

Outline of Dr. Greenson's lecture on:

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOANALYTIC CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

Sixth evening
Wednesday, November 27, 1946
8:15 P.M.
563 N. Alfred Street

Short repetition of the previous lecture.

FORMATION OF THE SUPEREGO

Boy: Because of the castration threat the sexual part of the relation to the mother is partly repressed, partly displaced onto other persons; the non-sexual part is retained. The renunciation of the possession of the Oedipus object results in acceptance of other objects. Since the father is no more the rival after the renunciation of the mother, he can be retained by part incorporation. The boy now does not want to replace the father but he wants to be like the father. He takes inside possession of the father. Something new is added to the child's personality. The stronger the instinctual desires before, the stricter the superego after passing of the Oedipus complex. The superego also will be the stricter and severer the stricter and severer the parents were.

Alongside also identification with the other sex, but primarily with the same sex. In general, it seems, that the parent who is the predominant disciplinarian will be the main creator of the superego.

Ego now has to cope not only with the id and the outer world, but with the superego in addition.

After establishment of the superego anxiety too is internalized and shows itself in the form of guilt feelings. Instead of tension between child and adult the tension now will be between ego and superego.

Development of self-esteem -- children now make demands upon themselves and if they feel guilty they often provoke punishment.

Superego makes child relatively independent from the external world. Rewards and punishments can come now from within himself. The function of the superego can be subject to the same vicissitudes as the functions of the instincts. For instance, it can be projected, by which people of the environment are made into an outer conscience of the child.

Whereas early impressions and perceptions were predominantly oral, olfactory, etc., at a later time they were more visual. In the phallic stage the auditive perception seems to be in the foreground. Verbalized demands, prohibitions, praises, are incorporated.

Some additional developmental lines from the oral to the phallic stage: in the beginning no relation of ego to outer object; self or non-self not clearly differentiated. Tensions have to be discharged immediately, no postponement, no waiting possible; thinking develops very gradually, very much later; first thinking is pictorial thinking, only later thinking in words. With command of the language a certain amount of mastery of the outer world is achieved.

Development of ideas of omnipotence. In the beginning magic belief in own omnipotence, later on all omnipotence assigned to the adults and in order to regain some of the old feeling of omnipotence, participation in the power of the omnipotent adults striven for and achieved by fulfilling demands and expectations.

Change from fear to guilt feeling. In the beginning only danger from without induces the child to give up an intended satisfaction. Later on the satisfaction is also given up if the superego warrants. Alongside with renunciation of satisfactions, with repression of the undesired impulses, the child has the possibility to satisfy instincts and impulses in play and fantasy. Mastery of too great an amount of stimuli can belatedly be satisfied by repeating in an active way what had to be handled before in a passive way. The necessary dosage can be regulated by the child in play and fantasy to suit his needs.

The passing of the Oedipus complex is the beginning of the relatively quiet latency period, which lasts until puberty where the battle with the instincts starts all over again.

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