Freud On Development Essay, Research Paper

Freud really did make some major contributions to the field of psychology. He

was the first one to suggest that psychological problems might have their roots

in how children were treated. Freud believed that most of our personality is

formed by early childhood, much of it so early that we don?t even have

conscious memories. For example, people who were toilet-trained strictly and at

an early age grow up to be intolerant of mess, disorder and anything that

doesn?t go by the rules of how things are supposed to be. In the summer of

1929, one of Freud?s patients, Herman Kleirman, wrote a letter to him in order

to be able to understand a dream he had. The symbolism and depiction of this

dream represents the different stages of Freud?s theory of development. The

first thing the patient remembers is that he was in a very dark and

uncomfortable space. Soon after, he fell down a tunnel and ended up in a lake.

This is the suggestion of the moment of birth, when the baby is still inside the

mother (the dark spot). The tunnel he talks about is the birth canal through

which he will come out and see the light for the first time. Up to that moment,

the baby has been in water for nine months. So, once he is outside (in the

lake), he starts to take oxygen. This is why he felt that ?the lake was filled

with more than water?, which is air. Next, the patient grasped onto something

to save himself in the dream. This is the representation of the beginning of the

oral stage for the baby. Now, the mouth is his only connection with the world.

Grabbing and sucking are two of the only things that the baby can do at this

point. As Freud indicates in his theory, little kids have the desire to

Freud?s psychosexual stages of development 3 suck all the time. They grab the

mother?s nipple for milk, as the man grabbed and ate that thing in the dream

to save his life. He tasted something bitter and acidic. This is similar to the

taste of the first milk the baby has from the mother when he starts sucking.

During the oral passive stage, the EGO, the rational and conscious part of our

minds, starts to develop. After getting to the edge of the lake, Mr. Kleinman

describes a horrible and disgusting feeling caused by thick and stinky mud that

he was into up to his waist. This compares to the stage of the toilet training

in the baby?s development, called the anal-retentive stage. Here, the child

starts to recognize internal sensations. Subsequently, the guy felt very

uncomfortable and overwhelmed by the feeling and odor of the mud, which makes

reference to the feces. Next comes the anal-expulsive stage, when the baby wants

to get rid of the ?mud?. In this stage, kids are very interested in the

products of their own bodies. They are rebellious and out of control. In the

dream, the patient suddenly started feeling much better because the mud was

converted into silver-white sand. He loved that feeling as much as the baby does

when he has the diaper changed and feels clean and comfortable again. This also

happens when little kids are finally able to go to the toilet by themselves.

Like Mr. Kleinman, they feel on ?dry land?. Moreover, the clean sand made a

path going into the distance. This path takes the baby to the next stage: the

phallic stage. This is called the Oedipal conflict, which happens when the child

falls in love with his mother. At this point, the SUPEREGO develops. It is

governed by the morality principle and it is the last part of the personality to

be formed. Besides, the father is his opponent in the battle for his mom?s

attention. In Freud?s psychosexual stages of development 4 the dream, we find

a representation of this stage in the part when the man gets to a large tower.

This tower is the symbol associated with the father?s penis. As we know, the

penis is the representation of the source of a man?s power. The baby gets

jealous and hates his dad for the power he has over him. Likewise, the man

wanted to destroy the tower in the dream: ?I wished I had an axe to chop it

down or matches to set in on fire.? This is similar to the internal feeling

the baby has for his father when he cannot get enough consideration from the

mother. The man found no way to enter the tower, as the kid has no way to

compete with his dad. Mr. Kleinman goes on in his dream. He follows the path

that takes him to a tangled and dense forest. This forest has a cave that makes

reference to a woman?s vagina. The baby is not a baby anymore. He is now an

adolescent in the puberty stage ready to have sex for the first time. It is a

frightening experience as the man explains in the dream. He felt terrified.

However, he felt a force pulling him closer and closer to the cave. This force

is the sexual desire that helps every man overcome the awful fear to enter

?the cave?. In the dream, he feels like he is being sucked in to be

devoured, which is the fear to lose his sexual power if he enters the cave. This

is the genital stage. To sum up, Mr. Kleinman?s dream illustrates the

different psychosexual stages of a person?s first years of life. These are the

oral, anal, phallic, latency, and genital stages. As we have seen, we become

sexual individuals since the day we are born. At birth, we acquire the ID

structure of the personality, which is the primitive animal instinct controlled

by the pleasure principle; the other two, the EGO and the SUPEREGO, develop

within the five first years of life. Besides, these stages determine every

person?s Freud?s psychosexual stages of development 5 personality. For

example, gamblers and people with other addictions go back to any kind of

problem in the anal expulsive stage. As Freud pointed out, all the energy of the

?psyche? is concentrated at birth, and by the time we are five, our

personality is practically shaped.