

Freud gave up using hypnosis as a tool to recover forgotten thoughts because not everyone can be hypnotized. Still, believing in & utilizing, the idea of psychic determinism, he was convinced the dream was the Royal Road to the unconscious, but not everyone remembers their dreams. How, then, do we gain access to the hidden layers of the psyche where the mind's secrets lay in wait? He then decided on the mechanism of free association to gain entrance to layers of the mind Freud knew were psychically inaccessible. Then he concluded this approach only worked when confronted with ego-alien symptoms due to the Ego's attempt to repress unacceptable psycho-sexual thoughts and feelings.

Still, how then gain entrance into that darker part of the cave around which the ego built an inner fortress to prevent entry while paradoxically permitting issues of psychological importance to seep into consciousness disguised and outside its awareness? And, how reveal that to someone seeking relief from their suffering through the gift of self-understanding while coming less frequently than desirable and at modest fees?

In this framework we require access to a mind unaccompanied by an observing ego. A mind whose centuries-old solution had been to seek forgiveness from God, not within. It took Freud's insight to explain that without this next, crucial, step in human knowledge the ability to forgive oneself would remain elusive. The mind would never acquire the indispensable tools to be free of its need for guilt or shame nor, ironically, the unbearable suffering for which the mind is convinced it is responsible.

This journey, to provide the Ego with the tools to replace compulsion with choice, had been unavailable prior to Freud - as well as to contemporary theories likely dismissing this fork in the mental road constructed by our awareness of an increasingly contaminated Ego. This is what is meant by Freud's statement he 'woke up the world' - for which he was resented - & continues to be. Even much of current thought in the field appears to think this as well.

Patients come to our offices seeking the 'talking cure'. To me, that is like mucking around in the waters of the patient's mind while they reach in, pick up a rock and throw it back in, not aware they have just discovered a nugget. Having been trained in psychodynamic theory, of what use is the mandatory technique of Free Association when, treating mostly character, there is little observation in the ego? We learned conscious thoughts are waking dreams.

He discovered to assist an ego in distress he had to find some intact parts and build on its ability to observe the thoughts and feelings it provides to the therapist. For a long period of treatment what is revealed, while impressing the young therapist, may just be words for the patient.

When will we know the patient's mind is capable of listening to itself? it is like learning a language. How do you know you're beginning to learn it, because, after all, analytic thinking is a new language? When you begin to think in it.

Times were changing. The initial period, mostly timeless, sustained by that necessary, and unfortunate therapeutically, pain which, when perceived by the ego made the decision to seek help an imperative. When confronted with this realization Freud admitted the analytic process had become too complicated because resistance to examining problems not addressed by psycho-sexual theory would likely make the process interminable.

Patients with character problems don't come as often or likely develop the kinds of transferences described in classical cases. The psycho-dynamic community has been losing its ability to hold these patients in treatment long enough to gain access to the unconscious while continuing to look for a royal road. One consequence of this state of affairs, unfortunately, is some contemporary theories have sought to obviate the investigation of this indispensable tool, suggesting the increasing significance of the counter-transference as part of the treatment.

Our state of affairs is becoming increasingly how someone described Columbus' voyage: he didn't know where he was going, when he got there he didn't know where he was and when he got home, he didn't know where he had been.