

PSYCHIATRY

Make Alcoholics Face Facts

Alcoholics lie about their drinking without knowing it. Parents often encourage delinquency, and a blood factor in schizophrenia has been found.

IN ORDER to cure chronic alcoholism, it is first necessary to find some way to make the patient face the fact that he is an alcoholic, Drs. Robert A. Moore and Thomas C. Murphy of the University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor, told the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J.

An alcoholic is often accused of lying because he denies the obvious reality of his uncontrolled drinking. But actually he is not conscious that he is lying, the psychiatrists explained.

It is psychologically vital to the patient to go on drinking and so he must fend off all awareness of the harm it is doing to him. He is reluctant to admit that his drinking is a problem and unwilling to accept any help.

The psychiatrists reported a study of 100 male alcoholic veterans for an average of three and a half years after discharge from the hospital. At that time 14 were significantly improved, 21 slightly improved, 33 unimproved, seven in other hospitals, seven dead, nine in jails and nine lost.

The degree of improvement of the patient was found to be significantly related to the degree to which he had become able to face the fact of his alcoholism. Success with Alcoholics Anonymous, the remedy Antabuse, or the state hospital programs is

related to effectiveness in diminishing the patients' denial of their problems.

Since only a small percentage of alcoholics are able to accept any treatment approach, new techniques must be devised to combat effectively the tendency of the patient to deny his alcoholism, the psychiatrists urged.

Science News Letter, May 21, 1960

Parents and Delinquency

A STUDY of 400 juvenile delinquents in a mental hospital showed with "regular frequency" that the parents unconsciously fostered the delinquent behavior in their own children, Drs. Donald J. Carek, Willard J. Hendrickson and Donald J. Holmes of the University of Michigan Medical Center told the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J.

The parents show an addiction to the child's delinquency that is much like drug addiction. They even suffer acute "withdrawal symptoms" when psychiatric treatment results in the child's abandoning his delinquent behavior.

Then the parent is likely, unconsciously, to find excuses to interrupt the treatment or place obstacles in the way of its progress.

This unconscious interference by parents is one of the major difficulties in treating

the child and his parents, the psychiatrists reported.

They said that as the method for treating delinquent adolescents improves, it becomes necessary to develop more effective treatment for his frantic parents suffering from sudden withdrawal of the unconscious satisfaction provided by the child's behavior.

Science News Letter, May 21, 1960

Blood Factor in Psychosis

HOPE THAT THE FUTURE may provide a way of preventing or possibly even curing the common mental disease schizophrenia was seen in a report to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J.

"Steps Towards the Isolation of a Serum Factor in Schizophrenia" is the modest title of the report by Drs. Charles E. Frohman, Elliot D. Luby, Garfield Tourney, Peter G. S. Beckett and Jacques S. Gottlieb, all of the Lafayette Clinic in Detroit, Mich.

The research team studied chronic schizophrenic patients under insulin stress and found a defect in metabolism which affects the conversion of chemical to kinetic energy.

Further research indicated that the defect may be caused by a substance in the blood of the patient. If this substance in the blood is a partial cause of schizophrenia, this finding would make it possible for physicians to spot the future schizophrenic before he develops the disease. Thus, the physician might be able to prevent the disease's development, psychiatrists believe.

Science News Letter, May 21, 1960

PSYCHOLOGY

Russian Animals Trained To Signal Body Condition

RUSSIAN scientists were reported to have the know-how for training space animals to send messages about their physical conditions to ground stations.

The Russian know-how was described at a meeting at Columbia University by Dr. Gregory Razran, chairman of the department of psychology at Queens College. He has been analyzing Soviet research under a grant from the National Institutes of Health.

He said the Russians can condition animals to perform certain acts when their blood pressure or rate of breathing changes. He said a dog in a satellite could be conditioned to push a lever or button with his paw to signal his physical condition.

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PSYCHOLOGY

Four Years in College Changes a Student

FOUR YEARS in college change the behavior of students considerably and the change is in the direction favored by teachers. This was found when Drs. Ralph M. Rust and James S. Davie of Yale University measured the behavior of students on a behavior inventory. The inventory contains 220 items, making up 17 scales that cover a wide range of behavior.

Science News Letter, May 21, 1960



BRAIN-BEHAVIOR—Dr. James Olds of the University of Michigan reported on the effect of electric stimulation of various areas in the brain on the behavior of rats. His report was carried by closed circuit television directly from Ann Arbor, Mich., to the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J.