

Outline of Dr. Greenson's lecture on:

INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOANALYTIC CHILD PSYCHOLOGY

First evening
Wednesday, October 23, 1946
8:15 P.M.
563 N. Alfred Street.

The lectures will deal with observations on the behavior of children from birth to six years of life. Theoretical concepts will be used as a help for the understanding of the manifestations of the child's personality.

Difference of the psychoanalytic approach to other psychological viewpoints: three basic concepts:

- 1) The child is a structured organism responding to external and internal stimuli.
- 2) All happenings are the expression of energies and counter-energies: the dynamic viewpoint.
- 3) In addition, to understand the manifestations, the history of the child's personality has to be known: the genetic viewpoint.

NEWBORN CHILD

Observations on the child: uncoordinated movements, crying, eliminating: actions in relation to certain happenings.

General description for behavior: tension -- motor activities aimed at relaxation. Attempt to maintain certain equilibrium.

Beginnings of attempts at relaxation: primitive discharge, seemingly unpurposeful, not anticipating purposeful achievements.

At birth reservoir of instinctual impulses (id; archaic and primitive mechanisms).

No differentiation yet. Gradually developing on grounds of observation and experience differentiation of ego.

ORAL PHASE

Development to mother as an instrument for satisfying hunger (food and love). Need to satisfy sucking urge. Mouth the executive organ of all instinctual needs. Aim: incorporation.

Disregard for personality. Interest only in satisfaction of need. Narcissistic attitude.

Swallowing model for acceptance; spitting model for rejection.

Sucking impulse later partly retained, partly replaced by biting impulse. Pleasure

of sucking partly taken over by biting. Both means of incorporation; expression of desire to retain and simultaneously desire to destroy.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS FOOD

Child's relation to food determines later attitude towards world and persons.

Results of feeding difficulties: not satisfied impulse creates frustration (blocked energy). This energy seeks discharge in roundabout ways. Underfed children and overfed children show intense preoccupation with activities of the mouth.

Experiment: excessive oral movements.

This preoccupation creates point of fixation.

Specific difficulties from lack of proper feeding: body becomes source of pain and danger.

Reaction to frustrating mother: creation of fear, hostility toward people.

Barton experiment: self-demand-diet. Series of children of three years.

Problem of weaning: has to be gradual. Ill effects from suddenness.

Sucking need vitally important to be satisfied. Serves a need. Therefore satisfaction purposeful. Interference necessarily creates disturbance. Some sucking at later age can be mildly interfered with if substitute accessible to child. No substitute yet at infant age. Disturbance of satisfaction of impulse creates danger of symptom formation.

Literature recommended:

Benjamin Spok: The common sense book of infant and child care.

English-Pearson:

HANNA FENICHEL, Ph.D.
Secretary