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NEUROSIS AND HUMAN GROWTH

The Struggle Toward Self-Realization

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CONTENTS

This trend in neurotic development (which is presented in detail in this book) engages our attention over and beyond the clinical or theoretical interest in pathological phenomena. For it involves a fundamental problem of morality—that of man's desire, drive, or religious obligation to attain perfection. No serious student concerned with man's development will doubt the undesirability of pride or arrogance, or that of the drive for perfection when pride is the motivating force. But there is a wide divergence of opinion about the desirability or necessity of a disciplinary inner control system for the sake of insuring moral conduct. Granted that these inner dictates have a cramping effect upon man's spontaneity, should we not, in accordance with the Christian injunction ("Be ye perfect . . ."), strive for perfection? Would it not be hazardous, indeed ruinous, to man's moral and social life to dispense with such dictates?

This is not the place to discuss the many ways in which this question has been raised and answered throughout human history, nor am I equipped to do so. I merely want to point out that one of the essential factors upon which the answer hinges is the quality of our belief about human nature.

Broadly speaking, there are three major concepts of the goal of morality which rest upon these different interpretations of essential human nature. Superimposed checks and controls cannot be relinquished by anyone who believes—in whatever terms—that man is by nature sinful or ridden by primitive instincts (Freud). The goal of morality must then be the taming or overcoming of the *status naturae* and not its development.

The goal must be different for those who believe that there is inherent in human nature both something essentially "good" and something "bad," sinful, or destructive. It will center upon the insurance of the eventual victory of the inherent good, as refined, directed, or reinforced by such elements as faith, reason, will, or grace—in accordance with the particular dominating religious or ethical concept. Here the emphasis is not exclusively upon combatting and suppressing evil, since there is also a positive program. Yet the positive program rests either upon supernatural aids of some sort or upon a strenuous ideal of reason or will, which in itself suggests the use of prohibitive and checking inner dictates.

Lastly, the problem of morality is again different when we believe that inherent in man are evolutionary constructive forces, which urge him to realize his given potentialities. This belief does not mean that man is essentially good—which would presuppose a given knowledge of what is good or bad. It means that man, by his very nature and of his own accord, strives toward self-realization, and that his set of values evolves from such striving. Apparently he cannot, for example, develop his full human potentialities unless he is truthful to himself; unless he is active and productive; unless he relates himself to others in the spirit of mutuality. Apparently he cannot grow if he indulges in a "dark idolatry of self" (Shelley) and consistently attributes all his own shortcomings to the deficiencies of others. He can grow, in the true sense, only if he assumes responsibility for himself.

We arrive thus at a *morality of evolution,* in which the criterion for what we cultivate or reject in ourselves lies in the question: is a particular attitude or drive inducive or obstructive to my human growth? As the frequency of neuroses shows, all kinds of pressure can easily divert our constructive energies into unconstructive or destructive channels. But, with such a belief in an autonomous striving toward self-realization, we do not need an inner strait jacket with which to shackle our spontaneity, nor the whip of inner dictates to drive us to perfection. There is no doubt that such disciplinary methods can succeed in suppressing undesirable factors, but there is also no doubt that they are injurious to our growth. We do not need them because we see a better possibility of dealing with destructive forces in ourselves: that of actually *outgrowing* them. The way toward this goal is an ever increasing awareness and understanding of ourselves. Self-knowledge, then, is not an aim in itself, but a means of liberating the forces of spontaneous growth.

In this sense, to work at ourselves becomes not only the prime moral obligation, but at the same time, in a very real sense, the prime moral *privilege*. To the extent that we take our growth seriously, it will be because of our own desire to do so. And as we lose the neurotic obsession with self, as we become free to grow ourselves, we also free ourselves to love and to feel concern

Only the individual himself can develop his given potentialities. But, like any other living organism, the human individuum needs favorable conditions for his growth "from acorn into oak tree"; he needs an atmosphere of warmth to give him both a feeling of inner security and the inner freedom enabling him to have his own feelings and thoughts and to express himself. He needs the good will of others, not only to help him in his many needs but to guide and encourage him to become a mature and fulfilled individual. He also needs healthy friction with the wishes and wills of others. If he can thus grow *with* others, in love and in friction, he will also grow in accordance with his real self.

But through a variety of adverse influences, a child may not be permitted to grow according to his individual needs and possibilities. Such unfavorable conditions are too manifold to list here. But, when summarized, they all boil down to the fact that the people in the environment are too wrapped up in their own neuroses to be able to love the child, or even to conceive of him as the particular individual he is; their attitudes toward him are determined by their own neurotic needs and responses.[2] In simple words, they may be dominating, overprotective, intimidating, irritable, overexacting, overindulgent, erratic, partial to other siblings, hypocritical, indifferent, etc. It is never a matter of just a single factor, but always the whole constellation that exerts the untoward influence on a child's growth.

As a result, the child does not develop a feeling of belonging, of "we," but instead a profound insecurity and vague apprehensiveness, for which I use the term *basic anxiety*. It is his feeling of being isolated and helpless in a world conceived as potentially hostile. The cramping pressure of his basic anxiety prevents the child from relating himself to others with the spontaneity of his real feelings, and forces him to find ways to cope with them. He must (unconsciously) deal with them in ways which do not arouse, or increase, but rather allay his basic anxiety. The particular attitudes resulting from such uncon-

[2] All the neurotic disturbances in human relations which are summarized in Chapter 12 of this book may operate.

Cf. also Karen Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts,* Chapter 2, The Basic Conflict and Chapter 6, The Idealized Image.

scious strategical necessities are determined both by the child's given temperament and by the contingencies of the environment. Briefly, he may try to cling to the most powerful person around him; he may try to rebel and fight; he may try to shut others out of his inner life and withdraw emotionally from them. In principle, this means that he can move toward, against, or away from others.

In a healthy human relationship the moves toward, against, or away from others are not mutually exclusive. The ability to want and to give affection, or to give in; the ability to fight, and the ability to keep to oneself—these are complementary capacities necessary for good human relations. But in the child who feels himself on precarious ground because of his basic anxiety, these moves become extreme and rigid. Affection, for instance, becomes clinging; compliance becomes appeasement. Similarly, he is driven to rebel or to keep aloof, without reference to his real feelings and regardless of the inappropriateness of his attitude in a particular situation. The degree of blindness and rigidity in his attitudes is in proportion to the intensity of the basic anxiety lurking within him.

Since under these conditions the child is driven not only in one of these directions, but in all of them, he develops fundamentally contradictory attitudes toward others. The three moves toward, against, and away from others therefore constitute a conflict, his basic conflict with others. In time, he tries to solve it by making one of these moves consistently predominant—tries to make his prevailing attitude one of compliance, or agressiveness, or aloofness.

This first attempt at solving neurotic conflicts is by no means superficial. On the contrary, it has a determining influence upon the further course his neurotic development takes. Nor does it exclusively concern attitudes toward others; inevitably, it entails certain changes in the whole personality. According to his main direction, the child also develops certain appropriate needs, sensitivities, inhibitions, and the beginnings of moral values. The predominantly complying child, for instance, tends not only to subordinate himself to others and to lean on them, but also tries to be unselfish and good. Similarly, the aggressive

which his early "solution" initiated a one-sided development, thereby making large areas of his personality unavailable for constructive uses. Hence, he desperately needs self-confidence, or a substitute for it.

He does not feel weakened in a vacuum, but feels specifically less substantial, less well equipped for life than others. If he had a sense of belonging, his feeling inferior to others would not be so serious a handicap. But living in a competitive society, and feeling at bottom—as he does—isolated and hostile, he can only develop an urgent need *to lift himself above others.*

Even more basic than these factors is his beginning alienation from self. Not only is his real self prevented from a straight growth, but in addition his need to evolve artificial, strategic ways to cope with others has forced him to override his genuine feelings, wishes, and thoughts. To the extent that safety has become paramount, his innermost feelings and thoughts have receded in importance—in fact, have had to be silenced and have become indistinct. (It does not matter what he feels, if only he is safe.) His feelings and wishes thus cease to be determining factors; he is no longer, so to speak, the driver, but is driven. Also the division in himself not only weakens him in general, but reinforces the alienation by adding an element of confusion; he no longer knows where he stands, or "who" he is.

This beginning alienation from self is more basic because it lends to the other impairments their injurious intensity. We can understand this more clearly if we imagine what would happen if it were possible for the other processes to occur without this alienation from the alive center of oneself. In that case the person would have conflicts, but would not be tossed around by them; his self-confidence (as the very word indicates, it requires a self upon which to place confidence) would be impaired, but not uprooted; and his relations to others would be disturbed without his having become inwardly unrelated to them. Hence, most of all, the individual alienated from himself needs—it would be absurd to say a "substitute" for his real self, because there is no such thing—something that will give him a hold, *a feeling of identity.* This could make him meaningful to himself and, despite all the weakness in his structure, give him a feeling of power and significance.

Lastly, the contradictory trends may be exalted as positive faculties or accomplishments so that they become compatible aspects of a rich personality. I have cited elsewhere [3] an example in which a gifted person turned his compliant trends into Christlike virtues, his aggressive trends into a unique faculty for political leadership, and his detachment into the wisdom of a philosopher. Thus the three aspects of his basic conflict were at once glorified and reconciled each with the others. He became, in his own mind, a sort of modern equivalent to *l'uomo universale* of the Renaissance.

Eventually the individual may come to identify himself with his idealized, integrated image. Then it does not remain a visionary image which he secretly cherishes; imperceptibly he becomes this image: the idealized image becomes an *idealized self*. And this idealized self becomes more real to him than his real self, not primarily because it is more appealing but because it answers all his stringent needs. This transfer of his center of gravity is an entirely inward process; there is no observable or conspicuous outward change in him. The change is in the core of his being, in his feeling about himself. It is a curious and exclusively human process. It would hardly occur to a cocker spaniel that he "really" is an Irish setter. And the transition can occur in a person only because his real self has previously become indistinct. While the healthy course at this phase of development—and at *any* phase—would be a move toward his real self, he now starts to abandon it definitely for the idealized self. The latter begins to represent to him what he "really" is, or potentially is—what he could be, and should be. It becomes the perspective from which he looks at himself, the measuring rod with which he measures himself.

Self-idealization, in its various aspects, is what I suggest calling a *comprehensive neurotic solution*—i.e., a solution not only for a particular conflict but one that implicitly promises to satisfy all the inner needs that have arisen in an individual at a given time. Moreover, it promises not only a riddance from his painful and unbearable feelings (feeling lost, anxious, inferior,

[3] *Our Inner Conflicts*

and divided), but in addition an ultimately mysterious fulfillment of himself and his life. No wonder, then, that when he believes he has found such a solution he clings to it for dear life. No wonder that, to use a good psychiatric term, it becomes *compulsive*.[4] The regular occurrence of self-idealization in neurosis is the result of the regular occurrence of the compulsive needs bred in a neurosis-prone environment.

We can look at self-idealization from two major vantage points: it is the logical outcome of an early development and it is also the beginning of a new one. It is bound to have far-reaching influence upon the further development because there simply is no more consequential step to be taken than the abandoning of the real self. But the main reason for its revolutionary effect lies in another implication of this step. *The energies driving toward self-realization are shifted to the aim of actualizing the idealized self.* This shift means no more and no less than a change in the course of the individual's whole life and development.

We shall see throughout this book the manifold ways in which this shift in direction exerts a molding influence upon the whole personality. Its more immediate effect is to prevent self-idealization from remaining a purely inward process, and to force it into the total circuit of the individual's life. The individual wants to—or, rather, is driven to—express himself. And this now means that he wants to express his idealized self, to prove it in action. It infiltrates his aspirations, his goals, his conduct of life, and his relations to others. For this reason, self-idealization inevitably grows into a more comprehensive drive which I suggest calling by a name appropriate to its nature and its dimensions: *the search for glory*. Self-idealization remains its nuclear part. The other elements in it, all of them always present, though in varying degrees of strength and awareness in each individual case, are the need for perfection, neurotic ambition, and the need for a vindictive triumph.

Among the drives toward actualizing the idealized self *the need for perfection* is the most radical one. It aims at nothing

[4] We shall discuss the exact meaning of *compulsiveness* when we have a more complete view of some further steps involved in this solution.

less than molding the whole personality into the idealized self. Like Pygmalion in Bernard Shaw's version, the neurotic aims not only at retouching but at remodeling himself into his special kind of perfection prescribed by the specific features of his idealized image. He tries to achieve this goal by a complicated system of shoulds and taboos. Since this process is both crucial and complex, we shall leave its discussion for a separate chapter.[5]

The most obvious and the most extrovert among the elements of the search for glory is *neurotic ambition,* the drive toward external success. While this drive toward excelling in actuality is pervasive and tends toward excelling in everything, it is usually most strongly applied to those matters in which excelling is most feasible for the given individual at a given time. Hence the content of ambition may well change several times during a lifetime. At school a person may feel it an intolerable disgrace not to have the very best marks in class. Later on, he may be just as compulsively driven to have the most dates with the most desirable girls. And again, still later, he may be obsessed with making the most money, or being the most prominent in politics. Such changes easily give rise to certain self-deceptions. A person who has at one period been fanatically determined to be the greatest athletic hero, or war hero, may at another period become equally bent on being the greatest saint. He may believe, then, that he has "lost" his ambition. Or he may decide that excelling in athletics or in war was not what he "really" wanted. Thus he may fail to realize that he still sails on the boat of ambition but has merely changed the course. Of course, one must also analyze in detail what made him change his course at that particular time. I emphasize these changes because they point to the fact that people in the clutches of ambition are but little related to the *content* of what they are doing. What counts is the excelling itself. If one did not recognize this unrelatedness, many changes would be incomprehensible.

For the purposes of this discussion, the particular area of activity which the specific ambition covets is of little interest.

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[5] *Cf.* Chapter 3, The Tyranny of the Should.

The characteristics remain the same whether it is a question of being a leader in the community, of being the most brilliant conversationalist, of having the greatest reputation as a musician or as an explorer, of playing a role in "society," of writing the best book, or of being the best-dressed person. The picture varies, however, in many ways, according to the nature of the desired success. Roughly, it may belong more in the category of power (direct power, power behind the throne, influence, manipulating), or more in the category of prestige (reputation, acclaim, popularity, admiration, special attention).

These ambitious drives are, comparatively speaking, the most realistic of the expansive drives. At least, this is true in the sense that the people involved put in actual efforts to the end of excelling. These drives also seem more realistic because, with sufficient luck, their possessors may actually acquire the coveted glamor, honors, influence. But, on the other hand, when they do attain more money, more distinction, more power, they also come to feel the whole impact of the futility of their chase. They do not secure any more peace of mind, inner security, or joy of living. The inner distress, to remedy which they started out on the chase for the phantom of glory, is still as great as ever. Since these are not accidental results, happening to this or that individual, but are inexorably bound to occur, one may rightly say that the whole pursuit of success is intrinsically unrealistic.

Since we live in a competitive culture, these remarks may sound strange or unworldly. It is so deeply ingrained in all of us that everybody wants to get ahead of the next fellow, and be better than he is, that we feel these tendencies to be "natural." But the fact that compulsive drives for success will arise only in a competitive culture does not make them any less neurotic. Even in a competitive culture there are many people for whom other values—such as, in particular, that of growth as a human being—are more important than competitive excelling over others.

The last element in the search for glory, more destructive than the others, is the drive *toward a vindictive triumph*. It may be closely linked up with the drive for actual achievement and

thing is allowed, and inferior ones like himself, to whom only the narrow path of correct behavior is permitted, crumbles. He too, he realizes, could be "great" and "free." He could have a mistress, even the very glamorous mistress of his boss. And his pride is by now so inflated that when he actually approaches her, and is rejected, he strangles her. Sought by the police, he is at times afraid, but his main incentive is to defeat the police triumphantly. Even in his attempted suicide this is the chief motivating force.

Much more frequently the drive toward a vindictive triumph is hidden. Indeed, because of its destructive nature, it is the most hidden element in the search for glory. It may be that only a rather frantic ambition will be apparent. In analysis alone are we able to see that the driving power behind it is the need to defeat and humiliate others by rising above them. The less harmful need for superiority can, as it were, absorb the more destructive compulsion. This allows a person to act out his need, and yet feel righteous about it.

It is of course important to recognize the specific features of the individual trends involved in the search for glory, because it is always the specific constellation that must be analyzed. But we can understand neither the nature nor the impact of these trends unless we see them as parts of a coherent entity. Alfred Adler was the first psychoanalyst to see it as a comprehensive phenomenon, and to point out its crucial significance in neurosis.[7]

There are various solid proofs that the search for glory is a comprehensive and coherent entity. In the first place, all the individual trends described above regularly occur together in one person. Of course one or another element may so predominate as to make us speak loosely of, say, an ambitious person, or of a dreamer. But that does not mean that the dominance of one element indicates the absence of the others. The ambitious person will have his grandiose image of himself too; the dreamer will want realistic supremacy, even though the

[7] See the comparisons with Adler's and with Freud's concepts in Chapter 15 of this book.

latter factor may be apparent only in the way in which his pride is offended by the success of others.[8]

Furthermore, all the individual trends involved are so closely related that the prevailing trend may change during the lifetime of a given person. He may turn from glamorous daydreams to being the perfect father and employer, and again to being the greatest lover of all time.

Lastly, they all have in common *two general characteristics,* both understandable from the genesis and the functions of the whole phenomenon: their compulsive nature and their imaginative character. Both have been mentioned, but it is desirable to have a more complete and succinct picture of their meaning.

Their *compulsive nature* stems from the fact that the self-idealization (and the whole search for glory developing as its sequel) is a neurotic solution. When we call a drive compulsive we mean the opposite of spontaneous wishes or strivings. The latter are an expression of the real self; the former are determined by the inner necessities of the neurotic structure. The individual must abide by them regardless of his real wishes, feelings, or interests lest he incur anxiety, feel torn by conflicts, be overwhelmed by guilt feelings, feel rejected by others, etc. In other words, the difference between spontaneous and compulsive is one between "I want" and "I must in order to avoid some danger." Although the individual may consciously feel his ambition or his standards of perfection to be what he *wants* to attain, he is actually *driven* to attain it. The need for glory has him in its clutches. Since he himself is unaware of the difference between wanting and being driven, we must establish criteria for a distinction between the two. The most decisive one is the fact that he is driven on the road to glory with an utter *disregard for himself, for his best interests.* (I remember, for example, an ambitious girl, aged ten, who thought she would rather be blind than not become the first in her class.) We have reason to wonder whether more human lives—literally and

[8] Because personalities often look different in accordance with the trend which is prevailing, the temptation to regard these trends as separate entities is great. Freud regarded phenomena which are roughly similar to these as separate instinctual drives with separate origins and properties. When I made a first attempt to enumerate compulsive drives in neurosis they appeared to me too as separate "neurotic trends."

Finally, the compulsive nature of a drive shows in the *reactions to its frustration.* The greater its subjective importance, the more impelling is the need to attain its goal, and hence the more intense the reactions to frustration. These constitute one of the ways in which we can measure the intensity of a drive. Although this is not always plainly visible, the search for glory is a most powerful drive. It can be like a demoniacal obsession, almost like a monster swallowing up the individual who has created it. And so the reactions to frustration must be severe. They are indicated by the terror of doom and disgrace that for many people is spelled in the idea of failure. Reactions of panic, depression, despair, rage at self and others to what is conceived as "failure" are frequent, and entirely out of proportion to the actual importance of the occasion. The phobia of falling from heights is a frequent expression of the dread of falling from the heights of illusory grandeur. Consider the dream of a patient who had a phobia about heights. It occurred at a time when he had begun to doubt his established belief of unquestioned superiority. In the dream he was at the top of a mountain, but in danger of falling, and was clinging desperately to the ridge of the peak. "I cannot get any higher than I am," he said, "so all I have to do in life is to hold on to it." Consciously, he referred to his social status, but in a deeper sense this "I cannot get any higher" also held true for his illusions about himself. He could not get higher than having (in his mind) a godlike omnipotence and cosmic significance!

The second characteristic inherent in all the elements of the search for glory is the great and peculiar role *imagination* plays in them. It is instrumental in the process of self-idealization. But this is so crucial a factor that the whole search for glory is bound to be pervaded by fantastic elements. No matter how much a person prides himself on being realistic, no matter how realistic indeed his march toward success, triumph, perfection, his imagination accompanies him and makes him mistake a mirage for the real thing. One simply cannot be unrealistic about oneself and remain entirely realistic in other respects. When the wanderer in the desert, under the duress of fatigue and thirst, sees a mirage, he may make actual efforts to reach

may have a frankly grandiose character. There is for instance the college boy who, although timid and withdrawn, has daydreams about being the greatest athlete, or genius, or Don Juan. There are also in later years people like Madame Bovary, who almost constantly indulge in dreams of romantic experiences, of a mystic perfection, or of a mysterious saintliness. Sometimes these take the form of imaginary conversations in which others are impressed or put to shame. Others, more complicated in their structure, deal with shameful or noble suffering through being exposed to cruelty and degradation. Frequently daydreams are not elaborate stories but, rather, play a fantastic accompaniment to the daily routine. When tending her children, playing the piano, or combing her hair, a woman may for instance simultaneously see herself in much the way a tender mother, a rapturous pianist, or an alluring beauty would be presented in the movies. In some cases such daydreams show clearly that a person may, like Walter Mitty, constantly live in two worlds. Again, in others equally engaged in the search for glory daydreams are so scarce and abortive that they may say in all subjective honesty that they have no fantasy life. Needless to say, they are mistaken. Even if they only worry about possible mishaps that might befall them, it is after all their imagination that conjures up such contingencies.

But daydreams, while important and revealing when they occur, are not the most injurious work of imagination. For a person is mostly aware of the fact that he is daydreaming, i.e., imagining things which have not occurred or are not likely to occur in the way he is experiencing them in fantasy. At least it is not too difficult for him to become aware of the existence and the unrealistic character of the daydreams. The more injurious work of imagination concerns the subtle and comprehensive distortions of reality which he is not aware of fabricating. The idealized self is not completed in a single act of creation: once produced, it needs continuing attention. For its actualization the person must put in an incessant labor by way of falsifying reality. He must turn his needs into virtues or into more than justified expectations. He must turn his intentions to be honest or considerate into the fact of being honest or considerate. The bright ideas he has for a paper make him a great scholar.

for glory. This does not mean a general incapacity to see necessities and abide by them. A special direction in the further neurotic development may make many people feel safer to restrict their lives, and they may then tend to regard the possibility of being carried away into the fantastic as a danger to be avoided. They may close their minds to anything that to them looks fantastic, be averse to abstract thinking, and overanxiously cling to what is visible, tangible, concrete, or immediately useful. But while the conscious attitude toward these matters varies, every neurotic at bottom is loath to recognize limitations to what he expects of himself and believes it possible to attain. His need to actualize his idealized image is so imperative that he must shove aside the checks as irrelevant or nonexistent.

The more his irrational imagination has taken over, the more likely he is to be positively horrified at anything that is real, definite, concrete, or final. He tends to abhor time, because it is something definite; money, because it is concrete; death, because of its finality. But he may also abhor having a definite wish or opinion, and hence avoid making a definite commitment or a decision. To illustrate, there was the patient who cherished the idea of being a will-o'-the-wisp dancing in a ray of moonlight: she could become terrified when looking at a mirror—not because of seeing possible imperfections, but because it brought to bear on her the realization that she had definite contours, that she was substantial, that she "was pinned down to a concrete bodily shape." It made her feel like a bird whose wings were nailed to a board. And at a time when these feelings emerged to awareness, she had impulses to smash the mirror.

To be sure, the development is not always so extreme. But every neurotic, even though he may pass superficially for healthy, is averse to checking with evidence when it comes to his particular illusions about himself. And he must be so, because they would collapse if he did. The attitude toward external laws and regulations varies, but he always tends to deny laws operating within himself, refuses to see the inevitability of cause and effect in psychic matters, or of one factor following from the other or reinforcing the other.

There are endless ways in which he disregards evidence which he does not choose to see. He forgets; it does not count; it was

accidental; it was on account of circumstances, or because others provoked him; he couldn't help it, because it was "natural." Like a fraudulent bookkeeper, he goes to any length to maintain the double account; but, unlike him, he credits himself only with the favorable one and professes ignorance of the other. I have not yet seen a patient in whom the frank rebellion against reality, as it is expressed in *Harvey* ("Twenty years I have fought with reality, and I have finally overcome it"), did not strike a familiar chord. Or, to quote again the classic expression of a patient: "If it were not for reality, I would be perfectly all right."

It remains to bring into clearer relief the difference between the search for glory and healthy human strivings. On the surface they may look deceptively similar, so much so that differences seem to be variations in degree only. It looks as though the neurotic were merely more ambitious, more concerned with power, prestige, and success than the healthy person; as though his moral standards were merely higher, or more rigid, than ordinary ones; as though he were simply more conceited, or considered himself more important than people usually do. And, indeed, who will venture to draw a sharp line and say: "This is where the healthy ends, and the neurotic begins"?

Similarities between healthy strivings and the neurotic drives exist because they have a common root in specific human potentialities. Through his mental capacities man has the faculty to reach beyond himself. In contrast to other animals, he can imagine and plan. In many ways he can gradually enlarge his faculties and, as history shows, has actually done so. The same is also true for the life of a single individual. There are no rigidly fixed limits to what he can make out of his life, to what qualities or faculties he can develop, to what he can create. Considering these facts, it seems inevitable that man is uncertain about his limitations and, hence, easily sets his goals either too low or too high. This existing uncertainty is the base without which the search for glory could not possibly develop.

The basic difference between healthy strivings and neurotic drives for glory lies in the forces prompting them. Healthy strivings stem from a propensity, inherent in human beings, to de-

fairy queen when an uncle picked her up and said jokingly, "My, what a dirty face you have!" She never forgot her impotent and indignant rage. In this way, such a person is almost constantly faced with discrepancies, puzzling and painful. What does he do about it? How does he account for them, react to them, or try to do away with them? As long as his personal aggrandizement is too indispensable to be touched, he can but conclude that there is something wrong with the world. It ought to be different. And so, instead of tackling his illusions, he presents a claim to the outside world. He is entitled to be treated by others, or by fate, in accord with his grandiose notions about himself. Everyone ought to cater to his illusions. Everything short of this is unfair. He is entitled to a better deal.

The neurotic feels entitled to special attention, consideration, deference on the part of others. These claims for deference are understandable enough, and sometimes obvious enough. But they are merely part and parcel of a more comprehensive claim —that all his needs growing out of his inhibitions, his fears, his conflicts, and his solutions ought to be satisfied or duly respected. Moreover, whatever he feels, thinks, or does ought not to carry any adverse consequences. This means in fact a claim that psychic laws ought not to apply to him. Therefore he does not need to recognize—or at any rate to change—his difficulties. It is then no longer up to him to do something about his problems; it is up to others to see that they do not disturb him.

It was a German psychoanalyst, Harald Schultz-Hencke,[1] who was the first among modern analysts to see these claims which the neurotic harbors. He called them *Riessenansprueche* (gigantic claims), and ascribed to them a crucial role in neuroses. While I share his opinion of their importance, my own concept differs from his in many ways. I do not think that the term "gigantic claims" is fortunate. It is misleading because it suggests that the claims are excessive in content. True enough, in many instances they are not only excessive but plainly fantastic; others, however, appear quite reasonable. And to focus on the exorbitant content of claims makes it more difficult to discern in oneself and others those which appear to be rational.

[1] Harald Schultz-Hencke, *Einfuehrung zur Psychoanalyse.*

When speaking of a demanding person, we usually think of demands made upon other people. And human relationships do indeed constitute one important area in which neurotic claims are raised. But we underrate considerably the range of claims if we thus restrict them. They are directed just as much toward man-made institutions, and even, beyond that, toward life itself.

In terms of human relationships, an over-all claim was fairly well expressed by a patient who in his overt behavior was rather on the timid, withdrawn side. Without knowing it, he suffered from a pervasive inertia and was quite inhibited about tapping his own resources. "The world should be at my service," he said, "and I should not be bothered."

An equally comprehensive claim was harbored by a woman who at bottom was afraid of doubting herself. She felt entitled to have all her needs fulfilled. "It is unthinkable," she said, "that a man whom I want to fall in love with me should not do so." Her claims originally emerged in religious terms: "Everything that I pray for is given to me." In her case the claim had a reverse side. Since it would be an unthinkable defeat if a wish were not fulfilled, she put a check on most wants in order not to risk a "failure."

People whose need is to be always *right* feel entitled never to be criticized, doubted, or questioned. Those who are power ridden feel entitled to blind obedience. Others, for whom life has become a game in which other people are to be skillfully manipulated, feel entitled to fool everybody and, on the other hand, never to be fooled themselves. Those who are afraid to face their conflicts feel entitled to "get by," to "get around" their problems. The person who is aggressively exploiting, and intimidates others into letting him put something over on them, will resent it as unfair if they insist on a square deal. The arrogant, vindictive person, who is driven to offend others but yet needs their recognition, feels entitled to "immunity." Whatever he perpetrates on others, he is entitled to having nobody mind anything he does. Another version of the same claim is the one for "understanding." No matter how morose or irritable one is, one is entitled to understanding. The individual for whom

"love" is an over-all solution turns his need into a claim for exclusive and unconditional devotion. The detached person, seemingly quite undemanding, insists on one claim, however: not to be bothered. He feels that he does not want anything of others, and is therefore entitled to be left alone no matter what is at stake. "Not to be bothered" usually implies being exempt from criticism, expectations, or efforts—even if these latter are in his own behalf.

This may suffice as a fair sample of neurotic claims operating in personal relations. In more impersonal situations, or with reference to institutions, claims with a negative content prevail. Benefits accruing from laws or regulations, for example, are taken for granted, but it is felt as unfair when they turn out to be disadvantageous.

I am still grateful for an incident which occurred during the last war, because it opened my eyes to unconscious claims I harbored and, from these, to those of others. Coming back from a visit to Mexico, I was put off the flight in Corpus Christi because of priorities. Although I considered this regulation perfectly justified in principle, I noticed that I was furiously indignant when it applied to me. I was really exasperated at the prospect of a three-day train ride to New York, and became greatly fatigued. The whole upset culminated in the consoling thought that this might be a special provision by providence, because something might happen to the plane.

At that point I suddenly saw the ridiculousness of my reactions. And, starting to think about them, I saw the claims: first, to be the exception; second, to be taken special care of by providence. From then on my whole attitude toward the train ride changed. It was no less uncomfortable to sit day and night in overcrowded day coaches. But I was no longer tired, and even began to enjoy the trip.

I believe that anyone can easily duplicate and extend this experience with observations of himself or others. The difficulties many people have, for instance, in observing traffic regulations—as pedestrian or as driver—often result from an unconscious protest against them. *They* should not be subjected to such rules. Others resent the "insolence" of a bank in drawing

their attention to the fact that they have overdrawn their account. Again, many fears of examinations, or the inability to prepare for them, stem from a claim to exemption. Similarly, indignation at seeing a bad performance may derive from feeling entitled to first-class entertainment.

This claim of being the exception pertains also in regard to natural laws, psychic or physical. It is amazing how obtuse otherwise intelligent patients can become when it is a matter of seeing the inevitability of cause and effect in psychic matters. I am thinking of rather self-evident connections such as these: if we want to achieve something, we must put in work; if we want to become independent, we must strive toward assuming responsibility for ourselves. Or: so long as we are arrogant, we will be vulnerable. Or: so long as we do not love ourselves, we cannot possibly believe that others love us, and must by necessity be suspicious toward any assertion of love. Patients presented with such sequences of cause and effect may start to argue, to become befogged or evasive.

Many factors are involved to produce this peculiar denseness.[2] We must realize in the first place that to grasp such cause-and-effect relations means confronting the patient with the necessity of inner changes. Of course it is always difficult to change any neurotic factor. But in addition, as we have already seen, many patients have an intense unconscious aversion to the realization that they should be subject to *any* necessity. The mere words "rules," "necessities," or "restrictions" may make them shudder —if they let their meaning penetrate at all. In their private world everything is possible—to them. The recognition of any necessity applying to themselves, therefore, would actually pull them down from their lofty world into actuality, where they would be subject to the same natural laws as anybody else. And it is this need to eliminate necessity from their lives which turns into a claim. In analysis this shows in their feeling entitled to be above the necessity of changing. Thus they unconsciously refuse to see that they must change attitudes in themselves if they want to become independent or less vulnerable, or want to be able to believe in being loved.

[2] *Cf.* Chapter 7, The Process of Psychic Fragmentation and Chapter 11, The Aversion against any Change in the Resigned Person.

Most staggering are certain secret claims toward life in general. Any doubt about the irrational character of claims is bound to disappear in this area. Naturally it would shatter a person's feeling of godlikeness to face the fact that for him, too, life is limited and precarious; that fate can strike him at any time with an accident, bad fortune, illness, or death—and blast his feeling of omnipotence. For (to reiterate an ancient truth) there is very little we can do about it. We can avoid certain risks of dying and we can, nowadays, protect ourselves against financial losses connected with death; but we cannot avoid death. Unable to face the precariousness of his life as a human being, the neurotic individual develops claims of his inviolability, or claims of being the anointed, of luck always being on his side, of life being easy and without suffering.

In contrast to the claims operating in human relationships, those toward life in general cannot be asserted effectively. The neurotic with these claims can do but two things. He can deny, in his mind, that anything can happen to him. In that case he tends to be reckless—go out in cold weather when he has a fever, not take precautions against infections likely to occur, or have sexual intercourse without precautions. He will live as though he could never grow old, or die. Hence, of course, if some adversity does strike him, it is a crushing experience and may throw him into panic. Trivial though the experience may be, it shatters his lofty beliefs in his inviolability. He may turn to the other extreme, and become overcautious toward life. If he cannot rely on his claims for inviolability being respected, then anything can happen and he can rely on nothing. This does not mean that he has relinquished his claims. Rather, it means that he wants not to expose himself to another realization of their futility.

Other attitudes toward life and fate seem more sensible, as long as we do not recognize the claims behind them. Many patients directly or indirectly express a sentiment of its being unfair that they are afflicted with their particular difficulties. When talking about their friends, they will point out that despite their being neurotic, too, this one is more at ease in social situations; that one is more successful with women; another is more aggressive, or enjoys life more fully. Such meanderings,

though futile, seem understandable. Each one, after all, suffers under his personal difficulties, and hence will feel it more desirable not to have the particular ones that harass him. But the patient's responses to being together with one of these "enviable" people point to a more serious process. He can suddenly develop a cold, or become despondent. Going after such responses, we discover the source of the trouble to be a rigid claim that he should not have any problems at all. He is entitled to be better endowed than anybody else. He is entitled, moreover, not only to a life devoid of personal problems but to the combined excellencies of those he knows in person, or, say, on the screen: to be as humble and intelligent as Charles Chaplin, as humane and courageous as Spencer Tracy, as victoriously virile as Clark Gable. The claim that I should not be I is too obviously irrational to be raised as such. It appears in the form of resentful envy toward anybody better endowed or more fortunate in his development; in imitation or adoration of them; in claims directed toward the analyst to supply him with all these desirable, often contradictory perfections.

This claim for being endowed with supreme attributes is rather crippling in its implications. It not only makes for a chronic smoldering envy and discontent, but constitutes a real drawback for analytic work. If it is unfair in the first place that the patient should have any neurotic difficulties, it certainly is doubly unfair to expect him to work at his problems. On the contrary, he feels entitled to be relieved of his difficulties without having to go through the laborious process of changing.

This survey of kinds of neurotic claims is not complete. Since every neurotic need can turn into a claim, we would have to discuss each single one in order to give an exhaustive picture of claims. But even a short survey gives us a feeling for their peculiar nature. We shall try now to bring their common characteristics into clearer relief.

To begin with, they are unrealistic in two regards. The person establishes a title which exists in his mind only, and he has little, if any, consideration for the possibility of the fulfillment of his claims. This is obvious in the frankly fantastic claims of being exempt from illness, old age, and death. But it is just as

true for the others. The woman who feels entitled to having all her invitations accepted takes offense at anyone's declining, no matter how urgent are the reasons for not accepting. The scholar who insists that everything should come easily to him resents the work to be put into a paper or an experiment, regardless of how necessary such work is and often despite his realizing that it cannot be done without painstaking work. The alcoholic who feels entitled to having everybody help him in a financial calamity feels it is unfair if help is not immediately and gladly given, no matter whether others are in a position to do so or not.

These illustrations point implicitly to a second characteristic of neurotic claims: their *egocentricity*. It is often so blatant that it strikes the observer as "naïve," and reminds him of similar attitudes in spoiled children. These impressions lend weight to theoretical conclusions that all these claims are just "infantile" character traits in people who (at least, on this score) have failed to grow up. Actually this contention is fallacious. The small child also is egocentric, but only because it has not yet developed a feeling of relatedness to others. It simply does not know that others have their needs, and limitations too—such as the mother's needing sleep or not having the money to buy a toy. The neurotic's egocentricity is built on an entirely different and much more complicated base. He is consumed with himself because he is driven by his psychic needs, torn by his conflicts, and compelled to adhere to his peculiar solutions. Here are, then, two phenomena which look similar but are different. It follows that to tell a patient his claims are infantile is of utter therapeutic futility. It can merely mean to him that they are irrational (a fact which the analyst can show him in better ways), and this at best sets him thinking. Without much further work, it will not change anything.

So much for this distinction. The egocentricity of neurotic claims can be epitomized in terms of my own revealing experience: priorities in wartime are all right, but my own needs should have absolute priority. If the neurotic feels ill or wants something done, everybody should drop everything else and rush to his assistance. The analyst's polite assertion that he has no time available for a consultation often meets with a furious

or insulting reply, or simply falls on deaf ears. If the patient needs it, there should be time. The less related the neurotic is to the world around him, the less is he aware of others and their feelings. As a patient who at the time showed a lofty disdain for reality once said: "I am an unattached comet, rushing in space. Which means that what I need is real—others with their needs are unreal."

A third characteristic of the neurotic's claims lies in his expectation that things are coming to him *without his making adequate efforts.* He does not admit that if he is lonely he might well call up somebody; somebody should call him up. The simple reasoning that he must eat less if he wants to take off weight often meets with so much inner opposition that he just keeps on eating, still considering it unfair that he does not look as slender as other people. Another may claim that he should be given an honorable job, a better position, an advance in salary without having done anything special to merit it and—what is more—without asking for it. He should not even have to be clear in his own mind what it is that he wants. He should be in the position *to refuse or to take anything.*

Frequently a person may express in most plausible and touching words how much he wants to be happy. But his family or his friends realize after a while that it is extremely difficult to make him happy. So they may tell him that there must be some discontent in him preventing him from attaining happiness. He may then go to an analyst.

The analyst will appreciate the patient's wish for happiness as a good motive for coming to analysis. But he will also ask himself why the patient, with all his desire for happiness, is not happy. He has many things which most people would enjoy: a pleasant home, a nice wife, financial security. But he does not do much of anything; he has no vigorous interest of any kind. There is a great deal of passivity and self-indulgence in the picture. It strikes the analyst in the very first interview that the patient does not talk about his difficulties, but rather, in a somewhat petulant way, presents a chart of wishes. The next hour confirms the first impressions. The patient's inertia in the analytic work proves to be the first hindrance. So the picture becomes clearer. Here is a person, tied hand and foot, unable to

here the analyst—should take all the responsibility and set things right for him. And this need, too, turned into a claim.

This example points to a fourth characteristic of neurotic claims: they can be *vindictive* in nature. The person may feel wronged, and insist on retribution. That this can occur is in itself old knowledge. It is obviously so in traumatic neuroses, in certain paranoid conditions. There are many descriptions of this characteristic in literature, among others Shylock's insisting on his pound of flesh and Hedda Gabler's laying claim to extravagant luxuries at the very moment when she has learned of the probability that her husband will not get the professorship they have hoped for.

The question I want to raise here is whether vindictive demands are a frequent, if not regular, element in neurotic claims. Naturally the individual's awareness of them will vary. In the case of Shylock, they were conscious; in the example of the patient's anger at me, they were on the threshold of awareness; in most instances they are unconscious. From my experience, I doubt their ubiquity. But I find them to be so frequent that I have made it a rule always to look out for them. As I mentioned in the context of the need for vindictive triumph, the amount of largely hidden vindictiveness we find in most neuroses is rather great. Vindictive elements are certainly operating when claims are made with reference to past frustration or suffering; when they are made in a militant manner; when the fulfillment of claims is felt as a triumph and their frustration as defeat.

How *aware* are people of their claims? The more a person's view of himself and the world around him is determined by his imagination, the more he and his life in general simply are as he needs to see them. There is no room then in his mind for seeing that he has any needs or any claims, and the mere mentioning of the possibility of his having claims may be offensive. People simply *do not* let him wait. He simply *does not* have any accidents, nor will he ever get older. The weather *is* fair when he goes on an excursion. Things *do* go his way and he *does* get by with everything.

Other neurotic individuals *seem* to be aware of their claims, for they obviously and openly demand special privileges for

themselves. But what is obvious to the observer may not be obvious to the person himself. What the observer sees and what the observed one feels are two things, to be sharply distinguished. A person aggressively asserting his claims may, at most, be aware of certain expressions or implications of his claims, such as being impatient or not being able to stand disagreement. He may know that he does not like to ask for things or to say thank you. This awareness, however, is different from knowing that he feels entitled to have others do exactly what he wants. He may be aware of being reckless at times, but often he will embellish the recklessness as self-confidence or courage. He may, for instance, quit a fairly good job without any concrete prospect for another one, and may regard such a step as an expression of his self-confidence. This may actually be the case, but there may also be present a recklessness resulting from feeling entitled to having luck and fate on his side. He may know that in some hidden recess of his soul he secretly believes that he, for one, will not die. But even that is not yet an awareness of his feeling entitled to be above biological limitations.

In other instances the claims are concealed from both the person harboring them and the untrained observer. The latter then will accept whatever justifying reasons are proferred for the demands made. Usually he does so less because of psychological ignorance than because of neurotic reasons of his own. He may, for example, find it inconvenient at times that his wife or mistress makes absorbing demands on his time, but it also flatters his vanity to think that he is indispensable to her. Or, a woman may make consuming claims on the basis of helplessness and suffering. She herself will merely feel her needs. She may even be consciously overcareful not to impose upon others. These others, though, may either cherish the role of protector and helper or, because of secret codes of their own, feel "guilty" if they do not measure up to the woman's expectations.

However, even if a person is aware of having certain claims, he is never aware of his claims being unwarranted or irrational. Actually, any doubt of their validity would mean a first step toward undermining them. As long, therefore, as they are vitally important to him, the neurotic must build up in his mind an airtight case in order to make them entirely legitimate. He must

feel thoroughly convinced of their being fair and just. The patient in analysis goes to a great length to prove that he expects only what is coming to him. Conversely, for the sake of therapy, it is important to recognize both the existence of a special claim and the nature of its justification. Since the claims stand and fall with the basis upon which they are put, this basis itself becomes a strategic position. If, for instance, a person feels entitled to all sorts of services on the grounds of merits, he must unwittingly so exaggerate these merits that he can feel righteously abused if the services are not forthcoming.

Claims often are justified on cultural grounds. Because I am a woman—because I am a man—because I am your mother—because I am your employer. . . . Since none of these reasons, serving plausibility or justification, actually entitles one to the demands made, their importance must be overemphasized. For instance, there is no rigid cultural code in this country that it offends masculine dignity to wash dishes. So, if there is a claim of being exempt from menial work, the dignity of being a man or a wage earner must be inflated.

The always present base is that of superiority. The common denominator on this score is: because I am something extra special, I am entitled to . . . In this blunt form, it is mostly unconscious. But the individual may lay stress upon the special significance of his time, his work, his plans, his always being right.

Those who believe that "love" solves everything, that "love" entitles one to everything, must then exaggerate the depth or the value of love—not by way of conscious pretense but by actually feeling more love than there is. The necessity to exaggerate often has repercussions which may contribute to building a vicious circle. This is particularly true for claims put on the grounds of helplessness and suffering. Many people, for instance, feel too timid to make inquiries by telephone. If the claim is made that somebody else make the inquiry for him, the person concerned feels his inhibitions greater than they actually are in order to validate them. If a woman feels too depressed or helpless to do her housekeeping, she will make herself feel more helpless or more depressed than she is—and then will in fact suffer more.

fortunately, the two sides of the scale do not balance. The patient can get well only if he is willing and able to work at himself and to change. So if the patient's good intentions are not combined with effective efforts nothing much will happen. Disturbances keep recurring and the patient, with increasing irritation, will feel cheated; he will present his bill in the form of reproaches or complaints and will feel entirely justified in an increasing distrust of the analyst.

The overemphasis on justice may be, but is not necessarily, a camouflage for vindictiveness. When claims are raised primarily on the grounds of a "deal" with life, usually one's own merits are stressed. The more vindictive claims are, the more the injury done is stressed. Here, too, the injury done must be exaggerated, the feeling for it cultivated, until it looms so large that the "victim" feels entitled to exact any sacrifice or to inflict any punishment.

Since claims are crucial for the maintenance of a neurosis, it is of course important to *assert* them. This applies only toward those directed toward people, because, needless to say, fate and life have a way of deriding any assertion directed toward them. We shall come back to this question on several occasions. It suffices here to say that by and large the ways in which the neurotic tries to make others accede to his claims are intimately connected with the basis on which they are put. In short, he can try to impress others with his unique importance; he can please, charm, promise; he can put others under obligations and try to cash in by appealing to their sense of fairness or guilt; he can, by emphasizing his suffering, appeal to pity and guilt-feelings; he can, by stressing love for others, appeal to their yearning for love or to their vanity; he can intimidate with irritability and sullenness. The vindictive person, who may ruin others with insatiable claims, tries through hardhitting accusations to enforce their compliance.

Considering all the energies invested in justifying the claims, and in asserting them, we cannot but expect intense *reactions to their frustrations.* There are undercurrents of fear, but the prevailing response is anger or even rage. This anger is of a peculiar kind. Since the claims are subjectively felt as fair and just, the frustrations are experienced as unfair and unjust. The ensuing

anger has therefore the character of a righteous indignation. The person feels, in other words, not only angry but the right to be angry—a feeling which is vigorously defended in analysis.

Before delving deeper into the various expressions of this indignation, I want to take a brief detour into theory—in particular the theory advanced by John Dollard and others that we react with hostility to any frustration; that, as a matter of fact, hostility essentially is a reaction to frustration.[3] Actually, fairly simple observations show that this contention is not valid. On the contrary, the amount of frustration human beings can bear without hostility is amazing. Hostility arises only if a frustration is unfair or if, on the basis of neurotic claims, it is felt to be unfair. And it has then the specific characteristic of indignation, or of feeling abused. The misfortune, or the injury, done then appears magnified to sometimes ludicrous proportions. If one feels abused by another person, that person suddenly becomes untrustworthy, nasty, cruel, contemptible—i.e., this indignation drastically influences our judgment of others. Here is one source for neurotic suspiciousness. Here is also a reason, and an important one, for many neurotic people being so insecure in their estimates of others and for their turning so easily from a positive friendly attitude to one of total condemnation.

If I may oversimplify, the acute reaction of anger, or even rage, may take one of three different courses. It may be suppressed, for whatever reason, and may then—like any suppressed hostility—appear in psychosomatic symptoms: fatigue, migraine, stomach upsets, etc. On the other hand, it may be freely expressed, or at least fully felt. In this case the less the anger is warranted in fact, the more one will have to exaggerate the wrong done; one will then inadvertently build up a case against the offender that looks logic tight. The more openly vindictive a person is, for whatever reason, the more prone will he be to take vengeance. The more openly arrogant he is, the surer will he be that such vengeance is the doling out of justice.

[3] The postulate is made on the basis of Freud's theory of instincts and entails the contention that every hostility is a reaction to frustrated instinctual urges or their derivatives. For those analysts who accept Freud's theory of a death-instinct, hostility in addition derives its energy from an instinctual need to destroy.

The third kind of reaction is to plunge into misery and self-pity. The individual then feels extremely hurt or abused, and may become despondent. "How can they do this to me!" he feels. Suffering in these cases becomes the medium to express reproaches.

It is easier to observe these reactions in others than in oneself, for the very reason that the conviction of righteousness inhibits self-examination. It is in our real interest, however, to examine our own reactions when we become preoccupied with a wrong done to us, or when we begin to ponder the hateful qualities of somebody, or when we feel the impulse to get back at others. We must then scrutinize the question of whether our reaction is in any reasonable proportion to the wrong done. And if with honest scrutiny we find a disproportion, we must search for hidden claims. Provided we are willing and able to relinquish some of our needs for special prerogatives, and provided we are familiar with the special forms our suppressed hostility may take, it is not too difficult to recognize an acute reaction to an individual frustration and to discover the particular claim behind it. Having seen the claims in one or two instances does not mean, however, that we are rid of all of them. We usually have overcome only those which were especially conspicuous and absurd. The process is reminiscent of a tapeworm cure in which parts of the worm are eliminated. But it will regenerate and keep sapping our strength until the head is removed. This means that we can relinquish our claims only to the extent to which we overcome the whole search for glory and all that it entails. However, unlike a tapeworm cure, in the process of coming back to ourselves every step counts.

The *effects* which pervasive claims have on a personality and his life are manifold. They may create in him a diffuse sense of frustration and a discontent so encompassing that it could loosely be called a character trait. There are other factors contributing to such chronic discontent. But among the sources generating it pervasive claims are outstanding. The discontent shows in the tendency in any life situation to focus on what is lacking, or on what is hard, and thus to become dissatisfied with the whole situation. For instance, a man is engaged in a most

vant factors contributing to inertia, which in its open or hidden form is perhaps the most frequent neurotic disturbance. In contrast to idleness, which can be voluntary and enjoyable, inertia is a paralysis of psychic energies. It extends not only to doing things but to thinking and feeling as well. All claims, by definition, substitute for the neurotic's active work at his problems, and hence paralyze him with regard to his growth. In many instances they contribute toward a more comprehensive aversion to all efforts. The unconscious claim, then, is that the mere intention should be enough to bring about achievement, to get a job, to be happy, to overcome a difficulty. He is entitled to achieve all this without any output of energy. Sometimes this means that others should do the actual work—let George do it. If this does not happen, he has a reason for discontent. Thus it often occurs that he becomes tired at the mere prospect of doing some extra work, such as moving or shopping. Sometimes, in analysis, an individual fatigue can be removed quickly. One patient, for instance, had many things to do before going on a trip and felt fatigued even prior to starting in on his work. I suggested that he might take the problem of how to get everything done as a challenge to his ingenuity. This appealed to him, the fatigue disappeared, and he was able to accomplish everything without feeling rushed or tired. But although he had thus experienced his ability to be active and joy in being so, his impulse to make efforts of his own soon receded, for his unconscious claims were still too deeply entrenched.

The more vindictive the claims involved, the stronger the degree of inertia seems to be. The unconscious argument, then, runs as follows: Others are responsible for the trouble I am in—so I am entitled to repair. And what kind of repair would it be, if I made all the effort! Naturally, only a person who has lost constructive interest in his life can argue that way. It is no longer up to him to do something about his life; it is up to "them," or to fate.

The *tenacity* with which the patient adheres to his claims and defends them in analysis points to the considerable subjective value they must have for him. He has not one but several lines of defense and shifts them repeatedly. First, he has no claims at all, he does not know what the analyst is talking about; then

he becomes strong enough to dispense with the solution he found in self-idealization.

We do not fully understand the tenacity of the claims so long as we regard them merely as a "naïve" expression of what the neurotic, with his glorified image of himself, feels is coming to him; or as an understandable desire to have his many compulsive needs fulfilled by others. The tenacity with which the neurotic adheres to any attitude is a sure indication that the attitude fulfills functions which seem indispensable in the framework of his neurosis. We have seen that claims seem to solve many problems for him. Their over-all function is to perpetuate his illusions about himself, and to shift responsibility to factors outside himself. By raising his needs to the dignity of claims, he denies his own troubles and places the responsibility for himself on other people, on circumstances, or on fate. It is unfair that he had any difficulties in the first place, and he is entitled to life's being so arranged that they should not trouble him. For example, he is asked for a loan or for a contribution. He becomes upset and, in his mind, heaps abuse on the person asking him. Actually he is indignant because of his claim not to be bothered. What makes his claim so necessary? The request actually confronts him with a conflict within himself, which is roughly that between his need to comply and his need to frustrate others. But so long as he is too scared or too unwilling to face this conflict—for whatever reason—he must hold on to his claim. He puts it in terms of not wanting to be bothered, but more precisely it is the claim that the world should behave in such a way as not to mobilize (and make him aware of) his conflicts. We shall understand later on why the shedding of responsibility is so vital to him. But we can see already that, in effect, claims prevent him from squaring himself with his difficulties, and that thereby they perpetuate his neurosis.

everything, to understand everything, to like everybody, to be always productive"—to mention only a few of these inner dictates. Since they are inexorable, I call them "the tyranny of the should."

The inner dictates comprise all that the neurotic should be able to do, to be, to feel, to know—and taboos on how and what he should not be. I shall begin by enumerating some of them out of context, for the sake of a brief survey. (More detailed examples will follow as we discuss the characteristics of the shoulds.)

He should be the utmost of honesty, generosity, considerateness, justice, dignity, courage, unselfishness. He should be the perfect lover, husband, teacher. He should be able to endure everything, should like everybody, should love his parents, his wife, his country; or, he should not be attached to anything or anybody, nothing should matter to him, he should never feel hurt, and he should always be serene and unruffled. He should always enjoy life; or, he should be above pleasure and enjoyment. He should be spontaneous; he should always control his feelings. He should know, understand, and foresee everything. He should be able to solve every problem of his own, or of others, in no time. He should be able to overcome every difficulty of his as soon as he sees it. He should never be tired or fall ill. He should always be able to find a job. He should be able to do things in one hour which can only be done in two to three hours.

This survey, roughly indicating the scope of inner dictates, leaves us with the impression of demands on self which, though understandable, are altogether too difficult and too rigid. If we tell a patient that he expects too much of himself, he will often recognize it without hesitation; he may even have been aware of it already. He will usually add, explicitly or implicitly, that it is better to expect too much of himself than too little. But to speak of too high demands on self does not reveal the peculiar *characteristics of inner dictates.* These come into clear relief under closer examination. They are overlapping, because they all result from the necessity a person feels to turn into his idealized self, and from his conviction that he can do so.

ence to the length of the whole analysis, but equally so in regard to an individual insight gained. For instance, recognizing some of their neurotic claims seems to them the equivalent of having outgrown them altogether. That it requires patient work; that the claims will persist as long as the emotional necessities for having them are not changed—all of this they ignore. They believe that their intelligence should be a supreme moving power. Naturally, then, subsequent disappointment and discouragement are unavoidable. In a similar way, a teacher may expect that, with her long experience in teaching, it should be easy for her to write a paper on a pedagogical subject. If the words do not flow from her pen, she feels utterly disgusted with herself. She has ignored or discarded such relevant questions as: Has she something to say? Have her experiences crystallized to some useful formulations? And even if the answers are affirmative, a paper still means plain work in formulating and expressing thoughts.

The inner dictates, exactly like political tyranny in a police state, operate with a supreme *disregard for the person's own psychic condition*—for what he can feel or do as he is at present. One of the frequent shoulds, for instance, is that one should never feel hurt. As an absolute (which is implied in the "never") anyone would find this extremely hard to achieve. How many people have been, or are, so secure in themselves, so serene, as never to feel hurt? This could at best be an ideal toward which we might strive. To take such a project seriously must mean intense and patient work at our unconscious claims for defense, at our false pride—or, in short, at every factor in our personality that makes us vulnerable. But the person who feels that he should never feel hurt does not have so concrete a program in mind. He simply issues an absolute order to himself, denying or overriding the fact of his existing vulnerability.

Let us consider another demand: I should always be understanding, sympathetic, and helpful. I should be able to melt the heart of a criminal. Again, this is not entirely fantastic. Rare people, such as the priest in Victor Hugo's *Les Miserables,* have achieved this spiritual power. I had a patient to whom the figure of the priest was an important symbol. She felt she should be

covered a disturbing problem in himself (as the analyst tends to assume) than to his feeling impotent to remove it right away.

Thus the inner dictates, while somewhat more radical than other ways to maintain the idealized image, like the others do not aim at real change but at immediate and absolute perfection. They aim at making the imperfection disappear, or at making it appear *as if* the particular perfection were attained. This becomes especially clear if, as in the last example, the inner demands are externalized. Then what a person actually is, and even what he suffers, becomes irrelevant. Only what is visible to others creates intense worries: a shaking of the hand, a blush, an awkwardness in social situations.

The shoulds, therefore, *lack the moral seriousness of genuine ideals.* People in their grip are not striving, for instance, toward approximating a greater degree of honesty but are driven to attain the absolute in honesty—which is always just around the corner, or is attained in imagination.

They can achieve at best a behavioristic perfection, such as Pearl Buck has described in the character of Madame Wu in the *Pavilion of Women.* Here is the portrait of a woman who always seems to do, feel, think the right thing. The superficial appearance of such people is, needless to say, most deceptive. They themselves are bewildered when, seemingly out of a blue sky, they develop a street phobia or functional heart trouble. How is that possible, they ask. They have always managed life perfectly, have been the leaders in their class, the organizers, the model marriage partners or parents. Eventually a situation which they cannot manage in their usual way is bound to occur. And, having no other way to deal with it, their equilibrium is disturbed. The analyst, when getting acquainted with them and the enormous tension under which they operate, rather marvels that they have kept going as long as they have without gross disturbances.

The more we get a feeling for the nature of the shoulds, the more clearly do we see that the difference between them and real moral standards or ideals is not a quantitative but a qualitative one. It was one of Freud's gravest errors to regard the

inner dictates (some of the features of which he had seen and described as superego), as constituting morality in general. To begin with, their connection with moral questions is not too close. True enough, the commands for moral perfection do assume a prominent place among the shoulds, for the simple reason that moral questions are important in all our lives. But we cannot separate these particular shoulds from others, just as insistent, which are plainly determined by unconscious arrogance, such as "I should be able to get out of a Sunday-afternoon traffic jam" or "I should be able to paint without laborious training and working." We must also remember that many demands conspicuously lack even a moral pretense, among them "I should be able to get away with anything," "I should always get the better of others," and "I should always be able to get back at others." Only by focusing on the totality of the picture are we able to get the proper perspective on the demands for moral perfection. Like the other shoulds, they are permeated by the spirit of arrogance and aim at enhancing the neurotic's glory and at making him godlike. They are, in this sense, the neurotic counterfeit of normal moral strivings. When one adds to all this the unconscious dishonesty necessarily involved in making blemishes disappear, one recognizes them as an immoral rather than a moral phenomenon. It is necessary to be clear about these differences for the sake of the patient's eventual reorientation from a make-believe world into the development of genuine ideals.

There is one further quality of the shoulds that distinguishes them from genuine standards. It is implied in the previous comments but carries too much weight of its own not to be stated separately and explicitly. That is their *coercive character.* Ideals, too, have an obligating power over our lives. For instance, if among them is the belief in fulfilling responsibilities which we ourselves recognize as such, we try our best to do so even though it may be difficult. To fulfill them is what we ourselves ultimately want, or what we deem right. The wish, the judgment, the decision is ours. And because we are thus at one with ourselves, efforts of this kind give us freedom and strength. In obeying the shoulds, on the other hand, there is just about as much freedom as there is in a "voluntary" contribution or

prevails. To anticipate later distinctions, the attitudes toward and ways of experiencing inner dictates are primarily determined by the greatest appeal life holds for the individual: mastery, love, or freedom. Since such differences will be discussed later,[1] I shall here indicate only briefly how they operate with regard to the shoulds and taboos.

The expansive type, for whom mastery of life is crucial, tends to identify himself with his inner dictates and, whether consciously or unconsciously, to be proud of his standards. He does not question their validity and tries to actualize them in one way or other. He may try to measure up to them in his actual behavior. He should be all things to all people; he should know everything better than anybody else; he should never err; he should never fail in anything he attempts to do—in short, fulfill whatever his particular shoulds are. And, in his mind, he does measure up to his supreme standards. His arrogance may be so great that he does not even consider the possibility of failure, and discards it if it occurs. His arbitrary rightness is so rigid that in his own mind he simply never errs.

The more he is engulfed in his imagination, the less necessary it is for him to make actual efforts. It is sufficient, then, that in his mind he is supremely fearless or honest, no matter how beset he is by fears or how dishonest he actually is. The border line between these two ways of "I should" and "I am" is vague for him—for that matter, probably not too sharp for any of us. The German poet Christian Morgenstern has expressed this concisely in one of his poems. A man was lying in a hospital with a broken leg after having been run over by a truck. He read that in the particular street in which the accident happened trucks were not allowed to drive. And so he arrived at the conclusion that the whole experience was only a dream. For, "sharp as a knife," he concluded that nothing can happen that should not happen. The more a person's imagination prevails over his reasoning, the more the border line disappears and he *is* the model husband, father, citizen, or whatever he should be.

The self-effacing type, for whom love seems to solve all problems, likewise feels that his shoulds constitute a law not to be

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[1] *Cf.* Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11.

cause of his rather abstract love for humanity. His attitude toward concrete individuals was much more divided than he realized. Thus any request plunged him into an inner conflict: he should accede to it and be very generous and also he should not allow anybody to coerce him. The irritability was an expression of feeling caught in a dilemma which at that time was insoluble.

The *effects* the shoulds have on a person's personality and life vary to some extent with his way of responding to them or experiencing them. But certain effects show inevitably and regularly, though to a greater or lesser degree. The shoulds always produce a feeling of *strain,* which is all the greater the more a person tries to actualize his shoulds in his behavior. He may feel that he stands on tiptoe all the time, and may suffer from a chronic exhaustion. Or he may feel vaguely cramped, tense, or hemmed in. Or, if his shoulds coincide with attitudes culturally expected of him, he may feel merely an almost imperceptible strain. It may be strong enough, however, to contribute to a desire in an otherwise active person to retire from activities or obligations.

Furthermore, because of externalizations, the shoulds always contribute to *disturbances in human relations* in one way or another. The most general disturbance on this score is hypersensitivity to criticism. Being merciless toward himself, he cannot help experiencing any criticism on the part of others—whether actual or merely anticipated, whether friendly or unfriendly—as being just as condemnatory as his own. We shall understand the intensity of this sensitivity better when we realize how much he hates himself for any lagging behind his self-imposed standards.[2] Otherwise the kinds of disturbance in human relations depend upon the kind of prevailing externalization. They may render him too critical and harsh of others or too apprehensive, too defiant, or too compliant.

Most important of all, the shoulds further *impair the spontaneity* of feelings, wishes, thoughts, and beliefs—i.e., the ability

[2] *Cf.* Chapter 5, Self-Hate and Self-Contempt.

all imposed from without; inside there was absolutely nothing of mine.[3]

The creation of make-believe feelings is most striking in those whose idealized image lies in the direction of goodness, love, and saintliness. They should be considerate, grateful, sympathetic, generous, loving, and so in their minds they *have* all these qualities. They talk and go through the motions *as if* they simply were that good and loving. And, since they are convinced of it, they even can be temporarily convincing to others. But of course these make-believe feelings have no depth and no sustaining power. Under favorable circumstances they may be fairly consistent and then, naturally, are not questioned. Madame Wu, in *Pavilion of Women,* started to question the genuineness of her feelings only when difficulties arose in the family situation and when she met a man who was straight and honest in his emotional life.

More often the shallowness of the made-to-order feelings shows in other ways. They may disappear easily. Love readily makes way for indifference, or for resentment and contempt, when pride or vanity is hurt. In these instances people usually do not ask themselves: "How does it happen that my feelings or opinions change so easily?" They simply feel that here is another person who has disappointed their faith in humanity, or that they never "really" trusted him. All of this does not mean that they may not have slumbering capacities for strong and alive feelings, but what appears on more conscious levels often is a massive pretense with very little that is genuine in it. In the long run they give the impression of something unsubstantial, elusive, or—to use a good slang word—of being phonies. An irruptive anger often is the only feeling that is really fair.

At the other extreme, feelings of callousness and ruthlessness can also be exaggerated. The taboos on feelings of tenderness, sympathy, and confidence can be just as great in some neurotics as the taboos on hostility and vindictiveness are in others. These people feel that they should be able to live without any close personal relations, so they believe that they do not need them.

[3] From "Finding the Real Self," *American Journal of Psychoanalysis,* 1949. *A Letter,* with Foreword by Karen Horney.

They should not enjoy anything; so they believe they do not care. Their emotional life then is less distorted than plainly impoverished.

Naturally the emotional pictures engendered by the inner commands are not always as streamlined as in these two extreme groups. The orders issued can be contradictory. You should be so sympathetic that you shun no sacrifices whatever, but you should also be so coldblooded that you can carry out any act of vengeance. As a result, a person is convinced at times that he is callous and at others that he is extremely kindhearted. In other people so many feelings and wishes are checked that a general emotional deadness ensues. There may be, for instance, a taboo on wanting anything for themselves, which puts the lid on all alive wishes and creates pervasive inhibitions about doing anything for themselves. Then, partly because of these inhibitions, they develop just as pervasive claims on the grounds of which they feel entitled to have everything in life presented on a silver platter. And then the resentment over the frustration of such claims may be choked off by a dictate that they should put up with life.

We are less aware of the harm done our feelings by these pervasive shoulds than of other damage inflicted by them. Yet it is actually the heaviest price we pay for trying to mold ourselves into perfection. Feelings are the most alive part of ourselves; if they are put under a dictatorial regime, a profound uncertainty is created in our essential being which must affect adversely our relations to everything inside and outside ourselves.

We can hardly overrate the *intensity* of the impact of the inner dictates. The more the drive to actualize his idealized self prevails in a person, the more the shoulds become the sole motor force moving him, driving him, whipping him into action. When a patient who is still far removed from his real self discovers some of the cramping effects of his shoulds, he may nevertheless be entirely unable to consider relinquishing them because without them—so he feels—he would or could not do anything. He may sometimes express this concern in terms of the belief that one cannot make other people do the "right"

thing except by force, which is an externalized expression of his inner experience. The shoulds then acquire a subjective value for the patient with which he can dispense only when he experiences the existence of other spontaneous forces in himself.

When we realize the enormous coercive power of the shoulds we must raise one question, the answer to which we shall discuss in the fifth chapter: what does it do to a person when he recognizes that he cannot measure up to his inner dictates? To anticipate the answer briefly: then he starts to hate and despise himself. We cannot in fact understand the full impact of the shoulds unless we see the extent to which they are interwoven with self-hate. It is the threat of a punitive self-hate that lurks behind them, that truly makes them a regime of terror.

they expect the analyst to instill it into them in some way or other. Which always reminds me of a cartoon in which a rabbit and a mouse got an injection of courage; they then grew to five times their ordinary size, were bold and full of indomitable fighting spirit. What the patients do not know—and are anxious indeed not to realize—is the strict cause-and-effect relation between existing personal assets and the feeling of self-confidence. This relation is not any less definite than the way in which the financial status of a person depends upon his properties, his savings, or his earning capacity. If these factors are satisfactory, a person will have a feeling of economic security. Or, to take another example, the fisherman's confidence rests on such concrete factors as his boat being in good shape, his nets being mended, his knowledge of weather and water conditions, and his muscular strength.

What are regarded as personal assets vary to some degree with the culture in which we live. For Western civilization they include such qualities or attributes as having autonomous convictions and acting upon them, having the self-reliance that stems from tapping our own resources, assuming responsibility for ourselves, taking a realistic appraisal of our assets, liabilities and limitations, having strength and directness of feelings, and having the capacity for establishing and cultivating good human relations. The well-functioning of these factors shows subjectively in a feeling of self-confidence. To the extent that they are impaired, self-confidence will be shaky.

Healthy pride likewise is based on substantial attributes. It may be a warranted high regard for special achievements, such as feeling proud of a deed of moral courage or of a job well done. Or it may be a more comprehensive feeling of our own value, a quiet feeling of dignity.

Considering the extreme sensitivity of a neurotic pride to hurt, we are inclined to consider it as a rank growth of healthy pride. The essential difference, however, as we have so often before found true, is not one of quantity but of quality. Neurotic pride is by comparison unsubstantial, and it is based on entirely different factors, all of which belong to or support the glorified

version of oneself. They may be extraneous assets—prestige values—or they may consist of attributes and faculties which one arrogates to oneself.

Of the varieties of neurotic pride that in prestige value seems the most normal. In our civilization it is an average reaction to be proud of having an attractive girl, of coming from a respectable family, of being native born, a Southerner, or New Englander, belonging to a political or professional group enjoying prestige, meeting important people, being popular, having a good car or address.

This kind of pride is the least typical for neurosis. To many people with considerable neurotic difficulties these things mean no more than they do to the comparatively healthy person; to many others they mean distinctly less, if indeed anything. But there are some who have such a heavy investment of neurotic pride in these prestige values, and for whom they are so crucial, that their lives revolve around them and they often fritter away their best energies in their service. For these people it is an absolute must to be associated with groups that carry prestige, to be affiliated with prominent institutions. Of course all their hectic activities are rationalized in terms of genuine interest or the legitimate wish to get ahead. Anything that accrues to this prestige then may evoke real elation; any failure of the group to enhance such a person's prestige, or any diminution of the prestige of the group itself, provokes all the hurt-pride reactions which we shall discuss presently. For example, a member of someone's family not "making good," or being mentally ill, may be a heavy blow to his pride, mostly hidden behind superficial concern for the relative. Again there are many women who prefer to abstain from going to a restaurant or a theater than to go without a male escort.

All of this looks similar to what anthropologists tell us about certain so-called primitive people among whom the individual primarily is and feels as a part of the group. Pride then is invested not in personal matters but in institutions and group activities. But while these processes seem to be similar, they are essentially different. The main difference is that the neurotic is

at bottom unrelated to the group. He does not feel part of it, does not have a feeling of belonging, but rather uses it for his personal prestige.

Although a person may be consumed by thinking of and chasing after prestige, and although in his mind he rises and falls with his prestige, this often is not clearly seen as a neurotic problem to be analyzed—either because it is such a common occurrence, or because it looks like a cultural pattern, or because the analyst himself is not free from this disease. A disease it is, and a devastating one at that, because it makes people opportunistic and in this way mars their integrity. Far from being close to normal, it is on the contrary indicative of a severe disturbance. Indeed it occurs only in those who are so profoundly alienated from themselves that even their pride is largely invested outside of themselves.

Neurotic pride furthermore rests on the attributes which a person arrogates to himself in his imagination, on all those belonging to his particular idealized image. Here the peculiar nature of neurotic pride comes into clear relief. The neurotic is not proud of the human being he actually is. Knowing his wrong perspective on himself, we are not surprised that his pride blots out difficulties and limitations. But it goes further than this. Mostly he is not even proud of his existing assets. He may be but hazily aware of them; he may actually deny them. But even if he is cognizant of them they carry no weight for him. For instance, if the analyst calls to his attention his great capacity for work or the tenacity he has actually demonstrated in making his way in life, or points out that—his difficulties notwithstanding—he did write a good book, the patient may literally or figuratively shrug his shoulders and pass over the praise lightly, with noticeable indifference. He especially has no appreciation for all that is "merely" striving and not accomplishment. He rather discards, for instance, the honest striving to get to the roots of his trouble, which he has shown in making one serious attempt after another to take up analysis or to analyze himself.

Peer Gynt may serve as a famous illustration from literature. He does not make much of his existing assets, his great intelligence, spirit of adventure, vitality. But he is proud of the one

thing he is not, of "being himself." Actually he is—in his mind —not himself but his idealized self, with unlimited "freedom" and unlimited powers. (He has lifted his boundless egocentricity to the dignity of a life philosophy with his maxim "To thyself be true," which—as Ibsen points out—is a glorification of "To thyself be enough.")

There are many Peer Gynts among our patients, anxious to preserve their illusions of being a saint, a mastermind, of having absolute poise, etc.; and they feel as if they would lose their "individuality" if they budged an inch from these estimates of themselves. Imagination itself may become of supreme value, regardless of the use to which it is put, since it allows its bearer to look down with contempt on the drab and pedestrian people who are concerned with truth. The patient of course would not say "truth" but would speak in vague terms of "reality." One patient for instance, whose claims were so grandiose as to expect the world to be at his service, at first took a clear stand toward this claim, calling it absurd and even degrading. But the next day he had retrieved his pride: the claims were now a "magnificent mental creation." The true meaning of irrational claims had submerged and pride in imagination was triumphant.

More frequently, pride is not specifically attached to imagination but to all mental processes: intellect, reason, and will power as well. The infinite powers the neurotic ascribes to himself are, after all, powers of the mind. No wonder, then, that he is fascinated by it and proud of it. The idealized image is a product of his imagination. But this is not something which is created overnight. Incessant work of intellect and imagination, most of it unconscious, goes into maintaining the private fictitious world through rationalizations, justifications, externalizations, reconciling irreconcilables—in short, through finding ways to make things appear different from what they are. The more a person is alienated from himself, the more his mind becomes supreme reality. ("A person has no existence apart from my thought; I have no existence apart from my thought.") Like the Lady of Shalott, he cannot see the reality directly but only through a mirror. More accurately: he sees in the mirror only *his thoughts* about the world and himself. This is why the pride

of driving a hard bargain, others of never bargaining at all—depending on whether they must always be on the winning side or should never be out for their own advantage.

Lastly, it may be merely the very loftiness and severity of the compulsive standards which are invested with pride. The fact of knowing "the good" and "the evil" makes them godlike, just as the serpent promised it would to Adam and Eve. A neurotic person's very high standards make him feel that he is a moral wonder to be proud of, regardless of how he actually is and behaves. He may have recognized in analysis his ravaging hunger for prestige, his poor sense of truth, his vindictiveness; but all of that does not make him any more humble or make him feel any less a superior moral being. To him these actual flaws do not count. His pride is not in being moral, but in knowing how he should be. Even though temporarily he may have recognized the futility of his self-reproaches, or even at times have been terrified at their viciousness, he still may not relent in his demands on self. What does it matter, after all, if he suffers? Is not his suffering another proof of his superior moral sensibilities? Hence to sustain this pride seems worth the price.

When we proceed from these general viewpoints to the particulars of individual neuroses, the picture at first sight is confusing. There is simply nothing that may not be invested with pride. What is a shining asset to one person is a disgraceful liability to the next. One person is proud of being rude to people; another is ashamed of anything that could be construed as rudeness and is proud of his sensitiveness to others. One is proud of his ability to bluff his way through life; still another is ashamed of any trace of bluffing. Here is one who is proud of trusting people and there is one equally proud of distrusting them—and so forth and so on.

But this diversity is bewildering only as long as we regard the special kinds of pride out of the context of the whole personality. As soon as we see each of them from the perspective of the individual's total character structure, an ordering principle emerges: his need to be proud of himself is so imperative that he cannot tolerate the idea of being in the clutches of blind needs; so he uses his imagination to turn these needs into vir-

tues, to transform them into assets of which he can be proud. But only those compulsive needs which serve his drive to actualize his idealized self undergo this transformation. Conversely, he tends to suppress, deny, despise those which obstruct this drive.

His capacity for this unconscious reversal of values is perfectly amazing. The best medium through which to present it would be cartoons. There it could be shown most vividly how people afflicted with some undesirable trait take a brush, paint over the trait with beautiful colors, and present with blustering pride the picture of their assets. Thus inconsistency turns into unlimited freedom, blind rebellion against an existing code of morals into being above common prejudice, a taboo on doing anything for oneself into saintly unselfishness, a need to appease into sheer goodness, dependency into love, exploiting others into astuteness. A capacity to assert egocentric claims appears as strength, vindictiveness as justice, frustrating techniques as a most intelligent weapon, aversion to work as "successfully resisting the deadly habit of work," and so on.

These unconscious processes often remind me of the Trolls in Ibsen's *Peer Gynt,* for whom "black looks white, and ugly fair, big looks little, and filthy clean." Most interestingly, Ibsen accounts for this reversal of values in a way similar to our own. As long as you live in a self-sufficient dream world like Peer Gynt, Ibsen says, you cannot be true to yourself. Between the two there is no bridge. They are too different in principle to allow for any compromise solution. And if you are not true to yourself, but live an egocentric life of imagined grandeur, then you will play ducks and drakes with your values too. Your scale of values will be just as topsy-turvy as is that of the Trolls. And this indeed is the tenor of everything we have discussed in this chapter. As soon as we go off on the search for glory we stop being concerned about the truth of ourselves. *Neurotic pride, in all its forms, is false pride.*

Once having grasped the principle that only those trends are invested with pride that serve to actualize the idealized self, the analyst will be alert to detect hidden pride in any position which is tenaciously adhered to. The connection between the subjective value of a trait and neurotic pride in it seems to be a

regular one. Recognizing either one of these factors, the analyst can safely conclude that in all probability the other one will be there too. Sometimes the one, sometimes the other will come into focus first. Thus a patient at the beginning of analytical work may express pride in his cynicism or in his power to frustrate others. And although at this juncture the analyst does not understand the meaning that the given factor has for the patient, he can be reasonably certain of its playing a significant part of the particular neurosis.

It is necessary for therapy that the analyst gradually gain a clear picture of the particular kinds of pride operating in each individual patient. Naturally a patient cannot regard a drive, an attitude, or a reaction as a problem to be tackled as long as he is unconsciously or consciously proud of it. A patient may, for instance, have become aware of his need to outwit others. The analyst may feel it self-evident that this is a problematic trend to be tackled, and to be overcome eventually, because he considers the interest of the patient's real self. He realizes the trend's compulsive character, the disturbance it creates in human relations, the waste of energies which could be employed for constructive purposes. The patient on the other hand, without being aware of it, may feel that just this very capacity to outwit others makes him a superior person; and he is secretly proud of it. He is interested therefore not in analyzing the tendency to outwit but in the factors in himself which interfere with his doing it to perfection. As long as this difference in evaluation is under cover, analyst and patient will move on different planes and analyze at cross-purposes.

Neurotic pride resting on such shaky foundations is as insubstantial as a card house and, like the latter, collapses at the slightest draft. In terms of subjective experience it makes a person *vulnerable,* and does so exactly to the extent that he is obsessed by pride. It can be hurt as easily from within as from without. The two typical reactions to hurt pride are shame and humiliation. We will feel ashamed if we do, think, or feel something that violates our pride. And we will feel humiliated if others do something that hurts our pride, or fail to do what our pride requires of them. In any reaction of shame or humiliation that

seems out of place or out of proportion we must answer these two questions: What in the particular situation has aroused this response? And what special underlying pride has been hurt by it? They are closely interrelated, and neither can be given a quick answer. The analyst may know, for instance, that masturbation provokes excessive shame in a person who in general has a rational, sensible attitude to the problem and would not disapprove of it in others. There, at least, the shame-provoking factor seems to be clear. But is it? Masturbation may mean different things to different people, and the analyst cannot know offhand which of the many factors that may be involved in masturbation is relevant to arousing the shame. Does it mean for the particular patient a sexual activity that is degraded because it is separate from love? Is the satisfaction attained greater than in sexual intercourse, and thereby disturbing to the image of being geared only to love? Is it a question of the concomitant fantasies? Does it mean the admission of having any needs? Is it too much self-indulgence for a stoical person? Does it mean loss of self-control? Only to the extent that the analyst grasps the relevance of these factors for the patient can he then raise the second question as to the kind of pride that has been hurt by masturbation.

I have yet another illustration to show the necessity for accuracy with regard to the factors arousing shame or humiliation. Many unmarried women are deeply ashamed of having a lover, although in their conscious thinking they are quite unconventional. In the case of such a woman it is of importance to ascertain first whether her pride is hurt by the particular lover. If so, has the shame to do with his not being sufficiently glamorous or devoted? With her allowing him to treat her badly? With her being dependent on him? Or does the shame pertain to the fact of having a lover at all, regardless of his status and personality? If so, is it for her a matter of prestige to be married? Is the situation of having a lover, but remaining single, a proof of being unworthy and unattractive? Or should she be above sexual desires, like a vestal virgin?

Often the very same incident may elicit either reaction—that of shame or that of humiliation—the one or the other prevailing. A man is rejected by a girl; he can either feel humiliated by

her and react with a "Who does she think she is?" or he can feel ashamed that his charm or his virility seems not to be absolutely compelling. A comment made in a discussion falls flat; he can either feel humiliated by "these darned fools who do not understand me" or he can feel ashamed of his own awkwardness. Somebody takes advantage of him; he can either feel humiliated by the exploiter or ashamed of himself for not having asserted his own interests. His children are not brilliant or popular; he can feel humiliated by this fact, and take it out on them, or he can feel with shame that in some way or other he has failed them.

These observations point to the necessity of reorienting our thinking. We are inclined to put too great an emphasis on the actual situation, and to think that it determines our reactions. We are inclined, for instance, to regard it as "natural" for a person to react with *shame* if he is caught in a lie. But then the next fellow does not feel that way at all; instead he feels *humiliated* by the one who found him out and turns against him. Our reactions are thus determined not merely by the situation but even more by our own neurotic needs.

More specifically, the same principle operates in the reaction of shame or humiliation as in the transformation of values. In aggressive expansive types, reactions of shame can be strikingly absent. Even the minute scrutiny of the analytical searchlight may not detect any traces at the beginning. These are people who either live so much in the imagination that in their own mind they are without blemish, or they have so covered themselves with a protective layer of militant rightness that everything they do, *eo ipso, is* right. Injuries to their pride can come only from the outside. Any questioning of their motivations, any uncovering of a handicap is felt as an insult. They can but suspect malicious intent in any person who does this to them.

In self-effacing types, reactions of humiliation are by far overshadowed by feelings of shame. On the surface they are subdued and preoccupied with an anxious concern to measure up to their shoulds. But for reasons to be discussed later, they focus rather on their failure to be the ultimate of perfection and hence feel easily ashamed. The analyst can therefore, from the

prevalence of one or the other reaction, draw tentative conclusions as to relevant trends in the underlying structure.

Thus far the connections between pride and the reactions to its hurt are simple and direct. And, since they are typical, it would seem easy for the analyst or for the person analyzing himself to draw inferences from one to the other. Recognizing a special brand of neurotic pride, he can be alert to the kind of provocation liable to produce shame or humiliation. And, vice versa, the occurrence of these reactions would stimulate him to discover the underlying pride and to examine its specific nature. What complicates matters is the fact that these reactions may be blurred by several factors. A person's pride may be extremely vulnerable, but he does not consciously express any feeling of hurt. Self-righteousness, as we have already mentioned, can prohibit the feelings of shame. Moreover a pride in invulnerability may forbid him to admit to himself that he feels hurt. A god may show wrath at the imperfection of mortals, but he *just is not hurt* by a boss or a taxi driver; he should be big enough to overlook it and strong enough to take everything in his stride. "Insults" therefore hurt him in a twofold way: feeling humiliated by others and feeling ashamed of the very fact of his being hurt. Such a person is in an almost permanent dilemma: he is vulnerable to an absurd degree, but his pride does not allow him to be vulnerable at all. This inner condition greatly contributes to a diffuse irritability.

The issue may also be blurred because the direct reactions to hurt pride can be automatically transformed into feelings other than shame or humiliation. It may essentially hurt our pride if a husband or a lover is interested in another woman, does not remember our wishes, or is preoccupied with his work or hobbies. But all we may consciously feel is grief over unrequited love. A slight may be felt merely as disappointment. Feelings of shame may appear in our awareness as vague uneasiness, as embarrassment, or, more specifically, as feelings of guilt. This last transformation is of particular importance because it allows for a rather quick understanding of certain guilt-feelings. If, for instance, a person full of pervasive unconscious pretenses is guiltily perturbed by a comparatively harmless and inconse-

quential lie, we may safely assume that he is more concerned with appearing than with being honest; and that his pride is hurt by not having been able to maintain the fiction of ultimate and absolute veracity. Or if an egocentric person feels guilty about some inconsiderateness, we have to ask whether this guilt feeling is not shame about having besmirched the halo of goodness rather than an honest regret for not having been as sensitive to others as he would like to be.

Furthermore, it may be that none of these reactions, whether direct or transformed, is consciously felt; we may merely be aware of our reactions to these reactions. Prominent among such "secondary" reactions are rage and fear. That any hurt to our pride may provoke vindictive hostility is well known. It goes all the way from dislike to hate, from irritability to anger to a blind murderous rage. Sometimes the connection between rage and pride is easily enough established—for the observer. For instance, a person is enraged against his boss who he feels has treated him cavalierly, or against a taxi driver who has cheated him—incidents which, at most, would account for annoyance. The person himself would only be aware of a justified anger at the bad behavior of others. The observer, let us say the analyst, would see that his pride was hurt by the incidents, that he felt humiliated and then reacted with rage. The patient may accept this interpretation as most likely accounting for the excessive reaction, or he may insist that his reaction was not excessive at all and that his anger was a warranted reaction to the wickedness or stupidity of others.

While of course not all irrational hostility is due to hurt pride, it does play a greater part than is generally assumed. The analyst always should be alert to this possibility, particularly concerning the patient's reaction to him, to interpretations, and to the whole analytic situation. The connection with hurt pride is more easily discernible if the hostility has ingredients of derogation, contempt, or intent to humiliate. What operates here is the straight law of retaliation. The patient, without knowing it, has felt humiliated and returns in kind. After such incidents it is sheer waste of time to talk about the patient's hostility. The analyst must go straight to the point by raising a question as to what has registered in the patient's mind as hu-

miliation. Sometimes impulses to humiliate the analyst, or thoughts about it unaccompanied by any effect, appear right at the beginning of the analysis, before the analyst has touched any sore spot. In this case it is likely that the patient feels unconsciously humiliated by the very fact of being analyzed, and it is the analyst's job to bring this connection into clear focus.

Naturally, what happens in analysis also happens outside. And if we thought more often of the possibility that offensive behavior may stem from hurt pride, we would save ourselves many painful or even heartbreaking troubles. Thus, when a friend or relative behaves in an obnoxious fashion after we have liberally helped him, we should not be upset over his ingratitude but consider how badly his pride may have been hurt by accepting help. And, according to circumstances, we might either talk to him about it or try ourselves to help him in a way that saves his face. Likewise, in the case of a generally contemptuous attitude toward people, it is not enough to resent a person's arrogance; we must also regard him as someone who goes through life with a raw skin because of being pervasively vulnerable through his pride.

What is less well known is that the same hostility, hate, or contempt may be directed against ourselves if we feel we have offended our own pride. Violent self-reproaches are not the only form this rage at self may assume. Vindictive self-hatred has so many far-reaching implications, indeed, that we would lose the thread if we discussed it now among the reactions to hurt pride. We shall therefore wait to discuss it in the following chapter.

Fear, anxiety, panic may occur as reactions both to anticipated humiliations or to ones that have taken place. Anticipatory fears may concern examinations, public performances, social gatherings, or a date; in such instances they are usually described as "stage fright." It is a good enough descriptive term if we use it metaphorically for any irrational fear preceding public or private performance. It covers situations in which we want either to make a good impression—as, for instance, on new relatives, or some important personage, or perhaps a headwaiter in a restaurant—or in which we start new activities, such as

beginning a new job, starting to paint, going to a public-speaking class. People who are afflicted with such fears often refer to them as fears of failure, disgrace, ridicule. This seems to be exactly what they are afraid of. Nevertheless, it is misleading to put it this way because it suggests a rational fear of a realistic failure. It leaves out the fact that what constitutes failure for a given person is subjective. It may encompass all that falls short of glory and perfection, and the anticipation of this possibility is precisely the essence of the milder forms of stage fright. A person is afraid of not performing as superbly as his exacting shoulds demand, and therefore fears that his pride will be hurt. There is a more pernicious form of stage fright which we will understand later on; in it unconscious forces operate in a person, obstructing his capacities in the very act of performing. The stage fright then is a fear that through his own self-destructive tendencies he will be ridiculously awkward, forget his lines, "choke up," and thus disgrace himself instead of being glorious and victorious.

Another category of anticipatory fears does not concern the quality of a person's performance but the prospect of having to do something that will hurt his special pride—such as asking for a raise or a favor, making an application, or approaching a woman—because it entails the possibility of being rejected. It may occur before sexual intercourse if the latter means for him being humiliated.

Reactions of fear also may follow "insults." Many people react with trembling, shaking, perspiration, or some other expression of fear to a lack of deference or to arrogant behavior on the part of others. These reactions are a mixture of rage and fear, the fear being in part a fear of one's own violence. Similar reactions of fear may follow a feeling of shame without the latter being experienced as such. A person may suddenly feel overwhelmed by a feeling of uncertainty, or even panic, if he has been awkward, timid, or offensive. For instance, there is the case of a woman who drove up a mountain road, from the end of which a small path led up to the top. Though fairly steep, the path would have been easy to walk had it not been muddy and slippery. Moreover she was not properly dressed: she wore a new suit, high-heeled shoes, and had no stick. She tried never-

theless; but, after having slipped several times, she gave it up. While resting, she saw farther down a big dog barking furiously at passers-by and she became frightened of the dog. This fear startled her, because she was usually not afraid of dogs and because she also realized that there was no sound reason to be afraid since there were people around to whom the dog obviously belonged. So she started to think about this, and there occurred to her an incident from her adolescence which had caused her to be terribly ashamed. She recognized then that she was actually just as ashamed in the present situation on account of her "failure" to get to the mountain top. "But," she said to herself, "it really would not have been sensible to force the issue." Next she thought, "But I *should* have been able to make it." This gave her the clue: she recognized that it was a "stupid pride," as she put it, that was injured and made her feel helpless toward a possible attack. As we shall understand later on, she was helplessly delivered to her own attacks on herself and had externalized the danger. Though not quite complete, the piece of self-analysis was effective: her fear disappeared.

We have a more immediate understanding of the reactions of rage than of those of fear. But in the last analysis they are interlinked and we do not understand one without the other. Both occur because a hurt to our pride constitutes a terrifying danger. The reason for it lies in part in pride substituting for self-confidence, which we have discussed before. This, however, is not the whole answer. As we shall see later on, the neurotic lives between the two alternatives of pride and self-contempt, so that hurt pride rushes him into the abyss of self-contempt. This is a most important connection to keep in mind for the understanding of many spells of anxiety.

Though both the reaction of rage and that of fear may in our own mind have nothing to do with pride, they may nevertheless serve as road signs pointing in that direction. The whole issue is far more beclouded if even these secondary reactions do not appear as such, for they in their turn may be repressed—for whatever reason. In this case they may lead or contribute to certain symptomatic pictures, such as psychotic episodes, depressions, drinking, psychosomatic disorders. Or the need to

sit tight on the emotions of anger and fear may become one of the factors conducive to a general flattening out of emotion. Not only anger and fear but all feelings then tend to become less full and less sharp.

The pernicious character of neurotic pride lies in the combination of its being vitally important to the individual and at the same time rendering him extremely vulnerable. This situation creates tensions, which because of their frequency and intensity are so unbearable that they call for remedies: *automatic endeavors to restore pride when it is hurt and to avoid injuries when it is endangered.*

The need to save face is urgent, and there is more than one way of effecting it. As a matter of fact, there are so many different ways, gross and subtle, that I must restrict my presentation to the more frequent and important ones. The most effective and, it seems, almost ubiquitous one is interlinked with the impulse to take revenge for what is felt as humiliation. We discussed it as a reaction of hostility to the pain and the danger involved in a hurt pride. But vindictiveness may in addition be a means toward self-vindication. It involves the belief that by getting back at the offender one's own pride will be restored. This belief is based on the feeling that the offender, by his very power to hurt our pride, has put himself above us and has defeated us. By our taking revenge and hurting him more than he did us, the situation will be reversed. We will be triumphant and will have defeated him. The aim of the neurotic vindictive revenge is not "getting even" but triumphing by hitting back harder. Nothing short of triumph *can* restore the imaginary grandeur in which pride is invested. It is this very capacity to restore pride that gives neurotic vindictiveness its incredible tenacity and accounts for its compulsive character.

Since vindictiveness will be discussed later on in some detail,[2] I shall at this time merely present in barest outline some essential factors. Because the power to retaliate is so valuable for the restoration of pride, this power can itself be invested with pride. In the minds of certain neurotic types it is equal to strength,

[2] In Chapter 7, The Expansive Solutions.

and often is the only strength they know. Conversely, the incapacity to hit back usually registers as weakness, no matter whether external or internal factors prohibited a vindictive move. Thus when such a person feels humiliated, and either the situation or something within him does not allow him to retaliate, he suffers a double injury: the original "insult" and the "defeat," as opposed to a vindictive triumph.

The need for a vindictive triumph, as stated before, is a regular ingredient in the search for glory. If it is the dominant motivating force in life, it sets going a vicious circle that is most difficult to disentangle. The determination then to rise above others in every possible way is so gigantic that it reinforces the whole need for glory, and with that the neurotic pride. The inflated pride in turn enhances the vindictiveness, and thereby makes for a still greater need for triumph.

Among ways to restore pride the next in importance is losing interest in all situations or people who in some way hurt this pride. Many people relinquish their interest in sports, politics, intellectual pursuits, etc. because their impatient need to excel, or to do a perfect job, is not satisfied. The situation then may become so unbearable for them that they give up. They do not know what has happened; they merely become uninterested, and may instead turn to an activity which is actually beneath their potentialities. A person may have been a good teacher but, assigned to a task he cannot master right away or which he feels degrading, his interest in teaching wanes. Such changes in attitudes also are relevant to the learning process. A gifted person may start dramatics or painting with enthusiasm. His teachers or friends find him promising, and encourage him. But with all his gifts he is not a Barrymore or a Renoir overnight. He realizes that he is not the only gifted one in his class. He is naturally awkward in his initial efforts. All of this hurts his pride, and he may suddenly "realize" that painting or dramatics is not in his line, that he never was "really" interested in this pursuit. He loses his zest, skips classes, and soon gives up altogether. He starts something else, only to repeat the same cycle. Often for economic reasons, or because of his own inertia, he may stay with the particular activity but does it so listlessly that he does

not make out of it what would otherwise have been possible.

The same process may occur in relations with other people. Of course we may stop liking a person for good reasons: we may have overrated him in the first place or our developments may go in divergent directions. But it is in any case worth examining why our liking turns into indifference, instead of simply putting it down to lack of time or deciding that it was an error in the first place. What may actually have happened is that something in this relationship has hurt our pride. It may be a comparison with the other fellow in his favor. Perhaps he had paid us less deference than before. We realize that we have failed him and, hence, feel ashamed with regard to him. All of this may play an incisive role in a marriage or love relationship and we are inclined then to let it stay at "I don't love him any more."

All these withdrawals entail a considerable waste of energy and often much misery. But the most ruinous aspect of them is that we lose interest in our real self because we are not proud of it—a subject which we will leave to a later discussion.

There are further diverse ways to restore pride, which are well known but seldom understood in this context. We may, for example, have said something which later on appears silly to us —off the point, inconsiderate, too arrogant or too apologetic— and we may forget about it, deny that we said it, or contend that it meant something quite different. Akin to such denials are distortions of an incident—minimizing our share, omitting certain factors, emphasizing others, interpreting them in our favor —so that in the end we are whitewashed and our pride is unscathed. The embarrassing incident may also stay in our mind unchanged but be whisked away by excuses and alibis. Somebody admits having made a nasty scene, but it was because he had not slept for three nights or because others provoked him. He has hurt somebody's feelings, was indiscreet or inconsiderate, but his intentions were good. He has failed a friend who needs him, but it was because of lack of time. All these excuses may be partly or wholly true, but in the person's mind they do not serve as extenuating circumstances for a failing but erase it altogether. Similarly, many people feel that to say they are very sorry about something sets everything right.

All these devices have in common the tendency to refuse responsibility for self. Whether we forget something we are not proud of, or embellish it, or blame somebody else, we want to save face by not owning up to shortcomings. The declining of responsibility for self can also be hidden behind a pseudo-objectivity. A patient may make astute observations about himself and give a fairly accurate report of what he dislikes in himself. On the surface it seems as though he is perceptive and honest about himself. But "he" may be merely the intelligent observer of a fellow who is inhibited, fearful, or arrogantly demanding. Hence, since he is not responsible for the fellow he observes, the hurt to his pride is cushioned—all the more so because the flashlight of his pride is focused on his faculty for keen objective observations.

Others do not care for being objective, or even truthful, about themselves. But when—despite the diffuse evasiveness this attitude entails—such a patient does become aware of some neurotic trend, he may make a neat distinction between "him" and his "neurosis" or his "unconscious." His "neurosis" is something mysterious that has nothing whatever to do with "him." This sounds startling. Actually it is for him not only a face-saving but a life-saving, or at any rate a sanity-saving, measure. The vulnerability of his pride has assumed such extreme proportions that he would be split wide open by owning up to his disturbances.

A last face-saving device to be mentioned here is the use of humor. It is naturally a sign of inner liberation when a patient can squarely recognize his difficulties and take them with a grain of humor. But some patients at the beginning of analysis make incessant jokes about themselves, or exaggerate their difficulties in so dramatic a way that they will appear funny, while they are at the same time absurdly sensitive to any criticism. In these instances humor is used to take the sting out of an otherwise unbearable shame.

So much for the devices employed to restore pride when it has been hurt. But the pride is both so vulnerable and so precious that it also must be protected *in the future*. The neurotic may build an elaborate *system of avoidances* in the hope of cir-

cumventing future hurts. This too is a process that goes on automatically. He is not aware of wanting to avoid an activity because it might hurt his pride. He just avoids it, often without even being aware that he is. The process pertains to activities, to associations with people, and it may put a check on realistic strivings and efforts. If it is widespread it can actually cripple a person's life. He does not embark on any serious pursuits commensurate with his gifts lest he fail to be a brilliant success. He would like to write or to paint and does not dare to start. He does not dare to approach girls lest they reject him. He may not even dare to travel lest he be awkward with hotel managers or porters. Or he may go only to places where he is well known since he would feel like a nonentity with strangers. He withdraws from social contacts lest he be self-conscious. So, according to his economic status, he either does nothing worth while or sticks to a mediocre job and restricts his expenses rigidly. In more than one way he lives beneath his means. In the long run this makes it necessary for him to withdraw farther from others, because he cannot face the fact of lagging behind his age group and therefore shuns comparisons or questions from anybody about his work. In order to endure life he must now entrench himself more firmly in his private fantasy-world. But, since all these measures are more a camouflage than a remedy for his pride, he may start to cultivate his neuroses because the neurosis with a capital N then becomes a precious alibi for the lack of accomplishment.

These are extreme developments and, needless to say, pride is not the only factor operating in them, although it is one of the essential ones. More often, avoidances are restricted to certain areas. A person may be quite active and effective in those pursuits in which he is least inhibited and which are in the service of glory. He may, for instance, work hard and successfully in his field but shun social life. Conversely, he may feel safe in social activities, or in a Don Juan role, but would not dare to venture into any serious work which would put to a test his potential capacities. He may feel safe in his role as an organizer but avoid any personal relations because he would feel vulnerable in them. Among the many fears of getting emotionally involved with others (neurotic detachment) the fear of injuries to pride

often plays a prominent part. Also, for many reasons, a person may be particularly afraid of not being glamorously successful with the opposite sex. He unconsciously anticipates—in the case of a man—that when approaching women, or having sexual relations with them, his pride will be hurt. Women then present to him a potential threat (to his pride). This fear can be powerful enough to dampen, or even crush, his feelings of attraction to them and thereby cause him to avoid heterosexual contacts. The inhibition thus generated does not alone account for his turning homosexual, but it is indeed one of the contributing factors to a preference for one's own sex. Pride in many diverse ways is the enemy of love.

The avoidance may concern many different specific matters. Thus a person may avoid speaking in public, participating in sports, telephoning. If somebody else is around to do the telephoning, to make a decision, or to deal with the landlord, he will leave it to him. In these specific activities he is most likely to be aware of shirking something, while in the larger areas the issue is often more befogged by an attitude of "I can't" or "I don't care."

Examining these avoidances, we see in operation two principles which determine their character. One is, briefly, safety through restricting one's life. It is safer to renounce, to withdraw, or to resign than to take the risk of exposing one's pride to injury. Perhaps nothing demonstrates so impressively the overwhelming importance of pride in many instances as the willingness, for its benefit, to restrict one's life to an often cramping degree. The other principle is: It is safer not to try than to try and fail. This latter maxim gives the avoidance the stamp of finality because it deprives the person of the chance of gradually overcoming whatever difficulties he has. It is even unrealistic on the basis of the neurotic's premises, for he has not only to pay the price of unduly restricting his life but in the long run his very recoiling damages his pride more deeply. But of course he does not think in long-range terms. He is concerned with the immediate danger of trial and error. If he does not try at all it does not reflect on him. He can find an alibi of some sort. At least in his own mind he can have the comforting

thought that he could have passed the examination, secured a better job, won a woman, if he had tried. Often it is more fantastic: "If I applied myself to composing or writing, I would be greater than Chopin or Balzac."

In many instances the avoidances extend to reaching out in our feelings for anything desirable: in short, they may encompass our wishes. I mentioned people who feel it a disgraceful defeat not to attain something they wish to have. The mere wishing then entails too great a risk. Such a check on wishes, however, means putting a lid on our aliveness. Sometimes people also have to avoid any thought that would hurt their pride. The most significant avoidance on this score is shunning thoughts about death, because the idea of having to get older and having to die like any other mortal is unbearable. Oscar Wilde's *Dorian Gray* is an artistic presentation of the pride in eternal youth.

The development of pride is the logical outcome, the climax and consolidation of the process initiated with the search for glory. The individual may first have relatively harmless fantasies in which he pictures himself in some glamorous role. He proceeds by creating in his mind an idealized image of what he "really" is, could be, should be. Then comes the most decisive step: his real self fades out and the energies available for self-realization are shifted to the actualization of the idealized self. The claims are his attempt to assert his place in the world, a place that is adequate to the significance of the idealized self and one that supports it. With his shoulds, he drives himself to actualize the perfection of this self. And, lastly, he must develop a system of private values which, like "the Ministry of Truth" in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (by George Orwell), determines what to like and accept in himself, what to glorify, what to be proud of. But this system of values must by necessity also determine what to reject, to abhor, to be ashamed of, to despise, to hate. It cannot do the one without the other. Pride and self-hate belong inseparably together; they are two expressions of one process.

CHAPTER 5

SELF-HATE AND SELF-CONTEMPT

WE HAVE now traced a neurotic development that begins with self-idealization and evolves step by step with inexorable logic to a transformation of values into the phenomenon of neurotic pride. This development in actual fact is more involved than I have presented it hitherto. It is both intensified and complicated by another process operating simultaneously—a process which is seemingly opposite, though it is likewise initiated by self-idealization.

Briefly, when an individual shifts his center of gravity to his idealized self, he not only exalts himself but also is bound to look at his actual self—all that he is at a given time, body, mind, healthy and neurotic—from a wrong perspective. The glorified self becomes not only a *phantom* to be pursued; it also becomes a measuring rod with which to measure his actual being. And this actual being is such an embarrassing sight when viewed from the perspective of a godlike perfection that he cannot but despise it. Moreover, what is dynamically more important, the human being which he actually is keeps interfering—significantly—with his flight to glory, and therefore he is bound to hate it, to hate himself. And since pride and self-hate are actually one entity, I suggest calling the sum total of the factors involved

body, his hands shake or he stammers or blushes. Feeling himself a unique lover, he may suddenly be impotent. Speaking in his imagination to his boss like a man, he merely musters a silly smile. The brilliant remark which would settle a discussion for good and all occurs to him only the next day. The desired sylph-like slenderness is never attained because, compulsively, he eats too much. The actual, empirical self becomes the offensive stranger to whom the idealized self happens to be tied, and the latter turns against this stranger with hate and contempt. The actual self becomes the victim of the proud idealized self.

Self-hate makes visible a rift in the personality that started with the creation of an idealized self. It signifies that there is a war on. And this indeed is the essential characteristic of every neurotic: he is at war with himself. Actually the foundation has been laid for two different kinds of conflicts. One of them is within the pride system itself. As we shall elaborate later on, it is the potential conflict between expansive drives and self-effacing ones. The other, deeper conflict is between the whole pride system and the real self. The latter, though shoved into the background and suppressed as pride ascended to supremacy, still is potentially powerful and may, under favorable circumstances, gain its full effectiveness. We shall discuss the characteristics and the phases of its development in the next chapter.

This second, deeper conflict is not apparent at the beginning of analysis. But as the pride system totters and the person becomes closer to himself; as he starts to feel his own feelings, to know his wishes, to win his freedom of choice, to make his own decisions and assume responsibility for them, the opposing forces get lined up. With increasing clarity the battle is now drawn between the pride system and the real self. Self-hate now is not so much directed against the limitations and shortcomings of the actual self as against the emerging constructive forces of the real self. It is a conflict of greater dimensions than any neurotic conflict I have discussed hitherto. I suggest calling it the *central inner conflict.*[2]

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[2] Following a suggestion by Dr. Muriel Ivimey.

I should like to interpolate here a theoretical remark because it will help to bring this conflict into clearer focus. When previously, in my other books, I have used the term "neurotic conflict," I have meant one operating between two incompatible compulsive drives. The central inner conflict, however, is one between healthy and neurotic, constructive and destructive forces. We will therefore have to enlarge our definition and say that a neurotic conflict can operate either between two neurotic forces or between healthy and neurotic ones. This difference is important, over and beyond terminological clarification. There are two reasons for the conflict between the pride system and the real self having a much greater power to split us apart than other conflicts. The first lies in the difference between partial and total involvement. By analogy with a State, it is the difference between clashing interests of individual groups and the whole country's being involved in a civil war. The other reason lies in the fact that the very core of our being, our real self with its capacity for growth, is fighting for its life.

Hate for the real self is more remote from awareness than that for the limitations of the actual self, but it forms the never absent background of self-hate—or the undercurrent that always supplies the main energies, even though hate for the limitations of the actual self may be in the foreground. Hence, hate for the real self can appear in almost pure form while hate for the actual self is always a mixed phenomenon. If for instance our self-hate takes the form of a ruthless self-condemnation for being "selfish"—i.e., for doing anything in our own behalf—this may be, and most likely is, both a hate for not measuring up to the *absolute* of saintliness *and* a way of crushing our real self.

A German poet, Christian Morgenstern, concisely expressed the nature of self-hate in his poem *Entwicklungsschmerzen*[3] ("Growing Pains"):

> I shall succumb, destroyed by myself
> I who am two, what I could be and what I am.

[3] Collection of poems *Auf vielen Wegen,* R. Piper and Co., Munich, 1921. Translation of this poem by Caroline Newton.

And in the end one will annihilate the other.
The *Would-be* is like a prancing steed
(*I am* is fettered to his tail),
Is like a wheel to which *I am* is bound,
Is like a fury whose fingers twine
Into his victim's hair, is like a vampire
That sits upon his heart and sucks and sucks.

A poet has thus expressed the process in a few lines. He says that we may hate ourselves with an enervating and tormenting hatred—a hatred so destructive that we are helpless against it and may psychically destroy ourselves. And he says that we do not hate ourselves because we are worthless but because we are driven to reach beyond ourselves. The hatred, he says, results from the discrepancy between what I would be and what I am. There is not only a split, but a cruel and murderous battle.

The *power and tenacity of self-hate* is astounding, even for the analyst who is familiar with the way it operates. When trying to account for its depth, we must realize the rage of the proud self for feeling humiliated and held down at every step by the actual self. We must also consider the ultimate impotence of this rage. For, much as the neurotic may try to regard himself as a disembodied spirit, he is *dependent* on the actual self for being and hence for attaining glory. If he would kill the hated self he must at the same time kill the glorious self, as Dorian Gray did when slashing to pieces the picture expressing his degradation. On the one hand, this dependency as a rule prevents suicide. If it were not for this dependency, suicide would be the logical outcome of self-hate. Actually suicide is a comparatively rare occurrence, and it results from a combination of factors among which self-hate is but one. On the other hand, the very dependency makes self-hate all the more cruel and merciless, as is the case in any powerless rage.

Furthermore, self-hate is not only a result of self-glorification but also serves to maintain it. More precisely, it serves the drive to actualize the idealized self and to find a full integration on that exalted level by eliminating conflicting elements. The very condemnation of imperfection confirms the godlike standards

with which the person identifies himself. We can observe this function of self-hate in analysis. When we uncover the patient's self-hate we may naïvely expect that he will be eager to get rid of it. Sometimes such a healthy response actually does occur. More often his response is divided. He cannot help recognizing the formidable burden and danger of self-hate, but he may feel it even more dangerous to rebel against the yoke. He may plead in most plausible terms the validity of high standards and the danger of becoming lax through greater tolerance toward self. Or he may gradually reveal his conviction that he fully deserves the contempt with which he treats himself, which indicates that he is not yet able to accept himself on any lesser terms than those of his arrogant standards.

The third factor that renders self-hate such a cruel and merciless force we have already implied. It is the alienation from self. In simpler terms: the neurotic has no feeling for himself. There must first be some sympathy for the suffering self, some experiencing of this suffering, before the recognition of beating himself down can set going a constructive move. Or, to take another aspect, there must first be some owning up to the existence of his own wishes before the realization of self-frustration can start to disquiet or even to interest him.

What about the *awareness of self-hate?* What is expressed in *Hamlet, Richard III,* or in the poems cited here is not restricted to the poet's clear-sighted knowledge of the agonies of human souls. During longer or shorter intervals many people *experience* self-hate or self-contempt as such. They may have flashing feelings of "I hate myself" or "I despise myself"; they may be furious at themselves. But such alive experiencing of self-hate occurs only in periods of distress and is forgotten as the distress subsides. As a rule the question does not arise whether such feelings—or thoughts—are more than a temporary response to a "failure," a "stupidity," a feeling of wrong done, or a realization of some psychic handicap. Hence there is no awareness of the subversive and lasting operation of self-hate.

With regard to that form of self-hate which is expressed in self-accusations, the range of differences in awareness is too wide to allow for any general statement. Those neurotics who have

entrenched themselves in a shell of self-righteousness have so silenced all self-accusations that nothing reaches awareness. Opposed to these are the self-effacing types who frankly express self-reproaches and guilt-feelings, or betray the existence of such feelings by their flagrantly apologetic or defensive behavior. Such individual differences in awareness are significant indeed. We shall discuss later on what they mean and how they come about. But they do not justify the conclusion that the self-effacing types are aware of self-hate; because even those neurotics who are aware of self-recriminations are aware neither of their intensity nor of their destructive nature. They are also unaware of their intrinsic futility, and tend to regard them as testimony to their high moral sensitivity. They do not question their validity, and as a matter of fact cannot do so as long as they judge themselves from the perspective of a godlike perfection.

However, almost all neurotics are aware of the *results* of self-hate: feeling guilty, inferior, cramped, tormented. Yet they do not in the least realize that they themselves have brought about these painful feelings and self-evaluations. And even the bit of awareness they may have, can be blurred by neurotic pride. Instead of suffering from feeling cramped, they are proud of being "unselfish . . . ascetic . . . self-sacrificing . . . a slave to duty"—terms which may hide a multitude of sins against the self.

The conclusion we arrive at from these observations is that self-hate in all essentials is an unconscious process. In the last analysis there is a survival interest in *not* being aware of its impact. This is the ultimate reason that the bulk of the process is usually externalized, i.e., experienced as operating not within the individual himself but between him and the outside world. We can roughly distinguish between active and passive externalization of self-hate. The former is an attempt to direct self-hate outward, against life, fate, institutions, or people. In the latter the hate remains directed against the self but is perceived or experienced as coming from the outside. In both ways the tension of the inner conflict is released by being turned into an interpersonal one. We shall discuss the special forms this process may assume, and its influence upon human relations, in

later contexts. I introduce it here only because many varieties of self-hate can best be observed and described in their externalized forms.

The expressions of self-hate are identically the same as those of hate in interpersonal relations. To illustrate the latter by an historical example that is still fresh in our memory, Hitler's hatred for the Jews, we see that he intimidated and accused them viciously, he humiliated them, he disgraced them in public, he deprived and frustrated them in every form, shape and manner, he destroyed their hopes for the future, and in the end tortured and killed them systematically. In more civilized and concealed forms we can observe most of these expressions of hate in everyday life, in families or between competitors.

We shall now survey the *main expressions of self-hate* and their direct effects on the individual. All of them have been observed by great writers. Most of the individual data presented have also been described in psychiatric literature since Freud as self-accusations, self-minimizing, inferiority-feelings, the incapacity to enjoy things, direct self-destructive actions, masochistic trends. But, apart from Freud's concept of the death-instinct and its elaboration by Franz Alexander and Karl Menninger,[4] no comprehensive theory has been offered that would account for all the phenomena. Freud's theory, however, though dealing with similar clinical material, is based upon such different theoretical premises that the understanding of the problems involved and the therapeutic approach to them are entirely changed. We shall discuss these differences in a later chapter.

In order not to get lost in detail, let us distinguish six *modes of operation* in, or expressions of, self-hate, while keeping in mind the fact that they are overlapping. Roughly they are: relentless demands on self, merciless self-accusation, self-contempt, self-frustrations, self-tormenting, and self-destruction.

When in a previous chapter we discussed *demands on self* we regarded them as a means of the neurotic individual to make himself over into his idealized self. We have also stated, how-

[4] Franz Alexander, *The Psychoanalysis of the Total Personality*. Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., 1930.
Karl A. Menninger, *Man Against Himself*, Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1938.

dependency and which will be elaborated in that context: I should be big enough to mind absolutely nothing that is done to me; I should be able to make her love me; and I should sacrifice absolutely everything for "love"! The combination of these three shoulds is indeed bound to perpetuate the tortures of a morbid dependency. Another frequent should demands of a person that he assume full responsibility for his relatives, friends, pupils, employees, etc. He should be able to solve everyone's problem to everyone's instant satisfaction. This implies that *anything* that goes wrong is his fault. If a friend or relative is upset for any reason, complains, criticizes, is discontented, or wants something, such a person is forced to be the helpless victim who must feel guilty and set everything right. He is, to quote a patient, like the harassed manager of a summer hotel: the guests are always right. Whether or not any of the mishaps are actually his fault does not matter.

This process is well described in a recent French book *The Witness.*[6] The main character and his brother are out boating; the boat leaks, a storm comes up, and they are capsized. Since the brother has a badly injured leg, he is not able to swim in the violent water. He is doomed to drown. The hero tries to swim ashore, supporting his brother, but soon realizes that he cannot do it. The alternatives are that both drown or that the hero save himself alone. Clearly realizing this, he decides to save himself. But he feels as if he were a murderer, and this is so real to him that he is convinced everybody else will regard him as a murderer. His reason is of no avail, and cannot be effective, as long as he operates on the premise that he *should* be responsible in *any* case. To be sure, this is an extreme situation. But the hero's emotional response illustrates exactly what people do feel when driven by this particular should.

An individual can also impose tasks upon himself which are detrimental to his whole being. A classic example of this kind of should is to be found in Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment.* Raskolnikov, in order to prove to his satisfaction his Napoleonic qualities, felt that he *should* be able to kill a human being. As Dostoevski shows us in unmistakable terms, despite Raskolni-

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[6] Jean Bloch-Michel, *The Witness,* Pantheon Press, 1949.

awareness. If she had not analyzed herself, the scare of the dog would have remained a puzzling incident, puzzling because it was disconnected from all that preceded it. In other instances a person experiences in conscious awareness only the special ways in which he automatically protects himself from his self-hate, such as his special ways to allay anxiety (eating sprees, drinking or shopping sprees, etc.), his feeling victimized by others (passive externalization), or irritable at others (active externalization. We shall have ample opportunity to see from various viewpoints how these attempts at self-protection operate. In this context I want to discuss still another similar one, because it easily escapes attention and can lead to an impasse in therapy.

This attempt is made when a person is on the verge of realizing, unconsciously, that he cannot possibly measure up to his particular shoulds. It can happen then that a patient who is otherwise reasonable and co-operative may become agitated and go, as it were, on a wild spree of feeling abused by everybody and everything: his relatives exploit him, his boss is unfair, his dentist has messed up his teeth, analysis does him no good, etc. He may be quite abusive toward the analyst and may have violent fits of temper at home.

In trying to understand his upset, the first factor that strikes us is his making insistent claims for special consideration. According to the particular situation, he may insist on getting more help in his office, on his wife or his mother leaving him alone, on his analyst giving him more time, or on his school making exceptions in his favor. Our first impression then is that of frenzied claims and a feeling of abuse at their frustration. But when these claims are brought to his attention the patient's frenzy increases. He may become still more openly hostile. If we listen carefully, we find a theme running through his abusive comments. It is as if he said: "Don't you realize, you darned fool, that I really am in need of something?" If we now recall our knowledge that claims stem from neurotic needs, we can see that a sudden increase of claims points to a sudden increase of rather urgent needs. Following this lead, we have a chance to understand the patient's distress. It may turn out then that, without his knowing it, he has realized that he cannot fulfill certain of his imperative shoulds. He may have felt, for instance,

that he simply cannot make a go of some important love relation; or that he has so overloaded himself with work that even with the utmost straining he cannot swing it; or he may have recognized that certain problems which have come up in analysis did get him down and are beyond even his endurance, or that they deride his efforts to dispel them by sheer exertion of will power. These realizations, mostly unconscious, make him panicky because he feels he *should* be able to overcome all these odds. In this condition then there are but two alternatives. One is to realize that his demands on himself are fantastic. The other is to claim frantically that his life situation be so changed that he will not have to face his "failure." In his agitation he had taken the second road, and it is the task of therapy to show him the first one.

It is of great importance for therapy to recognize the possibility that the patient's realization of shoulds being unfulfillable can give rise to hectic claims. It is important because these claims can create a condition of agitation that is most difficult to handle. But it also is important in terms of theory. It helps us toward a better understanding of the urgency many claims have. And it forcefully demonstrates the urgency the individual feels to measure up to his shoulds.

Finally, if even a dim realization of a failure—or impending failure—to measure up to the shoulds can create a frantic despair, then there is a stringent inner necessity to prevent such realizations. We have seen that one of the ways in which the neurotic avoids them is by fulfilling the shoulds in his imagination. ("I *should* be able to be, or act, in a certain way—so, I *am* able to be so, or to do so.") We understand better now that this seemingly slick and glib way of avoiding truth is actually determined by the lurking terror of coming face to face with the fact that he does not and cannot measure up to his inner dictates. It is therefore an illustration of the contention propounded in the first chapter that imagination is put to the service of neurotic needs.

Among the many unconscious self-deceptive measures thus made necessary I comment here on only two, because of their basic significance. One of them is to lower the threshold of awareness of self. Sometimes an astute observer of others, the

premise. If the individual fails to reach the *absolutes* of fearlessness, generosity, poise, will power, etc., his pride speaks the verdict of "guilty."

Some self-accusations are directed against existing inner difficulties. They may therefore look deceptively rational. At any rate the person himself feels them to be entirely warranted. After all, is not such severity commendatory since it is commensurate with high standards? Actually, he takes the difficulties out of context and hurls at them the full fury of moral condemnation. They are lodged regardless of the person's responsibility for them. Whether he could, in any way, have felt, thought, acted differently, whether he was even aware of them does not matter in the least. A neurotic problem to be examined and worked at thus turns into a hideous blemish branding the person as being beyond redemption. He may for instance be unable to defend his interests or his opinions. He notices that he was rather appeasing when he should have voiced his dissenting opinion or defended himself against exploitation. To have observed this squarely is not only actually all to his credit but could be a first step toward a gradual recognition of the forces compelling him to appease rather than to assert himself. Instead, in the grip of destructive self-reproaches, he will beat himself down for having "no guts" or being a disgusting coward, or he will feel that the people around him despise him for being a weakling. Thus the whole effect of his self-observation is to make him feel "guilty" or inferior, with the result that his lowered self-esteem makes it still harder for him to speak up the next time.

Similarly, somebody who is overtly afraid of snakes or of driving a car may be well informed about the facts that such fears stem from unconscious forces over which he has no control. His reason tells him that the moral condemnation of "cowardice" makes no sense. He may even argue with himself about being "guilty" or "not guilty," back and forth. But he cannot possibly arrive at any conclusion because it is an argument involving different levels of being. As a human being he can allow himself to be subject to fears. But as a godlike being he should have the attribute of absolute fearlessness, and he can only hate and despise himself for having any fears. Again, a

time was too consumed with her own problems to be a consistently good mother; the actor had certain inhibitions against making necessary contacts and competing for a job. Both were to some extent aware of these difficulties, but they mentioned them casually, forgot about them, or subtly embellished them. In a person who is happy go lucky this would not strike us as peculiar. But in our two instances—which are typical in this regard—there is a simply stunning discrepancy between a gingerly dealing with their shortcomings on the one hand and merciless, unreasoning self-accusations for occurrences outside their control on the other. Such discrepancies may easily escape observation as long as we are not aware of their significance. Actually they contain an important clue for understanding the dynamics of self-condemnation. They point to a self-recrimination for personal flaws so severe that the person must resort to self-protective measures. And they use two such measures: to treat themselves in a gingerly way and to shift responsibility to circumstances. The question remains why, with this latter move, they do not succeed better in getting rid of self-accusations, at least in their conscious minds? The answer is simply that they do not feel that these outside factors are outside their control. Or, more accurately: they *should* not be out of control. Consequently everything that goes wrong reflects on themselves and shows them up in their disgraceful limitations.

While the self-accusations mentioned thus far focus on something concrete—on existing inner difficulties, on motivations, on externals—others remain vague and intangible. A person may feel haunted by guilt-feelings without being able to attach them to anything definite. In his desperate search for a reason he may finally resort to the idea that perhaps they concern a guilt incurred in some previous incarnation. Sometimes, though, a more concrete self-accusation will emerge and he will believe that now he has found the reason that he hates himself. Let us assume for instance that he has realized that he is not interested in other people and does not do enough for them. He tries hard to change this attitude and hopes, by doing so, to get rid of his self-hate. But if he has really turned against himself, such efforts —though all to his credit—will not rid him of the enemy because he has put the cart before the horse. *He does not hate him-*

is in its turn unconstructive, and it is so because he deals with it in the spirit of self-hate. This too is unconscious; he does not feel that he accuses himself mercilessly. The whole process is externalized.

Finally, a person may accuse himself for actions or attitudes which, viewed objectively, seem harmless, legitimate, or even desirable. He may brand taking sensible care of himself as pampering; enjoying food as gluttony; considering his own wishes instead of blindly complying as hard-boiled selfishness; considering analytic treatment—which he needs and can afford—as self-indulgence; asserting an opinion as presumptuous. Here too we have to ask which inner dictate or which pride is offended by a pursuit. Only a person taking pride in asceticism would accuse himself of "gluttony"; only a person proud of self-effacement would brand an assertive move as egotistical. But the most important thing about this kind of self-accusations is that they often concern the fight against the emerging real self. They mostly occur—or, more precisely, come into the foreground—in later phases of analysis, and are an attempt to discredit and discourage moves toward healthy growth.

The viciousness of self-accusations (as in any form of self-hate) calls for self-protective measures. And we can observe these clearly in the analytic situation. As soon as the patient is faced with one of his difficulties he may go on the defensive. He may respond with righteous indignation, with feeling misunderstood, or with becoming argumentative. He points out that it was true in the past but is already much better; that the difficulty would not exist if his wife didn't behave the way she does; that it would not have developed in the first place if his parents had been different. He may also develop counterattacks and find fault with the analyst, often in a threatening manner—or, on the contrary, become appeasing and ingratiating. In other words he reacts as if we had hurled at him a severe accusation too frightening for him to be able to test it out quietly. He can fight it blindly, according to the means at his disposal: by wriggling out of it, by putting the blame on somebody else, by pleading guilty, by going on the offensive. We have here one of the major retarding factors in psychoanalytic therapy. But also,

apart from analysis, it is one of the main causes preventing people from being objective toward their problems. The necessity to ward off any self-accusation stunts the capacity for constructive self-criticism and thereby mars the possibility of learning from mistakes.

I want to summarize these comments on neurotic self-accusations by contrasting them with the healthy conscience. The latter vigilantly guards the very best interests of our true self. It represents, to use Erich Fromm's excellent term, "man's recall to himself." It is the reaction of our true self to the proper functioning or the malfunctioning of our total personality. Self-accusations, on the other hand, stem from neurotic pride and express the discontent of the proud self with the individual's not measuring up to its requirements. They are not *for* his true self but directed *against* it, and are meant to crush it.

The uneasiness, or the remorse coming from our conscience, can be eminently constructive because it can set in motion a constructive examination of what is wrong with a particular action or reaction, or even with our whole way of living. What happens when our conscience is disquieted differs from the neurotic process from the beginning. We try to face squarely the wrong done or the faulty attitude which has come to our attention, without magnifying or minimizing it. We try to find out what is responsible for it in ourselves and work toward overcoming it eventually, in whatever accessible ways. Self-accusations, by contrast, issue a condemnatory verdict by declaring the whole personality to be no good. And with this verdict they stop. This stopping at a point when a positive move could set in constitutes their intrinsic futility. To put it in most general terms, our conscience is a moral agency serving our growth, while self-accusations are amoral in origin and immoral in effect because they keep the individual from soberly examining his existing difficulties and thereby interfere with his human growth.

Fromm contrasts the healthy conscience with the "authoritarian" conscience, which he defines as the "internalized fear of authority." Actually, in its common use, the word "conscience" connotes three entirely different things: the unwitting

inner submission to external authorities with the concomitant fear of discovery and punishment; the condemnatory self-accusations; and the constructive discontent with self. In my opinion the name "conscience" should be reserved for the last one only, and I will use it in this sense alone.

Self-hate expresses itself, thirdly, in *self-contempt*. I use this expression as an over-all term for the manifold ways of undermining self-confidence: self-belittling, self-disparaging, self-doubting, self-discrediting, self-ridiculing. The distinction from self-accusation is a fine one. Certainly it is not always possible to say whether a person feels guilty as a result of self-recrimination or inferior, worthless, or contemptible as a result of disparaging himself. In such cases we can with certainty say only that these are different ways of beating ourselves down. Yet there are discernible distinctions between the ways in which these two forms of self-hate operate. Self-contempt is mainly directed against any striving for improvement or achievement. There are enormous differences in the degree of awareness to it, the reasons for which we shall understand later on. It may be hidden behind an imperturbable front of righteous arrogance. However, it may be felt and expressed directly. For instance, an attractive girl wanting to powder her nose in public found herself saying: "How ridiculous! Ugly duckling, trying to look pretty!" Again, an intelligent man whose interest was captivated by a psychological subject, and who considered writing about it, remarked to himself: "You conceited ass, what makes you think you could write a paper on anything!" Even so, it would be erroneous to assume that people who are so open in their sarcastic comments about themselves are usually aware of their full significance. Other apparently frank comments may be less openly vicious—may indeed be witty and humorous. As I said before, these are more difficult to evaluate. They may be the expression of a greater freedom from a stultifying pride, but they may instead be simply an unconscious face-saving device. To be more explicit: they may protect the pride and save the individual from succumbing to his self-contempt.

Self-discrediting attitudes can easily be observed, although they may be praised as "modesty" by others and felt to be such

by the person himself. Thus a person, after having taken good care of a sick relative, may think or say: "That's the least I could do." Another may discount praise for being a good storyteller by thinking: "I do that merely to impress people." A physician may ascribe a cure to good luck or to the patient's vitality. But, conversely, he would consider it *his* failure if the patient did not improve. Moreover, although self-contempt may not be recognized, certain resultant fears are often fairly transparent—to others. Thus many well-informed people do not speak up in discussions because they are afraid of appearing ridiculous. Naturally such disavowing or discrediting of assets and achievements is pernicious to the development or recovery of self-confidence.

Lastly, in subtle and gross ways self-contempt shows in the whole behavior. People may place insufficient value upon their time, their work done or to be done, their wishes, opinions, convictions. Of the same sort are those who have seemingly lost the capacity to take seriously anything that they do, say, or feel and who are astonished if others do. They develop a cynical attitude toward themselves which may in turn extend to the world in general. More conspicuously, self-contempt is apparent in an abject, obsequious, or apologetic behavior.

Just as in other forms of self-hate, the self-berating may appear in dreams. And it may show at times when it is still remote from the dreamer's conscious mind. He may present himself through the symbol of a cesspool, some loathsome creature (a cockroach, say, or a gorilla), a gangster, a ridiculous clown. He may dream of houses with a pompous façade but inside as messy as a pigsty, of houses dilapidated beyond repair, of his having sexual relations with some low, despicable partner, of somebody making a fool of himself in public, etc.

To gain a more comprehensive grasp on the poignancy of the problem we shall consider here four consequences of self-contempt. The first is the compulsive need of certain neurotic types *to compare themselves* with everybody with whom they come in contact, and to their own disadvantage. The other fellow is more impressive, better informed, more interesting, more attractive, better dressed; he has the advantage of age or

not consciously aware of even a trace of self-contempt. Both of these factors—the blind assumption that others despise him and a relative or total awareness of his own self-contempt—point to the fact that the bulk of self-contempt is externalized. This may lead to a subtle poisoning of all his human relations. He may become unable to take any positive feelings of others at their face values. A compliment may, in his mind, register as a sarcastic comment; an expression of sympathy as condescending pity. Somebody wants to see him—it is because he wants something of him. Others express a liking for him—it can only be because they do not know him well, because they themselves are worthless or "neurotic," or because he has been or could be useful to them. Similarly, incidents which in fact have no hostile meaning are interpreted as evidence of an existing contempt. Somebody has not greeted him on the street or in the theater, has not accepted his invitation, or has not replied right away—it can only be a slight. Somebody makes a good-natured joke about him—it is a clear intent to humiliate him. An objection to, or a criticism of, some suggestion or activity of his does not constitute an honest criticism of the particular activity, etc., but becomes evidence of the other's despising him.

The person himself, as we see in analysis, is either unaware of his experiencing his relations with others in this way or he is unaware of the distortions involved. In the latter case he may take it for granted that others' attitudes toward him are really of this sort, and even pride himself on being "realistic." In the analytic relationship we can observe to what extent a patient can take it for granted that others look down on him. After much analytic work is done, and the patient is apparently on good friendly terms with his analyst, he may mention casually and without affectation that it was always so self-evident to him that the analyst was looking down on him that he did not feel it necessary to mention it or to give it any extended thought.

All these distorted perceptions in human relations are understandable because the attitudes of others are indeed open to several interpretations, particularly when torn out of context, while the externalized self-contempt feels unmistakably real. Also the self-protective character of such a shift in responsibility

tion is compulsive, because of the compelling need not to be at the mercy of self-contempt. It is also determined by a need to triumph, and may amount to an all-consuming life goal. The result is a total dependence on others for self-evaluation: it rises or falls with the attitudes of others toward him.

Thinking along broader theoretical lines, observations like these help us to understand better why the neurotic clings so tenaciously to the glorified version of himself. He must maintain it because he feels only one alternative: to succumb to the terror of self-contempt. There is thus a vicious circle operating between pride and self-contempt, one always reinforcing the other. This can change only to the extent that he gets interested in the truth about himself. But again self-contempt renders it difficult to find himself. As long as his degraded image of himself is real to him his self appears despicable.

What exactly does the neurotic despise in himself? Sometimes everything: his human limitations; his body, its appearance and functioning; the faculties of his mind—reasoning, memory, critical thinking, planning, special skills or gifts—any activity, from simple private actions to public performances. While the tendency to disparage may be more or less pervasive, it is usually focused on some areas more sharply than on others, depending on the importance which certain attitudes, faculties, or qualities have for the main neurotic solution. The aggressive vindictive type, for instance, will despise in himself most deeply anything he conceives as "weakness." This may comprise positive feelings he has for others, any failure to get back at others, any compliance (including a reasonable giving in), any lack of control over himself or others. In the framework of this book it is not possible to give a complete survey of all the possibilities. It is not necessary either, since the principles at work are always the same. For illustrations I shall discuss merely two of the more frequent expressions of self-contempt—those concerning attractiveness and intelligence.

With regard to looks and appearance, we find the whole range from a person's feeling unattractive to feeling repulsive. At first glance it is astonishing to find this tendency in women who are attractive beyond average. But we must not forget that what

counts are not objective facts or opinions of others but the discrepancy a woman feels between her idealized image and her actual self. Thus, even though by common acclaim she may be a beauty, she still is not the *absolute* beauty—such as never was and never will be. And so she may focus on her imperfections—a scar, a wrist not slender enough, or hair not naturally wavy—and run herself down on this score, sometimes to the extent of hating to look at a mirror. Or the fear of being repulsive to others may be aroused easily, for instance by the mere fact of having somebody who has been sitting beside her in the movies change his seat.

Dependent on other factors in the personality, the contemptuous attitude toward appearance may lead either to excessive efforts to counteract violent self-berating or to a "don't care" attitude. In the first case an inordinate amount of time, money, and thought is spent on hair, complexion, dresses, hats, etc. If the disparaging is focused on special aspects, like the nose or the breasts or an overweight condition, it may lead to drastic "cures," like operations or enforced reducing. In the second, pride interferes with taking even reasonable care of skin, posture, or dresses. A woman may then be so deeply convinced of being ugly or repulsive that any attempt to improve her looks seems ridiculous to her.

The self-berating on the score of looks becomes more poignant when one realizes that it is also fed from a deeper source. The question "Am I attractive?" is inseparable from another one: "Am I lovable?" Here we touch upon a crucial problem in human psychology, and will again have to leave a loose end because the problem of lovableness is better discussed in another context. The two questions are interlinked in more than one way but they are not identical. The one means: Is my appearance sufficiently beautiful to attract love? The other: Have I qualities which make me lovable? Although the first one is important, particularly in younger years, the second goes into the core of our being and is the one relevant to attaining happiness in love life. But lovable qualities have to do with personality, and as long as the neurotic is remote from himself his personality is too nebulous to interest him. Also, while imperfections in terms of attractiveness often are negligible for all practical

when, at the same time, they spend lavishly on things that add to their prestige, such as giving to charity in a conspicuous way, giving a party, or buying antiques which do not mean anything to them. They act as if governed by a law allowing them to slave for glory but forbidding anything that would "merely" add to their own comfort, happiness, or growth.

As in any other taboos, the penalty of breaking them is anxiety or its equivalents. A patient who instead of gulping down her coffee fixed a nice breakfast for herself was entirely taken aback when I vociferously approved of it as a good sign. She had expected me to blame her for such "selfishness." Moving to a better apartment, though it may be sensible in every way, may arouse a host of fears. Enjoying a party may be followed by panic. An inner voice may say at such occasions: "You are going to pay for this." A patient buying some new furniture found herself saying: "You will not live to enjoy this," which in her particular case meant that a fear of cancer which she had now and then surged up at this very moment.

The *crushing of hopes* can be clearly observed in the analytic situation. The word "never," with all its formidable finality, may keep recurring. In spite of actual improvements, the voice will say: "You will never get over your dependency or over your panic; you will never be free." The patient may respond with fear and frantically ask for reassurance that he can be cured, that others have been helped, etc. Even though a patient sometimes cannot help admitting improvement, he may say: "Yes, analysis has helped me that far, but it cannot help me any further; so what is the good of it?" When the crushing of hopes is pervasive a feeling of doom results. One sometimes feels reminded of Dante's *Inferno,* with the inscription at its entrance: "Abandon hope, all ye who enter here." The repercussions to undeniable improvement often occur so regularly as to be predictable. A patient feels better, has been able to forget about a phobia, has seen an important connection that shows him a way out—and then comes back, profoundly discouraged and depressed. Another patient who for all essentials has resigned from living develops severe panic and comes to the verge of suicide each time he realizes an existing asset in himself. If the unconscious determination to keep himself down is deeply en-

trenched, the patient may reject any reassurance with sarcastic remarks. In some instances we can trace the process leading up to a relapse. Having seen that a certain attitude would be desirable—such as giving up irrational claims—the patient feels that he has changed, and in his imagination he surges to the heights of *absolute* freedom. Then, hating himself for not being able to do so, he tells himself: "You are no good, and will never get anywhere."

A last and most insidious self-frustration is the *taboo on any aspiration*—not simply on any grandiose fantasy, but on any striving that means using one's own resources or becoming a better and stronger person. Here the border line between self-frustration and self-disparaging is particularly vague. "Who are you to want to act, to sing, to marry? You will never amount to anything."

Some of these factors show in the history of a man who later on became remarkably productive and achieved something in his field. About a year before his work took a turn for the better —without a change in any of the external factors—he had a talk with an older woman in which she asked him what he wanted to do with his life, what he wished or expected to achieve. It turned out that despite his intelligence, thoughtfulness, and diligence he had never thought about the future. All he answered was: "Oh, I guess I shall always make a living." Though he had always been regarded as promising, the idea of doing anything of some importance had simply been blotted out. With the help of outside stimulation and some self-analysis he then became increasingly productive. But his findings in research occurred without his being aware of their significance. He even did not experience having achieved anything. Hence it did not accrue to his self-confidence. He might forget about his findings, and rediscover them accidentally. When finally he came to analysis, mainly on account of remaining inhibitions in his work, his taboos on wanting anything for himself and aspiring for something, or realizing his particular gifts, were still formidable. Apparently his existing gifts and a hidden ambition driving him toward achievement were too strong to be altogether stunted. So he got things done—even though under

torture—but he had to keep this fact from awareness and was unable to own it and enjoy it. In others the result is still less favorable. They resign, do not dare to venture into something new, expect nothing from life, put their goals too low, and hence live beneath their abilities and psychic means.

As in other aspects of self-hate, self-frustration may show in externalization. A person complains that if it were not for his wife, boss, lack of money, the weather, or the political situation he would be the happiest person in the world. Needless to say, we should not go to the other extreme and regard all these factors as necessarily irrelevant. Certainly they may affect our well-being. But in our evaluation of them we should scrutinize how great their actual influence is, and how much is shifted to them from inner sources. Very often a person will feel serene and content because he is on better terms with himself, despite the fact that no external difficulties have changed.

Self-torture is in part an inevitable by-product of self-hate. Whether the neurotic tries to whip himself into a perfection impossible to attain, hurls accusations against himself, or disparages or frustrates himself, he is actually torturing himself. Making self-torture a separate category among the expressions of self-hate involves the contention that there is, or may be, an *intent* at self-tormenting. We must of course, in any case of neurotic anguish, consider all possibilities. Consider for instance self-doubts. They may result from inner conflicts and may show in endless and inconclusive inner dialogues, in which a person tries to defend himself against his own self-accusations; they may be an expression of self-hate, aimed at undermining the ground on which a person stands. Actually they can be most tormenting. Like Hamlet—or even worse than he—people can be eaten up by self-doubts. Certainly we have to analyze all the reasons for their operating, but do they also constitute an unconscious *intent* at self-torture?

A further example of this same caliber: procrastination. As we know, many factors may be responsible for delaying decision or action, such as general inertia or a pervasive incapacity to take a stand. The procrastinator himself knows that things postponed often will loom larger and larger, and that in actual

operate. We can see in Stefan Zweig's picture of Balzac the tragedy of a genius who, driven by a pathetic craving for glamor, actually ruined his health by excessive work, neglect of sleep, and abuse of coffee. To be sure, Balzac's need for glamor rushed him into debt so that his overwork in part was a consequence of a wrong way of living. But certainly the question is justified—here as in similar instances—whether self-destructive drives were not also at work, leading in the end to a premature death.

In other cases bodily damage is incurred, as it were, accidentally. We all know that in a "bad mood" we are more likely to cut ourselves, to take a wrong step and fall, to pinch our fingers. But it can be fatal if we do not pay attention to traffic when crossing the street, or to traffic regulations when driving.

There is, finally, the still open question about the silent operating of self-destructive drives in organic illness. While by now more is known about psychosomatic relations, it would be difficult to isolate with sufficient accuracy the specific role of self-destructive trends. Of course every good physician knows that in severe illness the patient's "wish" to recover and live, or to die, is crucial. But again the availability of psychic energies in one or the other direction can be determined by many factors. All that we can say now is that, considering the unity of body and soul, the possibility of a silent operating of self-destructiveness, not only in the phase of recovery but in producing or aggravating an illness, must be seriously considered.

Self-destructiveness directed against other values in life may appear as an inopportune accident. There is the example of Eilert Lovborg in *Hedda Gabler* losing his precious manuscript. Ibsen shows us in Lovborg a crescendo of self-ruining reactions and actions. First, following a flimsy suspicion of his faithful friend Mrs. Elvstedt, he tries to ruin that relationship by going on a binge. While drunk, he loses the manuscript, then shoots himself—and in the house of a prostitute at that. On a minor scale there are the cases of a person forgetting things in an examination or being late or drunk for an important interview.

Most frequently the ruining of psychic values strikes us

exposed to public disgrace in a parade. Although the dreamer was convinced of her essential innocence, she too was participating in the parade. On the other hand, she tried to plead in her favor with a priest. The priest, although sympathetic, could do nothing for the accused. Later the accused was on a farm, not only utterly destitute but dull and half witted. The dreamer, still in her dream, felt a heart-rending pity for the victim and wept for hours after waking. Barring details, the dreamer here says to herself: There is something fine and likable in me; through my self-condemnation and self-destructiveness I may actually ruin my personality; my steps against such drives are ineffectual; though I want to save myself, I also avoid a real fight and, in some way, collaborate with my destructive drives.

In dreams we are closer to the reality of ourselves. And this dream in particular seemed to emerge from a great depth, and to present a profound and square insight into the danger of the dreamer's particular self-destructiveness. The reaction of pity for self, in this instance as in many others, was at that time not constructive: it did not move her to do anything in her own behalf. Only when the hopelessness and the intensity of self-contempt abates, can the unconstructive self-pity turn into a constructive sympathy with self. And this indeed is a forward move of great significance for anybody in the clutches of self-hate. It goes with a beginning feeling for his real self and a beginning wish for inner salvation.

The reaction to the deteriorating process can also be stark terror. And, considering the formidable danger of self-destructiveness, this reaction is completely adequate as long as one continues to feel a helpless prey to these merciless forces. In dreams and associations they may appear in many succinct symbols, such as a homicidal maniac, Dracula, monsters, a white whale, or ghosts. This terror is the nucleus of many fears otherwise inexplicable, such as the fear of the unknown and of the dangerous depth of the sea; the fear of ghosts; of anything mysterious; of any destructive process within the body, such as poison, worms, cancer. It is a part of the terror many patients feel toward anything that is unconscious, and therefore mysterious. It may be the center of panic without apparent reason. It would

and even startling that a person who is not asleep and has no organic brain disease does not know who he is, where he is, or what he does or has been doing.

These are, however, less bewildering if we do not regard them as isolated occurrences but see their relation to less conspicuous forms of alienation from self. In these forms there is no gross loss of identity and orientation, but the general capacity for conscious experience is impaired. There are for instance many neurotics who live as if they were in a fog. Nothing is clear to them. Not only their own thoughts and feelings but also other people, and the implications of a situation, are hazy. Also related, in still less drastic terms, are conditions in which the dimming out is restricted to intrapsychic processes. I am thinking of people who can be rather astute observers of others, who can lucidly size up a situation or a trend of thought; yet experiences of all kinds (in relation to others, nature, etc.) do not penetrate to their feelings, and their inner experiences do not penetrate to awareness. And these states of mind in turn are not unrelated to those of apparently healthy people who suffer from occasional partial blackouts or from blind spots concerning certain areas of inner or outer experience.

All these forms of alienation from self can concern as well the "material self" [1]—the body and the possessions. A neurotic may have but little feeling of or for his body. Even his bodily sensations may be numbed. When asked for instance whether his feet are cold, he may have to arrive at an awareness of feeling cold through a process of thinking. He may not recognize himself when seeing himself unexpectedly in a full-length mirror. Similarly, he may have no feeling of his home being his home—it is for him as impersonal as a hotel room. Others have no feeling that the money they possess is their money, even though it may have been earned through hard work.

These are only a few variations of what we could properly call an alienation from the actual self. All of what a person actually is or has, including even his connection of his present

[1] Here, as in many other comments, I roughly follow William James, *The Principles of Psychology,* Henry Holt and Co., New York, the chapter on "The Consciousness of Self" The quotes in the paragraph are quotations from this chapter.

life with his past, the feeling for this continuity of his life, may be blotted out or dimmed out. Some of this process is intrinsic in every neurosis. Sometimes patients may be aware of disturbances on this score, as in the case of one patient who described himself as a lamppost with a brain on top. More often they are unaware of it, although it may be fairly extensive; and it may gradually unfold only in analysis.

At the core of this alienation from the actual self is a phenomenon that is less tangible although more crucial. It is the remoteness of the neurotic from his own feelings, wishes, beliefs, and energies. It is the loss of the feeling of being an active determining force in his own life. It is the loss of feeling himself as an organic whole. These in turn indicate an alienation from that most alive center of ourselves which I have suggested calling the *real self*. To present more fully its propensities in the terms of William James: it provides the "palpitating inward life"; it engenders the spontaneity of feelings, whether these be joy, yearning, love, anger, fear, despair. It also is the source of spontaneous interest and energies, "the source of effort and attention from which emanate the fiats of will"; the capacity to wish and to will; it is the part of ourselves that wants to expand and grow and to fulfill itself. It produces the "reactions of spontaneity" to our feelings or thoughts, "welcoming or opposing, appropriating or disowning, striving with or against, saying yes or no." All this indicates that our real self, when strong and active, enables us to make decisions and assume responsibility for them. It therefore leads to genuine integration and a sound sense of wholeness, oneness. Not merely are body and mind, deed and thought or feeling, consonant and harmonious, but they function without serious inner conflict. In contrast to those artificial means of holding ourselves together, which gain in importance as the real self is weakened, there is little or no attendant strain.

The history of philosophy shows that we can deal with the problems of self from many vantage points. Yet it seems as though everyone treating this subject has found it difficult to go beyond describing his special experiences and interests. From the viewpoint of clinical usefulness, I would distinguish

the actual or empirical [2] self from the idealized self on the one hand, and the real self on the other. The actual self is an all-inclusive term for everything that a person is at a given time: body and soul, healthy and neurotic. We have it in mind when we say that we want to know ourselves; i.e., we want to know ourselves as we are. The idealized self is what we are in our irrational imagination, or what we should be according to the dictates of neurotic pride. The real self, which I have defined several times, is the "original" force toward individual growth and fulfillment, with which we may again achieve full identification when freed of the crippling shackles of neurosis. Hence it is what we refer to when we say that we want to find ourselves. In this sense it is also (to all neurotics) the *possible* self —in contrast to the idealized self, which is *impossible* of attainment. Seen from this angle, it seems the most speculative of all. Who, seeing a neurotic patient, can separate the wheat from the chaff and say: this is his possible self. But while the real or possible self of a neurotic person is in a way an abstraction, it is nevertheless *felt* and we can say that every glimpse we get of it feels more real, more certain, more definite than anything else. We can observe this quality in ourselves or in our patients when, after some incisive insight, there is a release from the grip of some compulsive need.

Although one cannot always distinguish neatly between alienation from the actual self and that from the real self, the latter will be in the following discussion the focus of our interest. The loss of self, says Kierkegaard, is "sickness unto death"; [3] it is despair—despair at not being conscious of having a self, or despair at not being willing to be ourselves. But it is a despair (still following Kierkegaard) which does not clamor or scream. People go on living as if they were still in immediate contact with this alive center. Any other loss—that of a job, say, or a leg—arouses far more concern. This statement of Kierkegaard's coincides with clinical observation. Apart from the pronounced pathologic conditions mentioned before, its loss does not strike the eye directly and forcefully. Patients coming for consultation complain about headaches, sexual dis-

[2] The term "empirical self" is used by William James.

[3] Sören Kierkegaard, *Sickness unto Death*, Princeton University Press, 1941.

turbances, inhibitions in work, or other symptoms; as a rule, they do not complain about having lost touch with the core of their psychic existence.

Let us now, without going into detail, obtain a comprehensive picture of the forces responsible for the alienation from self. It is in part the consequences of the whole neurotic development, especially of *all that is compulsive in neurosis.* Of all that implies "I am driven instead of being the driver." It does not matter in this context what the particular compulsive factors are—whether they operate in relation to others (compliance, vindictiveness, detachment, etc.) or in the relation to self, as in self-idealization. The very compulsive character of these drives inevitably deprives the person of his full autonomy and spontaneity. As soon as, for instance, his need to be liked by everybody becomes compulsive, the genuineness of his feelings diminishes; so does his power to discriminate. As soon as he is driven to do a piece of work for the sake of glory, his spontaneous interest in the work itself decreases. Conflicting compulsive drives, in addition, impair his integration, his faculty to decide and give direction. Last but not least, the neurotic pseudo-solutions,[4] though representing attempts at integration, also deprive him of autonomy because they become a compulsive way of living.

Secondly, the alienation is furthered through processes, likewise compulsive, which can be described as *active moves away from* the real self. The whole drive for glory is such a move, particularly through the neurotic's determination to mold himself into something he is not. He feels what he *should* feel, wishes what he *should* wish, likes what he *should* like. In other words, the tyranny of the should drives him frantically to be something different from what he is or could be. And in his imagination he *is* different—so different, indeed, that his real self fades and pales still more. Neurotic claims, in terms of self, mean the abandoning of the reservoir of spontaneous energies. Instead of making his own efforts, for instance, with regard to human relations, the neurotic insists that others should adjust to him. Instead of putting himself into his work, he feels en-

[4] *Cf. Our Inner Conflicts* and the following chapters of this book.

little if anything to do and the findings about whom were interesting but did not apply to his life.

In fact, this analytic experience leads us straight into the core of the problem. For we must keep in mind that the patient does not talk about weather or television: he talks about his most intimate personal life experiences. Yet they have lost their personal meaning. And, just as he may talk about himself without "being in it," so he may work, be with friends, take a walk, or sleep with a woman without being in it. His *relation to himself has become impersonal;* so has his relation to his whole life. If the word "depersonalization" did not already have a specific psychiatric meaning, it would be a good term for what alienation from self essentially is: it is a depersonalizing, and therefore a devitalizing, process.

I have already said that the alienation from self does not show as directly and blatantly as its significance would suggest, except (speaking of neuroses only) in the state of depersonalization, feelings of unreality, or amnesia. While these conditions are temporary, they can occur only in people who are estranged from themselves anyhow. The factors precipitating the feelings of unreality are usually severe injuries to pride together with an acute increase of self-contempt, exceeding what is tolerable for the particular person. Conversely, when—with or without therapy—these acute conditions subside, his alienation from self is not thereby essentially changed. It is merely again restrained within such limits that he can function without conspicuous disorientation. Otherwise the trained observer would be able to perceive certain general symptoms pointing to an existing alienation from self, such as deadness of the eyes, an aura of impersonality, an automatonlike behavior. Writers like Camus, Marquand, and Sartre have described such symptoms excellently. For the analyst it is a source of never-ending astonishment how comparatively well a person can function with the core of himself not participating.

What, then, are the *effects* that alienation from self has on an individual's personality and on his life? In order to obtain a clear and comprehensive picture we shall discuss successively

the bearing it has on his emotional life, his energies, his faculty for giving direction to his life, to assume responsibility for himself, and his integrating powers.

Offhand, it would seem difficult to say anything about the *capacity to feel* or the *awareness of feelings* that is valid for all neuroses. Some are overemotional in their joy, enthusiasm, or suffering; others appear to be cold, or at any rate hide behind a façade of impassivity; again, in others feelings seem to have lost their intensity and are dulled and flattened out. Despite endless variations, however, one characteristic seems to be pertinent for all neuroses of any severity. Awareness, strength, and kind of feelings are determined mainly by the pride system. Genuine feelings for self are dampened or diminished, sometimes to a vanishing point. In short, *pride governs feelings.*

The neurotic is liable to play down those feelings which run counter to his particular pride and to overemphasize those which add to it. If in his arrogance he feels vastly superior to others, he cannot allow himself to feel envy. His pride in asceticism may put a lid on feelings of enjoyment. If he is proud of his vindictiveness, vindictive rage may be keenly felt. However, if his vindictiveness is glorified and rationalized in terms of dealing out "justice," he does not experience vindictive rage as such, although it is so freely expressed that nobody else has any doubt about it. Pride in *absolute* endurance may prohibit any feeling of suffering. But if suffering plays an important part within the pride system—as a vehicle for expressing resentment and as a basis for neurotic claims—it is not only emphasized in front of others but actually felt more deeply. A feeling of compassion may be choked off if it is regarded as weakness, but may be fully experienced if registered as a godlike attribute. If pride is mainly focused on self-sufficiency, in the sense of not needing anything or anybody, then to own to any feelings or needs is like an "unbearable bowing down to go through a narrow gate. . . . If I like somebody, he could have a hold on me. . . . If I like anything, I might get dependent on it."

Sometimes in analysis we can observe directly how pride interferes with genuine feelings. X may respond in a spontaneously friendly way to a friendly approach of Z, although he usually resents Z, mainly on the ground of injured pride. Then

a minute later something in him says, "You are a fool to be taken in by friendliness." So the friendly feeling goes by the board. Or a picture may awaken a warm, glowing enthusiasm in him. But his pride mars it when he thinks to himself, "Nobody else can appreciate pictures as you do."

Up to this point pride acts as a kind of censorship, encouraging or forbidding feelings to come to awareness. But it may govern feelings in a still more basic way. The more pride has taken over, the more a person can respond emotionally to life only with his pride. It is as if he had shut away his real self in a soundproof room and could hear the voice of pride alone. His feeling satisfied or dissatisfied, dejected or elated, his likes or dislikes of people, then, are mainly pride responses. Likewise the suffering he consciously feels is mainly a suffering of his pride. This is not apparent on the surface. It feels convincingly real to him that he suffers from failures, from feelings of guilt, loneliness, unrequited love. And he does indeed. But the question is: who suffers? In analysis it turns out that it is mainly his proud self. He suffers because he feels that he has failed to achieve supreme success, to do things to ultimate perfection, to be so irresistibly attractive as to be sought out always, to make everybody love him. Or he suffers because he feels entitled to success, popularity, etc., which is not forthcoming.

Only when the pride system is considerably undermined does he begin to feel true suffering. Only then can he feel sympathy for this suffering self of his, a sympathy that can move him to do something constructive for himself. The self-pity he felt before was rather a maudlin writhing of the proud self for feeling abused. He who has not experienced the difference may shrug his shoulders and think that it is irrelevant—that suffering is suffering. But it is true suffering alone that has the power to broaden and deepen our range of feelings and to open our hearts for the suffering of others. In *De Profundis* Oscar Wilde has described the liberation he felt when, instead of suffering from injured vanity, he started to experience true suffering.

Sometimes the neurotic can experience even his pride responses only through others. He may not *feel* humiliated by the arrogance or the neglect of a friend, but he feels ashamed at the

thought that his brother or his colleagues would regard it as a humiliation.

There are of course variations in the degree to which pride governs feelings. Even a neurotic who is severely crippled emotionally may have certain feelings which are strong and sincere, such as feelings for nature or for music. These, then, are not touched by his neurosis. One might say that his real self is allowed this much freedom. Or, even though his likes and dislikes are mainly determined by his pride, genuine elements also may be present. Nevertheless, as a result of these trends, there is in neurosis a general impoverishment of the emotional life showing in a diminished sincerity, spontaneity, and depth of feelings, or at least in a restricted range of possible feelings.

A person's conscious attitude toward this disturbance varies. He may not regard his emotional dearth as a disturbance at all, but be rather proud of it. He may be seriously concerned about an increasing emotional deadness. He may realize for instance that his feelings increasingly have a merely reactive character. When not reacting to friendliness or hostility his feelings remain inactive, silent. His heart does not go out actively toward the beauty of a tree or a picture and so they remain meaningless to him. He may respond to a friend complaining about a predicament but he does not actively visualize the other's life situation. Or he may become aware with dismay that even such reactive feelings are dulled. "If at least he had been able to discover in himself a trifling emotion that was veritably, though modestly, alive . . ." writes Jean-Paul Sartre of one of his characters in *The Age of Reason*. Finally, he may not be aware of any impoverishment. Only in his dreams will he then present himself as a dummy, a marble statue, a two-dimensional cardboard figure, or a corpse whose lips he has pulled up so that he seems to smile. The self-deception in these latter instances is understandable, because on the surface the existing impoverishment may be camouflaged in either of the three following ways.

Some neurotics may display a scintillating vivacity and a false spontaneity. They may be easily enthused or discouraged, easily incited to love or to anger. But these feelings do not come out

of any depth; they are not in them. They live in a world of their own imagination and respond superficially to whatever captures their fancy or hurts their pride. Often the need to impress people is in the foreground. And their alienation from self makes it possible for them to change their personality according to the requirements of the situation. Chameleonlike, they always play some role in life without knowing that they do it and, like good actors, produce the feelings that go with the roles. Hence they may seem to be genuine, whether they impersonate a frivolous man of the world, a man seriously interested in music or politics, or a helping friend. It is deceptive to the analyst too, because in analysis such persons play, appropriately, the role of patients eager to learn about themselves and to change their ways. The problem to be tackled here is the ease with which they slip into a role and change it for another—just as easily as one may slip into a dress and then change it.

Others mistake for emotional strength their pursuit of, and excited participation in, say, reckless driving, an intrigue, or a sexual escape. But, on the contrary, the need for thrill and excitement is a trustworthy indication of painful inner emptiness. Only the sharp stimuli of the unusual can elicit any response from such a person's inert emotions.

Others, finally, seem to have quite a sureness of feeling. They seem to know what they feel, and their feelings are adequate to the situation. But again, not only is the range of feelings restricted but they are on a low key, as if they were generally toned down. More intimate knowledge shows that these people automatically feel what, according to their inner dictates, they *should* feel. Or they may merely react with the feelings which others expect of them. Observations of this kind are more deceptive when personal shoulds coincide with cultural ones; in any case we can keep from erroneous conclusions by considering the totality of the emotional pictures. Feelings which come from the core of our being have spontaneity, depth, and sincerity; if one of these qualities is lacking, we had better examine the underlying dynamics.

The *availability of energies* in neurosis varies in all gradations from a pervasive inertia through sporadic unsustained

efforts to consistent, even exaggerated, outputs of energy. We cannot say that neurosis per se makes a neurotic person more or less energetic than a healthy one. But this inclusiveness obtains only as long as we think of energies in a merely quantitative way, separate from motivations and aims. One of the main characteristics of neurosis, as we have stated in general and elucidated in particular, is the shift of energies from developing the given potentials of the real self to developing the fictitious potentials of the idealized self. The fuller the grasp we have of the meaning of this process, the less are we puzzled by seeing incongruities in the output of energies. I shall mention here but two implications.

The more energies absorbed in the service of the pride system, the fewer are those available for the constructive drive toward self-realization. To illustrate this with a common example: the ambition-ridden person can display an astounding energy in order to attain eminence, power, and glamor, yet on the other hand have no time, interest, or energy for his personal life and his development as a human being. Actually it is not only a question of "having no energies left" for his personal life and its growth. Even if he had energies left he would unconsciously refuse to use them in behalf of his real self. To do so would run contrary to the intent of his self-hate, which is to keep his real self down.

The other implication is the fact that the neurotic does not *own* his energies (feel his energies as his own). He has the feeling of not being a moving force in his own life. In different kinds of neurotic personalities different factors may contribute to this deficiency. When a person for instance feels that he must do everything that is expected of him, he is actually set in motion by the pushes and pulls of others, or what he interprets as such—and he may stand still like a car with a run-down battery when left to his own resources. Or, if somebody has become scared of his own pride and has set a taboo on ambition, he must deny—to himself—his active share in his doings. Even if he has made a place for himself in the world, he does not feel that he has done it. What prevails is the feeling of "it happened." But, quite apart from such contributing factors, the feeling of not being the moving force in his own life is in a

deeper sense true to facts. For he is indeed not moved primarily by his own wishes and aspirations but by the needs evolving from his pride system.

Naturally the course of our life is in part determined by factors outside our influence. But we can have a sense of direction. We can know what we want to make out of our life. We can have ideals, toward the approximation of which we strive and on the basis of which we make moral decisions. This sense of direction is conspicuously absent in many neurotics, whose *directive powers* are weakened in direct proportion to the degree of alienation from self. These people shift without plan or purpose, wherever their fancy takes them. Futile daydreaming may take the place of directed activities; sheer opportunism, the place of honest strivings; cynicism may choke off ideals. Indecision may reach such an extent as to prohibit any purposeful functioning.

Even more widespread and more difficult to recognize are the *hidden* disturbances of this sort. A person may appear well organized, in fact streamlined, because he is driven toward such neurotic goals as perfection or triumph. The directive control is in such cases taken over by compulsive standards. The artificiality of the directives which then develop may show only when he finds himself caught between contradictory shoulds. The anxiety which will arise in such situations is great because he has no other directives to follow. His real self is, as it were, confined in an oubliette; he cannot consult with it, and for this very reason he is a helpless prey to contradictory pulls. This is true for other neurotic conflicts as well. The degree of helplessness toward them and the fear of facing them not only point to the magnitude of the conflicts but even more to his alienation from self.

Lack of inner direction also may not appear as such because a person's life has moved in traditional channels and has made it possible to evade personal plans and decisions. Procrastination may veil indecision. And people may become aware of their indecision only if a decision which they alone can make has to be made. Such a situation may then be an ordeal of the worst order. But, even so, they usually do not recognize the general

nature of the disturbance and ascribe it to the difficulty of the particular decision to be made.

Finally, an insufficient sense of direction may be hidden behind an attitude of compliance. People then do what they think others expect them to do; they are what they think others desire them to be. And they may develop considerable astuteness about what others need or expect. Usually they will, in a secondary way, glorify this skill as sensitivity or considerateness. When they become aware of the compulsive character of such "compliance," and try to analyze it, they will focus usually on factors pertaining to personal relations, such as a need to please or to ward off the hostility of others. However, they "comply" also in situations in which these factors do not apply, as for instance in the analytic situation. They leave the initiative to the analyst and want to know or to guess what he expects them to tackle. They do so contrary to explicit encouragements on the part of the analyst to follow their own interests. Here the background of the "compliance" becomes clear. Without being in the least aware of it, they are compelled to leave the direction of their lives to others instead of taking it in their own hands. They will feel lost when left to their own resources. In dreams such symbols will appear as being in a boat without a rudder, having lost a compass, being without a guide in a strange and dangerous territory. That the lack of inner directive powers is the essential element in their "compliance" also becomes apparent at a later time, when the struggle for inner autonomy begins. The anxiety occurring during this process has to do with abandoning accustomed aids without as yet daring to trust themselves.

While the impairment or loss of the directive powers may be hidden, there is another insufficiency that is always clearly discernible, at least to the trained observer: the *faculty of assuming responsibility for self*. The term "responsibility" may connote three different things. I do not, in this context, refer to dependability in the sense of fulfilling obligations or keeping promises, or to the assumption of responsibility for others. Attitudes on these scores vary too much to single out constant characteristics for all neuroses. The neurotic may be utterly reliable,

or he may assume too much or too little responsibility in regard to others.

Nor do we mean to embark here upon the philosophical intricacies of moral responsibility. The compulsive factors in neuroses are so prevailing that freedom of choice is negligible. For all practical purposes we take it for granted that in general the patient could not develop otherwise than he did; that in particular he could not help doing, feeling, thinking what he did do, feel, think. This viewpoint, however, is not shared by the patient. His lofty disregard for all that means laws and necessities extends to himself too. The fact that, everything considered, his development could go only in certain directions is beneath his consideration. Whether some drive or attitude was conscious or unconscious does not matter. However insuperable the odds against which he had to struggle he *should* have met them with unfailing strength, courage, and equanimity. If he did not do so, it proves that he is no good. Conversely, in self-protection he may rigidly reject any guilt, declare himself infallible, and put the blame for any difficulties, past or present, on others.

Here again, as in other functions, pride has taken over responsibility and hounds him with condemnatory accusations when he fails to do the impossible. This then makes it close to impossible to assume the only responsibility that matters. This is, at bottom, no more but also no less than *plain, simple honesty about himself and his life.* It operates in three ways: a square recognition of his being as he is, without minimizing or exaggerating; a willingness to bear the consequences of his actions, decisions, etc., without trying to "get by" or to put the blame on others; the realization that it is up to him to do something about his difficulties without insisting that others, or fate, or time will solve them for him. This does not preclude accepting help but, on the contrary, implies getting all the help he possibly can. But even the best help from outside does not avail if he himself does not make efforts toward a constructive change.

To illustrate with an example which is actually a composite of many similar cases: a young married man constantly spends more money than he can afford, despite regular financial help

from his father. He offers to himself and to others plenty of explanations: it is the fault of his parents, who never trained him to deal with money; it is the fault of his father, who gives him too small an allowance. This, in turn, continues because he is too intimidated to ask for more; he needs money because his wife is not economical or because his child needs a toy; then there are taxes and doctors' bills—and isn't everybody entitled to a little fun now and then?

All these reasons are relevant data for the analyst. They show the patient's claims and his tendency to feel abused. To the patient they not only account completely and satisfactorily for his dilemma but, to come directly to the point, he uses them as a magic wand to dispel the simple fact that, for whatever reason, he did spend too much money. This statement of facts, this calling a spade a spade, is often close to impossible for the neurotic caught in the push and pull of pride and self-condemnation. Of course the consequences do not fail to appear: his bank account is overdrawn; he runs into debt. He is furious at the banker who politely notifies him of the state of his account, and furious at his friends who do not want to lend him money. When the predicament is drastic enough he presents his father or a friend with the accomplished fact and more or less forces them to come to his rescue. He does not face the simple connection that the difficulties are the consequences of his own undisciplined spending. He makes resolutions concerning the future which cannot possibly carry weight because he is too busy justifying himself and blaming others to mean what he plans. What has not penetrated is the sober realization that the lack of discipline is *his* problem, that it actually makes *his* life difficult, and that consequently it is up to *him* to do something about it.

Another illustration of how tenaciously a neurotic can blind himself to the consequences of his problems or his actions: a person harboring an unconscious conviction of his immunity to ordinary cause and effect may have recognized his arrogance and his vindictiveness. But he simply does not see the consequence of others resenting it. If they turn against him it is an unexpected blow; he feels abused, and may often be quite astute in pointing out the neurotic factors (in others!) which make

them resent his behavior. He discards lightly all the evidence presented. He considers it an attempt by the others involved to try to rationalize away their own guilt or responsibility.

These illustrations, though typical, do not begin to cover all the ways of avoiding responsibility for self. We have discussed most of them in speaking earlier of face-saving devices and protective measures against the onslaught of self-hate. We have seen how the neurotic puts responsibility on everybody and everything except himself; how he makes himself a detached observer of himself; how neatly he distinguishes between himself and his neurosis. As a result his real self becomes increasingly weaker or more remote. If for instance he denies that unconscious forces are part of his total personality, they may become a mysterious power which scares him out of his wits. And the weaker his contact with his real self becomes through such unconscious evasions, the more does he become a helpless prey to his unconscious forces and the more and more reason he has in fact to dread them. On the other hand, every step he takes toward assuming responsibility for all of this complex which is himself makes him visibly stronger.

Moreover, the shirking of responsibility for self makes it harder for any patient to face and to overcome his problems. If we could tackle this subject at the very beginning of an analysis, it would reduce considerably the time and hardship of the work. However, as long as the patient *is* his idealized image he cannot even start to doubt his straightness. And if the pressure of self-condemnation is in the foreground, he may respond to the idea of responsibility for self with stark terror and without gaining anything from it. Also we must keep in mind that the inability to assume any responsibility for self is but one expression of the whole alienation from self. It is therefore futile to tackle this problem before the patient has gained some feeling of and for himself.

Finally, when the real self is "locked out" or exiled, one's *integrating power* too will be at a low ebb. A healthy integration is a result of being oneself, and can be attained only on this basis. If we are sufficiently ourselves to have spontaneous feel-

ings, to make our own decisions, and to assume responsibility for them, then we have a feeling of unity on a solid basis. In the words of a poet who speaks in jubilant tones of finding herself:

> All fuses now, falls into place
> From wish to action, word to silence.
> My work, my loves, my time, my face
> Gathered into one intense
> Gesture of growing like a plant.[5]

The lack of spontaneous integration we usually regard as a direct consequence of neurotic conflicts. This remains true, but we do not quite understand the power of disintegrating forces unless we consider the vicious circles which are operating. If as the result of many factors we lose ourselves, we have then no firm ground to stand on from which we can try to disentangle our inner conflicts. We are at their mercy, a helpless prey to their disintegrating force, and must seize upon any means available to solve them. This is what we call neurotic attempts at solution—and neurosis, from this vantage point, is a series of such attempts. But in these attempts we lose ourselves more and more, and the disintegrating impact of the conflicts grows. So we need artificial means to hold ourselves together. The shoulds, an instrument of pride and an instrument of self-hate, acquire a new function: that of protecting us from chaos. They rule a person with an iron fist but, like a political tyranny, they do create and maintain a certain superficial order. Rigid control through will power and reasoning is another strenuous means of attempting to bind together all the disconnected parts of the personality. We shall discuss it, together with other measures to relieve inner tensions, in the next chapter.

The general significance of these disturbances for the patient's life is fairly obvious. His not being an active determining factor in his own life creates a deep feeling of uncertainty, no matter how much overlaid by compulsive rigidities. His not feeling his own feelings makes him unalive, no matter how great his surface vivacity. His not assuming responsibility for

[5] From "Now I Become Myself," by May Sarton, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, 1948.

haustion of the power of imagination. That keeps working—but to the impairment of the inner condition. This condition was already precarious when the individual took his original flight toward the sun: by now (under the rending impact of the conflicts and tensions mentioned) the danger of psychic destruction is imminent.

Before presenting the new attempts at solution we must become familiar with certain measures aiming at relieving tension which operate all of the time.[1] It suffices to enumerate them briefly because they have already been discussed in this book and in previous publications, and they will be resumed in subsequent chapters.

Alienation from self, seen from this aspect, is one of these measures and probably ranks first in importance. We have discussed the reasons which bring about and reinforce the alienation from self. It is, to repeat in part, a mere consequence of the neurotic's being driven by compulsive forces; in part, it results from active moves away from the real self and against it. We have to add in this context that he also has a definite interest in disavowing it in order to avoid an inner battle and to keep the inner tension at a minimum.[2] The principle involved is the same as that operating in all attempts to solve inner conflicts. Any conflict within or without can vanish from sight and actually be (artificially) diminished if one aspect of it is suppressed and the other made predominant.[3] Speaking in terms of two people or two groups with conflicting needs and interests, the open conflict disappears when one individual or group is subdued. Between a bullying father and subdued child there is no visible conflict. The same holds true for inner conflicts. We may have a sharp conflict between our hostility toward people and our need to be liked. But if we suppress the hostility—or the need to be liked—our relations tend to become streamlined.

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[1] They correspond in principle, if not in content, to what I called "auxiliary approaches to artificial harmony" in *Our Inner Conflicts.*

[2] This interest constitutes another factor which is reinforcing the alienation from self; it belongs in the category of moves away from the real self.

[3] *Cf.* Karen Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts,* Chapter 2, The Basic Conflict.

ternalization [4] as a means of maintaining the idealized image by laying on other people's doorsteps all the blame for the shortcomings or ailments that he cannot fit into his particular image. I next saw it as an attempt to deny the existence of, or to smooth over the inner battle between, self-destructive forces; and I distinguished between active and passive externalization: "I am not doing anything to myself but to others—and rightly so"—*versus* "I am not hostile to others; they are doing things to me." And now, finally, I have taken a further step in the understanding of externalization. There is hardly one of the inner processes I have described which may not be externalized. A neurotic may for instance feel compassion for others when it would be utterly impossible to feel it for himself. His longing for his own inner salvation may be vigorously denied but express itself in an astute spotting of others being stuck in their growth, and in a sometimes astounding capacity to help them. His rebellion against the coercion of inner dictates may appear as defiance of conventions, laws, influences. Unaware of his own overbearing pride, he may hate it—or be fascinated by it—in others. He may despise in others his own cowering before the dictatorship of his pride system. Not knowing that he is smoothing over the ruthless cruelty of his self-hate, he may develop a Pollyannalike attitude toward life in general, removing from it all harshness, cruelty, or even death.

Another general measure is the neurotic's tendency to experience himself in a piecemeal way, as if we were the sum total of disconnected parts. This is known in psychiatric literature as *compartmentalization,*[5] or *psychic fragmentation,* and seems to be merely a reiteration of the fact that he has no feeling for himself as a whole organism, one in which every part is related to the whole and interacts with every other part. Certainly only an individual who is alienated and divided *can* lack such a feeling of wholeness. What I want to stress here, however, is the neurotic's active interest in disconnecting. He can grasp a connection intellectually when it is presented to him. But it comes

[4] *Cf.* Karen Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts,* Chapter 7, Externalization.

[5] *Cf.* Edward A. Strecker and Kenneth Appel, *Discovering Ourselves,* Macmillan, 1943.

to him as a surprise; penetration is only skin deep and lost soon after.

He has an unconscious interest, for example, in not seeing cause and effect: that one psychic factor follows from another, or reinforces another; that one attitude must by necessity be maintained because it protects some important illusion; that any compulsive trend has an effect on his human relations or on his life in general. He may not see even the simplest cause-and-effect connections. It may remain strange to him that his discontent has anything to do with his claims, or that his too great need of people—for whatever neurotic reasons—makes him dependent upon others. It may come to him as a startling discovery that his sleeping late has anything to do with his going to bed late.

He may have an equally strong interest in not perceiving *contradictory values* coexisting in him. Quite literally, he may utterly fail to see that he tolerates and even cherishes in himself two sets of values, both conscious, which are mutually contradictory. He may not for instance be disturbed by the fact that his placing value on saintliness is contradictory to his also placing value on making others subservient to himself, or by the fact that his honesty does not jibe with his passion to "get by." Even when he tries to examine himself he merely arrives at a static picture, as if he saw disconnected parts of a jigsaw puzzle: of timidity, contempt for others, ambition, masochistic fantasies, the need to be liked, and so on. The individual pieces may be seen correctly, but nothing can change because they are seen out of context without any feeling for interconnection, for process, or for dynamics.

Although psychic fragmentation is essentially a disintegrating process, its function is to preserve the *status quo,* to protect the neurotic equilibrium from collapsing. By his refusal to be puzzled by inner contradictions the neurotic keeps himself from facing the underlying conflicts, and thereby keeps the inner tension at a low ebb. He does not have even a rudimentary interest in them, and so they remain remote from his awareness.

The same result is attained of course by disconnecting cause and effect. Clipping the link between the two prevents him from becoming aware of the intensity and the relevance of certain

inner forces. An important and common illustrative example is

are, as it were, the untamed elementary forces within us. I am not speaking here of conscious self-control by dint of which we can check, if we choose, impulsive actions or an outburst of anger or enthusiasm. The automatic control system checks not only the acting on impulses or the expression of feelings but the impulses and feelings themselves. It operates like an automatic burglar or fire alarm, giving an alarm signal (of fear) when unwanted feelings arise.

But, in contrast to the other attempts, this one is also, as the name implies, a control system. If through alienation from self and psychic fragmentation a feeling of organic unity is lacking, some artificial control system is necessary to hold together the discrepant parts of ourselves.

inner forces. An important and common illustrative example is that of a person who may experience at times the full impact of a spell of vindictiveness. But he may have the greatest difficulties in grasping, even intellectually, the fact that his hurt pride and the need to restore it are the motivating forces; and, even when clearly seen, the connection remains meaningless. Again he may have gained a fairly clear impression of his practice of scathing self-berating. He may have seen in dozens of detailed instances that such expressions of crushing self-contempt follow his failure to measure up to the fantastic dictates of his pride. But again his mind imperceptibly disrupts the connection. Hence both the intensity of his pride and its bearing on self-contempt remain, at best, vague theoretical considerations—which relieve him of the necessity to tackle his pride. It remains in power, and the tensions are kept in a low key because no conflict emerges and he can maintain a deceptive feeling of unity.

The three attempts at preserving a semblance of inner peace described so far have in common the character of doing away with elements which carry the potentials to disrupt the neurotic structure: eliminating the real self, removing all kinds of inner experiences, doing away with connections which (if realized) would disrupt the equilibrium. Another measure, *automatic control,* follows in part the same trend. Its main function is to put a check on feelings. In a structure that is on the verge of disintegration, feelings are a source of danger because they are, as it were, the untamed elementary forces within us. I am not speaking here of conscious self-control by dint of which we can check, if we choose, impulsive actions or an outburst of anger or enthusiasm. The automatic control system checks not only the acting on impulses or the expression of feelings but the impulses and feelings themselves. It operates like an automatic burglar or fire alarm, giving an alarm signal (of fear) when unwanted feelings arise.

But, in contrast to the other attempts, this one is also, as the name implies, a control system. If through alienation from self and psychic fragmentation a feeling of organic unity is lacking, some artificial control system is necessary to hold together the discrepant parts of ourselves.

Such automatic control can encompass all impulses and feelings of fear, hurt, anger, joy, affection, enthusiasm. The corresponding physical expressions of a widespread control system are muscular tightness, showing in constipation, gait, posture, facial rigidity, difficulties in breathing, etc. The conscious attitude toward the control itself varies. Some people are still sufficiently alive to chafe under it and, at least at times, wish desperately they could let go, could laugh heartily, could fall in love, or could be carried away by some enthusiasm. Others have cemented the control by a more or less open pride which they may express in various ways. They may call it dignity, poise, stoicism, wearing a mask, showing a poker face, being "realistic," "unsentimental," "undemonstrative."

In other types of neurosis the control operates in a more selective way. Certain feelings then go scot-free or are even encouraged. Thus, for instance, people with strong self-effacing trends tend to exaggerate feelings of love or of misery. The check here is primarily on the whole range of hostile feelings: suspicion, anger, contempt, vindictiveness.

Of course feelings may be flattened out or suppressed as a result of many other factors, among them alienation from self, forbidding pride, self-frustration. But that a vigilant control system is operating over and beyond these factors shows in many instances by fright responses at the mere prospect of lessened control—such as fears of falling asleep, of being under anesthesia or under the influence of alcohol, of lying on the couch and associating freely, of letting go in skiing downhill. Feelings—whether of compassion, fear, or violence—that do penetrate the control system may arouse panic. Such panic may be caused by the person's fearing and rejecting these feelings because they jeopardize something specific in the neurotic structure. But he also may become panicky simply because he realizes that his control system is not functioning. If this is analyzed the panic subsides, and only then do the particular feelings and the patient's attitude toward them become accessible to work.

The last general measure to be discussed here is the neurotic's belief in the *supremacy of the mind.* While feelings—because unruly—are suspects to be controlled, the mind—imagination

and reason—expands like a genie from a bottle. Thus, factually, another dualism is created. It is no longer mind *and* feelings but mind *versus* feelings; no longer mind *and* body but mind *versus* body; no longer mind *and* self but mind *versus* self. But, like the other fragmentations, this one too serves to release tensions, to cover up conflicts, and to establish a semblance of unity. It can do so in three ways.

The mind can become a spectator of self. As Zuzuki says: "The intellect is after all the spectator, and when it does some work, it is as a hireling, for better or for worse." [6] In the case of the neurotic the mind is never a friendly, concerned spectator; it may be more or less interested, more or less sadistic, but it is always detached—as if looking at a stranger with whom it has been accidentally thrown together. Sometimes self-observations of this sort may be quite mechanical and superficial. A patient will then give a more or less accurate report of events, activities, symptoms that increase or decrease without touching upon the meaning these events had for him or his personal responses to them. He can also be, or become during analysis, keenly interested in his psychic processes. But his interest in them is rather a delight in the astuteness of his observations or in the mechanics with which they operate, much in the manner that an entomologist may be fascinated by the functioning of an insect. The analyst likewise may be delighted, mistaking all this eagerness of the patient for real interest in himself. And only after a while will he discover that the patient is quite uninterested in the meaning his findings have for his life.

This detached interest may also be openly faultfinding, gleeful, sadistic. In these instances it is often externalized, both in an active and in a passive way. He may, as it were, turn his back on himself and be most astute in observing others and their problems—in the same detached, unrelated way. Or he may feel that he is under the hateful and gleeful observation of others—a feeling pronounced in paranoid conditions but by no means restricted to them.

Whatever the quality of being an onlooker at himself, he is no longer a participant in the inner struggle and has removed

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[6] D. T. Zuzuki, *Essays on Zen Buddhism,* Luzac and Co., London, 1927.

The School of Sorrow

I gave thee a royal scep-
tre, and thou hast given
My head a crown of
thorns.

O My people, what have
I done unto thee? or in
what way have I offend-
ed thee?

Prayer

Lord, what dost Thou command?
I am ready to do it.
All things are good that come to me through Thee;
I have but one desire, to please Thee;
Take possession of my heart, of my senses;
Make them obedient to Thee;
Perfect goodness! Perfect Beauty!
Thy will be done!

Permissum Superiorum
Poor Clare Nuns
5245 S. Laflin St.
Chicago 9, Ill.

CHAPTER 8

THE EXPANSIVE SOLUTIONS: THE APPEAL OF MASTERY

IN ALL neurotic developments the alienation from self is the nuclear problem; in all of them we find the search for glory, the shoulds, the claims, the self-hate and the various measures to relieve tension. But we do not yet have a picture of how these factors operate in a *particular* neurotic structure. Such a picture depends upon the kind of solution the individual finds for his intrapsychic conflicts. Before we can adequately describe these solutions, however, we must clarify the inner constellation generated by the pride system and the conflicts involved in it. We understand that there is a conflict between the pride system and the real self. But, as I have already indicated, a major conflict also arises within the pride system itself. Self-glorification and self-contempt do not constitute a conflict. In fact, as long as we think only in terms of these two diametrically opposed images of ourselves, we recognize contradictory and yet complementary self-evaluations—but we are not aware of the conflicting drives. This picture changes when we look at it from a different perspective and focus on the question: how do we experience ourselves?

looking at personalities from certain vantage points. And what we use as criteria will be those factors which appear crucial in the framework of the particular psychological system. In this restricted sense every attempt to establish types has certain merits and also definite limitations. In the framework of my psychological theories the neurotic character structure is central. And so my criteria for "types" cannot be this or that symptomatic picture, or this or that individual trend. It can be only the peculiarities of a whole neurotic structure. These in turn are largely determined by the major solutions a person has found for his inner conflicts.

While this criterion is more comprehensive than many others used in typologies, its usefulness is nevertheless also limited—because of the many reservations and qualifications we must make. To begin with, although people tending toward the same main solution have characteristic similarities they may differ widely with regard to the level of human qualities, gifts, or achievements involved. Moreover, what we regard as "types" are actually cross sections of personalities in which the neurotic process has led to rather extreme developments with pronounced characteristics. But there is always an indeterminate range of intermediate structures deriding any precise classification. These complexities are further enhanced by the fact that, owing to the process of psychic fragmentation, even in extreme instances there is often more than one main solution. "Most cases are mixed cases," [1] says William James, "and we should not treat our classifications with too much respect." Perhaps it would be more nearly correct to speak of directions of development than of types.

With these qualifications in mind, we can distinguish three major solutions from the aspect of the problems presented in this book: the expansive solution, the self-effacing solution, and resignation. In the *expansive solutions* the individual prevailingly identifies himself with his glorified self. When speaking of "himself" he means, with Peer Gynt, his very grandiose self. Or, as one patient put it, "I exist only as a superior being." The

[1] *Cf.* William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* p. 148, Longmans, Green and Co., 1902.

feeling of superiority that goes with this solution is not necessarily conscious but—whether conscious or not—largely determines behavior, strivings, and attitudes toward life in general. The appeal of life lies in its mastery. It chiefly entails his determination, conscious or unconscious, to overcome every obstacle—in or outside himself—and the belief that he should be able, and in fact *is* able, to do so. He should be able to master the adversities of fate, the difficulties of a situation, the intricacies of intellectual problems, the resistances of other people, conflicts in himself. The reverse side of the necessity for mastery is his dread of anything connoting helplessness; this is the most poignant dread he has.

When looking superficially at the expansive types we get a picture of people who, in a streamlined way, are bent on self-glorification, on ambitious pursuits, on vindictive triumph, with the mastery of life through intelligence and will power as the means to actualize their idealized self. And, barring all differences in premises, individual concepts and terminology, this is the way Freud and Adler have seen these people (as driven by the need for narcissistic self-aggrandizement or for being on top). However, when we go far enough in the analysis of such patients, we discover self-effacing trends in all of them—trends which they have not only suppressed but which they hate and loathe. The first picture we get is the one-sided aspect of themselves which they pretend is their whole being in order to create a subjective feeling of unity. The rigidity with which they hang on to the expansive trends is not only owing to the compulsive character of these trends [2] but also to the necessity to eliminate from awareness all traces of self-effacing trends and all traces of self-accusations, self-doubts, self-contempt. Only in this way can they maintain the subjective conviction of superiority and mastery.

The point of danger on this score is the realization of unfulfilled shoulds, because this would elicit feelings of guilt and unworthiness. Since nobody can in actual fact measure up to shoulds he has, it is indispensable for such a person to use all available means to deny his "failures" to himself. By dint of

[2] As described in the first chapter.

imagination, highlighting "good" qualities, blotting out others, behavioristic perfection, externalizations, he must try to maintain in his mind a picture of himself of which he can be proud. He must, as it were, put up an unconscious bluff and live with the pretense of being all knowing, all generous, all fair, etc. He must never, and under any conditions, be aware that by comparison with his glorified self he has feet of clay. In relation to others one of two feelings may prevail. He may be extremely proud, consciously or unconsciously, of his faculty of fooling everybody—and in his arrogance and contempt for others believes that he actually succeeds in this. Conversely, he is most afraid of being fooled himself and may feel it as a profound humiliation if he is. Or he may have a constant lurking fear of being just a bluff, more intensely so than other neurotic types. Even though, for instance, he may have gained success or honors through honest work he will still feel that he has achieved them by putting something over on others. This makes him excessively sensitive to criticism and failure, or to the mere possibility of failure or of his "bluff" being called by criticism.

This group in turn includes many heterogeneous types, as demonstrated by a brief survey anyone can make of patients, friends, or literary characters. Among the individual differences the most crucial one concerns the capacity to enjoy life and to have positive feelings for others. Both Peer Gynt and Hedda Gabler, for instance, *are* their aggrandized versions of themselves—but what a difference in emotional climate! Other relevant differences depend upon the ways in which the type eliminates from awareness the realization of "imperfections." There are also variations in the nature of the claims made, their justifications, and the means of their assertion. We must consider at least three subdivisions of the "expansive type": the narcissistic, the perfectionistic and the arrogant-vindictive type. I shall be brief about the first two, because they have been well described in psychiatric literature, but go into greater detail with the last one.

I use the term *narcissism* with some hesitation, because in the classic Freudian literature it includes rather indiscriminately every kind of self-inflation, egocentricity, anxious concern with

one's welfare, and withdrawal from others.[3] I take it here in its original descriptive sense of being "in love with one's idealized image.[4] More precisely: the person is his idealized self and seems to adore it. This basic attitude gives him the buoyancy or the resiliency entirely lacking in the other groups. It gives him a seeming abundance of self-confidence which appears enviable to all those chafing under self-doubts. He has (consciously) no doubts; he *is* the anointed, the man of destiny, the prophet, the great giver, the benefactor of mankind. All of this contains a grain of truth. He often is gifted beyond average, early and easily won distinctions, and sometimes was the favored and admired child.

This unquestioned belief in his greatness and uniqueness is the key to understanding him. His buoyancy and perennial youthfulness stem from this source. So does his often-fascinating charm. Yet clearly, his gifts notwithstanding, he stands on precarious ground. He may speak incessantly of his exploits or of his wonderful qualities and needs endless confirmation of his estimate of himself in the form of admiration and devotion. His feeling of mastery lies in his conviction that there is nothing he cannot do and no one he cannot win. He is often charming indeed, particularly when new people come into his orbit. Regardless of their factual importance for him, he *must* impress them. He gives the impression to himself and others that he "loves" people. And he can be generous, with a scintillating display of feeling, with flattery, with favors and help—in anticipation of admiration or in return for devotion received. He endows his family and his friends, as well as his work and plans, with glowing attributes. He can be quite tolerant, does not

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[3] *Cf.* the discussion of this concept in *New Ways in Psychoanalysis.* The difference between the present concept and that propounded in *New Ways* is as follows: In *New Ways* I put the emphasis on self-inflation and I derived this from the alienation from others, the loss of self, and the impairment of self-confidence. All of this remains true, but the process leading up to narcissism as I see it now is more complex. I would be inclined to differentiate now between self-idealization and narcissism, using the latter in the sense of feeling identified with one's idealized self. Self-idealization occurs in all neuroses and represents an attempt to solve early inner conflicts. Narcissism on the other hand is one of the several solutions of the conflict between expansive and self-effacing drives.

[4] Sigmund Freud, *On Narcissism: An Introduction,* Coll. Papers IV.

Cf. also Bernard Glueck, "The God Man or Jehovah Complex," *Medical Journal,* New York, 1915.

surface he is rather optimistic, turns outward toward life, and wants joy and happiness. But there are undercurrents of despondency and pessimism. Measuring by the yardstick of infinitude, of the attainment of fantastic happiness, he cannot help sensing a painful discrepancy in his life. As long as he is on the crest of a wave, he cannot possibly admit that he has failed in anything, especially in mastering life. The discrepancy is not in him but in life as such. Thus he may see a tragic quality in life, not the one that does exist but the one which he brings to it.

The type of the second subgroup, moving in the direction of *perfectionism,* identifies himself with his standards. This type feels superior because of his high standards, moral and intellectual, and on this basis looks down on others. His arrogant contempt for others, though, is hidden—from himself as well—behind polished friendliness, because his very standards prohibit such "irregular" feelings.

His ways of beclouding the issue of unfulfilled shoulds are twofold. In contrast to the narcissistic type, he does make strenuous efforts to measure up to his shoulds by fulfilling duties and obligations, by polite and orderly manners, by not telling obvious lies, etc. When speaking of perfectionistic people, we often think merely of those who keep meticulous order, are overly punctilious and punctual, have to find just the right word, or must wear just the right necktie or hat. But these are only the superficial aspects of their need to attain the highest degree of excellence. What really matters is not those petty details but the flawless excellence of the whole conduct of life. But, since all he can achieve is behavioristic perfection, another device is necessary. This is to equate in his mind standards and actualities—*knowing* about moral values and *being* a good person. The self-deception involved is all the more hidden from him since, in reference to others, he may insist upon their actually living up to his standards of perfection and despise them for failing to do so. His own self-condemnation is thus externalized.

As confirmation of his opinion of himself, he needs respect from others rather than glowing admiration (which he tends

knowledge of these sources alone does not sufficiently elucidate its formidable power. In order to arrive at a fuller understanding we must approach the problem from still another vantage point. Even though in others the impact of the need for vengeance and triumph can be poignant, it usually is kept within limits by three factors: love, fear, and self-preservation. Only if these checks are temporarily or permanently malfunctioning can the vindictiveness involve the total personality—thereby becoming a kind of integrating force, as in Medea—and sway it altogether in the one direction of vengeance and triumph. And in the type to be discussed it is the combination of these two processes—powerful impulse and insufficient checks—that accounts for the magnitude of vindictiveness. Great writers have intuitively grasped this combination and have presented it in more impressive forms than a psychiatrist can hope to do. I am thinking for instance of Captain Ahab in *Moby Dick,* of Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights,* and of Julien in *The Red and the Black.*

We shall start by describing how vindictiveness shows in human relations. An impelling need for triumph makes this type extremely competitive. As a matter of fact he cannot tolerate anybody who knows or achieves more than he does, wields more power, or in any way questions his superiority. Compulsively he has to drag his rival down or defeat him. Even if he subordinates himself for the sake of his career, he is scheming for ultimate triumph. Not being tied by feelings of loyalty, he easily can become treacherous. What he actually achieves with his often indefatigable work depends on his gifts. But with all his planning and scheming he will often achieve nothing worth while, not only because he is unproductive but because he is too self-destructive, as we shall see presently.

The most conspicuous manifestations of his vindictiveness are violent rages. These spells of vindictive fury can be so formidable that he himself may become frightened lest he do something irreparable when out of control. Patients may, for instance, actually be scared of killing somebody when under the influence of alcohol—i.e., when their usual controls do not operate. The impulse for revengeful actions can be strong

tackling. Speaking again in terms of extreme instances, the patient is interested in everything that might in the end make for a bigger and better vindictiveness—for a vindictiveness that would at once be more effective and be carried out without cost to himself, with superior poise and serenity. This selective process is not done by conscious reasoning, but by dint of an intuitive sense of direction which operates with unfailing certainty. He is for instance keenly interested in getting over compliant trends or over his feeling of having no rights. He is interested in getting over his self-hate, because it weakens him in the battle against the world. On the other hand he is uninterested in diminishing his arrogant claims or his feelings of being abused by others. He may hold on to his externalizations with curious tenacity. Indeed he may be altogether unwilling to analyze his human relationships, emphasizing the fact that all he wants in this respect is not to be bothered. The whole analysis then may easily confuse the analyst until he grasps the formidable logic of the selective process.

What are the sources of such vindictiveness, and whence its intensity? Like every other neurotic development, this one started in childhood—with particularly bad human experiences and few, if any, redeeming factors. Sheer brutality, humiliations, derision, neglect, and flagrant hypocrisy, all these assailed a child of especially great sensitivity. People who have endured years in concentration camps tell us that they could survive only by stifling their softer feelings, including particularly that of compassion for self and others. It seems to me that a child under the conditions I have described also goes through such a hardening process in order to survive. He may make some pathetic and unsuccessful attempts to win sympathy, interest, or affection but finally chokes off all tender needs. He gradually "decides" that genuine affection is not only unattainable for him but that it does not exist at all. He ends by no longer wanting it and even rather scorning it. This, however, is a step of grave consequence, because the need for affection, for human warmth and closeness is a powerful incentive for developing qualities that make us likable. The feeling of being loved and—even more—of being lovable is perhaps one of the greatest values in life. Conversely, as we shall discuss in the following chapters, the feeling of not

vulnerability also assumes unbearable dimensions. But he never allows himself to *feel* any hurt because his pride prohibits it. Thus the hardening process, which originally was necessary to protect real feelings, now must gather momentum for the sake of protecting his pride. His pride then lies in being above hurts and suffering. Nothing and nobody, from mosquitoes to accidents to people, can hurt him. This measure, however, is double edged. His not consciously feeling the hurts allows him to live without constant sharp pain. Besides it is questionable whether the diminished awareness of hurts does not actually dampen the vindictive impulses too; whether, in other words, he would not be more violent, more destructive without this lessened awareness. Certainly there is a diminished awareness of vindictiveness as such. In his mind it turns into a warranted wrath at a wrong done and into the right to punish the wrongdoer. If, however, a hurt does penetrate through the protective layer of invulnerability, then the pain becomes intolerable. In addition to his pride being hurt—for instance, by a lack of recognition—he also suffers the humiliating blow of having "allowed" something or somebody to hurt him. Such a situation can provoke an emotional crisis in an otherwise stoical person.

Closely akin to his belief and pride in inviolability or invulnerability, and indeed complementing it, is that in immunity and impunity. This belief, entirely unconscious, results from a claim which entitles him to the freedom to do to others whatever he pleases, and to having nobody mind it or try to get back at him. In other words, nobody can hurt me with impunity but I can hurt everybody with impunity. In order to understand the necessity for this claim we must reconsider his attitudes toward people. We have seen that he offends people easily through his militant rightness, arrogant punitiveness, and his rather openly using them as a means to his ends. But he does not nearly express all the hostility he feels; in fact, he tones it down considerably. As Stendhal has described it in *The Red and the Black,* Julien, unless carried away by an uncontrollable vindictive rage, is rather overcontrolled, guarded, and vigilant. We get therefore the curious impression of this type being both reckless and guarded in his dealings with people. And this im-

pression is an accurate reflection of the forces operating in him. He must indeed keep an even balance between letting others feel his righteous anger and between holding it back. What drives him to express it is not only the magnitude of his vindictive urges but even more his need to intimidate others and to keep them in awe of an armed fist. This in turn is so necessary because he sees no possibility of coming to friendly terms with others, because it is a means to assert his claims, and—more generally—because in a warfare of all against all taking the offensive is the best defense.

His need to tone down his aggressive impulses, on the other hand, is determined by fears. Though he is much too arrogant to admit to himself that anybody could intimidate him or even affect him in any way, he is in actual fact afraid of people. Many reasons combine to engender this fear. He is afraid that others may retaliate for the offenses he perpetrates on them. He is afraid that they may interfere with whatever plans he has with regard to them, if he "goes too far." He is afraid of them because they do have the power to hurt his pride. And he is afraid of them because in order to justify his own hostility he must in his mind exaggerate that of others. To deny these fears to himself, however, is not sufficient to eliminate them; he needs some more powerful assurance. He cannot cope with this fear by not expressing his vindictive hostility—and he must express it without awareness of fear. The claim for immunity, turning into an illusory conviction of immunity, seems to solve this dilemma.

A last kind of pride to be mentioned is pride in his honesty, his fairness, and his justice. Needless to say, he is neither honest, fair, nor just and cannot possibly be so. On the contrary, if anybody is determined—unconsciously—to bluff his way through life with a disregard for truth, it is he. But we can understand his belief that he possesses these attributes to a high degree if we consider his premises. To hit back or—preferably—to hit first appears to him (logically!) as an indispensable weapon against the crooked and hostile world around him. It is nothing but intelligent, legitimate self-interest. Also, not questioning the validity of his claims, his anger, and the expression of it must appear to him as entirely warranted and "frank."

There is still another factor which greatly contributes to his conviction that he is a particularly honest person and which is important to mention for other reasons. He sees around him many compliant people who pretend to be more loving, more sympathetic, more generous than they actually are. And in this regard he is indeed more honest. He does not pretend to be a friendly person; in fact he disdains doing so. If he could leave it at an "At least I do not pretend . . ." level he would be on safe ground. But his need to justify his own coldness forces him to take a further step. He tends to deny that a wish to be helpful, or a friendly act, is ever genuine. He does not dispute the occurrence of friendliness in the abstract, but when it comes to concrete people he tends to regard it indiscriminately as hypocrisy. This move then again puts him on top of the heap. It makes him appear to himself as the one person who is above common hypocrisy.

This intolerance of the pretense of love has a still much deeper root than his need for self-justification. Only after considerable analytic work there appear here too, as in every expansive type, self-effacing trends. With his having made of himself an instrument for the attainment of an eventual triumph, the necessity to bury such trends is even more stringent than in the other expansive types. A period ensues when he feels altogether contemptible and helpless and tends to prostrate himself for the sake of being loved. We understand now that in others he despised not only the pretense of love but their compliance, their self-degrading, their helpless hankering for love. In short he despised in them the very self-effacing trends he hates and despises in himself.

The self-hate and self-contempt that now appear are appalling in their dimensions. Self-hate is always cruel and merciless. But its intensity or its effectiveness depends on two sets of factors. One is the degree to which an individual is under the sway of his pride. The other is the degree to which constructive forces counteract the self-hate—forces such as faith in positive values in life, the existence of constructive goals in life, the existence of some warm or appreciative feelings toward oneself. Since all these factors are unfavorable in the aggressive-vindictive type,

his self-hate has a more pernicious quality than is usually the case. Even outside the analytic situation one can observe the extent to which he is a ruthless slavedriver of himself, and frustrates himself—glorifying the frustration as asceticism.

Such self-hate calls for rigorous self-protective measures. Its externalization seems a matter of sheer self-preservation. As in all expansive solutions, it is primarily an active one. He hates and despises in others all he suppresses and hates in himself: their spontaneity, their joy of living, their appeasing trends, their compliance, their hypocrisy, their "stupidity." He imposes his standards upon others, and is punitive when they do not measure up to them. His frustration of others is in part an externalization of self-frustrating impulses. Hence his punitive attitude toward others, which looks altogether vindictive, is instead a mixed phenomenon. It is partly an expression of vindictiveness; it is also the externalization of his condemnatory punitive trends toward himself; and, finally, it serves as a means of intimidating others for the purpose of asserting his claims. All three of these sources must be tackled successively in analysis.

The salient point in protecting himself against his self-hate is here, as everywhere, the necessity to ward off any realization of not being what, according to the dictates of his pride, he should be. Aside from his externalizations, his main defense on this score is an armor of self-righteousness so thick and so impenetrable that it often makes him inaccessible to reason. In arguments that may arise he seems to be unconcerned about the truth of any statement he interprets as hostile attack, but automatically responds with counterattacks—like a porcupine when it is touched. He simply cannot afford to consider even remotely anything that might engender a doubt in his rightness.

A third way in which he protects himself from the realization of any shortcoming is in his claims on others. In discussing these we have stressed the vindictive elements involved in his arrogating all rights to himself and denying any to others. But, with all his vindictiveness, he could be more reasonable in what he demands of others if it were not for the cogent necessity of protecting himself against the onslaughts of his own self-hate. Seen from this viewpoint, his claims are that others should behave in such a way as not to arouse in him any guilt feelings or any

Their violation arouses both his self-condemnation and his self-contempt. He responds either with a general panicky feeling, without special content, or with feeling guilty. If self-contempt is in the foreground, he may respond with a fear of ridicule. Being in his self-feeling so small and so insignificant, any reaching out beyond his narrow confines may easily arouse the fear of ridicule. If this fear is conscious at all, it is usually externalized. Others would think it ridiculous if he spoke up in a discussion, ran for an office, or had the ambition to write something. Most of this fear, however, remains unconscious. At any rate he never seems to be aware of its formidable impact. It is, however, a relevant factor in keeping him down. The fear of ridicule is specifically indicative of self-effacing trends. It is alien to the expansive type. He can be blusteringly presumptuous without even realizing that he might be ridiculous or that others might so regard him.

While curtailed in any pursuit on his own behalf, he is not only free to do things for others but, according to his inner dictates, should be the ultimate of helpfulness, generosity, considerateness, understanding, sympathy, love, and sacrifice. In fact love and sacrifice in his mind are closely intertwined: he should sacrifice everything for love—love *is* sacrifice.

Thus far the taboos and shoulds have a remarkable consistency. But sooner or later contradictory trends appear. We might naïvely expect that this type would rather abhor aggressive, arrogant or vindictive traits in others. But actually his attitude is divided. He does abhor them but also secretly or openly adores them, and does so indiscriminately—without distinguishing between genuine self-confidence and hollow arrogance, between real strength and egocentric brutality. We easily understand that, chafing under his enforced humility, he adores in others aggressive qualities which he lacks or which are unavailable to him. But gradually we realize that this is not the complete explanation. We see that a more deeply hidden set of values, entirely opposite to the one just described, is also operating in him and that he admires in an aggressive type the expansive drives which for the sake of his integration he must so deeply suppress in himself. This disavowing of his own pride and aggressiveness, but admiring them in others, plays a

great part in his morbid dependency, a possibility which we shall discuss in the next chapter.

As the patient becomes strong enough to face his conflict, his expansive drives come into sharper focus. He should also have the *absolute* of fearlessness; he should also go all out for his advantage; he should be able to hit back at anybody who offends him. Accordingly he despises himself at bottom for any trace of "cowardice," of ineffectualness and compliance. He is thus under a constant cross fire. He is damned if he does do something, and he is damned if he does not. If he refuses the request for a loan or for any favor, he feels that he is a repulsive and horrible creature; if he grants such requests, he feels that he is a "sucker." If he puts the insulter in his place, he gets frightened and feels utterly unlikable.

As long as he cannot face this conflict and work at it the need to keep a check on the aggressive undercurrents makes it all the more necessary to adhere tenaciously to the self-effacing pattern, and thereby enhances its rigidity.

The main picture that emerges so far is that of a person who holds himself down to the extent of shriveling in stature in order to avoid expansive moves. Moreover, as indicated before and elaborated later on, he feels subdued by an ever-alive readiness to accuse and despise himself; he also feels easily frightened and, as we shall see, spends a good deal of his energies in assuaging all these painful feelings. Before discussing further details and implications of his basic condition, let us get some understanding of its development by considering the factors which drive him in this direction.

People who later on tend toward the self-effacing solution usually have solved their early conflicts with people by "moving toward" them.[1] The early environment in typical instances is characteristically different from that of the expansive types, who either got early admiration, grew up under the pressure of rigid standards, or were harshly treated—exploited and humiliated. The self-effacing type, on the other hand, grew up *under the*

[1] *Cf.* Karen Horney, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time,* Chapters 6–8 on The Neurotic Need for Affection. Karen Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts,* Chapter 3, Moving Toward People.

shadow of somebody: of a preferred sibling, of a parent who was generally adored (by outsiders), of a beautiful mother or of a benevolently despotic father. It was a precarious situation, liable to arouse fears. But affection of a kind was attainable—at a price: that of a self-subordinating devotion. There may have been, for instance, a long-suffering mother who made the child feel guilty at any failure to give her exclusive care and attention. Perhaps there was a mother or a father who could be friendly or generous when blindly admired, or a dominating sibling whose fondness and protection could be gained by pleasing and appeasing.[2] And so after some years, in which the wish to rebel struggled in the child's heart with his need for affection, he suppressed his hostility, relinquished the fighting spirit, and the need for affection won out. Temper tantrums stopped and he became compliant, learned to like everybody and to lean with a helpless admiration on those whom he feared most. He became hypersensitive to hostile tension, had to appease and smooth things over. Because the winning over of others became paramount in importance, he tried to cultivate in himself qualities that would make him acceptable and lovable. Sometimes, during adolescence, there was another period of rebellion, combined with a hectic and compulsive ambition. But he again relinquished these expansive drives for the benefit of love and protection, sometimes with his first falling in love. The further development largely depended upon the degree to which rebellion and ambition were suppressed or how complete the swing toward subordination, affection, or love became.

Like every other neurotic, the self-effacing type solves the needs evolving from his early development by self-idealization. But he can do it in one way only. His idealized image of himself primarily is a composite of "lovable" qualities, such as unselfishness, goodness, generosity, humility, saintliness, nobility, sympathy. Helplessness, suffering, and martyrdom are also secondarily glorified. In contrast to the arrogant-vindictive type, a premium is also placed on feelings—feelings of joy or suffering, feelings not only for individual people but for humanity, art, nature, values of all sorts. To have deep feelings is part of

[2] *Cf.* Karen Horney, *Self-Analysis,* Chapter 8, Systematic Self-analysis of a Morbid Dependency. (Claire's childhood is typical in this regard.)

his image. He can fulfill the resulting inner dictates only if he reinforces the self-abnegating trends which have grown out of his solution of his basic conflict with people. He must therefore develop an ambivalent attitude toward his own pride. Since the saintly and lovable qualities of his pseudoself are all the values he has, he cannot help being proud of them. One patient, when recovering, said about herself: "I took my moral superiority humbly for granted." Although he disavows his pride, and although it does not show in his behavior, it appears in the many indirect forms in which neurotic pride usually manifests itself —in vulnerability, face-saving devices, avoidances, etc. On the other hand his very image of saintliness and lovableness prohibits any *conscious* feeling of pride. He must lean over backward to eradicate any trace of it. Thus begins the shrinking process which leaves him small and helpless. It would be impossible for him to identify himself with his proud glorious self. He can only experience himself as his subdued victimized self. He feels not only small and helpless but also guilty, unwanted, unlovable, stupid, incompetent. He is the underdog and identifies himself readily with others who are downtrodden. Hence the exclusion of pride from awareness belongs to his way of solving the inner conflict.

The weakness of this solution, as far as we have traced it, lies in two factors. One of them is the shrinking process, which in biblical terms entails the "sin" (against oneself) of hiding one's talent in the earth. The other concerns the way in which the taboo on expansiveness renders him a helpless prey to self-hate. We can observe this in many self-effacing patients at the beginning of analysis, when they respond with stark terror to any self-reproach. This type, often unaware of the connection between self-accusation and terror, merely experiences the fact of being frightened or panicky. He is usually aware of being prone to reproach himself but, without giving it much thought, he regards it as a sign of conscientious honesty with himself.

He may also be aware that he accepts accusations from others all too readily, and realizes only later that they may actually have been without foundation and that it comes easier to him to declare himself guilty than to accuse others. In fact his response to admitting guilt, or a fault when criticized, comes with

for the injuries perpetrated on him. In dreams he may present himself as being ruined beyond repair and hence entitled to having all his needs fulfilled. In order to understand these vindictive elements we must survey the factors accounting for his feeling abused.

In a typically self-effacing person, feeling abused is an almost constant undercurrent in his whole attitude toward life. If we wanted to characterize him crudely and glibly in a few words, we would say that he is a person who craves affection and feels abused most of the time. To begin with, as I have mentioned, others often do take advantage of his defenselessness and his overeagerness to help or to sacrifice. On account of his feeling unworthy, and his inability to stand up for himself, he sometimes does not take conscious cognizance of such abuse. Also, due to his shrinking process and all it entails, he often does come out on the short end, without there having been any harmful intent on the part of others. Even if in actual fact he is in some regards more fortunate than others, his taboos do not allow him to recognize his advantages and he must present himself to himself (and hence experience himself) as being worse off than others.

Furthermore he feels abused when his many unconscious claims are not fulfilled—for instance, when others do not respond with gratitude to his compulsive efforts to please, to help, to make sacrifices for them. His typical response to frustration of claims is not so much righteous indignation as a self-pitying feeling of being unfairly treated.

Probably more poignant than any of these other sources is all the abuse he inflicts upon himself, through self-minimizing as well as through self-reproaches, self-contempt, and self-torture —all of which is externalized. The more intense the self-abuse, the less can good external conditions prevail against it. He often will tell heartbreaking tales of his woes, arouse sympathy and the wish to give him a better deal, only to find himself in the same predicament soon after. In actual fact he may not have been so unfairly treated as it seems to him; at any rate, behind the feeling is the reality of his self-abuse. The connection between a sudden rise in self-accusations and the subsequent feeling of being abused is not too difficult to observe. In analysis for

He may also have a broader vision of a goal which, in characteristically vague terms, he may call "serenity." This, however, means for him simply the absence of all troubles, irritations, or upsets. And naturally whatever he hopes for should come easily, without pain or strain. The analyst should do the work. After all, is he not the expert? Analysis should be like going to a dentist who pulls a tooth, or to a doctor who gives an injection: he is willing to wait patiently for the analyst to present the clue that will solve everything. It would be better though if the patient didn't have to talk so much. The analyst should have some sort of X ray which would reveal the patient's thoughts. Or perhaps hypnosis would bring things out more quickly—that is, without any effort on the part of the patient. When a new problem crystallizes, his first response may be exasperation at the prospect of so much more work to be done. As indicated before, he may not mind observing things in himself. What he always minds is the effort of changing.

A step deeper and we come to the very essence of resignation: the *restriction of wishes.* We have seen checks on wishes in other types. But then the lid was put on certain categories of wishes, such as those for human closeness or for triumph. We are also familiar with uncertainty about wishes, mainly resulting from a person's wishes being determined by what he should wish. All of these trends operate here too. Here, too, one area is usually more affected than another. Here, too, spontaneous wishes are blurred by inner dictates. But over and beyond these the resigned person believes, consciously or unconsciously, that it is *better* not to wish or to expect anything. Sometimes this goes with a conscious pessimistic outlook on life, a sense of its being futile anyhow and of nothing being sufficiently desirable to make an effort for it. More often many things appear desirable in a vague, idle way but fail to arouse a concrete, alive wish. If a wish or interest has enough zest to penetrate through the "don't care" attitude, it fades out soon after and the smooth surface of "nothing matters" or "nothing should matter" is reestablished. Such "wishlessness" may concern both professional and personal life—the wish for a different job or an advancement as well as for a marriage, a house, a car, or other possessions. The fulfillment of these wishes may loom primarily as a

cause he sees them in a different light. Most frequently he is aware only of his detachment and of his sensitivity to coercion. But, as always where neurotic needs are concerned, we can recognize the nature of the resigned individual's needs by observing *when* he reacts to frustration, when he becomes listless or fatigued, exasperated, panicky, or resentful.

For the analyst a knowledge of the basic characteristics is of great help in sizing up the whole picture quickly. When one or another of them strikes our attention we must look for the others; and we are reasonably sure to find them. As I have been careful to point out, they are not a series of unrelated peculiarities but a closely interknit structure. It is, at least in its basic composition, a picture of great consistency and unity, looking as if it had been painted in one hue.

We shall now try to arrive at an understanding of the dynamics of this picture, its meaning and its history. All we have pointed out as yet is that resignation represents a major solution of the intrapsychic conflicts by way of withdrawing from them. At first glance we get the impression that the resigned person primarily gives up his ambition. This is the aspect which he himself often emphasizes and tends to regard as a clue to the whole development. His history too sometimes seems to confirm this impression, in so far as he may have changed conspicuously in terms of ambition. In or around adolescence he often does things which show remarkable energies and gifts. He may be resourceful, surmount economic handicaps, and make a place for himself. He may be ambitious at school, first in his class, excel in debating or some progressive political movement. At least there often is a period in which he is comparatively alive and interested in many things, in which he rebels against the tradition in which he has grown up and thinks of accomplishing something in the future.

Subsequently there is often a period of distress: of anxiety, of depression, of despair about some failure or about some unfortunate life situation in which he has become involved through his very rebellious streak. After that the curve of his life seems to flatten out. People say that he got "adjusted" and settled down. They remark that he had his youthful flight to-

ward the sun and came back down to earth. That, they say, is the "normal" course. But others, more thoughtful, are worried about him. For he also seems to have lost his zest for living, his interest in many things, and seems to have settled for much less than his gifts or opportunities warrant. What has happened to him? Certainly a person's wings can be clipped through a series of disasters or deprivations. But in the instances we have in mind circumstances were not sufficiently unfavorable to be entirely responsible. Hence some psychic distress must have been the determining factor. This answer, however, is not satisfactory either, because we can remember others who likewise experienced inner turmoil and emerged from it differently. Actually the change is not the result either of the existence of conflicts or of their magnitude but rather of the way in which he has made peace with himself. What has happened is that he got a taste of his inner conflicts and solved them by withdrawing. Why he tried to solve them this way, why he could do it this way only is a matter of his previous history, about which more later. First we need to have a clearer picture of the nature of the withdrawing.

Let us look first at the major inner conflict between expansive and self-effacing drives. In the two types discussed in the previous three chapters one of these drives is in the foreground and the other one is suppressed. But if resignation prevails, the typical picture we get in relation to this conflict is different. Neither expansive nor self-effacing trends seem to be suppressed. Provided we are familiar with their manifestations and implications, it is not difficult to observe them nor—up to a point—to bring them to awareness. In fact, if we insisted upon classifying all neuroses as either expansive or self-effacing, we would be at a loss to decide in which category to place the resigned type. We could only state that as a rule one or the other trend prevails, either in the sense of being closer to awareness or of being stronger. Individual differences within this whole group depend in part upon such a prevalence. Sometimes, however, there seems to be a fairly even balance.

Expansive trends may show in his having rather grandiose fantasies about the great things he could do in his imagination,

others and their peculiar needs. This retained capacity comes into clear relief when we compare him with the self-effacing type. The latter likewise does not stifle positive feelings, but on the contrary cultivates them. But they become dramatized and falsified, because they are all put to the service of love—that is, surrender. He wants to lose himself with his feelings, and ultimately to find a unity in merging with others. The resigned person wants to keep his feelings strictly in the privacy of his own heart. The very idea of merging is obnoxious to him. He wants to be "himself," although he has but a vague notion of what that means and in fact, without realizing it, is confused about it.

It is this very process of immobilization that gives resignation its negative or static character. But here we must raise an important question. This impression of a static condition, characterized by negative qualities, is constantly reinforced by new observations. Yet does it do justice to the whole phenomenon? After all, nobody can live by negation alone. Is there not something missing in our understanding of the meaning of resignation? Is not the resigned person out for something positive too? Peace at any price? Certainly, but that still has a negative quality. In the other two solutions there is a motivating force in addition to the need for integration—a powerful appeal of something positive that gives meaning to life: the appeal of mastery in the one case, that of love in the other. Is there not perhaps an equivalent appeal of some more positive aim in the resigned solution?

When questions like these arise during analytic work it is usually helpful to listen attentively to what the patient himself has to say about it. There is usually something he has told us which we have not taken seriously enough. Let us do the same thing here, and examine more closely how our type looks at himself. We have seen that, like anybody else, he rationalizes and embellishes his needs so that they all appear as superior attitudes. But in this regard we have to make a distinction. Sometimes he obviously makes a virtue out of a need, such as presenting his lack of striving in terms of being above competition or accounting for his inertia by his scorn of the sweat of hard work. And as the analysis proceeds, these glorifications usually

drop out without much talk about them. But there are others which are not discarded as easily because they apparently have a real meaning for him. And these concern all that he says about independence and *freedom*. In fact most of the basic characteristics which we have regarded from the viewpoint of resignation also make sense when seen from the viewpoint of freedom. Any stronger attachment would curtail his freedom. So would needs. He would be dependent upon such needs and they would easily make him dependent upon others too. If he devoted his energies to one pursuit, he would not be free to do many other things in which he might be interested. Particularly, his sensitivity to coercion appears in a new light. He wants to be free and hence will not tolerate pressure.

Accordingly, when in analysis this subject comes up for discussion, the patient goes into a vigorous defense. Is it not natural for man to want freedom? Does not anybody become listless when he does things under pressure? Did not his aunt or his friend become colorless, or lifeless, because they always did what was expected of them? Does the analyst want to domesticate him, to force him into a pattern, so that he will be like one house in a row of settlement houses, each indistinguishable from the others? He hates regimentation. He never goes to the Zoo because he simply cannot stand seeing animals in a cage. He wants to do what he pleases when he pleases.

Let us look at some of his arguments, leaving others for later. We learn from them that freedom means to him doing what he likes. The analyst observes here an obvious flaw. Since the patient has done his best to freeze his wishes, he simply does not know what he wants. And as a result he often does nothing, or nothing that amounts to anything. This, however, does not disturb him because he seems to see freedom primarily in terms of no interference by others—whether people or institutions. Whatever makes this attitude so important, he means to defend it to the last ditch. Granted that his idea of freedom seems again to be a negative one—freedom *from* and not freedom *for*—it does have an appeal for him which (to this degree) is absent in the other solutions. The self-effacing person is rather afraid of freedom, because of his needs for attachment and dependence.

The expansive type, with his craving for mastery of this or that sort, tends to scorn this idea of freedom.

How can we account for this appeal of freedom? Which are the inner necessities from which it arises? What is its meaning? In order to arrive at some understanding we must go back to the early history of those people who later on solve their problems by resignation. There were often cramping influences against which the child could not rebel openly, either because they were too strong or too intangible. There may have been so tight a family atmosphere, so closed an emotional corporation that it did not leave room for his individual ways and threatened to crush him. On the other hand he may have received affection, but in a way that more repelled than warmed him. There may have been for instance a parent who was too egocentric to have any understanding of the child's needs yet made great demands for the child to understand him or give him emotional support. Or he may have had a parent so erratic in his mood-swings that he gave effusive demonstrative affection at one time and at others could scold or beat him in a fit of temper without any reason that the child could understand. In short there was an environment which made explicit and implicit demands for him to fit in this way or that way and threatened to engulf him without sufficient regard for his individuality, not to speak of encouraging his personal growth.

So the child is torn for a longer or shorter time between futile attempts to get affection and interest and resenting the bonds put around him. He solves this early conflict by withdrawing from others. By putting an emotional distance between himself and others, he sets his conflict out of operation.[4] He no longer wants others' affection nor does he want to fight them. Hence he is no longer torn by contradictory feelings toward them and manages to get along with them on a fairly even keel. Moreover, by withdrawing into a world of his own, he saves his individuality from being altogether cramped and engulfed. *His early detachment thus not only serves his integration, but has a most significant positive meaning: the keeping intact of his inner life.* The freedom from bondage gives him

[4] *Cf.* Karen Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts,* Chapter 5, Moving away from People.

the possibility of inner independence. But he must do more than put a check on his feelings for or against others. He must also retract all those wishes and needs which would require others for their fulfillment: his natural needs for understanding, for sharing experiences, for affection, sympathy, protection. This, however, has far-reaching implications. It means that he must keep his joys, his pains, his sorrows, his fears to himself. He often makes, for instance, pathetic and desperate efforts to conquer his fears—of the dark, of dogs, etc.—without letting anybody know about them. He trains himself (automatically) not only not to show suffering but also not to feel it. He does not want sympathy or help, not only because he has reasons to suspect their genuineness but because even if they are temporarily given they have become alarm signals for threatening bondage. Over and beyond putting a lid on these needs, he feels it safer not to let anybody know that anything matters to him lest his wishes either be frustrated or used as a means to make him dependent. And so the general retraction of all wishes, so characteristic of the process of resignation, begins. He still knows that he would like a garment, a kitten, or some toy, but he does not say so. But gradually, just as with his fears, here too he comes to feel it safer not to have wishes at all. The fewer wishes he actually has, the safer he is in his retreat, the more difficult it will be for anybody to have a hold on him.

The resulting picture so far is not yet resignation, but it contains the germs from which it may develop. Even if the condition remained unchanged, it involves grave dangers for future growth. We cannot grow in a vacuum, without closeness to and friction with other human beings. But the condition can hardly remain static. Unless favorable circumstances change it for the better, the process grows by its own momentum, in vicious circles—as we have seen in other neurotic developments. We have already mentioned one of these circles. To maintain detachment, it is necessary for a person to put a check on wishes and strivings. The retraction of wishes, however, is double edged in its effect. It does make him more independent of others but it also weakens him. It saps his vitality and maims his sense of direction. He has less to set against the wishes and expectations of others. He must be doubly vigilant against any influence

or interference. To use a good expression of Harry Stack Sullivan's, he must "elaborate his distance machinery."

The main reinforcements of the early development come from the intrapsychic processes. The very needs which drive others on the search for glory operate here too. His early detachment removes his conflicts with others, if he can carry it through consistently. But the reliability of his solution depends upon the retraction of wishes, and at an early age this process is fluctuating; it has not yet matured into a determined attitude. He still wants more things from life than is good for his peace of mind. When sufficiently tempted, he may for instance be drawn into a close relationship. Hence his conflicts are easily mobilized and he needs more integration. But the early development leaves him not only divided but also alienated from himself, lacking in self-confidence and feeling unequipped for actual life. He can deal with others only when at a safe emotional distance; thrown into closer contact, he is inhibited in addition to being handicapped by his recoil from fighting. Hence he too is driven to find an answer to all these needs, in self-idealization. He may try to realize ambitions in actuality, but for many reasons in himself tends to give up the pursuit in the face of difficulties. His idealized image, chiefly, is a glorification of the needs which have developed. It is a composite of self-sufficiency, independence, self-contained serenity, freedom from desires and passions, stoicism, and fairness. Fairness for him is less a glorification of vindictiveness (as is the "justice" of the aggressive type) than an idealization of noncommitment and of not infringing upon anybody's rights.

The shoulds corresponding to such an image bring him into a new danger. While originally he had to protect his inner self against the outside world, he now must protect it against this much more formidable inner tyranny. The outcome depends on the degree of inner aliveness he has safeguarded so far. If it is strong and he is, as it were, unconsciously determined to preserve it come hell or high water, he can still maintain some of it, although only at the price of enforcing the restrictions we discussed at the beginning—only at the cost of resigning from active living, of checking his drives toward self-realization.

There is no clinical evidence pointing to the inner dictates being more stringent here than in other types of neurosis. The difference lies rather in his chafing more under them because of his very need for freedom. He tries to cope with them in part by externalizing them. Because of his taboos on aggression, he can do so only in a passive way—which means that the expectations of others, or what he feels as such, acquire the character of commands to be obeyed without question. Moreover he is convinced that people would coldly turn against him if he did not comply with their expectations. In essence this means that he has not only externalized his shoulds but also his self-hate. Others would turn as sharply against him as he would himself for not measuring up to his shoulds. And because this anticipation of hostility is an externalization it cannot be remedied by experiences to the contrary. A patient for instance may have had a long experience with the analyst's patience and understanding and yet, under duress, may feel that the analyst would drop him at a moment's notice in case of open opposition.

Hence his original sensitivity to outside pressure is greatly reinforced. We understand now why he keeps experiencing external coercion, even though the latter environment may exert very little pressure. In addition the externalization of his shoulds, while relieving inner tension, brings a new conflict into his life. He should comply with the expectations of others; he should not hurt their feelings; he must appease their anticipated hostility—but he also should maintain his independence. This conflict is reflected in his ambivalent way of responding to others. In many variations it is a curious mixture of compliance and defiance. He may for instance politely comply with a request but forget about it or procrastinate in doing it. The forgetting may reach such disturbing proportions that he can keep a fair order in his life only by the help of a notebook in which he jots down appointments or jobs to be done. Or he may go through the motions of complying with the wishes of others but sabotage them in spirit, without in the least being aware of doing so. In analysis for instance he may comply with the obvious rules, such as being on time or saying what is on his mind, but assimilate so little of what is discussed that the work is rendered futile.

taboos. Sometimes he rationalizes these avoidances by thinking that any pursuits of his would impinge on the rights of others.

In these many ways the intrapsychic processes keep reinforcing the original solution of detachment and gradually create the entanglements which constitute the picture of resignation. This condition would be inaccessible to therapy—because of the minimal incentive to change—if it were not for the positive elements in the appeal of freedom. Patients in whom these prevail often have a more immediate understanding of the harmful character of the inner dictates than do others. If conditions are favorable, they may quickly recognize them for the yoke they actually are and may take an unequivocal stand against them.[5] Certainly such a conscious attitude does not in itself dispel them, but it is a considerable help in overcoming them gradually.

Looking back now at the total structure of resignation from the viewpoint of the preservation of integrity, certain observations fall in line and gain significance. To begin with, the integrity of truly detached people has always struck an alert observer. I for one have always been aware of it, but what I did not realize earlier was that it is an intrinsic and nuclear part of the structure. Detached, resigned people may be impractical, inert, inefficient, difficult to deal with because of their defiant wariness of influences and closer contact, but they possess—to a greater or lesser extent—an essential sincerity, an innocence in their innermost thoughts and feelings which are not to be bribed or corrupted by the lure of power, success, flattery, or "love."

Furthermore we recognize in the need to maintain inner integrity another determinant for the basic characteristics. We saw first that avoidances and restrictions were put to the service of integration. Then we saw them also being determined by a need for freedom, not yet knowing its meaning. Now we understand that they need freedom from involvement, influence, pressure, from the shackles of ambition and competition, for preserving their inner life unsoiled and untarnished.

We may feel puzzled that the patient does not talk about this

[5] *Cf.* "Finding the Real Self," *American Journal of Psychoanalysis,* vol. IX, 1949, *A Letter,* with a Foreword by Karen Horney.

crucial matter. Actually he has indicated in many indirect ways that he wants to remain "himself"; that he is afraid of "losing his individuality" through analysis; that analysis would make him like everybody else; that the analyst inadvertently might mold him according to his, the analyst's, pattern, etc. But the analyst often does not grasp the full implications of such utterances. The context in which they were made suggests the patient's wanting to remain either his actual neurotic self or his idealized grandiose self. And the patient meant indeed to defend his *status quo*. But his insistence on being himself also expresses an anxious concern about preserving the integrity of his real self, although he is not yet able to define it. Only through analytic work can he learn the old truth that he must lose himself (his neurotic glorified self) in order to find himself (his true self).

From this basic process three most different forms of living result. In a first group *persistent resignation,* resignation and all it entails, is carried through fairly consistently. In a second, the appeal of freedom turns the passive resistance into a more active rebellion: the *rebellious group*. In a third, deteriorating processes prevail and lead to *shallow living*.

Individual differences in the first group are related to the prevalence of expansive or self-effacing trends and to the degree of retiring from activities. In spite of a cultivated emotional distance from others, some are capable of doing things for their families, their friends, or for those with whom they come in contact through their work. And, perhaps because of being disinterested, they often are effective in the help they give. In contrast to both the expansive and the self-effacing types, they do not expect much in return. In contrast to the latter, it rather exasperates them if others mistake their willingness to help for personal affection, and want more of it in addition to the help given.

In spite of a restriction of activities, many such people are capable of doing their daily work. It is, though, usually felt as a strain because it is done against the inner odds of inertia. The inertia becomes more noticeable as soon as the work accumulates, requires initiative, or involves fighting for or against

something. The motivations for doing routine work usually are mixed. Besides economic necessity and the traditional shoulds, there also is often a need to be useful to others despite being themselves resigned. Besides, daily work may also be a means of getting away from the feeling of futility they possess when left to their own resources. They often do not know what to do with their leisure time. Contacts with others are too much of a strain to be enjoyable. They like being by themselves, but they are unproductive. Even reading a book may meet with inner resistance. So they dream, think, listen to music, or enjoy nature if it is available without effort. They are mostly unaware of the lurking fear of futility but may automatically arrange their work in a way that leaves little free time by themselves.

Finally, the inertia and the accompanying aversion to regular work may prevail. If they have no financial means they may take occasional jobs or else sink down to a parasitic existence. Or, if moderate means are available, they rather restrict their needs to the utmost in order to feel free to do as they please. The things they do, however, often have the character of hobbies. Or they may succumb to a more or less complete inertia. This outcome is presented in a masterly fashion in Goncharov's unforgettable Oblomov, who resents even having to put on his shoes. His friend invites him on a trip to some other countries and makes all the preparations for him, down to the last detail. Oblomov sees himself in his imagination in Paris and in the Swiss mountains, and we are kept in suspense: will he or won't he go? Of course he backs down. The prospect of what seems to him a turbulent moving around and ever-new impressions is too much.

Even if not carried to such extremes, a pervasive inertia bears within it the danger of deterioration, as is shown in Oblomov's and his servant's later fate. (Here then would be a transition to the shallow living of the third group.) It is also dangerous because it may extend beyond a resistance against doing to one against thinking and feeling as well. Both thinking and feeling may then become purely reactive. Some train of thought may be set in motion by a conversation or by the analyst's comments, but since no energies are mobilized by it, it peters out. Some feeling, positive or negative, may be stimulated by a visit or a

letter, but it likewise fades out soon after. A letter may evoke an impulse to answer it, but if not acted upon right away it may be forgotten. The inertia in thinking can be well observed in analysis and often is a great hindrance to work. Simple mental operations become difficult. Whatever is discussed during one hour may then be forgotten—not because of any specific "resistance" but because the patient lets the content lie in his brain like a foreign body. Sometimes he feels helpless and confused in analysis, as well as in reading or discussing somewhat difficult matters, because the strain of connecting data is too great. One patient expressed this aimless confusion in a dream, in which he found himself in various places all over the world. He had no intention of going to any of them; he did not know how he got there, or how he would go on from there.

The more the inertia spreads, the more the person's feelings are affected by it. He needs stronger stimuli to respond at all. A group of beautiful trees in a park no longer arouses any feelings; he requires a riotous sunset. Such an inertia of feelings entails a tragic element. As we have seen, the resigned type largely restricts his expansiveness in order to maintain intact the genuineness of his feelings. But if carried to extremes the process chokes off the very aliveness it was meant to preserve. Hence when his emotional life becomes paralyzed he suffers under the resulting deadness of his feelings more than other patients, and this may be the one thing which he does want to change. As the analysis proceeds he may at times have the experience of his feelings being more alive as soon as he is generally more active. Even so he hates to realize that his emotional deadness is but one expression of his pervasive inertia, and hence that it can change only as the latter is lessened.

If some activity is maintained and living conditions are fairly appropriate, this picture of persistent resignation may remain stationary. Many attributes of the resigned type combine to make it so: his check on strivings and expectations, his aversion to change and inner struggle, his capacity to put up with things. Against all of this, however, militates one disquieting element —the appeal freedom has for him. Actually the resigned person is a subdued rebel. So far in our study we have seen this quality

expressed in a passive resistance against internal and external pressure. But it might turn at any time into an *active rebelliousness.* Whether it actually does, depends on the relative strength of expansive and self-effacing trends and on the degree of inner aliveness a person has managed to salvage. The stronger his expansive tendencies and the more alive he is, the more easily will he become discontented with the restrictions of his life. The discontentment with the external situation may prevail; then it is primarily a "rebellion *against.*" Or, if his discontent with himself prevails, it is primarily a "rebellion *for.*"

The environmental situation—home, work—may become so unsatisfactory that the person finally stops putting up with it any longer and in some form or other rebels openly. He may leave his home or his job and become militantly aggressive toward everybody with whom he associates as well as toward conventions and institutions. His attitude is one of "I don't give a damn what you expect of me or think of me." This may be expressed in more or less urbane ways—or in more or less offensive forms. It is a development of great interest from the social point of view. If such a rebellion is directed mainly outward, it is in itself not a constructive step and may drive a person further away from himself, although it releases his energies.

However, the rebellion may be more an inward process and be directed primarily against the inner tyranny. Then, within limits, it can have a liberating effect. In this latter case it is more often a gradual development than a turbulent rebellion, more of an evolution than a revolution. A person then suffers increasingly under his shackles. He realizes how hemmed in he is, how little to his liking his way of living is, how much he does merely to conform with rules, how little he actually cares for the people around him, for their standards of living or their moral standards. He becomes more and more bent on "being himself" which, as we said before, is a curious mixture of protest, conceit, and genuine elements. Energies are liberated and he can become productive in whatever way he is gifted. In his *The Moon and Sixpence* SomersetMaugham has described such a process in the character of the painter Strickland. And it seems that Gauguin, after whom Strickland is roughly patterned, as well as other artists went through such an evolution.

factor, particularly when he succumbs to the temptation of money, success, and prestige. Persistent resignation means a restricted life, but it is not hopeless; people still have something to live by. But when they lose sight of the depth and autonomy of their own lives, the negative attributes of resignation remain while the positive values fade out. Only then does it become hopeless. They move to the periphery of life. This characterizes that last group, that of *shallow living.*

A person thus moving away from himself in a centrifugal way loses the depth and intensity of his feelings. In his attitude toward people he becomes indiscriminate. Anyone can be a "very good friend," "such a nice fellow," or "such a beautiful girl." But out of sight, out of mind. He may lose interest in them at the slightest provocation without even going to the trouble of examining what is happening. Detachment deteriorates into unrelatedness.

Similarly his enjoyments become shallow. Sexual affairs, eating, drinking, gossip about people, plays, or politics form a large content of his life. He loses the sense for essentials. Interests become superficial. He no longer forms his own judgment or convictions; instead he takes over current opinions. He generally is overawed by what "people" think. With all that, he loses faith in himself, in others, in any values. He becomes cynical.

We can distinguish three forms of shallow living, each differing from the others merely in the emphasis upon certain aspects. In one, the emphasis is on *fun,* on having a good time. This may superficially look like a zest for living, in contrast to a basic characteristic of resignation—a not-wanting. But the motive force here is not a reaching out for enjoyment but the necessity to push down a gnawing feeling of futility by means of distracting pleasures. The following poem, entitled "Palm Springs," which I found in Harper's Magazine [7] characterizes such fun-seeking in the leisure class:

Oh, give me a home
Where the millionaires roam

[7] From the article "Palm Springs: Wind, Sand and Stars," by Cleveland Amory.

And the dear little glamour girls play.
Where never is heard
An intelligent word
And we round up the dollars all day.

It is, however, by no means restricted to the leisure class but goes far down the social scale to people with small incomes. It is after all merely a question of money whether "fun" is found in expensive night clubs and cocktail and theater parties or in getting together in homes for drinking, playing cards, and chatting. It may also be more localized through collecting stamps, becoming a gourmet, or going to the movies, all of which would be all right if they were not the only real content of life. It is not necessarily socialized, but may consist of reading mystery stories, listening to the radio, looking at television, or daydreaming. If fun is socialized, two things are strictly avoided: being alone for any length of time and having serious talk. The latter is regarded as rather bad manners. The cynicism is thinly covered up by "tolerance" or "broad-mindedness."

In the second group the emphasis is on *prestige* or *opportunistic success*. The check on strivings and efforts which is characteristic for resignation is here undiminished. The motivations are mixed. It is in part the wish for a life made easier by the possession of money. In part it is a need to give an artificial lift to self-esteem, which in this whole group of shallow living sinks to zero. This however, with the loss of inner autonomy, can be done only by lifting oneself up in the eyes of others. One writes a book because it might be a best seller; one marries for money; one joins a political party which is likely to offer advantages. In social life there is less emphasis on fun and more on the prestige of belonging to certain circles or going to certain places. The only moral code is to be smart, to get by and to not be caught. George Eliot has given us in *Romola* an excellent picture of such an opportunistic person in the figure of Tito. We see in him the evasion of conflicts, the insistence on an easy life, the noncommitment, and the gradual moral deterioration. The latter is not accidental but is bound to happen with the moral fiber becoming weaker and weaker.

The third form is the *"well-adapted" automaton*. Here the loss of authentic thinking and feeling leads to a general flatten-

may change his attitude rapidly. He may easily turn against somebody whom he has held in high regard, or lose interest in him, and somebody else may as suddenly rise in his estimation.

Among the many ways in which such inner uncertainty manifests itself two seem to be present fairly regularly and to be rather independent of the particular neurotic structure. The individual does not know where he stands with regard to another person and where the latter stands with regard to him. He may call him a friend, but the word has lost its deep meaning. Any argument, any rumor, any misinterpretation he puts on something the friend is saying, doing, or omitting may arouse not only temporary doubts but shake the very foundation of the relationship.

The second rather ubiquitous uncertainty about others is an uncertainty of confidence or trust. It shows not only in trusting too much or too little but also in not knowing with his heart in what regard another person is trustworthy and where his limits lie. If this uncertainty becomes more intensive he has no feeling for either the decent or the mean things another person is capable of doing, or utterly incapable of doing, even though he may have been closely associated with him for years.

In his fundamental uncertainty about others he will as a rule tend to expect the worst—consciously or unconsciously—because the pride system also *increases his fear of people*. His uncertainty is closely interwoven with his fears because, even though others do in fact represent a greater threat to him, his fears would not skyrocket as easily as they do if it were not that his picture of others is distorted anyway. Our fear of others is, generally speaking, dependent both upon their power to hurt us and upon our own helplessness. And both of these factors are hugely reinforced by the pride system. No matter how blustering self-assurance may be on the surface, intrinsically the system does weaken a person. It does so primarily by the alienation from self, but also by the self-contempt and the inner conflicts it entails, which make him divided against himself. The reason lies in his increased vulnerability. And he becomes vulnerable on many scores. It takes so little to hurt his pride or to elicit his guilt-feelings or his self-contempt. His claims are of such a nature that they are bound to be frustrated. His equilibrium is so

precarious that it can be easily disturbed. Finally his externalizations and his own hostility against others, aroused by the externalization as well as by many other factors, make others more formidable than they actually are. All these fears account for his main attitude toward others being a defensive one, no matter whether it takes more aggressive or more appeasing forms.

When surveying all the factors mentioned hitherto we are struck by the similarity with the constituents of the basic anxiety which, to repeat, is one of feeling isolated and helpless toward a world potentially hostile. And this indeed is in principle the influence of the pride system on human relationships: *it reinforces the basic anxiety.* What in adult neurotics we identify as basic anxiety is not basic anxiety in its original form but rather modified by the accretions acquired through the years from the intrapsychic processes. It has become a composite attitude toward others which is determined by more complex factors than those involved at first. Just as, because of his basic anxiety, the child had to find ways to cope with others, so the adult neurotic must in his turn find such ways. And he finds them in the major solutions which we have described. Although these again bear similarities to the earlier solutions of moving toward, against, or away from people—and in part follow from them—actually the new solutions of self-effacement, expansiveness, and resignation are different in their structure from the old ones. While they also determine the form of human relationships, they are principally solutions for the intrapsychic conflicts.

To complete the picture: while the pride system reinforces the basic anxiety, at the same time it lends to other people an overimportance through the needs it generates. Others become overimportant, or indeed indispensable, for the neurotic in the following ways: he needs them for a direct confirmation of the fictitious values he has arrogated to himself (admiration, approval, love). His neurotic guilt-feelings and his self-contempt make for a stringent need for his vindication. But the very self-hate that engendered these needs renders it close to impossible to find this vindication in his own eyes. He can find it only

pairment of the neurotic's own capacity to love. This capacity is bound to be impaired because of all the factors we discussed in this chapter: his being too wrapped up in himself, his being too vulnerable, too afraid of people, etc. This connection between feeling lovable and being ourselves able to love, although fairly often recognized intellectually, has a deep, vital meaning to very few of us. Yet in fact, if our capacity to love is well developed, we are not bothered about the question of whether or not we are lovable. Nor is it then of crucial importance whether or not we are actually loved by others.

The second source of the neurotic's feeling of being unlovable is his self-hate and its externalization. As long as he is unacceptable to himself—indeed hateworthy or contemptible—he cannot possibly believe that anybody else could love him.

These two sources, both strong and omnipresent in neurosis, account for the feeling of unlovableness not being easily removed in therapy. We can see its existence in a patient and can examine its consequences for his love life. But it can diminish only to the extent that these sources become less potent.

A third source contributes less directly but is important to mention for other reasons. It lies in the neurotic's expecting more of love than it can at best give (the "perfect love"), or expecting something different from what it can give (it cannot, for instance, relieve him of his self-hate). And since no love he does get can fulfill his expectations, he tends to feel that he is not "really" loved.

The particular kind of expectations of love varies. Generally speaking it is the fulfillment of many neurotic needs, often in themselves contradictory, or—in the case of the self-effacing type—of all his neurotic needs. And this fact of love being put into the service of neurotic needs makes it not only desirable but badly needed. Thus we find in love life the same incongruity that exists with regard to human relations in general: an increased need and a decreased capacity for it.

It is probably as little accurate to make a too neat distinction between love and sex as it is to link them up too closely (Freud). Since, however, in neuroses sexual excitement or desires more often than not are separate from a feeling of love, I want to

the possibilities. *The special difficulties existing toward love and sex are after all only one expression of his total neurotic disturbances.* The variations in addition are so manifold because in kind they depend not only upon the individual's neurotic character structure but also on the particular partners he has had or still has.

This may seem like a superfluous qualification because we have learned through our analytic knowledge that there is more often than formerly was assumed an unconscious choice of partners. The validity of this concept can indeed be shown over and over again. But we have tended to go to the other extreme and assume that every partner is of the individual's choosing; and this generalization is not valid. It needs qualifications in two directions. We must first raise the question as to who does the "choosing." Properly speaking, the word "choice" presupposes a capacity to choose and a capacity to know the partner who is chosen. Both capacities are curtailed in the neurotic. He is able to choose only to the extent to which his picture of others is not distorted by the many factors we have discussed. In this strict sense there is no choice worth the name, or at least very little of it. What is meant by the term "choice of a partner" is the person's feeling attracted on the ground of his outstanding neurotic needs: his pride, his needs to dominate or to exploit, his need to surrender, etc.

But even in this qualified sense the neurotic has not much chance to "choose" a partner. He may marry because it is the thing to do; and he may be so remote from himself and so detached from others that he marries a person whom he just happens to know a little better than others or who happens to want to marry him. His estimate of himself may be so low, because of his self-contempt, that he simply cannot approach those persons of the other sex who—if only for neurotic reasons —would appeal to him. Adding to these psychological restrictions the factual ones of his often knowing very few available partners, we realize how much is left to incidental circumstances.

Instead of trying to do justice to the endless variations of erotic and sexual experiences resulting from these manifold factors involved, I shall merely indicate certain general tend-

encies operating in the neurotic's attitudes toward love and sex. *He may tend to exclude love* from his life. He may minimize or deny its significance or even its existence. Love then does not appear to him as desirable but is rather to be avoided or to be despised as a self-deceptive weakness.

Such a tendency to exclude love operates in a quiet but determined fashion in the resigned, detached type. Individual differences within this group mostly concern his attitude toward sexuality. He may have removed the actual possibility not only of love, but also of sex, so far from his personal life that he lives as if they did not exist or had no meaning for him personally. Toward the sexual experiences of others he feels neither envy nor disapproval, but may have considerable understanding for them if they are in some trouble.

Others may have had a few sexual relations in their younger years. But these did not penetrate through the armor of their detachment, were not too meaningful, and faded out without leaving a desire for further experiences.

For another detached person sexual experiences are important and enjoyable. He may have had them with many different people but always—consciously or unconsciously—was on his guard not to form any attachment. The nature of such transient sexual contacts depends on many factors. Among others the prevalence of expansive or self-effacing trends is relevant. The lower his estimate of himself, the more will these contacts be restricted to persons beneath his own social or cultural level, as for instance to prostitutes.

Again, others may happen to get married and may even be able to maintain a decent though distant relationship, provided the partner is likewise detached. If such a person marries somebody with whom he has not much in common, he may characteristically put up with the situation and try to abide by his duties as a husband and father. Only if the partner is too aggressive, violent, or sadistic to allow the detached person to withdraw inwardly may the latter either try to get out of the relationship or go to pieces under it.

The arrogant-vindictive type excludes love in a more militant and destructive way. His general attitude toward love usually is a derogating, debunking one. With respect to his

consummation of the sexual act or he may aim at complete emotional surrender. When these aims are achieved his interest recedes.

I am not sure that this brief presentation, condensed as it is into a few pages, conveys the extent and the intensity of the influence which intrapsychic processes have on human relations. When we realize its full impact we must modify certain expectations, commonly harbored, as to the beneficial effect which better human relations can exercise on neurosis—or, in a broader sense, on a person's development. The expectations consist of the anticipation that a change of human environment, marriage, sexual affairs, or participation in any kind of group activity (in the community, in religious, professional groups, etc.) will help a person to outgrow his neurotic difficulties. In analytic therapy this expectation is expressed in the belief that the principal curative factor lies in the possibility of the patient's establishing a good relationship with the analyst, i.e., one in which the factors that were injurious in childhood are absent.[4] This belief follows from the premise held by certain analysts that neurosis primarily is and remains a disturbance in human relations, and hence can be remedied by the experience of a good human relationship. The other expectations mentioned are not based on so precise a premise but rather on the realization—in itself correct—that human relations are a crucial factor in all our lives.

All these expectations are justified with regard to the child and adolescent. Even though he may show definite signs of grandiose notions about himself, of claims for special privileges, of feeling easily abused, etc., he may be sufficiently flexible to respond to a favorable human environment. It may make him less apprehensive, less hostile, more trusting, and may still reverse the course of vicious circles driving him deeper into the

[4] Janet M. Rioch, "The Transference Phenomenon in Psychoanalytic Therapy, *Psychiatry*, 1943.

"What is curative in the process is that the patient discovers that part of himself which had to be repressed at the time of the original experience. He can only do this in an interpersonal relationship with the analyst which is suitable to such a rediscovery. . . . The reality gradually becomes 'undistorted,' the self re-found, in the personal relationship between the analyst and the patient."

the influence of intrapsychic factors upon the process of work and the individual's attitude toward it. Lastly, neurotic disturbances are comparatively unimportant in any kind of routine work. They increase to the extent that the work requires personal initiative, vision, responsibility, self-reliance, ingenuity. I shall therefore restrict my comments to those kinds of work for which we have to tap our personal resources—to creative work in the broadest sense of the word. What is said in illustrations taken from artistic work or scientific writing applies just as well to the work of a teacher, a housewife and mother, a businessman, a lawyer, a doctor, a union organizer.

The range of neurotic disturbances in work is great. As we shall see presently, not all of these disturbances are consciously felt; many show instead in the quality of the work produced or in the lack of production. Others are expressed in various kinds of psychic distress connected with work, such as inordinate strain, fatigue, exhaustion; fears, panic, irritability or conscious suffering under inhibitions. There are only a few general and rather obvious factors which all kinds of neuroses have in common on this score. Difficulties *beyond* those inherent in the particular piece of work are never missing, even though they may not be apparent.

Self-confidence, probably the most crucial prerequisite for creative work, is always on a shaky basis, no matter how self-assured or realistic a person's attitude seems to be.

There is rarely an adequate appraisal of what is entailed in a particular job but rather an underrating or overrating of given difficulties. Nor is there as a rule an adequate estimate of the value of the work done.

The conditions under which work may be done are mostly too rigid. They are more peculiar in kind and more rigid in degree than the working habits which people usually develop.

The inner relatedness to the work itself is tenuous because of the neurotic's egocentricity. Questions as to how he made out or how he should perform are of greater concern to him than the work itself.

The joy or satisfaction that can be found in congenial work is usually impaired because the work is too compulsive, too

Against all evidence to the contrary he soon bounces back to his conviction that others may not be able to do so many things; but he can—and can do them all to perfection. To restrict his activities would to him smack of defeat and contemptible weakness. The prospect of being a human being like others, with limitations like others, is degrading and hence intolerable.

Other narcissistic persons may scatter their energies not by too many simultaneous activities but by successively starting and dropping one pursuit after the other. In gifted youngsters this still may look simply as though they needed time and experimenting in order to find out where their greatest interest lies. And only a closer examination of their whole personality can show whether so simple an explanation is valid. They may for instance develop a passionate interest in the stage, try out at dramatics, show promising beginnings—and give it up in a short time. Thereafter they may pursue the same course with the writing of poetry or with farming. Then they may take to nursing or the study of medicine, with the same steep curve from enthusiasm to loss of interest.

But the identical process may occur also in adults. They may make outlines for a big book, set an organization going, have vast business projects planned, work at an invention—but time and time again their interest peters out before anything is accomplished. Their imagination has painted a glowing picture of quick and glamorous achievement. But they withdraw interest at the very first real difficulty with which they are confronted. Their pride, however, does not permit them to admit that they are shirking difficulties. Therefore the loss of interest is a face-saving device.

Two factors contribute to the hectic swings which are characteristic of the narcissistic type in general: his aversion to attending to details in work and to consistent efforts. The former attitude may already be conspicuous in neurotic schoolchildren. They may for instance have quite imaginative ideas for a composition but put in a determined unconscious resistance to neat writing or correct spelling. The same sloppiness may mar the quality of work in adults. They may feel it behooves them to have brilliant ideas or projects but that the "detail work" should be done by the ordinary run of people. Hence they have no dif-

ficulty in delegating work to others, if this can be done. And, provided they have employees or co-workers who can carry their ideas into action, it may turn out well. If they have to do the work themselves—such as writing a paper, designing a dress, drawing up a legal document—they may regard the job as finished to their own supreme satisfaction before the real *work* of thinking through the ideas and checking, rechecking, and organizing them has even started. The same thing may happen with the patient in analysis. And here we see another determinant besides the general grandioseness: their fear of looking at themselves in concrete detail.

Their incapacity for making consistent efforts stems from the same roots. Their special brand of pride resides in "effortless superiority." It is the glory of the dramatic, of the unusual that captivates their imagination while the humble tasks of daily living are resented as humiliating. Conversely they can make sporadic efforts, be energetic and circumspect in an emergency, swing a big party, in a sudden onrush of energy write letters which have accumulated for months, etc. Such sporadic efforts feed their pride but consistent efforts insult it. Every Tom, Dick, and Harry can get somewhere with plodding work! Moreover, as long as no efforts are made there is always the reservation that they would have accomplished something great if they had put in real efforts. The most hidden aversion to consistent effort lies in the threat to the illusion of unlimited powers. Let us assume that somebody wants to cultivate a garden. Whether he wants it or not, he will soon become aware that the garden does not turn into a blossoming paradise overnight. It will progress exactly to the extent that he has put in work on it. He will have the same sobering experience when consistently working at reports or papers, when doing publicity work or teaching. There is a factual limit to time and energies and to what can be achieved within these limits. As long as the narcissistic type holds on to his illusions of unlimited energies and unlimited achievements he must by necessity be wary of exposing himself to such disillusioning experiences. Or, when he does, he must chafe under them as under an undignified yoke. Such resentment will in turn make him tired and exhausted.

Summarizing, we could say that the narcissistic type, despite

good qualifications, often is disappointing in the quality of the work he actually produces because, in accordance with his neurotic structure, he simply does not know how to work. The difficulties of the *perfectionistic type* are in some ways opposite. He works methodically and attends rather too meticulously to details. But he is so cramped by what he should do and how he should do it that there is no room left for originality and spontaneity. He is therefore slow and unproductive. Because of his exacting demands on himself he is easily overworked and exhausted (as is well known of the perfectionistic housewife) and lets others suffer as a result. Also, since he is as exacting on others as he is on himself, his influence on others is often cramping, especially if he is in an executive position.

The *arrogant-vindictive type* too has his own assets and liabilities. Among all neurotics he is the most prodigious worker. If it were not so inappropriate to speak of passion with regard to an emotionally cold person, we could say that he has a passion for work. Because of his relentless ambition and the comparative emptiness of his life outside his work, every hour not spent on work is deemed lost. This does not mean that he enjoys work—he is mostly incapable of enjoying anything—but neither does work tire him. In fact he seems indefatigable, like a well-oiled machine. Nevertheless, with all his resourcefulness, efficiency, and his often keen, critical intelligence, the work he produces is likely to be sterile. I am not thinking here of the deteriorated variety of this type, who has become opportunistic and is merely interested in the external result of his work—success, prestige, triumph—no matter whether he produces soap, portraits, or scientific papers. But even if he is interested in the work itself, in addition to his own glory, he will often stay at the fringes of his field and not go into the heart of the matter. As a teacher or social worker he will for instance be interested in methods of teaching or social work rather than in children or clients. He may write critical reviews rather than contribute something of his own. He may be anxious to cover completely all possible questions that may arise so that he has the final say in the matter without, however, having added anything of his own. In short his concern seems to be *to master the particular subject matter rather than to enrich it.*

Because his arrogance does not allow him to give credit to others, and because of his own lack of productivity, he may easily, without being aware of it, appropriate the ideas of others. But even these turn, in his hands, into something mechanical and lifeless.

In contrast to most neurotics he has the capacity for careful and minute planning and may have a fairly clear vision of future developments (in his own mind, his predictions are always correct). He may therefore be a good organizer. There are however several factors detracting from this capacity. He has difficulties in delegating work. Because of his arrogant contempt for people he is convinced that he is the only one who can do things properly. Also, in organizing he tends to employ dictatorial methods: to be intimidating and exploiting rather than stimulating; to kill incentive and joy rather than to kindle it.

Because of his long-range planning he can stand temporary setbacks comparatively well. In serious test situations, however, he may become panicky. When one lives almost exclusively in the categories of triumph or defeat a possible defeat is of course frightening. But since he should be above fear he gets violently angry at himself for being afraid. Besides, in such situations (i.e., an examination) he also gets violently angry at those who presume to sit in judgment over him. All these emotions are usually suppressed, and the results of the inner upheaval may be such psychosomatic symptoms as headaches, intestinal cramps, palpitations of the heart, etc.

The difficulties which the *self-effacing type* has with regard to work are almost point for point opposite to those of the expansive types. He tends to set his aims too low and to underrate his gifts as well as the importance and the value of his work. He is plagued by doubts and self-berating criticisms. Far from believing that he can do the impossible, he tends to be easily overwhelmed by a feeling of "I can't." The quality of his work does not necessarily suffer, but he himself always does.

The self-effacing types may feel fairly at ease and in fact work well as long as they work for others: as a housewife or housekeeper, as a secretary, as a social worker or teacher, as a nurse, as a pupil (for an admired teacher). In this case either one of

in the impairment of the quality of work produced. For the individual this means that he cannot fulfill himself in an essential area of his life. Multiplying such individual losses by the thousands, disturbances in work become a loss to mankind.

While not disputing the fact of such losses, many people are nevertheless disquieted by the relation between art and neurosis or, more precisely, by that between the creative ability of an artist and his neurosis. "Granted," they will say, "that neurosis makes for suffering in general, and for hardships in work in particular—is it not, however, the indispensable condition for artistic creativity? Are not most artists neurotic? Would it not, conversely, curtail or even destroy his creativity if an artist were analyzed?" We can arrive at least at some clarification if we take these questions apart and examine the elements involved.

To begin with, there is little if any doubt that the existing gifts themselves are independent of neurosis. Recent educational ventures have shown that most people can paint when properly encouraged, but even so not everybody can become a Rembrandt or a Renoir. This does not mean that a gift, if sufficiently great, will always express itself. As these same experiments demonstrate, there is no doubt that neurosis has a considerable share in preventing their expression. The less self-conscious, the less intimidated, the less a person tries to comply with expectations of others, the less his need to be right or perfect, the better he can express whatever gifts he has. Analytic experiences show in still greater detail the neurotic factors which can be a hindrance to creative work.

Thus far the concern about artistic creativity entails either unclear thinking or an underrating of the weight and power of existing gifts, i.e., of the faculties of artistic expression in a particular medium. However, here a second question sets in: granted that the gifts themselves are independent of neurosis, is not the artist's faculty to work creatively tied up to certain neurotic conditions? The path to an answer lies in discerning more clearly exactly which neurotic conditions may be favorable to artistic work. Prevailing self-effacing trends are distinctly unfavorable. And in fact people having these trends are not among those harboring any concern on this score. They know

erally true—but, even if it is, must all distress necessarily stem from neurotic conflicts? It would seem to me that there is enough distress in life even without them. This is particularly true for an artist, with his greater-than-average sensitivity to beauty and harmony but also to discords and suffering, and with his greater capacity for emotional experiences.

The argument moreover contains the specific contention that neurotic conflicts may constitute a productive force. The reason for taking this contention seriously lies in our experience with dreams. We know that in dreams our unconscious imagination can create solutions for an inner conflict that is disquieting us for the time being. And the images used in dreams are so condensed, so pertinent, so concisely express the essentials that in these regards they resemble artistic creations. Therefore why should not a gifted artist, who commands the forms of expression in his medium and can put in the necessary work, create a poem, a painting, or a piece of music in an equivalent way? Personally I am inclined to believe in such a possibility.

Yet we must qualify such an assumption by the following considerations. In dreams a person can arrive at different kinds of solution. They may be constructive or neurotic ones, with a great range of possibilities in between. This fact cannot be irrelevant for the value of an artistic creation either. We could say that, even if an artist presents only his particular neurotic solution well, he may still find a powerful resonance because there will be many others tending toward the same solution. But I wonder if the general validity of, for instance, what the paintings of Dali or the novels of Sartre have to say is not thereby—despite superb artistic facility and astute psychological understanding—diminished? To avoid misunderstandings: I do not mean that a play or a novel should not present neurotic problems. On the contrary, at a time when most people suffer from them artistic presentation can help many to wake up to their existence and significance and to clarify them in their minds. Nor do I of course mean that plays or novels dealing with psychological problems should have a happy ending. *Death of a Salesman* for instance has no happy ending. *But it does not leave us confused.* It is, in addition to being an indictment of a society and a way of living, a clear statement of

what may logically happen to a person going off in his imagination (in the sense of a narcissistic solution) instead of ever squaring himself with his problems. A work of art leaves us confused if we do not sense where the author stands, or if he presents or advocates a neurotic solution as *the* only one.

Perhaps in the consideration just presented there lies an answer to another problem involved. Since neurotic conflicts or their neurotic solutions may paralyze or impair artistic creativity, we could certainly not say without qualifications that they are inducive to it at the same time. Probably by far the majority of such conflicts and solutions has an untoward effect on the artist's work. But where should we draw the line between those conflicts which still may provide a constructive impetus to create and those which stifle or curtail his faculties, or which impair the value of the product of his work? Is the line determined by a mere quantitative factor? We could certainly not say that the more conflicts the artist has the better it is for his work. Is it good for him to have some but not good to have too many? But then where is the line between "some" and "too many"?

Apparently, when thinking in terms of quantity, we are left hovering in the air. The considerations about constructive and neurotic solutions, and what is implied in them, point in another direction. Whatever the nature of the artist's conflicts, he must not be lost in them. Something in him must be sufficiently constructive to inspire him with a wish to struggle out of them and to take a stand toward them. This however is identical with saying that his real self must be sufficiently alive to operate, notwithstanding his conflicts.

It follows from these considerations that the frequently expressed conviction of the value of neurosis for artistic creativity is unfounded. The only tangible possibility that remains is that the artist's neurotic conflicts may contribute to an incentive for his doing creative work. Also his conflicts and his search for a way out of them may be the subject of his work. Just as a painter may for instance express his personal experience of a mountain scene, he may express his personal experience of his inner struggle. But he can create only to the extent to which his real self is alive, giving him the capacity for deep personal ex-

only appear to him as right, wise, and desirable ways but as the only safe ones. They give him a feeling of unity; coming face to face with his conflicts entails for him the terrifying prospect of being split apart. His pride not only gives him a feeling of worth or significance but also safeguards him against the equally terrifying danger of being delivered over to his self-hate and self-contempt.

The particular means by which a patient in analysis wards off the realization of conflicts or of self-hate are those which, in accordance with his whole structure, are available to him. The expansive type steers clear of the realization of having any fears, of feeling helpless, of a need for affection, care, help, or sympathy. The self-effacing type most anxiously averts his eyes from his pride or his being out for his own advantage. The resigned type may present an imperturbable front of polite uninterestedness and inertia in order to prevent his conflicts from being mobilized. In all patients the avoidance of conflicts has a double structure: they do not let conflicting trends come to the surface and they do not let any insight into them sink in. Some will try to escape the comprehension of conflicts by intellectualizing or by compartmentalizing. In others the defense is even more diffuse and shows in an unconscious resistance toward thinking anything through clearly or in holding onto an unconscious cynicism (in the sense of a denial of values). Both the muddled thinking and the cynical attitudes in these cases so befog the issue of conflicts that they are indeed unable to see them.

The central issue in the patient's endeavors to ward off an experience of self-hate or self-contempt is to avoid any realization of unfulfilled shoulds. In analysis he must therefore fight off any real insight into those shortcomings which according to his inner dictates are unpardonable sins. Therefore any suggestion of these shortcomings is felt by him as an unfair accusation and puts him on the defensive. And whether in his defense he becomes militant or appeasing, the effect is the same: it prevents him from a sober examination of the truth.

All these stringent needs of the patient to protect his subjective values and to ward off dangers—or the subjective feeling of anxiety and terror—account for the impairment of his ability

at any length, for we are not interested here in analytic technique but in the essentials of the therapeutic process.

The patient may become argumentative, sarcastic, assaultive; he may take shelter behind a façade of polite compliance; he may be evasive, drop the subject, forget about it; he may talk about it with sterile intelligence as if it did not concern himself; he may respond with spells of self-hate or self-contempt, thus cautioning the analyst not to proceed any further—and so on. All these difficulties may appear in the direct work on the patient's problem or in his relationship with the analyst. Compared with other human relationships, the analytic one is in one regard easier for the patient. The analyst's responses to him come comparatively less into play because he is concentrating on understanding the patient's problems. In other regards it is more difficult, because the patient's conflicts and anxieties are stirred up. Nevertheless it is a *human* relationship, and all the difficulties the patient has with regard to other people operate here too. To mention only a few outstanding ones: his compulsive need for mastery, love, or freedom largely determines the tenor of the relationship and makes him hypersensitive to guidance, rejection, or coercion. Because his pride is bound to be hurt in the process, he tends easily to feel humiliated. Because of his expectations and claims, he often feels frustrated and abused. The mobilization of his self-accusations and his self-contempt makes him feel accused and despised. Or, when under the impact of a self-destructive rage, he will quickly become vituperative and abusive toward the analyst.

Lastly, patients regularly overrate the analyst's significance. He is for them not simply a human being who by dint of his training and his self-knowledge may help them. No matter how sophisticated they are, they secretly do regard him as a medicine man endowed with superhuman faculties for good and evil. Both their fears and their expectations combine to produce this attitude. The analyst has the power to hurt them, to crush their pride, to arouse their self-contempt—but also to effect a magic cure! He is in short the magician who has the power to plunge them into hell or to lift them into heaven.

We can appraise the significance of these defenses from several viewpoints. When working with a patient we are im-

pressed with the retarding effect they have on the analytic process. They make it difficult—and sometimes impossible—for the patient to examine himself, to understand himself, and to change. On the other hand—as Freud has recognized, speaking of "resistance"—they are also road signs directing our inquiries. To the extent that we gradually understand the subjective values the patient needs to protect or to enhance, and the danger he is fending off, we learn something about the significant forces operating in him.

Moreover, while the defenses make for manifold perplexities in therapy and—naïvely speaking—the analyst sometimes wishes that there were fewer of them, they also render the procedure much less precarious than it would be without them. The analyst strives to avoid premature interpretations, but since he has no godlike omniscience he cannot prevent the fact that at times more disquieting factors are stirred up in a patient than he is able to cope with. The analyst may make a comment which he considers harmless but the patient will interpret it in an alarmed way. Or, even without such comments, the patient through his own associations or dreams may open up vistas which are frightening without as yet being instructive. Hence, no matter how obstructive in effect the defenses are, they also entail positive factors in so far as they are an expression of intuitive self-protective processes, necessary because of the precarious inner condition created by the pride system.

Any anxiety that does arise during analytic therapy is usually alarming to the patient because he tends to regard it as a sign of impairment. But more often than not this is not so. Its significance can be evaluated only in the context in which it appears. It may mean that the patient has come closer to facing his conflicts or his self-hate than he could stand at the given time. In that case his customary ways of allaying anxiety usually will help him to cope with it. The avenue that seemed to open up closes again; he fails to benefit from the experience. On the other hand an emergent anxiety also may have an eminently positive meaning. For it may indicate that the patient now feels strong enough to take the risk of facing his problems more squarely.

The road of analytic therapy is an old one, advocated time and again throughout human history. In the terms of Socrates and the Hindu philosophy, among others, it is the *road to reorientation through self-knowledge.* What is new and specific about it is the method of gaining self-knowledge, which we owe to the genius of Freud. The analyst helps the patient to become aware of all the forces operating in him, the obstructive and the constructive ones; he helps him to combat the former and to mobilize the latter. Though the undermining of the obstructive forces goes on simultaneously with the eliciting of the constructive ones, we shall discuss them separately.

When giving a series of lectures [2] on the subjects presented in this book I was asked after the ninth lecture when I was finally going to talk about therapy. My answer was that everything I had said pertained to therapy. All information about possible psychic involvements gives everyone a chance to find out about his own troubles. When similarly we ask here what must the patient become aware of in order to uproot his pride system and all its entails we can simply say that he must become aware of every single aspect of what we have discussed in this book: his search for glory, his claims, his shoulds, his pride, his self-hate, his alienation from self, his conflicts, his particular solution—and the effect of all these factors have on his human relations and his capacity for creative work.

Moreover the patient must not become aware only of these individual factors but also of their connections and interactions. Most relevant on this score is his recognizing that self-hate is pride's inseparable companion and that he cannot have one without the other. Every single factor must be seen in the context of the whole structure. He must realize for instance that his shoulds are determined by his kinds of pride, that their nonfulfillment elicits his self-accusations, and that these in turn account for the need to protect himself from their onslaughts.

Becoming aware of all these factors does not mean having information about them, but having a knowledge of them. As Macmurray says:

[2] At the New School for Social Research, in 1947 and 1948.

It is not enough to know vaguely that his anger or self-reproach is probably greater than warranted by the occasion. He must *feel* the full impact of his rage or the very depths of his self-condemnation: only then does the force of some unconscious process (and its irrationality) stare him in the face. Only then may he have an incentive to find out more and more about himself.

It is also important to feel feelings in their proper context and to try to experience those feelings or drives which as yet are merely seen, not felt. To come back for instance to the example of the woman who was afraid of a dog when she had not been able to climb to the mountain top—the fear itself was felt in its full intensity. What helped her over this particular fear was the realization that it resulted from self-contempt. Although the latter was barely experienced, her discovery meant all the same that the fear was felt in its proper context. But other kinds of fear kept occurring as long as she did not feel the depth of her self-contempt. And the experience of self-contempt in turn helped only when she felt it in the context of her irrational demands on herself for mastering every difficulty.

The emotional experiencing of some hitherto unconscious feeling or drive may occur suddenly and then impress us as a revelation. More often it occurs gradually, in the process of seriously working at a problem. A patient may become cognizant first, for instance, of an existing irritability containing vindictive elements. He may spot a connection between this condition and hurt pride. But at some point he must experience the whole intensity of his feeling hurt and the emotional impact of the vindictiveness. Again he may first spot feeling more indignant or abused than the occasion warrants. He may recognize that these feelings were his responses to being disappointed in some expectation. He takes cognizance of the analyst's suggestion that they may be unreasonable but he himself considers them entirely legitimate. Gradually he will spot expectations which strike even him as unreasonable. Later on he realizes that they are not harmless wishes but rather rigid claims. He will discover in time their scope and their fantastic nature. Then he will experience how utterly crushed or how

furiously indignant he is when they are frustrated. At last their inherent power dawns on him. But all of this is still a far cry from feeling that he would rather die than give them up.

A last illustration: he may know that he regards it as most desirable to "get by" or that sometimes he likes to fool or cheat others. As his awareness on this score widens, he may realize how envious he is of others who "get by" with something better than he does or how furious he is when he is the one who is fooled or cheated. He will increasingly recognize how proud he actually is of his capacity to cheat or bluff. And at some point he must also feel in his very bones that it actually is an absorbing passion.

What, however, if the patient simply does not feel certain emotions, urges, longings—or whatever? We cannot after all induce feelings artificially. It is of some help, however, if both patient and analyst are convinced of the *desirability* of letting feelings emerge—whatever they may concern—and letting them emerge in their given intensity. This will alert both of them to the differences between mere brainwork and emotional participation. Besides it will arouse their interest in analyzing the factors interfering with emotional experiences. These may vary in extent, intensity, and kind. It is important for the analyst to ascertain whether they prevent the experiencing of all feelings or only of particular ones. Outstanding among them is the patient's inability or scant ability to experience anything with *suspended judgment.* It dawned upon one patient who believed himself the ultimate of considerateness that he could be unpleasantly domineering. Then he rushed in with a value judgment, that this attitude was wrong and that he must stop it.

Such responses look like taking a square stand against a neurotic trend and wanting to change it. Actually in such instances patients are caught between the wheels of their pride and their fear of self-condemnation, and therefore try to erase the particular trends hastily before they have had time to realize and experience them in their intensity. Another patient, who had a taboo on accepting or taking advantage of others, discovered that buried under his overmodesty was a need to look out for his own advantage; that in fact he was furious if he did not get something out of a situation, that he got sick every time he was

with people who in some ways important for him were better off than he. Then again, with the swiftness of lightning, he jumped to the conclusion that he was utterly obnoxious—and thereby nipped in the bud a possible experience and a subsequent understanding of suppressed aggressive trends. The door also was closed to a realization of an existing conflict between a compulsive "unselfishness" and an equally greedy acquisitiveness.

People who have thought about themselves and perceived quite a few inner problems and conflicts often say: "I know so much (or even all) about myself, and it has helped me to get myself under better control; but at bottom I still feel just as insecure or miserable." Usually in such instances it turns out that their insights were both too one sided and too superficial; i.e., it was not an awareness in the deep and comprehensive sense just presented. But assuming that a person has really experienced some important forces operating in himself and has seen their effects on his life, how and to what an extent do these insights in themselves help to liberate him? They may of course at times upset him and at others relieve him, but what do they actually change in a personality? Offhand, this question may seem too general to allow for a satisfactory answer. But I suspect that we all tend to overrate their therapeutic effect. And, since we want to make clear exactly what the therapeutic agents are, let us examine the changes which are brought about by such realizations—their possibilities and their limitations.

Nobody can acquire knowledge of his pride system and his solutions without some reorientation going on within him. He begins to realize that certain ideas he has had about himself were fantastic. He begins to doubt whether his demands upon himself are not perhaps impossible of attainment for any human being, whether his claims on others, besides resting on shaky foundations, are not simply unrealizable.

He begins to see that he was inordinately proud of certain attributes which he does not possess—or at least not to the extent he believed—that for instance his independence, of which he was so proud, is rather a sensitivity to coercion than a real inner freedom; that in fact he is not so immaculately

own constructive forces they felt that the therapist should in a rather artificial way, like a *deus ex machina,* provide for a more positive way of living.

We have come back to the ancient medical wisdom that curative forces are inherent in the mind as they are in the body, and that in cases of disorders of body or mind the physician merely gives a helping hand to remove the harmful and to support the healing forces. *The therapeutic value of the disillusioning process lies in the possibility that, with the weakening of the obstructive forces, the constructive forces of the real self have a chance to grow.*

The task of the analyst in supporting this process is rather different from that in analyzing the pride system. The latter work requires, besides a training in technical skills, an extensive knowledge of possible unconscious complexities and personal ingenuity in discovering, understanding, connecting. To help the patient to find himself the analyst also needs a knowledge, to be gained by experience, of the ways in which—through dreams and other channels—the real self may emerge. Such knowledge is desirable because these ways are not at all obvious. He must also know when and how to enlist the patient's conscious participation in this process. But more important than any of these factors is that of the analyst himself being a constructive person and having a clear vision of his ultimate goal as that of helping the patient to find himself.

There are healing forces operating in the patient from the very beginning. But at the onset of analysis they are usually deficient in vigor and must be mobilized before they can provide any real help in combating the pride system. Hence at the beginning the analyst must simply work with the good will or positive interest in analysis that is available. For whatever reasons the patient is interested in getting rid of certain disturbances. Usually (again for whatever reasons) he does want to improve this or that: his marriage, his relation with his children, his sexual functions, his reading, his capacity for mental concentration, his social ease, his earning capacity, etc. He may have an intellectual curiosity about analysis or even about himself; he may want to impress the analyst with the originality of his mind or the swiftness with which he gains insight; he may

growing plant or in which he discovers a room in his house of which he did not know before. The analyst will of course help him to understand the meaning of what is expressed in symbolic language. But in addition he may emphasize the significance of the patient's expressing in his dreams feelings or longings which he does not dare to feel in waking life. And he may raise the question of whether, for instance, the feeling of sadness is not more truly what the patient does feel about himself than the optimism he displays consciously.

In time other approaches are possible. The patient himself may start to wonder about how little he knows about his feelings, his wishes, or his beliefs. The analyst will then encourage such puzzled feelings. In whatever way he does it the much-misused word "natural" seems appropriate. For it is indeed natural for man—it is in his nature—to feel his feelings, to know his wishes or beliefs. And there is reason to wonder when these natural capacities do not function. And if the wonder is not volunteered the analyst may initiate such questioning at the proper time.

All of this may seem very little. But not only does the general truth that wondering is the beginning of wisdom obtain here; it is, to be more specific, important that the patient become aware of his remoteness from himself instead of being oblivious to it. The effect is to be compared with the moment when a youngster who has grown up under a dictatorship learns of a democratic way of living. The message may penetrate immediately or it may be received with skepticism because democracies have been discredited. Nevertheless it may gradually dawn on him that he is missing out on something desirable.

For a while such occasional comments may be all that is necessary. Only when the patient has become interested in the question "Who am I?" will the analyst more actively try to bring to his awareness how little he does know or care about his real feelings, wishes, or beliefs. As an illustration: a patient is frightened when he sees even a minor conflict in himself. He is afraid of being split apart and of going insane. The problem has been tackled from several angles, such as his feeling safe only when everything is under the control of reason or his fear

tradictory attitudes with regard to sexual activities, or to schools of thought. A patient may for instance become aware of both hating his mother and being devoted to her. It looks as if he were aware of a conflict, even though merely with regard to one particular person. But actually this is the way he visualizes it: on the one hand he feels sorry for his mother because, being the martyr type, she is always unhappy; on the other hand he is furious at her on account of her stifling demands for exclusive devotion. Both would be most understandable reactions for the kind of person he is. Next, what he has conceived as love or sympathy becomes clearer. He should be the ideal son and should be able to make her happy and contented. Since this is impossible he feels "guilty" and makes up with redoubled attention. This should (as next appears) is not restricted to this one situation; there is no situation in life where he should not be the *absolute* of perfection. Then the other component of his conflict emerges. He is also quite a detached person, harboring claims to have nobody bother him or expect things of him and hating everybody who does so. *The progress here is from attributing his contradictory feelings to the external situation* (the character of the mother), to *realizing his own conflict* in the particular relationship, *finally to recognizing a major conflict within himself* which, because it is within him, operates in all spheres of his life.

Other patients may at first have mere flashes of sighting contradictions of their main philosophy of life. A self-effacing type for instance may suddenly realize that there is in him quite a lot of contempt for people or that he rebels against having to be "nice" to others. Or he may have a fleeting recognition of having extravagant claims for special privileges. While at first these have not struck him even as contradictions, to say nothing of conflicts, he gradually realizes that they are indeed contradictory to his overmodesty and to his liking everybody. Then he may have transient experiences of a conflict, such as a blinding rage at himself for being a "sucker" when the returns of "love" for his compulsive helpfulness fail to come. He is completely stunned—and the experience submerges. Next his taboo on pride and advantages may come into clear relief, so rigid and so irrational that he starts to wonder about it. As his pride in good-

ness and saintliness is undermined he may begin to recognize his envy of others; to see some calculating greediness for self-gain, or the way he grudges giving. In part the process going on in him can be described as a growing familiarity with the existence of contradictory trends within himself. This alone accounts to some extent for the way in which the shock of seeing them is gradually mitigated. More important dynamically is his growing so much stronger through all the analytic work that he can gradually face these trends without being basically shaken—and hence is able to work at them.

Again, other patients may become cognizant of a conflict within themselves so vague in its contours, so unsettled in its meaning that at first it remains incomprehensible. They may speak of a conflict between reason and emotion or of one between love and work. It is inaccessible in this form because love is not incompatible with work, nor is reason with emotion. The analyst cannot tackle it directly in any way. He merely takes cognizance of the fact that some conflict must be operating in these spheres. He keeps it in mind and tries to understand gradually what is involved for the particular patient. Again patients may not at first feel it as a personal conflict but may relate it to existing situations. Women for instance may put the conflict between love and work on the basis of cultural conditions. They may point out that it is in fact difficult for a woman to combine a career with being a wife and a mother. Gradually it may come home to them that they have a personal conflict on this score and that it is more relevant than existing external difficulties. To make a long story short: in their love life they may tend toward a morbid dependency while in their career they may show all the earmarks of neurotic ambition and a need for triumph. These latter trends are usually suppressed but sufficiently alive to allow them a measure of productivity —or at least of success. In theoretical terms they have tried to relegate their self-effacing trends to their love life and their expansive drives to their work. In actual fact so neat a division is not feasible. And it will become apparent in analysis that, roughly, a drive for mastery also operates in their love relations, as do self-abnegating trends in their careers—with the result that they have become increasingly unhappy.

Patients may also frankly present what appears to the analyst as blatant contradictions in their ways of life or in their sets of values. They may first show an aspect of themselves that is all sweetness and light, overcompliance, even abjectness. Then a drive for power and prestige may come to the fore, showing for instance in a craving for social prestige or for conquering women, with distinct undercurrents of sadism and callousness. At times they may express a belief that they cannot sustain a grudge and at others—*without being disquieted by the contradiction*—have rather savage spells of vindictive rage. Or on the one hand they may want to attain through analysis a capacity for revenge that is undisturbed by any emotions and on the other the saintly detachment of a hermit. But they simply have no understanding whatever that these attitudes, drives, or beliefs constitute conflicts. They are instead proud of being capable of a wider range of feelings or beliefs than people following the "narrow path of virtue." The compartmentalization is carried to extremes. But the analyst cannot tackle it directly because the need to maintain this fragmentation requires an unusual amount of dulling of the sense of truth and of value, of discarding the evidence of reality, of shunning any responsibility for self. Here too the meaning and the power of expansive and self-effacing drives will gradually come into clearer relief. But this alone is of no avail unless much work is done at their evasiveness and their unconscious dishonesty. This usually entails work at their extensive and tenacious externalizations, at their fulfilling their shoulds in imagination only, and at their ingenuity in finding and believing in flimsy excuses as a protection against their self-accusations. ("I have tried so hard, I am sick, I am harassed by so many troubles, I don't know, I am helpless, it is already much better," etc.) All these measures allow them a kind of inner peace but also tend to weaken their moral fiber as life goes on, and thus to make them more incapable of facing their self-hate and their conflicts. These problems require long-drawn-out work, but thereby the patients may gradually gain sufficient solidity to dare to experience and to grapple with their conflicts.

To summarize: conflicts, because of their disrupting nature, are blurred at the beginning of analytic work. Provided they

are seen at all, it may be only in relation to specific situations—or they may be visualized in too vague, general forms. They may emerge in flashes, too short lived to acquire new meaning. They may be compartmentalized. Changes on this score take place in these directions: they come closer home as conflicts and as *their* particular conflicts; and they come down to essentials: instead of seeing only remote manifestations patients start to see exactly what is conflicting in them.

While this work is hard and upsetting, it is also liberating. Instead of a rigid solution there are now conflicts accessible to analytical work. The particular main solution, the value of which has been in process of deflation all along, finally collapses. Furthermore unfamiliar or little-developed aspects of the personality have been uncovered and given an opportunity to develop. To be sure, what emerge first are still more neurotic drives. But this is useful, for the self-effacing person must first see his self-seeking egocentricity before he has a chance for healthy assertiveness; he must first experience his neurotic pride before he can approximate a real self-respect. Conversely the expansive type must first experience his abjectness and his need for people before he can develop genuine humility and tender feelings.

With all this work well under way, the patient now can tackle more directly the most comprehensive conflict of all—that between his pride system and his real self, between his drive to perfect his idealized self and his desire to develop his given potentials as a human being. A gradual line-up of forces occurs, the central inner conflict comes into focus, and it is the foremost task of the analyst in the ensuing time to see to it that it stays in sharp focus because the patient himself is liable to lose sight of it. With this line-up of forces a most profitable but also most turbulent period of analysis sets in, varying in degree and duration. The turbulence is a direct expression of the violence of the inner battle. Its intensity is commensurate with the basic importance of the issue at stake. It is at bottom this question: does the patient want to keep whatever is left of the grandeur and glamor of his illusions, his claims, and his false pride or can he accept himself as a human being with all the general

limitations this implies, and with his special difficulties but also with the possibility of his growth? There is, I gather, no more fundamental crossroad situation in our life than this one.

This period is characterized by ups and downs, often in rapid succession. At times the patient is on the forward move, which may show in a great variety of ways. His feelings are more alive; he can be more spontaneous, more direct; he can think of constructive things to do; he feels more friendly or sympathetic to others. He becomes more alert to the many aspects of his alienation and catches on to them on his own. He may for instance quickly recognize when he is not "in" a situation or when, instead of facing something in himself, he is blaming others. He may realize how little he has actually done on his own behalf. He may remember incidents in the past when he has been dishonest or cruel with a more somber judgment and with regret, but without crushing guilt-feelings. He begins to see something good in himself, to become aware of certain existing assets. He may give himself due credit for the tenacity of his strivings.

This more realistic appraisal of himself may also appear in dreams. In one of these a patient appeared in the symbol of summer cottages, which were delapidated because they had not been lived in for a long time but which were nevertheless of good material. Another dream indicated attempts to get out of assuming responsibility for self, but in the end a forthright recognition of it: the patient saw himself as an adolescent boy who, just for fun, folded up another boy in a suitcase. He did not mean to hurt him nor did he feel any hostility toward him, but he simply forgot him and the boy died. The dreamer tried to make a halfhearted escape, but then an official talked to him and showed him in a very human way the plain facts and consequences.

These constructive periods are followed by *repercussions* in which the essential element is a renewed onrush of self-hate and self-contempt. These self-destructive feelings may be experienced as such or they may be externalized through becoming vindictive—feeling abused or having sadistic or masochistic fantasies. Or the patient may but vaguely recognize his self-hate but sharply feel the anxiety with which he responds to the self-destructive impulses. Or finally not even the anxiety appears as

such, but his customary defenses against it—such as drinking, sexual activities, a compulsive need for company, or being grandiose or arrogant—become active again.

All these upsets follow real changes for the better, but in order to evaluate them accurately we must consider the solidity of the improvement and the factors precipitating the "relapses."

There is the possibility that the patient will overrate the progress that he has made. He forgets, as it were, that Rome was not built in a day. He goes on what I jokingly call a "binge of health." Now that he can do many things he could not do before he should be—and is, in his imagination—the perfectly adjusted specimen, the perfectly healthy specimen. While on the one hand more ready to be himself, he also seizes his very improvement as the last chance to actualize his idealized self in the shining glory of perfect health. And the appeal of this goal is still sufficiently powerful to throw him out of gear—temporarily. A mild elation carries him for a while over still-existing difficulties and makes him all the more certain of now being over all his troubles. But with his general awareness of himself being much greater than before, this condition cannot possibly last. He is bound to recognize that, notwithstanding his actually dealing better with many situations, plenty of old difficulties still persist. And, just because he has believed himself to be on the peak, he strikes out against himself all the harder.

Other patients seem to be sober and cautious in admitting, to themselves and to the analyst, that they have progressed. They rather tend to minimize their improvements, often in a very subtle way. Nevertheless a similar "relapse" may set in when they run up against a problem in themselves or an external situation with which they cannot cope. Here the same process is going on as in the first group, but without the glorifying work of imagination. Both sorts are not yet ready to accept themselves with difficulties and limitations or without unusual assets. Their reluctance may be externalized (I would be ready to accept myself but people loathe me if I am not perfect. They only like me when I am the utmost in generosity, productivity, etc.).

The factor precipitating an acute impairment so far is a difficulty with which the patient cannot yet cope. In a last kind of

taken over together from their father and had developed successfully. The brother was capable, righteous, dominating, and had many typically arrogant-vindictive trends. My patient had always stood in his shadow, was intimidated by him, adored him blindly and, without knowing it, went out of his way to appease him. During analysis the reverse side of his conflict came to the fore. He became critical of the brother, openly competitive and at times quite belligerent. The brother responded in kind; one reaction reinforced the other and soon they were hardly on speaking terms. The atmosphere in the office became tense; co-workers and employees took sides with one or the other. My patient was glad at first that he could at last "assert" himself against the brother, but he recognized gradually that he was also vindictively out to get him off his high horse. After some months of productive analytic work at his own conflicts, he finally got a broader perspective of the whole situation and could realize that bigger issues were at stake than personal fights and grudges. He saw not only his share in the general tension—but what was considerably more—was ready to assume an active responsibility. He decided to have a talk with the brother, knowing full well that it would not be easy. And in the ensuing talk he was neither intimidated nor vindictive but held his own. Thereby he opened the possibility of a future co-operation on a healthier basis than before.

He knew he had done well and was glad about it. But that very same afternoon he became panicky and felt so nauseated and faint that he had to go home and lie down. He was not exactly suicidal but thoughts flashed through his mind that he could understand why people committed suicide. He tried to understand this condition, re-examined his motives for having the talk and his behavior during it, but could not find anything objectionable. He was entirely bewildered. Nevertheless he was able to sleep and felt much calmer the next morning. Yet he woke up remembering all kinds of insults he had suffered from his brother, with a renewed resentment against him. When we analyzed the upset we saw that he had been hit in two ways.

The spirit in which he had requested the talk with his brother and in which he had carried it through was diamet-

never have had before, even in upsetting times. He feels bewildered, disappointed, discouraged.

Actually these are in all instances constructive signs of the patient's grappling with the decision between self-idealization and self-realization. And perhaps nothing else shows so clearly that these two drives are incompatible as the inner struggle going on during the repercussions and the spirit of the constructive moves precipitating them. They do not occur because he sees himself more realistically but because he is willing to accept himself with limitations; not because he can make a decision and do something in his own behalf but because he is willing to heed his real interests and assume responsibility for himself; not because he can assert himself in a matter-of-fact way but because he is willing to assume his place in the world. To put it briefly: *they are growing pains.*

But they yield their full benefits only when the patient becomes aware of the significance of his constructive moves. It is hence all the more important that the analyst does not get bewildered by the seeming relapses but recognizes the swings of the pendulum for what they are and helps the patient to see them. Since the repercussions often set in with predictable regularity, it seems advisable after they have occurred a few times to forewarn the patient when he is on the upward move. This may not forestall the coming repercussions, but the patient may not be quite so helpless before them if he too realizes the predictability of the forces operating at a given time. It helps him to become more objective toward them. It is more relevant than at any other time for the analyst to be an unambiguous ally of the endangered self. If his vision and his stand are clear, then he can give patients the support they so badly need in these trying times. The support consists mostly not of general assurances but of conveying to the patient the fact that he is engaged in a final battle and in showing him the odds against which, and the aims for which, he is fighting.

Each time the meaning of a repercussion is understood by the patient he comes out of it stronger than before. The repercussions gradually become shorter and less intense. Conversely the good periods become more definitely constructive. The pros-

pect of his changing and growing becomes a tangible possibility, within his reach.

But whatever work is still to be done—and there will always be plenty—the time has come close at hand when the patient can try to do it on his own. Just as vicious circles were at work to entangle him more and more deeply in his neurosis, now there are circles working in the reverse direction. If for instance the patient lessens his standards of absolute perfection, his self-accusations also decrease. Hence he can afford to be more truthful about himself. He can examine himself without becoming frightened. This in turn renders him less dependent upon the analyst and gives him confidence in his own resources. At the same time his need to externalize his self-accusations decreases too. So he feels less threatened by others, or less hostile toward them, and can begin to have friendly feelings for them.

Besides, the patient's courage and confidence in his ability to take charge of his own development gradually increase. In our discussions of the repercussions we focused upon the terror that results from the inner conflicts. This terror diminishes as the patient becomes clear about the direction he wants to take in his life. And his sense of direction alone gives him a greater feeling of unity and strength. Yet there is still another fear attached to his forward moves, one which we have not yet fully appreciated. This is a realistic fear of not being able to cope with life without his neurotic props. The neurotic is after all a magician living by his magic powers. Any step toward self-realization means relinquishing these powers and living by his existing resources. But as he realizes that he can in fact live without such illusions, and even live better without them, he gains faith in himself.

Moreover any move toward being himself gives him a sense of fulfillment which is different from anything he has known before. And while such an experience is at first short lived, it may in time recur more and more often and for periods of longer duration. Even at first it gives him a greater conviction of being on the right path than anything else he may think or the analyst can say. For it shows him the possibility of feeling in accord with himself and with life. It is probably the greatest

CHAPTER 15

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

THE THEORY of neurosis presented in this book has evolved gradually from the concepts discussed in earlier publications. We have discussed in the previous chapter the implications which this evolution has for therapy. It remains to take stock of the theoretical changes that have occurred in my thinking with regard to individual concepts as well as the whole perspective on neurosis.

Together with many others[1] who had discarded Freud's theory of instincts, I first saw the core of neurosis in human relations. Generally, I pointed out, these were brought about by cultural conditions; specifically, through environmental factors which obstructed the child's unhampered psychic growth. Instead of developing a basic confidence in self and others the child developed basic anxiety, which I defined as a feeling of being isolated and helpless toward a world potentially hostile. In order to keep this basic anxiety at a minimum the spontaneous moves toward, against, and away from others became compulsive. While the spontaneous moves were compatible, each with the others, the compulsive ones collided. The conflicts

[1] Like Erich Fromm, Adolph Meyer, James S. Plant, H. S. Sullivan.

generated in this way, which I called basic conflicts, were therefore the result of conflicting needs and conflicting attitudes with regard to other people. And the first attempts at solution were largely attempts at integration, through giving full rein to some of these needs and attitudes and suppressing others.

This is a somewhat streamlined summary because the intrapsychic processes are too closely interwoven with those going on in interpersonal relations for me to have left them out altogether. They were touched upon at various points. To mention but a few: I could not discuss the neurotic's need for affection, or any equivalent need pertaining to others, without considering the qualities and attitudes which he must cultivate within himself in the service of such a need. Again, among the "neurotic trends" I enumerated in *Self-Analysis* there were some which had an intrapsychic meaning, such as a compulsive need for control through will power or reason or a compulsive need for perfection. For that matter, in the discussion of Claire's analysis of her morbid dependency (also in *Self-Analysis)* I dealt in condensed form with many intrapsychic factors presented in the same context in the present book. Nevertheless the focus was decidedly on the interpersonal factors. To me neurosis was still essentially a disturbance in human relationships.

The first explicit step beyond this definition was the contention that conflicts with regard to others could be solved by self-idealization. When, in *Our Inner Conflicts,* I propounded the concept of the idealized image I did not yet know its full significance. I saw it at that time simply as another attempt to solve inner conflicts. And its very integrating function accounted for the tenacity with which people adhered to it.

But in subsequent years the concept of the idealized image became the central issue from which new insights evolved. It actually was the gateway to the whole area of intrapsychic processes presented in this book. Having grown up scientifically with Freud's concepts, I was aware of the existence of this area. But because Freud's interpretations of it made sense to me only in spots it had remained strange territory.

I now saw gradually that the neurotic's idealized image did not merely constitute a false belief in his value and significance; it was rather like the creation of a Frankenstein monster which

in time usurped his best energies. It eventually usurped his drive to grow, to realize his given potentialities. And this meant that he was no longer interested in realistically tackling or outgrowing his difficulties, and in fulfilling his potentials, but was bent on actualizing his idealized self. It entails not only the compulsive drive for worldly glory through success, power, and triumph but also the tyrannical inner system by which he tries to mold himself into a godlike being; it entails neurotic claims and the development of neurotic pride.

With these elaborations of the original concept of the idealized image another problem emerged. While focusing on the attitude toward self, I realized that people hated and despised themselves with the same intensity and the same irrationality with which they idealized themselves. These two opposite extremes remained separate in my mind for a while. But finally I saw that they were not only closely interrelated but were in fact two aspects of one process. This then was, in its original draft, the main thesis of this book: *the godlike being is bound to hate his actual being.* With the recognition of this process as an entity, both extremes become more accessible to therapy. The definition of neurosis too had changed. *Neurosis now became a disturbance in one's relation to self and to others.*

Although this thesis remains to some extent the main contention, in recent years it has grown in two directions. The question of the real self, always puzzling to me as to so many others, pushed itself into the foreground of my thought and I came to see the whole inner psychic process, beginning with self-idealization, as a growing alienation from self. More important, I realized that in the last analysis self-hate was directed against the real self. The conflict between the pride system and the real self I called the central inner conflict. This made for an enlargement of the concept of neurotic conflict. I had defined it as a conflict between two incompatible compulsive drives. While retaining this concept, I began to see that it was not the only kind of neurotic conflict. The central inner conflict is one between the constructive forces of the real self and the obstructive forces of the pride system, between healthy growth and the drive to prove in actuality the perfection of the idealized self. Therapy therefore became a help toward self-realization. Through the clinical work of our whole group the general

according to the infantile pattern of an unresolved Oedipus complex.

As a result of this work the patient may feel relieved and the feelings of humiliation may be lessened. In part he has in fact benefited from this piece of analysis. He has learned a few things about himself and has realized that his feeling humiliated is irrational. But without his pride being tackled the change cannot possibly be a thorough one. On the contrary it is likely that the surface improvement is largely due to the fact that his pride will not tolerate his being irrational and particularly his being "infantile." The likelihood is that he merely has developed a new set of shoulds. He *should not* be infantile and *should* be mature. He should not feel humiliated because it is infantile to do so; so he does no longer feel humiliated. In this way a seeming progress can in reality be an obstruction to the patient's growth. His feeling of being humiliated is driven underground, and the possibility of his squaring himself with it is considerably lessened. Therapy has thus made use of the patient's pride instead of working against it.

Because of all the theoretical reasons mentioned, Freud could not possibly see the impact of the search for glory. Those factors in the expansive drives which he did observe were not what they seemed to be but were "really" derivatives of infantile libidinal drives. His way of thinking prevented him from appreciating expansive drives as forces carrying their own weight and having their own consequences.

This statement becomes clearer when we compare Freud with Adler. It was Adler's great contribution to realize the importance for neuroses of drives for power and superiority. Adler, however, was too preoccupied with devices of how to gain power and how to assert superiority to realize the depths of distress entailed for the individual, and hence stayed too much on the surface of the problems involved.

We are struck offhand by much greater similarities between my concept of self-hate and Freud's postulation of a self-destructive instinct, the death instinct. At least here we find the same appreciation of the intensity and significance of self-destructive drives. Also certain details are viewed similarly, such as the

with his environment ("reality-testing"). If this neurotic self is mistaken for its healthy alive counterpart, the whole complex problem of the real self as seen by Kierkegaard or William James cannot arise.

Finally we can look at the process from the perspective of moral or spiritual values. From this standpoint it has all the elements of a true human tragedy. However great man's possibilities for becoming destructive, the history of mankind also shows an alive and untiring striving toward greater knowledge about himself and the world around him, toward deeper religious experiences, toward developing greater spiritual powers and greater moral courage, toward greater achievements in all fields, and toward better ways of living. And his very best energies go into these strivings. By dint of his intellect and the power of his imagination, man can visualize things not yet existing. He reaches beyond what he is or can do at any given time. He has limitations, but his limits are not fast and final. Usually he lags behind what he wants to achieve within or outside himself. This in itself is not a tragic situation. But the inner psychic process which is the neurotic equivalent to healthy, human striving *is* tragic. Man under the pressure of inner distress reaches out for the ultimate and the infinite which—though his limits are not fixed—it is not given to him to reach; and in this very process he destroys himself, shifting his very best drive for self-realization to the actualization of his idealized image and thereby wasting the potentialities he actually possesses.

Freud had a pessimistic outlook on human nature and, on the grounds of his premises, was bound to have it. As he saw it, man is doomed to dissatisfaction whichever way he turns. He cannot live out satisfactorily his primitive instinctual drives without wrecking himself and civilization. He cannot be happy alone or with others. He has but the alternative of suffering himself or making others suffer. It is all to Freud's credit that, seeing things this way, he did not compromise with a glib solution. Actually within the framework of his thinking there is no escape from one of these two alternative evils. At best there may be a less unfavorable distribution of forces, better control, and "sublimation."

Freud was pessimistic but he did not see the human tragedy