

PART II

DISINTEGRATION - PART OF THE PROCESS TOWARD A UNIFIED
PERSONALITY

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It is my goal to outline as clearly as possible the Theory of Positive Disintegration, describe the stages of development outlined in the theory, and note the emphasis its author places on the part emotions play in the growth of an individual. Comments on the revolutionary aspects of the theory will be supported by results from recent neuropsychological research.

Dr. K. Dabrowski, M.D. Ph.D., Professor, Polish Academy of Science and Visiting Professor and Director of Clinical Research and Internship, Department of Psychology, University of Alberta, bases his theory on thirty-five years of clinical experience, including psychiatric and psychological research and practice. It rests on the assumption that empirically verifiable differences exist between levels of all mental functions. Mental development is assumed to consist of a transition from lower to higher levels. This process is accompanied by 'growing pains', consisting of a great deal of inner conflict, anxiety, and despair on the part of the individual. Enduring harmony and inner peace are possible only at the two extremes - the earliest level, where the individual is consistently primitive and acts thoughtlessly with no resulting inner conflicts, or at the highest level, where, having attained a level of refinement and unification of structure, the individual is no longer in danger of slipping down to more primitive levels of behavior.

The individuals at the in-between stage, those who are capable of higher level actions, but not consistently or enduringly, are subject to continual climbing-up and slipping-down which results, not in inner peace, but in inner warfare.

The earliest stage of mental development, called primary or primitive integration, is marked by lack of serious inner conflicts. The state of inner harmony attained by those at higher levels is called secondary integration. The entire period of transition is called developmental or positive disintegration, because it is characterized by disintegration of mental functions and because the 'crumbling' processes have a developmental role.

The theory has met with considerable resistance because, contrary to expectation, it defines neurotic symptoms, which are indicative of structural disintegration, as a sign of potential health, and prolonged integration at a low level, regardless of how 'well-adjusted' or intelligent the individual is, not as mental health, but as primitive or psychopathic behavior.

I will briefly outline the levels or stages of development:

Level I - Primitive Integration: Individuals at this stage display primitive or psychopathic behavior, characterized by rigid, automatic activity. All conflicts at this level are seen by the individual as being externally caused, and, while showing a lack of consideration for those who are weaker, he also shows self-abasement toward those who are stronger. (physically or mentally). Generally, he lacks scruples, is egocentric and selfish. Intelligence is subjugated to primitive drives, and is used as a tool to achieve one's ends.

Level II - Unilevel Disintegration: This stage begins with a loosening of the rigid structures of primitive integration. Accompanying it is an increased sensitivity to internal stimuli, marked by ambivalent feelings and disharmony. There is excessive moodiness at this stage, and many unco-ordinated 'wills' and desires. The inner conflicts are unilevel, which means simply that the ambivalence experienced by the individual is a result of trying to ascertain how one of two conflicting desires will be the most satisfying. There is as yet no awareness of acting in a 'better' or 'worse' fashion, but only of attaining 'greater' or 'lesser' pleasures.

Level III - Spontaneous Multilevel Disintegration: At this stage, the individual begins to become aware of 'better' or 'worse' in himself. He develops a critical awareness of both himself and others, accompanied by feelings of astonishment in relation to himself and his environment, disquietude with himself, and dissatisfaction with himself. This general feeling of inferiority towards oneself produces feelings of shame and guilt. The individual begins to show signs of positive maladjustment (a healthy stand against unhealthy conditions around him) and creativity. The individual at this level is no longer ambivalent or pleasure-seeking in a hedonistic manner.

Level IV - Organized or Directed Multilevel Disintegration: At this level, the individual exhibits more tranquillity, systematization, and conscious transformation of the self. He experiences the subject-object harmony in himself, which is the ability to perceive himself as object if necessary, and the ability to perceive the other as subject. At this stage, we also see the third factor (mental determinism), inner psychic transformation, the growth of identification and empathy, education of oneself (not

necessarily formal education) and autopsychotherapy, which is just what it sounds to be. The individual, now working toward the 'personality ideal', is contemplative, intuitive and synthetic in his approach to problems. (as opposed to analytic)

Level V - Secondary Integration: This stage consists in a new organization and harmonization of personality. The individual is autonomous, authentic, intuitive, shows universal empathy, displays a high level of the sense of responsibility, and gives an appearance of reduced psychic tension, a calmness which, at the same time, speaks of great power and great peace.

In a brief review, it can be stated that it appears that an individual, according to this theory, passes through three major phases, the first and last of which are integrative, the middle disintegrative. A different factor influences each of the stages, the first exhibiting biological determinism, the second sociological determinism, and third, mental determinism. The specifically human developmental elements consist in growing independence from hereditary and environmental determinants and in the individual's ability to perceive and achieve, in himself, what is 'higher' and 'lower'.

Now you may say "O.K., that's a great description, but it still doesn't tell us what happens, how an individual moves from one level to another, or why he doesn't in some cases." Current stage theories of personality describe personality stages as cognitive levels, a word which, by definition, excludes emotion. The question which comes to mind now is "Could the dynamisms underlying change from one cognitive integration to another be emotional in nature?" If so, research generated by Dr. Dabrowski's theory should prove fruitful. Prolonged integration at any one stage could be regarded as arrested development, a condition which, because it is 'locked in a state of self-defeating equilibrium', requires positive disintegration in order for change to take place. All forms of life manifest either growth or deterioration; growth is a dynamic, not a static process. For this reason, equilibrium as a goal, an end in itself, is questionable. Hopefully, until it is the dynamic, flexible equilibrium of secondary integration, it will be superseded by dis-equilibrium, an indication of 'that-which-questions-its-own-existence.'

Psychoneurosis is a fundamental form of positive disintegration. "Ancient people did not pay much attention to the strange behavior of individuals who displayed an outstanding power of intuition, ability of foresight and prophetic gifts." 1) Indeed, they were the recipients of general admiration, respect and protection. This prophetic gift was associated with mental overexcitability, and acute abilities of concentration and contemplation. Closer examination would likely reveal that some of the outstanding monks were psychoneurotic. Socrates is considered by many experts to have been a serious psychotic and schizophrenic.

In the Middle Ages, when dogmatism and lack of tolerance were widespread, in fact, dominant, many theological figures, as well as others who exhibited oversensitivity, suggestibility, or healing with sorcery, were regarded as being possessed by demons. At this time, alleged witches, and persons who refused to accept rigid systems of good and evil were put on trial. Many of the victims of medieval persecution can be shown to be, through careful analysis, psychoneurotics, "persons endowed with above average independence of mind, creative talents and intuition." 2)

Times have changed, we say. But have they? It is Dr. Dabrowski's contention that we have not moved far from the thorough misunderstanding of psychoneurotic symptoms which prevailed in the Middle Ages. Certainly we no longer believe that they are possessed by devils, but we do regard them as mentally ill. They have been raised to the rank of sick people, people who are regarded, in some way, as either defective or failures. Although hardly any expert takes seriously the hypothesis that psychoneurosis coincides with creativity, there are almost no outstandingly creative individuals who do not exhibit distinct psychoneurotic symptoms.

Since they have been regarded as 'different' for years, the majority of them persecuted, it is no wonder that psychoneurotics are intimidated, and have a tendency to conceal their symptoms. (For personal verification of this statement, ask yourself how many of your symptoms you have freely shared with friends or relatives.)

Fortunately, most psychoneurotics of very high creative ability are very successful at self-education and autopsychotherapy.

Psychoneuroses and nervousness are regarded, then, by Dr. Dabrowski, as positive developmental phenomena, even though this is contrary to the opinion popularly held by many laymen, and also by many physicians, psychologists, and educators. Most forms of Psychic overexcitability, anxiety states, depression, obsession, and existential attitudes are included by the author in the realm under question.

He doesn't stop here. In an effort to shake us out of thinking 'with' our perceptions, our preconceived ideas, and start thinking 'about' them, Dr. Dabrowski states that "Human development is rarely possible without the intervention of some nervous, neurotic, or psychoneurotic dynamisms." 3) The milder psychoneuroses are not only not a sign of mental decay, but are immunological in nature, that is, they guard a person against the more serious psychoses. 'Treatment', then, of psychoneurosis, does not consist of removing the symptoms, but of encouraging the person and promoting his development towards 'autopsychotherapy', which is, just as it sounds, 'self-help'. Assurance that his healthy, though somewhat unhappy state is an indicator of accelerated development, and not a regressed and broken-down condition, is necessary on the part of the psychologist. Many a person in this state would benefit by, more than anything else, the assurance that his condition does not represent the first phase of mental illness.

Disintegration usually implies disease, a term which is regarded negatively by most. The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary definition of this term is: (p.524)

- Disease: 1) Absence of ease, uneasiness; inconvenience, annoyance; disturbance; trouble - 1623; a cause of discomfort - 1712
- 2) A condition of the body, or of some part or organ of the body in which its function are disturbed.
- 3) A morbid condition (of mind or disposition, of the affairs of a community, etc.) an evil affection or tendency - 1509

In this definition, one sees the medieval and the present definition, as well as the one implied by the Theory of Positive Disintegration, being 'ill-at-ease' with oneself. This lack of ease can be observed in 'normal' people during certain periods of development - the age of opposition (2-3 yrs.) puberty, and the climacteric, and under severe stress. It is present in states of nervousness, neurosis and psychosis. It is generally regarded as involution, or a pathological descending to a lower level of functioning. Integration, or being at ease with oneself and one's surrounds, is seen as evolution, or health.

The concept of Positive Disintegration, when disease is regarded as an illness, is thus a paradox. Only when disease is viewed as 'dis-ease', being 'ill-at-ease with one's present self, one's way of relating to the world and himself', can one glimpse what may be positive about the disintegration of an integrated, adjusted structure. The question becomes "adjusted to what?"

One accepts the problems of wars throughout the world, pollution, prejudice against minority groups, to name a few, with apparent ease. The very mention of these subjects is enough to create 'dis-ease', which is brushed aside by most of us as quickly as possible. How healthy is this?

Perhaps surprisingly, the experience of shocks or stress may hasten the process of growth. Accelerated development includes protective forces that guide the individual through this treacherous territory, where he may at times hover on the borderline of psychosis. These forces, which re-shape the individual, can be thought of as a group of internal dynamisms, arranged hierarchically, which are either in co-operation or conflict with the developing personality. The entire process of positive disintegration has to do with the hierarchical development of this 'inner psychic milieu'. Inner harmony, being at-ease-with-oneself, is indicative of the first and last stages of development, the first being pre-conflict, the last post-conflict. The feeling of 'dis-ease' prevails while one journeys through the disintegrative stages. Periodic but temporary feelings of ease, of being at peace, occur. These flashes of what is to come are often all that keeps a person going.

Psychopathology, then, can be divided into parts:

Integration consists of "the incorporation of various functions into a co-ordinated structure, a structure displaying a dynamic equilibrium which counteracts neurotic responses." From the standpoint of the Theory of Positive Disintegration, it is necessary to distinguish various kinds of integrations at lower and higher levels and conceive of disintegration as a basic process of transition from a lower level integration to a higher one. Consequently, disintegrative processes are considered as developmental, that is, - positive and basically healthy, while rigid lower level integrations indicate the opposite of mental health." 4)

"Disintegration consists of the loosening, disorganization or dissolution of mental structures and functions. The term covers a wide range of states from mental disequilibrium, neurosis or psychoneurosis to a split personality in schizophrenia. "Normal" symptoms of disintegration are distinctly and almost universally observable at the time of puberty and menopause, also at times of critical experiences, intensive joy or exaltation, etc." 5)

"Negative or involutinal disintegration is characterized by the presence and operation of dissolving dynamisms and by the lack of developmental dynamisms." 6)

"Positive or developmental disintegration effects a weakening and dissolution of lower level structures and functions, gradual generation and growth of higher levels of mental functions and culminates in personality integration. Its characteristics are the presence and operation of developmental dynamisms and psychoneurotic states with all their defensive and creative forces." 7)

Hypotheses put forth by this theory are:

- 1) Individual human mental development is realized through processes of disintegration of mental functions.
- 2) The dynamisms of multilevel disintegration gradually transform emotions and drives from primitive to higher value drives.
- 3) Through the dynamisms of the inner psychic milieu, there is increased understanding of oneself and others; there is also an increased tendency for conscious direction and control of one's development.
- 4) The concept of mental growth and transition to higher levels of reality involves maladjustment to 'what is' and the tendency to want to adjust to 'what ought-to-be'.
- 5) The closer two individuals are to secondary integration, the greater their agreement in the sphere of values.
- 6) Mental health is defined as the ability for positive development, a conception which is dynamic, not static. Very few people are born lacking the potential for this process.
- 7) The greater the capacity for mental development, the more extensive the states of mental tensions, that is, neuroses, psychoneuroses, or disintegration.
- 8) Periods of accelerated mental growth are periods of particularly intense mental disequilibrium.
- 9) Remarkable individual talents and abilities correlate positively with mental disequilibrium.
- 10) Mentally retarded individuals do not display psychoneurotic syndromes.
- 11) Psychoneurotic dynamisms, particularly those coming into play at a higher level, provide an immunological dynamism against psychoses. (Things that don't kill you outright make you stronger.)
- 12) Only if protective and developmental dynamisms are at work do spontaneous remissions and complete recoveries occur.

Once started on this developmental process, new values are so attractive that the individual would now find life meaningless without them. He must ~~keep reaching~~; but he must also ~~preserve his unity~~.

keep reaching, but he must also preserve his unity. Disintegration of the primitive structures destroys his psychic unity. The loss of the cohesion motivates him to develop himself.

Brun 8) states that about seventy percent of all the patients in social security clinics in Switzerland are neurotics.

"Statistics in France show that eighty percent of all absences from work in factories and workshops are due to neuroses." 9) Many more are probably not reported. Conditions of nervousness, neuroses, and psychoneuroses may be considered as characteristic of societies with a high level of culture.

Positive traits discernible under these conditions are:

- a) increased psychic excitability, and greater sensitivity of emotion and imagination in relation to both one's environment and oneself.
- b) increased tendency for conflict with the external world, but an even greater tendency for conflict with oneself.
- c) psychosomatic sensitivity
- d) regressions to the past in the sense that the individual recalls (and may act out) some of the earlier and happier periods of his life. This may serve to replenish his energy forces, thus enabling him, in a defensive way, to handle future conflicts.
- e) The extreme tiredness and easy fatigability of neurotics is not consistent in the individual. In some activities, we see none of it, while in others it is considerable. While an individual may appear exhausted in relation to 'lower level' activity, he may function well, and without becoming tired, at a 'higher level' of reality.
- f) The night hours are a particularly creative time for some neurotics and psychoneurotics. They seem to have an increased ability for synthesis, meditation, and internal transformation during these hours.
- g) The excessive reactivity of nervous individuals to stimuli, external and internal, does not lead to trembling and masturbation. It is, instead, conducive to the realization of their capabilities, even if, at this stage, only in thought and imagination.
- h) Phobics are not necessarily afraid of something in the external world, and obsessive neurotics are not necessarily fighting against the expression of love directed towards an improper object. The apprehensions expressed, in both cases, are most likely an attitude of positive development expressed rather in terms of hypersensitivity, existential anxiety, and feelings of guilt towards oneself and others.

i) Neurotics and psychoneurotics have a tendency to "fall into sickness" to fly away from the brutality of everyday life, from insensitive people and from unsolved problems.

According to Proust, "all great things we have we owe to neurotics. They are the ones - and not others - who have originated religions and created masterpieces. The world may never know how much it owes them, and especially how much they suffered to produce it. We glory in their divine music, their beautiful paintings and thousand subtleties, but we do not know the price they paid in sleepless nights, crying, spasmodic laughter, asthma - and the everpresent fear of death, which is the worst of all." 10)

I think it would not be difficult to garner evidence for the fact that even the most rigorous, professional scientists, doctors, and researchers find renewed energy and strength in music or art in their leisure hours, a strength which allows them to go on with their difficult life tasks.

Regarding the immunological role of psychoneurotic dynamisms, Dr. Dabrowski states that "it is characteristic of defensive strategy to get acquainted with the enemy, to produce defensive mechanisms corresponding to the aggressive ones. In immunization it is essential to absorb a certain quantity of detrimental bodies or elements, such that the organism, without being overwhelmed by them, becomes cognizant of their action and forms antibodies." 11)

"Similarly, in psychoneuroses, we find some traits of disruption, disharmony, disorder, or psychic disequilibrium which are common to a great majority of psychoses; on the other hand it is a distinctive and essential feature of psychoneurosis that it includes hidden, as it were, the opposite forces, counteracting all the involuntary pathological dynamisms." 12)

"The nuclei of positive developmental hereditary endowment in the form of psychic overexcitability, the inner psychic milieu, general and special abilities and talents, etc., determine, on the one hand, accelerated development through positive disintegration, and, on the other hand, build defensive and prophylactic forces in the form of psychic plasticity, hierarchization of levels of reality and levels of values and the need for the realization of personality and its ideal." 13)

"Moral opinions and moral value judgments as a rule are set apart from descriptive judgments, that is, judgments concerning facts. The latter are considered objective. Evaluative judgments, especially in moral and social problems, are usually regarded as subjective and arbitrary. For this reason, any hierarchy of values is considered subjective and arbitrary." 14)

Dr. Dabrowski claims that value judgments can be objective and that a non-arbitrary hierarchy of values can be established. He discusses, in detail the hierarchy of man's neurophysiological functions, and the hierarchy of mental functions, regarding evolution as the transition from the simplest toward the most complex centers, the transition from more automatic toward more voluntary functions, and the transition from a well-organized lower center to a differently organized, firm, but flexible higher center. (the third point differs from Hughlings Jackson, who sees the change as from a well-organized lower center toward higher, less well-organized centers.) A higher center, in order to be higher, claims Dr. Dabrowski, must be in better control of a wider array of nervous functions.

He also claims that a hierarchy of values accompanies the hierarchy of mental functions, that it involves not only intellectual functions but "above all emotional and volitive functions." 15) He states: "If we consider the evolution of the human species, we may suppose that the evolution of the brain will go in the direction of further development of the frontal lobes while the development of emotional, intellectual and volitive functions will go in the direction of lessening of the psychomotoric functions and increasing the speed and efficiency of mental functions. The complexity of higher emotions will increase, most likely, and there will be closer union of emotional and intellectual functions." 16)

"The developmental program set up through the co-operation of a man's consciousness with his most important dynamisms and his emotional and volitive structure identifies the developmental program of a hierarchy of values as a hierarchy of aims. It is in this way that the empirically established structure of the system of values acquires a normative character." 17)

"In short, the hierarchy of aims is the superstructure of the hierarchy of values; it is the hierarchy of "what ought to be" erected on the underlying structure of "what is". 18)

Summary: Dr. Dabrowski draws the following conclusions, some of which have empirical evidence, some of which remain to be verified through extensive research:

- 1)0 The discovery of lower and higher levels of activity in the nervous system led neurobiologists to differentiate similar lower and higher levels of psychic activity.

- 2) Quantitative scales and measurement of intellectual functions permit a limited, one-sided approach to the study of the mental functions of man. What is necessary to fill in the gap is a similar quantitative scale and the measurement of emotional and instinctive functions. (E.Q.)
- 3) Manifestations of the expression of emotional and emotional-intellectual functions at a higher level are: greater psychic complexity, intense creativity, and a high degree of self-awareness, empathy, and social responsibility.
- 4) Each person who outlines for himself a plan of personal development formulated within that plan a hierarchy of values.
- 5) A group, if it is free, will always seek leaders and advisers who possess higher levels of emotional development and authenticity.
- 6) Higher values (as described) are never present in the mental make-up of the mentally or emotionally retarded. (psychopaths)
- 7) Universally educated and developed individuals, whose education need not be formal, show an agreement between their hierarchies of values and of aims with the hierarchy of values described in this paper.
- 8) People who understand and accept the hierarchy of values protect and nourish within themselves traits that are to the benefit of mankind. (foresight, creativity, empathy, etc.)
- 9) Every person with some common sense seeks out friends, teachers, doctors, and significant others, who represent a higher level of hierarchy of values than his own. This need grows with years of experience accumulated through life's difficulties and suffering. 19)

Herbert Fingarette, a philosopher, talks of our way of being in the world in the language of avowal and disavowal. An individual may state angrily that he is not angry. "...one who disavows an emotion, an intent, a deed, thereby surrenders the authority to speak as one who feels, intends, or does so and so, and he abdicates the authority to speak for, that is to spell out, the emotion, intent, or deed." 20) (as one who disavows his parents' way of life but accepts their food and shelter surrenders the right to speak for the family as a contributing member.)

"One mark of disavowal is the high degree to which the disavowed engagement is isolated from the influence of everything that is avowed. The sophistication and harmoniousness of a personality has for a basis the continuous and mutual influence upon one another of the elements of the avowed. (To me, this sounds like a person at Level IV or V) The disavowed, being relatively isolated from this system, remains proportionately

static and primitive. The 'rigidity' and - in spite of a certain ingenuity in the execution - the irrationality of the disavowed engagement are the familiar manifestations of this isolation." 21)

Fingarette notes that Arthur Murphy, in his chapter "The Moral Self in Sickness and In health," states "once the good is known the rational man cannot but prefer it, for it is as a greater good or lesser evil that he prefers one thing to another insofar as he is rational, and it is as rational that, as a practical agent, he is himself." 22)

Both Murphy and Fingarette see the self as "an achievement, a synthesis." Murphy states "The self is a synthesis which emerges in time, an achievement 'built' by the individual out of materials which are in many ways recalcitrant to such ordering." 23)

The forms of engagement in the world, says Fingarette, acquire citizenship in the community of the self. When they do, they are "significantly transformed by virtue of mutual interaction and interdependence, yet they do not entirely lose their distinctive character or quasi-autonomy." 24)

Avowing one's engagement, then, is to commit oneself to treat something as part and parcel of oneself. Without a person's acknowledging some identity as his own, and disavowing others, "man would be at most a highly co-ordinated, even highly intelligent animal, engaged in a sequence of pursuits in entire and inevitable unselfconsciousness. Such creatures might be numbered or named, and even referred to as 'persons', but they would not have the capacity for the moral or the spiritual life." 25)

Fingarette notes that with the emergence of the person in the individual, one notes an increasing correlation between what is avowed by the person and his actual engagements, a unity of personal identity.

Kierkegaard, states Fingarette, constantly refers to the 'task' of an individual to 'choose one's self.'

"The ethical individual knows himself, but this knowledge is not a mere contemplation..., it is a reflection upon himself which itself is an action, and therefore I have deliberately preferred to use the expression 'choose oneself' instead of 'know oneself.'" 26)

Fingarette : "Thus, for Kierkegaard, the relation relating to its own self is the establishing of a kind of unity, through a will-like, or choice-like movement, in the the disparate engagements of the historically given individual are taken up out of their particularistic immediacy, their

'aesthetic' movement towards mere gratification, and transformed by integration into the unity of the self." 27)

'Transformed by integration' - a term used again and again by Dr. Dabrowski to describe the changes between lower and higher levels.

"But Kierkegaard makes a distinction when he speaks of the choice of the self as the choice of good-and-evil. For the latter phrasing implies that the choice of the self is the acceptance of moral responsibility but not necessarily the choice of the good." 28)

Again, one can note that this sounds remarkably like the person at Level III or IV, exhibiting positive maladjustment and authenticity.

Fingarette notes "The person is constituted by avowal, and if there are not yet avowals, there is not yet a person." 29)

In his work with young delinquents, the great August Aichorn (according to Fingarette) found that, for a certain large class of them, "the first major therapeutic task is, paradoxically, to lead them to become neurotics." 30)

This statement, although seemingly paradoxical to Fingarette, is not paradoxical in the light of the Theory of Positive Disintegration, for it would appear to be the breaking down of the rigid structures of primitive integration and moving to anxiety-laden levels of multilevel disintegration.

"Aichorn's therapeutic technique consisted in untiring attempts to establish a personal, parental relation, and as a consequence to evoke belated but essentially normal forms of engagement which included the guilt reaction." 31)

Dr. Dabrowski thinks guilt is a force working in favor of development. I think that he would agree that it is, if expressed by an individual, an indication that they have passed from the primitive integration to the next level, perhaps less well-integrated and more neurotic, but healthier.

"Also, Aichorn tried to help the young person to learn how he could avow the impulse and the guilt, integrate them as part of the person and his conscience, transform and civilize them rather than being exhausted by warring with them." 32)

Unless avowal is followed by acceptance of responsibility for what is avowed, we have a case of personal agency, but not necessarily moral agency. Unconcern and absence of responsibility is found in numerous persons classed as 'sociopathic personality'. "The ability to act intelligently but without any authentic moral concern is a chief characteristic of the sociopath." 33)

Not all such persons have been classified. According to the Theory of Positive Disintegration, many function well in some of the most influential positions in businesses and universities¹ across the country.

Fingarette concludes his philosophical argument by stating: "The movement to becoming a responsible person has for its condition that the individual become a person, that although accepting oneself is the condition for accepting responsibility, the achievement of this condition is not a sufficient condition for becoming responsible. Though personal identity normally leads imperceptibly to a significant degree of personal responsibility, in some cases it hardly does so at all, and in general the achievement of each varies greatly among individuals." 34)

In an effort to draw together his idea that avowal, or spelling-out one's engagement in the world, and language are somehow tied together, Fingarette researched the latest psychological data and his conclusion was: "More generally, it should be noted that the left hemisphere is associated with the more intellectually elaborate performances of human beings. Calculation, and abstract reasoning of a high order seems generally to be rooted in left-hemisphere functions. Finally, and no doubt closely related to all the preceding, the left hemisphere seems to be dominant with respect to the co-ordination of projects which are themselves defined in complex and abstract intellectual terms rather than in fairly specific motor terms. All of this generally coincides with the thesis that the skill of spelling-out is, more than other forms of language and concept use, intimately associated with the self, the highest order organization and unity of the individual human being." 35)

Dr. Dabrowski notes "According to Janet, emotions have a disintegrating effect on the mind by diminishing its capacity for synthesis." 36) Also, according to Dr. Dabrowski, emotions have considerable effect on the initiation and development of endocrine disturbances, the genesis and development of neurosis and psychoneurosis, as well as on the vegetative system. He considers that there is a very close connection between emotional life, the vegetative system, and the endocrine glands in general, particularly in relation to neuroses and psychoneuroses, saying "We can speak, then, of emotional, vegetative, and endocrine activities which may be either integrating or disintegrating." 37)

Support for this hypothesis comes from the field of neurophysiological psychology. E. Gellhorn (1968) states: "...the appearance of an enormous variety of emotional patterns in civilized man under physiological and pathological conditions suggests that neocortical development and the complexities of individual and social experiences are chiefly involved." 38)

He goes on to say "It is suggested that the integration of somatic and autonomic activities, modified by neurohumours and hormones into ergotropic and trophotropic activities is the basis of the emotions." 39)

"Clinical observations show that mood and emotions depend on the ergotropic-trophotropic balance." 40)

"Apparently a shift in ergotropic-trophotropic balance profoundly alters the physiological as well as the pathological state of mood and emotions." 41)

In a summary of the article, he states: "It has been suggested that emotions are the result of a complex phylogenetic development. At a primitive level two types of responses occur: a) a withdrawal response (illustrated in the spinal animal by a flexor reflex) which, combined with unpleasant feelings and sympathetic discharges, represents an ergotropic reaction; b) a reflex response which leads to increased contact with the stimulus, as in the extensor thrust and the oral reflex. (suckling) The latter may be looked upon as the basis of a trophotropic reaction; feeding, muscular relaxation and sleep become combined. These reactions are present in the newborn and in infants without cerebral hemispheres." 42)

Two important features are added by the cerebral hemispheres: differentiation and sensitization. This is illustrated by the progression from hunger to appetite and from reflexly induced sexual acts to love. "The greatly increased muscular strength, and endurance in states of emotional excitement (rage, flight) may serve for a further analysis of the mechanisms underlying sensitization." 43)

"Although numerous problems remain to be clarified, particularly the relation of these findings to the inhibition of sensory impulses by the reticular formation, the fact that motor and sensory responsiveness is greatly intensified during states of emotional excitement seems well-established." 44)

"The value of enhanced somatic-system responsiveness under conditions of fight or flight is obvious; heightened awareness during danger, increased endurance, and other augmented functions increase an organism's chances for survival." 45)

Gellhorn concludes by stating "It should be remembered, however, that facilitation of the activity of sensory projection and association areas of the neocortex as the result of emotion plays a part in man's highest achievements and in the enrichment of his emotional life." 46)

K.H. Pribram, a neuropsychologist with an interest in philosophy, points out that "Experiments to date show that the organism's input is influenced by the more recently developed portions of the central nervous system, and further, that two reciprocally acting mechanisms of control exist." 47)

"Not only the clarity, but the range of our perceptions seems to be under the control of this brain mechanism." 48)

This may be critical in shaping our view of what is involved in motivation and emotion, since organisms can respond to stimulus input in ways not externalized as behavior.

One of the reactions an organism in a certain situation may have, says Pribram, is to control the input initiated by that situation. He feels that emotion (today often called a 'hang up') is not a haphazard affair, but very likely the operation of a hierarchy of neural servomechanisms or programs.

According to his analysis, one of the dimensions along which one's character may vary is the "extent to which interaction with his environment displays action or passion - is effective or affective." 49)

"Persons as actors effective, normal, and useful in their society have been chiefly considered by social scientists; exploration of the passions has been left to clinical psychologists and psychiatrists. Consequently, emotion, affect, has been suspect; we have come to think of it as somehow unhealthy, abnormal, futile. And yet, the error of this view is obvious. Attributes such as strength of character, creativity and so on are known even by the layman to depend on the non behavioral reactions of a person to his situation. The techniques are at hand; there is no longer any good reason to withhold physiological observations from experiments made to investigate these processes even by social scientists. The objective study of behavior can now be fruitfully complemented by the objective study of such non-behavioral, internal, 'mental' reactions of experimental subjects." 50

Research is now in progress to test and elucidate the concepts in the Theory of Positive Disintegration. It is being supported by a Canada Council Humanities and Social Sciences Grant.

Each subject is asked to take an entire battery of tests, consisting of: rating verbal items in terms of approval-disapproval, choosing favorites from sets of pictures, responding freely to verbal stimuli, etc. One of the most interesting tests is the neurophysiological examination given by Dr. Dabrowski himself, who feels that persons at different levels of development will exhibit different reflex reactions. Subjects are examined for trembling of eyelids, eye blink frequency, pupil dilatation or contraction, oculocardiac reflex, trampling of hands, co-ordination of movements, muscular reflexes, waxen flexibility, cutaneous sensitivity, etc. Dr. Dabrowski emphasizes that the hypothesis formulated on the basis of the neurological examination does not form by itself a sufficient basis for the diagnosis of a developmental level, but it is hoped that this test, in conjunction with the others, will yield fruitful results.

All persons interested in learning more about the theory and the research are invited to come to the Clinical Wing of the new Biological Sciences Building, Room 206, where we will try to answer any questions you may have in relation to the work being done.

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Support for this hypothesis comes from the field of neurophysiological psychology. E. Gellhorn (1968) states "...the physiological and pathological conditions

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