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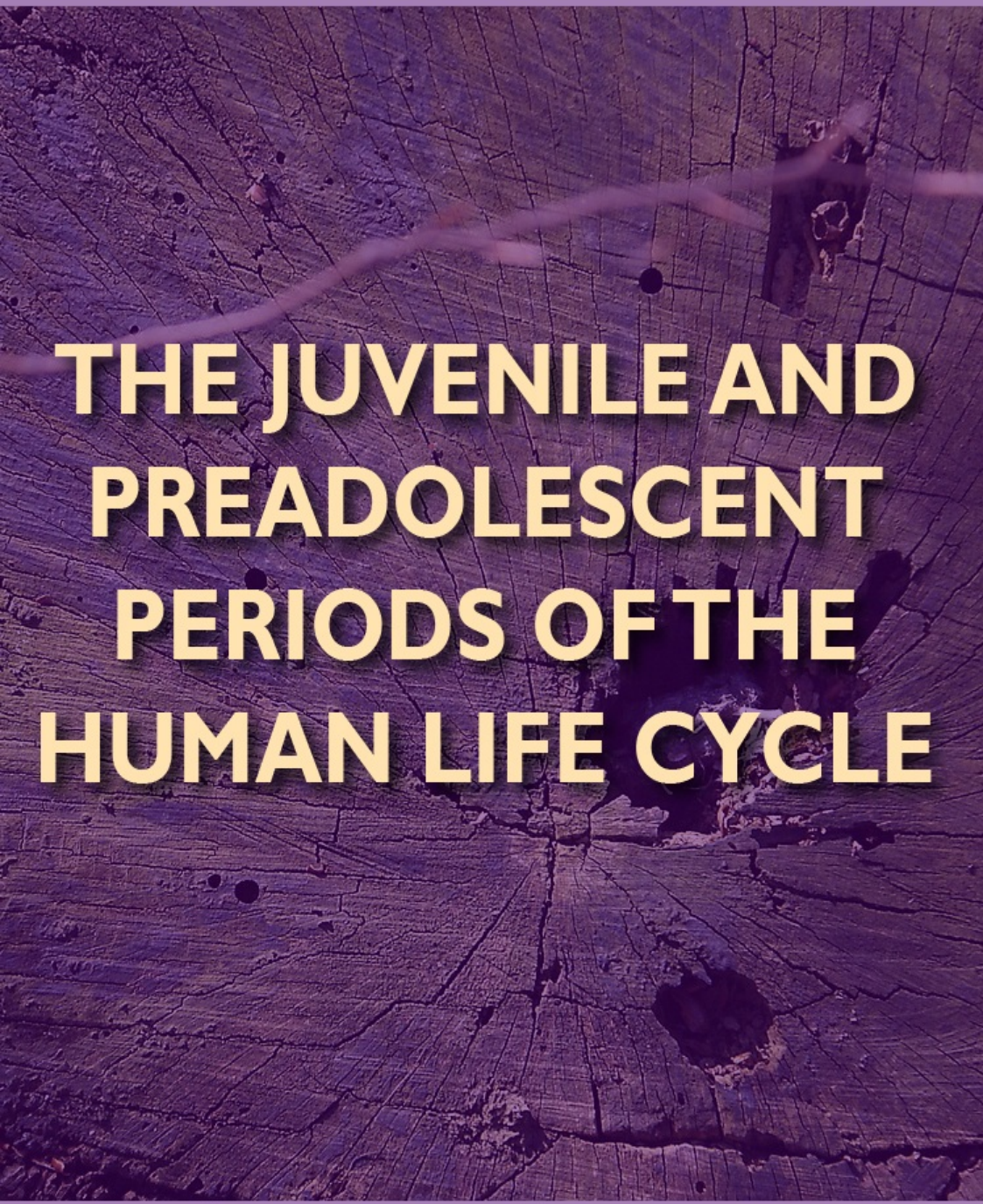

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The Juvenile Period

Definition

The juvenile period, outside its legal sense, was a term incorporated by Sullivan into his developmental system, but others have classified the same chronological span of time in ways more reflective of their particular professional viewpoints. To the educator, for example, these are the years passed in grade school and bifurcated for good educational reasons into a primary triennium from grades one to three and an elementary triennium from grades four to six. For the developmental psychologist this is the era of middle childhood, a time of relative quiescence interposed between the turbulences of preschool and adolescence. This is the case both physically and psychologically. In the context of physical development there is a plateau extending from the preschool to the pubertal growth spurts; Stone and Church have called this the "growth latency," suggesting that it may be a physiological counterpart of the Freudian sexual latency between the passing of the Oedipus complex and its reactivation in early adolescence. For the dentist the juvenile stage begins with the last of the baby teeth and ends with

the complete eruption of the permanent set, minus the “wisdoms.” In different theoretical systems of development, other prime characteristics have been accentuated. Piaget has pointed to the concrete operational mode of thinking, Sullivan to cooperation within interpersonal relationships, and Erikson to the opposing tendencies of industry and inferiority that can make or mar the school child. There would appear to be, therefore, some grounds for believing that the middle years of childhood represent a psychobiological moratorium in certain crucial and perhaps distracting areas that allows the child to restrict himself to the conflict-free spheres of ego “business” in order to learn as much as he can about the environment in which he lives and his own particular place in it. There is a growing flight from family life and especially from close parental contact, an increasing immersion in peer society, and a restless pursuit and exploration of a universe expanding in space and time with every year of development. The middle years form a self-contained world, irresponsible, irreflective, and halcyon, to which adults harken back with pleasure across the disturbing memories of adolescence. More recent investigations of latency have indicated that these golden recollections are to a large extent a sustaining, utopian illusion and that the miseries of the middle years are as real and as scarifying as any experienced in other parts of the life cycle.

Descriptive Development

Physical growth during the middle years is surprisingly regular and free from breaks or spurts as long as the environment is optimal. The evidence for the existence of a midgrowth spurt between five and eight years is dubious; until more exact longitudinal data are available, there is every indication of a growth latency apart from minor seasonal variations that may be superimposed on the rate-of- growth curve. Growth continues at a slower pace: the average child entering latency at six years measures 3½ feet and weighs 40 pounds and the average child leaving latency at 12 years measures 5 feet and weighs 80 pounds. His muscular strength more or less doubles during the same period. Latency girls, in general, keep ahead of the boys and enter puberty earlier. Very little is known about hormone excretion during the child's development, but there would seem to be no striking changes from infancy to puberty. Some parts of the pituitary, the adrenal cortex, and the gonads do not function until puberty, but others are secreted in proportion to the size of the growing child. The 11-oxysteroids of the adrenal cortex, believed to be concerned in the response to stress, are produced from birth onward at the same intensity as in the adult, per surface area. The 17-ketosteroids, mostly end products of androgenic hormones from the adrenal cortex and gonads, make a surprising appearance around about nine or ten years in both male and female children and some have termed this the "adrenarche." The nervous pattern of copulation and orgasm is complete by early childhood but not normally stimulated into action until the sex

hormones are secreted and lower the threshold to stimuli. More is known about the electrophysiological developments in the brain during latency. The slow or delta activity declines sharply during the preschool years and is not a prominent feature of the juvenile record as far as amplitude and abundance of activity is concerned. According to Grey Walter, it persists (statistically) in docile, manageable, and easily led children whom he terms “ductile.” These children tend to drift inevitably into delinquency. The theta rhythms are characteristically prominent during early latency and are easily evoked with frustration. The decline in theta parallels the decline in temper outbursts in preschool children, and its association with the frequent annoyance and deprivation of the preschool period suggests the reason for its relative inactivity during the latency phase. Its presence has been linked to the level of emotionality in the individual. The alpha rhythms attain their adult distribution sometime between the ages of nine to eleven, but the variations may be considerable. There are juveniles who show no alpha rhythm at all and others in whom it persists throughout the waking day, whether the eyes are closed or open, and whether the child is concentrating or relaxed. The rise of alpha may have something to do with the child’s new orientation to his environment during latency and his attempts to reduce its diversity to regular, recognizable, and familiar patterns.

Emotional development does not settle until later in latency. Gesell depicts the emotionality of the younger juvenile and the marked

disequilibrium between him and others in his environment. He is given to extremes of expression, to love and hate, and to extreme sensitivity to praise and blame. He is fearful during these early years, especially of the supernatural, of animals, of self-injury, and of something dreadful happening to his mother that may take her away from him. His dreams reflect these same concerns, and girls especially may fear and dream of men getting into their rooms and attacking them. In the later part of latency the emotions are brought more under control, and the juvenile is in much better equilibrium with others. Whereas in the early years he was somewhat humilious and unamenable to management with humor, later he is able to develop a good sense of humor and can even laugh at himself. The later fears tend to be realistic and concerned with school problems, competitive situations, and worries about failure, and although far fewer dreams are reported in the later part of the period, they mostly have to do with experiences regarding possessions, playmates, and personal difficulties or worries connected with these.

These are, of course, group profiles drawn by Gesell of white middle-class children, and they say very little about children in general, children in different cultures, children under conditions of disadvantage, children with different constitutional propensities, and individual children. The self of this white middle-class juvenile undergoes changes highly reflective of the child-centered world to which it belongs. In early latency Gesell describes the self

as the center of its universe, expansive, undiscriminating, self-willed, and demanding to be first, to be loved the best, to be praised and to win. At times the self may even seem to inhabit "another world" and to withdraw into this whenever circumstances are not propitious. There is also a self-consciousness about the body and the beginnings of modesty, especially in the girl. Shame is a powerful affect stemming from lapses of competence. Later, from nine onward, the child seems gradually to change for the better, to be more outgoing, more social, more interested in relationships especially with other children; more independent, self-sufficient, dependable, and trustworthy; more responsible and much busier and more actively interested in school work, hobbies, and a variety of tasks. At this point he becomes a "worker" and may even prefer work to play. He is increasingly self- aware about what he does, what he is, and what he can and cannot do. He is likely to complain a lot about life in general, his life in particular, and the way in which his body is malfunctioning. At the end of the period he may become markedly hypochondriacal and fearful of death and may even experience an existential crisis.

He now belongs almost completely to the society of children, and although living within adult society, he picks his way through it preoccupied with the concerns of childhood. He is part of a special, separate subculture with its own traditions, rules, regulations, values, and loyalties, and like primitive cultures it is handed down largely by word of mouth from child to

child. In this proving ground the child learns to function apart from adults and practices a variety of roles both in play and in social interaction. For the younger child play especially represents a time out in which he allows himself to escape from the limitations of reality and to undergo, if only momentarily, in Sully's term, a "transmutation of the self." He often plays as industriously and as seriously as he works, and since he is still reverberating from the emotions of preschool, he may use play further for catharsis, wish fulfillment, fostering anxiety, problem solving, circumventing the conscious, symbolizing conflict, stimulating new identifications, softening the impact of trauma by repetition, and elaborating new systems of defense. In the latter part of childhood participation in games teaches him to compete, to win and lose gracefully, to eschew cheating, and to cooperate with his peers. As a member of his group or gang he may take his place in the pecking order and construct a fairly valid concept of himself in terms of his usefulness to the group, capacity for leadership, and organizational skill. The membership carries with it the joys of belonging and the pains of exclusion or ostracism. Neighborhood groups are subdivided by age and sex, and in stable residential areas there may be direct continuity between early childhood groups and the street-corner society of preadolescence and adolescence. Some of the groups maintain their organizational identities while successive generations of children pass through them.

At this stage it is usual for the two sexes to play separately, although

they may still share in the same interests and even play the same games. Few latency girls are likely to participate in predominantly male games, but practically no boys ever openly engage in what are thought of as female ones. However, the interest of the two sexes shows convergence, and the sex cleavage is no longer as absolute. In the gangs a good deal of sexual experimentation may take place, and heterosexual exploration at this age is also becoming commoner as parents countenance or promote mixed parties. The continuity of sex role, to use Benedict's expression, is more manifest for girls who may spend a large part of latency rehearsing for motherhood, homemaking, and child care. Only a few adult occupations are continuous with boyhood culture.

There is no doubt that siblings provide an intense and crucial "corrective emotional experience" for the child and although the contacts are likely to be, according to Stone and Church, marked by "baiting, bantering, bickering, battling, belittling, and bedlam" within the family, an extraordinary solidarity may prevail outside it. The children hand down clothes, toys, traditions, customs, and play patterns from one developmental stage to the next, and they model for one another in terms of appropriate sex and age behavior. The world of parents is gradually left further and further behind although they are still a central pivot in the child's life. He may boast of their achievements, demand their backing and enthusiasm in his pursuits, and still appeal to them as the final arbiters where sensitive matters of justice and

fairness are concerned. Nevertheless, deidealization is gradually progressing, and the child is becoming increasingly aware of his parents as fallible and sometimes frail human beings.

Psychosexual Development (Freud)

The primary psychoanalytic concept relevant to the juvenile period is that of sexual latency. Latency begins with the resolution and repression of the Oedipus complex and ends with its reactivation at puberty; it is a kind of psychosexual moratorium in human development that allows the future adult to learn the technical skills necessary for a future work situation. This is different from the psychosocial moratorium given by some cultures to the adolescent so that he can find a place for himself in society. The first moratorium is brought about by mechanisms of repression and sublimation, and the second by suppression and prohibition. In our Western culture latency children manifest a great show of indifference and even antagonism toward members of the opposite sex, and such reaction formations are further rewarded by the attitude of society in general. The upsurge of intellectual curiosity observed in schoolchildren has been ascribed to sublimation, to transformations of repressed sexual energies, and also to disguised sexual curiosity. The rules and rituals of this stage are also seen as magic devices for controlling impulses and feelings, including the anxieties and hostilities derived from the oedipal conflict. Latency children, with their

superstitions, their collecting and hoarding habits, their mysterious chants and formulas, show a slight resemblance to patients suffering from an obsessive-compulsive neurosis, and latency children will often complain of compulsions, thoughts, and snatches of music that they cannot be rid of, magical counting devices before test situations, and sometimes quite elaborate systems of checking and undoing. All these are still within the range of normative development and the symptoms disappear with the stage. The compulsions may be a means of giving the child some sense of security, certainty, order, and meaning following his escape from the chaotic and confusing experiences of the oedipal period. Since no conflicts can be perfectly repressed, some of the child's rituals represent a disguised, symbolic enactment of an impulse escaping the repression barrier. Therefore, the characteristic latency child is a mildly obsessional child whose compulsions are very likely to pass with the onset of puberty.

Questions have been raised about how latent the situation really is, and investigators such as Broderick have pointed to the amount of heterosexual as well as homosexual interests and play in the preteen years. He feels that sexuality is still active but simply hidden from adult attention. Forbidden information, "smutty" magazines, crude drawings, dirty jokes, bad words, medical diagrams are passed around the underground with a great deal of nervous excitement and pleasure. Curiosity is probably stronger than craving at this age and the toilet function inseparable from the sexual one. In children

who have been overstimulated or seduced, a greater degree of precocity may develop and at the same time provoke much anxiety. The main repression, according to psychoanalytic theory, is directed toward sexual feelings for the parent of the opposite sex, and it is this element that is universally latent. The Henrys have furnished us with protocols from the doll play of children in an Indian tribe, and the record is replete with gross references to copulation. The latency children in many primitive societies spend a lot of time in sexual acting out under the permissive aegis of the elders, and Harlow has pointed to the fact that sexual play among immature rhesus monkeys is essential to sexual competence in adult life. The rehearsal of sexual elements becomes increasingly proficient with practice.

The drives that made the preschool child dream and play undergo sublimation into a host of latency activities, the most important being the sharpening of the epistemological interest. The child becomes a glutton for knowledge as his sexual curiosity is transformed into scholarly inquisitiveness. Leftover anxieties are dealt with by a wide range of defenses characteristic of the latency child and manifest themselves in minor phobias, obsessions, compulsions, conversions, and depressions, all within the normal range. Shame in reference to real or imagined inferiorities and guilt in relation to masturbation and masturbatory fantasies may push the latency child ever closer to a manifest neurosis. Infantile sexual theories are further embroidered and changed following research in latency, but it is surprising,

even with systematic sexual education, how fantastically the process of reproduction can be perceived. But as Freud pointed out, many erroneous ideas are invented by children in order to contradict older, better, but now unconscious and repressed knowledge. Furthermore, the latency child may admit that all parents, except his own, may copulate in the manner described by his instructor: "It is possible that your father and other people do such things, but I know for certain that my father would never do it."

Two fantasied offshoots of the Oedipus complex in latency are, first, the beating fantasy, which has its origin in the girl's incestuous attachment to the father or the boy's feminine attitude toward his father, and second, the family romance, which represents a stage in the estrangement of the child from his parents. In early childhood he may feel that he is not getting his full share of parental love and attention, and he may develop the idea that he is a stepchild or an adopted child. Somewhat later he may invent parents of higher social status. When he has become aware of the sexual determinants of procreation, the family romance undergoes a "peculiar curtailment"; the father becomes a stranger and exalted but the mother remains the same, although in dreams they remain king and queen. In one of his papers Freud reproduces a letter from a motherless girl of 11 years who urgently asks her aunt the "truth." "We simply can't imagine how the stork brings babies. Trudel thought the stork brings them in a shirt. Then we wanted to know, too, how the stork gets them out of the pond, and why one never sees babies in ponds. And please will you

tell me, too, how you know beforehand when you are going to have one." (The writer of this touching request has developed a compulsive neurosis full of obsessive questioning.)

Psychosocial Development (Erikson)

The central concept in Eriksonian developmental theory is the epigenesis of identity, the slow unfolding of the human personality through a succession of psychosocial crises or turning points. In this system the child enters latency, if all has gone well, with a requisite measure of basic trust, of confidence (Benedek) , of mutuality, of autonomy, and of initiative, all contributing to his overall rudimentary sense of identity. According to Erikson, identity is one of the "indispensable coordinates" of the life cycle and emerges more firmly, more completely, and with an increasing sense of inner unity with each crisis that is encountered and mastered. Each turning point in the epigenetic ground plan represents a period of specific vulnerability, a concomitant shift in instinctual urges, and a new interpersonal perspective. The child who is a developmental success actively masters his environment and begins to perceive himself and others more correctly. When development is failing, the child comes into latency overwhelmed by mistrust, shame, doubt, and guilt. Trust is the cornerstone of the healthy personality and stems from transactions with a trustworthy mother, imbued with a sense of fairness and justice. She has also been able to inculcate a deep and almost "somatic"

conviction that there is meaning to her management of the child. The psychosocial issue of trust to mistrust is a crucial quotient for the rest of the development. In latency the child is confronted with a widening social radius, expanding libidinal needs, a large number of developing capacities, and a specific psychosocial strength deriving from a favorable trust- mistrust ratio.

Erikson believes in the essential "wisdom of the ground plan" so that when the child reaches school age following the expansive period of the preschool years, he is more than ready to get down to work and discipline himself to perform well and to share in whatever is being constructed and planned. He becomes a manufacturer, a producer, a tool user and occupies himself industriously with making things as perfectly as he can and persevering with the job until it is fully done. When things go wrong, on the other hand, feelings of inferiority can develop, especially when he persists in comparing himself unfavorably with his father. A great deal depends on the parental surrogates who step into the picture to continue the work of the parents. The good enough teacher knows how to alternate work and play, recognize special efforts, and encourage special gifts. The good enough parents encourage their children to trust their teachers. The good enough school is not simply an extension of grim adulthood and the puritan ethic into the classroom or an extension of the expansive imagination of childhood without restriction, but something of both. The contribution, therefore, of the school age to the sense of identity can be expressed in the words: "I am what I

can learn to make work." To many children this is also the end of identity and its consolidation around an occupational or technical capacity. This is a foreclosure of identity and abrogates the "higher" elements of identity.

Interpersonal Development (Sullivan)

Sullivan constructed a heuristic classification of personality development ranging from infancy to adulthood and governed by the central principle of interpersonal cooperation. In this scheme the juvenile era begins with the need for playmates, defined as cooperative individuals of comparable status, and ends with the need for an intimate relationship with a single person of comparable status. Sullivan reiterates many times that this particular era is of special importance since it constitutes the first occasion when all the drawbacks of living in the family can be remedied in the world outside the home. It almost seems as if Sullivan is implying that one stage of development can be therapeutic for another, and if this is at all true it emphasizes the need to study the developmental stages in parallel in order to be able to exploit this ameliorating capacity to the full. Sullivan suggests that unless the juvenile era can alter the spoilt or self-effacing child for the better, he is going to be increasingly impossible to live with and work with in later life. (It is well to remember that Sullivan was particularly inclined to express himself in somewhat exaggerated terms and that most of his assertions need to be toned down to some extent.) At school the child is required to

subordinate himself to new authority figures with whom he has often had minimal experience. In order to get along in the new milieu, the juvenile must learn some degree of social accommodation, which is mainly a principle of expediency. However, social accommodation has the effect of increasing social competence as well as providing the individual with a basic education in getting along, getting by, and getting away with things. With increasing social sophistication the juvenile is able to detoxify the frightening authority figures and reduce them to the proportion of people. Without such necessary de-idealization the parents and their homologues remain sacrosanct and the juvenile continues in servitude.

Therefore, the juvenile era is the time, as Sullivan puts it, "when the world begins to be really complicated by the presence of other people" in relation to whom there must be cooperation, criticism, competition, compromise, concentration of attention, and real interpersonal communication. As a result of all these, the juvenile learns a good deal about how to create a secure environment for himself. The self-system at the core of Sullivanian personality development is a dynamism that organizes experience, controls the content of consciousness, and deals with the intrusion of anxiety. It is not synonymous with the psychoanalytic superego, although it sounds like it at times. Sullivan does little to clarify these overlapping terms and tends to avoid the issue. "It has been so many years since I found anything but headaches in trying to discover parallels between

various theoretical systems that I have left that for the diligent and scholarly, neither of which includes me."

Another piece of learning that goes on during the juvenile era is "sublimatory reformulation," which consists in substituting acceptable behavior for unacceptable behavior for the sake of appeasing authority figures. Since this diminishes gratification, the unsatisfied need must be worked off in a dream or daydream.

Since life at this time is largely lived in groups, the question of belonging to outgroups or ingroups becomes a crucial factor for healthy development. It may be hard for the juvenile to understand the mysterious workings of segregation and ostracism, and no amount of wishful thinking can transform an outgroup into an ingroup. Self-esteem is one of the major casualties of the group organization of the juvenile world. In addition to grouping, the individuals at this stage also resort to stereotyping, and if this becomes fixed, it can give rise to real trouble later on. A great many juveniles arrive at preadolescence with quite rigid stereotypes about the classes and conditions of mankind. These troublesome stereotypes also invade the self-system and set up "supervisory patterns" in the processes and personifications that constitute the self-system. These imaginary people are always with one and can be hearers (judging the relevancy of what one is saying) or spectators (of what you showed to others). Since these act in an inhibitory way, they can be

compared to the psychoanalytic superego and ego ideal system. The supervisory patterns come into being in the juvenile era and form a part of the elaborate organization for maintaining self-esteem and self-respect.

As the individual reaches the end of the juvenile era, he gains, whether he likes it or not, some sort of "reputation" in terms of popularity, sportsmanship, brightness, and other desirable or undesirable attributes. If one leaves the juvenile era with a bad reputation, it is likely to stick to one and prove a handicap during further development.

The individual is not only subjected to influences from the peer group but also from the parent group, and one of the less fortunate things that parents can do at this stage is to teach disparagement. As Sullivan puts it in his usual vivid style, "the disparaging business is like the dust of the streets—it settles everywhere." It can be very disastrous for the individual if the only way he can maintain his self-esteem is by pulling down the standing of others. Security achieved in this way is not real security and can easily crumble.

By the end of the juvenile era, all being well, one becomes "oriented in living" or, put in another way, "well-integrated." The integration includes one's interpersonal relationships, their management with relatively little anxiety, and the capacity for postponing immediate gratification in favor of some eventual gain. The juvenile who is well oriented to living has a more or

less assured future; the juvenile not so oriented is destined to be, to use some of Sullivan's favorite negative epithets, "unimportant," "troublesome," and a "lamentable nuisance."

Psychocognitive Development (Piaget)

The juvenile period, on Piaget's scale, approximates the end of the representational period and the stage of concrete operational thinking. Egocentrism is on the wane throughout the stage. Symbolic play gradually disappears, to be replaced by games. The child's conception of the world is gradually approaching the adult one.

At first glance there would appear to be some similarities between Piaget's and Gesell's notion of development. As Hunt has pointed out, both employed the cross-sectional method of confronting children of various ages with situations and materials, at the same time observing how the children reacted and responded; both described behaviors typical of children at successive ages; both recognized an epigenetic system of change in the structure of behavior as essentially predetermined, although Piaget is more of an environmentalist and his conception of the organism includes a theory of adaptation governed by the input and adjustment mechanisms of assimilation and accommodation. As a "stage" psychologist, Piaget has postulated a definite order in development, a succession of more or less self- contained

stages, with an intrastage hierarchical organization of attributes and transitions from one stage to the next. Anthony has suggested that a system such as this with well- defined stages, transitional periods, and a dynamic adaptation theory could well provide a basis for a psychopathology.

Egocentrism is narcissism without Narcissus or self-awareness. The process of differentiation between the ego and the world is still incomplete. The child is at the center of the universe, and his perspective is subjective, absolute, and incapable of allowing for another viewpoint. Early in the juvenile period a revolution in perspective takes place, and the child sees himself as a thing among many other things in the universe and by no means the most important of them. This is something in the nature of a Copernican shift. From being highly subjective and absolute, the viewpoint becomes objective and relative, and for the first time the child becomes capable of getting himself in someone else's shoes and perceiving the world through the other's eyes. However, by six or seven years he is not wholly free from egocentrism, and his world is still alive in every part with animistic projections and magical-phenomenistic forces. The sun and moon follow him around; his dreams come in through a window at night; a stone will feel a prick if it is rolling; twisted string unwinds itself because it feels all twisted up; shadows arc emanations from objects; and so forth.

As logical, operational thinking takes over, even if tied exclusively to the

manipulation of concrete objects, this dynamic, primitively conceived world sobers down and becomes much more realistic and down-to-earth. The child gives up thinking by transduction and juxtaposition of ideas and is surprisingly capable of conceiving reciprocal relationships and reversing his thought processes. Revers- ability is the crucial cognitive achievement of the juvenile era. Not only does the child think more logically, but his previously egocentric speech, seldom more than a "collective monologue," becomes socialized and intended for communication. In fact, his whole approach to his environment becomes less amorphous and syncretistic and more precise and differentiated. His cognitions can now encompass a variety of mental transformations referred to as groupings (a logico-mathematical structure that Piaget finds useful for describing cognitive operations). As a result the juvenile can solve many problems that lie beyond the capacity of the preschool child. A child from seven to eleven years behaves as though his primary task consists of organizing and ordering what is immediately and concretely present before him. He is essentially a here-and- now child, and what is absent or what is potential is not his concern. He is bound to the phenomenal and engages the elements of his universe one by one in his efforts to master them. He learns about classification, serialization, conservation, inclusion, the dimensions of time and space, and basic notions of movement and velocity, all of which help to make him familiar with the workings of his environment.

What drives the child to all this accomplishment? According to Piaget, it is because he has to "nourish" his internal cognitive schemata by repeatedly incorporating nutriments from the environment. There is a need to function, which is the only motivation that Piaget recognizes. Furthermore, the child's feelings are not tied to his motivations but to his cognitions and undergo a parallel development that is simply the reverse side of the coin. The intellect furnishes the structure and the affect provides the energy. During the juvenile era, the emotional life is isomorphic to the logico-arithmetic organizations and is characterized by highly structured systems of values, concepts of justice and obligation, fairness in transactions, and interpersonal relations founded on reciprocity and individual autonomy. The "two moralities of childhood" stretch across the whole juvenile period. The first morality, during the earlier years, is authoritarian and based on constraint and unilateral respect. Games are governed by coercive rules that are absolute and inflexible, and moral judgment derives from external and heteronomous sources. There is a moral realism about crime and punishment and the need to fit them together literally, so that a child who breaks six glasses is twice as culpable as the child who breaks three and must be punished twice as harshly. Punishment is dictated by the *lex talionis.* No one can escape justice; it is immanent in the entire universe, so that a child who has been stealing apples may very well break a leg as he attempts to escape over a wall. In the second part of the juvenile period, morality is based on norms of reciprocity

involving cooperation and mutual respect. Games are governed by rules agreed upon by the participants, and the sense of fairness may extend even to the point of making allowances for natural inequalities. For example, the child who has an injured knee will be given a handicap in the race. The moral sense is now internal and autonomous and functions even in the absence of authority figures. The justice meted out is "distributive," which means fairly apportioned in terms of responsibility.

The Possibilities and Problems of Synthesis

Taken in totality, the picture of juvenile development by Gesell, Freud, Erikson,- Sullivan, and Piaget, combined with the empirical findings of academic developmental psychology, is rich, complex, and varied. The different systems do not articulate very closely, nor do they agree very often on the interpretation of similar behavior, but they do frequently seem to be saying similar things in different ways. The language of the systems is idiosyncratic, and this in itself creates a climate of difference. The juvenile child turns away from his family and from his egocentric self to a society of peers with whom he engages in various cooperative transactions that are governed by principles of reciprocity and equality. Because of the physical and psycho- sexual latency, he can use a lot of his energies for epistemological ends and gradually constructs an internal representation of the world that is fairly authentic and based on reality. He talks now in order to communicate,

and his concrete thinking allows him to categorize his world, though to a mildly obsessional extent. He lives and works in groups and attempts to conform to the group's code of behavior; he is miserable when excluded from the group. He is on the way to developing a full and consistent identity and a sense of self that gives him a feeling of continuity throughout all the vicissitudes of developmental change. The self, which has private and public components and both true and false aspects, may emerge into self-consciousness suddenly and dramatically at the end of the juvenile era.

The Preadolescent Period

Definition

The end of childhood is indefinite since puberty may intervene almost any time after the tenth year. Educationally the largest number of preadolescents are concentrated in the junior high schools between the seventh and the ninth grades. Preadolescence can therefore be defined as an indeterminate period of variable duration, but mostly brief, between the eleventh and the fourteenth year. It is the transitional period between childhood proper and maturity. Many developmental psychologists ignore its existence; some give it a passing reference, while others, like Sullivan, speak impressively of its significance. He refers to it as "an exceedingly important but chronologically rather brief period." For Piaget formal or abstract

operational thinking makes its first appearance during this era, and with it a new conception of the world unfolds.

The term “pubescence” refers to a period of about two years immediately before puberty and to the preparatory physical changes that take place in this time. Its onset is marked by a prepubertal growth spurt signaling the end of growth latency, and along with this comes changes in the facial and body proportions, the appearance of primary and secondary sexual characteristics, and a variety of other physical changes that may sometimes persuade the child that he is turning into a completely different person. In both sexes the extremities and neck grow at a faster rate than the head and trunk, giving the self-conscious youngsters the long-legged, gawky, and coltish look characteristic of this age. The shoulders broaden in the boy and the pelvis widens in the girl, who, to a greater extent than the boy, develops a layer of subcutaneous fat that rounds and softens the contours of the body. In general, the boys remain leaner and more angular. The growth of pubic, axillary, facial, and chest hair adds to the transformation. The skin becomes coarser, the pores larger, and the sebaceous glands more active, and as a result the young person becomes subject to the miseries of acne. The composition of the sweat also alters and the odor becomes stronger. This, together with the odor of menstruation, intensifies self- consciousness. In girls the areolas grow larger and become elevated and pigmented, and the breasts may attain almost full size prior to the menarche (according to

Aristotle, menstruation tended to begin when the breast was two fingers abreast in size). A typical feature of pubescent physical development is asynchrony in the development of bodily parts. (Stone and Church referred to this as "split growth.") The resulting asymmetry may further intensify the child's feeling of being "off kilter" and this, together with early and late maturing, may promote transient maladjustments in the preadolescent. (These effects may be more permanent than was previously supposed. Jones has shown that personality differences between early and late maturing individuals may persist well into adult life. Early maturers as a group were poised, responsible, successful, and conventional, and late maturers were active, insightful, independent, and impulsive.)

The functioning of the endocrine glands during this period of growth and development provides an example of "feedback control," in which pituitary hormones stimulate adrenal hormones, which, in turn, stimulate gonadal hormones, which then inhibit the pituitary hormones and cause secretions to slow down. As a result of this, the pituitary-inhibiting secretions of the gonads also slow down and the pituitary once again becomes active. Why the pituitary becomes active at this particular time is not known, but it is thought to be part of a genetically programmed pattern of normal maturation.

Psychologically the preadolescent individual is more akin to the latency child than to the adolescent.

The new developments in the physical system create new feelings and new urges in the psychosexual sphere, with some increase in sexual tension. However, the mechanisms operating in the latter part of latency undergo a complementary increase in strength, so that the child's ego may become more heavily defended than at any other time during his development. Some analytic therapists insist that the child is more difficult to treat at this period than at any other and that transference work is particularly hard to carry out.

If one looks at the middle years in terms of defense, there are marked changes in the picture presented. During the first phase of latency the new superego is harsh, rigid, and, according to Bornstein, "still a foreign body." Two different sets of defenses begin to operate. The first is directed against the genital impulses and leads to a temporary regression to pregenitality, which seems at first to be less dangerous, but later offers problems of its own and provokes a second defense against pregenitality that is largely reaction formation. This brings about the first character change in latency. As a result of increasing genital pressure and constant defense against it, the child becomes increasingly ambivalent and oscillates between obedience, rebellion, guilt, and self-reproach. There is little he can do during this "intermediate stage of superego development" (Anna Freud) except to identify with the aggressor or project the guilt. The whole equilibrium is extremely precarious,

and every now and then a crisis situation occurs that may manifest itself in acute symptoms such as animal phobias, fears of being hurt or dying, insomnia and nightmares, and sometimes a new wave of separation anxiety. In the second phase of latency things are not as smooth as often described. Adults especially, when recalling latency, seem to be conjuring up the "ideal of latency" during which the instinctual demands have been successfully warded off. There is some truth, however, in the assertion that infantile neurosis decreases during the second part of latency. Certainly the sexual demands seem less pressing, the superego less rigid, the ego more preoccupied with reality, and masturbation less frequent. The gradual de-idealization of the parents helps to attenuate conflict between ego and superego. Because of the resurgence of instinctual forces accompanying pubescent development, the defensiveness of the preadolescent has become a therapeutic byword. The child is caught between latency and pubertal struggles, between old and new sexual aims. The latency peer relationship is now reduced to a group of two with homosexual undertones. As a result mutual masturbation and other sexual practices may erupt from time to time, associated with shame and guilt. A recapitulation of the psychosexual development of the first five years may come into evidence toward the end of the preadolescent period.

Psychosocial Development (Erikson)

Erikson has very little to say about preadolescence, and it does not

figure as a separate “box” in his epigenetic diagram. It is difficult to explain this oversight on his part, since the child obviously does not jump from industry into the confusions and turbulences of adolescence without some transitional or prodromal experiences. He clearly believes that at each stage the child becomes a very different person with greater capacities for action, reaction, and interaction and that the psychosexual moratorium is there for the specific purpose of learning the basic grammar of the culture during the sexual lull when the polarities of industry and inferiority are operating and competence begins to emerge.

Interpersonal Development (Sullivan)

Sullivan has much to say about preadolescence and what is for him the primary characteristic of the period, which is the preadolescent collaboration, different in every way from the cooperation, competition, and compromise of the juvenile era. The developmental force that brings this about is the integrating tendency, otherwise known as love or the need for interpersonal intimacy. This is a specific new type of interest in a *particular* member of the *same* sex that eventually develops into what Sullivan calls a “chumship.” What he is saying is that real love begins in preadolescence and that all previous relationships during development with peers and parents are essentially exploitative rather than reciprocal. In the loving chumship of preadolescence each partner moves toward the other for the purpose of mutual satisfaction.

This special sensitivity with regard to the other person and his feelings is the hallmark of this stage. As Sullivan puts it: “Collaboration is a great step forward from cooperation.” A change takes place from predominantly me-feelings to we-feelings. Because of the intimacy and the new capacity for seeing oneself through the other’s eyes, the preadolescent phase of personality development is especially significant in correcting autistic and fantastic notions about oneself or others. Here again Sullivan puts forward his fascinating idea of a developmental stage being therapeutic for disturbances inherited from other stages. “Development of this phase of personality is of incredible importance in saving a good many rather seriously handicapped people from otherwise inevitable serious mental disorder.” Here he isn’t allowing for his usual liberal use of superlatives. This idea would seem to be something that every therapist should keep in mind, involving, as it seems to do, a synergism between natural and artificial therapy. The essential therapeutic ingredient in the preadolescent phase is the “chumship.”

The gang at this time is basically structured on the two-group interlocking with other two- groups. Another basic unit is the three-group, made up of a two-group and a preadolescent providing model qualities to the other two. Thus, there is a lot of mutual influencing in the gang. When the members are confronted with serious problems that overwhelm them, one of the “models” may assume the role of leadership for the purpose of solving the pressing issues. The preadolescent personality is therefore molded by this

developing leadership-led system of relationships. Another important aspect of the gang is that it provides, for the first time during development, what Sullivan refers to as a "consensual validation of personal worth." The improved communication between chums helps to rectify the self-deceptions and mythologies. The intimacies of preadolescent socialization may also help to correct the leftover egocentrisms of the juvenile era or the marginal case, constantly on the fringe of ostracism, who may have been in the outgroup of juvenile society. Sullivan pooh-poohs the alleged dangers of homosexual development and feels that the chumship is a marvelously corrective emotional experience for the bad sports and spoiled children emerging out of the juvenile era. He is shocked by the idea that preadolescence could be considered as a training for an antisocial career because of the gang influence. He agrees that in bad circumstances and bad environments there are likely to be bad gangs, but even in these extreme cases the gang experience can be of value for socialization. So therapeutic is this phase in Sullivan's eyes that even juveniles entering preadolescence with what he calls a "malevolent transformation of personality" may have this ameliorated, reversed, or even cured. The juvenile who has a vicious disparaging tendency that constantly pulls people down may also have this somewhat mitigated by the preadolescent experience. Schizoid individuals may also benefit, although there is a chance that their self-isolating behavior may make it difficult to establish the type of intimacy required for a chumship, and puberty may be

established before they can reap the benefits of the period. The persistent juvenile who tries to avoid growing up may eventually wend his way into an irresponsible gang unless he can be salvaged by a chumship. The handicapped child is particularly likely to suffer from the competitions and rivalries of the juvenile era, but he may come into his own with the development of preadolescence and the helping hand of a chum.

The two-group has its built-in disadvantages as well as advantages. If the relationship is too intense, fixation in preadolescence may occur or homosexual developments might take place. Once again Sullivan dismisses this risk and insists that his own hope would be that the preadolescent relationship was intense enough "for each of the two chums literally to get to know practically everything about the other one that could possibly be exposed in an intimate relationship." It is difficult to know exactly what he means by this, but he clearly is proclaiming his faith in the "great remedial effect of preadolescence." At times like this he does seem perilously close to pushing a pathological development, and it is possible that wide experience of the adult outcome has provided him with the confidence for such assertions. What is sometimes disastrous for the preadolescent chumship or gang is unevenness of development at this time, which puts the participants out of phase and sometimes out of relationship with each other. Bad couplings may result from preadolescents' linking with those still juvenile or those already pubertal, and in these situations homosexuality or schizophrenia are possible

risks. The different time schedules of development bring about differences in attitudes, values, and behavior that carry with them the seeds of disruption.

In preadolescence, where real intimacy first begins, there can also be bitter experiences of ostracism and consequent loneliness. Without the protection of intimacy, loneliness can be terrible, and it is in this era that loneliness reaches its full significance and goes on relatively unchanged for the rest of life. The defense against loneliness is what shapes existence.

Psychocognitive Development (Piaget)

In Piaget's system a cognitive revolution takes place in the preadolescent. His reasoning frees itself from the concrete and begins to undertake such formal operations as deduction from hypotheses. A final state of equilibrium is reached at about 14 to 15 years. The preadolescent also starts to construct theories and make use of the ideologies that surround him. Piaget links these new capacities to the development of neurological structures and suggests an isomorphism with them, as do the Gestaltists. Nevertheless, he also is aware of social and cultural influences and feels that education may accelerate individual development. As he says, the maturation of the nervous system can only determine the totality of possibilities and impossibilities at a given stage, but the social environment remains indispensable for the realization of these possibilities. This constant circular

process characterizes all exchanges between the nervous system and society, and the individual has to learn to adapt to both physical and social worlds.

The preadolescent differs from the juvenile in that he thinks beyond the present and commits himself to possibilities. Unlike the juvenile, he begins to build "systems" as well as to think systematically. The juvenile does not try to systematize his ideas and is not reflective or self-critical. The preadolescent can also make theories, although they tend to be oversimplified and awkward at first. He may also develop theories as part of his intellectual life with the gang. He is not only capable of thinking about the past, the present, and the future, the present and the absent, but he is also able to think about thinking, which is another leap forward in self-consciousness.

What Piaget calls the third form of egocentrism emerges at this stage and continues through adolescence as one of its most characteristic features. It is only when this is "decentered" that a true adult work orientation becomes possible. The egocentrism of the preadolescent still makes him try to adjust the environment to his ego rather than the other way about. As a result there is a relative failure to distinguish between his own point of view as an individual and the point of view of the group. The preadolescent society helps to mitigate and correct this perspective. This egocentrism allows the preadolesccnt to attribute an unlimited power to his own thoughts, so that he dreams of a glorious future of transforming the world through ideas or

reforming the present sorry state of affairs. All this is generally fuzzy and contains elements of play rather than serious work.

One should point out, if it is not already sufficiently apparent, that Piaget does not have an adequate personality theory. In a somewhat oversimplified way he sees the ego as naturally egocentric and personality as a decentered ego. This is not enough to construct a personality theory and certainly not enough to make a psychopathology.

Conclusion

Preadolescence is, therefore, a gateway to adolescence; it is the crucial transitional era between the juvenile and adolescent stages; it is a time for high defensiveness, for intimate chumships, for therapeutic relationships, for the flowering of a new and important kind of human intelligence whose eventual purpose is to shape the future of the world. It is there to repair all the disastrous damages of development and prepare the person for the new and different world in front of him.

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