

DYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY  
LESSON V  
LAWS OF DISTRIBUTION II

As we have seen in previous lessons, the logical starting point to begin solving the question we have asked ourselves is the Unconscious mind, because here is the repository of all our life experience merely awaiting the proper approach to it to release its vast potential. That there is vast unused potential in the mind hardly any psychologist disputes, the divergence stems from the approach and the proper framework of the study. One school says we cannot use our potentials because of an inborn incapacity to reach into these unconscious stores. Another denies that such a storehouse of engramatic material exists, or if it does it is not permanent, but evanescent. At the other extreme we have the Jungians who assert that not only our lifetime, but ancestral memories are imprinted and stored as well. But they also feel that access to this collective unconscious as they call it is at best spotty and difficult.

As we go through life, all of us are accumulating a lot of data and experience, both in the form of memories and as engrams or imprints. For various reasons, however, not all that we experience has the same relative value or importance. Some incidents in life depending upon their impact upon our system assume an importance out of proportion to their real importance in the world, but they were extremely important to the individual concerned. Also, some events which our conscious mind did not consider especially important at the time, may have had particular importance to our sub or unconscious minds. Since our communication pathways to these regions is poor to begin with, how can we tell what is important to these faculties?

It is almost certain however that those experiences in life which were particularly traumatic or painful, emotionally disturbing or upsetting are filed in the Unconscious memory banks with red letter tags on them, saying in effect, "this incident has a high-priority, top urgency label, and all the sights, sounds, smells, feelings etc. associated with it are to be put in a special category. This category

must always be given first consideration in case anything like it occurs again." From this time on, receipt of any sound, odor or any feeling which in any way approximates these perceptions, an alarm signal will be transmitted to the organism, alerting it to the possibility of danger in the environment.

Here then is the mechanism of ecpchorization. Whenever a situation later in life reminds the ever-watchful monitors in the unconscious of near duplication of a previously dangerous or threatening situation, the conscious mind is reminded, or if it has forgotten, some of the unpleasant sensations of the original event are brought out of their storage place and reactivated so there will be no doubt as to the seriousness of the situation as the Unconscious sees it. We see therefore, that this process, called ecpchorization or restimulation, while it has some survival value, nevertheless, just because the present sights and sounds may closely echo those of a past moment of very grave danger and pain to the organism, it is not necessarily true, and these reminder mechanisms may sometimes be more of a hinderance than a help.

This does not mean however that a past incident needs to be dangerous in order to activate our ecpchorizing service, other exciting, pleasurable or even neutral events may become stimulated by close resemblance to the past. In these cases however, the effect is usually pleasant, not painful. A certain perfume may remind one of a nice girl; a brilliantly colored autumn leaf may conjure up fond memories of a fall picnic. This is natural and one would hate to part with such a fortunate type of memory mechanism.

On the other hand, one possible explanation for a common complaint called allergy may be ecpchorization of the body's reactions to a previous attack of some illness at a time when a particular pollen, say hay, was present in the air the sick child was breathing. Although the pollen itself was not to blame, because the body tissues were in a high state of irritation, almost any foreign substance in the air might aggravate the condition, thus sensitizing the body's defenses against this particular pollen.

Later on in life, if this person is once again exposed to this particular pollen when his body resistance is low, the original engram is reactivated and a sensitization occurs, resulting in acute body discomfort whenever hay pollen time rolls around once a year. A noxious association, once formed by the body mind, is retained as long as life lasts, or until the reaction is desensitized.

Much is written in psychologic literature about the relative value of pleasure or pain in determining the behavior of an organism. Some writers even speak in terms of the pleasure-pain principle, seemingly assuming that all psychic phenomena can be explained in terms of this "principle". While it is undoubtedly true that avoidance of pain and the seeking of pleasure are important motivating forces in the psychic dynamics, still there are undoubtedly other as important, if not more important factors. For example, many persons will endure all sorts of hardships in order to achieve some self-appointed goal, and not necessarily a pleasurable one.

In general, one could say that those acts which aid the survival of the organism and its offspring usually are pleasurable or at least not painful, while those which are against survival or which are destructive to tissue, are as a rule painful. Pain is a very essential and vital sensation which is necessary for the proper regulation of the organism. There are occasionally cases in medical history of children born without the sense of pain. They seldom live beyond their early childhood because of the careless behavior which they develop in the absence of painful stimuli that would ordinarily result when a kid falls down and damages muscle or bone. Without these necessary cues to safe conduct through the pitfalls all around the growing child, the child becomes more and more reckless until irreparable damage ensues.

In some instances however, pain seems to be related to well-being or survival, in that while, to many women child-birth is painful, it is viewed in retrospect as being "different" from the usual aches and pains which plague us. Still other mothers report that their deliveries

were not painful at all, so there appears to be some kind of psychic component to delivery pains. Perhaps here suggestion plays a large role. In a culture which believes that child-bearing is a painful process, how can one expect any other result with such strong suggestive beliefs current. Perchance it is much like a hypnotized subject who is told that when the hypnotist touches his arm a blister will appear. Sure enough, in a suggestible person the blister does develop, yet there was no hot object to cause such a reaction.

Modern methods of expectant mother training stress the non-painful aspects of childbirth and as a result, fewer women are enduring the agonies they used to suffer. With proper guidance and education in the birth process, more and more women are realizing that birth need not mean what they had been led to believe by hearsay and from mothers who had undergone real ordeals. Many women are benefitting from hypnosis to relieve the pain and anxiety usually associated with birth.

Just as not all painful sensations are harmful to the body, so too, not all pleasurable feelings are beneficial to the organism. Most of us are aware that while eating an extra piece of candy may be immediately pleasurable, it may not feel quite so nice later. Also, certain drugs are extremely pleasant in their initial stages, but, like the opiates, become very unpleasant as the tolerance to them increases. Alcohol too, has a mellow initial effect, but oh that morning after! But by and large we can usually rely upon our taste buds to warn us if we are about to swallow something harmful, and usually something that has a foul odor does not sit well on the stomach.

The marvel of the body is not what gives it difficulties in discriminating between good and bad, but the wonderful mechanisms which it has evolved over the millenia for dealing with the environment and overcoming the hazards of everyday life without conscious control or even an awareness on the part of the person that anything untoward is occurring. The antibodies which rush to sites of bacterial invasion, the white blood cells which attack hostile foreign hosts bent on using the body as a safe home, food

supply and breeding ground, the immune reactions that our bodies bring into play whenever danger threatens are the culmination of millions of years of evolution.

Throughout the long struggle up the evolutionary ladder, man has encountered countless times when his survival was threatened. This kind of situation is called a stress or emergency condition. When we are exposed to such a bad state of affairs, one that calls for drastic action, there are automatic reactions in our body which adjust our heart rate, blood pressure, flow and distribution to vital areas as well as secretion of certain hormones connected with muscle activity and metabolism. We are readied in a few instants for either fight or flight, depending upon circumstances. All this is as it should be, and in normal conditions, this all-out effort is seldom required.

There are unlucky persons whose fight or flight reaction goes into effect without any real emergency being present in the present time environment. They can be merely strolling down a quiet street, when suddenly they are seized with a overpowering feeling of dread. Fear more terrifying than an ordinary one because there is no visible reason for its occurrence. In the surroundings all is serene and peaceful, there is nothing at all to be alarmed about, yet here is this terrible feeling of fear rising without any apparent cause. To distinguish this type of fear feeling from the ordinary real and understandable one, psychologists label it "anxiety". Sometimes it is called "free floating anxiety".

The body reaction to anxiety is identical with its reaction to real fear, and the whole system changes to emergency status. Unlike a real fear however, anxiety may continue on unabated because it is not caused by an external threat, but by undoubtedly an ecphorized feeling of a past threat. This feeling of fear or perhaps it would be better to call it a restimulated or ecphorized fear, masquerades as a real one and the body cannot tell the difference. If this pseudo-emergency status of the body is maintained for any great length of time, it can be very harmful to the organism. All sorts of compensating

mechanisms come into effect and obviously no organ system can be kept on emergency footing for any great length of time without serious consequences to it.

One of the most important problems of clinical psychology is uncovering the cause of this anxiety attack and finding an adequate treatment for it. For if left unchecked, permanent, irreversible changes for the worse occur in the body. The usual treatment for anxiety is tranquilizers, sedatives and reassurance, but unless the underlying cause of the ecphorization of this anxiety is found, it will continue to recur without warning.

Also, as we had indicated earlier, another important psychological problem which needs solution is the high incidence of what is known as psychosomatic illness or pains without any apparent organic cause. Often these pains are more severe than "real" ones, and are usually more distressing both physically and emotionally. Here again, if we postulate the existence of a mechanism that can bring up out of the store of past recordings of pain, some particular pain and present it to our awareness as though it is a real present-time pain, then much of the mystery of psychosomatic aches and pains can be explained. It is merely ecphorization again, but this time instead of playing back an emotion such as fear or anger, pain is played off, much like a needle on a record groove.

In order to be able to solve these and other enigmas of the mind, we must know more about what is called the Margin of Awareness or the level of access that the conscious mind has to the engram stores. Or in other words how good are our communication pathways and our controls over these communication pathways to our deep-lying, but high-fidelity storehouses of knowledge and experience. To be able to reach these levels selectively and deliberately, not compulsively and at random is the goal or aim of our inquiry. We need to know how our level of awareness is affected by various factors and influences, and what if anything can be done to raise this margin of awareness to a more usable and reliable status. To phrase it in other terms we seek the laws governing the imprinting and recov-

ery of those recording which were made in our past experience by our unconscious mind. We also wish to know what conditions are necessary for optimum utilization of these stores and what interferes with our volitional access to them. In a sense, we ask, why is it that a hypnotist can place our playback needles upon the proper grooves and get a correct playing back of a desired experience of almost any type, while when we try to recall some important piece of data, either we get a vague recollection or in some instances wrong data.

When one is considering reform in any field, be it economics, sociology, politics or what have you, there has to be in the mind of the reformer some ideal or goal toward which to strive. Without an ideal or even an unattainable goal in view, reform cannot be really significant or meaningful. I have set as my ideal in psychology the concept of a free psyche, one which is not bound by the narrow viewpoints and prejudices of which almost all of us are now shackled. I envision a free psyche as one who can do by himself, those things which hypnotism and other researches into the mind's wonders have uncovered slumbers there merely awaiting the right approach to unleash its powers and talents.

The assumption of a free psyche carries with it the opposite idea of a bound or fettered psyche. This is the usual case with all of us, and unless someone is really using a large part of his psychic potential it is safe to classify him in the bound or shackled category. Probably 99.99 % of us are in the bound category, using but a small fraction of our available stores of data or our magnificent computer facilities for dealing with them. A person whose psyche was free would be in a class by himself, a sort of supergenius, very likely different from our present imagining of how he would be like. At any rate, even though such a condition is an unattainable goal, and perhaps no one would want to be such a supergenius anyway, still, the possibility exists that such a goal may become achievable in the future as research into the mind and its function expands and begins to solve some of the above problems that so vex us now.

To refer back to our economic analogy, the Conscious mind is comparable to the laborer of the mind, and the quality of the natural resources he has access to determine the efficiency of his labor and the quality of the finished product. A laborer who works on high quality land containing high-purity raw materials can do a much better job faster than a laborer who is forced to make do with inferior sites containing contaminated raw materials. So too, our Conscious mind cannot be expected to be able to decide proper courses of conduct or arrive at logical considerations if he only has access to vague, highly abstracted data available to him from his low capacity but fast access memory stores.

Just as "No Trespassing!" and "Keep Out!" signs along with lock-outs of labor from productive sites impoverishes and degrades labor, so too, being barred for some unknown reason from our own highly productive data stores impoverishes our mental apparatus and prevents us from making full use of our analytical faculties.

The french have a term "idiot-savant" which they use to describe a person who is otherwise a moron or an idiot who can nevertheless perform wonderful feats of memory. These unfortunates can have tremendous powers of calculation or some specialized skill at which they excell, but on the whole cannot take care of themselves in regard to the simplest things, such as dressing themselves or eating. A moron possessed of total recall is like a very unskilled menial laborer working on land suitable for men possessing the highest skills which this particular land needs to realize its full potential. Mathematical history is full of stories of one-track geniuses who could perform prodigious feats of memory and calculation. Yet their accomplishments were in the nature of parlor tricks, they were not thebrists or innovators for they could not discover anything new, they could merely echo what others had taught them.

So we see that when the psyche is not barred from its high-fidelity imprint stores, even though a person be almost without any analytical faculty whatever, still his performance is far superior to the ordinary run-of-the-



mill human being. Imagine what a really intelligent person could accomplish with such a talent as total recall. Yet we know that our psyche's access to these engramic stores are severely curtailed. If only we could free our psyche from its bound state and retain its analytical powers, what wonders we could accomplish.

But, since our psyches are bound and even though we have the use of very efficient computer circuits and very well developed mechanisms for learning skills and crafts, still it falls far short of what it would be if it had access to the Unconscious storehouse. But let us consider for a moment how we wish to have access to these full-range memory recordings.

As mentioned before in the case of the woman who was run over but a hit and run driver, when we seek to recall a past moment of pain or unconsciousness, we run the risk of opening up a pathway into our conscious mind not only the desired data contained in the incident, but also the undesirable pain and distress that accompanied it.

Since some persons have a greater tolerance of pain or distress than others, it would follow that not everyone has equal facility in probing the depths of their Unconscious minds. The differences between people in relation to their access to their engram stores we shall call their Margin of Awareness. This simply means the level of controlled access to the memory banks. Those who have a high margin of awareness, will be close to full recall, those whose access is very poor or extremely limited have a low margin of awareness.

Therefore a person with a high margin of awareness has discovered a way, even though he may not be consciously aware of it, to enter into his storage warehouse and select out of its highly charged and painful contents only those pieces of data which he wants and can ignore or neutralize the unpleasantnesses of those data which may surround the desired information chronologically. In effect it reminds one of a cat who can very deftly snatch a nicely toasted chestnut out of an extremely hot fireplace without burning his paw.

A question which often arises when someone finds out he has such a wonderful memory store of imprints, postulates feelings and emotions, is how far back in time do these recordings extend. Do they stop at infancy, birth, prenatal, conception, pre-conception, or where? Is there genetic transmission of important data, or is there a shared collective unconscious ala Jung? If there is genetic or ancestral transmission of data, is all of our ancestors life experience handed on to us or is there some selecting of high-lights.

Many people when given the newer chemical drugs called psychedylic agents, such as LSD, mescaline, psilocybin, etc. claim that they not only relived lives of people in the past, but they underwent all the accumulated experience of all life forms from the simplest one-celled animals to complex multicelled animals, through the whole evolutionary ladder up to man. So real and detailed do their visions, feelings and experiences seem to them that they have difficulty describing their experiences. Persons who ordinarily are sober, staid citizens describe how they felt as worms, dinosaurs, lions and zebras. Still others tell of fantastic adventures in far parts of the world, other planets, as people of different tribes, races, etc.

Most cautious scientists are reluctant to admit such verbal descriptions of past lives and past existences are real and treat them as fantasies, wish-fulfilments, suggestion or self-deception. It is also true that not all persons who take these drugs experience anything like the transcendent episodes described above. For some, the drugs produce nightmarish visions and quite a few people have had to have the experience stopped by a counterdrug. Nevertheless, we have not yet been able to answer the question of how far back in time our unconscious store-room goes, current medical research has evidence that it does extend beyond birth into the prenatal period, but further than that, few doctors are willing to commit themselves. Freud in his earlier works reported what he called "womb fantasies", in which patients without being asked, began to describe feelings similar to those which one would only be able to feel inside the womb. Freud tended to

regard much of what his patients told him as being produced by unconscious fantasy processes, and not being raw, unchanged data recorded during the past life of the person.

If scientific inquiry relied upon voting or the counting of noses as being the criteria for the truth or falsity of some hypothesis, the overwhelming majority of most of the world's people, in the past and now have believed in life after death, reincarnation and a host of other ideas about ancestral memories, astral projection, spirit phenomena etc. In order to start somewhere in throwing off old ideas, superstitions, prejudices, etc, scientists decided to reject everything of the old metaphysicians, philosophers, prophets and start out afresh, without any unproved assumptions, and by patient gathering of evidence, seek the truth, no matter how unpleasant or upsetting it may be. Before they will accept ESP or Extra-Sensory Perception, they require even more evidence than needed to prove the existence of the atom.

Without answering the question of how far back in time our unconscious recordings extend, as this is a very hotly contested point of controversy, let us see if we can outline the Law of Recall. Regardless of the extent of our recorded stores of imprinted engrams, nevertheless our access or lack of access to them is the important consideration. With no recall or memories to guide us through life, we could not live very long, with limited access, our lives are more or less full, rich and satisfying. To carry on the normal activities of everyday life, a bare minimum of access to these memory stores is necessary. Beyond a certain point any increase in recall facilities takes on the character of a luxury or a rare gift only available to a few lucky ones, endowed with eidetic memory or total recall. Most of us, however can get by with a so-called normal or fairly reliable recall mechanism. In fact there is evidence that too much recall may not be the undisguised blessing that it may seem at first hearing. There are many things, for instance, which I would like not to remember, and have spent quite a bit of psychic energy trying to forget. Surely to be able to

forget, ignore or disregard certain data which we have in our minds is as necessary to proper functioning of the organism as a good memory. Without the ability to discriminate between desirable and undesirable data, between vital facts and trivial details, our minds would be greatly handicapped in its task of deciding between choices, goals and actions.

Therefore, the Law of Recall must be related to the ability of the mind to have controlled, volitional access to its memory store as well as to the unconscious storehouse of recalls. There has to be selectivity as well as quality, ability to disregard material as well as to dig important details out of a mass of unimportant trivia or highly charged and painful surrounding material.

If we postulate the existence of a playback function in the mind which is concerned with reproducing this recorded data and handing it out on command or need, the degree that this faculty has access to the storehouse is a measure of awareness. The Margin of Awareness is the boundary line between material that is accessible and that which is not available to the consciousness.

When the Margin of Awareness is high and the quality and accuracy of memories and recalls are good, a person can have excellent control over his memorization process and learning is easy. When the Margin of Awareness is low, and access to the memory stores is unreliable, spotty or accomplished with great difficulty, control of the learning process is difficult if not impossible.

In summation, the Law of Recall states that the degree of Recall depends upon the Margin of Awareness, rising as it rises, falling as it falls. Or that our ability to play back past recorded data depends upon how well we can explore our unconscious storehouse of high-fidelity recordings without triggering unwanted, highly charged or painful stimuli which is also recorded along with the useful and valuable data. Later we shall consider some of the ways in which the Margin of Awareness can be raised or lowered at will.