

PSYCHIATRY

Man Given Nursing Bottle

Grown people have sucked on baby bottles to recall infant experiences with the result of cured insanity that was caused before the talking age.

➤ A GROWN MAN sucks for hours on a nursing bottle to recall suppressed experiences when he was a baby.

This is the latest cure for insanity.

It really works. The manic patient, "raving mad" as an ordinary person would say, regained normal behavior.

Dr. Carl A. Whitaker, Emory University psychiatrist, told the American Orthopsychiatric Association at Cincinnati of the amazing case.

The patient was a 26-year-old industrial worker whose mental sickness was the manic type. He was overexcited and overtalkative with the noisy behavior of manic patients. Every kind of psychiatric treatment, including shock therapy, had been given this patient without effect.

Then the doctors gave him a baby's nursing bottle to suck. He took it and promptly had a "most amazing explosion" of emotional and physical excitement which left him exhausted. He was given the bottle every day for a week. On the eighth day he said, "Well, I'm not a baby any more. I don't need the bottle."

Within one week he was well. Two other grown persons and several children have been helped to get over mental sickness by the use of nursing bottles, though their cases were not so dramatic.

The use of this nursing bottle method depends on the psychiatric principle that frightening experiences very early in childhood are often the cause of mental illness or breakdown later. Psychoanalysis, hypnotism and other methods are used to help the patient recall these experiences which have been buried deep in his subconscious mind. Once he has recalled them he is helped to see how they affected his life and how he can be free of the buried fear that was driving him crazy.

If the fright happened before the child was old enough to know words and talk, he would not be able later to recall the experience, Dr. Whitaker reasoned. He could not tell about the fright if he felt it before he knew the word for it. This might explain failure of patients to recover under psychiatric treatment.

So Dr. Whitaker decided to put the

patient into a situation where he could relieve the experience without words. Sucking to get food is one of the earliest activities in life and one associated with feelings. Use of the nursing bottle followed this line of reasoning. With its aid patients relive the feelings of fright and stress and strain of babyhood and are able to release the emotional tension these caused. With the release of the tension, they are able to shed their unconsciously babyish attitudes and to feel and behave like normal, grown persons.

Dr. Whitaker says he is coming more and more to the point of using the nursing bottle method all the time for all mentally sick patients.

He is even considering a new type of chair for patients during psychiatric interviews. The chair would be one in which the patient can curl up under a cover and in darkness to get as near as possible to the situation and feeling

of a baby in its mother's womb. The position unconsciously taken by one of his grown-up patients when she was first given the nursing bottle treatment suggested this.

A little colored boy who developed epilepsy gave Dr. Whitaker one clue to the nursing-bottle method of treating insanity. The child at the age of seven stopped talking completely. At 10 years, he had gone so far back toward babyhood that he was picking up and putting into his mouth everything he could lay hands on, just as babies do when they are first learning what objects are. Observing this child suggested the use of the nursing bottle for child victims of mental illness.

Science News Letter, March 1, 1947

PHYSICS

Radar-Like System Uses Supersonic Vibrations

➤ A RADAR-LIKE system, but using supersonic vibrations instead of radio waves, detects ships, airplanes, tanks, etc. This now-it-can-be-told wartime device is the invention of Dr. L. W. Chubb of Pittsburgh, who has assigned rights in his patent, No. 2,416,155, to the Westinghouse Electric Corporation.

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HOOK HAND—The new artificial hand, developed by the U. S. Army Medical Department, is shown in this U. S. Army Signal Corps photograph. It is the best that can be provided from a utility standpoint since it operates more effectively for the amputee and in addition looks like a natural hand.