

# Module 6 – Short Takes

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## Section 1 - Forgiveness – Lessons Learned

- 1- Terrorism is designed to prevent dialogue.
- 2 – The only way out of the cycle of violence is to listen to the pain of the other.
- 3 – Forgiveness does not preclude justice.
- 4 – We can’t understand demonic acts – they are unfathomable to the conscious, adult self.
- 5 – Any of us are capable of anything.
- 6 – Restorative justice has victims and perpetrators working together.
- 7 – Truth is liberating because you know what is happening.
- 8 – Forgiveness requires remorse where the perpetrators acknowledge they have done harm to a real human being, but ultimately all of this resides in the victim independent of the perpetrator’s remorse.
- 9 – Trust is a result, not a precondition or prerequisite for coming together.
- 10 – Few of us can get through life without committing an unforgiveable act.
- 11 – Dehumanization of the victim is necessary to do a crime without guilt or remorse.
- 12 – The perpetrators must confess all, not just part, of their crimes.
- 13 – If nobody speaks up against monstrosity, no society can survive.
- 14 – It helps to create a government fund for everyone who lost someone, on both sides, involving a small sum.
- 15 – The survivor and perpetrator are connected forever

- 16 – Forgiveness is necessary to change the future.
- 17 – Forgiveness accepts that we are imperfect and not ideal.
- 18 – Where idealization was, reality shall be.
- 19 – Vengeance is common and forgiveness is rare.
- 20 – Identification with the other allows guilt to be felt.
- 21 – A person cannot ask for forgiveness for someone else.
- 22 – Perpetrators dehumanize the victim. Propaganda makes the victim all evil so that hated and unwanted aspects of one's own baby self can be projected into them. Then the victim can be annihilated without remorse.
- 23 – The victim wants revenge with interest, but that does not satisfy the victim. Instead, the revenge produces paranoid anxieties and initiates a never ending cycle of projecting guilt, blame, and pain back and forth.
- 24 – In the “sin of forgiveness” (actually manic reparation), a double evil exists because a crime is committed and then not acknowledged.
- 25 – For a therapist dealing with negative transferences, first must come “containment” as one tolerates the patient's attacks for a long time. Then an elaboration of an understanding of the reality of the situation of the patient's pain is possible.
- 26 – It is worth asking this question for the victim: Are you forgiving the perpetrator or are you forgiving the person asking for forgiveness?
- 27 – A patient needs to learn the distinction between a therapist/parent hurting a patient/child on purpose versus hurting them by their inherent deficiencies and handicaps.

## **Section 2 - Breast Feeding and Kleinian Models**

### Disclaimer:

1 – Breast feeding is a topic about which people have very intense, often very personal feelings. From the perspective of infants it is huge and can have an impact on the rest of their life. From the perspective of mothers it is also huge but is more attached to their identity and self-esteem as a woman and a mother. When it goes well everyone wins and feels great about it. When it breaks down prematurely, it is a potential source of shame, guilt, and persecution for both.

2 – I believe Melanie Klein's models of early development offer some means for thinking about breast feeding that have the potential to be helpful to mother and infant. Used in advance, as a means to think about breast feeding, they may assist the prospective mother. Applying these models after the fact, when the feeding broke down or was interrupted before mother and baby could agree they were ready to move on, is commonly an exercise in Monday morning quarterbacking. The “woulda, coulda, shoulda” hind sight evaluations often lead to more defensiveness than is helpful and make for a very dicey situation.

3 – I am going to try to offer some ideas about this all and take the risk of inevitably upsetting some while hoping to be of help to others. Several caveats apply:

- Motherhood is really hard and most women approach it with their very best, loving intentions.
- Obstetricians, pediatricians, family, and friends all come with advice based on their own (often highly personal) perspective and good intentions. Having said that, they often don't know certain things about emotional development at a deeply unconscious or primitive level that might be worth adding to the mix as decisions are made.
- No one should ever be criticized in these situations when things break down. Everyone needs support and encouragement. Remember, the baby and mother have a lifetime together to regroup as needed.

#### Some Useful Assumptions about Breast Feeding:

Axiom #1: Interruption of breast feeding before the fourth month of life is at high risk to be traumatic to the infant. The potential likelihood and intensity of the trauma increases every month back closer to birth the interruption occurs.

Axiom #2: The impact of weaning in the first four months of life will typically be subtle until later in childhood and may even only be manifest after puberty. This link between early weaning and later development requires awareness that such a link is possible and common sense won't lead most people to imagine that this link exists.

Axiom #3: If a woman, in her "heart of hearts", does not want to be tied down by breastfeeding, or plans to go back to work full time after 3 to 6 weeks, then she might wish to consider not breastfeeding at all. This is often a very tough decision, especially if she feels she is being pressured into the breast feeding, by whomever for whatever reason.

Axiom #4: In taking a baby history, especially when trying to make sense of a deterioration of an adolescent for no obvious reason, always ask about breast feeding attempts. Just asking "Were you breast fed?" is not enough. You have to ask if it was even attempted for a day or two or a week. People don't realize that this may be significant from the perspective of how the baby experienced its beginning life outside the womb.

#### The Infant's Tasks Immediately After Birth:

1 – An infant's first task, at birth, is to find a means to cope with the massive abrupt change that accompanies being born and out in the world, now physically separate from mom. It must simultaneously find a means to (1) bring order to its world and (2) hopefully come to a conclusion that the goodness and pleasure of being outside mom outweighs the distress and badness of a life separate from mom. In other words, the infant must decide "Is life worth it?" Some infants adapt easily and make use of what is available to get the most from mom and caregivers. Other infants find the impingement of so much stimuli, once outside the womb, to be an "overload" and they really convey a need for a huge amount of contact and reassurance that everything will be okay.

2 – This earliest life decision – "is worth it to be born and live life out in the world" – hinges on the relationship that the mother and infant establish. The word "bonding" is a useful shorthand summary for this first task, and is inextricably linked to mother's availability, physically and emotionally. Needless to say, the same applies to whomever the primary caregiving is entrusted.

3 – This is where Klein's models become useful. Since all infants are both totally concrete in their thinking, and do not yet have mind and body clearly differentiated, they respond to the pleasures and pains of life as if they are concrete things that can be separated. They wish to "hold on to that which is pleasurable" (and therefore "good") while they inevitably try to "rid themselves of that which is unpleasant or painful" (and

therefore “bad”). This is all very much analogous to the function of the alimentary tract in which things can be concretely “taken in” or “expelled”.

– A key point here, not easily seen just using “common sense”, is that when the infant feels in distress, it doesn’t just feel that a good mom is absent, but rather that a “bad mom is literally present” and producing the distress on purpose. This is compactly expressed with Klein’s crucial discovery that “THE ABSENCE OF A GOOD MOM IS EXPERIENCED AS THE PRESENCE OF A BAD MOM”.

#### Klein’s Applicable Models:

1 – Klein viewed the infant’s initial task of bringing order to its world as requiring a successful separation of “good” (i.e. pleasurable) experiences from “bad” (i.e. distressing/painful) ones. Since separating the bad/painful component from the more positive experiences leaves the latter ones more “purified or ideal”, the process could be referred to with the shorthand phrase “splitting-and-idealization”. The good is held onto while the bad is evacuated outside to be gotten rid of, analogous to how an infant poops or pees out that which becomes physically distressing.

– Klein referred to this earliest period, approximating the first four months or so of life, as the “Paranoid-Schizoid Position”. It is the infant’s first “VALUE SYSTEM” of “SELF INTEREST”, during which the infant attempts to concretely bring order to its world by separating good experience and the persons (“objects”) linked with those experiences, from bad experience and the persons linked with those unpleasant experiences. In effect, it lives in two worlds that it tries to keep concretely “separate”. [This is so easily seen in the example familiar to every parent with a toddler when the juice from the pees runs under the meat on the plate and the child starts crying that the bad juice has spoiled the good meat and refuses to eat any of it.]

– The crucial point in this phase is that the “good parent”, who is felt to be giving love, comfort, and sustenance, is held separately from another version of a mother who is essentially seen concretely as “all bad”. Every bit of frustration, distress, and pain is felt to emanate from this “bad mother” (or caregiver) and is seen as being done “on purpose” to inflict pain. This has major implications for a “weaning” that occurs before the developments that will take place in the next few months of the middle of the first year of life.

2 – What becomes crucial is a shift in the middle of the first year of life as brain development and function leads to new capacities. The infant begins to develop a capacity to see that it is not living in two separate worlds, but just one that is more complex. It does not have two moms, a “good one” and a “bad one”, but rather just one mom who at times it loves and feels comfort from, and who at other times is frustrating and toward whom it temporarily feels anger and “mean” feelings. Enter the age of “ambivalence”.

– Klein recognized that the development of this “integration” (of the “good and bad versions of mom”) was key to the development of a capacity for stable loving relationships. This hinged on the recognition that the mom that one loved was also the same mom who was felt (i.e. imagined) to be injured, during periods of rage, for whatever reason. In turn, this recognition (that the good mom and bad mom are actually the same person) would then lead to a capacity to wish to repair any damage to the “good mom” while in that period of feeling full of rage. This act of restoring the “good mom” to an undamaged state in phantasy was referred to by Klein as “reparation”.

– This development of a capacity for “love”, “ambivalence”, and a “wish to make repair” can be seen as the growth of capacities that supplant the “self interest” in the “paranoid-schizoid position”. It represents a new VALUE SYSTEM in which “CONCERN FOR THE OTHER” can coexist side by side with interest in oneself. This is a central achievement in the middle of the first year of life and “greatly stabilizes” the developing infant’s character structure.

– Klein gave this phase of the development the unfortunate name “the Depressive Position”. She means to imply that “loving concern” for the welfare of the other leads to “depressive concern” for the object and

“depressive anxiety” regarding its welfare, all very positive, non-pathological elements. Unfortunately, it is easily confused with being “depressed” in the problematic sense. The noted English pediatrician and psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott suggested that “Phase of Concern” would have been a more appropriate name for this developmental period.

#### Theoretical Implications for Breast Feeding and Weaning:

1 – The logic that Klein’s models suggest is that a “weaning” from the breast, before a more integrated relationship with a whole mom has been established, has a tendency to cement in the developing psyche a feeling that “damage” has taken place to self and object that cannot be understood or repaired. This is a result of a rather permanent installation of a “paired relationship” in the internal world between a part of self and an object (i.e. a version of mom at a very primitive, part of her level) that is dominated by loss, distress, harm, etc. as a result of the premature rupture of that relationship (i.e. the early weaning).

2 – Most infants will push the weaning aside automatically even though it has registered in the psyche as this “paired relationship”. It will often seem as though this premature breakdown of the feeding relationship was “not registered” and the infant has simply “moved on”. Sometimes the early weaning will lead to a more obvious period of distress or temporary disruption of the developmental achievements that had been made. Most parents will not make the connection between the weaning and an impact on the infant unless the infant’s reaction is dramatic. I BELIEVE IT IS ALWAYS REGISTERED EVEN WHEN NOT APPARENTLY MANIFESTED.

– A crucial point to understand about this aspect is this that this “confusing and distressing event” has occurred before the “view of mother has been integrated”, so it tends to reinforce the need to keep “good” and “bad” versions of anything in life more extremely and rigidly “separated”. It is axiomatic that the more “wide and deep the splits” (between good and bad versions of elements in life), the more handicapped the personality, and the more predisposed to anxiety and possibly depression the individual will be during life.

3 – Let’s assume that life has gone wonderfully between mom and infant since the early weaning in the first few days, weeks, or months of life. The point to be remembered is that there will be this “one area” of life experience stored in the psyche that will either add a “colored filter” through which all experience will be seen, or it will remain as a “walled off, encapsulated piece of experience” that can break open given the right stimuli in later life.

This stored experience will be in the above mentioned internal relationship between a baby part of self and a version of mom that “went away”. In a manner analogous to adoption, some inevitable questions will remain, probably universally in all infants:

- Where did the breast go and why did it go away?
- Did it get damaged by me, or even die because of me?
- If it was my fault, can I repair it or will it come back to hurt me in retaliation?

You can see that the mood of the relationship to mother at the time of the weaning is likely to have an impact on these questions. If the relationship was “going well” from the baby’s perspective, then the weaning is a “huge loss” and typically a great source of fear that the baby “devoured it”. This could, for example, give a faintly sad, worried about the welfare of others, “stamp” to that infant’s later adult personality.

In contrast, if the relationship with the mother was stormy from the start, filled with frustration and rage, then the infant is likely to feel its aggression toward mother destroyed her. It is at some risk to grow up with a “predisposition to depression” of varying degree, or a more “paranoid, prickly expectation” of things never working out well and others being out to harm one.

In either type of situation, the weaning, and how it was experienced and stored in the psyche, becomes a template that has a lifelong impact. I have seen this impact over and over in patients in analysis who had such an early weaning experience.

4 – I am not suggesting that there is a one to one correlation that is predictable. The “timing” and “abruptness” of the weaning are key variables as is the nature of the relationship to the mother at that time. I am saying that it will have been recorded in the psyche and will in some manner inform future development. If one is aware of this as a possibility, then one can address it appropriately later in life, often after puberty begins.

5 – The most common time for a premature weaning that was traumatic to the infant to become manifest as a “problem” is around puberty. This is because the “baby core” of the personality comes prominently back to the surface of the personality at puberty and usually remains prominent for several years thereafter.

#### Some Practical Guidelines for Breast Feeding and Weaning:

1 – The ideal length of breast feeding is predicated on the assumption that infants do not develop a significant sense of differentiation between themselves and their mothers until the middle of the first year of life. Prior to that they feel “joined up” with and attached to the mother so that weaning before four to six months of age becomes increasingly traumatic and problematic for every month less than four months of age at which it takes place.

– Most infants (in the U.S.) seem spontaneously wean themselves between six months and a year, but will hold on to one last feeding, typically the night one, for a number of months more.

– A breast feeding (i.e. as the primary daily means of nutrition) that lasts significantly longer than twelve months needs to be explored. After that period it is likely either evidence of an infant whose first year had trauma in it, or it is evidence of a need in the mother to preserve that specific mode of relating. After two years, in my experience, the ongoing breast feeding is always more evidence of a need in the mother than in the infant.

2 – The most common “potentially traumatic weaning”, commonly unrecognized as significant, is the result of an attempted breast feeding that lasts less than a week after birth. This typically occurs because (1) the mother fails to “catch on” how to do it or fears that it is not working; (2) is ambivalent (consciously or unconsciously) about breast feeding; (3) has breasts with inverted nipples; (4) has breasts that are large and become over engorged and painfully inflamed; (5) has an infant who for whatever reason makes too feeble an attempt to engage with the breast feeding; etc.

– A well-meaning pediatrician or obstetrician will commonly suggest stopping the feeding and switching to a bottle with formula. He or she may even give the mother a shot to stop lactation (common in the “over engorgement” scenario).

[Note: I counsel pregnant mothers who say they intend to stop breast feeding before a minimum of 4 months that the infant may find the “weaning” traumatic and it might be wise to consider not breast feeding at all under those circumstances. Mothers who want to “give the baby the benefit of immunity from mother’s milk” may actually do more harm than good if they intend for the breast feeding to be stopped in the first three months to go back to work, etc.]

3 – Recognizing the association of weaning and behavior change is key to considering that it may be a trauma that needs factoring in as later life milestones are addressed, particularly those linked to separation. Evidence that the weaning was distressing is often subtle. Behavior changes, like disruption of an established sleeping pattern, increased clinginess, or its opposite “turning away”, etc. often go unrecognized as correlating with the early weaning. Knowing that the weaning has been registered by the infant is key to recognizing that the weaning was emotionally significant to the infant.

Later pubertal and adolescent emotional states and behavior will go unrecognized as linking to an early, traumatic weaning if no one has a model for such a link. [See Module Four on “How to Take a Baby History and Understand Its Implications”]

### Can a Baby Be Breastfed (or Sleep in the Parent’s Bedroom) For Too Long?

1 – This is a topic about which people will have intense emotional reactions. I would like to share some of my impressions on these topics as a result of considerable personal experience as a psychoanalyst where I have spent nearly four decades pondering these questions. I have had a number of patients who slept in their parent’s bedroom for up to four years after birth.

The difficulty in assessing the impact of such experience is that it is so variable. Parent/child combos are of every stripe and persuasion. With that in mind, I do think some issues can be addressed to give the prospective parent some working models of variables to assess.

Clearly, any parent, considering how long to breast feed or keep an infant in their bedroom, is reacting to some issues or concerns about their own needs and the infant’s welfare. They want the infant’s health, both physically and emotionally, to be paramount.

Additionally, they may have anxieties about parenting and they may have strong feelings about babyhood as a result of their own infancy and relationship to their parents. Most new parents want their own children to have a better experience of infancy and early childhood than they had themselves if anything was felt to have gone wrong (e.g. prematurity, colic, mother going back to work, divorce, etc).

There are two crucial developmental issues to be addressed in this discussion, “separateness” and “jealous/envy”. I’ll tackle “separateness” first since it is chronologically slightly earlier, but not by much.

2 – “Separateness” is simultaneously an enormously important issue, psychoanalytically speaking, and yet also very subtle as a developmental issue, until it is time in mid adolescence to leave home to go to college, the military, etc. True “emotional maturity” is profoundly linked to the capacity to remain “psychologically separate” as a person, while also having the capacity to enter into a committed, loving relationship with someone else. Its underdeveloped contrasting state is to unconsciously wish to be an “unborn, inside baby” and/ or to remain “joined up” to one’s objects as a precondition for having a relationship.

Dr. Benjamin Spock (the pediatrician who guided millions of parents through having an infant with his book “A Handbook for Infant and Child Care”, before infant psychiatry was born) had sound basic advice when he said that every infant should feel that it is the most important person in the world during its first year of life.

As every parent knows, the “Catch 22” is in balancing the needs of the infant, with the needs of the parents as individual’s and as a couple. Here are a couple of axioms I think are worth living by.

Axiom #1: All children need to feel that their parents are willing to “sacrifice” on behalf on the infant in need. [In fact, the word “sacrifice” is the only word I have ever been able to come up with as a synonym for the word “parent”.]

Axiom #2: All children need to feel that their mother and father (or any parental couple) have a loving, dependable relationship that provides the basis for security to the infant. Being a parent is hard, being an infant is harder, and parenting requires a “tag team” approach of two adults. The infant needs the reassurance that it cannot consume and destroy one parent with its needs. Single mothers or fathers do the best they can, but it is not ideal for parent or infant/child.

Axiom #3: Children will put their parents together in every possible way except the right one. That quote from noted English psychoanalyst Roger Money-Kyrle is a truism that is a testimony regarding how profoundly children do not want to be left out of anything the parents do, have, or are.

Parents who are “put together” in the “right way” are allowed to have a loving relationship that includes things that they do with each other without the child’s involvement, most quintessentially have a loving sexual relationship. I believe every child intuitively knows that fact, but does not want his or her “nose rubbed in it”. They want mom and dad to love each other but not “leave the child out” of anything. Part of growing up in life is the acknowledgment that one cannot be mom or dad’s life partner and must seek out one’s own partner in life.

So what happens if breast feeding goes on for years and/or the child sleeps in the parent’s bedroom for more than a month or two after birth. The likelihood is that the developing child will believe that “separation” and “separateness” are not a necessary part of development. It will also likely reinforce the idea that mom and dad are not entitled to a relationship except to serve the infant/child.

This latter idea seems rampant in modern Japan, where parents seem to stop having a sexual relationship by the age forty or so, and mistresses and pornography have filled the void. In my own consulting room I have observed many couples who at a deeply unconscious level had difficulty feeling entitled to a loving, sexual relationship when as children they had not allowed the same to their parents. Couples often only begin to have marital difficulties after a child has been born and they find themselves more identified with the “left out” child that requires “split apart” parents.

3 – This leads to the question of “oedipal jealousy” and “envy” of the parent’s relationship. If mother is monopolized for years by breast feeding, one has to split off one’s sexual phantasies about mother’s body and deny that mom and dad have a sexual relationship with each other. Most mothers become progressively more uncomfortable with their child wanting to touch or fondle their body as the child progresses from being a baby to being a child.

I grew up in a poor neighborhood where homes were small, children could hear their parents’ sexual relationship, and experimenting with sex with siblings and neighborhood children was the norm. Everyone was exposed to and curious about sex. Pubertal siblings and peers often initiated the curious younger children.

While I cannot prove it, I have always felt that countries that are impoverished, and have cramped living quarters, expose children to adult sexuality very early. The oedipal jealousy and envy aroused may have a significant impact on why women are treated as “possessions” and prevented from being sexual in their own right. One need not look very far in the world today to see that fear of women being free to be seen as sexual is very threatening to many men around the world.

The point I wish to make by this digression is that children who monopolize mother for years of breastfeeding, and split mom and dad apart in their minds (or even literally) by sleeping in the parental bedroom for years, are at risk to develop serious distortions about “separateness” and “parental sexuality” that may prove significantly problematic in later years.

It is like global warming, it is difficult to see in the moment, but why risk denial when the upside is a minor cost and the downside is potentially catastrophic.

#### Conclusion:

All other things being equal, don’t have children sleeping in the parental bedroom with any regularity after a month or two after being born. Breast feed according to the baby’s needs and response, not the parent’s preconceived ideas about how long it should be. Everything in life is a trade-off and these two situations are powerful examples of that truism.

If the breastfeeding is seriously likely to go for less than four months, seriously consider not doing at all as the immune benefits are highly likely to be outweighed by the emotional costs of a weaning before a baby's brain is sufficiently organized to figure out why it is coming to an end. The loving quality of relationship with the infant is more important than breast feeding done for outside pressure or guilt.

## **Section 3 - Some Thoughts on Adoption**

### Introduction:

I view adoption as a wonderful opportunity for those who cannot have their own child. It is also a saving grace for those whose lives cannot support the child, and it is a life-saving event for the unborn infant.

Unfortunately, there are not always enough adoptive parents available, and there are babies who, for any number of reasons, are felt to be less desirable to adopt. It can be a wonderful and loving gesture to adopt these infants. But one also hears regularly of adoptive parents who find their situation to have unanticipated consequences and complications.

Because of my awareness of the multitude of elements in the unconscious inner world that can be activated, I see adoption as a valuable but complex circumstance. The biological mother, the infant, and the adopting individuals are all dealing with very intense emotional experiences and a multitude of both realistic and unrealistic wishes and expectations. In turn, these unconscious thoughts are complicated by a multitude of unconscious anxieties and phantasies.

Adoption is a circumstance that has a great potential to be wonderful for everyone, but these complicating elements require a significant amount of knowledge and preparation. Being forewarned is being forearmed, and therefore, more prepared. I am trying to add to this preparation.

We can arbitrarily start this discussion by describing some of the common circumstances and motives that bring each person into the arena of adoption.

### Motives for Adoption:

#### I – The Biological Mother

It is probably impossible for any woman to “believe” that she has a living baby inside her, that she does not intend to keep, and not feel some measure of sadness, loss, and/or guilt. I highlighted the word “believe” because it is also possible for the “pregnancy” to not yet be a “psychic reality”, even though a test strip says there is a pregnancy.

If the pregnancy is not yet a psychic reality, then the woman can choose to end the “theoretical” pregnancy via abortion (or the “morning after pill” in the case of a potential pregnancy) with relief rather than the above mentioned sadness and guilt. The “Catch 22” in all of the above is that it is often only possible to assess the full nature of the “psychic reality” of a pregnancy by careful exploration with a therapist.

For most biological mothers, the decision to give the baby up for adoption is a conscious choice, with a conscious awareness of the existence of the baby. The mother may feel her life circumstance is too incompatible with motherhood so that keeping the baby is an untenable option. Alternatively, she may have too much anxiety about her capacity to be an adequately good mother to risk trying to keep the baby.

Tragically, as is the case in some cultures, she may want the baby but its gender is not acceptable for whatever combination of reasons.

As a result of any of the above, the biological mother's circumstance and attitude are potentially very complex, and may be quite conflicted. Mind you, I am leaving out the additional elements that the biological father may bring, but they are also potentially very powerful.

One additionally important wrinkle in this set of complexities is that the attitudes and circumstances of the biological mother can change significantly over the course of the nine months of pregnancy. It is a common fear of parents planning an adoption that the biological mother will "change her mind" before or after the birth.

## 2 – The Adoptive Parents:

The adoptive parents have often been through many emotional ups and downs before the final decision to adopt. They commonly come filled with hope and overwhelmed with underlying anxieties, often not consciously recognized or articulated. These anxieties often include a fear that they will not get the baby after all when all is said and done, or that the baby will not be okay, or that they won't be up to the task of parenthood, etc.

This is complicated by the reality that in some portion of adoptive parents, they are unconsciously ambivalent about becoming parents, for any number of possible reasons. These include unhappy childhoods of their own, faulty parental images that they could not use as models, doubt about the stability of their marriage withstanding parenthood, etc.

With all of this going on most adoptive parents are commonly rather reluctant to get their hopes up until all is signed, sealed, and delivered. Once they get the baby, they still have to struggle with a concern that the biological mother will change her mind, or become excessively intrusive.

With all of these anxieties and issues in mind, it is my goal, with this discussion, to try to add some logic and understanding to the lives of adoptive children and their parents. I think that this extraordinarily important situation in society can be made more sensible and thus families can be aided in coping when issues arise.

To begin this discussion I would like to outline a few background assumptions that are a product of a Kleinian approach to understanding the "baby core" the personality in all parties, but especially the adopted infant.

### Some Background Assumptions:

1 – Infants have a capacity to recognize their birth mother very shortly after birth. If that woman with whom they were connected for nine months is not present, they have a rudimentary awareness that something is different.

2 – Infants and small children have a natural tendency to assume that anything and everything that goes on around them is in some way related to them or caused by them. This seems to be a product of poverty of understanding of "cause and effect" relations, combined with a desire to see themselves at the center of everything, and thus somehow in control of everything.

This latter idea lessens the feeling of helplessness that is so painful in infancy. The infant or child is, in effect, exchanging the potential to feel guilty and to blame (i.e. because they are omnipotently the cause of everything both good and bad), for the fantasy of being in control, and therefore able to fix a situation that is going badly.

3 – All adopted children, whether told that they are adopted or not, will behave in a manner at times that seems to suggest that they are trying to understand what happened in their infancy. This particularly involves the questions of: (1) Where did the woman go that they lived inside for nine months; and (2) Why did she go away?

Parents who understand that these questions are inevitable and universal in adopted children will be in a better position to deal with these issues as they arise.

4 – The “baby core” of the personality comes back to the surface of the personality at puberty. This means that all of the emotional elements linked to the adoption will resurface at puberty, but mostly in an unconscious level. This resurfacing of “baby level” issues can offer a renewed opportunity to move forward in maturational development.

However, if these elements are not addressed constructively, they can also offer an unfortunate possibility for development to be derailed.

[See Module One, Section Nine: Puberty and the Resurgence of the Baby Core of the Personality]

5 – There is no “one size fits all” right or wrong way or time to inform a child about their adoption. Every child, family, and circumstance is unique. Any “cookie cutter” approach or guideline is at risk to do unnecessary harm to someone.

That said, “lying” about the truth or purposefully “misrepresenting” the truth will almost always do more harm than good in the long run. It is always difficult to assess how much information a child wants at a given moment in time. It is probably safest to give some information, see if the child feels satisfied for the moment, and then add bits as the child requests more, directly or indirectly. Slow but steady usually wins the race.

#### Very Early Memories, The Amygdala, and the Repetition Compulsion

It is crucial at this point for adoptive families to have an awareness of the nature of the memory storage system applicable to the last trimester of pregnancy and for the first two years after birth.

It turns out that memories during this early period of life are stored in amygdala, which is part of a very primitive part of the brain that is even found in our reptilian brethren. It has two characteristics that are necessary to understand in relationship to adoption.

The first is that memories in the amygdala are stored as “memories in feeling”, that is to say the “emotional experiences” are stored in amygdala rather than pictures or ideas.

The second is that they are not “rememberable” or “recallable” in the ordinary sense that we think of “memories” as ordinarily being. Paradoxically, however, they are “reliable”. That is to say, these “memories as feelings” can be “externalized” and “relived” without having any conscious awareness that this is taking place.

This presents an often frustrating situation for any parent who has tried to reassure a toddler that there are no “monsters” in their closet, only to have the question repeated endlessly with the small child seemingly incapable of accepting the realities and proofs meant as reassurance.

Adoptive children are often endlessly preoccupied with someone “going away” or being seen as a “bad” person. They not infrequently will test the boundaries of how much the parents can stand before the adoptive parents will “give them away” in the same manner as the biological parents did.

The punchline is that this is all stored in the adopted infant’s “amygdala”, and will necessarily and inevitably be recreated and repeated endlessly throughout childhood because it is the “only game in town”. This need to unconsciously externalize without being able to consciously remember is the basis for what Sigmund Freud referred to as “The Repetition Compulsion”. It is not so much a compulsion as it is an expression of a handful of key emotional states having so much importance in the psyche of the infant.

I do not mean to say that there are not also a myriad of wonderful developmental things also going on. I only mean to say that these issues will crop up with sporadic regularity in a manner that is unique to every parent/child family constellation.

It bears mentioning at this point that some children are constitutional predisposed to be especially “good” children, and may demonstrate very little of this “testing”. They may even “split off” any curiosity regarding their origin, and act as if nothing ever happened in their infancy. This does not mean the “memories as feelings” are not present in their amygdala, it just means their manifestations are more subtly.

One concern in such situations is that these feelings of abandonment, etc may be shoved into the body and become expressed as a “psychosomatic” illness. This is perhaps a greater risk if puberty has been reached with no discussion ever occurring about the adoption, leaving the amygdala level baby memories as feelings completely “un-metabolized”.

[Note: For a more detailed discussion about the neuroscience of infancy, the storage of these “memories in feeling” as “paired relationships”, and the resurfacing of the “baby core” at puberty, see Module One, various sections.]

#### Unconscious Manifestations and Consequences of Adoption in the Child:

I suspect that all adopted parents can expect two questions to be in the background of their adopted child’s mind. (1) Where did the woman go that I lived inside? (2) Why did she go away? (3) Was it my fault because I was bad or unwanted?

If you think about it, this implies the issue of “separation” is a huge one for all adopted children. Birth stamps “separateness” as a universal issue for all, but having the person leave you permanently adds powerfully to the equation.

This means that adoptive parents have a high likelihood of having their child have a lot of anxieties and “issues” regarding separation. In effect, that is “normal” and expectable for their situation and they need to be aware of and sensitive to it.

The second issue, often more subtle in its expression, but potentially just as powerful, has to do with how much “badness” or misbehavior will be tolerated before the adoptive parents will also abandon the baby or child.

The recognition of this type of “testing behavior” can be tricky, partly because it can be very unconscious, and partly because so many additional elements may be involved at a given moment. But the conclusion that they could be “given away” is usually recognizable as an anxiety for which they are unconsciously seeking reassurance. This can be a daunting issue when the child seemingly does gratuitous stuff to regularly be viewed as “bad” and test the issue of abandonment.

A variation on these issues is a child who is simply anxious about any and all “changes” but has no awareness of why they are anxious. Parents who can make anxieties something to talk and think about are more likely to help the child develop the requisite “psychological mindedness” to learn as they get older to link their feelings with their infancy.

Situations that ignore or turn away from contact with these underlying feelings and phantasies increase the risk for their expression via psychosomatic channels in childhood and adolescence or acting out behavior after puberty.

#### Making the Emotional Elements of Adoption Conscious:

The “take home lesson” of this discussion on adoption is that it must be dealt with and discussed, sooner or later. Ideally this will take place as the child is in need and adequately “ready” to begin to face the elements

involved. I am loathe to say when that time is because I can imagine some children who might need to know in early childhood and others for whom it is an unnecessary complication of life until puberty is on the horizon.

In all cases, the child's behavior is the guiding component. If the child is clearly acting as if they wonder if they are "wanted" or are "lovable", and there is no particular reason for such questions, then it should be considered that they are struggling with some deeper concern about which they do not yet have any idea how to think about it.

Similarly, if they are excessively burdened with anxiety about separation and cannot be consoled by reality, then they need to know something about the origin of such intense anxiety about which they are lacking the tools to think.

This brings me to the final component of this discussion, therapy for adopted families.

#### Therapy and Adoptive Families:

In an ideal world, I would have all adoptive families have a therapist with whom they could speak whenever issues arose that seemed beyond the family's ability to cope or understand. This might entail the parents going for a session alone, it might be the parents and adopted child going together for a few sessions, and occasionally all going for a more extended period.

I personally am a big fan of "family therapy". By that I mean the parents and child, less often all of the children, going together to talk about whatever issues are at hand. You get the most "bang for the buck" because the child's feelings gets addressed, the parents are learning things together with the child that allows everyone to change and grow, and no one feels singled out as the "problem".

I do not particularly favor individual child therapy in the majority of situations because the issues are usually between the parents and the child and everyone can use some assistance in dealing with each other. The exception to this rule is most commonly when an older child wants someone to talk with outside of the presence of the parents. This may be especially important when the parents are in significant conflict or one or both parents are disturbed.

#### Adoption of Older Children:

Throughout this discussion, I have treated adoption as if the circumstance was that of an infant who was given up at birth and the adoptive parents were there to take the infant from the hospital. But adoption also occurs with babies who spend a week or a month elsewhere, and sometimes months or years in an orphanage, foster home, etc.

The longer the time from separation from the biological mother to the time the adoptive parents take over, the greater the number of complicating variables injected into the situation.

One then has to ask did the child "bond" with anyone. If the answer is yes, then that represents a second traumatic loss. If the answer is no, then the child has suffered traumatic deprivation on top of everything else. And one can add additional wrinkles of all sorts.

The punch line is that adopting an older child is a wonderful thing to do, but the child will necessarily and inevitably have issues that must be faced. This need not be an insurmountable issue, but it will ALWAYS REQUIRE THERAPY FOR THE FAMILY AND POSSIBLY CHILD!

I do not say this as an admonition but more like an accepted expectation so that the adoptive individual or individuals are prepared for what must inevitably exist. The child has suffered significant trauma and will need significant support and help with it. The only real danger is the family who is denying this possibility and then fails to cope with the needs of the situation adequately. That is a recipe for long term difficulties.

### Summary and Conclusion:

Human infants have far greater capacities to record experience and know that something is going on around them than they are often recognized as having. When really momentous events happen in infancy, they will remember it and need to process those events over and over during childhood.

Adoption is such an event and the adoptive parents who recognize that the child will be processing the event for the rest of their lives will be in a much better position to aid the child with that processing.

Parents who idealize infancy or see themselves as saviors of a forever grateful child are setting themselves up to be unprepared for what they may need to ultimately process and remedy. On the other hand, parents who go into it with “eyes wide open” will likely feel it is the greatest gift they could have ever been given!

## **Section 4 - Super-Ego and Conscience**

### Introduction:

I had occasion recently to give a talk during which I asked of the assembled group, “What is the super-ego?” To my surprise, I got a number of thoughtful but rather vague answers like “the conscience” or “that part of you that makes you behave yourself” or “that part of your mind that punishes you”. I thought that all of these ideas were correct in a certain sense, but they had no coherent, organizing logic to them.

What was most concerning to me was that they did not seem to be based on an understanding of emotional development in infancy. In turn, their understanding was not grounded in an understanding of the composition of the unconscious inner world and its functioning.

For me the concept of the “super-ego” is too much of an “abstraction”, i.e. it is a meta-psychological concept, and is not sufficiently “experience near”, to be useful except in the most general or crude descriptions. It does not flow logically from infancy and childhood and their relationship to external experience, combined with unconscious phantasy.

It also lacks a connection to the development of the brain in the first year of life. The result of this failure of specificity is that it leads to crude descriptive comments like someone has a “harsh super-ego” or “lacks a conscience”. These are only useful in the most rudimentary sense analogous to saying “look there is a bird”. It tells nothing about what it really is, how to think about it, or what to do with it.

So to launch this discussion I would like to make a few orienting observations in the form of axioms. I will follow with a few definitions and then try to succinctly explain the logic in my thinking.

**Axiom #1:** What is referred to as the super-ego is actually a depiction of a handful of object relationships, between parts of self and internal versions of mom and dad that exist in the unconscious inner world of every individual. These object relationships, being the only game in town, are externalized into the outside world where they are recreated. This recreation makes it possible to visualize what they are like in that persons unconscious inner world of psychic reality.

**Axiom #2:** When someone is said to “lack a super-ego” or have a “harsh super-ego”, those descriptions are referring to internal object relations that are dominated by views of life that originated in very early infancy, and may have been reinforced by ongoing later experiences. These primitive internal relationships are by definition, concrete in nature and dominated by the Law of Talion (i.e. “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”).

# Section 5 - Sibling Rivalry

## Background:

I have been in practice now for nearly four decades and sibling rivalry is an issue that never ceases to amaze me in the various ways it comes up with great intensity, at any age, throughout the lifespan. Although it arises in early childhood, it seems to be a product of baby states of mind at any age that those baby emotions are activated. This means that virtually all circumstances or functions that bring families and siblings together, or require their interaction, have the potential to generate intense sibling rivalry.

We will need a simple definition of sibling rivalry before we dive into the subject.

## Definition:

Sibling rivalry is essentially the emotional and behavioral consequences of the feelings of envy and jealousy experienced by any child in relation to an actual sibling, or someone in the functional role of sibling, meaning near one's same age. Those feelings originate in infancy and early childhood and are most intense when the ages of siblings are less than two years apart. Interestingly, they can also be intense as a function of the "baby core" of the personality, even when the sibling is born after the older child has passed the age of four.

## Some Quotes From Siblings at the Arrival of a New Baby:

- "Okay, I have seen the baby, now can you take it back to the hospital".
- "Mom, I want you to throw it out the window" (or alternately "...flush it down the toilet")!
- "Dad, can we tie the new baby to the back of the car and drag it on the freeway"?
- "Mom, I want to be the baby!"

## Spacing of Births and Sibling Rivalry:

There is a constructive logic to sibling spacing that has powerful reasoning behind it. The ideal spacing between siblings, all other things being equal, and they often are not, would be twenty four to thirty six months apart. When the space between siblings is greater than three years, the older child is doing things that are too advanced for the younger one to join in effectively.

When sibling spacing is less than 24 months apart, the intensity of the envy and jealousy go up logarithmically. At 18 months or less, the sibling rivalry intensity begins to risk significant detrimental emotional impact on the development of potentially either child, but most commonly the older one.

The logic behind these observations follows from several factors in combination. They include the age at which the older child will become aware of the pregnancy, the older child's language capacity at that time, and how much that older child still experiences his or herself to still be a "needy baby".

For example, if the spacing turned out to be 18 months, the mother would begin "showing" typically by four months, which suggests that the older child would likely apprehend the pregnancy around 13 months of age, perhaps earlier. It would therefore still be in diapers, have very little receptive or expressive language capability, and would still likely be very intensely invested emotionally in being "mommy's baby". The lack of language would make it more difficult for the mother to forewarn the older child and try to prepare it for the arrival of the new baby.

When the spacing gets down to 11 to 15 months apart, and there are several children with that spacing, one will invariably find more serious impacts on emotional development. Because of that, one of the first questions I ask people when I see serious emotional disturbance is how many siblings were there and with what spacing.

It is important to realize that I am not saying all closely spaced children will have emotional disturbance. "Good enough" parenting combined with a constitutional predisposition that is able to tolerate the losses

can result in the children all doing just fine. But I am declaratively stating that the risk of “problematic” sibling rivalry impacting development goes up considerably when the spacing is less than 18 months.

Parental unhappiness, disturbance, or divorce obviously adds to the negative impact. Parental favoritism is always assumed by children and any actual trend in that direction is usually a seriously negative factor on the self-esteem and development of the children not receiving the favoritism. Such parental behavior is invariably a sign of narcissism, serious immaturity, or disturbance in that parent. Most parents intuit that they should treat their children as equally as is possible and make them all feel loved and special.

#### Manifestations of Sibling Rivalry in Ordinary Family Life:

##### 1 – Feeling displaced by a new birth:

Sibling rivalry is ordinarily first evident when, as the name implies, a new sibling arrives in the family. The intensity of the feelings about the new baby seem to be partly constitutional, partly a function of the preparation for the new birth, partly a function of the spacing, and a function of the total number of children already in the family. The mathematical calculation is essentially: “How much of mom is there to go around and how much of a share am I now going to lose?”

In most families, when the second child is born, the first turns to the father, often then becoming his favorite because mother is occupied with the new baby. A total of three children seems to be the maximum number that most parents can manage without serious deprivation of one or more children. At four children, unless they are spaced four or more years apart (which risks making each child functionally an “only child” in terms of playing with each other), most parents cannot divide their time sufficiently for there not to be significant deprivation of attention to one or more children.

My experience of families larger than four has been that even when they are superficially a happy family, I see evidence of significant harm done developmentally to several of the children. It is simply impossible to not have some of the children suffer significant, felt, emotional deprivation.

##### 2 – Envy of sibling’s attention and/or achievement:

This is obvious in childhood, but it can be seen as operative in all families throughout life, and in most workplaces where co-workers are functionally siblings. While it is inevitable, its corrosive effects can be mitigated by a family or workplace that is fair and open in its management and treatment of siblings and issues as they arise on a daily basis. The appearance of favoritism will have a deleterious impact in proportion to the “lack of equitable and fair treatment” of all.

##### 3 – Denial of sibling rivalry by a child:

This is not a natural state of affairs and requires “splitting off” the envy and jealousy. This is often achieved in older children by denying they too are a child. They accomplish that denial by becoming a “co-parent” to the baby while projecting their own baby elements and needs into the baby. In the case of some older girls, this may be genuinely an expression of a constructive identification with the mother and the baby simultaneously. But for every circumstance where it is successful, there are many more where significant resentment is afoot unconsciously.

That “split off” resentment will come home to roost somewhere, sooner or later, often in a choice to never have children of one’s own as an adult. It may also stamp the personality with depression, a masochistic tendency to deny one’s own needs, etc. and is likely to be recreated in a problematic manner in a marriage.

##### 4 – Denial of sibling rivalry by a parent:

I have on occasion been surprised by mothers who were utterly clueless as to why their first child, who always had been so tractable, had increasingly become difficult in the “last six months for no reason”. How that mother could not see the connection to the birth of a sibling six months ago is beyond me.

I should think that such situations imply that the parent had failed to face their own envy and jealousy growing up in their own childhood. In any case, parents who are not aware of sibling rivalry are at great

risk to make it worse and more problematic than it need be. The key parental characteristic that can mitigate sibling rivalry is its acknowledgment combined with attempts to be fair and equal with all the children. A parent in denial cannot possibly address the feelings directly in the child and those feelings will go on unmitigated if not intensified.

5 – Resurgence at parent’s death:

The death of a parent in old age is a loss. A premature death of a parent is usually a tragedy. It is a time when siblings need to be of support to each other, and potentially the surviving parent.

The above would lead one to conclude that the siblings, now much older and mature, would not have sibling rivalry still be a problem. WRONG! Because the baby core of the personality is operative throughout the lifespan, the loss of a parent is unfortunately a time when favoritism, past resentment, and human greed rear their ugly heads and often ruin the sibling relations permanently. Commonly, all of the old childhood grievances will resurface as if a day had not gone by since the last repetition of that grievance. All of this is human, but it is also a huge potential problem.

Lack of parental planning, preparing the siblings for the eventual distribution of the family estate, inequitable distribution, and worse, will make sibling rivalry a much more significant problem than it need be. It is axiomatic that if sibling rivalry was a problem in childhood, it will still be a problem later in life.

#### Parental Contributions to Sibling Rivalry:

1 – Parental ignorance of the existence of sibling rivalry:

This is never good and always a problem. It suggests, at minimum, a parent who lacks contact with ordinary human emotions. It may indicate that they are particularly out of touch with or in denial of negative emotions. But it suggests that they are out of touch with their own “baby self”, and as such, will be inadequately prepared to deal with a baby and all of the feelings it will reawaken in the baby parts of the parent.

2 – Failure to modulate sibling rivalry:

This is commonly evidence of an inability to deal with destructive, angry emotions on the part of the parent. It may be a sign of immaturity, a lack of contact with feelings and “psychological mindedness”, or simply gross inadequacy as a parent due to excessive narcissism, etc.

3 – Favoring a child:

I am regularly impressed with the sensitivity on the part of parents to the pain of jealousy and envy in their children, and the parents’ instinctive ability to take it into account. These parents seem regularly to go out of their way to attend to the feelings and needs of the “left out” sibling when the other is having a birthday, special achievement, etc.

But I have also seen rather breathtaking favoritism and cruelty toward the left out child. Such behavior, when extreme, seems always to be a function of a parent with a very disturbed area of their personality, often psychotic. As a result, when favoritism is flagrant in a parent or grandparent, I am always on alert for possible psychotic levels of disturbance in the caregiver, even if the caregiver is not floridly psychotic.

In less severe situations, it still indicates invariably that the parent is projecting an idealized or needy baby part of themselves into the favored child. This inability to be more differentiated and separate from that child will have problematic ramifications for that child’s development even if those negative impacts are not obvious to the casual observer. The child that is not being favored will have some degree of grievance and sense of unfair treatment that will be remembered and likely impact later life as well.

#### Sibling Rivalry in the Workplace:

Sibling rivalry is a function of human emotions and the baby core of the personality, so it will be inevitably recreated in the workplace. Coworkers will stand for siblings, and individuals in position of authority will stand for parental figures. The fair and equitable treatment of all will be as important in the workplace as it

was originally in the family. All for the above mentioned disturbances in the family on the part of siblings and parents will apply to the workplace.

It is worth noting that “one rotten apple can spoil the barrel”. It is possible in some work settings for an individual to undermine the general attempts by most to keep problematic expressions of envy and jealousy out of the work environment. This is even more problematic if that individual has significant authority.

#### Sibling Rivalry in Marriage:

Most husbands and wives feel loving generosity toward each other. They do things for each other, share the pleasurable and unpleasant tasks equally, and generally feel all is fair. If sibling rivalry had been an issue in childhood for one or both, they manage it consciously in the marriage by being extra equal and fair.

Unfortunately, once they start having children, there is no longer sufficient time and energy to assure that both are getting their fair measure of time, attention, pleasure, exercise, etc. Strain on the baby core of each individual’s personality appears.

The husbands often feel displaced and jealous/envious of the attention the baby gets. The wives often feel unappreciated for the exhausting effort it takes to mother an infant and resent the husband’s assumption that they have been home all day just reading, drinking tea, and getting their nails done.

A variation on this theme is the marriage that from the “get-go” is based on what I think of as a “sibling-ship”. In such marriages, the two parties band together with a goal of getting through life together, in mutual support, but with a relative de-emphasis of the romantic, sexual component of the relationship. They may devote themselves to careers, parenting, etc.

The rub is that there is invariably an inherent, underlying fear or intolerance of having baby needs. This is typically a product of a childhood in which those baby needs were unmet and a source of pain. That fact implies that those needs are still in existence at the level of the baby core of the personality and will likely come home to roost sooner or later, often in a problematic, destabilizing manner.

There is one final element to be mentioned about marriage and sibling rivalry. I have worked with many couples over the decades and restored many marriages. Those that could be saved had a measure of underlying love for each other that could be rekindled when the problematic projections into each other were removed.

However, virtually all of the marriages I could not ultimately improve had one element in common, assuming that both partners had a capacity for love and commitment in a relationship. That element was that one or both had an area of deeply rooted “envious hatred” of the other, usually operative quite unconsciously.

The husband might hate the wife for being the source of everything he needed emotionally, or the wife might hate the husband for his career and the esteem in which he was publicly held. But in any case, the envy could be seen to have been in evidence in childhood toward siblings and parental figures, and now recreated in the marriage.

#### Summary and Conclusion:

Remember that separation, envy, and jealousy are the big three of potentially painful, negative emotions in relation to mom in infancy. Mom’s relation to dad activates all three of those emotions and we refer to it as the “Oedipal situation”. Mom and dad’s relationship to other children also activates those three emotions and we call it “sibling rivalry”. The primary emotions of sibling rivalry are “envy” and “jealousy”, but they exist in a context of “separation” as attention is given to another child.

Because everyone has an “alive, active baby core” to their personality, the degree to which the above referenced emotions were intense or a problem in infancy and early childhood, is the degree to which they will be a potential problem throughout the lifespan. That includes marriage, the workplace, and all ongoing family relationships.

Where sibling rivalry was too intense to have been constructively and successfully mitigated in childhood, it will be recreated potentially in all later circumstances that roughly approximate the childhood situations. As a result, any and all awareness and acknowledgment of its existence and operation has the potential to improve the situation in which it appears.

Axiom #3: These paired internal relationships, which make up the unconscious inner world, are linked together by “unconscious phantasies”. These phantasies represent what the part of self and the version of mom or dad are imagined to be doing to each other including why they are doing it to each other.

The degree to which these paired relationships are a product of projective processes is the degree to which these relationships need not correspond to things actually done to the individual in external reality. In other words, parts of self and internal parental figures may be imagined to be doing things to each other that bear little resemblance to what the parents actually did with and to the child. [I’ll give a case example of this shortly.]

#### Definitions:

This focus on the unconscious inner world and its creation and composition allows for a detailed specificity that is utterly lacking in the words super-ego and conscience. For contrast sake, the following are the definitions of each from one of my dictionaries.

Conscience: “Consciousness of the moral right and wrong of one’s own acts or motives.”

Super-ego: “The one of the three divisions of the psyche in psychoanalytic theory that functions to reward and punish through a system of moral attitudes, conscience, and a sense of guilt.”

I rather like these definitions but they tell us little about the prototypic origin of these attitudes and motives that are manifestations of a sense of morality and guilt. To ground this discussion of the origin of these elements in the psyche, we need a brief discussion of brain development.

#### Brain Development:

For this discussion I would like to arbitrarily divide brain development into three phases. The earliest phase, spanning intra-uterine life to about the first three to four months after birth, I would like to describe as having a disproportionate degree of storage of “experience stored as unthinkable feelings” at a “mid-brain” level, substantially in the “limbic system”.

The second phase is the primitive reworking of these experiences at a cortical level, in effect trying to make sense of these “memories of experience as feelings” and giving them meaning. This activity seems to commence in early infancy, concomitant to and in parallel with the limbic storage of feeling experience, but increases as the months after birth allow for more development of neuronal pathways and connections in the later part of the first year after birth.

The third phase involves the further elaboration of the connections of the cerebral cortex, in particular with the development of the frontal lobes, so unique to homo sapiens. The frontal lobes come increasingly “on-line” during the middle of the first year and are more fully functioning by the end of the second year of life.

To this brain development we need to meld the phylogenetic inheritance of “preconceptions” of a mom and a dad figure to whom we will relate immediately after birth, a necessary inheritance for survival. The brain seems to literally be wired to expect a mom and dad to be found in the outside world, and as infants we will immediately create versions of them, analogous to an oyster forming a pearl around a grain of sand. In this case, we create two pearls, a mom pearl and a dad pearl, as our experiences with each are ongoing.

These versions of mom or dad do not seem to be stored in the psyche as isolated individuals. Instead they seem to be stored as a paired relationship between a part of self and a version of mom or dad.

The earliest raw emotion connecting them can potentially become a life-long element in this paired version, but the meaning of this emotional connection can and will be elaborated and modified during the second and third brain phases of development. These “meanings” will become what Kleinian psychoanalysts refer to as “unconscious phantasies”.

In summary, the creation of these earliest versions of self with mom and/or dad form what we will later refer to as the foundation of the super-ego. If these earliest experiences in life were extremely intense and problematic, then those experiences will powerfully influence the development of the super-ego in ways that have a significant likelihood to be problematic later in life.

By taking a careful history of infancy, we can often make sense of what these earliest relationships were like and what unique meaning the child gave to them, as the experiences were reworked over years of development. It is important to note that the parental behavior can reinforce the worst elements of these early experiences, or can greatly mitigate the potentially problematic nature of these experiences.

#### Klein’s Models of Development in Infancy, The First Three Months:

We are now in a position to address the key issues of morality, conscience, and guilt. I remember hearing as a young man that the only two things that keep humans civilized were “fear of punishment” and “guilt”. I thought that was an intriguing idea, but I did not have the tools to fully grasp its basis in the unconscious inner world. What I did not yet grasp was that virtually all are attitudes about how we treat others, and how we experience others as treating us, have their basis in infancy, often very early infancy.

This link to infancy stems from the need of the infant to bring order to the chaos of its earliest experience. It looks for something positive and good to hold onto in its experience of life outside the womb. To achieve this, since infants are so literal and concrete in their experience, they seem to innately try to get rid of anything which is felt to be unpleasant and therefore “bad” so that it won’t spoil the “good” stuff they are retaining.

This leads to an inevitable holding on to that which is good and evacuating that which is felt to be bad into the outside world. The good is now purified and thus “ideal”, hence the process can be described as a process of “splitting-and-idealization”.

The evacuation of the “bad” into some container in the outside world could be thought of as “splitting-and-projective identification”. Together these processes represent the predominating mental maneuvers that make up Klein’s “paranoid-schizoid” position.

The word “schizoid” refers to the result of the processes of “splitting-and-idealization” combined with the “splitting-and-projective identification”.

The “paranoid” aspect emanates from the projection of the undesirable elements into the outside world. The resulting paranoid anxiety is that the “bad” stuff will come back home to roost in some negative or retaliatory form.

It is worth noting that self and object are both divided into “ideal” and “bad”. I think this is because the part of self that experiences the bad is felt to have also caused it in some rudimentary manner. Thus, the evacuation of the “bad” into the outside world actually means getting rid of both the bad object and the bad part of self (that is bad because it is connected to that figure).

So this is approximately the state of affairs in the first three to five months of brain development after birth. Earliest experiences, if felt to be too distressing to hold in the mind at a cortical level, as they “leak out” from the midbrain level, will be evacuated.

The result is that the infant will live in an utterly “concrete” world dominated by self-interest, with little understanding of the needs and feelings of other in the more complete sense of the word “empathy”. The pains of separation, envy, and primitive jealousy will be unbearable if intense, and guilt will as yet be a non sequitur. That is because brain development will not yet support it as an emotional state that can be tolerated so it will be evacuated almost instantly.

#### Klein’s Models of Development in Infancy, The Second Half of the First Year:

To bring guilt into the picture and leave the paranoid world of the “Law of Talion”, the infant will need more brain development at a cortical level, so that experiences can be more integrated. This seems to come online around the middle of the first year of life. The early extreme splitting of self and parental figures, into all good and all bad, can give way to a more integrated awareness of having just one mom and one dad, rather than the earlier versions of a good and bad mom, and good and bad dad.

It is worth noting that I do not mean to imply that the earlier “split” versions disappear from the psyche, but that those earlier neuronal pathways are relegated to the “back burners of the psyche” unless particularly intense reminders activate them.

Ordinarily, as development and emotional maturation occur in life, these earliest attitudes/phantasies are usually modulated by the more advanced, “adult part of self” reminding the more primitive “baby elements” in the personality that their point of view has been superseded by a more advanced one.

So it is in this context of cortical development, in the middle of the first year of life, that the infant finally has the capability of recognizing that its good and bad versions of mom are actually emanating from one and the same person, and that it is the infant’s own emotional attitude that varies from one moment to the next. This development finally puts us in the position to discuss “moral” attitudes and thinking.

The “paranoid schizoid” approach to life and relationships, of almost pure self-interest, was an appropriately “ruthless” period, as concern for the welfare of the object was functionally not yet developed. Furthermore, there was no reason to be concerned about the projected bad stuff, it was simply a case of “good riddance to bad rubbish”.

These background assumptions are no longer the case when the infant begins to recognize that the bad rubbish version of mom is also the loved and needed good mommy.

Melanie Klein gave the unfortunate name “depressive position” to this desirable development that occurs in the middle of the first year of life, linked to brain development, and adequately desirable life circumstances. I say unfortunate because while it represents a positive developmental move to “concern for the welfare” of the object, it sounds like a negative move into “depression”, which was not what she meant at all.

What is implied in her view of this period is that the loving concern for the welfare of the object finally has potentially equal status with concern for oneself. Now it finally matters how one treats other human beings. This allows the concept of “morality” to be grounded in one’s treatment of other human beings, both in psychic and external reality. This is in contrast to arbitrary, prescriptive rules of “right and wrong” such as “one should not smoke cigarettes on Wednesday”.

That brand of morality is much closer to Eric Erikson's "moralism" which is not linked to empathy and goodness, but rather more connected to infantile control of mom and dad, with sanctions at every turn controlling their behavior. One need only look to myths like the "Garden of Eden" to see an example of such infantile states of mind masquerading as "adult" thought.

#### A Case Example: Ted Bundy

At this point we might develop these concepts by using as an example, the early life of the serial killer Ted Bundy. His mother, who was pregnant out of wedlock, gave birth to him at a home for unwed mothers and left him after a month of being with him (to be given up for adoption) while returning to her parent's home a thousand miles away. After two months of family deliberation, she returned to the home where she left him, to take him with her, and raise him with her parents. He had been left at the home for about two months.

At less than the age of five, he went into his mother's younger sister's bedroom while she was asleep, folded back the bed covers, and placed several sharp kitchen knives next to her legs. In later childhood he was obsessed with "pulp police detective magazines" where crime scenes were described in detail. As a man in his twenties and early thirties he became a serial killer of young women who fit certain physical characteristics.

He was so aware of criminal forensic techniques from his earlier studies that he went undetected for years, dismembering the bodies of his victims. When he was finally apprehended, he had descended into a florid psychotic state, literally biting the buttocks of one of his final potential victims.

Should we think of Ted Bundy as having no conscience? Did he lack a super-ego? Did he not know right from wrong? I would like to argue that these questions are too simplistic to be useful. I would rather think in terms of internalized object relations, between parts of self and various versions of mom or dad, and what is imagined to be happening within each of those relationships, and why it is happening.

Here is my version of what may have happened to baby Ted. His intrauterine experience may have been intensely distressing, since his mother must have been very upset and probably humiliated during the pregnancy which necessitated her being sent to a home for unwed mothers. To whatever degree there is any validity to that assumption, those intense intrauterine experiences would likely have been stored at an unthinkable midbrain level in Ted.

During his first month of life I could imagine that he formed an attachment to his mother before she left him behind, around the end of that first month. During the ensuing two months that she was gone, I suspect that he felt extreme emotional distress, as if he were literally being "torn limb from limb".

Life must have settled down once he was taken to the home of his grandparents and his mother's sisters. That upbringing was purported to be strict but not harsh or abusive. However, as the saying goes, "the die was cast". He had created internal relationships based on his earliest infancy and they were so intense that later experiences could not override those earliest, primitive, apparently unthinkably painful states of mind.

So what might his inner world have contained by one year of age. It likely included a "bad" version of a mother who was felt want to want to get rid of him and abandoned him in a state of torture and agony. Since he never knew who his father was, his internal version of a father would likely also reinforce this sense of being unloved and abandoned despite whatever modulating influence his relationship to his grandfather might have offered.

In summary, his inner world would have, at minimum, likely contained a relationship between a part of self, felt to be unwanted, unloved, and maybe even felt to be hated. That part would be a "bad" part of self in the sense of being unlovable, etc. That bad part of self was paired with a cruel, torturing and abandoning bad version of a "bad" mom. In more classical terminology, this would be a central element in what could then be described as a "sadistic super-ego".

His inner world would have also contained a “good” version of mom, and possibly dad (based on his grandfather), but these “good” versions would be eclipsed during times of distress where “limbic leakage” of his earliest baby experiences would override his relationship to good internal versions of mom or dad.

I suspect that the separation of leaving home to go to college would have left him struggling with these earliest torturous feelings connected to abandonment. He was apparently capable of behaving in an intelligent, charming manner. That might be based on a superficial version of a good object relationship but I suspect it had no real substance to it in his unconscious inner world.

I would like to summarize the implications of this story as I experience them. Ted Bundy had a really problematic internal version of a relationship between an unwanted baby part of self and a really bad version of mom, who not only didn’t want the baby Ted, but was felt to actually torture him cruelly and purposefully.

This really painful connection between a part of self and a version of mom completely eclipsed all other versions of mom or dad, became the “only game in town”, and dominated his early childhood thought processes as he unconsciously tried to understand and give meaning to these earliest experiences (e.g. as seen in the “knives by the legs” and “detective magazines” aspects of his childhood history).

His capacity for loving relationships was simply too undeveloped to override his need to cope with the massive pain embedded at an unthinkable midbrain level of his psyche. His experiences with his rather shallow mother were incapable of elaborating a caring, loving concern for the welfare of his good objects that could neutralize and make up for the pain of his earliest experiences.

Put in slightly more theoretical terms, his “depressive concern for the welfare of his good objects” could not make up for the ongoing pain he experienced internally in the paired relationship between a bad, unloved part of self and a hated, cruel, bad version of an abandoning mom.

The concrete experience of this bad internal object relationship (in effect a really bad half of a “super-ego” relationship) was so painful that it could only be evacuated into the outside world. But as it was expelled and recreated externally, with the roles reversed, he became the torturing mother and the victim was made into the tortured and murdered baby Ted.

#### Contrasting Ted’s Internal World with a Healthy Super Ego:

Let’s imagine Ted’s life writ differently. If his mother had kept him at home with her parents, had not been ashamed of having a child out of wedlock, and felt lovingly supported by her parents, her pregnancy might have been uneventful for the baby Ted. He would not have stored such intense primitive emotional pain at a midbrain level that began during the pregnancy and was reinforced by his first three months of experience after birth.

By four months of age, not having had a traumatic beginning to his life, the baby Ted would have been able to begin integrating mildly bad versions of mom with fairly good versions of mom, leading to a much more realistic version of mom with whom he could sustain a predominantly loving relationship. His internal world could ultimately contain a “super-ego” dominated by a good relationship between a lovable part of self and a loving mother.

His relationship to a dad, the other half of his super-ego, would have been partly based on an absent dad and partly based on his relationship to his grandfather. Thus his inner world would have probably also contained a somewhat negative, bad version of a relationship to a dad who did not want him and thus abandoned him, in parallel to the bad version of mom. It is possible that this version of dad would have been a less important in his inner world if the relationships to mom and grandfather were adequately positive to counterbalance not having a dad.

### The Depressive Position and the Concept of Conscience:

Did Ted Bundy know that it was “morally wrong” to torture, murder, and dismember young women? Of course he knew it was wrong, that is why he tried so hard to not get caught! The question is a non sequitur. The question regarding any criminal act that is more pertinent is why can't the person restrain their compulsive behavior? We all have the conscious fantasy of doing rather awful things to someone who is upsetting us at a given moment in the course of a day and yet we don't act on it.

Most likely everyone, with perhaps the exception of the most decompensated and deluded schizophrenic, can recognize the difference between right and wrong. Conscience is not the issue, the nature of the internal object relationships populating the world of psychic reality is the issue. It is the compulsive externalization of those unthinkable, internal relationships, trying to rid the self of the distress at minimum and make sense of them at maximum. That unconscious externalization is at the root of most criminal behavior.

If a person did not develop a capacity to tolerate the pains of feeling that they have injured a person, toward whom they also have caring feelings, then guilt will not be an emotion motivating that person to make repair. Because the pain of guilt is too painful to bear, then the person will most likely resort to “manic defenses” to deny that they care about the damage done, or deny the damage itself.

The take home lesson is that the person's relationship to the emotion of “guilt” greatly influences their capacity for facing how they treat others. If they cannot bear the emotion of guilt, they will appear to be callous or lacking a conscience, but the real issue will have been a developmental breakdown in the first year of life.

If things broke down in the first year of life, then the next question is what was the nature of the breakdown and to what degree were the parental figures felt to be doing painful things to the baby on purpose? Ted Bundy did to others what he felt had been done to him, even though he most likely had no conscious awareness of why he was doing what he was doing.

### A Variation of the “Golden Rule”:

The Golden Rule represents how a “conscience” should operate: Do unto others as you would have them do to you. That would be the proper motto of Klein's depressive position in relationship to mom and dad, the two objects who make up the super-ego, and are locked into rather permanently fixed relationships with various parts of self.

{Note: In classical Freudian metapsychology, the “super-ego” represents the various internalized versions of mom and dad, both good and bad, that are having paired relationships with various parts of self, with “self” representing Freud's “ego” with a bit of Id added.]

It turns out that in disturbed development, a different version of the Golden Rule predominates. That variation of the rule would be more like this: DO UNTO OTHERS AS THEY ARE FELT OR IMAGINED TO BE DOING UNTO YOU. In other words, the more mental pain embedded in early object relationships, the more that pain has the potential to distort development, interfere with movement into the depressive position, and distort the development of the early super-ego relationships between parts of self and versions of mom and dad.

If the most powerful versions of mom or dad are experienced as unloving, abandoning, selfish, mean or cruel, etc., those versions will exist side by side with the loving versions of mom or dad. If the pains of infancy are too intense or ongoing, then there is a danger of those painful “bad” experiences managing to eclipse and overwhelm the loving, positive experiences.

The potential is then for an inner world to be created in which the pains produced by the “bad” internal relationships predominate and a problematic “super-ego” is established that will potentially plague that individual for their lifespan.

What we then have is an inner world in which “parts of self” feel they are being mistreated by bad versions of mom or dad, and the parts of self will feel it is necessary to “turn away” from the internal versions of bad parents. This situation implies that the internal “good” versions of mom and dad cannot be trusted to be available and come to the aid of the baby parts of self that are in pain.

Turning Toward Versus Turning Away From Good Internal Parental Figures:

It is intuitively obvious that for infancy to go well, it is required that the external parental figures and caregivers are trusted to be available in a caring manner, willing to sacrifice on behalf of the infant. If the infant cannot trust in the availability of good parents, an environment is created in which the “bad part of self” can dominate the personality, getting the “good baby parts” to turn to it and away from good parents, both externally and internally.

That is the essential psychic situation underlying a “narcissistic personality organization”, the fundamental psychic situation found in many if not most personalities in which addictive, criminal, or sociopathic behavior takes place.

This implies that the internal worlds of people who seem to lack a concern for how they treat others actually have a very problematic set of relationships between parts of self and versions of mom or dad. In effect, their internal worlds contain a distorted, cruel, harsh, confused, etc. internalized object relationships where the bad, paired relationships predominate over good relationships.

One can easily see the implication of this. These complex internal relationships cannot possibly be usefully described by just saying the person lacks a super-ego or has a harsh one.

Projective Processes and the Nature of the Internal Parents:

There is one additional element that complicates this discussion. A given individual’s super-ego is not just based on what was “done” to them in infancy and/or childhood, it is also a product of the distortions that the child makes of any situation at hand at a given moment in childhood.

What is difficult to grasp, using common sense alone, is that the “evacuations” of painful bad experiences, pained parts of self, and bad versions of mom or dad have to “lodge” somewhere in the outside world. In effect, there has to be a “container” for the projection. That projection will in turn modify and distort the infant’s experience of and resultant view of the object containing its unwanted projection.

Let’s use the situation of a “breast occlusion” episode in which the infant pushes its face too firmly into the breast, while sucking, and blocks its nasal passages. It abruptly gags, coughs, pulls back from the breast, and in some cases starts to cry, and will refuse to feed from that breast for the rest of that feeding.

While we cannot know for sure what that infant experienced, we can create a working model of the situation that is useful. At the moment that the brief suffocation took place, the infant might have felt that the breast from which it was feeding had turned into one that no longer wanted to feed it.

Whatever the infant’s negative experience/phantasy about it was does not really matter. The point is that the breast can be turned “bad” in the infant’s mind even when a loving mother is endeavoring to continue a successful feeding of her loved infant.

If that infant was of a particularly “enviously resentful” persuasion, or particularly sensitive to feeling attacked, that infant might feel that the mother wishes to keep the good stuff for herself and wants the infant to feel bad, needy, small, dependent, etc. In such circumstances, it is the infant’s attitude that is distorting the situation, not the mother’s motives.

As the infant becomes a toddler, and the parents have to restrict its behavior on an almost continuous basis, that same infant may project its own attitudes into the parent and feel that the parent wants to spoil the

infant's time and make it miserable. Now add a much more problematic situation like prematurity, adoption, colic, parental divorce in infancy, etc. and the situation is ripe for potentially huge distortions.

The bottom line is that what we call a super-ego is composed of versions of mom and dad that can, under problematic situations in infancy, lead to very distorted versions of the actual parental figures. Even when the parents are really awful as parents, there is still very significant distortion of those figures. These distorted versions of the actual parents are a product of projections into those parents.

#### The Evolution From Super-Ego to Super-Ego Ideal in Middle Childhood:

There is one final essential point to be made about the super-ego. This has to do with the evolution of the relationship of the parents to the child as it progresses through childhood.

At the beginning of life, the parents have to constantly monitor the infant and toddler's behavior. They must constantly say "no" to the baby's impulses to put everything in its mouth, grab everything, wander off, etc.

These acts of restricting behavior are often taken as "mean" on the part of the parents. These restrictive parental behaviors are based on loving concern for the infant and toddler, but they are part of the concreteness of the early "super-ego" and its seemingly controlling, restrictive, and punitive aspects.

The result of this early situation is that the child is very much dominated by either loving feelings for idealized parents, or angry, frustrated feelings for parents interfering with its activities, at other moments. On balance, the parents are good, but it is still a situation where the child is controlled by the parents. It has not yet developed a more independent sense of self based on a more internalized sense of the parents as realistic models. Usually this will change.

Somewhere around the period of going off to elementary school, with a quantum leap in independent functioning, as the child becomes more separated from the parents, a change begins to take place in the unconscious internal versions of the parents.

The child is now developing some sense of those qualities and behaviors that are desirable in its parents, and is becoming able to differentiate those from elements in the parents that are less desirable or downright undesirable.

The child is no longer relating to its primary caregivers as a needy, dependent child. Furthermore, it is now meeting new adult figures who are in the new role of primarily teaching and inspiring the child.

As the child goes off to school and meets teachers, the parents of classmates, and other adult figures, it gradually builds a repertoire of adult figures from whom it can pick and choose characteristics from which to model. As it becomes aware of public figures in world politics, history, athletics, the entertainment industry, etc. it can significantly expand the qualities and behaviors that it can use as ideal models to "aspire" to grow up to be like.

Put in other words, the capacity of the growing child to be more differentiated and separate from its parents allows it to create internal figures who may be a composite of a number of desirable qualities that no one person, including one's parents can represent.

This allows the internalized parental figures to be grown from the restrictive, controlling figures of infancy into much more sophisticated, complex models of adult qualities that one can "aspire" to emulate. In effect the super-ego is grown from the loving but bossy and controlling parents of infancy, to inspirational figures of adult life.

The British Kleinian psychoanalyst, Donald Meltzer described this in his book “Sexual States of Mind”, as an evolution from “super-ego” to “super-ego ideal”. In effect, these internal figures become one’s internal inspirational “gods” to model after and “aspire” to grow up to be like.

A key element in this evolution is that one is “psychologically separate” from those figures as now become figures of inspiration.

The early super-ego figures are not separate, are bossy and controlling, and are the “harsh gods” of primitive religious thought, not the “inspirational” ones of the mature personality.

#### Summary and Conclusion:

Sigmund Freud accurately recognized that human beings have an unconscious inner world in which one felt an awareness of their self. He also saw that humans experienced something that was not self but instead felt to be “above” self, if you will. In this “tripartite model” of the mind he also needed the concept of the “Id” to represent the instincts that were central to his understanding of human nature. He needed a self that was experiencing these instincts, and something above the self that was keeping these instincts from running amok.

Melanie Klein was trying to be a good Freudian, if you will, but her studies took her more into infancy where she became aware of the “baby inside Freud’s child” of the unconscious inner world. She also came to see that infants develop from a period of rather ruthless self-centeredness to an evolving capacity for awareness of and concern for the other, mom in the case of the infant. This evolving capacity for thinking of the other led her to postulate a depressive position that represented a mature capacity for concern for self and other, in equal measure.

As she fleshed out her awareness of the unconscious inner world of psychic reality, Freud’s rather abstract terminology of a “super-ego” came to be represented by “internal objects”. These internal figures were, by genetic preconception, built up around experiences of the actual caregivers of infancy, essentially mom and dad and their surrogates. These figures represented a combination of actual experiences, combined with distortions of experiences, based on projections into these parental figures.

What Klein came to then realize was that we humans live in two worlds simultaneously, that of external reality and that of psychic reality. Furthermore, it turns out that if the infancy is particularly difficult, the psychic reality that results can override and eclipse external reality and its potential influence. The result is that a person can externalize their internal world and do fairly awful things to their fellow man, seemingly without any concern for the other.

Such callous treatment of others would lead to a common sense conclusion that those individuals have no internal guidelines, no “conscience or super-ego”, using those terms loosely. My complaint is that those words are too vague and imprecise to be of much utility. I would prefer to suggest that such mistreatment of others is probably an externalization of internal object relationships, between parts of self and various versions of mom or dad. Used in this manner, the misbehavior can be seen to provide details about the internalized relationships that populate that individual’s unconscious inner world.

One is then in a position to explore the details of that individual’s internalized relationships. In turn one can speculate how early life was experienced, whether one turned toward or away from their “good objects”, to what extent projections into the objects altered that individual’s view of those figures, and what causes the person to behave in the manner they do. The transference relationship with the therapist will reflect these same externalizations and distortions, lending an opportunity to corroborate one’s suspicions about how infancy was experienced.

For me, this represents an infinitely more interesting and rich version of a human, far beyond a simplistic blanket statement that includes the phrases, “lack of conscience or a harsh super-ego”.

## Section 6 - Internal Harmony

AFTER LIFE ITSELF, INTERNAL HARMONY IS A HUMAN BEING'S MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSION

### Background:

Over my lifespan, I have had various versions of a dream, filled with dread, in which I am going to a final exam for college or medical school and I have neglected to attend any classes or study for the exam and I know I will fail. In every case that I have ever had that dream, I was able to see some area of my inner world and external life that I was neglecting to address.

It might literally be an exam or term paper for which I was procrastinating. It would often be an area of conflict in my life that I had not addressed, an unpleasant but necessary task I had not done, or an internal area of emotional importance that I was not facing. Not infrequently, the dream referred to an emotional issue that I was lying about to myself in order to evade guilt, essentially a manic denial of psychic reality.

In all cases, the dream represented a hideous barometer of an internal situation that was going awry. In other words, the dream was telling me that my internal harmony was going out of whack. I would awake from such dreams persecuted by the feeling of dread that was in the dream and immediately feel motivated to figure out what was its cause so I could do something to fix it. When I was younger, if I did not address it, I would begin to become depressed.

Somewhere in life, I imagine it was in my thirties, I made a decision to try to always face anything as soon as I noticed it was persecuting me, no matter how small the persecution. I have learned to move such items to the top of my "to do or face" list. The result of this way of life is that most of the time, when I am asked how I am, I can honestly say "I am great".

I love feeling that I have "internal harmony"! I truly believe it is my most precious commodity, even above health, which seems to be intimately interlaced now with my internal harmony. Health is now automatically taken care of by my need to preserve my internal harmony. I have a great diet and exercise daily because my internal harmony can no longer be maintained if I do not take care of those elements.

So let's try to create a definition of internal harmony as I am using the phrase.

### Definition of Internal Harmony:

One of my Webster's Dictionaries says: (1) musical agreement of sounds; (2) a pleasing arrangement of parts; (3) internal calm.

I find all three meanings useful and will combine them together. This is my made up definition. "Internal Harmony": An arrangement of internal object relationships in which all of the parts of self and versions of mom and dad are acknowledged and dealt with in a realistic and constructive manner. None of these elements is denied, misrepresented, evaded, neglected or abused, or in any fashion harmed (by omission or commission).

Proper, caring, realistic treatment of all of these internal relationships is a precondition to having a "pleasing arrangement" of the "good" elements in the internal world and an "internal calm" in relation to the "bad" and potentially problematic elements. Conscious awareness of or recognition of each component is not necessary, although it does help in many circumstances.

### Elaboration of the Definition:

If one reads the definition carefully and contemplates it, one will immediately realize that internal harmony is defined as involving two broad arenas. The first are is perhaps fairly readily available to "common

sense” because it involves the area of object relationships that could be thought of as “good” elements, i.e. good parts of self and good versions of mom and dad, all in relation to each other. It seems logical that they would be a part of a pleasing array of musical elements and calm internal relations.

What is perhaps not as intuitively obvious is that internal harmony also requires involvement in the area of what are most certainly more unpleasant aspects of self and internal objects. That is the area of what might be called “problematic” object relationships, in short, the universe of “bad” parts of self and “bad” versions of mom and dad.

At first blush this seems counter-intuitive. How can “good” internal harmony come from “bad” object relationships, especially when those bad relationships are such an ongoing source of mental pain? To answer this we will need to define “bad object relationships” and depict the world of internal object relations in somewhat greater detail.

#### “Turning Toward” versus “Turning Away” From the “Good” Internal Family:

Small children are aware of wanting and needing the love and attention of their mommy and daddy. When mommy and daddy meet these desires and needs with regularity, they are loved and seen as “good” by the child. Those relationships are represented in the unconscious inner world as rather permanently fixed relationships between a “good” part of self (i.e. that feels loved and lovable) and a “good” version of mom or dad (i.e. reliably available and loving). They are felt to have a nice relationship in which they do nice things to and with each other and all is harmonious.

Contrast that with times of separation, jealousy, envy, frustration, etc., i.e. any circumstance in which the small child is in emotional pain and blames that pain on a parent. At that moment a “bad” part of self is having a relationship to a “bad” version of a parent. The “badness” is a function of the emotional pain attached to it. It is not “bad” in the moral sense of having done evil rather than good. Badness in a moral sense is a separate issue to which we will come shortly.

When a child and a parent are in conflict with each other, they can face their conflict and try to restore their good, loving relationship, or they can leave the situation in a negative, painful, unhappy “bad” state of affairs. Put in other words, they can “turn” toward each other and restore a “good relationship, or they can “turn away” from each other, leaving their relationship on “bad” terms.

The result is that When early life has too much emotional pain, and an inadequate resolution of that pain in order to restore a good relationship to a parent externally, then a “bad” object relationship is likely to be created and maintained internally in psychic reality.

In other words, a part of self that is bad in the sense that it is in pain and feels unloved, is having an ongoing bad relationship to a parent who has turned bad in the sense of being the cause of the pain. The question is what happens if the child doesn’t pursue the “bad” version of the mom or dad and try to resolve the pain in order to restore a good relationship. That restoration would turn that bad version of mom or dad into a good parent?

The answer seems to be that if the pain is more chronic, the bad version of mom or dad becomes installed as a more permanently bad figure and the emotionally injured part of self will “turn away” from the relationship to that parent externally and internally. When that happens, the injured part of self will invariably turn to the part of self that offers relief from the pain.

That part of self, the one part that by definition lives outside the sphere of caring, good object relationships, is the “bad” part of self. If one were to name it according to its key characteristics, one would call it the “envious, omnipotent, know-it-all, destructive, self-sufficient part of self”. [See Module Five for an elaboration on the Bad Self.]

The implication of this “turning away” from bad versions of mom and dad is that one is turning away from all versions of mom and dad, therefore losing any opportunity for a good relationship to a good version of mom or dad. One cannot have internal harmony unless one has a good relationship internally to good versions of mom and dad.

Here is where this can get confusing. External parents are not the same as internal parents! You cannot change your external parents much, if at all. But you can grow your internal versions of parents by (1) seeing the external versions realistically, (2) not turning away from them no matter how inadequate or destructive they are, yet (3) not setting yourself up for more mental pain by being unrealistic in your expectations of the external parental figures.

In effect, you are staying psychologically “separate”, being realistic and accepting but not masochistic. You are taking whatever good you can get from the external parents. Your internal versions of parents do not have to have a “one to one” correspondence to your external parents.

The internal version may have the good elements and qualities of your external parents, but the internal versions can be augmented by any and all good qualities that you have observed in other parental figures of whom you have known. How many times in life have you said to yourself, after observing someone else that you want to be like: “That is how I want to be”. Hopefully that happens regularly, and each time you are potentially growing and elevating a good internal version of mom or dad.

#### The Super-Ego Ideal = One’s Internal Gods:

Those enhanced versions of a mom or dad can become “inspirations” for how you want to be yourself. In effect, your internal versions of mom and dad can be enhanced and grown into “internal gods” who represent models for how you would like to be in life. Every contact with a mentor, good human figure, etc. has the potential to add to your internal parental figures.

Perhaps most importantly, seeing loving relationships between a husband and wife, or any two adults for that matter, can add to your capacity to allow your internal versions of mom and dad to have a loving relationship to each other that you stay out of and allow to blossom. It provides a model for a loving relationship that you can emulate with your own partner in life.

What has then been established is an internal world in which loving relationships predominate over bad, pain producing relationships. This is a necessary state for any ongoing stable internal harmony. It means that a “good internal family” has been established. Good parts of self are having caring and loving ongoing relations with good versions of mom and dad.

Central to this good family atmosphere is an attitude of generosity and love on the part of the self which allows the good mom and good dad to have a loving and caring relationship to each other. This attitude of acceptance of mom and dad’s loving, creative relationship, that one does not intrude into and control, is the most mature and evolved state of affairs, psychically speaking.

#### Living Outside the Sphere of the Good Internal Family:

In contrast to growing “internal Gods” who are sources of inspiration, if one has turned away from mom and dad internally, and made them bad, then one has fundamentally turned away from a good internal family that could otherwise exist. One is now living outside the sphere of “good” object relationships. That is a road to permanent disruption of internal harmony, leaving in its place things like depression, addictions, and at the extreme, insanity.

We are now moving into the realm of “moral badness” to which I alluded earlier. It is bad in the sense that one has adopted a life that is determined to be beyond the influence of caring object relationships. If caring is felt to be a one way ticket to mental pain, then the sphere of caring, good object relationships is to be avoided at all costs.

Have you ever wondered why young adults, who are on the road and taken in by an elderly, loving couple for the night, then murder the couple in the morning for seemingly no reason at all? The answer is very likely linked to their fear of being lured back into the sphere of loving object relations.

If one adds intense envious hatred of “goodness”, then one gets a particularly nasty form of “moral badness” where the person doesn’t just turn away from good objects, but has an intense unconscious wish to perversely turn goodness upside down and inside out. This is Lucifer’s choice: “To prefer to rule in hell than serve god in heaven”.

The original pain of such intense envy would likely have stemmed from a particularly intense reaction to being born. In that reaction, the helplessness, smallness, etc. of being a baby would be particularly reviled. Mom qualities of seeming to have everything, know everything, and be able to do anything would be intensely coveted.

The fact of her having those capacities and the baby having none would be the source of the intense envious hatred. This is not a popular view of infancy but it is often the one that has the most explanatory power with certain severe disturbances where perversity is a powerful component in that person’s psyche and behavior.

Let me summarize the two versions of a bad part of self I have just described. This latter version of a bad part of self is the one I referred to as having “moral badness”. It is somewhat different from the bad part of self to which I referred initially.

The “moral badness” of this latter version of a bad self is a function of “negative” attitude. This part of self has chosen to live outside the sphere of the good family as a permanent way of life. That is different from a part of self being seen as undesirable and therefore “bad” because it is in pain. The latter part of self may actually be a “caring, good part of self” that feels hurt and injured in its pursuit of loving relations. In theory, any loving interaction with a good parent would bring it back into the sphere of the good internal family and good, loving object relations.

#### Thinking versus Acting:

When the pains of childhood are excessive, and the external parents are failing to aid the infant or child in learning to “think” about these pains, in other words teaching the child to be psychologically minded, then there is little that child can do but evacuate the pain into the outside world.

At its most “unthinking” extreme, the human brain can be treated as if it were a “muscle”, suitable only for going from impulse to action without intervening thought. That is the state of affairs of one can observe in some severely borderline patients and psychotics. They populate portions of most prisons.

Tragically, such individuals are not very educable regarding developing an ability to think. Their frustration tolerance is nil, their adoption of violent evacuation so ingrained, their internal “good object relationships” seem to be non-existent, and thus there is literally no scaffolding upon which to build a better psychic apparatus and inner world.

#### The Consequence of Not Being Able to Think:

More than anything else, internal harmony is a function of a capacity to “think” and then a daily constant use of that capacity. If you use your brain like muscle, you will never have internal harmony.

The fact is that reality, whether external, or psychic and internal, must be dealt with or bad things will happen. One of my favorite quotes is attributed to Wilfred Bion: “Life is full of surprises, mostly bad!”

If one thinks about it, most of what happens in life that is good is not a surprise because you prepared for it and made it happen. In contrast, most of what happens that is bad can be prefaced the three words “I didn’t

think...”. The rest of the sentence is something like “..it would break”, “..fall off”, “..catch on fire”, “..get stolen”, “..I’d get caught”, etc.

The essential element in all is that the person DID NOT MINDFULLY THINK about the situation. They did not think it through adequately, or worse yet, they did not think at all, they just acted on impulse. As a result, something bad happened and it was an unanticipated, “bad” surprise.

As Seinfeld’s Soup Nazi would say: “No internal harmony for you!”

#### Unconscious Motivation and Bad Surprises:

It has often turned out, when I have questioned a person in detail about the “bad” surprise, after the dust has settled and they are in more of a frame of mind to do a proper “post-mortem” of the issue or event, that it was not actually a surprise. It was something that they had in their psyche as a possibility, and they had turned away from it, denied it, lied to themselves about it, misrepresented it, etc.

In fact, it regularly turns out that the bad event was actually done “on purpose”, all unconsciously mind you, to punish self or other, externalize some internal relationship or situation, test the boundaries or limits of something, etc. This implies it was not really an accident and could have possibly been avoided if one was facing “psychic reality” instead of neglecting or evading it.

Arguably the most tragic examples of this type of situation are “accidental deaths” that occur around someone’s birthday. These are often actually unconscious performances of “Russian Roulette” and thus are in reality, if one can bear to be honest, suicides. Usually no one can bear to be honest, at least not openly, so the suicide goes unspoken, unrecognized, or denied as such, by those around the situation.

In effect the person took unreasonable chances, and hit the chamber with the bullet in it and had the gun pointed figuratively at their own head. The fact that this happens so disproportionately around someone’s date of birth stamps the situation as involving the “baby core” of the personality and the death instinct. [See Module Two, Part Two for an elaboration of the Death Instinct.]

#### You Neglect Psychic Reality at Your Own Peril:

The punch line of this entire talk is that to get along in life one must constantly take care of their internal world, no differently than taking care of one’s physical health. Internal object relationships must be addressed and nurtured. They cannot be denied manically, projected, or neglected. One cannot do harm to ones internal figures unconsciously even if they seem to deserve it externally. One cannot live by the Law of Talion.

One must try to live as Ghandi and Martin Luther King espoused. Try to treat others with love and concern, turn the other cheek, practice forgiveness, strive to be humble and less triumphantly competitive, face unpleasant tasks, and properly “take care of business” in an adult manner, etc.

All of the above sounds potentially too idealized and therefore like “horse pockey”. The problem is that it is all actually “dead on” correct, even if difficult to achieve. How often has a patient retaliated because, as one of my favorite TV show characters would say, “it was justified”. Well it may be justified but the “paranoid anxieties” it will engender will assure that you will not have internal harmony!

I often get the response “But then they will be getting away with murder!” No they won’t, not in their psychic reality. Let them be the one with the internal harmony disrupted by paranoid anxieties or guilt. You want to be the one who can honestly say, as the iconic UCLA basketball coach John Wooden said, “THERE IS NO PILLOW SO SOFT AS A CLEAR CONSCIENCE”!

#### Good Object Relationships and the Depressive Position:

In Melanie Klein’s model for the development of the unconscious inner world, the movement of the infant

into the depressive position is really central to the creation of and maintenance of internal harmony. In Klein's model, the infant moves from a value system of "self-interest", to one of concern for the welfare of the other, in addition to the self.

This movement follows brain development in the middle of the first year after birth, and is key to the development of a proper unconscious inner world in which good object relationships predominate over bad ones.

It is ultimately a precondition of mental health and internal harmony. [See all of Module Two, Part One.]

It turns out that ALL OF THE UNCONSCIOUS DEFENSIVE MANEUVERS that are employed by we human beings, even if necessary for survival or development at some point in the past, at some point later in life become the ENEMY OF INTERNAL HARMONY.

There may have been periods when maneuvers involving manic denial of caring or guilt, projection of bad parts of self or objects, turning away in the face of unbearable separation, etc. were necessary for survival in early life.

But those same maneuvers, when the personality has matured and has more constructive coping capacities available to it, now become the source of depression, unconscious paranoid anxieties and persecutory guilt, and are fundamentally incompatible with internal harmony.

#### Progress versus Backsliding in Life:

I have often contemplated whether or not I can finally take the easy way in life and live off my past achievements. Unfortunately, as I age, I realize that "time keeps marching on" and, as the bastardized saying goes, "Wounds all heals". My body only needs a few days of neglect to tell me that I am backsliding.

With that concrete example in mind, I have also realized that the same is true of my psychic reality and internal harmony. Time keeps marching forward, bringing new bills and tasks, increasing the time I have neglected someone about whom I care, or requiring a new automotive, dental, or medical appointment for preventive maintenance.

The point is that because time is always moving forward, treading water is actually going backward. This is as true of psychic reality as it is of external reality, and perhaps even more so because some people take care of external reality adequately but stopped growing emotionally many years ago. It breaks my heart to see those who have neglected their marriage, for example, while focusing on their children, careers, or financial well-being.

Those people who are not growing themselves in life, especially their emotional life, on a daily, weekly, yearly, basis are in fact doing harm to their internal harmony. They may not see it for an extended period of time, but the cumulative negative impact on their feeling good about themselves and their life is unmistakable when examined with care and in detail.

#### Summary and Conclusion:

My purpose in writing this Short Take for MKA was not to do an exhaustive overview of internal harmony. This entire website is that exhaustive overview. My motive was to highlight this issue because it is why patients choose to be patients, even if they have not thought of it as such. It is also why patients neglect their inner worlds at their own peril.

No one wants to see themselves as inadequate or bad. Even when people embrace a lifestyle involving destructiveness, they want to be "good" at being bad. Humans need to find a way to feel good about themselves. Everyone wants a modicum of self-esteem, in order to feel happy. They need to be able to love and feel loved. I do not mean any of this on a grand or idealized scale, I simply mean they need sufficient "goodness" in life to feel life is worth living.

The tricky part of this sufficiency of goodness is that it is not as much an external issue as it is an internal, psychological issue. That in turn means that it is about the unconscious inner world and how things are going there.

The good point is that you don't need a Mercedes to look after your internal world. It is comically inexpensive to have internal harmony. All it costs is a caring and ongoing concern for your own mental health! If you do that, you can be the richest person on earth. But you neglect it at your peril.

## Section 7 - On Blaming

### Introduction:

I cannot say that finding someone to blame, whenever anything goes other than planned, is more on the rise than in years past. However, with all of the media coverage of everything from politics to sports, I sure hear a lot of blaming rather than understanding, solving, and improving. All of this blaming is surely not evidence that "adult personality functions" are predominating in society. So why is there so much blaming?

For me, this subject is of extreme importance in life in general, and therapy in particular. This is because, on one hand, "blaming" and "sitting-in-moral-judgment" have in common that they are functions of the baby core of the personality. That is because they involve projective processes, hatred of being small or helpless or dependent, intolerance of guilt, and often unconscious envy. They also have in common that they serve NO USEFUL PURPOSE IN ADULT LIFE, and can RUIN ALMOST ANY RELATIONSHIP.

In families, marriage and the workplace, "blaming" and "morally" judging others tends to have a severely "corrosive" effect on the morale of the parties involved. Both tend to destabilize relationships over the long term, commonly leading to estrangement in families, divorce in marriage, and in the extreme, going "postal" in the workplace.

Similarly, in the consulting room, any therapist who has an "unconscious" predisposition to "sit-in-moral-judgment" of patients, no matter how subtle, will have difficulty holding on to patients.

Because both of these subjects are primarily a function of the "baby" part of the personality, they particularly benefit from the application of Kleinian models. Klein's model of "projective processes", the "paranoid-schizoid" and "depressive" positions, the distinction of "persecutory guilt" from "depressive guilt", and "unconscious envy" are all particularly central to thinking about these issues.

### Axioms:

Axiom #1: The more intensely "blaming" is a dominant theme in a person's mental life, regarding a particular issue, event, or relationship, the more it implies that mental activity is dominated "unconsciously by baby levels of the personality".

Axiom #2: It is inevitable that "blaming" and "sitting-in-moral-judgment", regarding a person or situation, will entail the unconscious projection of unwanted "parts of self" or "internal parental figures", on the part of the person doing the "blaming" and/or "judging".

Axiom #3: Where "sitting-in-judgment" is a prominent theme in a personality, it is useful to assume that intense "unconscious envy" is lurking around, causing its usual problems.

### Some Definitions I Find Useful:

JUDGEMENT: The application of "reasoning" to a situation in order to form an "opinion".

**MORALITY:** The application of the assumption that something can be divided into the categories of “right and wrong”. It can be applied on a continuum of “idealization”. That continuum would span from the less idealized descriptors of “ethical and principled”, to the considerably more idealized “noble, righteous, and virtuous”.

[“Ethical and principled”, can to a reasonable extent, be judged by “behavior”. However, “noble, righteous, and virtuous” have too much of an “idealized purity of motive” to actually be knowable about another person, and represent assumptions that unconsciously link back to “idealization” in infancy.]

**SITTING-IN-MORAL-JUDGMENT:** It is the act of conjoining morality and judgment with a goal of achieving a sense of “sanctimonious superiority” over that which (or whom) is being judged. It is based on an infantile assumption that something can be “all good or all bad” (i.e. black or white), and denies the inevitable “complexity” (i.e. shades of gray) that proper thinking and reasoning brings to a situation.

**BLAMING:** An emotional activity in which one “sits-in-moral-judgment” of another person and views that other person as being “guilty” of thinking, feeling, or behaving in some “bad” fashion. It is commonly accompanied by a mental state of feeling wronged by and superior to the perpetrator.

At a deeper level, it is commonly a function of the “externalization” of something from the unconscious inner world of the person doing the “judging” or “blaming”. The more that “righteous indignation” and “moral superiority” are involved, the more likely it is that “hated” baby states of mind can be assumed to have been “evacuated” into the situation.

None of this should be equated with “constructive criticism”, which has “positive motivations” by definition. It is at risk to represent an overlapping circle with the problematic forms of criticism, but it is less likely to involve projections of “unwanted” parts of self if the motivation is genuinely constructive unconsciously as well as consciously.

**GRIEVANCE:** A real or fancied cause of complaint.

**GRUDGE:** A feeling of deep seated resentment or ill will.

In summary, “blaming” has a more of an “action” attached to it of projecting “bad responsibility and guilt” into another, while “sitting-in-moral-judgment” has more of an emotional posture of “feeling superior” to another. Generally speaking, blaming is more likely to be linked to the “projection of guilt” and “sitting-in-moral-judgment” is more likely to be linked to “unconscious envy” in some fashion. In both types of situations, there are too many possibilities to make generalized assumptions without a detailed exploration of each situation.

Any therapist who has an “unconscious” predisposition to “sit-in-moral-judgment” of patients, no matter how subtle, will have difficulty holding on patients. The exception would be with patients who are unconsciously recreating such a situation from their own unconscious inner worlds. In those situations, the therapy is likely to remain permanently perverted and stalemated, in a subtle, or more overt, sado-masochistic relationship where being “cruelly critical” becomes the “coin of the realm”.

On the other hand, every therapist must tolerate being “blamed”, sooner or later, by some patients. This is inevitable in every treatment where “blaming” or “sitting in judgment” is a part of the patient’s unconscious inner world. This is “inevitable” for two reasons. The first is that for that sort of patient it is part of their fundamental “unconscious, internal” view of relationships, i.e. “the only game in town”. The other reason is that for that “internal view” to be worked on, it must be “recreated in the transference” with the therapist. In Kleinian terminology, this would be referred to as tolerating being made a “bad object”.

#### Overview and Background Assumptions:

1 – In life, things go wrong. Sometimes it is by chance, sometimes by neglect or irresponsibility, and sometimes by bad intent. Probably it is mostly commonly a result of a failure to “think”, literally as in ... “I

didn't think it would ... break, fall, catch fire, etc." When something goes wrong and another is injured, disappointed, loses something, etc., there is mental pain involved. The "injured" party suffers in some manner and the person creating the negative outcome feels a sense of "responsibility" and possibly "guilt".

Undesirable outcomes are created by all of us at one time or another, as well as suffered by all of us. There are noteworthy sayings that apply to such situations:

– In application to "bad outcomes", one of my favorites is "Shit happens."

– As applied to "guilt", I try always to remind myself "There but for the grace of good fortune [or God] could go I."

– As applied to "sitting-in-moral-judgment" I am reminded of the biblical saying "Let he who is free of sin cast the first stone."

Note that all three of the above sayings imply that one may want to "think" about the entire situation, apply "reason" to it, and be slow to arrive at a conclusive "judgment" about how it happened and why.

2 – The application of thinking, reasoning, and judgment may lead to the conclusion that the perpetrator, if there is one, may need to make some "repair" to the "receiver" of the "undesirable outcome". It may even be that something should be done to "educate or modify the future behavior" of the "perpetrator". If one thinks about any of these in detail, it is crucial to recognize that they should all be a function of the "adult part" of the personality taking control of the "baby parts of self", both in the judger and the judged..

#### Making a Distinction Between Baby States of Mind and Adult States of Mind:

1 – The human behaviors represented by the definitions, in the earlier section of this talk, exist as continuums, or overlapping circles, and must therefore have at least a modest degree of "arbitrariness" applied to them.

To make the differences more evident, it is useful to make a distinction between "baby level quality of thought" and "adult quality of thought and reasoning". These distinctions are necessary for the differences in the definitions to be usefully, fully apparent.

2 – For example, babies lack any appreciation of "cause and effect" beyond physical or temporal proximity. In addition, their "concreteness" and "paucity of imagination" makes them completely subject to the type of simplistic reasoning of the "where there is smoke, there is fire" type. In other words, everything is "black or white", "all good or all bad", and a sense of "certainty" can be applied if desired.

This type of rigid, "non-thinking" can be found to exist, at times, in all humans, throughout the lifespan, precisely because the "baby core" of the personality exists throughout the lifespan, in all individuals.

It tends to be most prominent in those who had more severe emotional pain that began in infancy. That is because the pains of infancy would have necessitated using whatever coping maneuvers were available to the infant, and those invariably turn out to variations on the theme of "denial of" or "evacuation of" those unwanted baby states of mind. [In other words, using Kleinian models, the maneuvers are functions of "splitting-and-idealization" and "splitting-and-projective identification.]

The ongoing use of such projective mechanisms later in life tends to be fostered by growing up with parents and grown-ups around the baby and child who themselves tend to be "concrete" and use the same all "black or white" types of judgments.

3 – By contrast, an "adult level" of thinking benefits from adults around the developing child who are mature and not overly concrete. This implies that they are more oriented to being "thoughtful", "slower to

judgment” until they have all of the facts, have the capacity to be “generous” as well as to “forgive”, and can “bear mental pain and uncertainty”, etc. The child learns these lessons from the parents’ manner of thinking and behaving, and is able ultimately to identify with such “adult” functioning.

4 – Because both of these subjects (“blaming” and “sitting-in-moral-judgment”) are primarily a function of the “baby part” of the personality, a deeper understanding of their roots can particularly benefit from the application of some of the models developed by Melanie Klein. Her models of “projective processes”, the “paranoid-schizoid and depressive positions”, “persecutory” and “depressive” guilt, and “unconscious envy” are particularly central to thinking about these issues.

#### The Foundation for Blaming in Infancy:

1 – I will start with the assumption that infants have, as a fundamental problem, the issue of how to “bring order” to their life and inner world. To achieve some order, their initial task is to figure out what feels good/pleasurable, and how to hold onto it, while simultaneously figuring out what causes pain, and is thus “bad”, suitable to avoid or get rid of it when present.

As I described in Module Two of MKA, this can be thought of as entailing a process of “splitting-and-idealization”, to separate the “good” from the “bad”. That division is inevitably followed by a process of “splitting-and-projective identification” whereby the “bad” component is “evacuated” out of oneself into the outside world. The “container” (human or inanimate), into whom this “bad stuff” is placed, will be imagined to be containing this stuff, and at least impacted if not “taken over” by it.

If this container happens to be the mother, and she has the capacity to bear it and respond constructively, then the potentially hundreds of times a day that this occurs will lead to a feeling that this “bad stuff” is not overly dangerous or harmful. [See “Bion’s Mother-Infant Model” at the beginning of Module Two, Part One].

2 – If, on the other hand, this “bad stuff” is felt to be really dangerous to self and object, for whatever combinations of reasons, then there is the lifelong potential for a need to keep such stuff very “split off” and, if you will, and “not me”. Later in life this will lead to a chronic predisposition to need to find containers for it, either as a “chronic, continuous” approach to life, or as an “acute, situational” problem when something has provoked the threat of contact with an “unwanted” part or aspect of self (or object) that is felt to be “bad”.

It is important to recognize that whatever is being projected, is being projected because it has some particular “emotion” linked to it which is the source of the pain. Therefore, to understand the underpinnings of a circumstance in which a person is “sitting-in-moral-judgment” of another person or situation, it is usually very helpful to recognize which “painful emotion” is involved in the person doing the “judging”.

3 – But it also is helpful to have the concept that these painful emotions “do not ordinarily exist in a vacuum”. They are typically embedded in a context of an ongoing “internalized relationship” between a “part of self” and a “version of mom or dad”. Because of this fact, the “emotion” that is evacuated is usually evacuated along with the “part of self” that is felt to be having the emotion, or the “version of mom or dad” that is felt to cause the part of self to feel that emotion.

4 – When the child harbors too much pain for whatever reason, or has “turned away” from the parental figures, then that child will not have “good” adult figures to identify with and internalize. If the adult figures are seen primarily as the source of mental pain, then the child will be at risk to make the parent “all bad”. The resultant “blaming” of the pain on the parent is likely to lead to a “grudge and/or chronic grievance”.

One sees this perhaps most commonly as a result of the spacing of siblings, who were born too close together. This leads to a resentful feeling that the “pains” of that spacing, and never getting ones “fair share”, were “purposeful acts” on the part of the mother and/or father to deprive the infant or child of his

“fair share of the goodness”. That phantasy is often accompanied that the child was replaced by the new baby because the child was “bad” in some way and “unloved”. Such phantasies lead to grievances that can commonly be seen to last over the lifespan, visible with every family gathering, even in old age.

5 – Before I give you some samples of projections linked to blaming, I need to make one final point about infancy in relationship to blaming. It is that, as with most things human that are “problematic”, one has to factor “UNCONSCIOUS ENVY” into the equation if one wants to make sense of the full gamut of blaming activities. This is because blaming has so much of a sense of “grievance” attached to it, usually with strong unconscious components involved, for some individuals.

6 – Whenever one sees “grievance” as a long term tendency in an individual, one has to consider that the grievance originated with a baby feeling of anger about having been born a “helpless baby” instead of coming out to be the “mommy” with the ability to “have everything, know everything, and be able to do anything”. In other words, the infant wishes to be the same as the mommy is imagined to be, instead of having to be the helpless, dependent baby.

As I like to phrase it, the baby comes out at birth saying “Why do you get to be the big, fancy grown up mommy who has everything, knows everything, and can do anything while I’m the helpless, shitted-up baby? I hate that! Why don’t you be the baby and I’ll be the big, fancy mommy. See how you like that.” [See Module Two, Part Two on Unconscious Envy for an expansion of this idea.]

#### Some Hated Baby States of Being:

1 – Some “QUALITIES ATTENDENT TO BEING AN INFANT” might include: smallness; helplessness; complete dependency; not knowing; complete physical inability, ineffectiveness, or incompetence behaviorally; etc.

These are potentially quite distressing to infants, especially when the adult caregivers are inadequate to the task of modulating these pains, and therefore leave the infant with a greater degree of distress than is necessarily inevitable in infancy. When inadequately modulated in infancy, these qualities become the “object of hatred”, are not tolerated, and are felt only to be suitable for being “evacuated”.

– This type of experience in infancy can lead to a baby who cannot wait to “grow up” and to do everything for itself. In the future it will avoid “dependency” at all costs. It will want to hold its own bottle, feed itself, and be completely independent at the earliest possible age.

Later in life, any reminder of these “hated states of mind” is avoided or attacked, often with extreme intensity. The person will be at risk to be a “bossy, arrogant, know-it-all” as he or she grows up, as a manifestation of the fear of returning to the “hated baby states of being”. Such individuals often make the people around them feel like a “stupid idiot” or “incompetent baby”

They will also have a positive preference for thinking that “absolute judgments” about right or wrong, good or bad, etc. can be made. These judgments will always be in danger of being infected by the “hatred of baby states” and a need to feel “morally superior” to such states of being, which will then be seen as existing in others but not oneself.

2 – FEAR OF “SEPARATENESS”: If separation is the source of great pain in infancy, as a consequence of one’s utter dependence on the caregivers in the environment, then anything that could result in separation (or its extreme, complete abandonment) will be avoided like the plague. Such a reaction to separateness often leads either to a powerful need to feel “omnipotently self-sufficient”, or on the opposite pole, a need to always be “joined up” to whomever they are relating.

– This latter approach may extend to an inability to “think for oneself”, as having a “mind of one’s own” is felt to be too dangerous, because it risks feeling separate when not in agreement with the surrounding environment. Such an anxiety is exemplified by the fable of “The Emperor’s New Clothes”, where the

Emperor's employees fear being seen as "stupid" or "not fit for their job", if they have a "mind of their own".

– The take home lesson in relation to "blaming" and "sitting-in-moral-judgment" is that separation and separateness are to be avoided, and the person will go on the attack when threatened.

For the person who "turned away" from their good objects as a result of "intolerance of needing the parental figure", any feeling of tenderness, need, or dependency will cause the person needing "self-sufficiency" to hold those feelings in contempt, mocking someone who displays them, and attacking someone who tries to create them in that "avoidant" individual. The person is likely to project the baby neediness, helplessness, etc. and "mock" the recipient of the projection as being a "big baby" or "sissy" or "weakling", etc.

– The person who wishes to be "joined-up" to an individual or group is always at risk to attack any new idea or rival group that is "different". One sees this continually in relation to religion and politics on a large scale, and in the workplace or family on a small scale. The unconscious fear of being left out or abandoned often leads to highly "judgmental" attitudes toward those who are "different" in their beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors.

3 – UNCONSCIOUS ENVY: When combined with number one or number two, this makes for the most toxic form of "sitting-in-judgment", and makes anyone in such a state of mind in danger of becoming a miniature Adolf Hitler. It leads to the greatest sanctimony, viciousness and cruelty, hypocrisy, etc.

– The "envious hatred of the other" engenders an unconscious urge to "ruin" the enviable elements in the other. As examples, the Hutus hatred of the Tutsies wealth in Rwanda lead to genocide, Saddam Hussein destroyed Kuwait's oil fields as he retreated in order to deprive them of their enviable wealth, Hitler destroyed art, books and culture in his march across Europe, Lucifer refused to serve as second fiddle in Heaven, etc. These are all expressions of "envious hatred" of the goodness, success, and happiness of others.

– On a much smaller scale, we are all capable of feeling relief when someone "fails to achieve something" about which we would have felt envious. If we could do it with anonymity assured, many of us would cast the decisive vote depriving someone of that success. This is simply "human" even though it is not pretty. Most of us do not admit to ourselves that we often feel this way.

A good friend of mine, with whom I regularly engage in an activity at which he is better than I, remarked to me in a discussion that he did not think he "felt envy", and that he "genuinely liked others' success" at the activity. We recently had a day in which I could do nothing wrong and he could do nothing right at that activity. Toward the end of that period he walked up to me, and with a pained but charitable wink said to me, "I was wrong about not having envy because right now I hate your guts!"

– Most of us feel safe in this type of "hating someone's guts" at a safe distance, and express it in the form of "sitting-in-judgment" of that movie star, political figure, athlete, sports team, nation, etc. when they stumble or fall. There is usually an "envious reversal", at the root of such states of mind, whereby a "hated" baby aspect or part of ourselves is being projected into the fallen other.

4 – INTOLERANCE OF GUILT: This is a very important category because "intense envy and guilt" are among the most "unbearable" of human emotions, and tend to immediately be projected into the outside world.

It may well be that very primitive feelings of guilt, originally related to mom and anyone with whom she came in contact, are at the root of a considerable amount of judging and blaming. This primitive attitude would likely be linked to envy and jealousy of mom's other babies (born and unborn) and dad, as well as

envy of mom directly, as mentioned above, for being the “source” of everything desirable in life, in the eyes of the infant.

The problem with these primitive states of guilt (essentially for hostile attacks on mom, her body, and her other relationships out of envy and jealousy) is that one would literally have to see the person (possibly influenced by such guilt) in an analytic setting for an extended period of time, including looking at their dreams and ongoing object relationships, to get a sense of the depth of this “unconscious guilt”. This difficulty in seeing the early underpinnings is that they remain so “deeply unconscious” in most individuals, even though they may pervade that individual’s approach to life.

Perhaps the best we can do is look for plausible parallels in the person’s conscious attitudes and behaviors, as described in this next section.

#### Clues That Baby States of Mind Are Leading to Judging and Blaming:

1 – The first clue is seen in the form of people making “SNAP JUDGMENTS” about someone. This is invariably done without looking at the unique details of the situation, as the “adult part of self” would be more likely to do.

2 – The second clue would be the use of verbiage that is “ALL OR NONE, BLACK OR WHITE”. One of the most common examples is seen with the use of the word “evil”. There are behaviors that are inexcusable, and some individual’s propensity for such behaviors suggests that they be locked up for life to protect others from them.

– But every person started life as a baby and “no baby is all bad”! Every patient I have ever seen, no matter how objectionable or destructive their behavior or personality traits are, becomes a “sympathetic figure” with whom I can identify, as I learn to see and understand the world in which they live through the perspective of their eyes and point of view. I have never seen a person who has absolutely nothing about them that isn’t “all bad”, as the word “evil” would suggest.

3 – The “PLEASURE”, “VEHEMENCE”, or “SANCTIMONY” with which the “judging” and “blaming” is performed is always an indication that baby states of mind have infiltrated, or are dominating, the perspective of the judger or blamer. This is so powerfully in evidence when a public figure rails about something with great disapproval, only to be later discovered to be a “practitioner” of that which has been so stridently attacked.

4 – The final hint of infantile states of mind, that I wish to highlight in this essay, is the activity of “LOOKING FOR SMALL DETAILS TO POISON THE WELL”. This is so “quintessentially a baby state of mind”, which often goes ignored by those wishing to judge and blame, and is linked to a feeling that if something isn’t “pure in its goodness”, then it can be treated as “all bad”.

Small children will often refuse to eat a cookie that has a small defect or break in it. When one looks at any complicated subject like healthcare, immigration, abortion, climate warming, etc., it is very difficult to see the entire big picture, unless you are an expert, and very easy to find “fault with some particular” in the picture.

With any of these issues, an “adult state of mind” would try to see the “whole picture” with an eye toward what is the “greater good for the largest number of people”. The baby parts of self are incapable of not being dominated by their own “emotional needs” and “imagined self-interest”. Even if they could see the big picture, their tolerance of frustration and sacrifice is too small, and their “frontal lobes” of their brains, where more sophisticated “assessments of morality and ethical behavior” will be made in the future, are as yet quite undeveloped.

It is tragic that so many of us never develop these functions, or choose to ignore them as grown-ups, and in effect never achieve a “proper adulthood” dominated by “adult” states of mind and functioning..

### Summary and Conclusion:

1 – Blaming and sitting-in-moral-judgment of others is always a function of “baby states of mind”. It is almost always linked to the projection of unwanted or even hated “baby states of mind” on the part of the judge or blamer into the object of the judgment and blame.

Those baby states of mind often involve (1) “unwanted qualities” that are inherent in being a baby (such as smallness, helplessness, need and dependence), or (2) the emotions specifically of guilt and envy.

The “guilt” is often a product of very early hostile states of mind toward those with whom the infant must share its mother. In order to preserve its good relationship to the loved mother, the hostile elements are “split off” into the outside world and seen as “not a part of oneself”.

The “envy” usually has its root in attitudes about the mother being the source of everything the infant needs but cannot provide for itself. It is also commonly split off, but leads to envious attacks on others who are felt to deserve it, thus displacing the attack from its original object, usually mother.

2 – Evidence that the “blaming” and “sitting-in-moral-judgment” is a function of baby states of mind is commonly seen in the “rush to judgment”, making the object of the judgment “all bad”, feeling stridently “superior” or even “gleeful” about the others downfall, and looking for “tiny pieces of evidence” that can be used to spoil the whole situation or person.

3 – All of the above qualities and behaviors of infantile thinking can be contrasted with “adult states of mind” and “qualities of thought”. An adult approach to evaluating a situation acknowledges that there are two sides to every coin and life is rarely one dimensional and black or white. This makes the adult approach move more slowly and cautiously to a final conclusion, recognizing the shades of grey, that no person is all bad, and few situations don’t have both positive and negative elements involved. The adult self can see the merit of such ideas as: “Everything in life is a TRADEOFF”, and “For every problem there is a solution that is simple, straight-forward, and WRONG.”

4 – When one wishes to adjudicate the ethical or moral nature of a situation in life or a person, it becomes important to assess the “motivation” that was involved at the time. “Shit happens” as the saying goes, and some things are just an unfortunate roll of the dice, not the “fault” of the person doing the activity that didn’t “turn out as desired or planned”.

5 – “Blaming” and “sitting-in-moral-judgment” are human, because we were all once babies. But they serve no useful purpose if performed by the “baby parts of self” once one has “grown up”.

– In marriage and family, it is necessary for the couple, as marital partners and as parents, to be able to differentiate “adult states of mind” from “baby ones”, and not allow the baby ones to dominate. “Blaming” and “sitting-in-moral-judgment” of one’s partner, or one’s children, is a virtual one way ticket to divorce or unhappiness or worse in the children.

– On a much larger scale, the obvious implication is that the most “mature” members in society should be the ones making such judgments about “ethical and moral issues”. “Baby states of mind”, that lead to the “projection of hated parts of self or guilt”, should never be allowed to dominate the field of public discourse.

– Similarly, “infantile greed and envy” will invariably “corrupt the motivation” of those in power and making such adjudications, if personal self-interest is allowed to excessively dominate policies and procedures in governance. Society needs to acknowledge and keep this in mind if it wishes to survive for another millennium.

### A Note For Therapists:

1 – The task of doing therapy requires making many “adjudications” by the therapist. Should I address a conscious or unconscious element at the moment? Should I listen longer before I speak up? Should I take up this issue in the dream or should I await further spontaneous associations? Should I play the role into which I am being put or should I immediately start interpreting the projections. Quite often one has to “make a decision” and see how it then goes in order to see if decision seemed productive.

However, there is one type of judgment that often needs to be made that is germane to this talk, and that is deciding whether or not something is “problematic, destructive, or crazy”. One occasionally runs into a patient who insists that their behavior or thinking is none of the three when you are quite convinced to the contrary. Such patients will at times insist that you are “sitting-in-moral-judgment of them.

2 – The reason why it is necessary for all therapists to have had their own therapy is to “calibrate their instrument”. The longer and at greater depth their therapy is, the better. Otherwise, It is impossible to know if the patient is at least partly right that you are being a “moralist”, for whatever unconscious reason, or are projecting your own “issue” into them. That is unless you know a great deal about your own unconscious inner world.

– The problem here is that there are therapist’s who do have a “characterological” predisposition to “sit-in-moral-judgment” in life, and it will extend to their consulting room. It may be ever so subtle, or it may be problematically overt.

In the former case certain patients, usually with “judging” internal relationships, will recreate those problematic internal situations with the therapist. The therapist will be at risk to be unable to analyze the problem because he or she will actually be the problem.

Where the therapist’s judging is more overt, he or she is likely to have difficulty holding onto patients. The occasional exception, with such therapists, is the patient who unconsciously externalizes a “sado-masochistic element” from their own unconscious internal relationships, into the therapeutic relationship. Often in such circumstances, the patient would unconsciously rather have the therapist be “cruel” than for the patient to have to recognize the “cruelty” in themselves.

3 – This all segues into another important task required of the competent therapist. That is the issue of tolerating being made into a “bad object” so that the patient can “recreate in the transference” a deeply unconscious internal situation from their inner world. Sometimes the nature of that “bad” version of a mom or dad that is being projected into the therapist is a parental figure that is “critical and judgmental”. If a therapist is very clear about their own judgmental tendencies, because of having had extensive therapy, then they can be confident about whether they are or are not being “excessively judgmental”.

– Sometimes patients will maneuver a therapist, who is not basically “moralistic and judgmental”, into unconsciously taking on the role being moralistic and judgmental. It is much easier to tolerate such a situation when you know whether or not you should feel “guilty or contrite” for having done something problematic, when the patient insist that you have.

Being a therapist is very fascinating and gratifying business when you can see what does or does not actually belong to you. **YOU MUST CALIBRATE YOUR INSTRUMENT!**

## Section 8 - Minnick's Favorite Quotes and Paraphrases

### Psychoanalytic:

- 1 – All human beings want magic – Susanna Isaacs Elmhirst
- 2 – To be an infant is to be psychosomatic – Susanna Isaacs Elmhirst
- 3 – A person's most precious possession is their internal harmony
- 4 – Neurotics are caused pain by their pursuit of pleasure, psychotics are preoccupied with the avoidance of pain, pleasure is a non sequitur – Wilfred Bion
- 5 – Pride in one's achievement under the sway of the life instinct becomes self respect. Pride in one's achievement under the sway of the death instinct becomes arrogance – Wilfred Bion
- 6 – Psychotics, whether out of love or hate, are driven to get inside their objects in order to possess and control the other. Neurotics are more likely to get inside in order to understand the other person. – so it is more likely to be reversible – Herbert Rosenfeld
- 7 – Perhaps the biggest problem in having crazy parents is the difficulty it brings in seeing your own projections – Susanna Isaacs Elmhirst
- 8 – Nobody stands in line for the truth. CLM
- 9 – Children put their parents together in every imaginable way, except the right one – Roger Money-Kyrle
- 10 – Concern in the outside world is a function of capacity for concern for one's internal objects – CLM
- 11 – Infants who suffer early emotional disturbance inhabit their bodies awkwardly – CLM
- 12 – It is too often forgotten that the gift of speech, so centrally employed, has been elaborated as much for the purpose of concealing thought by dissimulation and lying as for the purpose of elucidating and communicating thought. – Wilfred Bion
- 13 – Freud acknowledged the baby's love but Klein recognized the baby's hate, that threatened people. – Albert Mason
- 14 – King Solomon's Fable differentiates hate linked to love from pure hate (i.e. envious hatred). – Albert Mason
- 15 – Life is making the best of a bad job – Bion
- 16 – The absence of a good object is the presence of a bad object that has to be evacuated. – Albert Mason on Klein
- 17 – "I had a fractured dislocation". – self description of an autistic girl to Francis Tustin
- 18 – Masturbation is OK but you don't meet any interesting new people – Jaime Genot (sp?)
- 19 – On Magic: You seem to have found the cure, what's missing is the illness – attributed to Wilfred Bion

### Every Day Life:

- 1 – Life is hard and then you die – Popular
- 2 – Life is full of surprises, mostly bad – Wilfred Bion
- 3 – The road to hell is paved with good intentions – Karl Marx
- 4 – Luck is the residue of design – Branch Rickey; Chance favors the prepared mind – Louis Pasteur  
Luck is When preparation meets opportunity – ?
- 5 – He who does not study history is doomed to repeat it – George Santayana
- 6 – Everything you own in life takes up time and space – MMM
- 7 – Everything in life is a trade-off – CLM
- 8 – The goal of life is to die young, as late as possible – Ashley Montague
- 9 – No one ever went broke underestimating the taste of the American public – H. L. Menken  
– No one in this world, so far as I know ... has ever lost money by underestimating the intelligence of great masses of the plain people – H. L. Menken
- 10 – There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience – John Wooden
- 11 – Civilized man is an oxymoron – ?
- 12 – The only thing that will stop falling hair is the floor – Benjamin Franklin
- 13 – A woman is a path, don't ask who has walked on it before, just enjoy it – Senegal
- 14 – Never complain, never explain – Henry Ford II
- 15 – When I leave here, I'll wear the same size hat as when I came in – Abraham Lincoln about his

potential election to the presidency

16 – A wagging tail is more sincere than many handshakes

17 – People with humility don't think less of themselves, they just think of themselves less –

Norman Vincent Peale

18 – No one can make you feel inferior without your permission – Eleanor Roosevelt

19 – In life, what you resist, persists – Werner Erhard

20 – Life is what happens to you while you're planning to do something else – John Lennon

21 – To really enjoy the fire try chopping your own wood – ?

22 – Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a gift and not giving it – ?

23 – It is better to keep your mouth shut and appear stupid than it is to speak and remove all doubt – ?

24 – I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody – Bill Cosby

25 – Do something. Either lead, follow, or get out of the way – Ted Turner

26 – People quarrel because they don't know how to argue – ?

27 – Life is like a twenty mule team: unless you're the lead mule, the scenery is about the same – ?

28 – Of all the animals man is the only one that lies – Mark Twain

29 – Of all the animals man is the only one that blushes... or needs to – Mark Twain

30 – All men make mistakes but married men hear about them a lot sooner – ?

31 – There is nothing wrong with teenagers that reasoning with them won't aggravate – ?

32 – He who loses his head is the last one to miss it – ?

33 – Minds, like parachutes, work only when open – ?

34 – Everyone is entitled to my opinion – ?

35 – I don't know what apathy is and I don't care – ?

36 – I sentence you to hang by the neck until you cheer up – ?

37 – Lawyers – the larval form of politicians – ?

38 – Of course you can trust our government! Just ask any Indian – ?

39 – A woman is like a tea bag – you never know how strong she is until she gets in hot water – Eleanor Roosevelt

40 – If you want to tell people the truth, make them laugh, otherwise they'll kill you – Oscar Wilde

41 – Get your facts first, and then you can distort them as much as you please – Mark Twain

42 – It is not always the same thing to be a good man and a good citizen – Aristotle

43 – It is difficult to get a man to understand something when his salary depends upon his not understanding it – Upton Sinclair

44 – People around the world have always been more impressed by the power of our example than the example of our power – Bill Clinton

45 – You can only be young once, but you can always be immature! – ?

46 – Wisdom = the art of knowing what to overlook – William James

47 – You campaign in poetry but you govern in prose – Nell. Carter

48 – Those that would sacrifice freedom for security will deserve neither and lose both – Ben Franklin

49 – Republicans are selfish to a fault and Democrats are generous to a fault – CLM

50 – Republicans feel a moral correctness that in extreme leads to the end justifies the means – CLM

51 – Democrats feel a social responsibility that in the extreme means being tolerant of almost anything – CLM

52 – Simplicity and plainness are the soul of elegance – ? Dickens

53 – Never attribute to malice what can be adequately explained by stupidity – ?

54 – Life is a comedy to those who think and a tragedy to those who feel – Horatio

55 – Art is like sex, it's no fun if you are just trying to get it finished – ?

56 – It ain't what they call you, it's what you answer to – W.C. Fields

57 – No one arrives in Hell surprised – St. Robert Bellarmine

58 – Everyone is entitled to their own opinion but not their own facts – ?

59 – I make myself rich by making my wants few – Henry David Thoreau

60 – Life is short, read people not books – attributed to Wilfred Bion

61 – You only live once, but if you do it right, once is enough – Mae West

62 – Old age ain't no place for sissies – Bette Davis

63 – It is a happy talent to know how to play – Ralph Waldo Emerson

64 – Happiness is a dry martini and a good woman...or a bad woman – George Burns

65 – You know you’ve reached middle age when all you exercise is caution – ?

66 – Folks who have no vices have no virtues – Abe Lincoln

#### Work and Success:

1 – I attribute my success in life to the discovery at an early age that I was not God – Oliver Wendell Holmes

2 – Some may see things as they are and ask why? Others dream things that never were and ask why not? – George Bernard Shaw

3 – Even if you’re on the right track, you’ll get run over if you just sit there – Will Rogers

4 – A man can succeed at almost anything if he has unlimited enthusiasm – Charles M Schwab

5 – Well done is better than well said – Benjamin Franklin

6 – Eighty percent of success is showing up – Woody Allen

7 – When you own your own business you only have to work half a day, you can do anything you want with the other 12 hours – ?

8 – Choose work you love and you will never work a day in your life – Confucius

9 – It is surprising how much you can accomplish if you don’t care who gets the credit – Abraham Lincoln

10 – Trying is just a noisy way of not doing something – ?

11 – For every problem there is a solution which is simple, clear, and wrong – H. L. Menken

12 – I always behave like a duck – keep calm and unruffled on the surface but paddle like the devil underneath – Lord Barbizon

13 – Rockefeller once explained the secret of success. “Get up early, work late and strike oil.” Joey Adams

14 – The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of will – Vince Lombardi

15 – Be the labor great or small, do it well or not at all – ?

16 – Kites rise highest against the wind, not with it – ?

17 – Pressure makes coal into diamonds – ?

18 – Winners never quit, quitters never win – Vince Lombardi

19 – If you want to succeed – double your failure rate – IBM pioneer Tom Watson

20 – Creativity is the residue of wasted time – Albert Einstein

#### Old Fashioned Aphorisms:

1 – The hurrier I do, the behinder I get – Pennsylvania Dutch saying

2 – The early bird catches the worm

3 – A stitch in time saves nine

4 – A penny saved is a penny earned

5 – An apple a day keeps the doctor away

6 – Early to bed, early to rise, keeps a man healthy, wealthy, and wise

7 – Neither a borrower nor a lender be

8 – If wishes were horses, beggars would ride

#### Religion:

1 – Religion is the opiate of the masses – Karl Marx

2 – Faith may be defined as an illogical belief in the occurrence of the improbable – H. L. Menken

3 – The difference between a moral man and a man of honor is that the latter regrets a disreputable act, even when it worked and he has not been caught – ?

4 – Conscience is the inner voice which warns us somebody may be looking – H. L. Menken

5 – Puritanism is the haunting fear that someone, somewhere, may be happy – H. L. Menken

6 – The great artists of the world are never puritans, and seldom even ordinarily respectable – H. L. Menken

7 – There are no atheists in a foxhole – heard from Wilfred Bion

8 – Religion is the masterpiece of the art of animal training, for it trains people as to how they shall think – ?

9 – Don’t pray in my school and I won’t think in your church – ? H. L. Menken

10 – So many Christians, so few lions – ? H. L. Menken

11 – Republicans think everything is made better if you add Jesus and Bacon – Bill Maher

Perverse Quotes:

- 1 – Talent borrows, genius steals – heard from David Lyon-Buchanan
- 2 – No good deed shall go unpunished – ?
- 3 – Of all the escape mechanisms, death is the most efficient – H. L. Menken
- 4 – When you pick up a stray dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you, that is the principle difference between a dog and man – Mark Twain
- 5 – Every dog likes the smell of his own shit – RSM
- 6 – One death is a tragedy, a million deaths is a statistic – Josef Stalin
- 7 – A translation is like a woman: when it is beautiful, it is not faithful, when it is faithful, it's not beautiful – Boudelaire (sp)
- 8 – I can resist everything except temptation – Oscar Wilde
- 9 – Common sense = prejudices laid down before the age of 16 – Albert Einstein
- 10 – If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament – Florence Kennedy
- 11 – Winston Churchill of George Atwood – He is a modest man who has much to be modest about
- 12 – I bring you bitter pills in sugar coating, only the sugar coating is dangerous – ?
- 13 – A stiff prick has no conscience – Don Iovino
- 14 – Consistency is the last refuge of the unimaginative – Oscar Wilde
- 15 – Lack of money is the root of all evil – George Bernard Shaw
- 16 – Never put off until tomorrow what you can do the day after tomorrow – Mark Twain
- 17 – On Negotiation: You can get a lot further with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone – Al Capone
- 18 – I would kill for a nobel peace prize – Steven Wright
- 19 – Some people are so far behind in the race they actually think they are leading – ?
- 20 – Trauma = too much reality – Jim Grotstein
- 21 – What contemptible scoundrel has stolen the cork to my lunch? – W. C. Fields
- 22 – Take my advice, I'm not using it – ?