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## **Child Development Monograph 1**

### **Mental Development of a Human Being as Viewed by "Counter-Conditioning Therapy®" A Unified, NON-COGNITIVE Psychotherapy**

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#### **INTRODUCTION**

People don't evolve out of an experiential vacuum. Instead, they live and flourish amongst human beings. Through the authors' emphasis upon the universal quality and nature of early experiences, you the reader, will appreciate the extent to which, in common human terms, all of us possess the same mental response capacity. At the same time, you will be able to mentally resurrect some of your own childhood experiences, and thus, gain some personal sense of what the authors are talking about. This material will allow you to place your childhood experiences into a perspective which comes from an experiential, rather than a theoretical, view of early mental development. In sum, all of us, inadvertently and innocently, participated in the formation of our own mental system simply by the act of growing older.

#### **YOU WERE A KID ONCE AND YOU WERE PARENTED**

You were a kid once and you were parented. Consequently, you, like all human beings, have met with a conditioning experience originating from and determined by the quality of that nurturing.

When you and I were born, the people who looked after us and to whom we paid attention, were those in charge of PARENTING us (these people weren't necessarily our biological parents). During our childhood, we were "little" and they were "taller" than us, so we always paid attention to them. As children, we "short" people spent much of our early time looking up at them and envying their height. This observation influenced us in our emotional desire to accelerate our "growing-up" period.

The "tall" people had access to benefits which we "little" people coveted. For instance, they could "stay up late" and they could "eat what they pleased". It appeared to us as children that the "tall" people weren't always being told "what to do".

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORMAL WORKINGS OF THE MIND**

As kids, we constantly heard our parents use words such as: SHOULD, MUST, OUGHT. Our parents preoccupied themselves with STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR and VALUE JUDGEMENTS. They also spent much time and mental energy commenting upon OTHER PEOPLE'S BEHAVIOR. We heard our parents employ YOU frequently in their commentary. Also, we heard them use WHY quite a lot.

During this time of laying down the mental foundation of ourselves, we inadvertently forged a framework based upon COPYING verbalized material from those older than us. We heard their commentary over and over again. So the SHOULD and the SHOULDN'TS and the MUST and the MUSTN'TS which we mentally absorbed from our parents' verbal commentary formed the beginnings of our own mental fabric.

As we progress through life, we reiterate parts of this copied material as if it were our own THINKING. The COPIED material is now us. It is this absorbed emotional material which DICTATES, unremittingly, the style of our behavior as members of the next generation. This mental evolution depicts the normal development of our functioning mentality, the commonplace workings of the human mind.

## **PARENTAL REPETITION OF LOGIC AND REASON**

The child hears the verbal demands and commands repeatedly hurled at him. These demands and commands become lodged in his volitional mental system (his information-bank). The parent employs logic, reason and repetition in anticipation of obedient behavior. But the child has heard the same commentary over and over. The more this commentary is repeated by the parent, the more the child will be inclined to drift away from compliance. Indeed, the only function served by parental repetition is the mobilization of the child's "reactive" ([non-volitional](#)) system. Inevitably, parental "brow-beating" results in the child's rebellious or even disobedient behavior. It is the mobilization of the child's emotional system which impedes his cooperation. Telling the child a hundred times "clean up your room" is not an informationally productive activity.

## **A CHILD'S NATURE IS TO BE INQUISITIVE AND SPONTANEOUS**

A child is intrinsically creative, inquisitive and spontaneous. Kids are curious about everything. After all, they only arrived recently on this earth. As we were all kids once, all of us have filed those early developmental experiences in our mental "bank". This developmental scenario applies to the mental evolution of everyone.

## **GRIEVANCE NETWORK**

While we were growing up, a parent said to us, "No, you can't have that"; or, "No, you can't do that"; or, "No, you can't say that". In terms of impact upon the child, it matters not in what language "no" is said. The variable of what nation a person was raised or enculturated in is irrelevant. This matter of cultural background merely serves to pin-point the national location or the human source of the particular contents of one's emotional, reactive make-up.

This socialization activity represented by the phrases "no, you can't have that" or "no you can't do that" is the basis for the creation of what we call the "grievance network". Every child acquires a grievance network in the

process of their mental development. It doesn't matter in what human circumstance or environment the child was raised. It is from mentally "collecting" resentments or perceived grievances in the early stages of one's mental beginnings that the common human capacity for "complaining" arises. Raised in poverty or raised in plenty does not cancel out development of the grievance network.

Becoming a parent places one in the unenviable position of being "blamed" by your children over how you raised them. As a parent, one cannot escape the inevitability of this human event. This "blaming" activity evolves into a collection of negative happenings which form into a "network of grievances". The beginnings of the collecting activity that forms the "grievance network" starts shortly after the child begins to verbalize. He demands things because we all want our way. It is a parental responsibility to direct and control this childhood tendency. Intermittent confrontation between parent and child is the inevitable outcome of their interaction. In no way can the parent win. He will not end up as the "good-guy" in this struggle. Reasoning with the child merely delays the inevitable "blaming" outcome. Endeavoring to have the child UNDERSTAND parental actions only forestalls active resentment in the child's mind.

### **CONDITIONED TO SCAPEGOAT, RATHER THAN TO GET ALONG WITH PEOPLE**

As human beings, we are not conditioned or oriented to "like" people. We are conditioned to "scapegoat" people. Scapegoating, a state of mental functioning, occurs because we, as human beings, are conditioned to be alert to the differences in human behavior. Therefore, we become inadvertent participants in accentuating and amplifying human differences. It is due to human conditioning that we mentally perform in this way. This factor in our mental development does not prepare us to be innately predisposed towards others.

Another feature which we mentally possess in common, besides the one of actively noting different behaviors, is the activity of "complaining". While our individual complaints differ, the activity of complaining is universal. Complaining evolves from two items. One is "we all want our own way". The other is our inherent compulsion to refine and improve upon our surroundings for reasons of comfort and personal safety (a feature in the survival of the species).

### **TO BE ALIKE, IN ORDER TO BE LIKED**

As children, we feel driven to appear similar to the human elements in our surroundings, to fit in with people around us. We want to be "liked" by people. We want to "fit in". We don't like being left out of what everyone around us is experiencing. In fact at times, we even want the same things or experiences as have our familial brothers and sisters. If we don't get our way, we get mad. Consequently, this component in our pattern of behavior can conspire to make us feel "abandoned" by our family, which causes us to feel "sorry" for ourselves. As children, we become annoyed with those around us when they don't let us do what we want to do. The drive to both get our way and to fit-in with those around us is a "push-pull" feature of our growing-up experience. This urgency to "fit in" develops out of: "It's dangerous to be different". (We refer the reader to the Center's article: "It's Dangerous to be Different".)

### **COPYING HUMAN BEHAVIOR**

What emerges out of the human inclination to be "like" those around us is an inadvertent mentally-based predisposition for "copying" others. What we COPY from the behavior of people around us resembles a close likeness of their style of verbalization and the mannerisms they use. But, it is NOT a replica. Each of us is NOT a







