The Shadow of the Object

Psychoanalysis of the Unthought Known

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the parent's own developmental arrest, in that the parent was unable to deal appropriately with the child's particular maturational needs. What had been a self experience in the child, one that could have been integrated into the child's continuing self development, was rejected by the parents, who failed to perform adequately as ordinary 'transformational objects', so that a self state was destined to be frozen by the child into what I have called a conservative object – subsequently represented only through moods.

7 *Loving hate*

IN Freud's early theory of instincts, love and hate were conceived of as nonidentical twins. Love aimed to acquire pleasure and pleasurable objects, and hate expelled the unpleasurable into the outside world. 'The ego hates, abhors and pursues with intent to destroy all objects which are a source of unpleasurable feeling for it,' wrote Freud (1915, p.138), equating hate with destruction. After a partial reworking of his instinct theory in 'Beyond the pleasure principle' (1920), Freud incorporated love among the life instincts and placed hate in the service of the death instinct. At this point, therefore, hate had two potential functions: it could serve a mnemic purpose ('to restore an earlier state of things' (p. 36)) if considered a facet of the death instinct, or it could fulfil a purely expulsive-destructive function if conceived according to the earlier instinct theory.

Psychoanalytic theory is not shy of references to destructive hate. Indeed, if we consider hate in object-relations theory, we assume a complex process whereby an internal object is damaged or destroyed and the ego is faced with the exceedingly daunting task of renegotiating internal reality in the wake of such hate. An internal object that is damaged by hate may lead to phobic withdrawal from the external representations of the object, or it may lead to an addictively depressive state that is a compromise formation between the wish to damage the object further and the dread of being attacked from within for such destructiveness. If the internal object is psychologically destroyed, it may be expelled into fragmented objects which assume a bizarre quality (Bion, 1962).

When a person hates, is it always true to say that he wishes to destroy? I am sure that most clinicians can find an exception to the rule of destructive hate in their clinical work, and I will examine

certain nondestructive forms of hate. It is my view that in some cases a person hates an object not in order to destroy it, but to do precisely the opposite: to conserve the object. Such hate is fundamentally nondestructive in intent and, although it may have destructive consequences, its aim may be to act out an unconscious form of love. I am inclined to term this 'loving hate', by which I mean a situation where an individual preserves a relationship by sustaining a passionate negative cathexis of it. If the person cannot do so by hating the object he may accomplish this passionate cathexis by being hateful and inspiring the other to hate him. A state of reciprocal hate may prevail, but in the persons whom I shall be describing, such hate is singular, not genuinely mutual. The subject finds that only through hating or being hateful can he compel an object into passionate relating. Therefore, although two people in such circumstances may seem to have accomplished a reciprocity of hate, it is illusory, as the object is never assumed to be capable of genuine mutual action: even one of hating.

Viewed this way, hate is not the opposite of, but a substitute for love. A person who hates with loving passion does not dread retaliation by the object; on the contrary, he welcomes it. What he does live in fear of is indifference, of not being noticed or seen by the other. Passionate hate is generated as an alternative to love, which is assumed to be unavailable.

The literature on the positive function of hate, or fundamentally nondestructive hate, is sparse. In Europe, Winnicott was one of the first analysts to emphasize its positive functions. In an early paper on aggression, he argues that 'aggression is part of the primitive expression of love' (1936, p. 205); he further stresses that, in the course of his ruthlessness, an infant 'does not appreciate the fact that what he destroys when excited is the same as that which he values in quiet intervals between excitements. His excited love includes an imaginative attack on the mother's body. Here is aggression as a part of love' (p. 206). Winnicott always saw aggression as a positive factor in human growth, frequently equating it with motility, and he would never have made it equivalent to hate. But in his work on the transitional object, he

makes it possible for us to imagine a form of hate which is positive; that intensely concentrated, aggressive use of a transitional object, which is founded on the infant's knowledge and gratitude that the object will survive. The infant needs the object of his hate to survive attacks against it and this object, which is itself the trace of the mother's capacity to survive the infant's attack, is carefully and jealously guarded by the infant against true destruction (against loss or actual change of state). Winnicott realized that each child needs to hate a safe object, since in so doing he can see the total experience of a certain kind of hate through to its completion. In attacking the object, the infant brings to bear, in reality, a self state which up to that point has been primarily internal, and as the object allows for this misuse of it, its capacity to survive is appreciated by the infant, who needs to externalize and to actualize his hate.

In 1940 Fairbairn wrote a profoundly insightful paper about the schizoid individual who, because of his early experiences as an infant in relation to a particular kind of mother, regarded his love as destructive. Some schizoid defences therefore aimed to isolate the individual from others; more significantly, they were developed to prevent the schizoid person from either loving or being loved. Such an individual 'may quarrel with people, be objectionable, be rude. In so doing, he not only substitutes hate for love in his relationships with his objects, but also induces them to hate, instead of loving him' (p. 26). By using hate in this manner, the schizoid acts in a curiously 'moral' manner. According to Fairbairn, 'the moral motive is determined by the consideration that, if loving involves destroying, it is better to destroy by hate, which is overtly destructive and bad, than to destroy by love, which is by rights creative and good' (p. 27).

Balint (1951) regarded hate as a defence against primitive object love and archaic dependence, and Searles (1956) argued that vengefulness was both a defence against repressed grief and a covert means of maintaining an object tie. Pao (1965) said that one of the 'ego syntonic uses of hatred' is that it allows the person to feel something, so that eventually 'hatred may become an essential element from which one derives a sense of self-sameness

and upon which one formulates one's identity' (p. 260). Stolorow (1972) added that there are certain patients who use hate as a defence against the 'possibility of forgiveness' (p. 220) because to forgive would be to destabilize the person's object world, one presumably constructed through hate. Other analysts indicate in their work a sophisticated understanding of the ways in which hate serves specific, and potentially positive, functions of the self. But I do not want to review the literature, I am only suggesting the outline of a tradition of looking at hate in a different way: associating hate more closely with love rather than assuming it to be the direct opposite.

There is no one particular family idiom that sponsors a loving hate. I do not claim that the pathological family situations that I shall discuss are the only pathways to loving hate: I am sure there are many. Furthermore, it is worth bearing in mind that a discussion of pathology often precludes consideration of more 'ordinary' forms of a phenomenon. In the natural course of affairs, children hate their parents with a passion, lasting a few minutes or even hours, and this hate aims to conserve the parental object, not to destroy it, so that the child can have the full course of pleasure in hating. There is an ordinary need to hate the loved object, one essential to the child's cumulative expression of self states that further enables him to feel a sense of personal reality in his lived life.

In the following clinical vignettes, however, I will illustrate how loving hate emerged as a major dynamic in the development of different persons, and I will discuss what pathological purposes it served. It bears repeating that when I use the word 'loving' I mean to suggest a passionate cathexis of an object, a 'falling' into hate that constitutes a profoundly intense experience in which the subject feels merged with the object and attempts to maintain an object relation through the terms of this fusion.

'WELL, HE'S A PAIN IN THE NECK, BUT WE DO LOVE HIM.'

We are all aware of that person who fashions for himself a rather

unique aesthetic in his character by being an irritant, whom we can predict will almost always prove to be difficult in a social situation and whom we are quite content to hate for a brief moment. And yet it would be untrue to say that we continue to hate this person; paradoxically, we may feel quite an affection for him. I can think, for example, of a friend who in many respects is a pain in the neck. If my wife and I invite him to dinner, he will almost inevitably try to irritate at least one of us. After a journey to an exotic country where he basked in tropical luxury and returned to our English world with a magnificent tan, he said to my wife: 'The problem with men who have been living in England for a long time is that they no longer know how to be attractive to women. And look at his shape. He's fat and he doesn't stand like a man.' Now, most of the time this comment would not bother me – coming from him – but it just so happened that for the two weeks prior to seeing my friend, I had been trying to lose weight, and I had been taking some exercise. This I had to do on an exercise bicycle which I could 'ride' between patients. Ten minutes is not much, but it's better than nothing. Still, I do recall that during these rather pathetic 'journeys' on my bike I felt a bit foolish and depressed that at mid-life things should have come to this. I had, nonetheless, tried valiantly to convince myself that the results – being fit and trim – would compensate me for a newly acquired sense of the absurd. As it was, however, when I saw my friend, I was feeling rather handsome. This was not the moment when I wanted to hear about how I had degenerated, even if the jab was put in his ridiculous manner, yet I am convinced that one of his talents is knowing when people feel vulnerable, and choosing that moment to wade in and say something that makes one want to kill him. However, in the moments that follow such an irritating encounter, it is possible to feel something like affection for him, a sort of 'well, he sure has proved to be in good form!'. Furthermore, he does know something about oneself that borders on intimacy and, since he tends to express affection through negative charm, one often knows his irksomeness for what it is. To be sure, now and then I do find myself asking why I keep seeing him, since he really can be maddeningly abrasive: at

the last dinner party he 'ruined' a convivial discussion by informing us that we were all bourgeois dilettantes incapable of a genuine discussion of the very topics that we ourselves had raised. Of course, at that moment he was accurate, and we could have killed him!

It was therefore with some additional interest that I discovered Paula, one of my patients, to be just such a person. She had a reputation among her friends for being outrageous, and in fact she was capable of setting one friend against another and gossiping in a way that was moderately scandalous. I knew this about her from her accounts of her life, but for the first years of her analysis no meaningful aspect of this emerged within the clinical space. Looking back, I can see that her somewhat gigglish barks ('Ohhhhhh! You've got it all wrong! Oh, forget it. I'm just being bitchy. You are right, and I don't like the fact that you know so much about me.') were designed to move me towards a more combative relation to her and expressed a need on her part to be allowed unreasonable and troublesome behaviour in the sessions.

She found it frustratingly difficult to be a troublemaker in the sessions because she was an analysable person, was genuinely motivated to understand herself, and so, in an odd sort of way, being understood mitigated a full expression of a segment of herself. I understood her rather too well, or prematurely, and thereby denied her sufficient room in which to become a 'bad character'. But in the third year of her analysis, she went through a series of personal crises in her private life that made her really quite dependent on me. Up until then, she had always kept an almost exact emotional distance from me, and I was aware that she was keeping quite a bit of her internal life to herself. Now, as she became more dependent on me, she also became argumentative, loud, combative, and 'unanalysable'. I was never in any doubt, however, that her bad behaviour was an expression of loving hate. It became clear that as she began to fall in love with the other, she felt in considerable danger and protected herself against this anxiety by developing her love along the lines of a negative intimacy. 'Oh, you, you would say that'; 'Oh, that's typical of you'; 'On the way here, I was telling you about myself, but then, of course, you said to me . . .'; 'What did you mean last week when you said. . . ? I suppose you meant the same thing you told me last year, which is just what you would say, isn't it! Why are you like this?': all of these 'protests' revealed an intense preoccupation with me, a positive transference only partly, and ineffectively, negated by her use of hate.

Both of Paula's parents were greedy in needing to give to their infant a certain kind of love. As a child she had feared the intensity of parental affection, praise and facilitative eagerness. Eventually it seemed to us both that her difficult character was a defence against the fear of being consumed by her parents' love. So long as she was irascible – 'Oh, you are a wretchedly uncooperative child!' – she could mitigate the intense need of her parents to have a wonderfully lovable offspring. To be difficult within the context of her family was a great relief. It was reassuring to find that she could be hateful, and she very carefully ensured that she would develop into something of an eccentric, taking respite in her mother's warnings to friends – 'Oh, don't expect Paula to warm to you, she's a rather nasty sort of little girl, aren't you Paula?' – because she was insured against the parental need to extol her virtues and draw her into the depersonalized space of their idealized daughter. We can see how being hateful, if only in this modest 'pain-in-the-neck' way, may be a defence against the destructive valency of certain forms of love. Being hateful allowed Paula to conserve a sense of self, whereas being lovable would have jeopardized the integrity of her own identity.

It is also possible to see how in the transference Paula spoke to me rather like her mother spoke to her. It is not without irony that this seemingly rejecting mother was the safer object, while the all-embracing mother was worrying. In being the hateful object, Paula identified with the rejecting element in the mother's character, a part of the mother that she could actually use and rely upon: the mother who does accept and cognize rejection and has some capacity for differentiated living. By being a difficult child, Paula brought out certain latent features of the mother's personality, in particular her narcissistic anger: 'Oh, the hell with you, if you don't want me, then just be difficult.' It is this

mother that Paula can love. It is this mother with whom Paula can identify, so that we can see how her eccentric character, in which she cultivates being a pain in the neck to her friends, is both a reflection of what she brought out in the mother and that part of the mother with which she was able to identify. This is a positive use of hate, if we take into consideration the peculiar circumstances of this family's idiom. It allows in this instance for a child to enjoy qualified love of the partly differentiated mother.

'OH, THANK GOD WE HATE EACH OTHER. I FEEL SO FREE.'

From Jane I have learned of another form of loving hate. Not content to be a pain in the neck, she has sought out a partner who will reciprocate her passion for destructive activity. She and Charles typically enjoy a few days of quite intense affection for one another. He brings her flowers, she cooks him wonderful meals, they have a lazy Sunday reading through the day's newspapers, they go to the movies and enjoy discussing the film, and they make love with considerable passion. After a few days of this, each of them seems to feel slightly uncomfortable with the way things are going. 'Too good to be true' shifts imperceptibly into 'it's not true to be so good'. Jane feels a sense of oppression after a spell of getting on well with Charles. She has a sense of reliving that destiny set for her in her childhood when she was the family's 'nice' girl who would, according to her mother's oft-verbalized dream, 'marry a nice man'. For a substantial period of her childhood, she was oppressed by her own premature ego development (James, 1960), which had evolved into a false-self disorder by latency. As a model child, she cannot recall ever having been a problem to either parent, and in adolescence she would either have become suddenly delinquent or had a breakdown were it not for the fact that both parents (as we shall see) acted this out for her.

Jane was never in any doubt about why she needed to hate Charles. If everything was too good to be true from her point of view, then she would undo the sense of impending doom by becoming outrageously contentious and inspiring an almighty row with her partner. By hating Charles with a passion and by being hateful in turn, Jane felt more fully established as a person and more fully exhibited. It was as if she were saying: 'Here I am, mother: look at me! Look!' And watching the externalization of hate was a significant feature of Jane and Charles' festivals of black passion. Standing in the kitchen, Charles would watch as she would pick up a dish and with careful and deliberate aim throw it at him. She would watch as he, in turn, would fill a cup full of water and with equally measured accuracy pitch it at her. Sometimes crying, sometimes screaming, and often laughing, in a short period of time they would almost destroy their flat. Exhausted, they would collapse on the bed or on the floor, leave each other alone for a period of time (it varied from a few minutes to a few hours), and then make up.

When she first reported these incidents to me, Jane did so with considerable embarrassment. She expected that I would disapprove. Instead I said on first hearing about this, 'It seems that you enjoy these fights'; and, in great relief, she said: 'I do. I don't know what I would do if he couldn't hate me the way he does. It's such a relief! And he is so sweet. Even when he throws things at me, I love him. But I love hating him too. I need to do it. I couldn't stand it otherwise.'

Jane came from a family which prided itself on its calm and rational approach to life. Each member of this rather large family was quite an apparent extrovert and, as a group, they threw themselves into shared interests, hobbies and adventures (such as moving from one country to the next). Their ostensible individual strength and their collective heartiness were sufficient for quite some time to conceal an underlying inability to achieve intimacy. If any member of the family was in distress or trouble, the difficulty would be known only through the report of persons outside the group. Jane can remember feeling terribly oppressed by the family's nature, and when the entire system collapsed, she experienced the family breakdown with mixed feelings. When the parents had a ferocious row and the children felt a collective paralysis as they heard accusations being thrown back and forth

between mother and father, Jane can recall feeling both terrified and relieved. A sense of 'my God, what is happening, and how are we going to survive this?' was countered with another feeling: 'Thank God, I am not the only one who feels this whole system stinks. They do too!'

In a very brief period of time, the father left and married a person totally different from his previous wife, and Jane's mother changed from being an energetic, outgoing woman to a frenzied, vengeful person who was determined to get even with 'that son of a bitch'. In some ways both parents acted out and expelled a family false-self system, but Jane could not participate in this primitive actualization of other parts of the self, since she was then absorbed in looking after her mother, who continuously asserted, 'You children, God bless you, are all that I have in this world'.

In her parents' homes, Jane is still a model person. She cannot get angry with her mother or father, and she fails to establish any of her own privately developed interests if they meet with parental opposition. It is only in her relation to Charles and in the clinical space that she can express the primitive parts of herself.

Her occasional need to love Charles with passionate hate amounts to an unsuccessful attempt to fuse love and hate, and to bring unintegrated areas of the self into greater proximity to another. She dreads being captured into becoming that false self of her childhood to which she reverts when she is with her family of origin. Passionately expressed hate reassures her that she isn't capitulating into being a compliant self, and Charles' participation in loving hate safeguards the infant self's right to be heard and expressed within the adult world. Thus loving hate can both conserve the integrity of the self and keep object relating alive and true.

'AT LEAST I CAN HATE YOU – YOU'RE ALL I'VE GOT.'

George's hate is comprised of an intensely nourished feeling that he is neglected by people. He records each moment of slight with meticulous care and takes considerable pleasure in storing up the evidence to use against the offending object in some imagined eventual confrontation. At the same time, his microscopic observation of the other's disposition towards him does give him a certain knowledge of the other's personality and, at times, he is aware of the non-malignant, even good, portions of the other's being. Such recognitions are distressing to him, and he often attempts to rid himself of such perceptions.

In the course of his analysis, it became clear that his intimate knowing of a hated other, often giving rise to feelings of déjà vu, was of course composed of his own projections. This other has to be made up of split-off parts of George's self, because his mother's absence in his early life did not give him sufficient sense of the other to facilitate generative introjections. A generative introjection is one in which the infant takes in a part of the mother, so that when it is linked up internally with a drive, and when the infant re-projects the introject, it matches up with the intrinsic characteristics of the mother, thus enabling the child to feel in some form of harmony with the outside world. George had to construct the mother out of a vacuum – rather than introject that which was there – and as her absences were so frequent, that which George tended to project into the mental space of 'mother' were those moods in himself that were created by her absences. We can say that if a mother is an insufficient selfobject – and in George's case the mother was a withdrawn and depressed woman who avoided maternal care by immersing herself in her professional life – then the child must form some kind of alternate selfobject that is most likely to be composed of projected self states, such as isolation, despair, helplessness, frustration and rage. In forming an object that contains these affects (Bion, 1962), the child constructs an object through loving hate. He dreads desertion, and although he may feel intense hatred for the mother, he also treasures her, as she is all he has.

In that loving hate that characterizes George's contemporary object relations, he aims to make the object indebted to him forever. He looks forward to that day when the other acknowledges wrongdoing. The wish is not for justice, but for a confession that

gives him unconditional licence to regress into dependency upon the other. As I have suggested, the ultimate aim of this form of hate, therefore, is a kind of loving merger with the object. This is why the hated object must not be destroyed – indeed, why it must be protected against true harm. George was in fact a staunch defender and protector of his mother, and he rarely talked about her except in glowing terms during the first year of his analysis. Nevertheless these positive feelings suddenly collapsed quite dramatically, revealing a very private and secretive hateful relation to her. He really knew very little about her, but insisted upon maintaining a sense of intimacy through detailed observations of her, which filled him with private loathing. Not a courtly love. A courtly hate.

THE NEGATIVE SELF-OBJECT

In addition to the examples I have given above, it is possible to talk about one other exceedingly common expression of loving hate in the clinical setting. I will not give a case example, but instead I will discuss the intent of that person who seeks to be an irritant to the analyst – to get under the analyst's skin – in order to compel the analyst to hate him. There are certain persons who feel that until the analyst can hate them, and until they can see evidence of such hate, there is a risk that they will never have been known. It is through hate evoked in the analyst that this kind of person seeks to achieve his sort of intimacy with the clinician. It is when the clinician's steady state of mind and even temper break down under the weight of the patient's negativity that the analysand takes hope; for it is there, in that moment when he sees the analyst's hesitation or senses his frustration, that he feels himself in rapport with the analyst. In that state there is a sense of merging with the analyst, whose even-mindedness until then – even when he is being empathic and sympathetic – has felt like a refusal, a rebuff.

This person wants to convert the analyst into a negative object. He aims to find his double in the analyst's frame of mind, and has constructed a negative self-object, that is, an object not differentiated from himself but carrying his projections and identifications. Although as far as I know Kohut intended his term 'selfobject' to be used for those psychic situations in which no differentiation exists between self and object, the sort of person I am describing does recognize difference. It is more accurate to say, perhaps, that these people seek to convert a differentiated object into a non-differentiated one, and this is accomplished through loving hate. Each is in fact split according to corresponding splits in the ego: one part of the individual recognizes the object's independence, while another part of the ego assumes self and object to be fused. It is only when negative self-objects are formed that the person feels in rapport with the other. A differentiated object is in some ways a lost object or a non-object.

People of this type are object seekers, even if that which they find or create is a negative self-object. It is my view that the concept of the death instinct, insofar as hate is concerned, should be reserved for those individuals who seek to destroy objects in order to live in an objectless world. I do think a form of hate can be identified which is in the service of a death instinct, and I am of the view that certain forms of autism in children reflect this wish to annihilate the object world in order to be returned to the pre-object world.

Some families are fundamentally cold and unloving. For varying reasons the parents find it next to impossible either to love their children, or more to the point, to demonstrate their love and also their lovableness. A child who is raised in a milieu of this kind discovers that his loving impulses and gestures are not mirrored in a positive way by the parent. The child's ordinary positive aggression and love are not validated by the parent. Instead such parents may interpret the child's aggressive libidinal cathexis of themselves as an insult or as an indication of a moral defect. These people may be exceedingly rigid, or very religious, or particularly sour in their being. Whatever the reason for the nature of their own family style, such parents refuse to celebrate their children, and are instead constantly finding fault with them and in some cases seem drawn to conflict. Gradually, the child loses his belief in love and in loving. Instead, ordinary hate

establishes itself as the fundamental truth of life. The child experiences the parents' refusal of love and their constant aloofness or harshness as hate, and he or she in turn finds his or her most intense private cathexis of the parents to be imbued with hate.

To some extent, these children sense the parents' need to hate. Disinclined, perhaps, to tamper with a system, and curiously reassured by being the object of intense feeling, such children may become consistently hateful. To be cathected by a parent, even to the point of becoming a reliable negative self-object for him or her, is a primary aim for children, as their true dread is that of being unnoticed and left for dead.

When a person's hate is destructive of his internal objects, we know that the emptiness he feels is due to his destructive activity. With his internal objects mangled or useless, there is nothing of value left, and he will feel only the deadness of the annihilated objects or the emptiness of an evacuated space. The precise opposite is true, however, of those persons I am discussing. Children who are reared by cold and unloving parents find that hate is a form of object relation, and they hate the object in order not to destroy it, but to preserve and maintain it. Hate emerges not as a result of the destruction of internal objects, but as a defence against emptiness. Indeed, it represents an effort to emerge from this vacuum into object relating.

These children may suffer from a kind of vacuum anxiety, a state created by intense isolation. Affective life is so meagre that objects are only dimly cathected. Such a person has a sense of losing the remnants of psychic life, of fearing the termination of affective existence altogether. Although this anxiety may have different causes and may evolve in different ways according to varying ego defences, such an individual finds that by annoying someone or by inspiring hate in the other he has been provisionally guaranteed a psychic life.

RETROSPECTIVE MIRRORING

There is another form of family idiom that sponsors a particular kind of hate. Some families are emotionally shallow. The parents may be unusally concerned with creating a 'happy family'. A certain kind of superficial support is provided, but core emotional issues are avoided and channelled through a kind of pseudo-sublimation. If a child is acting out some distress, a parent might typically say, 'that's not done here', or 'cut it out right now'. Since there is no effort to investigate why the child is misbehaving, the behaviour is never allowed a symbolic elaboration, for example by means of explanation to the mother. Instead the families rely upon stereotypical speech patterns to control the children. As such, these patients report family clichés as if they were life-defining categories, and they are unusually impoverished in their own relation to themselves as objects of perception and interest. They cannot elaborate an internal experience. If asked how they feel they are surprisingly inarticulate and will resort to a cluster of clichés, such as, 'uh, I dunno, I'm kind of down' or 'I've had it, you know, I'm going to be number one now'. Although the clinicians know what the person means, or at least can make a fairly good guess, language does not serve to communicate, but instead to discharge the self of tension. Thus an effort to inquire why someone doesn't feel himself to be 'number one' any more yields only further substitutive clichés.

Such people may also resort to sudden action. If angered by a friend, they may 'write him off'. If a love relation goes wrong they can find another partner with comparative ease, and they can do so amid a culture that supports the replacement of an old part(ner) with a new one. One does not get the impression that they have the ego ability to cope with their own narcissistic injury and aggression.

True love was never a real possibility for such people given the nature of their family life. In subtle ways the parents did not provide enough characterological presence for the child to settle his loving feelings. As curiosity about oneself or the other is not encouraged, the children become deficient in techniques of ordinary insight and self-reflection.

It is curious, then, that parental anger and the sudden emergence of hate may be the only deep experiences in which parent

and child are mutually engaged. They rarely take place during childhood, but are exceedingly commonplace in adolescence, when conflict with a parent can create an atmosphere of fear and violence. Typically, the family atmosphere, which has previously been superficially harmonious, breaks down. An early adolescent discovers that his mother has become furious with him. An overly constrained mother or exceptionally composed father might all of a sudden, when angry, say things otherwise deleted from the family vocabulary and the family's sense of its own being. In order to feel increased contact with the parent, the child may cultivate hate. For in doing so, he discovers that the parents will give signals about their private and often confused experience of their offspring.

In one case, for example, an eleven-year-old girl angered her mother by being rebellious. This led the mother to call her a selfish little bitch, an outburst which surprised the girl, but which also excited her. In this instance she had caught mother out of her ordinary self. She knew that to push mother more would yield both more of mother and more of mother's experience of herself as daughter. Using the veil of innocence by appearing oblivious to mother's reason for being cross, the child inspired the mother to recall many previous occasions when the child had annoyed her. Again the child experienced this interchange with mixed feelings. The mother's response was rather frightening, but it was also exciting, and beyond that it was interesting. For in mother's enumeration of all the times when she felt internally critical of her daughter, her child found images of herself within the mother.

This recollection of the child is a form of retrospective mirroring, which is an ordinary form of object relation. Reflecting with a child on his or her past (selves) gives a child a chance to see how he was and to keep in touch with this phenomenon we call 'self'. But retrospective mirroring may be the primary form of feedback that a child gets from a parent about his specific nature; when a parent lists observations about the child, a child has the sense of having been seen by the parent, which may be an unusual and gratifying experience. This need to feel seen may be so compelling that a child continues to provoke parental hate just to have negative intimacy and retrospective mirroring.

Erikson's concept of 'negative identity' (1968) is not unrelated to the formation of a negative self-object and the abuse of retrospective mirroring. He claims that negative identity is 'perversely based on all those identifications and roles which, at critical stages of development, had been presented to them as most undesirable or dangerous and yet also most real' (p. 174). It is not difficult to see how a late adolescent may assume a negative identity in order to be what his parents have dissociated from human life, and he may compel the parent to act out aspects of his own negative identity. In so doing he urges the parent to become a negative self-object, one in which there is little psychological differentiation between the teenager's hate and the parent's. In such an interaction the teenager may feel strangely closer to his parent than ever before, and the parent may wish to rid himself of the adolescent not because he cannot bear his behaviour, but because he cannot bear the intimacy of the relationship and refuses the claim being made by the child for this closeness.

LOVING HATE: A PERVERSION?

Those persons who are drawn towards being hateful and who cultivate the passion of hate alert us to the possibility of a perverse object relation. Stoller (1976) has argued convincingly that perversion is the erotic form of hate and that, in assessing whether an object relation is perverse or not, one must ascertain whether or not the subject desires to harm the other. Is this the aim of loving hate: to harm the other? It certainly looks this way. We can add that, as loving hate appears to be a singular mode of cathecting the object, the range of affects is impoverished, thus alerting us to another feature typical of the perversions. Finally, we can point to the stereotypical and repetitive nature of loving hate; it seems that the person aims to create an object relation through an affect rather than find an other and develop affective life in harmony with increasing intimacy. Does this not suggest a dehumanization

of the other, a point which Khan (1964) stresses in his definition of perversion as a drive to alienate the object from true contact with one's inner life?

In my view, we are once more called upon to ask whether the outcome of a psychic activity necessarily defines the intention, for it is true to say that the forms of hate I have discussed, and term 'loving hate', may harm the other or alienate the other. But Stoller and Khan are careful to define the perverse as the intention to harm or to distance the object, and it is my view that the primary aim of loving hate is to get closer to the object. Further, we know that in the perversions, the subject uses a scenario to close down the possibility of surrender to affective life, while in loving hate the person surrenders to affect.

8 *Normotic illness*

WHEN Winnicott wrote that 'it is creative apperception more than anything else that makes the individual feel that life is worth living' (1971, p. 71), he was aware that psychoanalysis focuses on those disturbances in human subjectivity that make creative living difficult. As if to gesture towards a different pathway of disturbance, he suggested another axis of illness.

> People may be leading satisfactory lives and may do work that is even of exceptional value and yet may be schizoid or schizophrenic. They may be ill in a psychiatric sense because of a weak reality sense. To balance this one would have to state that there are others who are so firmly anchored in objectively perceived reality that they are ill in the opposite direction of being out of touch with the subjective world and with the creative approach to fact. (1971, p. 78)

I believe that we are witness either to the emergence of a new emphasis within personal illness or we are just getting around to perceiving an element in personality that has always been with us. This element is a particular drive to be normal, one that is typified by the numbing and eventual erasure of subjectivity in favour of a self that is conceived as a material object among other man-made products in the object world.

We are attending an increasing number of disturbances in personality which may be characterized by partial deletions of the subjective factor. Therefore, we write of 'blank selves' (Giovacchini, 1972), 'blank psychoses' (Donnet and Green, 1973), and an 'organizing personality' (Hedges, 1983). The effort to explore selected features of these personalities can be found in the work of Masud Khan (1974, 1979), André Green (1973), Donnet and Green (1986) and Robert Stoller (1973, 1976). Such

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