

The responsibility still lies with those who have the liberty to use creatively the spiritual gifts that the Fascists are throwing away; but we shall have to train ourselves in sincerity and truth; as well as prepare to fight for what we hold in trust.

The goal of mankind is a free brotherhood. The Nazis and Fascists have substituted another goal -- slavery and hate. Free brotherhood is what we are fighting for; and we must train for cooperation -- each of us -- to fight for it, or we shall lose it.

THE FUNCTION OF DREAMS

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Most psychologists agree nowadays that dreams are manifestations of unsolved emotional conflicts. It was Freud who first drew attention to this rich source of psychological research, though his first conception of dream - interpretation has changed a great deal not only with psychologists but also with psychoanalysts as well. It is incontestable that Alfred Adler, the originator of Individual Psychology, has given us a most valuable point of view by emphasizing that dreams must be looked at as parts of the total personality and that we are not entitled to make any classification or schematic interpretation such as, for instance, psychoanalysis has endeavored to make.

As manifold as nature itself are the personality patterns formed by civilized man to meet life's ever -

changing variability. Each personality consists of many variables, little mosaic stones, as Alfred Adler used to call them, which though they may seem to be similar, are continuously forming different patterns simply by changing places. Sexuality is only one among the many variables, a powerful one; there are, however, many others which may drive civilized man into conflict-situations. The responses each individual gives to this emotional upheaval may be latent or may become manifest, shaping his behavior pattern and thus his individuality. The definite personality of an individual will show up under all circumstances and will be recognizable for him who knows how to interpret its various manifestations. Furthermore, it will disclose changes which an individual may undergo under altered conditions or in the course of treatment.

Dreams may become guides -- and this is one of their important functions -- which may point to any improvement or deterioration of a patient's conflict-trauma. I shall never forget my rejoicing when I learned of the dream of a girl patient who was about to be sent to a mental institution, suspected as a beginning dementia praecox. The patient was fourteen years old, and just starting to break through the isolation in which she had wrapped herself, when she had the following dream: "I was swimming in a lake when I found out that I was farther away from the shore than I had intended to go. Anxiety caught up with me and I feared that I would be unable to reach the shore again. Nevertheless, I tried with all my strength to swim back, but the shore seemed to move away and so did the figures of my mother and my sister who stood there waiting for me. I tried to shout out, but my throat was dry and did not give any sound. An indescribable fear got hold of me. I could not swim further and I already felt myself dragged down. Suddenly I saw two girls approaching me who were holding green branches in their hands which they tried to pass over to me. When I reached them and saw into the girls' faces, I recognized my two cousins whom I always had hated with my whole heart, because they were put before me as examples. In my dream, however, I felt relieved and happy to see them swimming before me, drawing me by the green branches to the shore."

This dream which the girl told spontaneously to

her mother after waking up one morning, was one of the first signs that she had responded to my treatment. Up to this time I was not quite sure if she had been in a satisfactory rapport with me. Her dream, therefore, was like a sunray breaking through heavy clouds, and telling me that we were well on our road to recovery. Signs of a closer contact with her surroundings followed soon and confirmed my conception that this dream was a finger-post to improvement in her condition.

I had a similar experience years later when I treated a young nurse in Scotland who had a breakdown after she was suddenly discharged because of improper behavior. Brought to the hospital, she kept silent and did not respond to any approach on the part of the doctors or the nurses. She refused food and resisted any treatment whatsoever. I was with her only a few weeks when her family came to take her back to England and I was very doubtful if any rapport had been established between her and me. Ten months later I got a letter from her, which showed me that my effort was not in vain. In this letter she told me of a dream she had: "I stood in a dark and narrow room where no windows were and only a door separated me from the blossoming and greening garden which I loved so much when I was a child. I was unable to open this door though I used all my strength, but something seemed to keep it back from opening wide. Suddenly I heard your voice telling me that one has to try if one wants to succeed....and I managed to open the door. I stood in the garden and I felt happy as I never had since childhood!" Her letter ended with the sentence: "You can scarcely imagine what your friendly and encouraging words have meant to me; they gave me strength and self - confidence to start anew."

Both dreams show what every psychotherapist is waiting for: first signs of rapprochement, a first willingness to try again.

Sometimes dreams are like naturally set tests. Frequently a patient seems to respond quite well to the treatment. He shows signs of improvement and considers himself making rapid progress. He discontinues the treatment and feels he can do as well without the physician. There exist no miracles; to alter one's personal-

ity, one's outlook into life, means hard and continuous work. To become a giver when one was a taker for so long a time involves a great deal of courage and renunciation. Dreams can tell better than any clever set test if the patient is well on his way to become a socially minded personality, or if he only acts as if he were prepared to draw the practical consequences of his analysis. It was a dream which gave me the clue that a young man who had been treated for quite a time had not yet started to climb up the 'Hills of Golgotha.'

He was known since his earliest childhood as "the racer" because he reacted as if he were compelled to live on a race-track. He was possessed by the thought of falling short in everything. Jealousy has held him tight ever since he was a boy. He was jealous of everything and everyone, in particular of his younger brother, who, by chance worked at the same place with him. He continually accused his brother of taking away the attention of their employer and the customers. After having been treated for a time he was convinced that he could get along fairly well with the aid of self-analysis.

About six months later he came back and I realized that he had grown worse, though he considered the tremor of his hands and his sleeplessness as symptoms of an organic disease. He complained that during the little time he slept, he dreamed so much and so confusedly, that this kind of rest made him more tired and exhausted than no sleep at all. Asked for the kind of dreams he had, he told me one and said that it repeated itself typically with little alteration. He then told me the following dream: "I saw myself in the storage-room of the storehouse where I am employed. I heard a customer enter the hall and saw that it was one for whom the boss cared most. I already saw my brother coming along and I tried to reach the man first, when the shelves around me broke down, burying me under the fragments of the precious china and glassware. Through the noise of the broken glass I heard the voice of the boss calling angrily for me. A terrible feeling of anxiety took hold of me when I realized that I could not move, and that by my haste, I had broken all these precious goods."

This dream decidedly confirmed the deterioration

of his condition which could be diagnosed also by his tremor and his sleeplessness. It was this kind of nightmare which kept him restless and a tension that prevents successfully a satisfactory sleep. The sleeplessness prevented him from getting up in time in the morning. The tremor made him fear to take the valuable pieces of china and glassware into his hands. It prevented him from doing his work as well as he should have done it. His irrational fear of doing ineffective work was converted into a rational one. Instead of adjusting himself more effectively to his work, he simply had rationalized his shadowy fear.

This brings us to another function of dreams. Anxiety dreams (nightmares as they are usually called) disturb the best sleeper. The parasympathetic nervous system is the guardian of sleep, rest, emotional balance and inward equilibrium. It is counteracted by the sympathetic nervous system which prepares the individual for emergency situations. It is the latter which, by means of the anxiety reflexes, makes us ready for flight or battle and which provides the accumulation of energy to meet any emergency. Sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are as much antagonists in the psychological sphere as they are in the organic one. Like all lower functions they, too, easily get out of equilibrium. The predominance of the one or the other is as much a matter of training as is, for instance, the training of the motor nerves.

An interruption of the sleep-rythm is easily achieved through emotional instability due to the predominance of the sympathetic nervous system's influence. Normally the consumption of energy decreases during sleep. It has the contrary effect upon the sleepless individual, who feels more exhausted when he has to get up than when he went to bed. Sedatives are no cure for the interruption of the sleep - rythm; they are simply sedatives. The result of poor sleep frequently is a breakdown, followed by inability to work properly or to work at all. This vicious circle in which the patient soon becomes entangled can only be interrupted by treating his irrational attitude toward the problems which confront him, and by readjusting him to a normal sleep-rythm.

A third function of dreams which I want to mention in this rather incomplete enumeration, is that dreams may give us a hint of an individual's attitude toward life and the future. The stimuli, the external and internal ones, are similar for all civilized human beings. These stimuli are constantly present and no individual can escape them. The reactions, however, are different, which fact is best pointed out by paraphrasing the words of Alfred Adler: "Not what we get is important but what we build upon is of greatest consequence." The stimuli are similar; the dreams, which are reactions to these stimuli, are different.

In this connection I would like to mention two dreams of identical twin - sisters, the one born half an hour earlier than the other. They got the same care, the same attention, the same education in the same surroundings, not to mention that they had the same inheritance. Yet they developed quite differently, the younger one quite plump and full of vitality and pep, the older one retiring, frail and tender. Their personalities were different and so were their attitudes and their daydreams and nightdreams. The younger one insisted on taking the place of the first-born child and the older one gave in, glad of being near her mother. The former dreamed of becoming a wife and a mother and she started to achieve this goal with great zeal and persistence upon becoming mature. The latter one wanted to stay with her mother only, and adapted her life to this aim completely. When they went to their first dance, at the age of about sixteen, they both told me the dreams which they had in one of the following nights. The younger and livelier one dreamed that she was standing before a mirror in bridal gown, and was amazed to see herself surrounded by lovely children. When she woke up in the morning she felt happy and elated. The older sister dreamed that she was sitting in a car beside an old man who seemed to be cranky, and she suddenly discovered that he looked like the young man with whom she had danced several nights before. When she woke up in the morning she felt uncomfortable and thought it would not be worthwhile to marry, anyway.

The stimulus of both sisters was the same. They both had been incited by the first experience in meeting boys at a dance. Their dreams were different. These

dreams mirrored the attitudes of these two identical twins so perfectly that a well - trained psychologist could have portrayed their personalities with little difficulty.

If we now summarize what has been said in this article about the function of dreams we can state that:

1. Dreams are manifestations of a certain personality pattern and as such they are a function of this definite personality. We are able to analyze dreams only by the analysis of the total personality. They will mirror this personality as well as will all other reactions of this entity.
2. Dreams, too, mirror the attitude of an individual, his outlook on life, his wishes and longings, and as such they may become a directive for his future development, serving as a "factory of emotions." As long as the individual's attitude has not changed, the dream - type may repeat itself continuously with little different arrangement.
3. Dreams may be important symptoms in the syndrome of a neurotic or psychotic state. With regard to this function they may point to an improvement or a deterioration of a patient's condition.
