

unconscious.

Freud psychosexual stages of personality development

Freud proposed that children pass through a series of psychosexual stages during which the id's pleasure-seeking tendencies are focused on a specific pleasure. These sensitive areas of the body are called erogenous zones. According to him, deprivation or overindulgence can arise during any of these stages, resulting in fixation. Fixation is a state of arrested psychosexual development in which instincts are focused on a particular psychic theme or area.

The oral stage - 0 to 18 months

During this stage, the infant's sensual pleasure focuses on sucking, biting, chewing, swallowing and crying. The pleasure centers on the mouth. Excessive gratification or frustration of oral needs can result, later in life, in fixation on oral activities, such as being a glutton, tongue-sucking, chewing sweets, excessive oral hygiene, smoking, drinking profusely and nail biting.

The anal stage - 18 months to 3 years

During this stage, the bowel and bladder retention and elimination become a source of gratification. During toilet training, the child is first faced with an attempt to control a biological urge. Harsh toilet training can be due to compulsion, overemphasis on cleanliness, obsessive concerns with orderliness and insistence on rigid rules and rituals. Laxity in toilet training results in messy, negative and dominant adult personality traits such as indecency, rudeness or being gullible and bed-wetting.

The phallic stage - 3 to 6 years

During this stage, pleasure shifts to the genitals. Boys seek genital stimulation and develop both unconscious sexual desires for their mother, and jealousy and hatred for their father whom they consider a rival. This feeling arouses strong guilt and fear that the father might punish the child by castrating him (castration anxiety). This situation involving the boy's love for the mother and hostility towards the father is known as the Oedipus complex. Girls, on the other hand, experience what is called, the Electra complex where they discover that they lack the penis (penis jealousy) and blame their mother for the lack of that organ. She therefore becomes attached to the father figure. Children resolve these conflicts by repressing the conflicts and by identifying with the rival parent of the same sex. This process is called identification. Children imitate the activities done by this parent such as dressing. Identification helps children to possess the opposite sex parent indirectly or vicariously and also helps form the superego as children internalize the parent's values and moral beliefs. This stage results in the development of gender fixation and leads to flirtation, masturbation and expression of sexual desires.

The latency stage — 6 to 12 years

During this stage, children's sexuality is dormant, they associate mainly with peers of the same sex. At this stage, children are willing to pay attention to instructions, take advice, master tasks and concentrate on their academics.

The genital stage - 12 to 18 years)

This is a stage during adolescence when sexual feelings are very strong and are directed towards