3 - Psychoanalysis

As the earliest form of depth psychology, psychoanalysis is very nearly opposite <u>Behaviorism</u>, which eschews consideration of mental phenomena. Because the prevailing concern of psychoanalysis is with psychological disorders, some of the earliest descriptions of <u>Personality Disorders</u> were inspired by psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis has three main applications:

1. It is a method of investigation of the mind;
2. a provides a systematic theory about human behavior; and
3. Proposes methods of treatment for <u>psychological</u> or <u>emotional</u> illness.

Freudian psychoanalysis refers to a specific type of treatment in which the "analysand" (analytic patient) verbalizes thoughts, including <u>free associations</u>, <u>fantasies</u>, and <u>dreams</u>, from which the analyst formulates the <u>unconscious</u> conflicts causing the patient's symptoms and character problems, and interprets them for the patient to create insight for resolution of the problems.

The specifics of the analyst's interventions typically include confronting and clarifying the patient's pathological <u>defenses</u>, wishes and <u>guilt</u>. Through the analysis of conflicts, including those contributing to <u>resistance</u> and those involving <u>transference</u> onto the analyst of distorted reactions, psychoanalytic treatment can clarify how patients unconsciously are their own worst enemies: how unconscious, symbolic reactions that have been stimulated by experience are causing symptoms.

Freud's theory is based on three primary assumptions about the nature of humans beings due to the influence of prevailing scientific attitudes towards these maters at the time.

1. Anthropic Mechanism

   The thesis in anthropic mechanism is that *everything about human beings* can be completely explained in mechanical terms, as surely as can everything about the workings of a clock or gasoline engines - i.e that their functioning is analogous to the working of mind and that principles of energy consumption, conservation and transformations in machines are regarded as true for human systems as well.

2. Psycho-social Conflict Theory

   Assumes that the drives of the psyche are in constant conflict with the demands and norms of society. The result of this conflict, is that the individual constantly attempts to achieve as much drive satisfaction, with as few guilt feelings as possible.

3. Biological and Psychic Determinism

   Freud held that our drives were physiologically based and rooted within the body - biological determinism. More specifically he proposes that these biological drives are localized within the Id of the psyche while, societal rules are gradually absorbed into the Super Ego of the psyche. It is the conflict that ensues between these two regions pf the psyche that ultimately result in our behavior - physic determinism.

Topography of the Mind

Freud saw the individual as consisting of three separate aspects that functioned alongside each other to attain three primary goals:

1. To ensure the survival of the organism;
2. To allow the individual to experience as much pleasure as possible; and
3. To minimize the individual's experience of guilt

Freud's theory places central importance on dynamic, unconscious psychological conflicts. According to Freud there were three types of <u>primitive unconscious instincts</u>:

1. Sexual Instincts - that influence the behaviors that generate pleasure
2. Ego Instincts - that influence behavior associated with preservation of self
3. Hostility Instincts - that influence aggressive experience and behavior

In Freud's view these instincts are innate. They generate tension and energy that cause the person to behave in a certain way that releases the tension. There are three <u>principles</u> that regulate this instinctual energy:

1. The Pleasure Principle - *directs energy to the immediate gratification of needs.*
2. The Reality Principle - *enables the person to delay the immediate gratification of needs wishes, and desires, so that greater pleasure can be experienced later on;*
3. The Moral Principle - *keeps the persons actions in line with societal values & norms.*

Levels of Consciousness

Freud originally tried to explain human behavior, by distinguishing between three levels on consciousness in the psyche.

1. The Conscious Level

   Contains thoughts, feelings and experiences of which the individual is currently aware of. As such the contents of this level changes frequently.

2. The Preconscious Level

   Contains information that can be recalled to the conscious level without much effort, memories of earlier experiences that were either positive or neutral and sensations, not being focused on, below the level of conscious awareness.

3. Unconscious Level

   Contains the persons 'forbidden' drives, fears and anxieties. Also unpleasant and suppressed memories which cannot be recalled to the conscious mind.

Freud later revised this model due to it being unable to satisfactorily describe all aspects of the complex functioning of the psyche and proposed three structural elements that each functioned primarily at a particular level of consciousness, while still overlapping another level to a small extent.

Structure of the Psyche

According to Freud the psyche is based on the dynamic interactions of <u>three mental structures</u>:
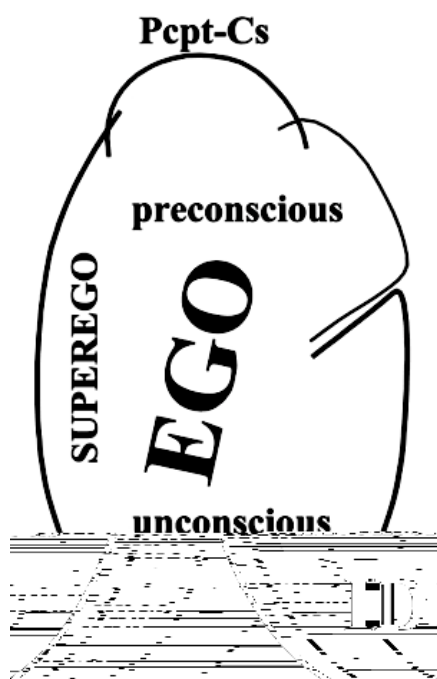
1. The Id

   The id acts according to the *pleasure principle*, demanding immediate gratification of its needs regardless of external environment. The id provides energy, called *libido*, for the psyche or personality.

2. The Ego

   The ego then must emerge in order to realistically channel the wishes and demands of the id in accordance with the outside world, by adhering to the *reality principle*.

3. The Super Ego

   The superego inculcates moral judgment and societal rules upon the ego, thus forcing the demands of the id to be met not only realistically but morally. The superego is the last function of the personality to develop, and is the embodiment of parental/social ideals established during childhood. It functions according to the *moral principle*.

Dynamics of the Psyche

Freud believed that the human psyche functioned according to mechanistic principles. According to Freud, physical-biological energy is converted into psychic energy through the process of energy transformation. This motivational energy - or libido - powers the drives of the id or guilt processes of the super ego. Unequal distribution of the energy thus reinforces the conflict between the two aspect of the psyche. Due to the principle of energy conservation, Freud holds that energy attached to wishes or desires - drive energy - does not dissipate of its own accord and if not directed towards fulfillment of the drive, it will remain repressed in the psyche. According to Freud, all drives have four characteristics, a source, and impetus, a goal and an object:

1. <u>Source</u> - refers top the physical location in the body where drive energy originates - the erogenous zones. The genitals and sex glands are the source for sexual energy, while the gullet and stomach, for example, are the source for the hunger drive.
2. <u>Impetus</u> - the quality of intensity of the energy, depends on how recently the drive was satisfied and the condition of the energy source of the particular drive.
3. <u>Goal</u> - a subjectively experienced desire to accomplish a particular action that would lead to drive satisfaction.
4. <u>Object</u> - is a physical item, or organism that assists in the satisfaction of the drive. The energy of the drive is used up in the process of interacting with this object.

An object of satisfaction is chosen by the ego, and invested with psychic energy through the process of object choice - or cathexis. Drive objects can also be substituted through the process of displacement - which may occur, for example, if the earlier object choice is no longer available. During displacement the attachment to the original object is maintained, while the substitute object is also imbued with energy through cathexis. According to Freud drive energy attached to unattainable objects could accumulate in the psyche leading to psychological disturbances - beginning with tension and discomfort and leading to neurosis if not dealt with successfully.

Motivational Drives

Freud reduces all drives to being of one of two types, based on the two most basic inclinations of living organisms; to develop constructively and to disintegrate and die.

1. The Life Drives

    The life drive - or *eros* serves to preserve life and function in a constructive manner, building up complex units from smaller constituent elements. There are two types of Life drives, ego drives and the sexual drives.

    a. <u>The Ego Drives</u> - are associated with individual survival - self preservation, and are aimed at satisfying basic physiological needs such as eating, drinking and breathing. Collectively these drives provide the energy necessary for the development of the ego and the functioning of the psyche.
    b. <u>The Sexual Drives</u> - are primarily concerned with the survival of the organisms species. Thus they are concerned with impelling the organism to reproduce and pass on its genes. The satisfaction of these drives are largely prohibited or controlled by societal moral prescriptions, leading to psycho-social conflict.

2. The Death Drive

    The death drive - *thanatos* - has the deconstructive tendency to break down complex cells to inorganic matter, leading to organic death. Freud saw this destructive drive as the root cause of aggression, war and suicide - which are projections due to the inherent conflict between the life drives and the death drive. Society controls and prohibits such expression of the death drives encouraging symbolic destruction rather than literal destruction.

    The super-ego uses aggressive energy against the ego when its attempts to guilt the ego into following its moral prescriptions, by causing refocused pain through reproach. Ultimately, after being largely sublimated throughout an organisms life, the death drive reverts to its original target: the organism itself, resulting in its own death. In death, the individual attains a tensionless, conflict free state - *nirvana* - which Freud viewed as the unconscious ideal of all life.

Anxiety

Freud describes anxiety as the ego's reaction to danger. Anxiety usually stems from the conflict between the forbidden drives of the Id, and the super ego's moral codes. Anxiety is an uncomfortable feeling that motivates the ego to avoid danger or resolve the otherwise threatening situation. Freud distinguishes between three types of anxiety:

1. Realistic Anxiety

   Is anxiety - fear - about physical dangers in the environment. While intense these anxieties can usually be more easily dealt with than the other kinds of anxiety, though the flight or flight responses to the potential danger.

2. Moral Anxiety

   This is what we feel when the threat comes not from the outer, physical world, but from the internalized social world of the superego. It is, in fact, just another word for feelings like shame and guilt and the fear of punishment. Moral anxiety is more difficult to resolve than realistic anxiety, and is thus usually the anxiety underlying defense mechanisms and the events that occur during dreams.

3. Neurotic Anxiety

   This is the fear of being overwhelmed by impulses from the id. If you have ever felt like you were about to "lose it," lose control, your temper, your rationality, or even your mind, you have felt neurotic anxiety. Neurotic is actually the Latin word for nervous, so this is nervous anxiety.

Defense Mechanisms

Defense mechanisms are strategies that the ego uses to defend itself against the conflict between 'forbidden' drives and moral codes witch causes neurotic and moral anxiety. Since the mechanisms are attempts to cope with unconscious psychic contents, individuals are not conscious of the fact that they are using defense mechanisms and the deep-seated reasons underlying their defensive behavior. Freud postulated that there were several different defense mechanisms:

a. Repression/Resistance

   Repression is the basic defense mechanisms which transfers (represses) drives, wishes or memories that are unacceptable to the super-ego, to the unconscious.

   Resistance is the continual repression of repressed drives that threaten to surface at a conscious level - as can happen during therapy.

b. Projection

   Projection, is essentially an attempt to keep repressed psychic material unconscious, by subjectively shifting the focus of the drive onto the drives and wishes of others. Projection effectively externalizes these drives, representing them as if they were the desires of others.

c. Reaction formation

   Reaction formation is a mechanism whereby the individual tries to keep a forbidden desire unconscious, by adopting a fanatical or extremist stance, that gives the impression that he or she experiences exactly the opposite desire.

d. Rationalization

   Rationalization, is an attempt to explain ones behavior, by providing reasons that justify it, that, while seeming rational are not the real reason underlying the behavior in question. As, it is found less threatening to shift blame, to an imaginary reason - however exotic - than to face up to the real reasons - and drives behind our actions.

e. Fixation

   Fixation occurs when an individual's psychological development, becomes stuck at a particular stage of psychic development. A child, typically, will behave in a manner appropriate to an earlier stage, and avoid facing the challenge of the next developmental stage.

f. Regression

Regression, is a partial, or total return to an earlier stage of development, that one previously passed through successfully. Psychologists contend, that individuals regress back to previous times during development during which they were fixated.

g. Identification

Identification with the aggressor focuses on the adoption, not of general or positive traits, but of negative or feared traits. If you are afraid of someone, you can partially conquer that fear by becoming more like them - C.F Stockholm Syndrome. Freud though identification to be specifically significant for male children during the phallic stage of development.

h. Displacement & Sublimation

Displacement functions, by finding a substitute object for the object choice of a drive. The psychic energy that was invested in the first object is displaced to a lesser degree to the substitute object.

Sublimation is the transforming of an unacceptable impulse, whether it be sex, anger, fear, into a socially acceptable, even productive form - thereby converting the baser drives into something 'sublime'. The work of the film critic , deconstructing films or the work of the surgeon could be seen as the sublimation of aggressive drives.

Dreams

Freud viewed a dream as the experience of distorted or symbolic versions of desires while asleep, that were repressed by the super-ego during waking life. This occurs because the preconscious censoring function is more relaxed during sleep, allowing the unconscious desired to break through to the surface in altered forms through a transformative process known as dream work. The hidden symbolic meaning of the dream is referred to as the latent content, while the actual - literal - events that take place are the manifest content of the dream.

Important matters and anxieties are represented as more innocuous events in the manifest content of the dream. This prevents dreamers from recognizing the real nature of the repressed desires underlying the dream, thus avoiding guilt feelings while satisfying the desires themselves. Generally this process will not alert the dreamer that anxieties are being expressed allowing the individual to continue sleeping, unless the preconscious censor fails to prevent the emergence of high level anxieties, in which case the dream will become a nightmare.

Freud viewed dreams as the door to the normally inaccessible unconscious mind. Dream analysis, is a process used by psychoanalysts alongside free association to discover the patients underlying issues through interpreting recurring patterns. In free association, the elements of a dream are used as the stimulus to which the patient must respond with immediate feedback based on whatever works of impressions spring to mind, however apt, improper or otherwise. Freud used this and a comprehensive listing of dream symbols taken from Greek and Jewish mythology to decode the meaning behind the dream elements. As a results, his interpretations may not be relevant to people with other cultural backgrounds.

Parapraxes

A parapraxis is an act that appears to be unintentional but can be understood, through psychoanalytic exploration, to be perfectly motivated and unconsciously determined. A brief and delimited disturbance that may be spontaneously explained as the result of chance or inattention, a parapraxis may be readily perceived by its initiator or by a third party to be a "mistake." Parapraxes include a wide range of events, including failures of memory, slips of the tongue or pen, mistakes, and bungled or accidental acts.

A parapraxis cannot be explained by referring to the nature of the "slip" itself, but psychoanalytic hypotheses make it possible for it to be described simultaneously as a mistake and not a mistake, depending on one's point of view. The link between parapraxes and psychopathology, moreover, is established, according to Freud, uniquely through the fact that, in the case of chance events in a real world, "slips" involve the most insignificant psychic events. By contrast, neurotic symptoms are related to the most important psychic functions from both individual and social perspectives. In both instances, however, the same processes enable such symptoms to be understood, that is, as compromise formations located between desire and defense, between a subject's conscious intention and repression.

Psychosexual Theory of Child Development

The concept of psychosexual development, as envisioned by Sigmund Freud at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, is a central element in his sexual drive theory, which posits that, from birth, humans have instinctual sexual appetites (libido) which unfold in a series of stages.

Each stage is characterized by the erogenous zone that is the source of the libidinal drive during that stage .Freud believed that if, during any stage, the child experienced anxiety in relation to that drive, that themes related to this stage would persist into adulthood as neurosis. The theory suggests four stages:

1. The Oral Stage

   The oral stage, lasts from the beginning of one's life up to (about) the 15th month. During this stage, the focus of gratification is on the mouth and pleasure is the result of nursing, but also of exploration of the surroundings (as infants tend to put new objects in their mouths). In this stage the id is dominant, since neither the ego nor the super ego is yet fully formed. Thus the baby does not have a sense of self and all actions are based on the pleasure principle.

   The ego, however, is under formation during this first stage. There are two factors that contribute to the formation of the ego.

   1. body image is developed, which implies that the infant recognizes that the body is distinct from the outer world. For instance, one will start understanding that one feels pain only when force is applied on one's own body. By the identification of the body boundaries, one starts developing the sense of ego.
   2. The infant gradually realizes that gratification is not immediate and that it has to produce certain behaviors to initiate actions that lead to gratification. An example of such behavior is crying, which seems to be purposeless during the first 2 months of the baby's life, but later seems to be used productively and is connected to certain needs (Leach 1997).

   The key experience in this stage is weaning, during which the child loses much of the intimate contact with the mother and leads to the first feeling of loss ever experienced by the baby. Weaning also adds to the baby's awareness of self, since it learns that not everything is under its control, but also that gratification is not always immediate.

   A fixation can lead to passivity, gullibility, immaturity and unrealistic optimism, and also to the formation of a generally manipulative personality due to improper formation of the ego. This can be the result of either too much or too little gratification.

   - In the case of too much gratification, the child does not learn that not everything is under its control and that gratification is not always immediate (which are the results of weaning), forming an immature personality.
   - If the child's needs may be insufficiently met, and thus the child becomes passive since it has learned that whether it produces behavior or not, no gratification will come.

2. The Anal Stage

   In the anal stage of the psychosexual development the focus of drive energy (erogenous zone) moves from the upper digestive tract to the lower end and the anus. This stage lasts from about the 15th month to the third year of age. According to the theory, the major experience during this stage is toilet training. This occurs by the age of two, and results to conflict between the id, which asks for immediate gratification of its drives that involves elimination and activities related to it and the demands of their parents.

   The resolution of this conflict can be gradual and non-traumatic, or intense and stormy, depending on the methods the parents will use to handle the situation. The ideal resolution will come if the child tries to adjust and the parents are moderate, so that the child will learn the importance of cleanliness and order gradually, which will lead to a self-controlled adult.

   - If the parents emphasize on toilet training too much while the child decides to accommodate, this may lead to the development of compulsive personality, extensively concerned about order and neatness.
   - If the child decides to heed the demands of the id and the parents give in, the child may develop a messy and self-indulgent personality.
   - If the parents react, the child will have to comply, but it will develop a weakened sense of self, since the parents controlled the situation, and not the ego.

3. The Phallic Stage

The phallic stage extends from about three to five years of age, and the erogenous zone associated with it as the area of the genitals. Even though the gratification is focused on the genitals, this is not in the form of adult sexuality, since the children are yet physically immature. However, stimulation of genitals is welcomed as pleasurable and boys, like adult males, may have erections during their sleep. Children become increasingly aware of their body and are curious about the body of other children, but also their parents.

The major conflict of this stage is called Oedipal conflict, the name deriving from Oedipus, who killed his father and unintentionally slept with his mother. Freud used the term Oedipal for both sexes, but other analysts proposed the female variant to be referred to as "*Electra complex*". In the beginning, for both sexes the primary care giver (at least in most societies) and main source of gratification is the mother. As the child develops, however, it starts forming a sexual identity and the dynamics for boys and girls alter. For both sexes, the parents become the focus of drive energy.

For the boy, the mother becomes more desired, while the father is the focus of jealousy and rivalry, since he is the one who sleeps with the mother, but still he is one of the main caregivers. The id wants to unite with the mother and kill the father (like Oedipus did), but the ego, based on the reality principle, knows that the father is stronger. The child also feels affectionate towards the father, one of the caregivers, and his feelings are ambivalent. The fear that the father will object to the boy's feelings is expressed by the id as fear that the father will castrate him. The castration fear is not rational, and occurs in a subconscious irrational level.

Freud argued that young girls followed more or less the same psychosexual development as boys. Whereas the boy would develop a castration anxiety , the girl would go on to develop penis envy, envy felt by females toward the males because the males possess a penis. The envy is rooted in the fact that without a penis, the female cannot sexually possess the mother as driven to by the Id. As a result of this realization, she is driven to desire sexual union with the father. After this stage, the woman has an extra stage in her development when the clitoris should wholly or in part hand over its sensitivity and its importance to the vagina. The young girl must also at some point give up her first object-choice, the mother, in order to take the father as her new proper object-choice.

If the conflict is not resolved, a fixation in this stage may lead to adult women striving for superiority over men, if she had overwhelming feelings of devastation due to lack of penis, being seductive and flirtatious, or very submissive and with low self-esteem. On the other hand, men can exhibit excessive ambition and vanity. Overall, the Oedipal conflict is very important for the super ego development, since by identifying with one of the parents, morality becomes internalized, and compliance with rules is not any more the result of punishment fear. A poor identification with the opposite sex parent may lead to recklessness or even immorality.

4. The Latency stage

The latency stage is typified by a solidifying of the habits that the child developed in the earlier stages. Whether the Oedipal conflict is successfully resolved or not, the drives of the id are not accessible to the ego during this stage of development, since they have been repressed during the phallic stage. Hence the drives are seen as dormant and hidden (latent), and the gratification the child receives is not as immediate as it was during the three previous stages. Now pleasure is mostly related to secondary process thinking. Drive energy is redirected to new activities, mainly related to schooling, hobbies and friends. Problems however might occur during this stage, and this is attributed to inadequate repression of the Oedipal conflict, or to the inability of the ego to redirect the drive energy to activities accepted by the social environment.

5. The Genital Stage

The genital stage, lasts from puberty, about the twelfth year of age, and onwards. It actually continues until development stops, which is ideally in the eighteenth year of age, when adulthood starts. This stage represents the major portion of life, and the basic task for the individual is the detachment from the parents. It is also the time when the individual tries to come in terms with unresolved residues of the early childhood.

In this stage the focus is again on the genitals, like in the phallic stage, but this time the energy is expressed with adult sexuality. Another crucial difference between these two stages is that, while in the phallic gratification is linked with satisfaction of the primary drives, the ego in the genital stage is well-developed, and so uses secondary process thinking, which allows symbolic gratification. The symbolic gratification may include the formation of love relationships and families, or acceptance of responsibilities associated with adulthood.

Psychopathology

According to Freud, psychological disorders are caused by an imbalance in the structure of the personality. An imbalance can arise for example, if the ego to weak to handle the conflict between the super-ego and the id, due to various historical and contemporary factors:

1. Historical factors

    Can be traced back to fixation in pre-genital stages of psycho-sexual development at result from:

    - Fixation at a particular stage causes unresolved problems to be repressed to the unconscious allowing excessive, fear-arousing drive energy to remain in the psyche.
    - The development of a weak ego due to parental over protection as can happen when the ego fails to develop effective defense mechanisms or sufficient rational skills to enable drive satisfaction.
    - The development of an overly strict super-ego due to strict parental discipline and the child taking over rule identification, or if limited opportunities are made for the expression of aggression.

2. Contemporary causes

    Stem from any changes or crises that upset the balance between fulfillment of drives and guilt feelings. These changes are brought about by the transition from one stage or phase of life to another or a radical change in the persons lifestyle.

When the ego can no longer cope with the anxiety that results from the conflict between the id and the super-ego by means of the usual defense mechanisms, it resorts to pathological ways of handling conflict. Freud regards pathology as a desperate effort, on the part of the ego, to escape from this conflict situation (Freud, 1953: Vol 7).

Freud distinguished between three types of mental disorder:

1. Neuroses

    Neuroses correspond to anxiety states in the DSM-IV. According to Freud, they develop due to the inability of the ego to cope with psycho-social conflict, which leads to the ego producing a symptom that brings the underlying conflict to the surface.

    A symptom then has the following functions:

    - It is a form of communication;
    - Acts as a 'punishment' from the super-ego;
    - Is a symbolic satisfaction of the unconscious wish; and
    - Provides a secondary advantage - attention and sympathy.

2. Personality disorders

    Personality disorders are deeply rooted disturbed ways of dealing with conflict and satisfaction of drives. The disturbance is the results of fixation and consequent regression to the corresponding pre-genital stage.

3. Psychoses

    Psychoses, are severe distortions of reality that occur when the ego can no longer function according to the reality principle. This occurs due to the ego not being able to resolve a deep seated conflict and withdrawing from reality as a result.

Psychotherapy

The purpose of psychoanalytic theory is to discover the causes of a patients anxiety or neurotic behavior and to enable the patient to overcome the issues through more constructive methods of dealing with the underlying conflicts. In his own words, Freud describes psychotherapy as "Where Id was, there shall Ego be. It is a reclamation work, like the draining of the Zuyder Zee." (1964:111-112) Thus it is not enough that the demands of the id be made conscious, but that the conflict be made conscious also - so that a better balance between structural elements of the psyche can be attained. Therapy aims to:

1st. Assist the patient to re-experience the repressed wishes and memories so that the
      dammed up energy can be utilized; and
2nd. In the longer term, to teach the patient to experience as much drive satisfaction and
      as little guilt feelings as possible - i.e. to approach the ideal of optimal development
      (Maddi, 1980:42)

Various aspects of the therapeutic process can be distinguished:

- The patients search for the causes of their problems in their own psyche;
- The therapist interprets these explanations to facilitate the search;
- The patients intuitive understanding of the causes of symptoms is accessed through
  free association;
- Levels of emotional attachment are worked through to identify root causes;
- Ineffective behavior and habits are replaced with more effective ones.

In his interpretations, Freud used a number of techniques and guidelines:

1. Dream analysis - looking at both the manifest and latent content;
2. Identification of resistance, blocks in memory or free association;
3. Transference - form of displacement that occurs when a patient displays attraction or
   aggression to the therapist, used as way of allowing the patient to re-live the
   experience in a neutral setting

Interpretation and Handling of Aggression

Freud contends that aggression is the result of the inherent death drive which is diverted to
the outside in the form of violent behavior. According to Freud, violence is innate and
unavoidable: "There is no use trying to get rid of man's aggressive inclination" (Pervin,
1978:70).

An increase in violence in a particular area is due to:

- A relaxation of the moral code;
- Individuals concerned having a high level of aggressive drive energy;
- Risk of being a victim of violence; and
- Potential satisfaction of the death drive increases when participating.

Violence can be managed from two angles:

1. Sublimation of aggressive energy into culturally acceptable and productive tasks.
2. Via strengthening of moral prescriptions against violence through education and the
   method of non-violent resistance.

Criticisms of Psychoanalysis

The criticisms of Freud's theory can be grouped into four general categories.

1. Critics contend that Freud's theory is lacking in empirical evidence and relies too
   heavily on therapeutic achievements, whereas others assert that even Freud's clinical
   data is flawed, inaccurate, and selective at best.
2. The actual method or techniques involved in psychoanalysis, such as Freud's ideas on
   the interpretation of dreams and the role of free association, have been criticized.
3. Critics assert that psychoanalysis is simply not a science and many of the principles
   upon which it is based are inaccurate; and
4. There are criticisms of its lack of relevance outside of the context for which it was
   intended. The theory seems to have little multicultural relevance, as it was developed
   and observed exclusively in a western context, many of its assumptions fall away if
   transferred.