

THE JOURNAL OF ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

VOL. XII

OCTOBER, 1917

NUMBER 4

ORIGINAL ARTICLES

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CLINIC OF THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY

REPORTED BY F. E. OWEN

Head of the Department of Psychology, University of Southern California

IN September, 1915, the Southern California Association of Applied Psychology, of Los Angeles, opened a psychological clinic. This clinic was continued in September, 1916, in conjunction with the Department of Psychology of the University of Southern California.

The clinical work was conducted under the direction of the President of the Association, Miss Margaret Hamilton, practicing psychologist, who during many years of private research and practice had developed principles and methods of psycho-analysis and re-education which she has kindly permitted the writer to discuss in the following pages. The success of our clinical work has been due to Miss Hamilton's generous contribution of time and technical knowledge and skill. The writer makes grateful acknowledgment of the privilege of intimate study for the past three years of the methods and principles used, and for the opportunity of observing and applying them in constant clinical demonstration during the past year.

Copyright 1917, by Richard G. Badger. All Rights Reserved.

The aim of this report is to set forth the general outline of the problems that gave rise to the ideas and technique demonstrated in the clinic, the range of the clinical work done and the bearing of the methods and principles upon mental hygiene and upon the more vital problems of general education.

The record of the progress of civilization may be interpreted as the story of growing control attained through the development and control of the mental life. Fundamental to the growth of effective control of the mental life is the problem of securing adequate motivation. The sources of motivation must be properly tapped in order to make the thought processes dynamic, and also in order to give them the greatest amount of constructive freedom in solving the problems of adjustment.

The intellectual processes which educational procedure strives so hard to make effective are under the control of the sources of motivation, the emotional and volitional life. When these sources are untouched, intellectual processes fail to become dynamic, vital, and even the physiological processes do not function at their highest and most efficient potential. When these sources are repressed or misdirected, there not only follows profound failure of successful physical adjustment, showing itself either in various forms of physical illness, or in lowered bodily efficiency, but also, what is still more important, conduct guided by the intellectual processes which are called forth by misdirected or repressed emotional life fails of the most effective control in the adjustment process, or is positively destructive in its program.

The place for foundational control is thus to be sought in the emotional and volitional life. It is sound psychological fact that out of the heart are the issues of life. Of this fact man has long been convinced although his thought about it has been without sufficient concreteness to give him either satisfactory access to or adequate control of the back-lying causes of conduct. We propose to show that there is a simple and direct mode of approach to these back-lying causes, and a method by which they may not only be brought to light but dealt with successfully so that the control for which educational procedure seeks may be more surely

secured and human life brought to a higher level of constructive efficiency in meeting the problems of adjustment.

No thoughtful observer of human life can fail to be impressed and deeply disturbed by the waste on all sides that is apparent in the large amount of failure to meet successfully and efficiently life's demands. In one way and another society is carrying along a heavy load of those who, for some reason, are failing totally or in part to contribute to the full of their capacity in caring for themselves and in filling their proper place in the common tasks of human progress.

In spite of the great and effective advances in medical science, in scientific methods of sanitation, disease prevention and cure, we are told that our rest-cures, our hospitals and sanatoriums, our insane asylums, our psychopathic institutions are full to overflowing. Though wastage through plagues of the mediaeval sort can never be again, yet everywhere men and women are suffering defeat and failure through physical wreckage, nerve-strain, over excitement, the modern rapid pace in the striving for place and power. Moreover, the common run of diseases are taking their usual toll of lost time and weakened bodily powers, and because this state of affairs is usual, because we are accustomed to so much of human ill, we tend to become calloused, to look upon it as inevitable, unavoidable. "There has to be about so much illness," we think, and we go on our way submitting to what seems inevitable because it has not yet occurred to us that this is one of our problems, just as commonly recurring epidemics once were, and that we are taking the same attitude of either hopelessness or indifference toward this state of things as was taken by our less enlightened ancestors toward plague ravages. With all our progress, waste in various forms still goes on, and to much of it we are apathetic, indifferent. So long as the machine keeps running with some degree of success we are inclined to be contented. But from some source, or sources, physical waste is being propagated and continued. Our methods in the past have always been to search for the controlling causes of the difficulty and to remove them. Are there causes, as yet understood not at all, or only imperfectly, which we can

seize upon and put under our control? Causes there must be, and only the pessimist would deny that there are also remedies, and that we shall find them.

But the wastage is not all primarily of the physical sort. Wastage through failure of adequate adjustment to life shows itself in the presence of poverty, alcoholism, crime, vagrancy, delinquency, and uncontrolled sexual life. Here again, modern scientific method has stepped in, and in the form of social surveys and social service programs has gone far towards discovering and relieving environmental conditions which are contributory to these forms of waste. But while the results obtained are gratifying, we must recognize the fact that we have not succeeded in eliminating the evils to any satisfactory extent. After doing all that can be done for the improvement of environmental conditions, there still remain the internal conditions, the psychological factors, which are primarily the reason why men and women fail to meet the external conditions successfully, and which are at bottom the reason why the major portion of environmental social and economic evils arise and continue.

It is not a complete explanation to say that environmental conditions are unfavorable to efficient living. We must know why the individual succumbs to the conditions instead of surmounting them, and why these conditions arise and are permitted to continue. It is the common experience of social campaigns that after proper legislation has been secured, after evil environments have been cleansed, many fail to show any marked improvement in meeting the responsibilities of life, and left to themselves, they soon drift back into as squalid conditions as when first the effort was made to help them to higher levels. And we must not be blind to the fact that wastage, wreckage of the worst sort, is by no means confined to the people living under grossly improper environmental conditions, but is rampant where external conditions are of the very best. We are inclined to ignore the failures among the "better classes" merely because good housing, good clothes, plenty to eat, etc., give the appearance of respectability to conditions of life just as evil, to failure in personal efficiency just as profound as any

found among the poorer classes with their less fortunate environment.

The fact remains, that after untoward environmental conditions have been given full credit, after one has taken proper account of actual mental and physical deficiencies, the primary factor in the production of economic, social and moral failure is to be found in the life of intellect, emotion, and volition. And while there must be no cessation of our every effort to give men and women and children increasingly better opportunities for a more abundant life by improving the external conditions of success, sound wisdom directs that the success of our efforts to lift humanity out of its failures, its wastage, will lie in going to the heart of the matter by dealing more directly and effectively with the underlying, fundamental causes through grappling with the internal, psychological factors. These factors are the same, ultimately, for all human beings, whether we deal with the evils of our poor and outcast population, or with the broken lives, the inefficiencies and failures of the so-called "upper strata" of society.

When we face the facts frankly we clearly see that our sanatoriums and asylums, our jails, our bread-lines and haunts of poverty and crime are the unsightly open sores resulting from the exaggerations of the wastage, of the misdirections and the perversions of human power that are present under less evident and less manifestly disagreeable forms on all sides, among all classes of people. We rub elbows with this state of things wherever we turn. Professor James has said truly that even the best of us actually use in our constructive activities but a fraction of our energies, and it is easily evident to any observer that much of the power that is used goes into "lost motion," is not used economically, represents strains and stresses and frictions that are wasteful of energy which, if spent upon life's adjustments, would bring a larger degree of success in the fight.

The problem of education might well be described as the problem of the elimination of human waste and the liberation and direction of human power at its highest potential in the most direct and efficient fashion upon the problem of control: control of individual powers and capaci-

ties and control of environment. Nowhere should we find the adjustment process more successful, surely, than in our schools of higher education. And men and women trained in our high schools and colleges may well be expected to show a higher degree of adequate adjustment than those who have not enjoyed such opportunities. By the time the student has entered college a firm foundation has supposedly been well laid which should insure his successful adjustment to life as he is to meet it in its varied forms in the higher school. And yet there is no teacher or parent who does not know that the number of those who go through two or more years of college work with more than mediocre success is not large, that many in the school ranks are failing to reap the supposed benefits of their college life, that many are keeping abreast of the demands upon them at great cost to their energies, while partial or complete nervous and physical breakdown is by no means uncommon. And many more there be who are making moral failures in the adjustment process which bring sorrow and loss in their wake. After all is said in favor of the greater success of the school-trained individual, there remains this fact to be faced, that large numbers of our college-bred men and women are to be found in the ranks of the down and out, and many more in the ranks of the mediocre, the half-failures, instead of among those who are making constructive, adequate contributions to society as might confidently be expected had their school training eliminated the waste of energy and brought their powers to the high degree of efficiency and control which it is supposed to do. In spite of all that we teachers do to develop effective power, we succeed only partially with some, and fail with many more.

Our position is that the reason for this failure is not to be laid to general natural incapacity on the part of the student in any large percentage of the cases, but to causes and conditions within the individual which can be discovered and eliminated, and that this discovery and elimination of the causes for waste and inefficiency in the adjustment process, which not only interfere with the gaining of the greatest values from the school training, but which continue to block success all along the way, constitutes one of our

most vital educational problems. Properly understood, it is basal to all the rest of our educational procedure.

Too long have we lulled ourselves into academic anaesthesia by attributing the failures in college life to conditions beyond our control or outside our special province. True, we insist, within limits, on certain hygienic measures of exercise, proper food, medical inspection and care. The value of as much attention as this to the purely physical barriers to success is not to be under-estimated. And yet every teacher knows that there are many students who give due care and attention to all these matters of good physical regime, and yet who do not seem to generate thereby the physical vigor necessary to carry them along through the stress and strain of hard and persistent application with ease and buoyancy and efficiency. But we have formed the habit of avoiding all responsibility by laying this state of things to the "natural" incapacities of the student's physical machinery. Such students we say are "naturally not strong," they are "frail," "delicate," "high strung;" they are "overworking," "of nervous temperament," etc., *ad nauseam* as though to give ourselves over to manufacturing vague terms brought a satisfactory solution or explanation of the difficulty. When we have covered over the problem with a vain show of words, and have relegated the difficulty thereby either to the realm of native incapacity mentally, or to physiological imperfections, we are satisfied that it is outside our jurisdiction, it is not our affair, but belongs, for correction, to the physician.

The truth is that there is much physical waste and inefficiency and ill-health that cannot be laid to the door of wrong diet, insufficient exercise, irregular hours, or the incursions of various diseases. And there is also much mental waste and inefficiency that cannot be laid to mere native incapacity, physical or mental, as the primary cause. It was the conviction that the causes of failure to meet life's demands, as outlined in the preceding paragraphs, are to be found primarily in the mental life, and that these causes can be discovered and controlled by psychological methods, which led Miss Hamilton to the discovery and development of the principles of psycho-analysis and re-education which

she has used successfully through many years of constant practice and which she demonstrated in our clinic at the University.

From the above outline it will be seen that our problem, while it includes the pathological conditions of mind and body which may be found to be of mental origin, bears primarily, not upon these conditions, but upon the whole range of personal adjustments which is taken into account by all educational effort. The view of education as adjustment is not new, whether one considers either the intellectual or the moral aim. And while our work has an important direct bearing upon intellectual success, it is not primarily directed at the training of the intellectual life as this is commonly attempted by our educational disciplinary programs. We are attempting to deal as directly as we may with the emotional and volitional aspects of mental life. The major efforts in this direction have been confined, for the most part, in our educational procedure, to the presentation of religious, moral and intellectual ideals in the hope that these would get themselves built into individual character. But it is one of the most familiar facts that minds may be supplied with rich stores of experience and trained to the finest cutting edge of logical keenness, and yet out of these stores of experience the intellectual processes use material that is built into either partially or wholly destructive programs of conduct. The failure is not due to faulty functioning in *form* of the well-trained intellectual processes, nor to any lack of constructive ideal material available. The failure is more largely due to the readiness of the intellect to accept false premises, to its tendency to be guided by a false scale of values, to the wrong selection and use of materials, and thus to the failure of constructive ideals to function in controlling thought and action.

It is a matter of common knowledge that any deep-seated emotional bias or attitude inevitably colors all judgments, and in so far causes the individual thus affected to fail of the most successful, clear thought and efficient action. Case after case might be cited from any one's experience of persons who have gone down to actual destruction, or who have failed of highest attainment, or the most fruitful con-

tribution to social and personal values because of some bias that has kept them self-centered, or devoid of the courage of their convictions. All their thinking has been so motivated by the emotional attitudes present that it has led into blind alleys and has fallen into self-contradictions in the outcome of the adjustments secured by it. These emotional biases or attitudes run all the way from the most trivial and momentary acquired interests to the most fundamental instinctive inherited trends of human nature. They may function consciously or quite without the individual who is motivated by them being conscious of their influence upon him to determine his thought and action. The intellectual blindness occasioned by deep-seated biased attitudes is seen in the frequent example of men at the head of great business ventures, grasping for power, and more power, who little by little prepare the way for the disastrous labor wars with their consequent losses of material, time, money and lives. And yet, in spite of this contradictory outcome, these men persist again and again in their programs of destruction until they are restrained by tardy legislation. Intellect, the finest in the country, is here the servant of greedy passions, and it brings to pass failure instead of success.

In the large, one might point to the whole program of militaristic "efficiency" which is bringing untold destruction upon the modern world. This program was wrought out by the keenest of minds; minds having at their disposal all the contrary experience of human history, all the high ideals of the ages, all the finest training that can be given the logical processes by our modern educational machinery. And these minds conceived cunning plans by which they were confidently hoping to attain place and position for themselves and their followers. Blinded, misled, and deceived by sources of motivation that never yet have succeeded in moving men to constructive programs, they have their answer in the cataclysm of failure and destruction and ruin which has come upon them, and through them upon the whole world.

Everywhere the principle is the same. With the poor or with the prosperous, with the weak or with the powerful,

with the one, or with the many, the ideas that arise and the use that is made of them are but the end result of processes lying back in the emotional life.

Control of the emotional life is thus seen to be fundamental to the constructive functioning of the intellectual processes. Constant demonstration was given in our clinic of specific, direct, and effective methods of discovery and control of the emotional life upon which hinges volitional control. With the changing, by the methods of re-education, of the emotional biases or trends there resulted adequate and constructive volition, the tendency to be influenced by false scales of value disappeared, and the valid ideals, hitherto merely intellectually assented to became dynamic realities in guiding the adjustment program. An individual thus rid of emotional blocking and re-educated at the foundations of motivation meets his life's problems with ever growing efficiency because of the fact that his higher perceptions, his insight and understanding are no longer under the domination of blind emotional tendencies. Thus one great source of inefficiency and waste is discovered and removed.

But there is another fundamental way in which the emotional life is frequently a source of waste. Attention has been called above to the fact that much of our energy goes into "lost motion," is wasted in strains and tensions and frictions. Again an appeal to our common experience shows us how intense emotions of any kind consume energy and leave men and women exhausted and depleted from the loss. Attention from many quarters has been called to the enervating effects of anxiety, worry, fear, and "nervous tension," and there has been much exhortation to cease from these injurious emotional attitudes and to lead the "simple life." Here again the attempts at correction have been vague and indirect.

But while attention has been often directed to these grosser and more evident forms of emotional waste—a waste that weakens the physical powers and dulls the capacity for clear and constructive thinking—there is need of knowledge of the fact that there are constantly present less evident emotional conditions, both conscious and unconscious, that

waste the energies and rob the individual of his ability to see his problems clearly and form adequate programs for their solution. These emotional attitudes are technically known in more recent psychological literature as "complexes."

It is a commonly noted fact that men and women in every station in life are prone to map out programs for the conduct of their affairs that lead to the restriction of success, and oftentimes to actual failure, due to the conscious or unconscious fear of losing their positions. The constant evasion of moral responsibility, as well as the short-sighted business plans resulting from economic fear, are too evident on all sides to need further comment, while on every hand men and women are working at lowered efficiency and are meeting with disappointment of their hopes and desires, many actually breaking down in health under these emotional strains and stresses that are slowly sapping away their mental and physical strength.

It is a common-place of modern psychological knowledge that all reactions to incoming stimuli, all responses to situations, are determined either by the original nature of man (reflexes, instincts, and capacities), or by that original nature as it has been modified by experience. It is further accepted that this inner life of ours is impulsive in nature and seeks satisfaction along the line of some form of expression, and that those forms of expression that bring satisfaction tend to be repeated and to form permanent pathways of response. Response is along the line of the "satisfiers" and hence we may say that all activity is emotionally motivated, a seeking for the satisfaction of the emotional life.

It is further accepted that this inner mass or complex of ideational and emotional life may function both consciously and unconsciously in its determination of the nature of the reactions to the outer situation, and that in the determination of the reactions the greater influence is exerted by factors lying outside of consciousness. Very frequently, what appear to be the conscious factors bringing about response are but rationalizations of the unconscious factors.

These attitudes and tendencies constituting the individual character have long been looked upon as more than relatively fixed. The changing of even lesser and more

superficial habits is notably a difficult and relatively unusual thing, while the changing or uprooting of the deeper-lying attitudes that are foundational to the personality's modes of response is regarded in much psychological literature as next to impossible, accomplished, if at all, only by some sort of emotional upheaval such as sudden conversion, or some other profound emotional disturbance either sudden or long continued, or else by patient and frequently painful experience and educative effort extending over a long period of time.

Two things thus stand out as eminently fundamental. First, there is need of more efficient and direct ways of establishing desirable habits, desirable fundamental attitudes, desirable channels of outlet for the impulses of life from childhood on through maturity. Second, more efficient and direct ways need to be devised for the changing or nullifying of injurious or undesirable habits and fundamental attitudes anywhere they may manifest themselves along the advancing years. The aim of the clinical demonstrations given at the University by Miss Hamilton was to indicate the direction in which the solution of these two problems may be found. The methods used showed invariably in a wide range of cases that it is possible to uncover and bring under the control of the personal consciousness of the individual those deep-seated and underlying influences or attitudes, those fundamental tendencies that are at work giving habits their power and interfering with the most satisfactory adjustment. Furthermore, by an intensive process of re-education it was shown that it is possible to free the personality from the domination of harmful habits and disturbing tendencies, and to furnish adequate and satisfactory channels of outlet and expression for the hitherto pent-up, or misdirected, and hence unsatisfied emotional nature. The methods used give direct and immediate access to the sources of the mal-adjustments, whether these causes be conscious or unconscious, and furnish an opportunity of dealing with them more rapidly and effectively than is possible through the existing methods of general education.

With a limited range of pathological cases only, some

notable corrective work has been done by such men as Morton Prince, Sigmund Freud, and his disciples. Whatever else may be said in approval or disapproval of the Freudian school, its methods and theories, this much should be frankly recognized by everyone: that Freud and his followers have furnished abundant scientific evidence of the pathological effects, physical and mental, proceeding out of repressions, perversions, and fixations of the sex life. And while Miss Hamilton has by no means neglected this very important and fertile source of difficulty, she has extended her investigations into the whole range of the manifestations of the emotional life as it arises in connection with any and every sort of human impulse, instinct, capacity or interest. It has been amply demonstrated by her, both in private practice and in our clinical work, that repressed, misdirected, or unsatisfied emotional life is responsible for a wide range of disturbances and mal-adjustments in both the mental and physical fields, ranging all the way from the most extreme pathological difficulties to the finer errors in adjustment which are in no sense pathological, but which keep men and women from attaining their best in the complex business of living. And while unmistakably neurotic conditions are sometimes present as contributing causes to emotional waste, it is by no means possible to class all those who are failing of satisfactory adjustment, whether the difficulty has become pathological or not, under the convenient term "neurotic."

In our clinical work during the past year we have dealt not only with various kinds of pathological cases made familiar to the reader of the literature of psycho-analysis, but also with a wider range of pathological and semi-pathological cases, and have extended our methods to include all instances where the emotional and ideational life is found to be causing waste, failure, or partial inefficiency in the adjustment process. There is not wanting abundant evidence of the serious effects of the repression or perversion of the sex life (using that term in its broad Freudian sense), and there is also abundant evidence that disturbances of a serious nature find their roots in other primary causes. Above all, while the methods used make possible the cor-

rection of those difficulties that are pathological or bordering on the pathological, and this is a necessary and important phase of the work, it should nevertheless be noted that the most significant and important contribution and application of these methods and principles are to educational procedure because of the understanding and control which they afford of those habits and emotional trends upon whose proper direction depends the success of both the intellectual and moral education of the normal, healthy individual.

In the analysis which is undertaken, while use is made of the "free association" method, no use is made of hypnosis, dream interpretation, or of the Freudian system of symbols. Psycho-analysis, as the term is generally used and understood, refers to the Freudian methods or to some variation of them. But the term should not be thus limited, for any procedure by which the conscious and unconscious life are brought into clear light for examination and understanding may rightly be called psycho-analytic.

The self is a complex bundle of inborn tendencies seeking satisfactory outlet or expression. As might be expected from *a priori* considerations, mal-adjustments may come about from the misdirection or repression of this emotional life anywhere along the years from childhood through maturity. It is the misdirection or repression of the emotional life that is the primary cause of more manifold forms of human illness, wastage, and failure of full achievement than has as yet been properly recognized and effectively dealt with. The clinical work done at the University was for the purpose of demonstrating this fact, and to give hope that these conditions may be more directly and efficiently corrected than has heretofore been possible through existing educational methods. The methods that reveal the causes may properly be called psycho-analytic, while the methods by which these causes are corrected are primarily a matter of the re-education of the emotional and volitional life at the sources of motivation.

We plan to publish as rapidly as possible reports of cases to make clear the position that in instances of faulty adjustment and waste growing out of the mental life the causes can be discovered and removed. It will be possible

in detailing the cases to make clearer the nature of the technique of analysis used in the discovery of fundamental causes, and to present the methods of re-education whereby the individual learns the control of the fundamental tendencies of his own nature, so that the repressions, the inhibitions, the tensions, are removed, satisfying channels of outlet discovered, and the life brought to its normal level of efficient expression. It will ultimately appear from our studies that the fundamental task of psycho-analysis and re-education is that of bringing to pass a harmonious unity of all the various interests represented by the complex inborn tendencies of the personality. In essence this unity is a moral unity, for it involves the harmonizing of all the urging capacities and powers of the self with those fundamental laws of life, which, when obeyed, make for progressive, constructive, satisfying self-realization in the complex adjustment process called life, a process which has the individual and physical needs at one end, and the social and spiritual needs at the other.