Chapter V

DISCUSSION

The causation of any particular behavior pattern is tremendously complex, and even with the information we do have it is all but impossible to predict how given circumstances will affect given individuals.

Although we may assume that the same psychological principles underlie both normal and abnormal behavior, the problem still remains of delineating the specific conditions responsible for different outcomes.

In comparison with the variables associated with biological causes of maladaptive behavior, those associated with psychosocial causes are less understood and more elusive. However, a good deal has been learned about psychological and interpersonal factors that appear to play significant roles in maladaptive behavior; (a) maternal deprivation, (b) pathogenic family patterns, (c) early psychic trauma, (d) disordered interpersonal relationships, and (e) key stresses of modern life.

Again, we shall see that these factors are by no means independent of each other and that a given condition may function as a primary, predisposing, precipitating, or reinforcing cause.

Maternal deprivation

Faulty development has been observed in infants deprived of maternal stimulation (or "mothering") as a consequence of either (a) separation from the mother and placement in an institution, lack of adequate "mothering" in the home. Although the emphasis here is on maternal deprivation, we are essentially concerned with warmth and stimulation, whether it be supplied by the mother, father, or other persons responsible for the child's rearing.

The effects of maternal deprivation vary considerably from infant to infant, and babies in other societies appear to thrive under widely differing conditions of maternal care. Also, the effects of unfavorable conditions during the first year of life are not always as irreversible as many investigators have thought. For example, Kagan (1973) found that Guatemalan Indian infants raised during their first year in a psychologically impoverished environment - due to the custom of the culture - were
severely retarded in their development, as compared with American raised infants. However, after the first year, the environment of these infants was enriched, and by the age of 11, they performed as well or better than American children on problem-solving and related intellectual tasks.

Despite such encouraging findings, available evidence leaves little doubt that severe and sustained maternal deprivation—whether it involves growing up in an institution with restricted stimulation or suffering masked deprivation in the home—can seriously retard intellectual, emotional, social, and even physical development. The actual nature and extent of the damage resulting from maternal deprivation appear to depend on: (a) the age at which deprivation first occurs; (b) the extent and duration of such deprivation; (c) the constitutional makeup of the infant; and (d) the substitute care, if any that is provided. For example, mother surrogates or nursery schools may provide needed stimulation and loving care, thus preventing harmful effects to the infants of working mothers. However, in cases of early and prolonged deprivation, the damage to the infant may be irreversible or only partially reversible despite later corrective experiences.

Pathogenic family patterns

As the infant progresses into childhood, he must master few competencies, learn usable assumptions about himself and the world, and exert increasing inner control over his behavior.

During this period, the family unit remains the crucial guiding influence in the child's parental separation or loss as a traumatic experience personality development; unfortunately, faulty family patterns are a fertile source of unhealthy development and maladjustment. In fact, the Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children (1970) estimated that the parents of one-fourth of the nation's children are inadequate.

In view of the incidence of pathogenic family patterns, we shall deal with this problem in some detail. It may be emphasized, however, that parent-child relationships and family interactions are extremely complex matters. Thus caution is considered essential in applying given patterns to the explanation of specific cases of maladaptive behavior.
Faulty parent-child relationships

Several types of specific parent-child patterns appear with great regularity in the background of children who show emotional disturbances and other types of faulty development. Seven of these patterns will be discussed here.

1. **Rejection**: Parental rejection of the child is closely related to "masked deprivation" and may be shown in various ways—by physical neglect, denial of love and affection, lack of interest in the child's activities and achievements, harsh or inconsistent punishment, failure to spend time with the child, and lack of respect for the child's rights and feelings as a person. In a minority of cases, it also involves cruel and abusive treatment. Parental rejection may be partial or complete, passive or active, and subtly or overtly cruel.

   A consideration of why parents reject their children would take us too far afield, but it would appear that a large proportion of such parents have themselves been the victims of parental rejection. In this sense, lack of love has been referred to as a "communicable disease." And, of course, rejection is not a one way street; the child may be unaccepting of his parents whether or not they reject him. This pattern sometimes occurs when the parents belong to a low-status minority group of which the child is ashamed. Although the results of such rejection have not been studied systematically, it would appear that children who reject their parents deny themselves needed trials for healthy development.

2. **Overprotection and restrictiveness**: Maternal overprotection, or "momism," involves the "smothering" of the child's growth. Overprotecting mothers may watch over their children constantly, protect them from the slightest risk, overly clothe and medicate them, and make up their mind for them at every opportunity. In the case of mother-son relationships, there is often excessive physical contact, in which the mother may sloop with the child for years and be subtly seductive in her relationships with him.

   Different parental motivations may lead to overprotection. An early study by Levy (1945) found that in an experimental group of abnormally protective mothers, 75 percent had little in common with their husbands. Such maternal reactions appeared to represent a compensatory type of behavior in which the mother
attempted, through her contact with the child, to gain satisfactions that normally should have been obtained in her marriage. It is not uncommon in such cases for the mother to call the child her "lover" and actually to encourage the child in behaviors somewhat typical of courting.

3. **Over permissiveness and indulgence**: Although it happens less commonly than is popularly supposed, sometimes one or both parents cater to the child's slightest whims and in so doing fail to teach and reward desirable standards of behavior. In essence, the parent surrenders the running of the home to an uninhibited son or daughter.

Overly indulged children are characteristically spoiled, selfish, inconsiderate, and demanding. Sears (1961) found that high permissiveness and low punishment in the home were correlated positively with antisocial, aggressive behavior, particularly during middle and later childhood. Unlike rejected, emotionally deprived children, who often find it difficult to enter into warm interpersonal relationships, indulged children enter readily into such relationships but exploit people for their own purposes in the same way that they have learned to exploit their parents. In dealing with authority, such children are usually rebellious since, for so long, they have had their own way. Overly indulged children also tend to be impatient, to approach problems in an aggressive and demanding manner, and to find it difficult to accept present frustrations in the interests of long-range goals.

The fact that their important and pampered status in the home does not transfer automatically to the outside world may come as a great shock to indulged youngsters; confusion and adjustive difficulties may occur when "reality" forces them to reassess their assumptions about themselves and the world.

4. **Unrealistic demands**: Some parents place excessive pressure on their children to live up to unrealistically "high" standards. Thus they may be expected to excel in school and other activities. Where the child has the capacity for exceptionally high-level performance, things may work out; but even here the child may be under such sustained pressure that little room is left for spontaneity or development as an independent person.
Typically, however, the child is never able to quite live up to parental expectations and demands. If he improves his grade from a C to a B, he may be asked why he did not get an A. If he succeeds in getting an A, the next step is to attain the highest A in his class. The parents seem to be telling the child that he could do better if he tried, and that he is not good enough the way he is. But no matter how hard he tries, he seems to fail in the eyes of his parents and, ultimately, in his own eyes as well—a fact that results in painful frustration and self-devaluation. And in promoting failure by their excessive demands, parents also tend to discourage further effort on the child's part. Almost invariably he eventually comes to feel, "I can't do it, so why try?"

Not infrequently unrealistic parental demands focus around moral standards—particularly with regard to sex, alcohol, and related matters. Thus the parents may instill in the child the view that masturbation or any other sexual activity is terribly sinful and can lead only to moral and physical degeneration. The child who accepts such rigid parental standards is likely to develop a rigid and restricted personality and to face many guilt-arousing and self-devaluating conflicts.

5. **Faulty discipline**: Parents have been particularly confused during recent years about appropriate forms of discipline. Sometimes a misinterpretation of psychological findings and theories has led to the view that all punishment and frustration should be avoided lest the child be "fixated" in his development. In other cases parents have resorted to excessively harsh discipline, convinced that if they "spare the rod" they will spoil the child. And in still other cases, the parents have seemed to lack general guidelines, punishing children one day and ignoring or even rewarding them the next for doing the same or similar things.

Similarly inconsistent discipline makes it difficult for the child to establish stable values for guiding his behavior. When the child is punished one time and ignored or rewarded the next for the same behavior, he is at a loss to know what behavior is appropriate. Deur and Parke (1970) found that children with a history of inconsistent reward and punishment for aggressive behavior were more resistant to punishment and to the extinction of their aggressive behavior than were children who had experienced more consistent discipline. The preceding study supports earlier
findings showing a high correlation between inconsistent discipline and later delinquent and criminal behavior.

6. Communication failure: Parents can discourage a child from asking questions and in other ways fail to foster the "information exchange" essential for healthy personality development, for example, helping the child develop a realistic frame of reference and essential competencies. Such limited and inadequate communication patterns have commonly been attributed to socially disadvantaged families, but these patterns are by no means restricted to any one socioeconomic level.

Such patterns may take a number of forms. Some parents are too busy with their own concerns to listen to their children and try to understand the conflicts and pressures they are facing. As a consequence, these parents of ten fail to give needed support and assistance during crisis periods. Other parents may have forgotten that the world often looks different to a child or adolescent and that rapid social change can lead to a very real communication gap between generations.

7. Undesirable parental models: Since children tend to observe and imitate the behavior of their parents, it is apparent that parental behavior can have a highly beneficial or detrimental effect on they way a youngster learns to perceive think, feel and act. We may consider parents as undesirable models if they have faulty reality, possibility, and value assumptions, or if they depend excessively on defense mechanisms in coping with their problems as when they consistently project the blame for their own mistakes on others, if they lie and cheat, if they refuse to face and deal realistically with family problems, or if there is a marked discrepancy between their proclaimed values and those reflected in actual behavior.

A parent who is emotionally disturbed, addicted to alcohol or drugs, or drugs, or otherwise maladjusted may also serve as an undesirable model.

There are certain other common sources of stress in our society which appear directly relevant to understanding maladaptive behavior.

Devaluing frustrations: In contemporary life there are a number of frustrations that lead to self-devaluation and hence are particularly difficult to cope with. Among
these are failure, losses, personal limitations and lack of resources, guilt, and loneliness.

1. **Failure**: The highly competitive setting in which we live almost inevitably leads to occasional failures. No team is likely to win all the time, nor can all succeed who aspire to become movie or television stars or to achieve high political office. For each person who succeeds, there is an inevitable crop of failures. Furthermore, some people seem to court failure by setting unrealistically high goals or by undertaking new ventures without adequate preparation.

2. **Losses**: Closely related to failure are the many losses that people inevitably experience-losses that people inevitably experience-losses involving objects or resources they value or individuals with whom they strongly identify.

   Among the most distressing material losses are those of money and status. In our society money gives its owner security, self-esteem, and the use of desired goods and services; thus an appreciable financial loss is apt to lead to severe self-recrimination and discouragement. Similarly, loss of social status whether it stems from loss of economic position or some other cause- tends to devalue and individual in his own eyes as well as in the eyes of others.

3. **Personal limitations and lack of resources**: Being "on the low end of the totem pole" with regard to material advantages and possessions is a powerful source of frustration, one afflicting members of disadvantaged and possessions is a powerful source of frustration, one afflicting members of disadvantaged minorities in our society with special severity. Constantly being exposed to TV commercials and other advertising depicting desirable objects and experiences in our allegedly affluent society- while seeming to be "on the outside looking in"- can be highly frustrating for those whose aspirations and hopes seem to have been bypassed by society. But probably from time to time most of us make envious status comparisons in which we see others as more favorably endowed with personal and material resources than we are.
In addition, physical handicaps and other personal limitations that restrict one's activities and possibly attractiveness to members of the opposite sex can be highly stressful. Here again, dwelling on comparisons with others who seem more favorably endowed can unnecessarily increase frustration and self-devaluation.

4. **Guilt:** To understand feelings of guilt it is useful to note that (a) various value assumptions concerning right and wrong are learned and accepted; (b) these value assumptions are then applied to the appraisal of one's own behavior; and (c) it is learned, often by hard experience, that wrongdoing leads to punishment. Thus behaving in ways that one considers immoral leads to both self-devaluation and apprehension. Because of this orientation, depressed persons commonly search back through past event, locating and exaggerating misdeeds that have presumably led to present difficulties.

Guilt is likely to be particularly stressful if it seems that nothing can be done to rectify one's misdeed. In fact, Gelven (1973) concluded that "Of all the forms of mental suffering perhaps none is as pervasive or as intense as the ache of guilt" (p.69). Since guilt is heavily infused with self-recrimination and anxiety, this conclusion seems to be well supported.

5. **Loneliness:** Probably most people experience painful feelings of isolation and loneliness at some time in their lives.

Being unloved and lonely has been called "the greatest poverty." Perhaps for more people than we ever realize, the world is a lonely place.

Here it is useful to make a distinction between pathological and existential loneliness, although it is difficult to draw a line between the two. The former involves the individual who is uncommitted, unconcerned, and unloving and who does not attempt to deal with loneliness through close interpersonal relationships or commitment to the human enterprise, while the latter involves the caring, committed, loving person whose loneliness is the result of conditions beyond his or her control.
Value conflicts:

Here we shall briefly mention some core conflicts of modern life that frequently lead to such tension and inner turmoil that the individual's adjustive capacities are seriously impaired.

1. Conformity Vs nonconformity: Group pressures toward conformity inevitably develop as a group tries to maintain itself and achieve its goals, although the degree of conformity required varies greatly from one situation to another and from one group to another. For example, the conformity needed in a military group is considerably greater than that needed in a classroom. Even in the latter case, however, certain ground rules are established and members are under some pressure to conform to them. Usually people are most likely to conform to the demands of groups in which they value membership and which have the greatest power to meet or to frustrate their needs. Thus it is often easier for teen-agers to repudiate adult norms than it is for them to go against peer group pressures. But adults too are likely to find it difficult to go against the expectations, demands, and pressures of peer groups that are important to them.

Thus a problem which often proves deeply disturbing is when to conform or not to conform to group expectations and pressures. Usually blind conformity or nonconformity is considered maladaptive because it represents an abdication of responsible self-direction and often results in behavior at odds with the individual's own values. A choice based on rational thought and decision appears most likely to serve the long-term interests of both the individual and the group.

2. Caring Vs noninvolvement: Because of the impersonality and anonymity of modern urban society, many people find it difficult to experience a sense of relatedness to others or of concern for the human enterprise. And since efforts on behalf of others can jeopardize one's own safety, the risks associated with "getting involved" may seem too great a price to pay for helping "strangers." As Seaman (1966) has put it:

3. Avoiding Vs facing reality: Perhaps the first requisite of maturity is the ability to see oneself and the surrounding world objectively and to make the best of realities. But this is no simple task. Reality is often unpleasant and anxiety-arousing.
and may undermine an individual's efforts to feel good about himself and his world. For example, facing the realization that failure in an important venture resulted from one's own inadequacies would be self-devaluating. Hence a person may tend to avoid facing this reality by rationalizing projecting, or using other defense mechanisms.

Similarly, a proud parent may screen out the fact that his son is drinking too much, or is unduly preoccupied with drugs and neglecting his studies; or the parent may attempt to minimize the undesirable behavior by saying that young people go through "phases" and that there is really no cause for concern.

While screening out unpleasant reality whether it relates to oneself or the environment- may help the individual feel adequate in facing life's problems, it may also keep him from making needed changes in his frame of reference and modes of adjustment.

4. **Fearfulness Vs positive action**: Although most people are familiar with the increased tension and desire to flee that accompany fear, few realize that fatigue, worry, indecision and oversensitivity may also be disguised manifestations of fear. The pervasive effects of fear are illustrated by the person who is afraid to go out in the dark alone after watching a terrifying murder mystery on television; if the person does go out anyway, he is prone to jump at the slightest sound. This increased sensitivity is characteristic of the many frightened, insecure persons who go through life overreacting to the slightest threat. Their fears rob them of courage and cripple their reasoning and other adjustive capacities.

Probably all of us experience some degree of fear in facing the problems of living. The brave person is not the one who experiences no fear, but the one who acts courageously despite fear. Not realizing this, many people expend their efforts trying to deny or conceal their fears, instead of learning to function effectively in spite of them.

Phobias may occur in a wide range of personality patterns and abnormal syndromes, reflecting the part that anxiety and avoidance play in many manifestations of abnormal behavior. In general, phobias have been thought of as attempts to cope with specific internal or external dangers by carefully avoiding situations likely to bring about whatever is feared. Thus phobias have been seen as simple defensive reactions
in which the person feels he must give in to his fears in order to protect himself. This same view is applicable to phobic neurosis, although the focus has shifted from specific phobias to the more general role of phobias in an overall neurotic life-style of defensive and avoidant behaviors.

Three major causal patterns have been emphasized in the development of phobias: conditioning and avoidance learning, defense against threatening impulses, and the displacement of anxiety.

1. Conditioning and avoidance learning: As we saw in Watson's case of "little Albert"—who was conditioned to fear a white rat—a phobia may be the learned result of prior trauma in the feared situation. And this fear, as happened in the case of little Albert, may generalize to similar situations.

   Phobias of this type are not difficult to understand because most of us probably have mild phobias based on previous learning. A person who has been attacked and bitten by a vicious dog may feel uneasy around dogs, even though some reconditioning experiences have intervened. A pervasive pattern of fear and avoidance behavior can be learned in much the same way. For example, if a child's fumbling attempts to master new skills are ridiculed by her parents, or if she is discouraged from becoming independent, she may never develop the confidence she needs to cope with new situations. In effect, she learns that avoidance is the "appropriate" response where risk or uncertainty is involved.

2. Defense against threatening impulses: A phobia may represent a defensive reaction that protects the individual from situations in which his repressed aggressive or sexual impulses might become dangerous. Thus a husband may develop a phobia of lakes, swimming pools, and other bodies of water because of drowning his wife; similarly, a young mother may develop a phobia of being alone with her unwanted baby because of recurring fantasies about strangling him.

3. Displacement of anxiety: A phobia may represent a displacement of anxiety from some external threat that elicited it to some other object or situation.

   With the help of above discussion, we may discuss our results in the following way-
The families are generally classified in two ways. One classification is joint families and nuclear families. The other classification is small families and large families. This latter classification is generally done for nuclear families.

Joint families:

This kind of family has a large number of members who are related to each other. Such families include parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts and their children too.

The head of the joint family is an authoritarian figure, who exerts authority over other members of the family.

The child has interpersonal relations with a large number of people. So the child learns easily how to behave in the society but these relations are not much intimate. They are superficial to a great extent.

There are many children in joint families. So the children have greater opportunity to mix with other children and imitate them. They come in contact with adults for a lesser amount of time. The mother generally is overburdened with work so the children have less chance to be in contact with the adults or experience the affection of the mother. So there is poorer language development as compared to the nuclear families. The emotional needs of these children also are not well satisfied.

But the older children from the joint families develop a greater sense of responsibility for at times they have to share the responsibility with the adults. The joint family consists of many adults. So discipline tends to be inconsistent. Some adults approve of a particular behavioral pattern while others do not approve of it.

Nuclear Families:

This kind of family consists of parents and their children. Father is the head of the family and the family atmosphere is generally not authoritarian.

The children cannot have interpersonal relationship with a very large number of persons, but the relationship that exists is not at a superficial level. It is quite intimate.
The nuclear family does not consist of many children so the children don't have an opportunity to mix with many children around, but they have a lot of opportunity to be in contact with the adults. They get greater love and affection of the mother. This helps in proper language and emotional development of the children. Language and speech development therefore is faster in the nuclear families.

Since the only adults in the nuclear families are the parents, there is a likelihood of more consistent discipline. The behavior that is approved by the mother is generally approved by the father too.

The present investigation results showed that the children coming from joint family were significantly high decisiveness, high responsibility, high emotional stability, high masculinity, high friendliness, high heterosexuality, high ego strength, high curiosity and high dominance than children coming from nuclear family.

**Gender Differences**

Obviously, males and females differ biologically in their genitals and other aspects of anatomy, and in their physiological functioning. These readily apparent physical disparities between males and females lead people to expect other differences as well. Recall from Chapter 6 the stereotypes are widely held beliefs that people possess certain characteristics simply because of their membership in a particular group. Gender stereotypes are widely shared beliefs about males' and females' abilities, personality traits, and social behavior. Research finds a great deal of consensus on supposed behavioral differences between men and women (Bergen & Williams, 1991). For example, a survey of gender stereotypes in 25 countries revealed considerable similarity of views (Williams & Best 1990).

The present investigation results showed that the male children were significantly high decisiveness, high responsibility, high emotional stability, high masculinity, high friendliness, high heterosexuality, high ego strength, high curiosity and high dominance than the female children.

**Birth Order :**
Adler's theory stressed the social context of personality development (Hoffman, 1994). For instance, it was Adler who first focused attention on the possible importance of birth order as a factor governing personality. He noted that firstborns, second children, and later born children enter varied home environments and are treated differently by parents and that these experiences are likely to affect their personality. For example, he hypothesized that only children are often spoiled by excessive attention from parents and that firstborns are often problem children because they become upset when they're "dethroned" by a second child.

In recent years, however, Frank Sulloway (1995,1996) has argued persuasively that birth order does have an impact on personality. Sulloway's reformulated hypotheses focus on how the Big Five traits are shaped by competition among siblings as they struggle to find a "niche" in their family environments. For example, he hypothesizes that firstborns should be more conscientious but less agreeable and open to experience than later-borns. In light of these personality patterns, he further speculates that firstborns tend to be conventional and achievement oriented, whereas later-borns tend to be liberal and rebellious. To evaluate his hypotheses, Sulloway reexamined decades of research on birth order. After eliminating many studies that failed to control for important confounding variables, such as social class and family size, he concluded that the results of the remaining well-controlled studies provided impressive evidence in favor of his hypotheses. Some subsequent studies have provided additional support for Sulloway's analyses (Paulhus, Trapnell, & Chen 199) but others have not (Freeese, powell, & Steelman, 1999) Harris, 2000) More studies will be needed, as research on birth order is enjoying a bit of a renaissance.

The present study results showed that the first born children were significantly high decisiveness, high responsibility, high emotional stability, high masculinity, high friendliness, high heterosexuality, high ego strength, high curiosity and high dominance than the last born children.
1. Decisiveness trait refers to person's ability to take quick decisions in controversial issues, to decide priorities and attend accordingly, to take clear-cut stand over the given issues, etc. The relationship between decisiveness and phobic reaction was negative. It indicates that the person having high decisiveness shows less phobic reactions. The result support the hypothesis.

2. Responsibility is defined in terms of a number of behavioral syndromes such as finishing a task in time, meeting people on appointed time, going somewhere according to fixed schedule, attending meeting in time, etc. The relationship between responsibility and phobic reaction was negative. It indicates that the person having high responsibility shows less phobic reactions. The result support the hypothesis.

3. Emotional stability persons having trait of emotional stability has well control over his emotion, talk confidently with others, consider ailments in their proper perspective, face comments and criticisms realistically, etc. The relationship between Emotional stability and phobic reaction was positive. It indicates that the person having high emotional stability shows high phobic reactions. The result does not support the hypothesis.

4. Masculinity trait refers to person's ability to do arduous and risky work, his ability to handle challenges from military, taking interest in mountaineering, fighting etc. The relationship between masculinity and phobic reaction was zero. The result support the hypothesis.

5. Friendliness persons possessing such trait develop deeper acquaintance with people, often help others in time of trouble and show proper love and affection to even juniors and unknowns. The relationship between friendliness and phobic reaction was negative. It indicates that the person having high friendliness shows less phobic reactions. The result support the hypothesis.
6. Heterosexuality persons possessing such trait have normal sex relationship with opposite sex, don't feel shy among members of opposite sex and take active participation in working with members of opposite sex. The relationship between heterosexuality and phobic reaction was zero. The result support the hypothesis.

7. Ego- Strength persons having the trait of ego-strength tend to concentrate and attend to different activities at a tie, have feelings of adequacy and vitality, have adequate control over impulses and tend to show high coordination between thoughts and actions. The relationship between ego strength and phobic reaction was positive. The result does not support the hypothesis.

8. Persons having the trait of curiosity tend to explore the details of objects or things which are relatively new, tend to reach the destination in tie, tend to know the contents of talks of others or reactions of others toward oneself, etc. The relationship between curiosity and phobic reaction was negative. It indicates that the person having high curiosity shows less phobic reactions. The result support the hypothesis.

9. Persons having the trait of dominance tend to dictate over others for their duty, tend to be the leader of the group, tend to settle controversy between rivals, tend to undertake the supervision of a difficult and complex task. The relationship between dominance and phobic reaction was zero. The result support the hypothesis.