



something in order to keep it out of consciousness. Freud defined two phases of repression: *primal repression* in which the idea of an instinct is not allowed to come into consciousness (this idea, which is unalterable, becomes a *fixation*); and *repression proper* in which any ideas associated with the first idea of an instinct become repressed.

Freud determined that in every person 'there is a coherent organization of mental processes' which he calls the *ego*. The ego is, in part, conscious and rules the way in which you display excitations to the external world. The ego also censors dreams and so, in part, is unconscious, functioning to stop ideas from becoming conscious, and to activate *resistances* which prevent you from getting closer to what you have repressed.

The *id* is your unknown and unconscious mind; the ego rests on the surface of the id. While the ego represents reason and sanity, the id contains passions. The *superego* (or *ego ideal*) is an unconscious level to which the ego directs its tendencies. It is shaped in the transformation of the infantile ego from the context of narcissism into the activity of sexual aggrandizement of objects (the libidinal cathexis of objects). The activity of sublimation allows that repression does not occur in some cases: 'sublimation is a way out, a way by which the claims of the ego can be met without involving repression'.

According to Freud's theory, *neuroses*, which result from the conflict between the organized ego and what has been repressed are substitutes for sexual gratification or defences against it. Their symptoms develop by means of resistance and repression. Freud categorized several types of neuroses: (1) *transference neurosis*, which evolves in the process of recollecting what has been repressed from the past and bringing it into consciousness; it can take the form of *anxiety hysteria*, *conversion hysteria*, and *obsessional neurosis*; (2) *traumatic neurosis*, induced after a life-threatening event and resembling hysteria; (3) *actual neurosis*, which takes the form of hypochondria, anxiety neurosis, neurasthenia, etc.

Freud's theory of infantile sexuality focuses on the sexual interest in children that derives from their attempt to solve the problem of their birth. Freud describes the force through which this sexual interest occurs as the *libido*. In a child, sexual gratification is achieved initially in activities involving the mouth or lips (*erotogenic zones*) from which the *oral impulse* evolves. This impulse directs the ego to an object in the external world (i.e., the mother's breast); sucking that object becomes a means to gain pleasure. This oral impulse eventually becomes *autoerotic*: the child seeks pleasure from its own body parts, especially the genitalia.

Aus: Ka Liuka Kiatson "Encyclopedia of Reality"
London, Granada Publ., 1979

The libido development in children has several phases: (1) the *pregenital period*, in which sexual organization is not defined, sadistic and anal instincts are predominant, the mother is the *love object*, and the *Oedipus complex* develops; (2) the *latency period*, which delays sexual development; (3) *puberty*, in which sexual organization begins to take place to survive through adulthood. Repression occurs in the child when the superego begins to dominate the ego; activities that seem natural to the child are regarded as improper by the parents and censored. This process of repression, manifested as the tension between basic libidinal drives and the superego, can create anxiety, melancholia, etc., and affect a much larger context, i.e., civilization itself. Man's cultural, artistic, and social achievements, according to Freud, are the products of repression.

As Freud developed his theories, he gave birth to new terminologies and new subtheories that served to clarify the process and aims of psychoanalysis. In *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, Freud describes his method of treatment: 'In psycho-analytic treatment nothing happens but an exchange of words between the patient and the physician. The patient talks, tells of his past experiences and present impressions, complains, and expresses his wishes and emotions. The physician listens, attempts to direct the patient's thought-processes, reminds him, forces his attention in certain directions, gives him explanations and observes the reactions of understanding or denial thus evoked.'

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ERICH FROMM (1900-), a leading figure in both psychiatry and psychoanalysis, was born in Frankfurt, Germany. He received his Ph.D. in 1922 from the University of Heidelberg and studied at the Psychoanalytic Institute in Berlin. From 1929-32, he lectured at the Psychoanalytic

Institute in Frankfurt and the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt. From 1934-39, he was a fellow at the International Institute for Social Research in New York City, and a guest lecturer at Columbia University from 1940-41. From 1941-50, he held a teaching post at Bennington College, during which time he was also the Terry Lecturer at Yale University. In 1951, he was appointed a professor at the National University of Mexico. From 1957-61, he was a professor at Michigan State University, and became adjunct professor at New York University in 1962.

Fromm's major concern is with the character structure of society, which is measured in terms of the common personality structures of the members of the society, or social group. *Social character* is composed of a selection of the traits of the personalities of individuals within a group, i.e., 'the essential nucleus of the character structure of most members of the group which has developed as the result of basic experiences and mode of life common to that group'. The concept of social character is necessary for the understanding of social process and functions as an aid to understanding how human energy is channelled and works as a productive force. In a psychoanalytical framework, character is 'a specified form in which human energy is shaped by the dynamic adaptation of human needs to the particular mode of existence of a given society'. Character is the crux of the shape of thoughts, feelings, and actions. Ideas have an emotional matrix which is the key to understanding the spirit of a culture. In this respect, ideas exert a powerful influence, but only to the extent that they satisfy the needs which are specific to the individual in a given social character. The function of character is to guide individuals to act in a way that is both practical and psychologically satisfying. If the social character adapts dynamically to the objective tasks that the members of society perform, then the collective energies of the society are moulded into productive forces indispensable to the functioning of the society. Social character changes responsively to changing social conditions, resulting in new needs and new ideas. New ideas determine the actions of the members of society which, in turn, realign social character.

Fromm maintains that we are no longer one with nature, as we would be if we were animals, but instead have been turned out into a world of reason and self-awareness, which emphasizes our separateness from and helplessness against the forces of nature and society. As a result, we are subject to anxiety which produces feelings of shame and guilt. Our deepest need is to overcome our separateness and achieve union, or 'at-one-ment'.

Fromm is concerned with how we analyse both our cultural and individual patterns of existence. He contends that we should see ourselves in terms of our specific natures, rather than how we fit into a general behavioural scheme, so that we can become more concerned with our drives rather than with our behaviour. We would then judge ourselves in terms of our passions rather than our instincts. Fromm defines passions as an attempted means to understand and experience life in the most intense and eventful way. He considers passions more active than instincts since they elicit the basic trends in our activity - the manifestations of our culture. They are the aspects of our unification.

In this context, Fromm believes that we have neglected to consider cultural constituents as distinctly human products of a universal language that is both individualized and, most importantly, unified through its symbolism. Understanding this symbolic language (specifically through myth and dreams) would bring us closer to 'one of the most significant sources of wisdom, that of myth', as well as to the depths of our personalities. The closures and limitations imposed upon our thoughts about these matters by past schools of psychoanalytic thought would be transcended.

Fromm conducted an extensive study of destructiveness as a meaningful pattern of existence in modern society. He interprets it as man's passion for 'drama and excitement'. Although it takes the form of the destruction of life, paradoxically it becomes 'man's attempt to make sense out of life and to experience the optimum of intensity and strength he can (or believes he can) achieve under the given circumstances'. According to Fromm, 'All human passion, both the "good" and the "evil", can be understood only as a person's attempt to make sense out of life and transcend banal, merely life-sustaining existence.' Destructiveness is the 'only true perversion'; its cure lies in the readjustment and 'radical change' of social conditions which nurture it.

According to Fromm, aggression is genetically manufactured to ensure man's survival. However, destructiveness (the ability to eliminate one of man's own kind for no ostensible reason) has evolved from the growth of civilization, power, governmental divisions of society and culture, etc. Fromm believes that the tide of destructiveness is rising because of our tendency to lock into automatism.

Present Western society has created so-called solutions to separateness in ways completely antithetical to achieving states which are morally condoned. The first solution is based on conformity and pertains to the

mind, not the body. It occurs in the routinization and 'prefabrication' of our activities in daily life. The second solution is found in creative activity or productive work, and is not interpersonal. We unite ourselves with a process of creating. For many, who cannot see that their work is productive, their union is only in conformity. Fromm contends that the unity that finds its basis in these states (conformity and productive work) is only a partial answer to the problem of separateness.

The key to solving problems of separateness and the essential key to existence in society is love: 'the active concern for the life and growth of that which we love'. Love is an inner activity inducing the giving of ourselves genuinely and productively through our joy, interests, understanding, humour, sadness. Our loving of others enriches them. Our ability to love depends on the development of our character in terms of certain basic elements: care, respect, responsibility, and knowledge. These elements are interdependent and characteristic of the maturity which evolves because we have productively developed our powers, we want only that for which we have worked, we have rid ourselves of the narcissistic longing for omnipotence and omniscience, and we have acquired humility rooted in our inner strength. The practice of love depends upon our practice of faith in ourselves and others, and the practice of courage to judge our values.

Attitudes of loving occur on many levels other than the universal one. In a biological sense, loving happens between male and female. The male-female polarity is a basis for interpersonal creativity and penetrates all of nature. Our capacity to love develops from childhood and, for this reason, is a necessary function of the parent-child relationship. Motherly love is selfless, making us secure to grow and develop; fatherly love guides and teaches us in growing. Brotherly love is a fundamental source of different kinds of love. It is the activation of our characteristic sense of care, respect, responsibility, and knowledge of others, and our will to further the lives of others. Brotherly love is rooted in oneness.

Fromm believes that the most deceptive form of love is erotic love, or 'the craving of complete fusion' with another. Erotic love, not universal in nature, is based on feeling, rather than decision, judgment, or promise. In this way, erotic love can indicate a relationship which is easily dissolvable. The self is as much an object of love as the other person.

The affirmation of life in terms of happiness, growth, and freedom is a basis of our capacity to love. Selfish people are not capable of loving others because they cannot love the self, are only concerned with them-

selves and not willing to give. If we love ourselves, we can love others fruitfully.

Loving God is a function of how we conceive of God. In Western religion, we love God because we believe in God, God's existence, God's justice, God's love. In Eastern religion, the love of God is the experience of oneness and linked with its expression in every facet of life. Loving God performs the same function as loving our parents. The quality of our love of God corresponds to our love of man, which is directly connected to our relations with family and determined by the structure of our society.

In contemporary Western society, loving, in the sense of brotherly, motherly, and erotic love, is disintegrating and being replaced by forms of 'pseudolove'. We are transformed into automatons, routinized in work and amusement, and incapable of loving. We 'love', instead, neurotically. Fromm separates this neurotic love into three different categories: (1) *idoltrous love*, which is seen in the tendency to idolize persons we love in the belief that they possess everything we lack; this kind of love only demonstrates our hunger and despair at not having realized our own identity and powers; (2) *sentimental love*, the essence of which 'lies in the fact that love is experienced only in phantasy and not in the here-and-now relationship to another person who is real'; examples of this form of love are provided by our experience of movies, magazine love stories, love songs and our thinking about how we have loved in the past and will love in the future; (3) love in which we use 'projective mechanisms' to avoid and ignore our own problems by becoming involved with the loved one's weaknesses.

Because we have become automatons, we can no longer love God. Our image of God is anthropomorphic; our idea of God is idolatrous. Our lives do not depend upon the principles of God. God has become a 'Director of the Universe, Inc.', and a 'partner in business'.

The realignment of human principles is in the interest of future generations. By this, Fromm does not mean advocacy of specific schools of thought or doctrine. Rather, he means having faith in our ability to free ourselves from the ties which the latter create in order to see our intention as the embodiment of our most precious quality, the love of life.

References

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