

PSYCHIATRY

Healing When Depressed

Depression of manic depressives is thought to be caused by pampering. Babies with sleeping difficulties tend to have same problem later in life, and sniffing can be psychological.

WHEN PERSONS who suffer from manic-depressive illness fall into a depressed state, they are not getting worse but are healing, a psychiatrist reported to the American Psychoanalytic Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J.

Dr. Philip Weissman, a psychiatrist of the Affiliate Staff of the New York Psychoanalytic Treatment Center, said he had found that in certain cases mania seemed to be the basic illness.

Manic-depressive illness, also called cyclothymia, has generally been considered as having two phases—mania and depression. Depression has been thought the basic, more serious, part of the illness. Mania has been regarded as the end of a manic-depressive sequence.

Classical psychoanalytic concept tells that before the development of this illness, in the infantile stage, one depression sets the pattern for later ones.

Dr. Weissman said that early development in the cases he studied showed that the manic patterns of behavior stemmed from mothers being "over-good" to the child.

He said that depression comes along when the idea of pleasure from "too good" treatment by mother is denied by the world of cold reality. As a result, the depression, which is a strengthening of the ego, or self, develops.

He added that psychoanalytical therapy is more effective during the depressive period.

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Babies Sensitive to Sound

SOME BABIES who have difficulties in sleeping, especially at night, are very sensitive to sound, it was reported to the American Psychoanalytic Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J.

Through contact with parents, Drs. Mildred H. January of Hartford, Conn., and Betty Huse of Washington, D. C., studied the disturbance of sleep in babies aged 11 to 14 months.

They found that these babies were extremely sensitive to stimulation of the senses and proved to be of very superior intelligence when tested later in childhood and adolescence.

All the babies with sleeping difficulties had also had feeding difficulties since shortly after birth.

Another factor found in all the cases was that the sleep disturbance in the babies first occurred after mother and child had been separated over one night.

A 10 to 15 year follow-up of the children seemed to show a tendency toward re-

curing psychological problems including inability to sleep.

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Psychological Sniffing

TO A PSYCHOANALYST, a patient's sniff means more than the need for a handkerchief.

Dr. Jack Sheps, psychiatry instructor at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, told the American Psychoanalytic Association meeting in Atlantic City, N. J., that exploration of the patient's associations to his nasal congestion will do much to undo his lifelong clinging to infantile fears. This new information is important in treating certain neurotic states and some schizophrenic cases.

Dr. Sheps said there is a close correlation between the nose and the mouth and thus sensations in the nose can revive infantile recollections. This helps patients gain awareness of unresolved fears stemming from early experiences, the instructor said.

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BACTERIOLOGY

Test for Strep Throat

A QUICK new method to test for streptococci in infected throats was reported to the Society of American Bacteriologists meeting in Philadelphia. The new test may protect thousands of persons from rheumatic fever, which strikes only after a strep infection.

Earle K. Borman, director of the laboratory division of the Connecticut Department of Health, Hartford, said that with the method the Health Department Laboratories are making identifications within 24 hours after specimens are received.

The basic principle of the method is not new, Mr. Borman said. The original work was done in 1950 by Drs. A. H. Coons and M. N. Kaplan of the Harvard University Medical School.

But identification of the streptococci causing rheumatic fever by the Coons-Kaplan method was complicated by the fact that several types of organisms, including staphylococci, had the same fluorescent appearance when viewed in a microscope.

In Connecticut the new method was worked out by Mr. Borman, John J. Redys and Dr. Martin R. Ross. They used a culture medium in which staph will not multiply and in which a non-fluorescent agent is used to prevent the reaction of streptococci other than the Group A,



MINIATURIZED INSTRUMENTS

—Simultaneous recording of body functions is possible with the instruments worn on the belt of the flyer. Developed by scientists at the Boeing Space Medicine Section, Seattle, Wash., the instrument belt is adaptable to space flight.

which may be a forerunner of rheumatic fever.

The rapid, relatively simple technique can be adopted by public health and medical laboratories in other states, Mr. Borman said, so that physicians will be provided with the information they need for more effective treatment and control of rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease.

If the dangerous Group A streptococci are thoroughly eradicated with sulfa drugs, penicillin or other antibiotics, rheumatic fever can be prevented.

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Hybrid Bacteria

TWO KINDS of bacteria have been shown able to mate and produce hybrid offspring in the intestines of mice, it was reported to the Society of American Bacteriologists meeting in Philadelphia.

Herman Schneider of Walter Reed Army Institute of Research said he created conditions in the intestine of a mouse in which both parent types could multiply in large numbers. He was able to recover the offspring, living proof that the cross-mating had actually taken place.

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