, via public issues such as mesmerism, hypnotism, seances, and the promotion of theosophical and Buddhist ideas.

Simultaneously, there was a trickle up of psychological awareness into religious and secular movements, such as Christian Socialism and the Fabian society. Psychological awareness revolves around harmonising and controlling the emotions and desires. But this awareness failed to penetrate very far into traditional ideas of spirituality. This blockage remains so even at the beginning of the 21st century.

Therefore, there are two quite separate classes of thought about spirituality: the traditional path and the existentialist path. The old and the new. Perhaps the Aquarian age will blend them together. Whether this happens or not, one thing is certain: the age of Aquarius will be the age of psychology.

Motivation

Why does a person go on the search for higher values in life? Why does he or she go on the search to find a deeper meaning to life? The answer relates to the issue of sensitivity.

Sooner or later a person reaches the point in his personal evolution when materialistic values and goals no longer completely satisfy him. He loses attachment to a materialist life when his level of sensitivity has reached the point that he can no longer find harmony in such a life. This high level of sensitivity is the watershed in personal evolution ; it means that he can now become receptive to the influence of his soul.

This influence can be labelled an 'internal' drive, a drive that arises within his consciousness. This can be contrasted with 'external' drives, when the person comes under the spell of external criteria, such as wealth, fame, etc, and becomes egotistically motivated to attain them.

When the person becomes receptive to his soul, then he comes under the influence of one or more of four powerful internal drives: the desires for union, justice, freedom, and truth. His motivation becomes the way that he handles and directs these drives into suitable ideals.

As a simple guide:

Religious seekers desire union with god.

Socialists desire justice.

New Age seekers desire freedom.

Existentialists desire truth and justice.

Socialists want justice, but they do not want truth. So the pursuit of truth is that which separates the existentialist from the socialist. In addition, the socialist is conscious of his desire for justice, whilst for the existentialist, this desire may be subconscious.

Existentialists value truth because it is through the pursuit of truth that they try to achieve justice. So the desire for justice (whether conscious or subconscious) powers the search for truth. This is true for me, and, in my view, it was true for Nietzsche. It seems strong in Camus' books that I have read. Perhaps it is true for all existentialists, though some of them were obscure about what motivated them. [When a drive is not clearly delineated, then the person is unclear about his aims – so the drive remains at a subconscious level].

The intensity of any drive varies with the degree of personal evolution and with the time factors in a life. My drives were of medium intensity in my 20s, low in my 30s, and very high in my 40s and 50s.

Which of the drives is most important can also change during a life. I became an existentialist when I was 23, after reading Kierkegaard's *Sickness unto Death*. However, this influence remained low-key during my 20s and 30s. I was primarily socialist / anarchist in my 20s, religious in my 30s, and existentialist above all in my 40s and 50s.

The Search for Truth

Perhaps the search for justice underlies all searching. [**1**]. Then why does

the existentialist differ from the traditionalist?

Existentialists differ from the traditional religious seeker because the focus of truth has changed in modern times. The pursuit of truth has always been the hardest drive to follow, and in modern times it has become even harder. So it has never had many devotees. There are numerous sensitive seekers in the world, but they do not have the same drive as the existentialist. Sensitive seekers are not rare – it is only those who seek truth who are rare.

In olden times, the focus of spiritual inquiry or search for truth was into the psychic nature of reality. Hence the development of mind power was the aim, usually within the practice of meditation and contemplation – typified by yoga and Buddhism. The psychological side of humanity was written off as being delusionary, and ignored as much as possible. Emotions and feelings (along with desires) were labelled the 'astral world' and considered to be a dangerous realm for the meditator. To reduce the influence of emotions, the meditator retreated into solitude.

In modern times, the psychological side of humanity has come into prominence, and problems with emotions can no longer be ignored. So now the search for truth is centred on the understanding of emotions and relationships. This brings the dark side of the subconscious and unconscious minds within the sphere of spirituality for the first time ever. Issues of authoritarian power, violence and immoderate sexuality dominate the headlines.

[The subconscious and unconscious minds have their bright side, in that they are a source of creativity and imagination. But this is not the focus of my analysis].

This modern inquiry is too difficult and repugnant for the religious seeker, and so it has become the preserve of a few existentialist and psycho-analytic thinkers.

This inquiry can no longer be done in solitude : the thinker has to live within society. Hence the psychological pressures on him are far more intense than on the traditional seeker in his solitude. In solitude, the emotions are too quiescent to be explored and analysed. They can only be examined when they are intense. Hence comprehensive psychological understanding can only be developed in high-stress societies.

The greater the psychological stress on the thinker, the more easily he can penetrate into the subconscious mind. This is the positive function of stress (or anxiety). The negative function produces an inevitable result: his quality of life is reduced. He does the best he can under intolerable circumstances, but nothing seems to alter for the better. The spiritual poverty of his life activates the intense desire for justice. The only way to achieve justice is to understand why life is the way that it is. Everything has to be questioned, especially all forms of relationships. He has to question his motivations, to see if they are just or unjust. He is like a goldminer, sieving small nuggets of wisdom from a huge pile of psychological dross and sorrow.

And so the existentialist goes on his lonely search for truth.

It has been said that there are as many forms of existentialism as there are existentialists. But I think the themes of truth and justice are likely to be a common thread, allowing for the fact that some thinkers may not appreciate their importance. By this I mean that the themes may be subconscious rather than openly conscious.

Strangeness

Ordinary people are content with a simple and mythical view of reality. Their lives seem straightforward since they are primarily socially-orientated. The harshness of life is put down to specific causes and events, and so can be managed through social-support structures. Their individuality is not very developed, and this is their spiritual handicap. Until a person's individuality is strong enough he cannot handle any of the four major drives mentioned earlier. Even when his individuality is strong enough, as in a traditional seeker, he may not admit the strangeness of life.

The existentialist lives a life that appears strange to other people. Perhaps it is more accurate to say that the existentialist lives in full the strangeness of reality, the strangeness of the ways that good and evil link together in the subconscious mind.

As he explores the hidden ways of the mind, he comes to understand that the more good he wants to be, so correspondingly the more bad he can be. Because his state of mind is the way that it is, he feels in full consciousness the undiluted flow of goodness and badness through him. The chief advantage that he gets from this flow is that it gives him the ability to understand other people. Strangeness is simply the fact that good and evil are opposite faces of one reality, the reality of a life lived on Earth. Good and evil are the opposite polarities of an endless cosmic rhythm of positive and negative feelings.

The existentialist develops psychological awareness. In today's terminology, we can say that he develops self-awareness. This is done in

a manner quite different from that of the traditional seeker.

The traditionalist seeks the good life. He puts his awareness on the moments of fleeting contact with his soul, and receives inspiration and joy from such contact. He is basically an optimist. His spiritual journey is the journey to the light.

He is aware of the dark side of consciousness – he experiences guilt, shame, despair, etc. But he tries to ignore them if possible. He uses such emotions in a manner that strengthens his moral code, that is, he refutes the experiences that led to the arising of such emotions. He blames himself for the episodes of guilt, shame, despair, etc. He accepts that he is responsible for them. So he attempts not to repeat such experiences ; this way his code of morality becomes stronger.

He never understands that they usually come to him unbidden, as part of the cyclic flow of positive and negative feelings. He never understands, or attempts to understand, the darkness, the strangeness, of the subconscious and unconscious minds.

A few of the episodes of guilt, shame, despair, etc the person will be responsible for. But for the majority of them he is not responsible. In the cyclic flow of positive and negative feelings, what happens is this:

> **An emotion comes up into normal consciousness, and then the person puts a scenario to it. The scenario reflects his experiences and aspirations.**

If the emotion is one of happiness, the person searches his mind for a previous experience of happiness that he can attach to the current emotion. If the emotion is one of guilt, then similarly he searches for an experience of guilt to attach to it. Likewise for other emotions. Failure to

understand this process keeps the person locked into delusion and self-deception. If the person can refrain from putting a drama to the emotion, then he begins to follow the path to detachment. Emotions cannot be avoided, but dramas can.

The existentialist tries to handle reality in a very different way. The contradictions in life need to be understood: this is the only way to approach justice. He is fully aware of the dark side of consciousness. Not only this, but his soul forces him to examine it. Hence his contact with his soul is dis-heartening and ensures that he remains a pessimist.

In his view, there must be meaning within the darkness. So his spiritual journey is the journey to the end of the darkness, *the journey to the end of the night* (in Céline's phrase).

For the existentialist, the harshness of life is intangible and non-specific: there appear to be no specific causes and events for his sadness. Therefore his character is formed in intangible ways that he cannot define. His character formation is thereby much deeper and broader than is possible to ordinary people. Character is formed through conflict (usually mental conflict), and not primarily through social-support structures. Because he cannot define his conflict, he has to search deeper within himself.

> [In some ways, it is like a Kafka novel. Kafka's anti-hero is judged to be guilty, and not allowed to see the charges against him. Because he does not know what he has to refute, he becomes impelled to examine everything about himself to see if this judgement is true or false].

Both the traditional seeker and the modern kind become aware of their limitations. What is the point of this, apart from strengthening ones' moral codes? It seems to me that the purpose of spiritual evolution is to become aware of one's strengths and weaknesses, together with insight into one's drive or motivation. The person can then use this awareness in his everyday relationships. He sees that relationships are usually the arena of power and conflict, and that people have little ability to create harmony.

His self-awareness and search for truth enables him to learn the reasons for power and conflict. Then he can try to rise above them. Then he can realistically aspire to the practice of harmlessness and friendliness, without his relationships being ones of dominance or dependency. This way he can practise equality and self-control. This is the fulfilment of the Egyptian- Greek exhortation to know oneself.

Causality & Motivation

These ideas into modern thinking can be sorted out into two parallel streams of thought. In the examination of the strangeness of the subconscious mind, existentialism joins forces with psycho-analysis, although their orientations are not always the same.

The examination of causes (of weakness, especially) is the province of psycho-analysis, and the examination of motivation (or how one uses one's drive) is the province of existentialism. I follow both streams of thought and merrily mix them together. What both prove is that the acquirement of self-understanding is a long, painful journey.

Both existentialism and psycho-analysis explore justice, and the

difference between them is that they conceive justice in different ways.

The concept of causality allows justice to be thought of as the province of **reward and punishment**. This is harmonious with Eastern views of karma. However, psycho-analysis explores this concept of justice through the amoral subconscious mind, whilst Eastern views use the ethical perspective on justice.

For the existentialist, justice is conceived as **equity or fairness**. The unfairness of his life propels him into a need to justify himself, since he tries to act from the best of motives. Whence he examines his motivation. The concept of equity is the special ingredient to views of justice that distinguishes the existentialist from Eastern thinkers.

Only the need to justify oneself can lead to the examination of motive.

Justification, motivation, and the pursuit of truth is the peculiar psychological blend that some existential thinkers have brought to modern philosophy.

In spiritual terms, one has to pass through the darkness before one enters the light. Whereas the traditionalist passes through the darkness intuitively, without being able to explain it, the existentialist has to pass through it cognitively (he has to understand what is happening to him).

Sources of Inspirational Writing

Interestingly, the concept of justification sheds a light into creative writing that is driven by idealism, whether ethical or noble. There are two main sources of writing that is 'inspired'. In both cases there is 'pressure' of writing, akin to pressure of speech.

These two are :

- 'Normal' inspiration. Here the writing is non-critical of tradition. Much of it consists of exegesis of experience that is in tune with tradition.

- Justification. Here the writing is critical and analytical of past idealisms and past orthodoxies.

Some literary writing is produced by justification. Differences arise from what it is that is being justified.

The existentialist is trying to justify his nobility of character, along with his idealism. He is under pressure from his soul, which is intensifying the conflicts within his subconscious mind. The soul is leading the seeker into situations of mental and social conflict, from which he has to learn how motivation is being used. The soul is acting as an agency of change on the seeker's idealism. The differences of philosophical outlook between existentialists are related to the differences in their idealisms.

In non-idealistic writings, the pressure comes only from the subconscious mind, without the soul being an agent of change.

Effects on Identity

I present a general outline of how the person's sense of identity relates to **creative writing**.

The pressure of writing is propelling the writer towards a new sense of identity, through the exploration of psychological boundaries. The differences between the ideas of various creative writers are related to the differences in their idealisms and how they perceive their boundaries.

- If the boundaries are too narrow, the person may be under the compulsion to expand them. The ideal of freedom attracts him.

- If the boundaries are too broad, his idealism may be unrealistic and impracticable. He needs to contract his boundaries, by damping down his vanity. He feels the need to become more stable. If his ethical boundaries are in question, he may use bitterness as his route to stability. If his religious boundaries are his focus, then he may prefer guilt (self-hate mode) as his route to stability.

- If his boundaries are confused and conflicting, he may feel the need to clarify them. He becomes propelled into psycho-analysis or the existential need to justify himself and validate his ideals.

If a writer's boundaries are acceptable ones, then life can be pleasant, with no extremes. He has no drive activating him, no pressure and no high ideals.

There is another effect to understand:
how the writer conceives his identity, or what aspect of his consciousness is most important to him. The pressure of writing is directed into exploring and justifying his particular identity that needs to be expressed.

The 19th century was a time of exploring communal and socialist identities. In the background, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche were exploring ethical and spiritual identities.

Some literary artists justify their sexual identity. The 20th century especially was a time of exploration of new ideas about sexuality. Sexuality that was non-orthodox had to be justified before it could be socially accepted.

Justification by itself is not enough to categorise the existentialist writer. Creative writers may only be concerned to justify their deficiencies. When justification is allied to the pursuit of truth, then we get the special styles of the existentialist writers.

Within Western history, the 19th century saw the exploration of identity by a small number of people. The 20th century saw this exploration extend to a significant number of people. By the end of the present century, perhaps everyone will participate in this exploration and attain a sense of identity that is harmonious to their ideals.

Where is the place of existential and psycho-analytical writers and thinkers in this exploration?

By exploring motivation, causality and spiritual values, they have opened a way into psychological discovery that may well make the goal of an harmonious personal identity easier to achieve.

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[**1**]. There is an article **Dialectics and Human Evolution** in section 5 of my website **Patterns of Spirituality**. It contains ideas on conceptions of spiritual justice. See **Links**. [1]

There is a short note on my justification bias on my website **Discover Your Mind**. It is in the article **Writing Style, Inspiration and Justification**, accessible from the *Replies to Correspondents* page (go to the *List of Additional Articles* page and use the *Replies* button).

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Reversal of Values

during Catharsis

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Role & sex reversal
Disjunctive states
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Ideal mother image
Love of humanity
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Disgust and Shame in the Subconscious Mind

Sometime in the summer of 1987 my self-analysis had began (there was no definite start to it that I could identify afterwards). It began slowly and I only later realised that it was happening because my daydreams of the autumn started to feature unusual sexual thoughts. At times I became quite excited about ideas on sexuality that I had previously disapproved of. This was my first major catharsis and it confused me.

At this time I did not understand the concept of catharsis and so did not realise that I was experiencing it. But why did I phantasise about themes of sexuality that used to be repugnant to me ? Why did my sexual values seem to change

into their opposites ?

Catharsis produces a reversal of values. What is the usefulness of this ?   A person is unlikely to change his existing conscious values until he realises their limitations. During catharsis the repressed values within the subconscious mind are brought into normal consciousness. These values highlight the limitations of current preferred values. When this effect is understood, the person can choose to replace out-moded and unskilful values by more suitable and harmonious ones.

I give an example of values reversal.

1988 opened exceeding well for me. I was precipitated into more sexual excitement ! On 8th January began my second major catharsis of my psycho-analysis. Its contents had the theme of ***Disgust and Shame***.

For some time I had begun to feel threatened by pretty women wearing miniskirts. The sight of them was generating antithetical thoughts in me. This was the effect of a slowly-intensifying sense of puritanism in me. Now when the catharsis began, all this hostility in me vanished as if by magic, and I began to be entranced by the thoughts of miniskirts – I longed to see women in them. Unfortunately it was winter, and no one wore them any more! By the time that warmer weather, and miniskirts, re-appeared, my catharsis had long since ended.

Never mind. I made up for it in my phantasies. For three weeks I obsessively dreamt of myself as a beautiful woman wearing miniskirts and being sexually alluring. Whatever had formerly repelled me in *Disgust and Shame* now appeared very exciting to me. I had swung to the opposite extreme of my puritanism.

What I was to learn repeatedly is that during catharsis there is intense pressure to phantasise, and to phantasise on the forbidden. For someone of a puritan nature, that which is forbidden has usually become centred on aspects of sexuality. Hence the lonely puritan becomes entangled in exciting sexual phantasies. The drama of catharsis generates confusion in the unwary. (In the puritan times of the 16th century onwards, married puritans often produced

very large numbers of children per family. Guess why !)

In my excitement over the catharsis I considered that for me sexuality had been freed from desire, as well as from fear in particular. My burden seemed lightened. Removal of the fear of sexuality means that I can now be completely truthful and honest in any relationship, whether sexual or non-sexual. To be able to voice affection and to acknowledge my feelings in the reception of affection – this to me was something that I had never been able to do before. It put freedom in my relationships. Once sexuality ceases to be a burden then life becomes exciting. I felt that I had confidence and self-command at last.

I became euphoric. Now I can journey into the unknown for the sheer joy of doing it. I no longer need to act from expectation or reward. No need to accomplish anything. Simply to act from joy. Joy becomes my criterion for doing, for living. This euphoria carried over even into my daily meditation: it produced dis-orientation and crying – crying from joy and confidence, crying from the joy of the unknown.

However, when the catharsis ended I returned more or less to my previous attitudes, and resumed the burden of sexual fear.

Sexuality has numerous aspects to it and so requires numerous episodes of catharsis in order to resolve its difficulties. Each episode will have its own theme. Catharsis allows oneself to have certain insights into one's past experiences that are not possible otherwise. The excitement temporarily dissolves the fear associated with the subconscious mind. This temporary removal of fear allows oneself to view the dark side of one's past, the dark side of one's desires, the dark side of one's personality, without a simultaneous condemnation. *Only in this way can a person develop their understanding of sexuality* (as opposed to just wanting either to express it or repress it). Only when a person has become fully aware of his limited attitudes to sexuality can he begin to replace them with more harmonious ones.

The euphoria of catharsis presents a difficulty with one's social image. If a

person has become staid and conservative in their worldly outlook, then they need to refrain from communicating their reversed values to friends and work-associates. Otherwise they will be highly embarrassed once they return to 'normality'. *In particular they need to refrain from making sexual jokes* – their conservative friends will not appreciate them. The best tactic is to keep silent about the effects of catharsis whilst one is undergoing them. If the person wants to talk about the experience to friends it is best to wait till it is over, when he can be sober about it.

Role and Sex Reversal

In general, the reversal of values occurs when aspects of the social conditioning of the child are not in accord with its deepest attitudes and feelings. The intensity of these reversed values indicates the intensity of the child's rebellion against its conditioning. I focus on the reversed values of my sexuality and of the relationship between the mother and the male child.

One day I realised that in my sexual day-dreaming I was merely replaying the sexual relationships of my 20s, but with **role reversal and sex reversal**.

What do these reversals mean? These reversals are ways of handling the anxiety and guilt produced by unpleasant memories and poor social skills. Another common way is to create a compulsive ritual ; the anxiety and guilt produced by the memory are channelled into a physical practice such as obsessive hand-washing. So when an unpleasant sexual memory cannot be repressed, or does not lead to a compensatory compulsive ritual, then it is handled in phantasy by a reversal of values and even by sex reversal. What was unpleasant in sexual relationships becomes, when reversed, very pleasant in phantasy. What satisfactions I failed to achieve as a man I dream of achieving as a woman.

For example, to compensate for occasions when I was impotent (because of an intense state of anxiety) I dream of being a woman who helps an impotent young man – this phantasy contains both sex and role reversals. I also had an Oedipal phantasy of being an older woman who sexually liked younger men :

this was one of sex and role reversals as well. Another example is that given above, when I dreamt of myself as an attractive woman who loved wearing mini-skirts – this is only sex reversal.

Looking back on my phantasies over the years there seems to have been two main stages to them:

- At the start of my analysis my sexual phantasies were mainly focused on women who excited me, alternating with phantasies of degradation as I projected my hatred of sex into the phantasies.

- Then as my sexual problems were slowly resolved, my phantasies featured only myself in role and sex reversal.

Disjunctive States of Mind

When a man undertakes a psycho-analysis he begins to explore his values, and these include sexual ones. Therefore in the course of the analysis his sexual phantasies will change as his sexual values change. As his sexual values change, so the sexual polarity (male or female) and the sexual roles in phantasy will change, and will even reverse, as traits of masculinity and femininity are explored. The changing values reflect changing needs.

This reversal of values is a fundamental distinction between the ordinary surface consciousness and the subconscious mind.

Hence the subconscious mind is not a linear extension of ordinary consciousness ; the two states of consciousness are usually different in kind and so are disjunctive. By this statement I mean that the subconscious mind cannot be explored adequately by an examination that is purely rational, as ordinary consciousness can. Because the values are different, so the ground rules of each state of mind are different. Rationality alone is only useful when it is analysing states where the values are consistent, compatible and non-disjunctive.

Disjunctive states of mind require the ability to be intuitive in order to detect and understand them.

As an example, suppose that we want to analyse the various states of madness, which are disjunctive to ordinary consciousness. First of all intuition has to be used in order to establish the ground rules (such as the relevant unconscious ideas and emotional dynamics) and the values that create the forms of madness. Then we can use rationality to analyse the experiences of madness.

Ways of Adaptation

The reversal of values in the subconscious mind is a way of adapting to sexual problems. I list some other ways as well.

Sexual guilt :
this can be handled by:

      a) Reversal of role and sex in phantasy.
      b) Masochism.
      c) Changing from heterosexuality to homosexuality (or vice versa).

The fear of sexuality :
this can be handled by:

      d) Switching to transvestitism.

The hatred of sexuality:
this can be handled by:

      e) Preferring trans-sexuality.

f) Sadism.

The emotional dynamics of these sexual orientations will be described in future articles.

Why is there reversal of values between the conscious mind and the subconscious mind? There are two main factors to this circumstance.

The first factor reflects the child as it is in itself.
The child is usually amoral (an attitude of non-responsibility). To have an amoral attitude to sex is more fun than to be bound within narrow social conventions. In the adult this attitude underpins the desire to experience sexuality as an exciting event. In order to become excited about sexuality, any past unpleasant memories have to be neutralised or transformed, otherwise they will generate anxiety or guilt. Therefore, role and sex reversals are ways of subconsciously manipulating unpleasant memories so that they can now produce exciting phantasies.

The second factor reflects the child's relationships to its parents.
The reversal is generated as a compensation to an insufficiency of love in childhood. The need to portray myself in phantasy as a woman derives from the mother-child relationship. I portray myself as the loving, exciting woman that mother never was to me. This phantasy is a symbolic re-creation of my mother, that is, I am symbolically creating the mother that I would have liked to have had, and simultaneously identifying with that creation. In phantasy I create the ideal mother.

The Ideal Mother Image

The male child has a psychological need to identify with the mother. If the actual mother does not come up to the level of need and expectation of the child, then one means of compensation is for the child, when he has become an

adult, to create an ideal image of the mother. Then he can identify with this image. The problem here is that if the ideal mother image is confused with the actual mother then the man cannot recognise the faults in the actual mother as faults ; instead he blames himself, he accepts that he must have deserved the badness of the mother.

The child's or the man's identification with the ideal image of the mother becomes a fact once he begins to portray himself, in phantasy, as a woman, a woman who is symbolically the ideal mother.

The reversal of role and sex in phantasy portrays the need to change past sexual failures into 'successes'. The meaning of role reversal is that it is an attempt to neutralise guilt feelings that are attached to sexual memories. The meaning of sex reversal is that it is a means to the creation of an ideal mother image.

The reversal of values in phantasy generally denotes the reversal of the values of the actual mother, and these reversed values become attached to the ideal mother image. In other words, the ideal mother image has the reverse values of the actual mother. Hence any puritan sexual values of the actual mother are transposed into contrary permissive sexual values of the ideal mother. The child needs to relate to a beneficent mother, even if he has to construct that mother in his imagination.

> *This need of the child for a beneficent and permissive mother is the cause of the reversal of values between the conscious and subconscious minds.*

> This is true at least as regards sexuality. Perhaps a similar reversal of values happens in the male child's relationship to his father, who usually represents authority.

This need causes problems for ethical development. The child needs a beneficent mother, but it also needs rules and boundaries in order to contain the confusion of childhood. Moral boundaries are induced by the harshness of social abreaction, which in turn highlights the need for a beneficent and permissive mother. The failure of the actual mother to be such a figure sensitises the child or the adolescent to the effects of social abreaction. Morality is felt to be divorced from goodness. So the adolescent sees nothing wrong in

sexual explorations. This viewpoint relegates ethics to the sidelines. When this happens, ethics can only be cultivated by rising to a higher, idealistic view of humanity.

There can be constraints and variations on the reversal of values. I give some examples.

- **The reversal of values is unlikely to occur if the child does not identify with a parent.** In my case, I did not identify with my father.

- **There may be little or no divergence between the child's needs and the parent's ability to satisfy those needs.** Hence there may exist little reversal of values in the child's subconscious mind. (There will always be some reversal, since childhood need to learn rules, and so the parent can never be completely permissive).

- **There may be a time period attached to the reversal of values.** The adolescent youngster rebels against the parents' values, but this rebellion usually ceases once he / she has established a suitable sense of identity. Where no suitable sense of identity has been achieved, then the reversed values are likely to be maintained within the subconscious mind. However, when a suitable identity has been achieved, but has at a later date been lost through the experience of severe distress and / or trauma (such as madness, bitter divorce, deep bereavement, etc), then a reversal of values may re-appear.

- **There may be values reversal with regard to sexuality, but not with regard to authority.** And vice versa.

There is an additional factor that helps with the creation of the ideal parent image. This is the predilection towards romanticism.

A non-materialistic idealism and romanticism can link together. The ideal mother image is a romantic production, as is the ideal father image. These two ideal images generate all noble feelings. Perhaps only people who are dissatisfied with their parents' shortcomings are likely to become romantics. In other words, idealism as a motivating force in a person's life originates

romanticism and the romantic production of the ideal parent. Romanticism is the concept that life is a heroic task – **and the hero needs ideal parents !** [1]

The Love of Humanity

Each person has two identities, but one of them is usually preferred at the expense of the other. The socially-centred person is anchored to a social identity and often represses his / her individual identity. Whereas for me my individual identity is usually dominant – this has been so from early childhood.

What I did as a child (from about the age of eleven or twelve onwards) was to try to repress my actual social identity some of the time so that I could create an ideal social one, in similar fashion to the creation of the ideal mother image. This was the beginning of my political idealism (though at that time it had a right-wing base and was focused on power). In the education system I had to compromise; at school I had to accept a non-ideal social identity, but when school finished for the day I usually preferred to return to my own self-absorption and my ideal social world. The stresses of puberty made this dichotomy permanent.

Perhaps the reversal of values in the child's subconscious mind reflects the influence of creative imagination or of idealism, whether political, ethical, or spiritual. It is primarily these characteristics that require a mother who has an abundance of love.

An idealistic child who does not receive sufficient love can create the aspiration to love humanity as a whole (for example, the 19th-century followers of Saint-Simon in France) or the aspiration to attain the mystic love of god. There is no drive in the non-idealistic, non-imaginative child to do this ; such a child will become an adult with a similar disposition to the parents (the child's social identity will be a realistic one, not an ideal one).

The love of humanity, if it arises, always arises as a compensation to childhood problems.

The number in brackets at the end of the reference takes you back to the paragraph that featured it.

[**1**]. There is a short description of the dynamics of romanticism in the article **Romanticism and Evangelism and Abreaction** on my website **Patterns of Confusion**. See Links page. [**1**]

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