CHAPTER VIII

CONTROL FUNCTION

The period of "adolescence" offers perhaps the last opportunity of setting right any misdevelopments which have taken place earlier. Normally little is done until a breakdown occurs. In other words, the SENSOR must provide timely and accurate feedback to the control function operating on the adolescent.

Generally failures in adjustment result in those adolescents who are ill prepared for life and antisocial in purpose. Interpersonal relationships especially with teachers, counsellors, responsible adults and youth leader can effectively assist these adolescent's normal development. Adults must understand and tolerate their temporary regression. Parents and adults alike should grasp and allow for, the dynamism of normal psychological growth whenever they are faced with conflict in multiplex social demands to help them out of regression or fixation. An approach to adolescent's reactive behaviour through different channels - the corelation between their experience and the changes in family and extrafamiliar relationship - will result in an understanding of the intrinsic processes that occured during early adolescence.

The adolescents with social problems need constant practice in social skills and be permitted to experiment in an extrafamilial social medium without too much adult participation or supervision for giving practice in living with others, to accept responsibility to act out their infantile pattern and to reactivate re-
relationships both within and outside the family to attain new and more mature adaptations. Through trial and error method the adolescent learns to modify the aims and objects of his feeling life and advances toward social maturity. Parents especially the mother must be prepared to release their children to work out their own salvation, at the cost of deprivation and an undermining of the emotional balance within the family group; yet ready with affectionate understanding, help and a timely word of encouragement when life seems to be hard.

Adults must be careful to inculcate "the right moral values" in children. The adolescent must be helped in the formation of definite ideals and philosophy of life. Much conflict could be avoided by the adolescent if he had a clear code of principles and ethics by which he would live. Then when an issue involving right or wrong confronts him, he can settle it with little or no anxiety.

At this period of life visual and auditory impacts are very powerful in adolescent's minds. They avidly gather impressions from the surroundings without the benefit of a mature mind. It is for this reason society should give sufficient attention to them.

Our country must have an extensive system of controls and restrictions. Adults must protect the young people from directly corrupting influences—of alcohol, pornographic writing, painting and obscene cinema as such.

Films about LSD or other controversial subjects, at least in the mind of the beholder should be screened.
W. D. Wall expressed that the older generation must see that worthy materials are at hand, worthy objects for identification, worthy causes to serve and great ideals and that the fundamental needs of the developing mind are not frustrated.

Whenever questions on sex arise full and unemotional information must be imparted, to the growing child to prevent shocks and struggles to which ignorance give rise, and the eradication of wrong attitudes.

Mere knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of sex without having a well adjusted emotional attitude is not enough; right emotional training for the maturing of right attitude in this field is most important and most difficult and cannot be achieved, unaided. The sentiment of sex is influenced first by the home. He needs plain straightforward talk at the right time. He needs private instruction from an adult whom he trusts. Physical activity and aesthetic impulses are to be encouraged. Sexual difficulties can be sublimated in all sorts of creative activity.

Next to the home, the school is the most important shaper of personality. The school should provide the kind of experiences that will give the students a feeling of selfworth and self acceptance so that projection of blame and of negative characteristics will not be necessary.

School can stimulate the kind of careful thinking that dispels irrational prejudice and restrictive stereotypes. The example set by the teacher is of great importance.
Most schools provide overcrowding classroom and a kind of mass teaching. This makes individual attention to the need and potentialities of each child difficult.

The syllabus is also crowded. New subjects have been added, little has been dropped. With adolescent's eyes on competitive examination that leave little time for music, creative work, dramatic work, painting, discussion and even physical education essential to healthy growth - healthy emotional and mental development of all children because they give an outlet through which they work out their own emotional problems.

Interest in music, art and in literature, taste for reading must arise which provide them with relaxations of leisure as their companions in future years and they lose something of their loneliness. These interests are of great importance to development which not only indicate future vocation but give the material from which the adolescent will build a satisfying and personal interpretation of life, - moral, ethical or religious. In recent years the therapeutic value of handicraft as a means of treatment of the emotionally disturbed is recognized. Inclusion of 'work experience' in the syllabus has a sufficient justification though in most of the schools the subject suffer from insufficient guidance.

Organized group games and systematic exercises ensure harmony of muscular co-ordinations. Hard physical games may be helpful for expenditure of excess physical energy. It is a remedy for introvert in mild cases.
Wall says "physical, practical and vocational training as will enable them to develop their various aptitudes and capacities and will prepare them for the responsibilities of citizenship". This will depend upon a clear visualization by them of the goals of individual development on a knowledge of the laws governing growth in all its aspects.

Wandering or excursions apart from serving as satisfaction to adolescent's powerful drives, they are part of the process of psychological weaning from the domination of the parents.

Education must concentrate upon educating a personality. School, home and community must somehow be brought into a clear integration. Education must be able to answer the philosophic question, remove superstition which arise at that period.

Early adolescents cannot appraise carefully their own potentialities or to survey realistically the opportunities which exist in the world of occupation. Education must make their life more valuable and meaningful, arouse their enthusiasms and release their personality into purposeful activity. Thus the raising of the school leaving age will do something by the delay it imposes, to make vocational choice a little more likely to be successful.

The wise educator will seek to direct the admiration away from the hero worshiper as a person to the desirable qualities he embodies. Education should not impose a code but offer techniques and guiding principles for experiment.
One more object of education should be to give the intellectual security which comes from a realization of the power and limitations of one's own intelligence. The psychological climate of the school is also an important factor in the personality development of the individual. Through the lessons and through the interpersonal relationships of teacher and students, it may foster an understanding of people and situations.

Home, school, community and club can all contribute in complementary fashion to develop and build up habitual modes of behaviour. These have a part to play in educating the adolescents through books, music, art through vital experience and the example of fine personalities and through the satisfaction of fundamental needs.

Communities must run youth clubs and sports clubs. An adolescent is on the threshold of independent life and burns for recognition, his need to be of value to someone or to some organization is very strong. He is anxious to be accepted as useful. He must feel to be needed must achieve a sense of personal worth which is the very foundation of security.

Hence any group or organization which makes the adolescent feel himself necessary to others is in a strong position to influence his growth and outlook on life. The values of a good club to the development of adolescents cannot be over estimated. It gives opportunities for unsupervised activities, responsibilities and the chance for informal education.
Youth organizations provide leisure, occupations and constructive activities for adolescents. Yet it is not practical to expect the efforts of club leaders and adolescents themselves to provide in the meagre time all the training demanded by that period.

Group discussion carried on with members just large enough to give a certain amount of impersonality to what is said and yet small enough to remain intimate with inclusion of a leader can be made to serve a therapeutic purpose. The leader acts as a reference point and must tactfully steer the conversations. In this way many adolescent preoccupations and sources of conflict can be brought into the open without alarming self consciousness or provoking a defensive behaviour. Not the particular method adapted but the attitude of sympathy and understanding is essential for effective assistance. Sincerity, conviction, enthusiasm in adults are of incalculable importance to win the affection and interest of adolescents.

It is of great help to the adolescent even to know that his troubles and liability to error are shared by others of his own age and understood by an older friend.

Adolescents need seek affection of a trusted adult and acceptance by contemporaries. Such attitudes present in the adults in the environment will help much to diminish the anxieties, fears and conflicts until the techniques to protect himself from the blows of social life have been acquired.
Since the adolescent is unconsciously seeking idealized substitute for his parents, one working out of the attitude of dependence is the dawning of religious consciousness.

There are some adolescents in whom behaviour difficulties are so marked or disturbances in adjustment persist in force for few years that the skilled attention of a psychologist is essential either as a preventive or as a therapeutic measure. Sometimes for fear of public exposure the children are not referred for consultation with professionals. It is a legitimate cause for concern whether the adolescent requires merely reassurance or extensive professional treatment. Most can be helped to deal with their conflicts by knowledge of the causes, and by a manipulation of the environment to channel out their emotion and to provide security. Adults understanding of emotional conflict help children to recover from the danger of becoming 'fixated'.

Since we have little control over our genes, and much more control over our actions, there are more grounds for pride or shame concerning our actions and social impact rather than heaping the blame for undesirable traits, or the pride over desirable ones on inheritance.

Difficulties of adjustment in adolescence arise both from hereditary reasons and the environment. If the adolescent problem stemmed strictly from an inherited defect which is unmodifiable, the view that special training for the mentally retarded would be of no value in helping them to adjust more successfully.
For extreme environmentalism all children should be treated alike in school. Then differences among children's abilities would be attributed to the way they were raised, and individual differences in capacity might not be recognized at all, except as a mistake of the culture.

The argument remains that the appropriate application of selective educational methods - separate programs for gifted and for retarded individuals should exist. In India Novodaya group of schools are emphasizing it.

Hollingworth (1949) has stressed "Many problems of adjustment in adolescence hinge on moral dilemmas. Improved insight into the meaning and origin of moral obligations may contribute effectively to attainment of happiness".

Hurlock (1955) pointed out moral training consists not only of teaching the individual the moral codes of the group but also of instilling in him high regard for these codes, so that he will be willing to accept them and control his behaviour accordingly and thus making external restraints unnecessary.

They must know what values to accept to meet the problems of conflicting moral values they are faced with and then have sufficient experience in meeting such conflicts, so that he will be able to do so when he is independent of adult guidance and help.

The child may require skilled guidance to formulate a derived set of values acceptable to himself and to the cultures with which he interacts.
It is, therefore an extremely important phase of educational guidance that appropriate personal values be transmitted. These personal values (values of the home and neighbourhood) are powerful forces in adolescents' behaviour and should not be underestimated.

"Conscience" controls the behaviour of the individual. It means "the voice of the herd". It is trained and is dependent upon the mores of the culture in which the individual grows up. The important part of the moral training of the child is the development of high regards for the mores of the group. This is called the conscience building.

Adolescents can achieve improved social acceptability, had they received counseling in the form of help and guidance. Many experiments have shown that students who were counselled held responsible leadership positions (Hurlock 1955). The type of education the responsible adults give adolescents will shape the whole future of social and spiritual structure of our society.

Traditional methods of mind training was that the stories from the great epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata and other folk tales were told and retold both in the home and at school to give a solid foundation to a stable mind. The values of truth, non-violence, honesty and respect for elders, love and welfare of animals, birds and various other values were habitually accepted by the children. Even though in the later stage of life conflicts in such values are noticed off and on; yet the foundation is by and large not shaken.
In man the stimuli that arouse the drive and even the direction the drive takes are heavily affected by learning. Hence, more emphasis should be put on the theories of learning to help shape or modify at least in part, the kind of drive.

The successful maturing of the whole person is associated with a study of basic psychological needs. The distressing behaviour which characterize some adolescents result from certain social antecedents and certain sort of situational treatment.

If one is sensitive to minor indications of maladjustment during the early stages, chronic maladjustment can often be averted by rather simple guidance procedures in the home and school. In this section we discussed the various control functions like parents, schools, clubs and gave a presentation on how the control function ought to react to the problems of the adolescent.
FIG 1.2 AN INTEGRATED SYSTEMS APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF ADOLESCENT BEHAVIOUR