

A PLANNED EXPANSION
FOR
THE LOS ANGELES INSTITUTE FOR PSYCHOANALYSIS

BULLETIN I

(1)

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Today more and more individuals, more and more communities are looking to psychoanalysis for help and guidance. The psychoanalyst, like his colleagues in medicine in general, fulfills his obligations to individual and community through private practice and also through organizations devoted entirely to the needs of the community.

In Los Angeles, the organization through which a large group of analysts serves the community as a whole is the Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis. This Institute maintains a school where graduate physicians are trained to become analysts. It provides an Extension Division to give instruction to workers in related fields such as education and social work. And it supports a Psychoanalytic Clinic devoted to research and to the treatment of people who are unable to pay the fees of private practice.

The Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis has been steadily expanding since its inception in 1946. But the calls the community is making on its services have increased even beyond the bounds of the profession; it has become a community problem.

The officers and trustees of the Institute would like to tell you something about how the problem came about and what solutions might be provided.

Until recently psychiatry and psychoanalysis were vague and mysterious terms which stirred up some

apprehension in most people. During the past few years, and especially during the war, a marked change in the attitude of people generally toward psychiatry and psychoanalysis has taken place. Many more people have learned that emotional and mental disorders are usually not only treatable but also preventable. This change of attitude has come about in a large measure because psychoanalysis has demonstrated a systematic method of understanding and treating these hitherto mysterious illnesses.

In World War II thousands of G.I.'s suffering from emotional disorders variously known as "battle fatigue," "combat exhaustion" and "shell shock" were effectively treated by psychiatric methods based on psychoanalytic principles. Thus the service men and many physicians gained first hand evidence of the applicability of psychoanalytic ideas to problems of emotional stress. Information regarding this experience was spread rapidly throughout the civilian population by the returning soldier and physician, with the result that the demand for psychoanalytic treatment and training was tremendously increased.

A recent survey shows that of the young physicians now in training for psychiatry, 85% desire to undertake the additional specialized training required for the practice of psychoanalysis.

It was the need for such training of physicians that

brought the Institute into existence. And for several years after it was started this was its principal work. During its first five years 58 physicians were enrolled in the training program. The first physician was graduated in 1948 and since that time 10 physicians have completed the work of the course. At the present time 44 physicians are in training in this Institute.

Due to the fact that the interest in psychoanalysis has developed rapidly during the past few years there have been a great number of questions by people who are interested in the subject. Here we shall attempt to state some of the requirements that are necessary to become a psychoanalyst.

The first requirement for one who wishes to specialize in psychoanalysis is the M.D. degree together with at least one year of general internship. In addition to that the applicant must have served at least one year as a resident in psychiatry. After completing these requirements the applicant then applies for admission to one of the several accredited psychoanalytic institutes. After his acceptance the student is required to complete his own personal psychoanalysis and enters upon a period of didactic training which includes a series of seminars and lectures, usually extending over a period of about three years. During the course of this training he is permitted to start doing psychoanalytic work with patients under the super-

vision of an instructor. Upon the completion of his course he is required to write a scientific paper describing his experience in working with patients, in which he demonstrates his knowledge of psychoanalysis and ability to use it.

After the work of the training school was started it became possible to make some attempt to meet the needs of people in the community working in related fields. Many physicians in general practice, social workers and educators who sought information concerning the psychoanalytical approach were enrolled in the newly established Extension Division of the Institute. During the past few years of its existence numerous courses have been given to these groups. At the present time courses are in progress for physicians in general practice and in other specialties, as well as for teachers and social workers.

The most recent part of the expansion program of the Institute has been the Psychoanalytic Clinic. Although it is the newest development, the plans for the establishment of this facility were begun about fifteen years ago. In 1939, Sigmund Freud wrote a letter to Dr. Ernst Bimmel in Los Angeles encouraging him in his attempt to establish the first psychoanalytic institute and clinic on the West Coast. Unfortunately, World War II disrupted these plans because most of the psychoanalysts in this area entered the Armed Forces at that time. In 1949 this clinic facility of

the Psychoanalytic Institute was finally established. The work of this branch of the Institute is of fundamental importance to the community and to the science of psychoanalysis. In the first place, it makes psychoanalytic treatment possible for a number of people who cannot afford private fees; in the second place it provides a rich source of clinical material, furnishing opportunities for research that are not available in private practice.

The work in the Clinic started on a small scale and has continued only in a limited way in relation to the enormous need of the community. The Clinic now has a long waiting list despite the fact that each analyst is already taxed to the limit in supporting this and other work of the Institute. The individual character of psychoanalytic treatment and the length of time required for such treatment makes necessary a far greater number of physicians in relation to the number of patients than is the case in other medical clinics. The shortage of trained psychoanalysts to do the work in this clinic becomes apparent when one realizes that there are only 600 accredited psychoanalysts in the entire United States. The difficulty in the Clinic is directly the result of the lack of trained personnel to carry out the treatment program of the Clinic. As a result, the waiting list of patients has grown steadily, and the increased need for psychoanalytic treatment has outstripped our ability to provide it. Some of our patients have had to wait as long as two years before it was possible to begin their treatment.

This problem of supplying treatment facilities for a greater number of people who need such help is our most urgent and pressing one. Almost as serious, in the service of the community, is the necessity for research in many areas.

For instance, research is especially urgent in the field of juvenile delinquency. A considerable part of the difficulty in treating juvenile delinquency is due to the fact that emotional disorders of adolescents have not as yet been adequately studied. There is a need for prolonged, intensive and systematic research in cooperation with trained workers in the field of sociology.

Los Angeles is one of perhaps four cities in the United States where the psychoanalytic profession conducts a clinic and ^{plans a} research program.

In Los Angeles the program has been handicapped by lack of facilities and the need for a staff of technical assistants. So far the program in Los Angeles has been conducted entirely on a volunteer basis by practicing analysts who use their own offices for free treatment and devote their evenings to research and discussion in their homes.

It is clear that the needs of the community can no longer be met on this basis. The clinic-research work of the Los Angeles Institute must be placed on a planned, coordinated basis, under a single roof, with the guidance of a professional director and the assistance of a technical staff. Only in this way can the work go forward to keep pace

with the growing needs of the community.

To this end, with the aid and advice of community leaders, the Los Angeles Psychoanalytic Institute has embarked on a fund-raising program. Its goal is \$200,000 for an initial three-year program, or \$66,000 per year.

The funds will be used entirely to provide modest housing for the clinic-research program, to finance free psychoanalytic treatment, and to employ a director and a small staff of research technicians.

The benefit to the community will take three forms: (1) a free psychoanalytic service for needy patients, (2) research on problems of community interest, such as the origins of juvenile delinquency, problems of the pre-school child, and general research in mental health, and (3) increased facilities for the training of additional psychoanalysts, now urgently needed.

Financial support of this program will contribute to the improved mental health of the community and will make possible scientific achievements of significance to the whole nation.