



STRESS AND CHARACTER-STRUCTURE

a synthesis of concepts
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PART I: LIBIDINAL ENERGY AND HUMAN CONTACT

There have been two dominant strands in the development of characterology since Freud: on the one hand, following Freud's original instinct psychology, with its focus on blocks to the libido, there has been a system of character types based on the classification into developmental stages: oral – anal – genital. The classic works on characterology in the first half of the century were Reich's CHARACTER ANALYSIS (1) and Fenichel's PSYCHO-ANALYTIC THEORY

OF THE NEUROSES (2). Fenichel studied with Reich and has incorporated many of his ideas into his book.

Since the death of Reich two people have attempted to re-think the dynamics of character on the basis of Reich's approach. Elsworth Baker, in MAN IN THE TRAP (3) summarised the principal character types described by Reich, and added some new divisions of his own. The other attempt to build on Reich's concepts of character, extend them, and deepen them, has been Alexander Lowen's. Lowen's book THE PHYSICAL SYNAMICS OF CHARACTER STRUCTURE

begins where Reich's CHARACTER ANALYSIS left off, and is one of the most brilliant books on character formation ever written. Lowen's classification remained essentially one in terms of orality, masochism (with anality), and genitality; though he added two chapters on the schizoid and schizophrenic problem.

A second strand of characterology has followed a somewhat different line of development, originating not in Freud's instinct theory, but in his ego psychology. Harry Guntrip (5) has traced the history of this approach, through Melanie Klein to Fairbairn, Winnicott and "object relations" school of British psycho-analysts. The work of Sullivan and the Washington school in America has much in common with this approach in so far as the emphasis was put not on the libidinal stages of development and the specific oral, anal, and genital hang-ups, so much as on the quality of the contact between people. Melanie Klein introduced the terms "depressive position" and "paranoid position" for two modalities of relationship between people. Karen Horney – also following cues given her by Reich – divided character-types into

those who moved against people, those who moved towards them, and those who moved away from them. The greatest achievement of this object-relations approach was Frank Lake's monumental book on characterology, (6) in every way a milestone, in spite of his insistence on presenting his exceptionally clear psychodynamics in close association with specifically Christian theological concepts.

In the last few years Lowen himself has published two books exploring in a more interpersonal way, the dynamics of both the schizoid position (Betrayal of the Body) (7) and the depressive position (Depression and the Body) (8). He has shown himself a very creative thinker who is continuously reformulating his approach to character, simplifying it, and reducing the formative processes down to essentials. His most recent thinking is represented by his 1973 paper on the hierarchy of character (which appeared in Vol.5 No.3 of Energy and Character). (10)

Lowen's approach, coming through Reich, with its emphasis on energy and the bodily tension-systems, began as a physical dynamics, and has moved towards a more total understanding of the root situations that produce character blockages. Lake's approach, coming from his Christians background, began as a consideration of the sicknesses of the soul when it was born into traumatic conditions. Lake has recently become aware of the bio-energetic approach and has paid Lowen the tribute of saying "Lowen's BETRAYAL OF THE BODY is a beautifully written and detailed study of schizoid personality dynamics. I have quite failed to do justice to his immense fertility of inner and outer observation and their connections. He is extremely perceptive as to the physical disabilities from which schizoid personalities suffer". (11)

Lowen's character concepts are widely adopted by bio-energetic analysts, but the developmental thinking in this area has not yet been extended by others in his group. Frank Lake complains that neither theologians nor psychiatrists understand his approach, but housewives are excited by his book.

For some years I have been interested in the relationship between character defences, and animal stress-response patterns. And I have been fascinated by the simple fact that two books as perceptive as Lake's and Lowen's should write so deeply about character formation and yet have evolved independently from different frames of reference.

The present paper is an introductory paper in which I try to relate the fundamental character concepts of Lowen and Lake, and to formulate them at the same time in words that are less linked to Freudian terminology, and more closely linked to ethology. It is an attempt to look at their work from a different angle, one that originates basically outside the psychoanalytic framework.

Wilhelm Reich showed that character and body-posture were unified expressions of a basic underlying energy-metabolism. There are four aspects of energy metabolism, which can be taken as crucial for growth and development. These are:

- a) Energy flow, or the circulation of energy from centre to periphery in streaming pathways. The basic rhythm of swelling and shrinking (pulsation) lies at the foundation of vegetative life. The nature of this energy is not discussed here, but is dealt with in my book on Reich, and in many papers in "Energy and Character". The systole and diastole of the heart, the movements of the intestines (peristalsis), and the pulsatile movements of breathing all express this energetic rhythm, which is mediated by the autonomic nervous system. The basic emotional polarity is of expansive reaching out to the world (in pleasure), and contracted shrinking in from the world (in unpleasure and anxiety).

- b) Energy level, or the degree of charge. The organismic energy level is built up through breathing which charges the body fluids and the blood, as well as oxidizing food to nourish the flame of life. Any activity which promotes deeper breathing helps to build up the energy charge. The level of charge can be determined by blood tests, by observations on the energy field (as in the work of John Pierrakos in New York), and can be assessed subjectively.
- c) Energy direction, or swing. Apart from the fundamental flow from centre to periphery, Lowen has described a longitudinal pulsation (4) from the energy centers in the great plexi of the vegetative nervous system, out to the ends of the body where it can be stored in the two great reservoirs of the pelvic basin, and the head. The direction of energy swing may be downwards, leading to discharge through the legs and genitals, and recharging from the feet through the function of grounding; or upwards, leading to charging by the intake of air and nourishment, and to discharge through emotional expression and language (the function of sounding).
- d) Energy containment, or the quality of the organismic boundary. The muscular system acts as the container and releaser of impulses, and the tonus of the musculature reflects the degree of tension and relaxation in the passage of impulses.

Each of these four aspects of energy metabolism is essential to healthy development. Growth from the dependence of the infant to the independence of the adult can also be seen as falling into four phases, and each of these is related particularly closely to one of the energy functions described above.

PART II: THE MATURATION CYCLE AND THE PRIMARY RIGHTS

Human maturation is a process of moving from the longest period of dependency in the animal kingdom, towards independence. The infant is unable to stand for the best part of a year. After that, once he has learned to walk, he begins his long journey towards independence, a journey he will not complete for eighteen or more years. Maturation is also a key concept in D.W. Winnicott's thinking. (3-4) There are four crucial steps in the maturation of any mammal, the first two concerned with dependency on parents, the second two with moves toward independence from them.

1. Growth inside the womb of the mother. In primates, where the newborn infant is least able to take care of itself, the womb-like unity with the mother continues after birth, the infant clinging to her body, or dependent on her presence, in the process called attachment. Harlow's experiments with rhesus monkeys showed that attachment is not primarily for nourishment, but for skin-comfort and eye-contact. "No form of behavior", writes John Bowlby, "is accompanied by stronger feeling than is attachment behavior".(9)
2. The infant also needs sustenance in the form of nourishment, physical care, and all that we understand by nurturing. Until it is old enough to feed itself without dependence on the mother, it will not survive if deprived of sustenance. The two processes of attachment and sustenance are distinct. A child may be poorly cared for by a mother to whom he feels attached; and he may be unattached to a mother who provides food and physical security but shows no warmth.

3. The young child needs opportunities for exploration. If the processes of attachment and sustenance have been well established, his moves away from the mother to explore his surroundings are the first steps towards eventual full independence. Exploratory play is the basis on which he will learn the skills needed to provide his own sustenance as an adult. In human beings success in this area is the basis for mature achievement and satisfaction in work.
4. There is a need to form relationships with others in the social group. These depend on successful communication, and the understanding and interpretation of bodily signals (and in the case of man spoken signals). The closest forms of communication are found in pair-bonding relationships.

In the case of man we recognize that one of the hallmarks of maturity is the capacity to form stable love-relationships. These contacts lead to the transference of bonding from the parent figures, and to the formation of new attachments, which in turn may become the basis for a new cycle for the next generation.

EROGENOUS ZONES AND LIBIDINAL STAGES

There is a correspondence between these four phases of maturation and the Freudian libidinal positions. Historically, the oedipal-conflicts of the genital period were the first to be studied by Freud. They relate to problems in sexual communication. The second period that Freud investigated was the anal period around the age of 2. Reich and others have questioned whether there is a true anal-erotic stage of development; but if one can think of the anal period as covering roughly the time when the child gains motor control over the sphincters, and has mastered the rudiments of walking, it is clear that this is a crucial period of development. It relates to what I am calling the phase of exploration. Freud believed that the oral period was the earliest developmental stage. There is a considerable discussion in John Bowlby's classic study of attachment (9) of the view that many psycho-analysts have erred in seeing the oral phase as the most basic. Bowlby comments that Melanie Klein shows a "pronounced tendency for her theoretical formulations to be dominated by the inter-related themes of food, orality, and the mother's breast". He criticizes Erikson for his view that "basic trust, on which he places so much emphasis, has its origins in orality". Rene Spitz is similarly criticized for holding that "true object-relations stem from the need for food". Bowlby considers that all these writers are of other features in the first year of life and later.

Jerome Liss opens his chapter "Why touch" in his book on the New Therapies, with this statement:

"Freudian theory states that oral feeding is the infant's most crucial relationship to its mother. That is why the first period of life is called the `oral period`. Freud did not study infants directly but based his findings on his work with adult patients. From a common sense point of view though, wouldn't you say Freud was right? After all, it does seem that the most obvious characteristic of the small infant is that he will howl when hungry and show great satisfaction when fed.

However, if we examine the experimental work of Harlow as presented in John Bowlby's excellent and comprehensive book, Attachment and Loss, Volume I, we see that Freud was definitely

wrong. The infant's emotional life is not as affected by periodic feeding as it is by the availability of touch. Harlow's experimental work is carried out with infant monkeys, (thank God) but there is nothing to suggest his results would be reversed for human infants".(37)

Reich, Harlow, Bowlby and Suttie have all stressed the crucial role played by skin contact and by eye contact in the early life of the child. Elsworth Baker, following the lead taken by Reich, has described a fourth erogenous zone and libidinal stage: the `ocular`, which although overlapping in time with the oral phase, is even more fundamental.

"Except for general body feeling, the ocular zone is the infant's first specific contact with the environment. As a matter of fact, it remains the means of reaching out the farthest. The eyes are also the first area to be traumatized, either by having medication applied at birth, or by meeting with cold, frightening, or hateful expressions. Hostile expressions imply the negation of any opportunity for warm and understanding contact. Full contact is vital to development in general. It promotes a feeling of acceptance and well-being and encourages expansion and reaching out into the environment. It is especially important for proper development of the sensory organs, all of which are derived from the skin or ectoderm.Normally where there is good contact with the mother, the eyes remain open, frank, and inquiring, with a serious but trusting quality. Healthy eyes develop binocular vision, which is vision which is necessary to maintain good contact with the environment and to permit adequate integration of the individual. In other words, he can place himself properly in his environment, experience pleasure from it, and respond to acceptance he finds there. Excitation from the eyes is felt directly in the genital as a pleasurable thrill". (3 p.18-19)

The "ocular" and "oral" phases therefore both occur in the same period, just as the phases of attachment and sustenance are seen existing alongside each other. The emphasis by Reich and his followers on the primacy of contact between mother and child, over and beyond the special features of the oral relationship, are completely consistent with the findings of modern ethology.

EXISTENTIAL AND BIOENERGETIC THINKING

Frank Lake has developed a model of mental health, derived from existential theology, involving four components: a state of "being" in which the child gains his sense of identity through the experience of contact with the mother; a state of "well-being" in which he gains the feeling that he can be secure and is entitled to support; a state of "achievement", when he gains satisfaction in developing skills; and the gaining of personal "status" based on secure emotional relationships with others. These four states correspond to the four phases of maturation I have described above, which are therefore valid even without the specifically Christian flavor that Lake brings to them.

Lowen (10) has described character defenses in relationship to five primary rights which are violated by defective upbringings. The rights he describes are:-

(One)"The right to exist, that is to be in the world as an individual organism. This right is generally established during the first months of existence". This right is associated with the opportunity for attachment and is related directly to free energy flow and to the first phase of the maturation cycle. It is the experience of being and seeing.

(Two) "The right to be secure, which derives from the support and nourishing function of the

mother sharing the first years". This right relates to the sense of being charged, and to the period of sustenance. It is the experience of having and tasting.

(Three) "The right to be free, that is not to be subject to the needs of others".

And (d) "The right to be independent which the child establishes through its self-assertion and its opposition to the parent". Both these rights are associated with a free energy swing (which Lowen sees as the basis of the reality drive); and with the phase of exploration, and the early moves towards independence. Both involve the experience of doing and making.

(e) "The right to want, and to move towards the satisfaction of these wants openly and directly. This right has a big ego component and is the last of the natural rights to be established. I would relate its emergence and development to the period between 3 and 6 years of age approximately. It is strongly tied to the early sexual feelings of the child". This right clearly is associated with the child's freedom to communicate his feelings straightforwardly in which I have called the fourth phase of maturation. It depends additionally on fine adjustments in muscular tonus, and involves the experience of giving and taking.

A neurosis is a disorder incurred under chronic stress. Normally the stress occurs during infancy, where the child cannot easily escape from it. Animals do not appear to become neurotic unless they are domesticated by man, or imprisoned in zoos.

Neurosis is a breakdown in the conditions of maturation, and a violation of these basic rights. The character-defenses are desperate counter measures aimed at ensuring survival and continued growth by re-asserting those rights by some means. They allow the organism a limited functioning which without them and in the fact of the traumas that are undergone, would not be possible. They are re-grouping operations, protective towards life.

The neuroses can be looked on as falling into four groups, corresponding to the four phases of the maturation cycle. Since the ability to explore and to communicate satisfactorily is based on adequate attachment and sustenance, we would expect that neuroses associated with blockages in the phases of exploration and communication might rest on a sub-structure of disturbance based on blockages in the phases of attachment and sustenance. This is what we do find. It is possible, though not very likely, that a person could have basically good experiences in the first two phases, and the major traumas would occur only during the later two phases on the move towards independence. In general any particular person is likely to show some degree of malfunction in each of these four areas. The character defenses are universal patterns of response. They are the colors of hurt. But each person is also likely to show a latent capacity to function in each of these areas which, well-hidden, survives undamaged. It is this latent capacity which makes therapy possible. It is the health in the patient we work with to overcome the sickness. Without it we would drown in pathology, for no therapist can bring health to a person who offers nothing except resistance.

We are now in a position to look at some of the differences in the characterology proposed by Lake and by Lowen. Lowen has distinguished 5 major character defense patterns, two of which lie in the first half of the maturation cycle, and 3 of which lie in the second half of the cycle. Lake on the other hand has devoted himself primarily to the first half of the cycle only, and has described 4 major character patterns associated with this period. His work is more detailed in this area, as Lowen's is more detailed in the later phases of the cycle. The two characterologies are complementary, and mutually consistent.

The following scheme clarifies this, and forms the basis for the account that follows.

Energy Function	Maturation Phase	Basic Rights	A. Lowen's Characterology	F. Lake's Characterology	Associated Libidinal Zone
Flow	Attachment	To exist	Schizoid	Schizoid- Hysterical	"Ocular"
Charge	Sustenance	To be secure	Oral	Paranoid- Depressive	"Anal"
Swing	Exploration	To be free & independent	Psychopathic, masochistic	Sado-masochistic, Obsessional & compulsive	"Anal"
Tonus	Communication	To want	Rigid	Compliant defences	"Genital"

PART III: ATTACHMENT & SEPARATION: THE STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY

The basic right in this period is the right to exist in the world, to have a sense of one's own identity. The infant needs close contact with the skin of the mother, which forms the basis of his contact with the world. The need for recognition through being touched and looked at, so that one experiences oneself as seen, is absolutely basic to a maturing identity sense. The infant needs to experience himself being experienced; the mother who can delight in her child has the reciprocal joy of experiencing him experiencing her. These contact-approaches are the basis of personalization. The ability to form loving relationships as an adult absolutely depends on them. It is in this context of containment within the arms and orbit of the mother that the infant learns to define his own boundaries, learns to face himself and another human being, and derives his sense of belonging in the world.

The basic threat to attachment is annihilation through detachment and separation. The infant who is deprived of these essential contact experiences, lives in a basic and intolerable sense of dread and despair. This is the agony of the fundamental schizoid position of abandonment and desolation and being frozen out of this world. The degree of severity of stress determines which of the two dominant character reactions to this position will develop as a way of coping with the intolerable, so as to survive without going mad. Pavlov has introduced the concept of trans-marginal stressing, which Lake has adapted to describe the functional shift between two very contrasting character reactions- patterns, the schizoid defense and the hysterical defense, which both derive from attempts to deal with dread. The essence of the concept of trans-marginal stressing is that a response, which is adequate to a certain mounting level of stress will eventually become inadequate, and once a margin of tolerance, or threshold of stress is passed, an opposite kind of stress-response comes into effect.

Let us take as an example the response to a physical stress of extreme cold. Initial responses include shivering, which activates the musculature to warm up the body; and a person may deliberately move more vigorously in order to counteract the cold. He may try desperately to escape to somewhere warmer.

Free Article

We may describe his increasing attempts at flight from cold as a mounting panic towards warmth. But if the stress is too severe there comes a threshold where the person subjected to cold becomes bemused by it, his faculties become less active, his body becomes peripherally numb and frozen. In the first stage of stress, towards warmth, fire and heat are sources of strong attraction. But to a person who has become cold-adapted, the approach of heat may cause acute pain as he starts to thaw out. One part of the cold-adaptation response to this kind of stress may then include a retreat from warmth.

This example is intended to form an analogy for responses to the emotional cold, which blocks the child's attachment. The schizoid character defense is a response to a deeper level of stress than the hysterical defense; but although these two defenses are in many ways opposite in kind, both are attempts to cope with the same kind of threat. The schizoid person experiences the dread of non-being and rejection as an acute terror, against which he freezes with a paralysis and fragmentation of many of his functions; the hysterical person experiences this dread as a source of acute pain from which he runs in flight.¹ Depersonalization is a root experience in both character patterns, since not being a person in one's own right is basic to the position of dread. But whereas the schizoid character has learned to live with this depersonalization, and to use it as a protection against further stress from people (a form of cold-adaptation), the hysteric is in flight from depersonalization. All his defenses are built around avoiding it.

FUNCTIONAL IDENTITY & ANTITHESIS

Frank Lake has devoted seven pages of his book (6) to a summary of the contrasts between the schizoid and the hysterical reaction. I have selected a few of these below. They illustrate Reich's concept of functional identity and antithesis.

HYSTERICAL REACTION

Reaction from dread in the direction of people and the substantial world.

Extraversion and defence by attachment, to person and things.

Separation-anxiety; anxious when no-one pays attention.

Touch hunger; needs to be grasped and hugged.

Enjoys flamboyant flinging extensor movements.

SCHIZOID REACTION

Reaction from dread in the direction away from people and away from the material world.

Introversion, and defence by detachment from persons and things.

Commitment-anxiety; anxious when attention is paid.

Cringes from touch; cannot bear embrace or close grip.

Movements express guarding, cringing away, and hugging oneself.

¹ Charles Rycroft terms this the 'phobic' defence. (12)

Over-communicative; needs to have a socially full life.	Under-communicative; needs large safe areas of emptiness.
<u>When suffering, creates an audience.</u>	Creeps away to suffer in silence.
<u>Supplies any lack by going to people.</u>	Supplies inner lack by going to books or to reflective mental activity.
Pleasantly excited by publicity.	Appalled by publicity, love privacy.
Taking leave is like a little death.	Taking leave is like a new lease on life
Feelings tend to be explosive.	Feelings tend to be implosive.
Compulsive need to be looked at. Clothes are used to attract favorable gaze and to look younger.	Compulsive need not to attract attention. Clothes are used to deny sex and give an impression of age.

LOOKING & SEEING

Elsworth Baker has distinguished between the 'ocular repressed' character, which corresponds to the schizoid defense, and the 'ocular unsatisfied'. His only example of the latter category is that of the "voyeur". The voyeur, however, can be looked on as a special case of the hysterical need to cling for contact. But because more direct sexual approaches are too strongly repressed, the voyeur clings with his eyes. Judging by the widespread sales of nudie magazines the voyeur-tendency is very common. The libidinal fantasy is described by Lake as integral to the longing of the hysterical position:

"The real personal good that flows abundantly from the mother's body, her full breasts, her round and gentle limbs, her smooth touch, her exciting smells, all this he has lost. But he has never become reconciled to the loss. It is fixated. His mind possesses picture galleries of these more desirable objects. It is always open to a lonely person to take a walk round his private gallery. As he walks down the street he is projecting, almost unconsciously, these pictures in front of him. His eyes, like those of certain insects, seem to be out at the end of long wandering antennae, so sensitive are they to the presence of one of his favoured shapes, even in the far distance". (6 p.372)

Whereas the true hysteric may find ways of gaining the skin contact she hungers for, the voyeur has to be content with touching the objects of his fantasies with his eyes. If the girl in the picture is looking at him, he feels the acceptance he needs, but real life eye-contact carries too much energy-charge for him to find comfortable. (How embarrassing for a voyeur to look through a key-hole and see another eye looking back at him!) The significance of voyeurism in the culture at large has been clearly seen by John Berger who shows in his book on WAYS OF SEEING how this kind of seeing turns people into objects:

“To be naked is to be oneself. To be nude is to be seen naked by others and yet not recognized for oneself. A naked body has to be seen as an object in order to become a nude. The sight of it as an object stimulates the use of it as an object. Nakedness reveals itself. Nudity is placed on display. To be naked is to be without disguise. To be on display is to have the surface of one’s own skin, the hairs of one’s own body, turned into a disguise, which, in that situation, can never be discarded. The nude is condemned to never being naked. Nudity is a form of dress”. (17 p.54)

If exhibitionism is not repressed in the hysteric, this disguise is identified with. In this way the contact at the surface compensates for the lack of contact in depth and the absence of true recognition (just as surface sexual activity can become a defense against deep sexual feeling).

So whereas the schizoid person develops `internal vision` and can see but does not look or like being looked at, the hysteric develops `external vision`, and can look but does not see.

TWO TYPES OF SPLITTING

The basic experience, which underlies both the schizoid and the hysterical positions is that of splitting (or fragmentation).

The schizoid person has been split as though by ice: his mother is typically cold and hateful, with the hate disguised and deeply repressed. The hysteric has been split as if by lightening: the mother is typically hot and angry, with the rage often manifest. She can look at her child as if looks could kill.

The schizoid and the hysterical defenses are the inside and the outside of each other. We could say that the hysteric is like fire, she has a flaming character defence to counteract the ice that is in her womb and in her heart. The Greek word ‘hysteron’ means womb; there was a theory that ‘hysteria’ was due to ‘suffocation of the womb’ by the retained animal spirits which should have been released in sexual intercourse. The hysteric throws all her energy into a desperate attempt to preserve life and youth against the inner sense of dying which stems from the schizoid dread; the schizoid person on the other hand is like ice - he has a frozen periphery which acts as a barrier behind which he can nurse what warmth he has left.² Under the schizoid ice-wall there is often a fiery, passionate nature, terrified of being extinguished, or of turning into a conflagration of rage.

It follows from this that the typical schizoid nightmares are of ice-cold deserts and arctic wastes - basically death by freezing or slow extinction; whereas the typical hysterical nightmare includes atomic bombs and white-hit explosions - basically death by burning, or sudden catastrophe.

From these relationships it follows that progress for the hysteric means helping her to face the death of aloneness and abandonment that she is in flight from; whereas progress for the schizoid person means helping him to construct the channels of contact along which his hot life-forces can flow. As he gets better he may seem more hysterical. For people in both character-situations, therapy becomes an existential matter, one is dealing with the therapy of existence, since the trauma strikes at the roots of existence.

² Compare Winnicott’s notion of a ‘true self in cold storage’.

HYSTERICAL FLIGHT

If this account of the basic hysterical problem is correct, how is it that hysteria is usually described as an oedipal problem, and the hysterical character is described by Lowen as falling within the 'rigid' category? The fact is that all the rigid neuroses may contain roots in the schizoid position, as Lowen has shown in his book *THE BETRAYAL OF THE BODY*. The genital conflicts of the hysteric in her dealings with them have been described by a number of writers. The hysteric has usually suffered a double disappointment: it is rejection at the hands of the father which produces the specific mixture of rage blocked by longing, and longing blocked by rage, which Lowen has described so brilliantly; but this rejection is itself underpinned by the desperate need to turn from the unsatisfactory mother and find a more reliable attachment figure. The hysterical blocks to sexual communication - about which more will be said later - rest in turn upon a substructure of wounds to basic trust and containment.

"When a child's need for intimacy, body contact and oral erotic gratification is not fulfilled in the first years of life", Lowen writes, "it becomes transferred to the sexual feelings which developed during the oedipal period.....The sexual attachment to the parent of the opposite sex is charged with the unfulfilled infantile longing for intimacy". (7 p.118)

The hysteric is pushed into sexuality by two forces: the impulse of flight towards contact with a man who might provide the warmth and holding she needs, and by a flight away from the anguish and distress that racks her. But these impulses themselves conflict. To commit her heart to a relationship is to put herself in the power of someone who could abandon her, and so reinforce the hurt. So although skin-contact is sought, a deeper merging with another person involves intense risk. In the dark hours of the night when orgasm- anxiety is at its height - representing as Reich saw a fear of dying and a melting down of one's identity - when the hysteric is clenched against deeper contact from the man she has gone to for comfort, who can console her?

The hysteric lives on the battlefield between fire and ice. If she turns against her own life-impulses and contact-needs too strongly, as did the repressed Viennese girls that Freud was treating in his classic period, then the ice starts gaining the upper hand. Whole areas of the body may become energetically immobilized, contracted down, to obliterate sensation and produce hysterical anaesthesias, or to obliterate movement and produce hysterical paralyses. As Lowen has pointed out, in an age when the acting out of peripheral sexuality is less socially condemned (and may even be socially endorsed), such conversion symptoms are less common. But the hysteric who does not damp herself down in such ways, may be in constant underlying torment. Her body, if not drugged into passivity by conversion reactions, is actively protesting. In the Salem witch trials the hurts and aches of hysterical distress were attributed to the devil; if the girls would not project their distress and confess to consorting with the devil, they were likely to be burnt at the stake as witches. Anyone who has witnessed the intensity of primal distress when it finally surfaces in therapy could be forgiven for thinking that the hysteric is possessed by devils; sometimes the body seems almost literally to writhe in its own flames. If these severe autonomic symptoms are themselves repressed, as they usually are, (for the whole hysterical neurosis is an attempt to escape from them, and to socialise their panicky energy), one may find the fear and fright that they contain projected into phobias of something in the outside world, spiders, or motor cars for example, which are a source of threat. The fear and

panic that nourishes hysteria may be more tightly contained in the phobias, though they may return in full strength in the nightmares of explosion or disaster.

“The maximum fear”, Lake writes, “is attached to any movement which takes the frightened person one step farther away from the place where the attentive person is, or is to come, or any situation which curtails movement to safe places. Because, when whole-person experiences are not available, the infant calls fantasy to its aid and becomes, in imagination, related to part- objects on its own body or on the body of another person, or associated with the longed for person, this disorder of movement secondarily attaches itself to objects. To certain object which Laughlin sensibly calls ‘soteria’, there is a passionate attachment. To be separated from them arouses irrational fear, or phobia. Other objects are associated with the fearful infantile experiences and these become indirectly the centre of a phobic reaction. If these feared objects approach from the environment the patient attempts to fly from them and, if this is not possible, is rooted to the spot in panic”. (6)

‘Soteria’ are those comfort-sources which protect one from panic; clinging to a teddy-bear or a furry animal may allay night-fears; the adult hysteric for whom comfort-figures in infancy had become sources of pain or absence, may turn to the body of her lover, or a part of him, for this kind of protection. The man’s penis can become a soterial object to be clung to as a talisman against dread; but if the talisman doesn’t work, and the hysterical nightmare continues, the search is on for a more gratifying contact-source. What the hysteric needs, more than anything, to get out of this trap, are dependable people she can work with who can supply contact, warmth and containment, in order to help face the dread she has spent a lifetime trying to escape from. This is not the place to describe the difficulties and rewards of a therapeutic relationship with a hysteric.

SCHIZOID PARALYSIS

The schizoid person’s implosive nightmare is locked into the paralysis by what Lake has called the ‘tripartite split’. (11) There is a split between the body and the mind, so that the schizoid person lives in the shadow of the depersonalization that the hysteric mostly succeeds in evading; there is a split within the organism between the terror which freezes and traps the energy, bottling vital feelings in an imploded and contracted body structure, and the rage which seeks to blow outwards destructively and explosively, but is checked by the terror; and there is the split between the self and the outside world, which leads to a set of ‘as if’ relationships. The specific schizoid defense against the isolation of the contactless ice-desert, which is his primary experience of the world, may take several forms.

The schizoid depersonalization leads to at least three characteristic deformations of the self-image: the ‘saint’, the ‘demon’ and the ‘robot’. The saint-image in the schizoid person stands at the threshold of the mystical identification. Such a person counteracts the deadness and dreariness of life in the world, with an active hope for a better life beyond the grave. The saint has a ghost-like body drained of warm blood; the spirituality and sensitivity survive in a partially disembodied form. He is able to influence people by indirect ways, such as telepathy. In this way he may do good in the world. The high ideals and good intentions of

the schizoid saint give him some self-respect to counter the desperate sense of non-being. In a way, the schizoid lives beyond the grave, he acts as though his body is in part already dead, which is how it feels, and as though he has an existence beyond it. Many of the great mystics have an underlying schizoid root in this kind of defense, which is not to belittle the values in their mysticism, only to point to the qualities of dematerialization in it. The saint can maintain his existence only by denial of the demon-image, which also afflicts the schizoid sufferer. Unfortunately the godly and the devilish are twin faces of the one coin: ghosts and demons inhabit the same nightmare. The repressed passions and rages which seethe far below the surface in the schizoid body-structure may erupt at times through vents in the character-frozenness, so that the schizoid person may be prone to malignant feelings, devilish thoughts, and demonic outbursts. If the demonic impulses are fully acted in life we are dealing with the murderous frenzy of the schizoid psychopath exploding volcanically across the as-if frontier into reality. Much more frequently the demonic is not acted out, but haunts the consciousness of the schizoid person in fantasy. Since censorship has been relaxed in the arts we have seen many examples of demonic schizoid fantasy acted out on stage or screen, though I shall not discuss the desirability or undesirability of censorship here. Often the demonic is well hidden and acted out in partial ways, as Lowen has described in his chapter on demons and monsters. Demonic acting out of this kind may be the basis for persecutory attacks on the child disguised by angelic intention. (See Schatsman)(13)

A third very common schizoid image and body-structure is that of the 'robot'. A robot is a mechanical man, without apparent feelings, who has found a way of functioning in the world without flesh and blood. Many schizoid people are fascinated by machinery, computers and electronic gadgets (even though if they also have paranoid leanings, these may appear as persecutory objects); in the over-emphasis on the intellect and higher-brain processes, which are found with this defense, there is an attempt to emulate the compulsive certainty and superiority of the computer. Feelings may be submerged, the body may be mechanical, but through a life of cold-headed thought one may still preserve a tenuous identity to offset the dark vortex of nothingness, which lies beneath the feet of the schizoid person if he dare look down into it.

"At a clinical seminar in my office", write Lowen, "a young man was presented whose physical appearance strongly resembled the pictures of Frankenstein's monster. He had the same stiff, mechanical walk, square shoulders, deep-set unalive eyes, and facial expression as the monster of the movies". Yet under this exterior of the robot lay a "delicate and frightened child who had somehow developed this unusual appearance to protect himself from an insensitive world". (7 p.147)

I shall not say anything here about the treatment of schizoid suffering. Building a bridge back towards warmth is not easy, but both Lowen and Lake have described the energy, which the schizoid person will bring to bear on healing himself once he realizes the therapist has a genuine concern and humility in his efforts to help. In some ways the schizoid person is more readily accessible, since he is closer to his predicament than some of the more densely-layered neurotic patterns. Some aspects of the treatment of a schizoid person were also described in my article "The Divided Body" (14) in an issue of *Energy and Character*, which had several other contributions on the schizoid problem.

PART IV: SUSTENANCE & DEPRIVATION: THE STRUGGLE FOR NOURISHMENT

A child derives his sense of being, identity and human nature from his attachment experiences during the first year or so of life. But during this time he is also totally dependent upon the mother for nurture, nourishment, and oral supplies. A good mother not only confirms a child in identity by her touch and her glance, but also sustains him with the milk from her body or a substitute for it. In the attachment phase the emphasis is on the containing function of the mother's arms and eye-contact, which reinforce the embrace of the womb. But in the taking of nourishment the child becomes the container, the mother becomes the contents, as he drinks her, or what she offers him, into his body. The problems in this relationship are related to what the world tastes like, the inner sense of well-being.

"A learning process has to take place", write Bjorn Christiansen (15) "in order for sucking to be fully gratifying, and if no learning process takes place, whether due to the fact that the supply of milk is insufficient, more milk is forced into the baby's mouth than its digestive system will accept, or feeding is rigidly bound to a time-table out of step with the infant's own rhythm or pursued in an atmosphere of restlessness, irritation and rejection, we are faced with various possibilities. One of these possibilities is that the sucking response will continue to assert itself in different ways. But the possibility also exists that the constantly ungratifying situation will give rise to postural changes in the infant, changes preventing its repetitious frustrations". Christiansen goes on to distinguish between infants who "appeared always to be hungry and became excited at feeding time", and others who appeared "never to be hungry, and were easily disturbed when fed".

A child in the vulnerable suckling situation may be exposed to various degrees of stress. The milk may be too hot or too cold, or the mixture may be wrong, if it is bottle fed. Or it may be breast fed, but the milk may be running out so the nourishment is thin, or may taste bad. Feeding, instead of being a source of sustenance, may come to be dreaded either as a situation of being deprived of the correct nourishment, or of being positively invaded by bad nourishment. "Many people who cheerfully advocate bottle feeding" writes Bevan-Browne, "would be astonished and horrified if they were able to be present at psychiatric sessions in which the patient under treatment reproduces feelings and impressions of terror at being pursued and attached with a terrible weapon which is going to pin him down, transfix, or even kill him. This process is being carried out by a mother or mother substitute with the best of motives, who is convinced that the baby needs food, and that her task is to force the teat into his mouth by any means available, whether he resists or not". (16 p.23)

Food is essential to life, but few things cause more revulsion than being force-fed. Adult prisoners on hunger strike who are force-fed report that it is one of the most traumatic experiences they have ever undergone, and produces vomiting, disorder of the intestinal tract, and severe discomfort. How much more horrific must such an experience seem to an infant who is learning how to drink in the world, and whose sense of well-being or ill-being derives from the feeding situation? The work of the Boyesens (18) has shown how basic the peristaltic movements of the intestinal tract are to the sense of sweetness in later life. The basic trauma, if the nourishing function is disturbed, is that life tastes at best sour, and at the worst you want to vomit what you have been given out again as so much poison. The experience of being

poisoned, or persecuted with emptiness, is the root experience of the paranoid position. The functions that nourish charge: breathing, eating, and sleeping are all weakened. The basic threat, whether by withdrawal of supplies or pollution, is of sapping or exhaustion, of having one's lifeblood drained away.

This is how one of Frank Lake's patients relived his trauma of bad nourishment:-

"I could feel myself as an infant. (There are long pauses between short phrases, her tongue moving with sticky noises in a dry mouth. From time to time she makes loud sucking noises). I can't talk sense. I can only see pictures and feel with my mouth. It feels as if it would choke me. Chewing away and not able to breathe. As if I dare not take time off chewing in order to breathe. It goes back to being so elementarily physical. Confined to your mouth and to your feeling here. (Pointing with her hand to the genital area)... I just feel like one big hunger. It tastes sickly like half-turned milk, like regurgitated milk. It's poisonous. I hate being just all appetite. You've got driven to such a point of inner desolation that all that's left of you is the physical.

"For a long time my hands were in the air hanging on to mother's breast like a child, and getting nowhere. Then I fell backwards. I felt utterly empty with an indescribable taste, a tasteless taste, not bitter, but sick. My mouth is dry as dust, working all the time. It sounds too elemental to be said. My whole body just seems to be empty, groping. All this is silly. I must have had food. I get pictures of mother's body as dead and shrunken breasts. My mouth went big and swollen and I felt as if I was all want. It is a horrible feeling and a suffocating feeling... The springs of life turned bitter on me. Yesterday somewhere there was some water draining away, and it seemed to be pouring away from the very sources of my being... Whenever I think of mother's breasts, I think of them with feelings of nausea... I feel all puffy in the cheeks like a baby, and it's a horrible taste. I am trying to suck all the time and it is a revolting feeling. I work at it but it gets drier and drier, an absolutely nauseating physical feeling – a breast with nothing in it, all shrunken like mother's breasts looked when she was dying". (6)

HORROR AND DISGUST

If the root schizoid experience is terror at loss of being, the basic paranoid experience is one of horror at loss of well-being. The horror at being nauseated is linked to disgust, as Darwin has pointed out:-

"Judging from pictures, the whole body is often turned away or shrinks; or the arms are violently protruded as if to push away some dreadful object. The most frequent gesture is the raising of both shoulders, with the bent arms pressed closely against the sides or chest. These movements are nearly the same with those commonly made when we feel cold; and they are generally accompanied by a shudder, as well as by a deep expiration or inspiration, according as the chest happens at the time to be expanded or contracted. The sounds thus made are expressed by words like uh or ugh. It is not however, obvious why, when we feel cold or express a sense of horror, we press our bent arms against our bodies, raise our shoulders and shudder". (19 p.305)

But Darwin's account of disgust is also very close:

"As the sensation of disgust primarily arises in connection with the act of eating or tasting, it is natural that its expression should consist chiefly in movements around the mouth. But disgust is generally accompanied by gestures as if to push away or to guard oneself against the offensive object. With respect to the face, moderate disgust is exhibited in various ways: by the mouth being widely opened, as if to let an offensive morsel drop out; by spitting; by blowing out of the protruded lips; or by sound of clearing the throat. Such guttural sounds are written ach or ugh; and their utterance is sometimes accompanied by a shudder, the arms being pressed close to the sides and the shoulders raised in the same manner as when horror is experienced. Extreme disgust is expressed by movements round the mouth identical with those preparatory to the act of vomiting". (19 p.257)

The horrific experience of being nauseated at the source of nourishment may also occur if a child is forced to digest experiences or to swallow other people's bad feelings. Why is a horror film called a horror film and not a terror film? Why do vampires which feed on human flesh, which is nauseating, feature so strongly in horror films? I knew a woman who had the experience as a child of having to watch her father drive her mother mad. Having to witness this, she found nauseating, yet she was helpless to ward it off. The experience polluted her, and had a lot to do with her paranoid expectation.

The persecutory regime that Dr. Schreber, a prominent Viennese physician, devised for his son consisted of a whole series of restrictive and constrictive measures which have been relentlessly described by Morton Schatzman. Here the relationship of the persecutory methods to purification measures can be seen. By purifying his son he seeks to ward off the sense of his own pollution; in the end the sense of pollution is transformed into the paranoid feeling in the son.

"Dr. Schreber's method of teaching a baby self-denial is to set up a hierarchy by which he applies his power upon the nurse to apply hers upon the baby... The father specifies in detail what children up to seven years should eat and drink at each meal, what they must never eat or drink, when they are and are not allowed to drink water, and how often and at what times meals should be". The reasons given include the "avoidance of a 'pampered stomach', and the attainment by the digestive system of 'full Strength'". (13)

At the first instance of any whims of tastes towards or against particular foods, Dr. Schreber recommends, "one should never give in; one should not give the child a morsel of anything else until he has completely eaten the refused food".

"The father", Schatzman explains, "demands that a child disobey the child's natural desire to eat...In order to meet the demands of the father's system, a child would have to learn to forget and to forget he was ignoring all signals of hunger (and some of satiety) from his digestive tract. In effect, he would have to forget, especially between meals, he had a stomach". (13)

Dr. Schreber's belief was that withholding food was a way of suffocating the "seeping poison of the soul". The starving of emotions he objected to was described by him as the 'gentle treatment'. Schatzman argues that the father is trying to eradicate his own 'rotten spots' by his regimes; unfortunately we don't have information about his own pollution or deprivation problems as a child, which he tries to counteract through the upbringing of his son.

Alexander Lowen has described the case of Aldo, a compulsive over-eater with a paranoid personality. Aldo's mother had been "pre-occupied with the functions of the alimentary canal. The success of a day was measured by the amount of food he consumed and the regularity of his bowel movements. If he was constipated for a day, he received an enema. In effect his body was violated at both ends by his mother". (7)

Compulsive eating is linked by Lowen to paranoid behavior. "The compulsive eater 'acts out' his feelings of frustration, rage, and guilt by over-eating. Over-eating serves to reduce his feeling of frustration, to express his rage, and to focus his guilt. Eating and devouring are infantile modes of expressing aggression. Compulsive over-eating is a literal doing away with or destruction of food which is a symbol of the mother".

The worst possible thing Aldo's mother could do to him was "to expose her breasts to me. It's repulsive". At the same time Aldo felt: "I don't deserve pleasure because I'm evil. There is too much hate in me". (7)

THE PARANOID SCREEN

The awareness of horror as an infant at the breast, expressed in the long quotation from Frank Lake given earlier, is normally blocked from awareness, for this is the nausea of the paranoid position which it takes much courage to face, whereas the paranoid defense projects the sense of being persecuted on to figures in the on-going environment, and wards off the humiliating sense of weakness and emptiness with paranoid delusions of grandeur. Just as the compulsive over-eating absorbs some of the rage and blows the body up large so that it is less puny and exposed to hurt, so the paranoid person when he senses a threat, puts out a kind of screen which makes it difficult (though no impossible) to get near him.³ It would be interesting to hear John Pierrakos' comments on the energy field of an inflamed paranoid person. I have certainly sensed it as like an electric fence forming a perimeter several yards from the body, designed to neutralize and repel possible attack or invasion. The work 'horror' derives from words related to 'shaggy', 'hairy', 'bristly', and to animals like the wolf and the hedgehog. When one shudders one comes out in goose pimples; a wolf's hair will stand on end, as will a hedgehog's bristles, to repel an attack. The paranoid screen is horrendous in this sense, and the paranoid character is bristly and spiky, like a cactus which has to barricade itself against invaders which rob it of nourishment. In a full-blown paranoid system, there is a primary delusion of persecutory forces. Morten Schatzman has devoted his whole book to showing that delusions of persecution must be taken seriously. They are a genuine reflection of real persecutory events; it is only the realisation that the source of persecution was someone who one needed as a source of sustenance and well-being which is so painful that it cannot readily be faced except with the support of a therapist.

The alternatives that Lowen's patient Aldo was faced with, were to live by his will power, or to resign. "For him to use his will power as if every morsel of food was a matter of life and death would turn him into a monster", writes Lowen. "He needs his will to support his omnipotence, for when the will falters, he will collapse into humiliation".

"Aldo's difficulty lay in the unacceptability of the alternatives that his problem presented: to identify with his body with all its humiliating connotations or to deny the body and escape into

³ It may be in this sense that the repulsive reaction of horror, as Dick Mullins suggested, is a defence against terror. (35)

paranoid thinking. The first was intolerable, the second was disastrous. The unpleasant feelings in his body and its unattractive appearance made him attempt to find his personal worth in his mind. As he saw it, the 'nothingness' of his body could be countered by the omnipotence of his mind, the contamination of his body by the purity of his mind. Through the will, his rejected and despised body became merely and instrument of action.

"There are two ways of reacting to a situation in which the body is experienced as unacceptable. One way is to 'deaden' the body, to withdraw inward behind a shell, and to reduce one's activities. The other way is to withdraw upward, to rise above the body through an over-identification with the ego and the will. The second way is the paranoid mechanism. It leads to delusions of grandeur (megalomania); ideas of reference (people are talking about me); and feelings of persecution (people are hostile)....The paranoid person goes 'wild'. As his energy goes into his head his ego becomes overcharged, his will becomes a superhuman force, and his body becomes capable of actions that are normally impossible". (7)

The alternative to going wild is going dead. Lowen relates this to the schizoid retreat; but I would prefer to stress the alternative to the paranoid defence offered by the depressive reactions. For in which character reaction do we find the severest paralysis of the will, so much so that the body becomes 'incapable even of actions that are normally possible', if not in the depressive character?

Just as the two primary reactions patterns to the dread on non-being, in the attachment phase, are the inverse of each other, so the paranoid and depressive reactions are antithetical, yet are malnourished at the same root. But whereas the paranoid person attempts to spit out the bad taste, and to blame the world for the evil he seeks to deny in himself, the depressive person identifies with the bad taste, and blames either his own body or himself. If a paranoid reaction collapses, a person falls back into the humiliation and weakness of the oral-deprivation or oral-persecution he has suffered. On the other hand if a depressive person enters a manic phase, he may well develop delusions of grandeur and omnipotence as rich as any paranoid person.

Morton Schatsman similarly has pointed out how Dr. Schreber's "soaring towards high moral ideals can be seen to be his way of denying or flying from the threat of his 'depressive emotions'; in so doing he may be employing, in the idiom of Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott, the English psychoanalysts, a 'manic defense". (13)

Lake does in fact suggest that the distinction between a paranoid response of blaming the world, and a depressive response of blaming oneself, involves a margin of tolerance to stress. I believe myself that the paranoid trauma is more severe because it occurs earlier in the life-cycle. Winnicott argues that the paranoid feeling can date from the first day of life, whereas the basis of depression dates from the second six months of life or later. (34 p.112)

Depressive states involve a sense of loss, whereas the paranoid person's basic experience is that what he has had is so worthless that he wants to get rid of it as soon as possible. Lowen has clearly shown the polarity between the paranoid and the depressive reactions when he writes:-

"The child's sanity and survival require that he sees his mother in a positive light. This can be done by dissociating her clearly destructive behaviour from her personality, which is then projected on a 'bad mother'. Later when reality proves that there are not two mothers, the child absorbs the mother's negative aspect into himself. The child sees himself as the villain or monster who by some twist of fate behaves so as to merit the pain he experienced". (8)

LOSS AND RAGE

Psychiatry distinguishes between two types of depression, known as agitated or reactive depression and endogenous or retarded depression. Lake has summarized the characteristics of the two and has suggested that the distinction is a valid one. The reactive depression shows much more agitation and anxiety, and is associated with a deeply buried rage against the mother. The other form of depression is characterized by a weaker energy system and associated with more hypochondriacal symptoms. The predominant situation for a child in this situation can be described as follows:-

“Since the person whose supplies of sustenance to the infant are inadequate is herself present, or the contour of her desired breast is in sight, the emotion felt towards the depriver is ‘hate’ when she will not give, ‘envy’ when she keeps it for herself, ‘jealousy’ when she seems to give herself or her breast to others. Both envy and jealousy are more than the passive desiring which could better be called coveting. Envy and jealousy carry destructive connotations. When these aggressive emotions, hate, envy and jealousy are turned back upon the self by fear, the resultant pattern of depression is characterized by retardation and the absence of vital anxiety”. (6p.173)

The image of the wolf, with bristling hairs, repulsing the persecutory threat, has been related to the paranoid defense. The story of Red Riding Hood is a paranoid depressive nightmare, for the wolf is also the devourer:

“The attempt to overcome separation from the vital supplies by fantasy of possession naturally takes the form of mental pictures of a breast full of milk which can be swallowed. But if the breast will not give itself so that the milk can be sucked from it, then the impulse is to bite and hold on to the breast with fantasies of retaining it, so that it cannot take itself away, and of devouring it”. (6)

The infant who has had a basically good experience from the mother in the very earliest period may have a strong enough energy system, and sense of his own identity, to be able to focus his rage more consciously towards the mother as the frustrating person, if for example weaning is undertaken abruptly, or the mother begins to withdraw from the child as his interaction with the breast becomes more personalized. To experience this rage is devastating, as it is tantamount to feeling oneself to be, in Lake’s words, “a murderer of one’s own life-source”.

Bjorn Christiansen has described the situation at weaning as follows: “Weaning may easily give rise to numerous critical situations. If it does not proceed flexibly in accordance with the child’s growth and development, if towards the end sucking occurs in an atmosphere of impatience and tension, biting impulses will easily be aroused. The child’s mother, perhaps tense and uncertain before, will react by even greater uneasiness which in turn may be transmitted to the child. If the mother withdraws when the child bites or tries to bite, this may often mean much more to the child than a threatened loss of food. Its whole existence may be considered in danger.

“The growth of the teeth and the increasing control of the jaw muscles enable the child to bite. This newly acquired ability can easily become a two-edged sword as far as the child is concerned. Aggressive biting in small children is often regarded as extremely improper and unseemly behaviour. The child’s impulse to bite in response to frustrations may easily become

a boomerang which strikes back in the form of new threats and new frustrations". (15 p.103)

The boomerang works in such a way that the outer-directed anger and biting has to be bitten-back and internalised. Rage turned in on oneself becomes guilt, and has no outlet. The depressive person is filled with "a sense of guilt about all activity of a biting, back-biting or mordant kind, in which the patient has 'got his teeth into' someone. Under such circumstances the retributive, retaliatory activity is well described as 'remorse', a biting-back at oneself..... The 'bad' mother and breast, by not coming in a moment of vital need, become in a trade-union sense 'black', and in a mental picture, attacked. When mother does return, or even before this if the anxiety is too great, a fantasy of swallowing them is necessary, in order to get them out of sight. Our very language expresses this fact. You have got to 'stomach' your rage, and 'swallow' your anger....This sense that there is something bad and destructive inside me is exaggerated by the autonomic nervous system which is upsetting the tranquil operation of digestion by registering rage. This produces nervous dyspepsia. It is easy to see how the adult, knowing about cancer, as something which destroys the body by a kind of badness from within, interprets the depressive feeling of swallowed destructiveness as if it signified the presence of a cancerous growth from which he cannot hope to get better". (6 p/119)

Whereas compulsive eating often becomes associated with paranoid defences, the compulsive refusal to eat is common in the depressive condition. Otto Fenichel has pointed out that "the refusal to eat is not only the most widespread symptom of melancholia; it is a concomitant of every depression".

(2) How true this is depends on the intensity of the depression, and the effectiveness of measures taken against it. A depressive person that I knew was eating the minimum required to keep her alive: food gave her no pleasure at all, and she begrudged every ounce of energy required to feed herself. Her background included a mother who had used the with-holding of food as a regular means of inducing her daughter to behave acceptable, even to the extent that she had locked up every food cupboard in the house. It is as though the deprived child who grows up in such a house is saying, as one of Lake's patients did, "Look, I could not possibly be accused of eating what I should not have eaten, when you observe that I hardly eat at all". There is also the hidden retaliation, "since you will not feed me, I shall do the minimum to feed myself".

If on the other hand the oral longing can be displaced from people on to things, the withdrawal of love from a person may be compensated for by drawing further supplies from things. This is a reaction pattern that Baker has called the "oral-unsatisfied". Lake has described a patient of his who was not being loved by her husband:

"She baked for herself three sandwich cakes a day, filled them with cream, and ate them all herself. A doctor remarked to me that she was evidently coming out of her depression, since she could now pass a sweetshop without giving in, as she had previously done, to a compulsion to enter, buy a bar of chocolate, and eat it at once". (6 p.118)

GRIEF AND GUILT

The depressive condition has two components, the sense of deprivation and emptiness, and the bitten-back rage: the sense of grieving for the lost or absent sense of aliveness (for this, as Lowen shows, is what the depressive is really mourning for), and the sense of guilt at the angry protest. The two forms of depression that are recognized clinically are associated with these

two components, though both may co-exist and intermingle in any one person's defenses. The ways of coping with loss and with guilt, however, take different directions. The basis of satisfaction in sustenance is to be fulfilled, but "to be fulfilled is to be filled full, and that means a full belly, whether of good food or good feelings". (8 p.49)

Lowen (4) has described the energetic structure of the oral character as like an empty sack. This empty sack expresses the energy quality of the empty breast which literally, or figuratively, the condition derives from. What the person in such a state thinks he needs is something from outside, a substitute for milk, to fill him up and inflate him. But an adult is not an infant, and substitute oral supplies – food, drink, drugs, to which he may become addicted

– cannot replace the sustenance he lacked as an infant. What he needs is the aggression required to cope with providing his own life-support connections. This requires mobilizing energy for discharge outwards and downwards in an alive motor function, which is the basis of exploratory achievement. The oral tendency to inflate is in absolutely the opposite direction:-

"In the depressed state the ego is tied to the collapsed body, having been overwhelmed by feelings of hopelessness and despair. It struggles to get free, and when it does, it rises triumphantly like a gas balloon released from the hand of a child, becoming steadily more inflated as it goes upward. There is an increase of excitation in the manic condition, but this increased excitation or energetic charge is limited to the head and to the surface of the body, where it activates the voluntary muscular system producing the characteristic hyperactivity and exaggerated volubility. This direction of flow, upward rather than downward, does not lead to discharge, which is a function of the lower end of the body. It serves instead to focus attention on the individual and represents an attempt to restore the sense of infantile omnipotence that was prematurely lost". (8 p.42)

How guilt is handled on the other hand depends on whether it can be displaced on to the body, or some part of it, or whether the whole self is felt to be the object of blame. Hypochondria is a kind of half-way house between the paranoid blaming of others, and the depressive turning on oneself.

"The symptoms are reported on in such a way as to put the blame on the physical body.... The expression 'I've got to watch my digestion, my bowels, or more generally, my strength' expresses the alert scrutiny characteristic of paranoid defenses. Or the adjectives used may be 'weak'. 'It is my weak heart, or back, or nerves'...Either in a general physical, mental, or emotional sense, or in relation to a particular organ, there are openly declared feelings of being 'enfeebled', 'squeezed out', 'emasculated', 'castrated', 'crippled', 'made faint', 'limp', 'sickly', 'languid', or 'weak as a kitten'". (6 p.1079)

Just as the paranoid person deals with the feelings of badness by spitting them out of the body, the hypochondriac may turn on the parts of the body he believes responsible for his suffering, and seek to have them removed. "He has got to 'get them out of himself', 'get rid of them', or 'have them taken right away'". This fantasy defense accounts for the readiness of hypochondriacal patients to submit to major surgery in which organs or parts of them are taken out". (6 p.1093)

If, on the other hand, the blame attaches to the whole of oneself, so that the deprivation of love appears to be a result of one's bad actions, we have the situation described by Melanie Klein:

"The object which is being mourned is the mother's breast and all that the breast and milk

have come to stand for in the child's mind: namely; love, goodness, and security. All these are felt by the baby to be lost, and lost as a result of its own uncontrollably greedy and destructive phantasies and impulses against his mother's breasts".

Lowen has pointed out the strange illogicality which leads Melanie Klein to believe that the hostility is primary and the loss is secondary, when in fact the reverse order is true. But this is precisely how the child sees it. If food or love is withheld as a punishment for bad behavior, the only hope of its restoration is good behaviour. The answer to guilt can only be expiatory behavior. From now on how the child behaves can become a form of payment by means of which he can stand a chance to receive the reward of love. Love from now on is not something to be relied on in trust, but to be worked for as a duty. The essence of guilt is the sense of owing someone a debt. If the depressive seeks to pay his debt he is caught in the closed circle of compulsive work. But if he recognizes correctly, that no matter how hard he works, the love he needs will not be forthcoming, cannot be restored, is lost (in the way that he enjoyed it) for ever, then there is no escape route left open from the feeling of guilt and utter self- condemnation. But these considerations operate at the transition from dependency to the stage when a child should be growing towards some measure of independence from the mother.

PART V: EXPLORATION & SUPPRESSION: THE STRUGGLE FOR ACHIEVEMENT

The problems of the schizo-hysterical position, and the paranoid-depressive position may occur separately, or they may co-exist. One can find depressive people with a strong schizoid component, and hysterical people with a paranoid element in their structure. And all or any combination of these defenses can underlie and help to shape the particular defenses associated with the third and fourth phases of the maturation cycle.

What are the characteristics of the exploration phase? Exploration means, literally, "to flow out". Evidence of exploratory behavior are found even in simple one-celled animals like the amoeba, but in higher animals it is usually associated with the movements by which an animal explores its living space. In the case of mammals which have a prolonged period of attachment to the mother the main phase of exploration is initiated by the beginning of locomotion, which depends on the ability to walk, and therefore to take the first steps into the world away from the mother. Anthony Barnett, a zoologist from Glasgow, in discussing the exploratory behavior of animals, has recognized that:

"This kind of behavior depends on freedom from fixed orientations, and allows independence of the demands of the immediate environment". (21)

Alexander Lowen has, quite separately, suggested that the right to be free and the right to be independent are fundamental rights, the frustration of which leads respectively to the psychopathic and masochistic character reactions. Lowen defines freedom as not being subject to the needs of others, specifically to control by the parents; and independence he relates to the child's ability to develop self-assertion through opposition to the demands of the parents. It is not clear to me how freedom and independence differ, and I prefer to regard them as two aspects of the need to explore its own environment and to make decisions about it, in the way that Anthony Barnett has done. The way is then clear to seeing the psychopathic and

masochistic defenses as polarized reactions to the principal block against exploration, which is suppression.

Lowen relates suppression to events between the first and third year of life. "This comes from the mother who is over-protective, over-solicitous and over- watchful. A material interest in the child's welfare is substituted for the tenderness and affection which has regard for the growing independence of the new individual. It has been called 'smothering' instead of mothering. It takes the form of forced feeding, anxiety and interest in the bowel function, and overzealous regard that the child should not be hurt in physical activity. This is done in the name of love, but the effect is to suppress the growing ego of the child. Resistance and rebellion are soon stamped out, self-assertion and self- regulation are not permitted. Under the dictum that 'mother knows best' the spirit of the child is literally crushed". (4)

In both the earlier two phases of attachment and sustenance the concept of trans-marginal stressing was used as a threshold distinguishing between two polarised types of character reaction an active form of protest, and a more passive form of protest. In responding to the threat of suppression to its exploratory needs, a child similarly has a choice between two modes of response, and which direction he selects may well correspond to the severity of the stress. Basically, what is involved in this period, is a struggle for power, if the parents are successful in the struggle to break the child's will and crush his spirit a typical masochistic character defense will result. If on the other hand the child responds by asserting his own power and control, the basis is laid for a psychopathic character reaction pattern.

Crushing, or deformation of the longitudinal pulsation of the body is the basic threat to the energy metabolism. It leads to compression of energy into the lower segments of the body with pelvic congestion and stasis, and over- active flexion of the body in the masochistic pattern; or to displacement of energy upwards into the higher segments of the body with expansion of the chest and head areas. The main reservoir at one end or the other of the body becomes subjected to pressure which deforms the longitudinal body-shape more massively than in other structures.

ANALITY & MOTILITY

Both these reaction patterns are formed in what Freud called the 'anal' period. What is the relationship between anality and exploration? Bjorn Christiansen has expressed it as follows:-

"The excretory process stands for more than a passive experience of pleasure. It seems to the child to represent a new area of contact with the environment. Its excretory products awaken the child's positive interest where taste, smell and touch are concerned, and the process in its broadest sense seems to be an important testing ground for the child's dawning self- discovering tendencies. By letting go of the anal product, which is part of itself, the child learns to let go, or to untie, its symbiotic relationship to its mother".

This period of untying the relationship to the mother coincides with the period of walking. Gerda Boyesen describes it in this way:

"The pleasure of kicking and the pleasure of self-assertiveness is strongly connected with the feeling of body streamings reaching the gluteal muscles, which are the point of 'standing on one's own fee'; they erect the body and make it independent and they also erect the neck. This gives a feeling of self, of being independent and of self-worth, of value as a separate being. This process also makes the breathing freer and the posture erect and proud and with a natural

dignity which is typical of the bearing of an independent human being". (18c)

Pleasurable walking is an exquisite compromise between letting go to gravity and holding up against it. To let go too much is to fall over and collapse; to hold up too much has an effect on one's posture as though one is hung up in the air; both disturb natural walking, and with that the ability to stand ground, or to move over the ground easily. The too much letting go is associated with hypotonic muscles and the hanging-up response with hypertonic muscles. Trygve Braatoy describes the relationship between posture and anal functions in these words:-

"The trouble with too early toilet training is that it tries to teach the child differential relation to sphincter mechanisms at a time when sphincter relaxation cannot be achieved without general relaxation of the lower limbs. To relax on the pot includes at this age the risk of falling off the pot. The child's stubbornness is, in such situations, aided by respectable motives". (22 p.173)

Lowen has also shown how the fact that the child is forced to use the muscles of the buttocks and thighs to gain anal control leads to an immobilization of the legs and to disturbances in walking and grounding.

The ability to explore on his own terms, is the foundation of the natural pleasure in achievement. The main pleasure here is in doing and making, shaping and forming:

"The child shows increasing interest in playing with objects, in taking toys to pieces and putting them together again, in filling up and emptying, in building up and pulling down. (15 p.112)

Here are the beginnings of art and science, the roots of play and the basis for satisfaction in productive work: "A child's excretory product is its first form of productivity. The defecation process itself provides a central testing ground for its self-control. The excretory product awakens its interest, first as something to let go, and later as something it can manipulate and about which it can make decisions. Its manipulations and decisions imply that an inner autonomy is beginning to take form. Although control of anal matters certainly is an important aspect, it is probably only a fragment of the total issue, the child's general psychic and motor control". (15 p.113-4)

The character-reactions of the exploration phase arise from the battle for control. The child may submit to the parents, and outwardly accept their control and suppression; or he may resist, and assert his own control in order to gain power over the parents. A third possibility is a composite between these two positions: it is to use the energy of control against himself, and to win a conditional independence from the parents, by becoming the controller of himself.

MASOCHISTIC APPEASEMENT & THE PSYCHOPATHIC THREAT

The energy dynamics of the masochistic character have been exceptionally clearly delineated by Reich (1), and Lowen has extended and deepened our understanding of these dynamics. (4) Reich has based his account of masochism on Freud's discovery "that masochism and sadism do not form an absolute antithesis, that one never occurs without the other. Masochism and sadism can each turn into the other". Reich saw this relationship in terms of a "dialectic antithesis". Reich points out that sadistic aggression is not, as Freud at first thought, limited to the anal phase. He distinguished oral sadism based on frustrations in sucking (and linked in the present paper to the paranoid- depressive antithesis); anal sadism based on frustrations in anal pleasure, resulting in the urge to step on, to over-power, and to beat (and linked here with

the psychopathic-masochistic antithesis); and phallic sadism, based on frustrations to genital pleasure, which are linked to the blocks of the fourth phase of the growth cycle. The three forms of sadism are closely linked, so that in the phallic character pattern (to be described later) there will often be found a psychopathic and/or paranoid understructure.

However, not very much has been written about the psychopathic character, and one of the reasons for this is that he seldom comes for therapy, since to do so would put him in a one-down relationship. The psychopathic person reacts to the threat of suppression with oppression; he counters the attempts to crush him by becoming over-bearing. Charles Rycroft, in an interesting book on "Anxiety and Neurosis", which also attempts to look at character reactions in terms of biological responses to stress, distinguishes between defences in the form of attack and defenses in the form of submission. He relates the attack- response to what he calls the 'obsessional defense', and by his account of this it is clear that he covers elements of the psychopathic need to control others and the compulsive character's need to control himself.

"The obsessional defence consists then in an attempt to deal with the anxiety which is inherent in all human relationships by treating all spontaneous tendencies whether in oneself or others, as though they were dangerous invaders of a territory of which one had acquired absolute power and knowledge, and then adopting the same defense towards these invaders as animals use when their territory is literally invaded, viz attack in an attempt to expel the intruder or force him into submission. When the intruder s really an alienated part of the self, the response of attack manifests itself as repression; when it is spontaneous behavior of others, it leads to attempts to control and dominate them and to deny their reality as free agents". (12)

Ethologists have studied the reaction-patterns of animals, and in particular their intention-movements. (21) They distinguish between intention movements of threat if an animal's territory is invaded: intention movements of appeasement if it finds itself in some other animal's territory; and displacement-activities if the animal is caught between threat and appeasement on the edge or margin of its territory. In relation to the development of character-reactions the battle for control between child and parents can be looked on as a fight over territory. Initially the territory which is contested is the child's own body, later it is the space he seeks to explore. If the child accepts the claims made on his body by the seductive or smothering parent, he has ceded vital territory; if on the other hand he asserts his mastery and domination, he may come to threaten his parent's rights. If the masochist identifies with his feeling of guilt and shame it is because he seeks to hide the opposite tendencies of spite and blame. For the psychopath the reverse is true.

Lowen has described the struggle between parent and child for control in these terms:

"It is a matter of principle not to let the child have his own way. A child can sense the antagonism and reacts to it with over-aggressiveness. Once the lines of conflict are drawn, the outcome of the struggle can only be disastrous. If the parents yield out of guilt or simply to quiet the child, they will spoil him. Sensing their weakness, they will attempt to be firmer on the next occasion. But the child, having learned he can get his way by creating a disturbance will fight back with more vigor. In these situations the battle is a never-ending one, with the parents overcoming the child's resistance at times, and giving in at others. For the child, too, the issue becomes one of principle - on principle he will oppose his parents' every demand.

"A child growing up in such a home never develops a faith in life. He has learned that he

can get what he wants only by outmaneuvering and outyelling the opposition. His opponents, however, are those whose love he needs, and they will include all the people with whom he desires intimacy. He has also learned how to manipulate people by playing on their guilt, and he will use this tactic when his bullying fails to achieve its end. The character one develops from these experiences has a sado-masochistic streak". (8 p.164)

The sado-masochistic relationship demonstrates the polarity of the exploration phase. The psychopathic character and the masochistic character are the inside and the outside of each other. Every masochist, under his submission, contains the buried spite and repressed urge to dominate which are overt in the psychopathic person. Every psychopath, under his domination, hides the fear of collapse and humiliation. So the struggle between them, if they relate, goes rather as follows:

The masochist is crushed, but the psychopath crushes. The masochist submits and suffers for the sake of keeping the peace, but the psychopath dominates and makes people suffer for the sake of winning his war. If the masochist is pushed too far or is threatened too much, he can flip over and become a crusher, but not for long. He prefers to induce or persuade you towards what he wants, and can then become conciliatory. The psychopath mustn't lose, the masochist can't win. The psychopath shits on people, he treads and tramples over them, has no respect for their needs. The masochist gets thrown into a masochistic 'depression', and acts beaten. He reacts to any putting down as an incredible humiliation and loss of face. His defence is in humiliating others. The masochist wants closeness and intimacy, he is hostile to prevent it. The masochist hangs down, sags, and gets bowed under. The psychopath is hung up, he hunches, stands over people. The masochist may give up his life looking after someone else to prove his love; the psychopath spends his life expecting other people to give him what he demands.

But the collapse of the masochistic position is defended against by compulsive effort, so that the masochistic character defense has elements of compulsiveness in it. This explains why on the one hand the masochist is characterized, as Lowen has shown, by "I am trying to please you" and on the other hand by "I will never give in no matter what you do to me".

A NOTE ON COMPULSION

The compulsive character has been described both as a defensive reaction associated with problems connected with anal control; and it has also been described as a type of rigidity associated with the genital stage of development. Yet Lowen had written earlier:

"The concept of the compulsive character is widely used in analytic writing. Actually this is a classification based upon a symptom and not upon the dynamic structure, which underlies it. Compulsion itself is a defense against the masochistic collapse, failure or defeat. In the masochist it is a weak defense, in the rigid structure it is a powerful defense. Just because the defense is good and collapse and failure are prevented, we are justified in regarding the compulsive as a rigid character". (4 p.139)

Rigidity, Lowen points out, is always a genital problem, but it can be determined by other factors than genital frustration. In response to the suppression, associated with this period, rigidity of the compulsive type is one possible reaction; if successful the defense is naturally continued when the frustrations of genitality are encountered. The true compulsive character is the result of a compromise between threat and appeasement: hence the preponderance of displacement activities as neurotic symptoms. In sexuality he is liable to be caught between

seduction and rape. In fact it may be helpful to look on compulsiveness as having three aspects: compulsive domination linked to the psychopathic reaction-pattern, compulsive self-control (linked to the traditional 'compulsive character') and compulsive submission linked to the masochistic position.

What is certain is that whichever of these responses a child develops as a means of coping with the threats to its exploration, the result is a severe disturbance to a pleasurable work-function. The child "loses its intimate relationship to its own productivity and creativity. Its pleasure in the processes of shaping and forming easily becomes blocked in favour of an expedient and ambitious attitude towards achievements, its self-esteem limited to its productivity, or its productivity perfectionistically oriented with a pre-occupation on shaping (and controlling) at the expense of making and creating". (15 p.116) Delight in play and creativity is displaced by the ethic of forcing and being forced, which in turn will form the basis on which relationships are formed, and on which communication between people, and specifically their sexual lives, takes place.

PART VI: COMMUNICATION & DENIAL: THE STRUGGLE FOR INTIMACY

To communicate means to make contact. We can touch people with our words, through speech, but this is a very late form of communication to evolve. We can also communicate body to body. "Communication is not a cold intellectual process, on the contrary it is the only way we can share the richest emotional feelings, that is information about ourselves". (24)

When we are deeply moved by feeling, the body moves spontaneously. To surrender to the feeling is to surrender to the bodily movements that express the feeling. Reich described three directions of bodily movement: away from people, against people, and towards people. We move against people in anger and hatred, we move away from them in fear and fright, we move towards them with pleasure and love.

The contact we make with another person's body is governed by the strictest taboos, which regulate which people it is permissible to make bodily contact with and which parts of their body it is safe or not safe to touch. There has been a taboo generally in our culture on touch, so that people are starved of touch; and there has also been a taboo on tenderness (as Ian Suttie showed). (25)

The natural tendency to explore the environment flows into the desire to explore one's own body and the bodies of other people. In young children this does not have the specific orgiastic focus of adult sexuality; rather it is concerned with erotic delight in total body feeling, including delight in genital feelings.

GENITAL PLAY

"Sexual play", writes Bjorn Christiansen, "is mainly concentrated on mutual feeling and touch, essentially a form of bodily play. However, among children of five and six copulation-like play patterns are also observable, patterns strongly reminiscent of adult sexual behavior. Since such patterns have been found to occur also in environments where the children probably have had no opportunity to observe adult sexual behavior, it is likely that we are confronted

with responses which have inborn, instinctual roots; responses in boys of an 'introductive' and in girls of an 'embracing-enclosing' character". (15 p.118)

Reich has described the taboo against sexual play in terms of the metaphor of the stage and the meadow. The 'stage' represents man-made social structure, the 'meadow' represents natural functioning:

"On the stage of human acting it is forbidden by law under punishment of fine or imprisonment 'or both' to show or even discuss the embrace between two children of the opposite sex at the age of 3 or 5. Somewhere in the audience sits a human being, broken in his emotional security, full of perverse longings and hate against what he has lost or never known, ready to run to the district attorney with the accusation that children are being misused sexually and that public morals are being undermined. Outside on the meadow, however, the genital embrace of two children appears like a beautiful wonder: what drives two organisms together with such force? No procreation is involved yet, and no regard for the family. The newborn somehow brings this drive to unite with another organism with it from the outside when it passes to the inside onto the stage. There it is squelched outright and remains smouldering under cover, developing smoke and fog". (26)

Since Reich wrote these words there has been a superficial revolution in the cultural norms of many Western societies. Suddenly, and significantly, it has become permissible to portray sexuality of all kinds on the stage and on the screen. The so-called sexual revolution appears to counter the repressions and frustrations that preceded it, with great permissiveness and freedom. Unfortunately nothing very basic has changed, as the kind of sexuality, which has emerged from under the covers is very largely the smouldering sexuality which is the product of centuries of frustration.

"Inside, on the stage", Reich writes, "the embrace between two children or two adolescents or two grown-ups would appear as dirty, as something utterly unbearable to look upon. Outside under the shimmering stars, no such reaction to the sight of the embrace of two organisms would ever occur in sane minds. We do not shudder at the sight of two toads or fish or animals of other kinds in embrace. We may be awed by it, shaken emotionally, but we do not have any dirty or moralistic sentiments". (26)

The whole question of the relation between celebration of sexuality, and the smirching and degradation of sexuality, in the culture pattern at large, has been described elsewhere (27, 28) and will not be pursued further here.

For sexual communication to be undisturbed in later life it is vital that the child's maturing genitality is given emotional support. "We think that the emotional support offered the child from its environment is of great importance for this learning process, and above all, the child's opportunities for social and bodily interplay with children on its own age level. It has been suggested that childhood peer-interaction and bodily play in monkeys represent a pre-requisite for their later smooth sexual functioning. Probably a similar connection exists in humans too.... Given limited opportunities for sexual play with other children, or if such play is punished, rejected or condemned, the child's sexual interests will become one-sidedly focussed on its own parents. We will be faced with an oedipal situation". (15 p.118)

Paul and Jean Ritter have described some of the difficulties placed in the way of genital play in our culture, and some ways of seeking to overcome them. They mention three responses to genital frustration in children:

1. The life-negative forces of parents may have led to such guilt and fears that the genital pleasure feelings are altogether blocked and great anxieties arise instead.

2. The genital play and its pleasure is felt, guilt and fear are produced, and so it is kept for secret times and secret places.

3. The child is aware that genital play puts the adults on edge, although verbally they may permit it, and the child uses it to produce irritation when feeling aggressive. (29)

But parental rejection can take many forms: it may consist of direct punishment, or seductive tenderness and bodily stimulation, followed by abrupt rejection of the child's responding impulses. The effects are to produce massive splitting of the unitary urge for contact and fusion, and a cutting-off either of heart feelings or of spontaneous pelvic movements.

HEART FEELINGS & PELVIC MOVEMENTS

"In history", writes Gerde Boyesen, "we have seen man's relationship to woman ruled by the split: that the one you feel tenderness and love towards, you do not feel sexual about, and vice-versa - the split between the nun and the whore, the virgin and gypsy.....If there is a feeling of love in your heart of a streaming quality, then sexual feelings naturally result". (18c) If either tenderness or sensuality has to be repressed, then there is a block which if it cannot be resolved results in "the energy pressing towards the heart and towards the genitals accumulating without any release". (18c)

For a person who has matured into sexuality without such bad experiences, or who has succeeded in recovering his sexual aliveness through energetic therapy, his adult love-life makes true intimacy possible. ('Intimacy' is a much abused word, and has come to mean, in popular usage, any sexual contact, often clandestine). Intimacy involves the whole question of what is outside you and what is inside you, and how you meet the other person across the body's boundary. Can you give yourself without losing yourself? What happens when two bodies superimpose? Inside are the deep heart feelings, the involuntary bodily vibrations, and the streamings through the cells. In the inter-penetration of true sexual contact there is a fusion of two charged and responsive energy systems. During orgasm the fused genitals, which in the separated state are at the periphery of the body, become the centre of the total energy system, a source of charge, which can flow back and rejuvenate both individuals mutually. In this free-flowing relationship both the partners are aggressive and receptive towards each other. Aggressivity means that the muscles can give in to the involuntary movements in orgasm, which move bodies into close contact; this stems from the meaning of the word 'aggression' - to move towards. Receptivity means that one can surrender to these movements, and to the feelings that accompany these movements. Giving and taking are complementary experiences, between people who are responsive to each other: one takes pleasure in giving, and gives pleasure in taking. As Reich described it:-

"It takes many months, sometimes years, to learn to know your love partner in the body. The finding of the body of the beloved one itself is gratification of the first order. So is the victorious overcoming of the first difficulties in the adjustment of two alive organisms. He may not be gentle enough during high excitation, and she may be afraid of full sweetness in surrendering to the involuntary. He may at first be too 'quick' and she too 'slow' or the other way around. The search for the common experience of supreme delight in the complete merger of the two

streaming energy systems we came to call male and female - this search itself and the mutual wordless finding one's way into the beloved's sensations and truly cosmic quivering, is pure delight....The genital embrace grows out naturally from a slowly developing total body urge to merge with another body....The final delight of total energy discharge in the orgasm is the spontaneous result of a long continued build-up of smaller delights....The total organismic excitation precedes the special genital excitation. The orgasmic potency grows out of this total body delight and not from the genital. The genital organs are merely the means of physical penetration after the mutual merger of the orgone energy fields has occurred a long while before the last fulfillment". (30 p/28-9)

The splitting of natural sexual responses due to the denial of childhood and adolescent sexuality, takes many forms. Tenderness is split from sensuality, so that love feelings may be hard to integrate with the animal vigor of the sexual movements. The aggressive and the receptive aspects of sexuality become separated, and these in turn become identified with some of the cultural characteristics associated with the masculine and feminine roles. This means that the body, if he wants to be manly, identifies with a hard aggressiveness at the expense of softness and receptivity; the girl if she wants to be feminine, suppresses her active sexual movements, and becomes passive and doll-like, with a split-off emphasis on a dead receptivity. What results is pseudo- sexuality; and the identification with pseudo-masculine and pseudo-feminine roles which become defenses against true masculinity or true femininity.

Alternatively, there may be rebellion by either sex against the usual role, and an identification, with the pseudo-qualities of the opposite sex. What this means is that one finds women with a pseudo-masculine sexuality, and men with a pseudo-feminine sexuality.

This situation means that there are fundamentally two polarized character patterns in the communication phase, but because the sexual differences are crucial here in a way that they are not in earlier phases, each pole divides into two, giving four major character-defenses for this period. Traditionally they have been termed the "phallic narcissistic", the "hysterical", the "masculine- aggressive" and the "passive-feminine".

TWO TYPES OF RIGIDITY

What is it that cuts off the flow of feelings and with-holds them from expression, and which blocks the natural aggressive movement and converts them into an angry push. According to Lowen it is only body structures, which are characterized by rigidity which possess a true muscular armor, in the sense of a relatively uniform hardening of the entire musculature. The uniformity gives these characters the consistency of drive and ego-strength which other character patterns lack; but the rigidity can take two forms which Lowen terms 'plate-like' and 'mesh-like'. (4) The difference is in the degree of flexibility or tensile strength. The rigid characters function as though they are made of one of two types of wire: a resilient, inflexible wire which extends itself against flexion and is difficult to deflect, or a ductile and malleable wire which gives under tension, maintaining its tension by adaptation. The inflexible rigidity is associated with spastic hypertonic muscles, the flexible rigidity with flaccid hypotonic surface muscles concealing a deeper spasticity.

The character pattern can now be looked at in more detail.

RAPE & REVENGE

The phallic-narcissistic defense is the male form of the pseudo-masculine response. The phallic is the penetrate whose penis has become a weapon or tool by means of which he can assert his superiority over the woman and prove his potency to her. The struggle for power from the previous phase is carried on in the sexual realm, so that sexuality becomes a question of doing or making it, rather than of giving and talking. "Dynamically speaking, a phallic-narcissistic solution means that genital introductive impulses, i.e. impulses towards leading into, are modified into the form of forcing into.... we find urges to push oneself in indiscriminately, also where not invited or desired". (15) The sexuality of the phallic moves in the direction of rape, the forcible seizure and conquest of the woman. He does not find it difficult to find women to collude with him since he poses as the masculine romantic hero of adolescent visions. But the well- developed phallic hero may become, as Lowen has shown, "a caricature of the romantic picture of a knight on horseback - the leather-jacketed hoodlum on his motorcycle". (31 p.296) The phallic character identifies with the phallus, it asserts his strength, stiffness and aggression, as against weakness, failure and humiliation. His rigidity is a defense against collapse, his rape of the woman becomes a form of revenge against the mother for the rape of his own sensitivity. Behind the disappointment with the mother, for which he takes his revenge, lie a warded-off passive-homosexual urge. At one level the phallic man acts out on the woman what he would like to experience himself in the female role. The full dynamics of this character-defense has been given by Reich (1) and by Lowen (4 p.31) and will not be described in greater detail here.

Corresponding to the phallic man there is the 'phallic woman' or pseudo- masculine woman (otherwise called 'masculine-aggressive') who has experienced deep rejection of her femininity by the father. Lowen has described the splitting-off of aggression from receptivity, and the frequent desexualizing of the aggression, so that she competes with the man in the realm of work and achievement:-

"The dominant conflict is with the father and this is later transferred to the male therapist and to all men...This leads to a secondary identification with the male which is favored by the dominance of the aggressive tendencies. The block against the moving of the energy inward into the vagina keeps the energy in the region of the vulva. As the identification with the male proceeds, the clitoris takes on a real phallic quality and may enlarge. There is a tendency towards muscular development. Such women are aggressive in the sexual act, but this must be considered as a defense against submission...If they prove stronger than their partner, they become very contemptuous and castrating. The male is the recipient of all their hatred derived from their early frustration at the genital level. On a deeper level these women want to be forced to submit". (4)

That is, just as the phallic male is defense against passive-anal impulses, so the phallic female is defended against the pseudo-feminine surrender position, and the seductiveness associated with it.

SEDUCTION & COMPLIANCE

The essence of the pseudo-feminine position is the abandonment of overt aggression, and the identification with a split-off receptivity. Charles Rycroft has equated the submissive defense with the hysterical response. He describes a class of women “who regard themselves as fundamentally defeated and who consistently adopt a submissive attitude in their relations to both men and other women, and who allow themselves to be used as doormats or dolls by men and are incapable of asserting their own right to self-fulfillment, or of competing with other women as women. They let themselves be put upon by possessive parents or selfish husbands and adopt a long-suffering attitude if their husbands are unfaithful or if their lovers treat them as conveniences...Habitual adoption of the hysterical, submissive defense does not abolish aggression and self-assertion but sends it underground, and in persons who use this defense extensively ‘the return of the repressed’ manifests itself in devious forms, either

...leading to short lived and ineffective ‘hysterical’ attacks of rage, or the submissive role will itself be exploited in a way calculated to control others by making them feel guilty, or the conviction of being a defeated person will be used to justify underhand methods of manipulating others”. (12 p.89)

As the earlier account of the infantile roots of the hysterical reaction has shown, the true antithesis to hysteria is schizoid withdrawal. The hysteric is driven by acute feelings of panic derived from the sense of being deserted or rejected by the mother, and these impel her to turn to the man as a secondary source of attachment. Her need is to seduce him into closeness; and submission to the pseudo-feminine image may be one way that need is expressed. True submissiveness hides and buries both the hysterical need to cling, and the rage at the man for his failure to provide love on the terms that it is sought. If one follows Reich in describing a character-structure by the nature of the defense, rather than by the nature of what is defended against, then the submissive (pseudo-feminine) character structure is itself a way of defending against the tendencies to exhibitionism and extraversion which are the true hallmarks of the hysterical reaction pattern.

What is important here is to recognize that no character-defence is a pure type. Hysterical reactions from the attachment phase can be defended against by phallic activity⁴ just as schizoid tendencies can appear strongly in submissive character responses. It would be more accurate to say that the submissive pattern contains within it certain tendencies that are linked with hysteria, (just as the aggressive pattern may, according to Baker), than to equate the two patterns as readily as Rycroft does.

The principal distinguishing features of the pseudo-feminine response are passivity, the block to aggression hiding deep bitterness, and the identification with a romantic ideal of tenderness as the wish to be loved and protected. If the extreme form of the phallic action-man is he ‘hell’s angel’, the extreme form of the passive plastic doll is a kind of ‘heaven’s angel’.

“Often a pattern of sleeping-beauty-like, angel-like, or nice-little-girl-like behavior will be pronounced with emphasis on denial, innocence and pollyanishness...by invoking protection and approached, it satisfies narcissistic wishes of getting without giving, of teasing others to

4 Elsworth Baker’s characterology does not in fact include a category corresponding to the ‘masculine-aggressive’ character, as such. However, he has a category called the ‘intellectual (“big brain”) hysteric’ corresponding to a type identified by Reich as one who uses her intellect as a tall phallus to defend herself against all men. “One such patient” Baker describes “reached the point of feeling she used her head as a phallic weapon, smashing everyone about her”. (3)

believe they get when they really don't....The ambivalence becomes expressed in the formula: 'Please take initiative, but I don't want to give you anything". (15 p.122)

The adoption of the submissive reaction in men leads to the exaggerated softness, eagerness to please, and 'compulsive compliance' of the pseudo-feminine character (otherwise known as passive-feminine). Here also there is a deep repression of assertiveness, both the phallic assault against the woman, and the natural aggressiveness of sexual contact and normal self-confidence. The result is the artificial meekness of an emasculated yes-man. As Frank Lake describes him:-

"There is an inability to feel or express anger even to the point of loss of normal and moral self-affirmation in the face of injustice. As over against the inner rage against the mother's ordering of life, the child becomes an intense supporter of every point of view mother espouses. He leans over backwards to be unctuously pleasant to those against whom he is inwardly raging. He will avoid a set-to or row at any price. Contradicting the inner desire to dominate and compel the parental figures, the reaction pattern is one of entire submission and willingness to be controlled. The 'death-wishes' are covered up by an excessive solicitude for the health and longevity of those upon whom he depends". (6 p.155)

There is a very full account of the muscular and characterological details of this character-pattern in Lowen's book on THE PHYSICAL DYNAMICS OF CHARACTER STRUCTURE, and these do not need to be repeated here.

John Pierrakos has described some of the inter-relationships between the aggressive man and the passive woman, and the passive man with the aggressive woman. (32) He makes the point that, since both character-types contain, in repressed form, their polar opposite, you can sometimes find an alternation of roles within a given relationship:

"A woman selects a man with the basic characteristic of passivity who does not assume the responsibility for his aggression. Concealing his aggression, he makes his negative feelings come out in an indirect way, and the woman expresses her aggression in the ego functions. He reveals his cruelty when he withdraws his feelings or expresses them in hard sexual behavior. The man withholds his love; he withholds his pleasure; he withholds his tender feelings from the woman. Thus he subdues the woman and forces her to submit to him in the sexual act. At other times the man, who is threatened and afraid of her menacing behaviour capitulates in his aggressive role, his manhood, and descends into a state of total passivity on every level.... These two partners can alternate roles as well. The woman becomes the aggressive partner with paranoid overtones; this is on an external level. The man is the paranee from whom the woman extracts her energy by draining him. In reversing their roles, the woman takes on the passive role, the man becoming the aggressor. Thus, the games of barrels is played, an up and down see-saw of aggression and passivity".

Once again the functional identity and antithesis between the character- structures from each phase of the growth cycle, is demonstrated.

PART VII: ENERGY BLOCKS & LIFE-STREAMS

This concludes this introductory attempt to survey the principal character- defenses, and to illuminate the relationship between the two most dynamic characterologies since Freud and Reich: that of Lowen, derived from the bio- energetic study of libidinal development, and that of Lake, built on the interpersonal dynamics of Ronald Fairbairn and Harry Guntrip, and of existential theology.

The principal relationships are summarized in the chart overleaf, which may be compared with the earlier chart.

The defences are connected vertically to their functional opposites and the double headed arrow (↔) indicates a polarity between which a given person may swing. The defenses are connected horizontally, by dotted lines, to those with which they share features in common from the next phase of the growth cycle. Thus the early hysterical and oral patterns although leading to very different character patterns have in common the tendency to cling (the hysteric to people, the depressive to oral supplies); the paranoid defense and the psychopathic defense are closely linked, though the assertion of the psychopath does not collapse as easily as the paranoid screen can, and the masochist and the submissive character have appeasement in common, though the masochist fights against it while the true passive submissive person identifies with it.

THE MOVEMENT QUALITIES OF RUDOLF LABAN

There is an interesting relationship between the four 'functionally antithetical' pairs of character-structures, and the movement functions studied by Rudolf Laban. Laban was a German stage-director and choreographer who revolutionized physical education with his dynamic views on the quality of movement experience. Although he never applied his ideas to therapy, the Laban Art of Movement Studio in London called a special conference at the University of London, in April 1966, on "Movement as Therapy". Thirty Dutch movement therapists who had been influenced primarily by Nic Waal's approach to therapy (based on vegetative identification – a concept she had learned from Reich) (38) turned up at this conference. Marion North, a prominent Laban movement specialist, who was a member of the British Psychological Society's seminar on "Communication without words" (Edinburgh, March 1969), has since written a book on "Movement Education" (39) in which she has made a tentative attempt to relate movement qualities to characterology.

Laban postulated that all the movement qualities of a person were the expression of four basic factors which he called flow, time, weight and space. If one thinks of 'flow' as denoting a fundamental energy quality, and thinks of weight as linked to mass and structure, it can be seen that we are dealing with the four fundamental physical properties: energy, mass, space and time.

For each of these, Laban postulates a pair of antithetical movement qualities. In relation to flow, he distinguishes bound flow and free-flow: totally bound flow results in frozen, immobilized movements; totally free flow results in movements with too little structure, over-expansive and impulsive. We see here the basic polarity of the attachment phase, between schizoid immobilisation and hysterical (phobic) flight.

In the relation to time, Laban distinguishes between slow, retarded responses, and rapid,

accelerated ones. In biology the sense of time is related to metabolism: we see here the basic antithesis between the lowered charge and slowed responses of the depressive reactions, and the high-and-fast movements of the manic response. A person who is depressed may take a drug called “speed” (amphetamines) to pep up his reactions.

Laban’s third category is that of ‘weight’. His two extremes are the forced, effort-laden movements, which are dominated by gravity and are earth-bound and heavy; the opposite attitude to weight seeks to rise up away from the ground in a way that resists collapse and dominates gravity. Here the essence of the psychopathic tendency to hold up against collapse can be recognized. In the contracting and compressed body of the masochist, where the body is literally bowed in on itself by pressure, we have a situation where every movement seems forced.

Energy function	Maturation Phase	Contact-qualities	Basic Right	Stress and block	Character-polarity
Flow	Attachment	Being and seeing	Identity	Splitting and fragmentation	Schizoid-Hysterical
Charge	Sustenance	Having and tasting	Nourishment	Sapping and exhaustion	Paranoid-Depressive
Swing	Exploration	Doing and making	Achievement	Crushing and deformation	Psychopathic-Masochistic
Tonus	Communication	Giving and Taking	Intimacy	Cutting-off and rigidification	Phallic – passive - submissive

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The relationship between the four pairs of character-structures formulation here (leading to eight basic character defenses), and Lowen’s five basic character- reactions, can be shown in the following summary:

Hierarchical level in Lowen’s characterology	Attachment blocks	Sustenance blocks	Exploration blocks	Communication blocks
1. Right to exist	Schizoid defense			
2. Right to need	Phobic-defense (pre-genital hysteria)	Oral character defenses (with depression)		
3. Right to be free		Paranoid defenses	Psychopathic defenses	
4. Right to be independent			Masochistic defenses	Passive-Submissive character defences
5. Right to want				Rigidassertive character defenses
	‘Ocular’ phase	Oral phase	Anal phase	Genital phase

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Laban’s final category involves two extreme responses to the dimensions of space, which he termed “direct” and “indirect”. The direct response is straight and linear, the indirect response is bent, twisted and squirmy, and avoids directness. There is a clear relationship between the straight, stretched, extended and inflexible attitude to space, and the phallic reaction-pattern. The opposite pattern is flexible, shifting and curvi-linear. It is not difficult to see here the pattern of the passive-submissive reactions.

Laban regards a person who is free in his movements as being able to respond at any point of the spectrum between the extremes of each mode, as the situation demands. He can be still or mobile, slow or rapid, inflexible or compromising, forceful or delicate, according to need. The character reactions can be looked on as distorted expressions of these primary tendencies: thus the schizoid is not simply still, he freezes; the phallic is not simply direct, he is compulsively intrusive, and so on.

The coincidence between Laban’s four effort qualities, and the view of character developed in this paper, is striking and suggests that this is no chance arrangement, or arbitrary classification, but one which has a deep meaningfulness.

There are no pure character types. Every person you meet has his own distinct life-stream. No two life-streams are identical. But the experiences that lead to blocking and distorting of the

active maturing energies of life have much in common. Thus we can distinguish patterns and structures in immobilised energy forms. Character, Reich reminds us, is frozen history.

In working to dissolve a piece of character-structure, we meet with resistance. Every neurotic defense reaction fights for its life. It cannot be battered down by force. A child who has found means to protect himself from the traumas of infancy, is not going to respond by becoming healthy with a therapist who attacks his armor unsympathetically. The armor needs to be softened and melted, and the therapist's best ally in this process is the dormant life in the person he works with.

The study of character-defenses is the study of pathology: these are patterns that cripple and restrict growing life. But Reich spoke near the end of his life (33) of the life-saving function of sequestration; the function of armor is in the last analysis life-preservative. True the water froze, but the stream did not run dry. When the frozen character reactions start to dissolve, the life has been preserved ready to flow again. Character-structure is a means of avoiding death – children have literally pined to death from lack of attachment if they were unable to develop appropriate survival patterns. When character-structure starts to crumble, a new fear of death is awakened, the death of the self that one knows. People say, “yes but if you take away my armor, how do I know there is anything underneath, perhaps I am just a void”. Depth-therapy therefore can become a journey back to the many deaths one might have died without defenses; but it carries with it the discovery that all this happened a long time ago. It is history that froze, the present can begin to flow again. The death in the past was survived, the death in the future is not yet. A person discovers that there is a lot of living to do in the meanwhile.

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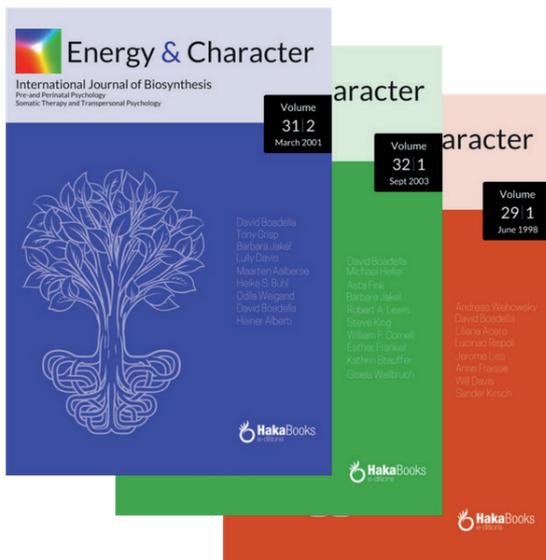
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