

***PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
A TEXTBOOK***

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INTRODUCTORY UNIT

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INTRODUCTION

To be a parent is among the most complicated and taxing jobs in the world. It is a serious, complex and demanding job. The fact is that more people work as parents, have the job of parenting, than do any other kind of work. Yet, as we all know, it is the one job which requires a great deal of technical knowledge and skills for which no formal training is required and no education is formally imparted. **We have found that there is much teachable knowledge and many teachable skills in parenting.**

Many people know, and yet too many do not, that the simplest tasks a parent performs for the baby, feeding, bathing, diapering, carry with them emotional experiences which have a profound effect on the developing personality of the infant. The effect does not stop with these tasks, nor with this infant. The gradually built up awareness of being a loved and valued person, will enhance the child's total personality and emotional development and will enable the child to become a loving parent in his/her turn. In parenting, probably more than in other jobs, there are reverberations down the generations, for better or for worse.

People know a great deal about raising children. This is especially so of those who have them. Species-preservative instincts -- both sexual and parenting ones --, identifications with (being like) our own parents and other adults we love and have loved and admired while growing up, are factors that powerfully influenced our almost "natural" capabilities to rear our children. This is why everyone seems to have opinions and even set views on how to handle a child who is fussing and causing embarrassment to his mother in the supermarket.

However, it should be known that enormously valuable resources such as our instincts, our family experiences, our traditional folkways are, we cannot always be sure that they will help us as we wish. For example, it is well known by child development specialists, clinicians in the mental health field, that our parenting instincts -- and there are some who argue against our having such instincts -- are generally modified if not interfered with by normal human experiencing, normal adaptive psychological repressions, and by our average expectable everyday experiencing. Even good family experiences may at times be unintentionally growth-inhibiting. And rich, as traditional folkways are, some of these also are growth-inhibiting and hurtful. Take for instance the dogma that "the woman must stay at home!"

Fifteen years of observation of pre-school children accompanying their mothers and infant siblings to developmental research and parent education groups, have shown us that little children have a very early and strong interest in babies and in parenting functions and roles. Our research and observations of these led to a collaborative pilot project with Germantown Friends School in Philadelphia. A flexible curriculum in education for parenting was set up, involving not only high school students, but also

children of elementary school and of kindergarten age. Included in this training were age-adjusted classroom studies in **parenting, human development, and child rearing**, which included especially **live laboratory** observations. The observations were provided in several ways. One of these (developed by Mrs. Sara Scattergood and her co-workers) was having an expectant mother meet with a class to share her knowledge and some of her experiences about the intrauterine development of the baby, as well as the parents' preparation for the new family member; then, the mother brought her baby to the class at intervals after so that its physical and emotional development could be observed and studied directly by the students. Students were also observers of a mother-infant group (led by our Medical College of Pennsylvania-Eastern Pennsylvania Psychiatric Institute Team [MCP-EPPI Team]) which met weekly at the school to discuss issues in parenting. The experience at Germantown Friends School and at a number of other schools made possible by Sara Scattergood and her collaborators, demonstrated dramatically that girls and boys at all age levels take the domain of parenting and its study seriously and with enthusiasm; they are eager to learn what babies and young children are like, and how to function as a mother or a father. It is the conviction of our Education for Parenting staff that there is a body of knowledge which can be shared, and can help these young people prepare better for this most important work.

This Textbook: The Emotional Sector of Parenting: Toward Rearing Emotionally Healthy Children

This Textbook is not a total Education for Parenting Curriculum. It does not address a number of important areas of concern for parents such as Home Economics with its many everyday concerns and functions; nor do we address normal physical development, its health and common ills; nor do we focus on the way children learn. This Textbook addresses that sector of human experience (and parenting) we know as mental health, or as emotional or psychological development. It is not a course on emotional disorders.

Also, this Textbook does not attempt to be definitive. We do not believe that the definitive textbook is feasible, certainly not now, and perhaps it never will be. One reason it cannot be done now is that human development is a young field study that is growing by leaps and bounds. It is a domain of study that is wide open, can only suffer by dogma, and seems to hold few axioms. Our position is that much is already known which had held up to testing and is essential information for parents to know. Therefore, this textbook can be highly serviceable, can be a basis for future work; but it is modifiable, and we hope that it will continue to be developed and revised as new information becomes available.

In addition, even in addressing only the sector that is emotional development, the contents entered in this textbook are incomplete. Many behaviors and explanatory concepts are not presented. We feel that it is not necessary to discuss every behavior or hypothesis known. We have found and believe that by making key observations and discussing common everyday behaviors and issues, the student will learn and become

equipped to observe, try to account for and understand all aspects of behavior, rearing, and parenting--even those they have not seen before.

Why Education for Parenting and Why Such Education for Children

In Chapter 1 we detail a number of reasons why Education for Parenting is warranted, why it can serve parents and future parents. Essentially, in the course of our work with parents and their children we have found that even good parents often do not understand well enough their children's behaviors and needs. As a result, to their dismay and at times their children's detriment, they are at times at a loss to know how to carry out their parenting in a growth-promoting way.

In the course of our work we have found that there is much factual information on matters essential to growth-promoting parenting which parents have not had the opportunity to learn which is readily teachable. And, we have found that many aspects of parenting can be taught and can be enhanced by it, much to the benefit of both parents and their children.

In presenting why such education should be imparted to children **from the early grades on**, we cite (1) the wishes parents have expressed for getting information about parenting **before** they become parents, (2) the knowledge mental health professionals have that young children are deeply interested in parenting, especially in its caretaking aspects, (3) the possibility that informing youth of the many difficult aspects of parenting may help to prevent premature teenage pregnancies, and (4) the fact that it is advantageous that education for parenting be assimilated over the course of years of thought and study. The implications of such education for the prevention of experience-derived emotional disorders are large. And finally, we also note that Educators at high administrative national levels have strongly endorsed the development of education for parenting programs over the past fifteen years.

A Laboratory Type Curriculum

The authors place much emphasis on the fact that this textbook serves a laboratory type of curriculum (See Parenting for Emotional Growth: A Curriculum for Students in Grades K thru 12). By this we mean that the students must be exposed to live observation of children and their parents to document and test the concepts contained in this textbook and curriculum. Much experience with parents and their children shows that direct observations tend to reveal more than most people expect to find in children. Such observations also train the student not only to observe better but also to make efforts to understand the meaning of the behavior they see, and help them test preferred explanations for that behavior. Also, much valuable theory is doubted and rejected by many people until they see it in the live child and parent.

Education for Parenting: Three Subdomains of Study

In the course of developing this work, our curriculum development team (which originally was constituted of 3 child psychiatrists-psychoanalysts, 3 social workers, and 3 teachers) came to recognize that, as a domain of study parenting is highly complex. Our task was both facilitated and better organized when we elected to compartmentalize some of the concepts and issues of parenting which we examined. We, therefore, proposed to catalogue issues and address them usefully in 3 subdomains: (1) parenthood, (2) human development, (3) child rearing, and methods. Although there of course is overlap and interplay among the three subdomains, each requires a different perspective and context which allows parenting to be better explained and better understood.

How We Present The Material In This Textbook and the Curriculum:

This curriculum consists of two parts: a **Textbook** and a set of **Lesson Plans** which includes a **Manual of Laboratory Observations** for the high school level. Our Lesson Plans are intended to be models only; teachers should tailor these according to their best judgment. There are Lesson Plans for all grades, from K thru 12. The authors' aim is to make the Lesson Plans and their contents correspond to the Units and Sections (Issues) in the Textbook. First, there are several introductory chapters, one on education for parenting and one for each subdomain, parenthood, human development, and child rearing.

Then, the main body of both Textbook and Lesson Plans consist of a set of **Units**, one for each stage of development through childhood and adolescence. These stages of development are consonant with and modeled on several well defined psychodynamic theories of child development, proposed respectively by Freud and Abraham, Erikson and Mahler. Other theoretical concepts and constructions can easily be introduced into this set of developmental periods.

Each **Unit** is a more or less defined developmental stage, most closely resembling the model proposed by Erikson. That is, Unit 1 addresses the first year of life; Unit 2 addresses the second and third years of life; then Unit 3 addresses the period extending from the fourth through the sixth year of life; Unit 4 is on the elementary school years, that is, from about 6 to 10; then Unit 5 addresses the prepubertal period, from 10 to 13 years; and finally, Unit 6 is on adolescence, from about 12 or 13 to about 19 or 20 years of age.

Each Unit of the Textbook and corresponding Lesson Plans addresses a series of **Issues** most relevant for that age period. Each **Issue** in turn is viewed from two standpoints: first from the vantage point of **human development**, then from that of **child rearing**, and where pertinent, also from that of **parenthood**.

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INTRODUCTORY UNIT

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INTRODUCTORY UNIT

CHAPTER 1

EDUCATION FOR PARENTING

Good and Not So Good Parenting

In all cultures and all times, there have been children who have grown up to be happily adjusted, contributing members of their society; there have been others who have grown up to be unhappy, unduly emotionally troubled and/or have caused serious problems to others. We assume that hereditary and constitutional factors do not account for all the differences between the two groups. Professionals concerned with such issues have long proposed that in most instances the parenting received by the first group differs in critical ways from that received by the second.

Beyond the parenting instinct with which we may be endowed, there are some parents who appear to be experts. They enjoy their jobs, solve well the complex snags and difficulties they bring, cope well with the frustrations, and turn out well adjusted, productive, and capable delightful children. Somehow they seem to know what to do in most situations. A new parent observing them could learn much. However, it is dismaying to find that the handling which has worked well with one mother and child, may not be successful when adopted by another mother and her infant. It even happens that the excellent advice given in "how-to-do-it" books may work with one parent and fail with another who may be equally intelligent and concerned.

Why does the seemingly same technique or tactic work well for one parent-child pair and not for another? Without covering all the issues at play, here are some reasons. One is that the effectiveness of what the parent does, which is responsible for the child's reaction, does not reside only in the actual maneuver carried out by the parent; much depends on **how**, **why**, and **when** the maneuver is carried out. Emotional attitude, rationale and timing are important factors that determine whether the tactic employed will succeed or fail.

Another reason, possibly the most basic, that makes for effective and growth-promoting parenting is that of "understanding the child". Understanding the meaning of the child's behavior gives the parent a positive and rational framework by which to determine what the parent can do to achieve a growth-promoting intervention; it makes good timing for an intervention not just a matter of chance, and also tends to enhance positively the parent's attitude. Not understanding the child makes parents rely too

heavily on trial and error child rearing -- and too many errors in these efforts can mount up to be costly.

Still another reason is that every parent-child relationship is unique, that it is the sum of many more variables and their combinations than we have heretofore assumed. Individual variations in temperament and patterns of development make it necessary that the parents become attuned to his/her own particular infant. For example, all children enjoy being played with by their parents. However, if one parent, observing the happy gurgling of his neighbor's baby when being lifted high into the air, does this same thing with his/her own, the child may burst into frightened tears. His/her own baby, on the other hand, may respond most cheerfully to a (richly meaningful) gentle peek-a-boo game.

Understanding the child's needs, experiencing and behavior being able to empathize with one's child, the child's temperament and patterns of development, parental emotional attitude, rationale and appropriate timing of parental interventions, are but a few of the many factors that make for success in child rearing and fulfilling parenting.

But, you may wonder, just what do we mean by "parenting"?

What is Parenting?

Definition: Parenting is the work a person performs which aims to establish and maintain an environment and conditions in which that person's child can achieve his/her optimal personality, emotional and physical development. It is a unique kind of work in which the parent and the child interact mutually, and where it succeeds, both parent and child thrive and grow. It is unique because we experience this work differently from whatever other work we do. It is also unique because the subject of this work, the child, is valued in a specific and special way by parents.

The work of parenting is serious, complex, and demanding. While it is governed by stable principles and conditions, the work of parenting is in a continuing state of change, indeed, it evolves; this is because of the fact that as the child grows, parenting functions change according to the status of the child's developmental needs and adaptive capabilities.

Parenting is a Serious, Complex, and Demanding Job

Serious:

Parenting is a serious job by virtue of several factors. First of all, a human life depends on it. Human development is importantly influenced by the parents, by the way the parents exercise their parenting functions. It is especially important to recognize that the human personality is structured in its basic forms in early childhood. The first six years of life are believed by most child development specialists to be the most important for the development of the personality because it is the period during which the foundation and basic elements of the personality are established. Although highly important developments do occur after 6 years of age, basic personality patterns become

quite stable and can be changed only by rather important experiences and extreme conditions.

Secondly, parenting is a serious job because one can do a great deal of good in rearing children and equally one can do a great deal of harm. Often, unfortunately, harm is done without meaning to do so by parents who love their children and who want the best for them. This harm is done simply because even well meaning parents often do not understand their children's needs, nor their children's behaviors. One is tempted to ask how it is that parents who were once children themselves at times do not understand their own children whom they love? Because human development brings with it many pressures to do things, many wishes, many fantasies which the child himself/herself disapproves of, much of our early life experience is pushed out of awareness, that is, it is repressed, it is made unconscious. For example, when a child experiences hate toward a much loved person, the child experiences that hate as an undesirable and frightening feeling and may suppress, deny, or repress it in order to not be aware of experiencing that feeling. It is especially on the basis of such rejection of one's own feelings, fantasies, and wishes--which we all experience in childhood--that much childhood experience is repressed or made unconscious. This makes our past feelings, fantasies and experiences seemingly unrememberable. Because of this, many parents do not remember much that they felt, wished, fantasized, and thought when they were young children, and are thereby robbed of feeling and knowing what the average, normal, healthy young child experiences.

Thirdly, parenting is a serious job as viewed from the following vantage point. If the development of every single human individual is dependent on the character and quality of the parenting she/he experiences, and society is made up of individual human beings, we can see by induction that the character of society is determined significantly by the parenting we do. In this sense, we can say that civilization is in the hands of parents. It was pointed out by Sigmund Freud that parents are the representatives of civilization to their children. For these reasons, and still others, parenting is extremely serious work.

Complex:

Human parenting is a complex job because the task of parenting is carried out on an organism that is extremely complex. Although human beings all have similar basic physical, psychological and emotional needs, similar fundamental internal pressures, conscious and unconscious fantasies and wishes; nonetheless, within the framework of these similarities there is a great range of individual variations. The variations from one person to another, from one child to another, have to be recognized and understood by parents.

In this sense, not all children experience their basic physical, psychological and emotional needs in the same way, to the same degree, with the same frequency at the same rate of needing gratification. Some children, for example, are much more active than others from birth on. Some children, from birth on, have a much lower frustration tolerance than others. This type of child will experience waiting for mother to prepare to

feed her/him with much greater difficulty, experiencing much more quickly rising tension and pain; that child will experience the waiting with more turmoil, and the mother will feel pressured by the infant's higher-level of demandingness and tend to fulfill her function of feeding more quickly than with a quieter, calmer child. Some children at the other extreme of inborn temperament may be unusually slow in their demand for gratification of their needs. They tend to experience their needs very slowly and may indeed suffer from too slow a demandingness, and an experienced talented mother will recognize the need to encourage such a child to be more active and, in some children, even to feed earlier than the child may demand.

Another complexity is that although children follow **the same basic patterns** of physical, psychological and emotional development, one phase of development following another **in the same sequence** in all children, the individual **schedule**, or the timing, of phase progression and development will vary from one child to the next. In fact, we can only speak of **ranges** of normal development for any one particular aspect of physical, psychological or emotional development to take place. One child may, for example, begin to walk quite normally at 9 or 10 months of age; another equally normal child may begin to walk at 12 or 16 months of age. In this sense every child has his/her own schedule of maturation, most within a normal range.

As was mentioned earlier, human parenting is made especially complex by the fact that growth brings with it continually changing conditions for parenting. For instance, you cannot parent or deal with a 3 month old infant as you have to deal with a 3 year old child; nor can you deal with a 3 year old child as with an 8 year old, or a 17 year old. In this sense, when we say that human beings are dependent on another human being during the entire course of life, we obviously do not mean that the one year old child is dependent in the same way and for the same functions on another human being as is a 12 year old child or a 20 year old, 35 year old, or a 70 year old person.

Of all mammals, the human infant is considered the most immature and helpless at birth. His or her childhood and adolescence is the most prolonged among mammals. Humans are also considered the most complex class among animals. Because of that prolonged childhood helplessness and dependence, human parenting has to be carried out for nearly 2 decades, during which enormous growth occurs, from infancy to late adolescence. Because growth brings with it continually changing conditions for parenting, requiring continually evolving forms of parenting functions, the task is complex and difficult.

Another critical factor that adds to the complexity of parenting is that a parent has to sort out what is going on in the child and act in different ways, depending on the different conditions governing the child's behavior and needs at a given moment. In this sense, in limit setting for instance, a parent at one moment has to know to be lenient, and at another moment to hold the line. Another complexity is in having to weigh the needs of a given situation, for example, deciding whether the parent will play with a child at a given time, or have to say that he/she is busy now and cannot give the child the attention the child now seems to need. It is not always easy to sort out one's priorities.

Another common complexity in parenting arises out of the parents' need often to deal with more than one child at a time. Also making it complex, is the fact that the

parent at times functions as an individual with relation to a child, and at other times functions as one of a pair of parents. In this, many times loving and mutually respecting parents may disagree on how to handle a given situation; although this can be resolved, it too adds difficulty to the work of parenting.

Demanding:

As everyone knows, parenting work is a 24 hour a day responsibility. It is especially demanding for the parent, usually the mother, who stays home with the child and has the larger share of responsibility in taking care of a child during the day. Even when a parent does not spend so many hours a day at it, the work carries with it the unique emotional ingredient that what the parent does affects her/his own child directly. This means that although most of us are concerned with the quality of the work we do, no other job has the feature of having a direct impact on someone in whom we emotionally invest so much as one does in one's own child. The degree to which parents can be objective in their functions of parenting is known to be limited. Whereas one can be objective about working with a case in court, or repairing an automobile, or teaching students in class, or driving a truck, or delivering mail, and want to do a good job, in none of these instances do we experience the kind of emotional investment in the end product of the job as in parenting. In very few instances do we feel as much shame, guilt, and responsibility as when we do, or think we do, an unsatisfactory job in parenting our own children.

Another factor that makes parenting a demanding job is that a great deal of factual information is required for dealing well with one's child. One must know facts about a child's needs, about a child's development, about what is appropriate and what is not appropriate, what is growth-promoting and what is growth-disturbing. Although the great amount of **knowledge** that parents must have makes their job a demanding one, not having that knowledge makes it even more difficult for parents to meet their responsibilities.

In addition to knowledge, parenting also requires **skills**. In addition to knowing much about children's development and needs, one must also be able to carry out our parenting functions in effective and constructive ways. At times parents understand some elements of child development but are at a loss to know how to best handle these with regard to their child.

Parenting is further demanding in that it requires a great deal of **patience**, and that no one has enough patience all the time in dealing with one's own child. A large part of this comes from the fact that one's child, makes demands of an emotional nature which increase the fear of making mistakes. The parent may be anxious and then uncertain about the child's demands. This makes the parent less self-assured and more vulnerable to not having enough patience. The demand for patience is so great, that we can categorically say that no parent has enough patience to always deal optimally with his/her child.

In addition to the enormous demands for patience, parenting often also requires **putting off or bypassing the gratification of some of the parent's own needs**. In

performing effectively as a parent, it is essential to weigh the degree to which the parents' needs should be gratified along with evaluating what the child's needs are at a given moment. Where the parent can judge appropriately the intensity of his/her own needs in comparison with the status of the child's need at a given time, that parent may often find that she/he will have to forego the gratification of his/her own needs because the needs of the young child just then are more intense. A general guideline is that the smaller the child, the greater is her/his needs for gratification by the parent. It is very important, however, to give **due attention and weight to the needs of the parents**; this is so even with very young children.

Because human beings tend to identify with those we love, parents quite normally to a greater or lesser degree identify with their own children. As a result, as parents we gain much pleasure from seeing our children do well, from seeing our children enjoy reasonable pleasures and be comfortable. At the same time, normal, healthy parents also tend to experience their children's pains and disappointments because of the identification they inevitably make with their own children.

Thus can see that parenting is not only a serious, complex, and demanding job, but that it is a very important job. If a loved human being's entire life, her/his well-being and pains, depend on it; if the well-being or ill-health of societies and the course of civilization depend on it; and if this job requires so much hard work, then certainly, it is an important job.

How is it, then, one wonders, that being a parent, so often is under-estimated in its importance and is undervalued? Many a woman who works hard at home rearing her children often feels that what she is doing is not enough. We still too often hear a woman say "I'm only a housewife". We still find too many men who assume that their responsibilities as fathers are not important, and may, in fact, deny they have such responsibilities and, in far too many instances, shirk them.

It is reasonable to point out that parenting can be a very gratifying job. As we said earlier, because the normal parent identifies with her/his child, when children do well it brings parents a great deal of pleasure and gratification. In addition, a job well done usually brings gratification to the person doing it. This can be readily experienced with regard to one's children as one sees them grow well. The crowning gratification in parenting generally comes to those who parent well. It is that good parenting leads to a significant sense of well-being in the normal child and it is that child who will, in due time, love and respect her/his parents.

Why Education for Parenting?

In the course of many years of observations of parents and their young children in natural interaction in parent-child groups, we have often found that even good mothers and fathers too often do not understand their children's needs and behaviors. As a result, parents frequently cannot evaluate which of their child's demands ought to be gratified and which benevolently frustrated. Perhaps 20 times a day a mother may have to decide between alternatives in handling her child's behavior without an assured feeling that the alternative she selects is a good one for her child at a given time. Of course many parents

have an excellent intuitive feel of what is good and not good for their children. This comes particularly to those who can feel within themselves the residua of their own childhood yearnings, as well as their own past growth-promoting and growth-inhibiting experiences.

Over many years of working with parents and their children, we have found that the job of parenting can be facilitated much more than both parents and concerned (mental health) professionals have realized. We have learned that **there is much factual information on matters essential to a child's good emotional (mental) health and development which parents lack and which is readily teachable.** For example, we have many times found gross misunderstanding of what **thumb-sucking** is all about, what **transitional objects** (as security blankets) do for children, what **stranger anxiety** and **separation anxiety** mean, how a child becomes a self and begins to form relationships (what the separation-individuation process achieves). Many parents know nothing about the **childhood family romance** (the Oedipus complex), what it does **for** and **to** children, how important it is to the development of morality, social conduct, and the ability to form good love relationships. Many parents do not know whether these ubiquitous phenomena are good, bad, or indifferent; nor do they know how to deal with undesirable as well as desirable elements in them.

No less surprising than the realization that a large pool of factual information should and can be made available to parents, we also learned that the average parent can be taught to understand basic facts of human emotional development, the principles that govern that development (psychodynamics), and can use such principles to guide their child rearing efforts and their parenting functions. In fact, we have found parents to be a highly motivated group of students. They, perhaps more than anyone else, know that love alone does not secure optimal enough parenting. In addition to parental love and sufficient freedom from oppressive problems, growth-promoting parenting also requires a working understanding of the nature of the child's changing needs, of her/his emotional-psychological functioning (psychodynamics) and development. In addition, it requires the achievement of **methods** and **skills** in child-rearing based on an understanding of developmentally evolving psychodynamics, and on the ability to determine **what is growth-promoting and what is growth-disturbing.**

Why Education for Parenting *for Children*?

You may wonder, "Why education for parenting **for school age children**, well before they become parents?" In the course of our work with parents, we found that they often expressed distress at not having learned earlier--about child development, the meaning of certain everyday behaviors, ways of handling puzzling or difficult or painful behaviors and events--what they were learning now. Their complaints were not trivial. They repeatedly let us know that their increasing understanding of their children made them realize that some of their past perceptions and modes of handling may have been growth-disturbing if not detrimental to their children's adaption and growth; they have often expressed the wish that they had had such instruction earlier.

But it was not just the parents' expressions that informed us of the usefulness for parents of such instruction in parenting. It also became clear that these mothers and fathers would have done better had they known some of the basic parenting facts from the beginning! Gradually we came to think that we should offer instruction before adults become parents, perhaps long before they become parents.

Mental health professionals have found that from their early years, well before kindergarten years, children show much evidence of a large interest in someday becoming a parent. Young children do not just "play" house; they experience it. And they do so seriously, a point often missed by most parents. This knowledge also contributed importantly to our thinking of education for parenting for school age children.

Also well known to all is that many teenagers, including very young ones, become mothers and fathers under the most adverse of conditions, often well before they are emotionally and economically ready to be parents, and at a time when the tasks of self-development of adolescence demand most of their energies and emotional resources. Most become parents for the wrong reasons, commonly to gratify their own dependency needs, to avoid loneliness and their own inner pressures to individuate. And they then discover that it does not work out the way they hoped it would. One cannot but wonder if knowing more about children and about the rigorous demands of child rearing might not reasonably discourage the teenager from trying to solve her/his problems by having a baby.

But perhaps the greatest thrust to our undertaking the development of an education for parenting curriculum that would address the psychological and emotional development of children comes from the conviction of our Early Child Development Program team that **education for parenting may well be the widest and most direct avenue to the prevention of many crippling emotional disorders in children and hence also in adults** (Parens, 1975, 1988). From 1976 on, our Early Child Development Program staff in collaboration with staff from the Germantown Friends School set out to study the feasibility and to develop such a curriculum for school age children, starting in the earliest grades. As mental health clinicians we know that the younger student is quite accessible to learning materials pertinent to parenting, indeed, despite some obstacles to revealing it, they have a great interest in that domain of experience and information. Although our own convictions on this matter are firm, it was helpful that in a personal communication with Anna Freud (educator and most distinguished child psychoanalyst) in 1978, Miss Freud encouraged our efforts and endorsed our view that the younger child is more receptive to parenting material, and that resistance to it is much greater in adolescents (Parens, 1988).

Thus from the early-1970s, the conviction grew among our staff that, albeit not without difficulty, formal education for parenting for school age children would be feasible and a highly promising undertaking. The thought became progressively more convincing that although we would encounter resistance, we should press for such formal parenting education to be instituted in the mainstream of our children's education.

In the course of this work, we then learned that for some years now there has been a vigorous call for education for parenting from national level **education** administrators.

According to Julie Currie (1978), S. P. Marland, Assistant Secretary for Education, HEW, in 1973 deplored the serious "consequences visited on children whose misfortune it was to be born to parents who lack even a rudimentary understanding of the emotional, nutritional, and early learning needs of the young. The condition (Marland asserted) is by no means limited to the economically disadvantaged. . . . We must strengthen the capacity of our schools and other community organizations to instruct young men and women --particularly teenagers--in the techniques and responsibilities of motherhood and fatherhood" (1973, p.3). Also, in 1975, T.H. Bell, U.S. Commissioner of Education, said that "Parenthood training must be made available to all young people -- teenage parents or just parents to be. We educators (he went on, must). . . assure that every youngster graduating from high school is competent to be a parent" (1975, unpubl.).

In 1978 in Philadelphia, Stanley Kruger, of the Department of Education-HEW, called for the development of education for parenting programs **interdisciplinary** in content and character. He called for the **collaboration of disciplines** whose domains of study and knowledge are relevant to education for parenting.

An exciting phenomenon was taking place. There was a growing recognition of the need for and, we now know, of the feasibility of formally teaching children about all aspects of parenting. Our Germantown Friends School project has made this amply clear (Parens, 1988). So has the school-based work of Sara Scattergood and Julie Curry that followed from their original start in our (MCP-EPPI Team) Education for Parenting project. Sara Scattergood's work has culminated in a module formatted curriculum for grades K thru 6, *Learning About Parenting* (Heath, Scattergood, & Meyers, 1983, revised 1988) which has been in public and private schools since the early 1980s. There are now also numerous other education for parenting courses of all kinds (many do **not** include mental health and constructive adaptation aspects), of highly variable duration (e.g., from 3-hour courses to courses of many more hours), offered in neighborhood community centers, and in some instances in high schools and in a few instances in junior high schools.

For the reasons we briefly stated before, the materials contained in this curriculum are intended to be developed into grade-appropriate courses for students **from grades K through 12**. The wealth of good mental health promoting information already available in psychiatry and psychology, the need for and advantage of children learning gradually, progressively about all aspects of parenting, including we emphasize **the optimizing of children's mental health and ability to adapt constructively**, the fact that young children are eager students of parenting, all point to the feasibility and wisdom of starting such education in the earliest school years.

What is Parenting Education for Emotional Growth?

What do we mean by **education** for parenting? We do not mean that one can instruct a student how to love a child. We can only teach that loving a child is essential to that child's well-being. We cannot teach students to respect a child. We can teach the student that being respected helps the child develop a sense of being respectable, worthwhile and lovable. We can only give students **information**, teach them **to study**

and observe their subjects (children and their parents) well, to let themselves resonate with their child-subjects' and their parent-subjects' behaviors and experiencing, and to **test explanatory concepts** as these are made available to them, in laboratory method, in the face of any given behavior.

Nor does education for parenting mean that any effort should be made to convince students that they should have children, that they should plan to someday be a parent.

To teach parenting is a complex undertaking. As a **domain of study**, parenting is vast. It can be usefully organized into **3 subdomains** of study: (1) parenthood, (2) human development, and (3) child rearing. It is important to bear in mind the overlapping and interplay between these subdomains. Many issues, if indeed not most, pertaining to the child's behavior, experiencing and needs can and should be considered from the vantage point of each perspective, that of parenthood, human development, and child rearing. We find that to examine behaviors in the context of any one of these subdomains requires the student to look and consider any given behavior from the perspective specific for each. This looking at an issue from two or three different vantage points makes for greater clarity and leads to better understanding of the issues and the tasks of parenting. For example, one can consider limit setting from the perspective of human development, from that of child rearing, and from that of parenthood, and in each instance discuss a different aspect of the same issue.

What do we have in mind when we think of **parenthood**? What information does the subdomain of parenthood contain? It contains that which pertains directly to becoming and being a parent. For instance, what motivates us to become parents? What makes parents different for the child from other persons in the child's life, such as friends, teachers, etc? Are there differences between males and females in parenting? Is it harmful for a mother to work outside the home when she has young children? Questions as these and many more pertain to being a parent without addressing human development or child rearing. Some, on the other hand, do also pertain to human development and child rearing, such as nurturing, limit setting, the development of self and human relationships.

What do we have in mind when we think of **human development**? In this curriculum we will address only that sector of development which pertains to psychological, emotional and cognitive, development with special emphasis on the development of adaptive capabilities. The development of one's personality, and one's emotional life begins at birth, if not before. From their first days of life, infants already show personality traits that may stay with them forever. Some of these traits are constitutional (inborn). Also from the very beginning, the experiences the infant has will significantly determine the infant's reactions, their patterning and stabilization. Much information is already available on the richly varied issues that constitute personality, emotional and cognitive development.

When can one expect certain capabilities to emerge? How, and in what sequences do specific aspects of personality and our emotional lives develop? When can a child begin to feel love? When can a young child be expected to understand what she/he is told? Do all young children suck their thumbs? Become upset when mother leaves to go for an appointment? Become afraid at night? Become angry when the parents have a

new baby? Why do these things happen? Is it normal for a child to touch his/her genitals? To want to have a baby? And, many more questions puzzle parents and students who observe young children.

Human development begins from the time of conception and continues through the entire life cycle. Considering only psychological and personality development, there is a voluminous amount of information currently organized into a number of human development theories. That store of information is constantly growing. Theories are being tested and modified as findings dictate; old theories that are challenged by new findings will in time be set aside.

What do we have in mind when we think of **child rearing**? The ultimate task of parenting is child rearing. It has become very clear in the field of Mental Health that parenting can be **growth-promoting** and that it can be **growth-inhibiting** and even **growth-destructive**. We define growth-promoting parenting as **parenting which optimizes the development of the child's mental and physical health and her or his abilities to adapt constructively**. What do I do when my child cries, bites another child, does not want to go to bed or eat the food I give him or her? **How** do I deal with each of these in a growth-promoting way? The questions are numerous, the challenge to parents enormous. These questions, these challenges start with the child's birth and continue through adolescence unabated. The answers are not simple, for the most part. The child's age, temperament, state, mood, and other factors, all determine how any one behavior might best be dealt with. All in all, the content of this complex subdomain may be larger than the other two, but much less is written about it.

Education for parenting aims at providing **information** pertaining to its three subdomains, teaching, and training the student to observe all aspects of behavior in children and adolescents, to try to infer the meaning of the behavior, to develop strategies and skills in growth-promoting child rearing, and to put parenting in its proper context in the scheme of their lives.

Why A Laboratory Type Curriculum?

We have learned much about education for parenting in the parent-child groups of our Early Child Development Program. These parent-child groups are made up of 6 to 8 mothers, and fathers when possible, along with their young children. In these weekly groups, we found enormous advantages in addressing parenting issues when they arose out of some behavior in the children which puzzled the parents. Observing the behavior makes the explanatory concept easier to grasp and to be grasped more clearly. It is better, we have found, to let the behavior talk, so to speak, to let the behavior raise questions and to discuss these and present theoretical concepts, based on the situation they have just experienced. Important behaviors repeat themselves and are readily accessible to the trained eye. This fact provides the opportunity for parents and students to test the explanations given by the instructors, especially when parents and students are encouraged to do so. It became clear over time that some developmental concepts would not have been understood or accepted by the mothers and fathers if they had been presented just as theory. We can argue theory much more easily than we can facts,

indeed, that is how it should be. After all, our interest really lies in the behavior, what it means and how to deal with it, not in the theory itself. Therefore, direct observations of children and their parents we found to be the best way to learn about them and their interactions and relationships about parenting.

In addition, we have found that to observe behavior leads to the need for explanations; to focus on a piece of behavior, to see its manifestations, and to see these in the context of a sequence of events, gives opportunities to test explanations. This process elicits thinking on the part of the observer. Important as well, is the fact that observing behavior narrows the possibilities as well as the range of disagreements, of opinion; we all know only too well that everyone has her/his own opinion about parenting! To simply present materials pertaining to parenting didactically, makes for an interesting intellectual exercise, but also for endless and not always fruitful debates. Learning is much enhanced when didactic materials, hypotheses and theories, can be tested by seeing children and their parents in actions.

We have also found that parents (and students as well) have expressed amazement at discovering that their children feel, experience, think, and remember much more and much earlier than they had realized. In other words, observing live children with their parents opens one's eyes to the richness of early life experience; this brings with it greater understanding of what "goes on" in young children. And of course, seeing the live material makes discussions and reading of didactic materials come to life and become more understandable.

In working with parents we have also found that they at times do not recognize certain behaviors for what they are. For example, some parents do not recognize anxiety in their children, and may believe that the child is being manipulative.

Very important also, is the fact that parents (and students) at times would not bring up certain every child, everyday issues if these did not appear in behavior, such as temper tantrums, the child's manipulation of his/her genitals (infantile masturbation). The unfavorable consequence of this is that certain erroneous ideas people have about what is normal and not normal would not get examined and erroneous thinking would be perpetuated.

These are only a few of the reasons why education for parenting courses ought to be of a laboratory type. Consider why educators teach biology, chemistry, and physics by means of laboratory observations. Although there are differences, in large part the same principles apply to the teaching of parenting.

The Textbook and the Curriculum

Parenting is a job which significantly determines the well-being of society and each individual in it. Since a high percentage of students will become parents and we cannot predict who will and who will not, all students should be required to learn about this subject. This curriculum attempts to guide the students of all grade levels to learn about parenting.

The entire domain of study that is parenting is presented in this textbook and the curriculum by addressing each of its three subdomains individually and inter-relatedly. Parenting is the sum, and more, of these subdomains of study.

The textbook and its curriculum proceed on two parallel tracts; the didactic tract detailed in the **Textbook** and the classroom curriculum containing the **Lesson Plans** with a **Laboratory Component** for all grades; the Lesson Plans for grades 9 and up, are supplemented with a detailed **Manual of Laboratory Observations**. Much emphasis is placed on the importance of the laboratory tract, especially on **live observations** of children and their parents. Indeed, for reasons given above, the writers' of this curriculum consider it invalid without its laboratory component.

The Textbook starts with several introductory chapters each detailing general principles pertaining to each subdomain, parenthood, human development, and child rearing. The Laboratory Manual opens with principles of observation; how to look; what to look at and what to look for; and how to infer from what is seen, that is, empathic observation and the making of assumptions.

Then, the core component of the Textbook and Lesson Plans (including the Laboratory Manual) consist of **a series of Units**, one devoted to each period of development subdivided according to certain established theoretical concepts from conception and birth through adolescence. Although human development continues into old age and will be briefly addressed in the chapter on human development, the stages beyond adolescence will not be detailed nor set up for laboratory observation since they do not pertain to parenting.

The age periods into which parenting from conception to adolescence is subdivided in this curriculum are modeled on the confluence of several well-defined and established psychodynamic theories of human (especially child) development proposed respectively by Sigmund Freud and Karl Abraham, by Erik Erikson and by Margaret S. Mahler. Our subdivisions come closest to those used by Erik Erikson. Other theories, like those of Rene Spitz and John Bowlby on attachment, and that of Piaget on cognitive development are integrated into the text and lesson plans materials. Much is also incorporated from the work on aggression of Henri Parens and his collaborators. Any other theoretical models and materials can easily be introduced into this sequence of developmental periods. We do not assume this present draft to be a final word on any subject it addresses.

Each Unit addresses one well defined stage of development in terms of major developmental concepts that characterize it. It is important to emphasize that the figures (in months or years) given are not concrete age landmarks, but are only suggestive, and will vary from child to child without implied bias. As we shall detail in Chapter 3 of this Introductory Unit, children have their own schedule of development although they all grow in the same sequence of developmental stages.

The first Unit, Unit 1 of the Textbook (and the Lesson Plans and Lab Manual for high school years) is on the first year of life. Unit 2 on the second and third years. Then, there is one Unit for each of the periods extending from the fourth through the sixth year, one for the period from about six to ten years of age, the elementary school years, Unit 5

addresses the 10 to 13 years period, and finally, Unit 6 is on adolescence extending from about 12/13 to 19/20 years of age.

In both the Textbook and the Curriculum (Lesson Plans), each Unit consists of several subsections; one on certain aspects of physical development, one each on various aspects of emotional and behavioral development. This segmentation is artificial since psychological development is one complex evolving phenomenon, but it is divided to make clearer, to facilitate and to enrich the students' study of this complicated subject.

Each subsection then, consists of key specific **issues** predominantly encountered by parents during each developmental period. For example, in Unit 1 on the first year of life, the subsection under emotional and behavior development on "adaptive capabilities" consists of the following issues: 1) sleep-wake states and patterning, 2) feeding experiences, 3) crying, 4) affects, 5) attachment, and 6) exploratory (sensorimotor) activities, limit setting. Subsections under emotional and behavioral development follow consisting of the following issues: 1) basic trust and mistrust, 2) oral activity, 3) aggressive activity, 4) dependence and self reliance, and 5) the development of the self and human relations.

Each issue, in both Textbook and in the Lesson Plans (including the Lab Manual), is addressed specifically from two vantage points: from the perspective of human development and that of child rearing. In some instances, issues are also examined from the perspective of parenthood.

Some issues pertain only to one developmental period, that in which it is presented. Other issues, indeed most of them, also pertain to other developmental periods but will usually not be repeated in all the chapters where they are pertinent. The authors of Parenting for Emotional Growth: A Textbook and A Curriculum believe the student will carry what she/he learns into the chapters where the issues in question apply.

Again we emphasize that this textbook and the curriculum are incomplete. Because these cannot do so, they does not attempt to detail or discuss all aspects of parenting. The authors feel that if cardinal issues are addressed in each developmental period, leaving some gaps will not detract from productive and effective work of parenting.

***PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
A TEXTBOOK***

INTRODUCTORY UNIT

CHAPTER 2

PARENTHOOD

Definition: What are we to make of the fact that Webster's massive New Informational Dictionary (1925, based on the International Dictionary of 1890 and 1900) defines parenthood so briefly and meaninglessly: "n. State or relation of a parent; the office or character of a parent" (p. 1567). In Webster's New World Dictionary, the Second College Edition (1972), parenthood is not defined at all.

We would define **parenthood** as a state of being a parent, a state of having begotten one's own or adopted children, which brings with it the enormous responsibility and difficult work of parenting. In Chapter 1 we defined and discussed briefly what the work of parenting is and what it entails. Some professionals also define parenthood as a **process** or as a **phase of human development** (Panel Report, 1975).

Parenthood as a Phase of Human Development

Parenthood is considered by some mental health professionals to be a phase of development because it is the culmination of a major aspect of one normal line of development, the potential for which exists in all human beings. That line of development has been defined by psychoanalytic theorists as "psychosexual development". The propositions formulated by psychoanalysts of this line of development detail the normal course of the psychological aspects of sexual development in humans. It begins in the first years of life in a constellation of experiences identified as the Oedipus complex; psychoanalysts propose that these experiences are determined by biological maturation and processes as well as psychologic events which according to this theory occur in all normal children.' This is considered to be the first phase of the psychological axis of normal sexual development.

For our purposes here, we can say that the second major phase of psychosexual development is well known to all of us: that of adolescence. It is characterized by

remarkable biological and psychological developments. This second major developmental phase introduces with it the biological capability for reproduction, and therefore, the biological capability for parenthood. However, as we shall detail in the chapter on adolescence, with regard to the capability for parenthood, in adolescence biological and psychological developments do not unfold in parallel or equivalently. Although the biological capability for parenthood emerges commonly in early adolescence, the psychological developmental tasks of adolescence -- at this stage in the development of civilization -- run counter to the psychological capability for parenthood. As a result, although the average healthy adolescent is **biologically** capable of parenthood, she or he is generally **not psychologically** capable of being a parent. The demands of parenthood are such that to fulfill them, the adolescent would have to sacrifice the fulfillment of other developmental tasks uniquely appropriate to that period of one's life.

Adult sexuality develops dramatically during adolescence and usually now-a-days culminates in young adulthood, in the psychological capability for stable sexual-love relationships and parenthood (family formation). Some psychoanalysts propose that these achievements are the adult stage and aim of the sexual drive: namely, the preservation of the species. It is well to underline that whatever people make of sexuality in their individual lives, the evolutionary function and aim of the sexual drive is the preservation of the species. The fulfillment of this aim is, of course, not obligatory. From the psychological standpoint, under optimal conditions, psychosexual development culminates in parenthood. In this context parenthood can be viewed as an adult phase of psychosexual development. This does not mean, however, that in order to be a healthy individual, everyone must become a parent. Humans can adjust well to alternative developments than those seemingly prescribed by biology. Many healthy and productive adults do not become parents -- with no detriment to themselves or others.

Parenthood as a Developmental Process

Some human development specialists propose that parenthood is a developmental process. Two principle reasons are given for this view. First, in Chapter 1, when we defined parenting, we said that it evolves, that it is in a continuing state of change. This is due to the fact that as the child grows, moves from one developmental phase to the next, parenting functions change according to the status of the child's developmental needs and adaptive capabilities. As we noted before (Chapter 1) a parent cannot deal with a 3 month old as with a 3 year old; nor with a 3 year old as with an 8 or 17 year old. In this sense, for instance, the universal dependence that exists in humans differs at sequential developmental phases; in consequence we experience different needs and experience them differently and, therefore, make different demands on those around us.

The second reason is probably the most responsible for the proposition that parenthood is a developmental process during which the parent grows in parallel with the child's passing from one phase of development to the next. That is, parenting brings with it the parent's reliving aspects of her or his own childhood, each phase of the child's development activating experiences and memories within the parent, of the parent's own parallel past developmental phase. This phenomenon is inevitable and is produced by the highly desirable fact that we identify with those we value emotionally, which especially applies to our children. The identifications with our children bring the opportunity for the parents to rework and further resolve old conflicts from their own past experiences (and developments) which occurred during the phase of development currently experienced by the child. This psychic work of further resolving old, residual conflicts leads to further growth in the parent as an individual. For this reason especially, therefore, parenthood is considered a developmental process.

From a recent think-tank psychiatric publication (Panel Report, 1975), comes the proposition that parenthood can be regarded as consisting of 4 stages: an anticipatory stage which may start in childhood and extends through pregnancy; a honeymoon stage from birth through the early months; a plateau stage from infancy through adolescence; and a disengagement stage which leads up to the point of the child's marriage. Can this be right? Does a person anticipate becoming a parent so far back as in childhood? What motivates most people to become parents?

Motivations For Parenthood

The motivation for parenthood can be catalogued to arise from three principal factors: 1) There is a primary (inborn) motivation which derives from biological forces represented psychologically in the individual by an instinctual drive and innately programmed adaptive mechanisms to preserve the species. This drive, the sexual drive, complemented by innately programmed adaptive mechanisms form one of the most powerful internal forces that motivates much of human activity and serves the primary function of preserving the species by insuring reproduction.

2) A second motivational force, which is of an acquired, experiential kind, evolves from one's inner psychological processes. This motivation is especially influenced by one's early childhood experiences, including especially how, as children, we achieve psychological individuality and stabilize our relationships to other human beings. In addition, how well we resolve the normal conflict arising out of our family romance (Oedipus complex) also plays a large part in shaping this motivation.

3) The other large force which influences our motivation to become a parent comes from familial, cultural, and societal sources. This third force which may both increase or decrease one's motivation toward parenthood, is distinguished from the

second in that it represents influences that arise strictly from outside the self, whereas the second force arises from within the self albeit in the context of our relationships with others.

These three motivating factors will be discussed in detail in the chapters that follow.

WHAT MAKES THE MOTHER ATTACH TO HER CHILD?

The mother's attachment to her child is created by a number of forces that impinge on her physically and emotionally. Some of these forces arise from within the mother, that is, forces with which we are all equipped at birth, although they will not become manifest until a given point in maturation. For example, puberty is already determined and scheduled to occur at a given-time according to the maturational program with which the child is born. Maturational forces as those that propel the emergence of puberty or of mother-attachment behavior are activated in such a manner that the sequence of development they induce is the same in all human beings.

Other forces that will affect the mother's attachment to her child arise from that mother's life experiences. Some of them arise from the external environment and the society in which the mother lives. Some of these will be detailed now.

There is a Psychobiological Need to Attach Emotionally to Other Human Beings

Child development specialists and students of human behavior of a variety of schools of thought, believe-that there is a force within each of us that creates a need for and leads us to attach emotionally to certain human beings who thereby become valued by us. Konrad Lorenz and a number of ethologists have described this tendency to attach in other living species as well. We can assume that the aim of this tendency is to insure the preservation of one's own species. This kind of force underlies the instinctive mechanisms described by Lorenz and Hess as **imprinting**, and as **primary socialization** by J. P. Scott. John Bowlby, a psychoanalyst, believed that such **attachment** instinctive mechanisms were also active in human beings. Most psychoanalysts, though, describe this force differently and have labeled it the **libido**. By whatever name, a biological bond-forming force is generally acknowledged to operate in humans which brings about an emotional attachment to another. Most psychoanalysts view the libido as an **instinctual drive**, which is a force that arises from within each of us, serves the preservation of the species and is, therefore, understood as the sexual drive.

The sexual drive or the libido is experienced by us as a need that requires gratification to a greater or lesser degree. It is in the nature of hunger, if you will, of a need for a certain form of gratification, which is experienced as pleasurable when sufficiently fulfilled and as frustrating when it is not.

Another major characteristic by which the sexual drive can be described is the tendency and the need in each of us to experience affection and feelings of love, as well as feelings of eroticism and sensuality, toward other human beings, and to be experienced in that way by other specific human beings.

It is assumed that this tendency of the sexual drive within the adult female -- although it has already expressed itself very sharply in the 3 to 6 year old girl as well as during the girl's puberty -- plays a dominant part in the young woman's inner thrust to have a mate, and to want a baby of her own to both of whom she will attach emotionally. It is well to mention here that the infant, in turn, is equipped at birth by virtue of the libido (or whatever other instinctive mechanism) within the child, to attach to a person who will take care of the infant. By her own emotional investment in the child, the mother will arouse and promote the emotional investment of the child in her. It is important to emphasize that the average loving emotional investment experienced by the mature-enough adult female toward her child, is a powerful ingredient which makes for the uniqueness of the mother's attachment to her own child. That love investment distinguishes the mother-child attachment from the kind experienced toward the child by teachers, by neighbors, by care-giving nonfamilial individuals (as good day care workers) who value the child to a significant degree but in whom the emotional attachment for cogent reasons cannot be as large and deep as that of a mother for her own child.

The difference in the emotional valence (loving, positive) of the mother's attachment to the child in contrast to the attachment invested in the child by other caring, devoted individuals is enormous. This difference makes for the uniqueness not only of the mother's attachment to the child, but also, reciprocally, makes for the uniqueness of the child's attachment to his/her own mother, in contrast to that made to other caregiving extrafamilial individuals. Many child development specialists place much importance in the interplay of these emotional forces, and in safeguarding the emotional investments created by the unique attachments on the part of the parents toward the child and on the part of the child toward the parents. This kind of attachment leads to the establishment of the unique bond that binds members of a family. It plays an important part in the character of the child's physical and emotional development, and how that development will affect the entire life of the individual being.

Other schools of thought have pointed to the need on the part of human beings to socialize, to live in groups, a tendency representing a herd instinct. This herd instinct, is akin to the kind of force that in certain other animal species leads to that species' living in packs, such as wolves and wild dogs, or apes and monkeys. There seems to be a variable

need on the part of certain animal species to live in groups, in a community. To whatever degree this occurs in humans, the unit (or lowest common denominator) at the foundation of such community living and on which it depends, is the nuclear family, that is, the mother, father, and child. There is no doubt that the mother-child dyad, is the most constant unit in all communal living. This tendency to live communally is intimately tied to that which in the adult female expresses itself in the need for procreation, and in the mother's attachment to her own child.

There is a Strong Tendency on the Part of the Human Female, Adult and Child, to be Attracted to a Small, Helpless Infant

Observation reveals readily that in the presence of a human infant, a female, adult or even a young child, tends to be drawn sharply greater or lesser degree (depending on that individual's total-life experiences) to that baby, to touch that baby, and to want to hold that baby. For example, a common experience follows: a young woman brings her six week old baby to a neighbor's house for a social gathering. Soon after she arrived a cluster of women gathered around her, talking about the baby in an animated, yet soft and warm manner. A number of them wanted to hold her baby. The young mother, feeling the tension within her baby, experienced the need to protect her infant and said to one of the women who reached to take the baby that she does not want others to hold her child because the baby was feeling tense. Almost as a group reaction, the women turned away with indignation and the young woman heard one say: "Who does she think she is; I know how to hold a baby!" Although men were gathered at this social occasion too they were not similarly drawn to the baby. Of course, not every normal adult woman may experience this uncanny attraction to a baby. Although this type of reaction can be seen already in most 3 and 4 year old and older girls, certain everyday life experiences may decrease this tendency and as a result a normal child or adult woman may not experience so strong an attraction to a baby.

The helpless crying infant triggers a nurturing response especially on the part of the human female. In many instances, perhaps more so when a female is not present, many a male, both child and adult, will also respond to a helpless infant who is crying and making his/her needs for nurturance known. This will be discussed further below. John Bowlby, a well-known psychoanalyst, observes that this tendency in the human infant to emit signals of nurturance needs, is a strong attachment-inducing mechanism with which every human infant is equipped at birth. Crying, Bowlby believed is one of several instinctive mechanisms that engender the child's attachment to the mother or to the adult who responds repeatedly to the baby's need for nurturance. Indeed these mechanisms -- crying, smiling, clinging, visually following, and sucking -- are mechanisms that forge the mutual attachment of mother and child.

Observation of adults and children, especially of the female, reveals that the nurturance response to a need-expressing infant, seems to be experienced by the individual toward babies who are not yet able to walk, more acutely than to those who already can move about on their own two feet.

The Mother-Infant Dyad

From another point of observation, one sees in the young mother with her relatively new baby a tendency to close the system that forms the mother-child dyad, or their two-some. There seems to be a normal symbiosis, according to psychoanalyst Theresa Benedek, that brings the mother and her very young infant very close together. Sigmund Freud pointed out that in the first months and years of life the break or separation between child and mother created by the birth of the child is much less than meets the eye. What he meant is that the powerful infant-mother emotional bond continues from the pregnancy through the first years of the child's life.

This symbiotic (mutual and equally beneficial to both) type of attachment between child and mother is influenced, of course, by past as well as current life experiences. From the mother's past experiences come many feelings and attitudes the young woman has toward her pregnancy, delivery, having a baby, being a mother, her relationship to a man, being married, etc. Affecting her tie to her baby from the present come feelings and attitudes caused by a variety of experiences during the course of the mother's pregnancy, her delivery, from the environment in which she lives, the re-alignment of relationships within the family created by her becoming a mother, by the changes in her way of life which parenting reactions and responsibilities bring.

The degree to which the mother-child unit will become a closed system depends on how much the mother-father relationship allows (or wants) that closed system to develop or continue to exist. Many a father will allow or even welcome a tightly closed mother-child system; many a woman will insist on the closure of this system. Many other fathers will want to be a part of that emotionally bound system and will, therefore, benevolently intrude themselves into it, and become part of it. Many other young mothers will want the father to be a part of that system. A number of variations of these possibilities exist. A factor that especially determines that the mother-child dyad is not closed, for example, follows from the inclusion of the father during the pregnancy and the process of childbirth. A number of fathers who were present in the delivery room feel deeply awed and a part of the entire childbirth process. Indeed, a father who becomes involved emotionally during his wife's pregnancy invariably becomes part of the subsequent mother-child bonding process that occurs after the delivery of the infant.

Another significant and pertinent issue here is that of adoption. Of course, in adoptions the family-preparing process of pregnancy is bypassed. However, a young

couple who adopts a child prepares emotionally for that adoption in a process that can have as much family-preparing capability as pregnancy. The emotional and actual preparations and activities necessary in carrying out the process of adoption also bind the parents-to-be together. Such preparation for the receiving or getting of the child, by adopting parents, is invested with much emotion which intensifies the adopting parents' attachment to the child they take in as their own. It is important to enhance -- rather than protect against or dampen -- adoptive parents' going through a preparatory period to having their child because it can be of enormous benefit to the child-parent attachment and bond formation and as a result make an early, anticipatory attachment (or bonding) with the child that can be equivalently meaningful and growth-promoting as that of a pregnancy.

More commonly than we like to think there are individuals for whom a pregnancy, whether because it is unwanted, unexpected or ill-timed, will be emotionally painful and traumatizing. In such cases, the character and quality of the eventual mother-child dyad may be negatively influenced. It will help parents to know that such a beginning can have a detrimental impact not only on the mother but also on the character of the mother-child dyad and thereby on the child's character and emotional life for years if not, in fact, for a lifetime.

Another force that will affect the mother-child dyadic system is the presence of other children in the family who will quite naturally, and beneficially most of the time, also intrude into that mother-child relationship. They will also have their own realistic and reasonable needs, and make demands on the mother that from time to time will pull her out of the new mother-child dyad. These of course will affect the new mother-child dyad in a variety of ways. In addition, factors such as the newborn's having a serious abnormality, or the mother's having an illness, or other family crises or painful events will have a stressful effect on the mother-child dyad. Let us emphasize that such stress inducing factors may have opposite effects; they may lead to better bonding or be a disruptive influence on the parent-child relationship depending on the reaction of the child as well as the mother.

The Child as Possession, Extension, and Part of the Self

As a natural outgrowth of the 9-month long pregnancy and its meaning to her, many a mother experiences her child as a possession, an extension, a part of her self, and in some instances still, indeed, part of her own body. This factor intensifies the young mother's attachment to her infant; and it provides the deeply felt emotional relatedness and closeness the infant needs. Fortunately, it is a beneficial normal reaction on the part of the young mother. But it is also equally important for the mother to recognize that her normal child will soon feel the need to start becoming an individual, a separate entity, who in and of herself or himself is a person. It will be necessary for the mother not only to provide physical and emotional closeness but also gradually, gently, patiently to relinquish her normal and natural tendency to experience the child as a possession, as a

part of herself. At times she will have to allow closeness, at others, separateness. Where this tendency to feel the child as part of self on the part of the mother is not gradually benevolently relinquished, it may lead to serious mal-adaptive consequences in the development of her child who may not learn to become an individual, to feel herself or himself sufficiently self-reliant and self-trusting. The child may, thereby, be handicapped in adapting to life.

The Mother's Responses to Her Child's Needs

One readily sees that when a child is in need to be comforted, or to be fed, and expresses this need clearly enough, it will elicit in a normal mother a response of nurturance. Many times we have seen such responses in persons of all ages who are not mothers, more in females than in males. Earlier we commented on the child's adaptive mechanisms which can arouse this response in the mother. In complement to that we now draw attention to the mother's tendency to respond emotionally, socially, and physically to her child's need reactions. Thus in a reciprocal way, the child's modes of relating to the mother stimulate, influence, and significantly determine the mother's responses, according to the mother's characteristic way of reacting. Let us elaborate.

Fortunately for the well-being of the child, the mother will be aroused to respond according to the intensity and the quality of the child's expressed needs. For example, Richie was a child who had been maltreated by his very upset young mother -- in part because of traumatic environmental factors -- during the period when he was 6 months to about 12 months of age. Because at this age this is a very long period of being maltreated, when he was 18 months of age Richie at times of need would show such an expression of pain and yearning to be comforted that he could arouse in 7 women who were observing him a reaction of wanting to nurture him that went so far as the wish to pick him up and breast feed him even by a women who did not have children. Such reactions commonly seen on the part of the adult female, which, by the way, we have also seen in young girls ages 4 and 5, 8 and 9, as well as 14 and 15 and so forth, seem to indicate a strong tendency within the female to react to the need state of the young infant, to a variable degree, according to the intensity of the child's expression of need.

Experiences Arising Out of the Individual Woman's Maturation and Development

Various experiences play a very large part in determining the quality of the female's wish to become a mother as well as the character of the attachments she makes as a parent. Among these experiences are those which arise out of the maturational program through which mental health research asserts we all pass that results from our

genetic disposition, the patterning of our brains, and the maturation of our hormonal systems. We refer here to a series of developmental stages, tasks and conflicts that shape our personalities, namely, those which -- according to one of the models we use in this work -- during the first three years of life the child emerges out of the powerful mother-child dyad into beginning to become an individual deeply related to his or her parents; to the emergence, experiencing, and resolution of the family romance; to the emergence of puberty and the adult sexuality it brings with it. These stages of development are programmed and determined by an inborn schedule of biological maturations.

The other major experiences are those each of us has arising out of the kinds of parents we have, the kinds of family life we have, the kinds of relationships we experience in the course of our development, the kinds of experiences we have in schools, in the neighborhood, in our daily lives. Let us sketch the key basic patterns of some of these parent-developing experiences as we see them occur in all of us. When do parenthood-relevant experiences emerge?

The First Three Years of the Normal Female's Emotional and Behavioral Life

We have noted before that the normal infant is equipped at birth to attach emotionally to the nurturing individuals who attach and invest emotionally in the child. And we emphasized that it is especially according to the degree to which the child is emotionally invested by the parent that the child will reciprocally emotionally attach to that parent. In general, we find that the person who invests most emotionally in the child is the child's mother. Next in line, usually and depending on the quality and quantity of their emotional investment, are the child's father, siblings, caregivers, and then extended family, neighbors, etc.

The bonding and attachment that are established during the first two years of life between child and mother leads to the tightly-knit mother-child system referred to before in which not only does the mother experience the child as a part of her, but in turn, **the child experiences the mother** as a part of herself or himself. This particular view of the way the child seems to experience the relationship to her mother has been described by Dr. Margaret Mahler as **the normal symbiosis** (thought of as the infant's experiencing himself or herself in a state of oneness with the mother). And the work the child does in the course of the first three-years of life to

emerge out of that normal symbiosis (emotional state of oneness), according to Dr. Mahler, is identified as the **separation-individuation process**. It is extremely important, first of all, that the child experiences a strong attachment to her mother, indeed a feeling as if the mother were a part of the self essentially during the first two years of life. It is then equally important that the child gradually modify the quality and degree of

closeness. The child develops out of this sense of oneness with the mother, to an awareness of their **physical** and **psychological-emotional separateness**. A strong emotional attachment is forged during this separation-individuation process, which thereby establishes a deeply felt stable emotional relationship between two distinct and separate individuals. This occurs in both girls and boys.

One of the great mechanisms employed which allows the child to emotionally, psychologically separate and individuate from her or his mother, is the mechanism of **identification** with that mother. Psychoanalysts believe that it is by identification, by becoming like, taking on some aspects of the mothering person into one's own character, that the tight dyad can be melted in a gradual, progressive manner to allow the child to experience herself as an individual and experience mother as a separate individual.

As a result of this taking on into oneself of some of those features of the mother that are part of how she functions toward the infant, every human being, takes into his or her own character the traits and features of nurturing like those the child experienced at the hands of her or his own mother. In this, then, one of the first contributions to the girl's feeling like, acting like, wanting to be a mother comes from these nurturing and caregiving experiences, whatever their quantity and characteristics, she has during the first three years of her life. As we shall note later in speaking of males and fathering, a similar process occurs in a boy namely, **every boy identifies with his mother**, with the nurturing, the caregiving which he experienced from his mother. In fact, in the first several years of life, every boy identifies significantly and usually predominantly with his mother.

The Family Romance

Many people assume that the normal child's sexual life, her (and his) experiencing of sexual excitation, fantasies and wishes, begin in adolescence. Nearly 80 years of direct observations of children and nearly one century of scientifically exploring the human psyche (as observable in human behavior) has led mental health professionals, educators, anthropologists and others, to recognize that the sexual life of normal human beings begins from about 2 years of age on.

The dynamics and character of the girl's (as well as the boy's) family romance, identified by psychoanalysts as the Oedipus complex, are described in greater detail in Unit 3. Briefly here let us say that when a girl enters her third year of life, one usually begins to see a strong interest in babies. This interest is quite different from that we have seen in children under two years of age and, in addition, seems to be quite different from the interest we see in boys toward babies during the period from ages two years through six. During this period we see evidence in the girl's behavior of her wish to have a baby of her own. This, psychoanalysts explain, is part of the child's "family romance". At this

time in her development, the normal 2 1/2 year old girl begins to show in her behaviors and often in her verbalizations evidence of wishing that she could marry her father, of wishing that she could have a baby, and of jealousy felt toward her mother. Very important here for the girl's eventually wanting to become a mother are two factors: (1) the normal wish to have a baby which emerges so strikingly at this time; and (2) the jealousy and rivalry which the girl experiences toward her mother.

Many mental health researchers believe that there is an instinctual mechanism, a psychobiological force arising from within the child, which at this time in the little girl's development is scheduled to arouse within her the wish to have a baby. If we look at the character of a little girl's wish for a baby, of her interest in babies, we see that it is not just that she likes to "play" with them; on the contrary, her interest in babies has a very serious and deeply-felt character. One sees the influence of this kind of instinctual mechanism from about 2 years of age on, and it will be expressed in many girls over the course of their development, especially again during puberty and adolescence. We will discuss this in greater detail below under the section on The Wish to Have a Baby and to be a Parent.

The second factor according to the theory of the "family romance" which leads to an enlarging of the girl's wish to become a mother, arises out of the rivalry she experiences toward her own mother due to her love and the emergence of infantile but nonetheless strong sexual feelings she now feels toward the male to whom she is most emotionally attached, her father. While the girl has already experienced a wish to be like her mother because of the identification she has made with her during the first two or so years of life, and while her currently deep feelings of love for her mother further contribute to her wish to be like her, it is especially because of her rivalry and jealousy of her beloved mother and the angry, hating feelings experienced toward her that a new identification is made with that mother.

Here is how this comes about.

The **co-existing feelings** of deep love side by side with those of acute anger and rivalry she now feels toward her mother create a conflict in the girl which leads her, under optimal circumstances, to give up her rivalry with mother to a greater or lesser degree, and to give up her wishes for a romantic attachment to her father. In trying to resolve and stop her anger and rivalry with her mother, the girl reaffirms her deep feelings of love for mother, and further identifies with her. In many instances this creates within the child an even greater wish to someday be a mother like her. The better a child is helped to, and is able to resolve her normal childhood family romance, the more integrated and the freer will be her identification with her mother. There are variations in the functioning of this mechanism; for example, a girl may identify with one or another aspect of the mother's character and personality; it may be with her mothering; and she may, in addition identify with her many other functions, including other work the mother does, etc. In general, the girl's resolving her family romance brings with it a further intensification of her femaleness and, in most instances, her wish to be a parent like her mother.

Those factors which seem to arouse in a girl the wish to have a baby carry with them a strong component of the girl's experiencing herself as a mother, something which is clearly manifest in much of the 3 to 6 year old child's fantasy play and activities with her peers and interactions with her own mother.

The maturational and developmental experiences of the first six years of life, the resolution of the strong diadic attachment to the mother, and the childhood family romance, are both influenced by the character and the quality of her specific individual life experiences. The degree to which these occur under optimal circumstances, in family relationships in which mutual respect and love play a dominant part, to that degree will the individual girl's own inclinations and biological dispositions be most optimally developed.

In addition to those experiences dictated by biological internal processes in the girl, and in addition to the experiences of the first six years of life which have just been described, there are a number of other circumstances that play large parts in the development of the individual woman's wish to be a mother. For example, a parent's serious illness during the first six years or subsequently will have a significant impact on a given child. The way in which parents get along with each other, the degree and way to which love and affection are manifested in the family between parents as well as with their children, or the occurrence of hate and violent fights, and mutual disrespect by one parent for the other, all will influence what being a mother means to her and the degree to which a girl wants to become a mother. The death of a sibling may have a large impact not only on the parents but on the child directly, whether that death occurs very early in life or during adolescence. The influence of external catastrophes will play a part, as well. The existence of emotional disorders in the parents or in the child will also contribute to the way she feels about becoming and being a parent.

The Influence of Culture and Society

In addition to the most important part family life plays in influencing the girl's wish to become or not be a parent, there are other forces at play that impinge on the individual from her social group, from the society in which she lives, and from her culture; these also contribute to the pool of experiences from which her own views regarding parenting will emerge. All these forces play variable parts in the directions of: complementing the child's own feelings about not being or being a parent, intensifying or diminishing or in fact inhibiting the person's own wishes to become a parent. The forces at play are complex, indeed are of such complexity that it is at times difficult, if not impossible, to sort out the part played by each of these individual forces. It is also this great complexity that makes for the wide range of variations we find in women's wishes to become mothers.

WHAT MAKES THE FATHER ATTACH TO HIS CHILD?

The father's attachment to his child, like that of the mother, is determined by a number of interacting factors. Note that when we speak of the father's or the mother's emotional attachment to the child we are also speaking of the motivation of the father and the mother to have a child.

A Psychological-Biological Need to Attach Emotionally to Other Humans

Like the female, the male has a large psycho-biological need to relate emotionally to other members of the species. As we described for the mother's attachment to the child, the same internal pressure -- an inner force identified by psychoanalysts as the **instinctual drive libido**, or as described by other scientists as a **herd instinct**, or especially in the case of animals other than homosapiens as **instinctive structures** (such as innate releasing mechanisms) that lead to imprinting and primary socialization -- this same internal force is operative in the male making for his need to invest emotionally in and attach to specific individuals of the same species. As with the female this fundamental psychobiological inner force serves the preservation of the species. It also underlies the human's need for socialization and for living in a community.

Experiential Factors

Again, as with the female, life experiences that contribute to the male's motivations for wanting a child and to the male's tendency to attach to his child are multiple and have their origins very early in life. These multiple influences may usefully be described in terms of (1) the boy's specific relationship to his mother; (2) the boy's specific relationship to his father; and (3) the boy's other significant relationship within and outside the family.

In general it can be stated for the male, as for the female, that the early relationships the child has with his mother, with his father, his siblings, and additional important persons who play a significant part in his caretaking during the first three years of life, create patterns of attachment in the boy which become the prototypes, the pool of models, for all subsequent relationships he will have. When we speak of such

early patterning and of prototypic relationships we do not mean that individuals necessarily seek exactly the same sort of persons as they have known in their early years, but that in their subsequent relations they will behave toward and expect behaviors from others characteristic of these early relationships. Also, the way the boy was treated, was cared for, was related to as a child is, essentially, the way that male will relate to his own children.

Again, this kind of statement about a major pattern characteristic of human life is a generalization. Of course, there always are variations to such a generalization, as for example, when a child's experiences cause him to determine that as an adult he will behave quite differently from the ways adults behaved toward him as a child. This at times is, indeed, carried out, although at other times is wished for but fails to be achieved. In other words, whereas a child may promise herself or himself to behave differently from the way his or her parents behaved when she or he was a child, that child when grown up may nonetheless, with guilt and much distress, behave exactly as his or her parents had.

The Boy's Relation to and Identification with His Mother

As with the girl, the first 2-3 years of the boy's life include the experiences described by Dr. Margaret Mahler as **the normal symbiosis and the separation-individuation process** (see Units 1 and 2). These specific, basic life experiences will have their influence for the rest of that human being's life. During his first 3 years the boy's relationship with his mother is one of, and probably **the** major determiner of, and contributor to his eventual parenting interests and functions.

Like girls, boys form a basic identification with the mother of these early years. The quality of the early attachment between the child and his mother is a key factor in the molding of the boy's personality. When in the first years the mother-child dyad (two-some) has become a positive, profound mutual emotional attachment, the two and three year old boy will be able to grow out of that original oneness with his mother by internalizing this emotional relationship within his psyche and forming an identification with the mothering person. In other words, the boy can give up that original oneness with his mother only by internalizing within his psyche a mental image of the relationship with her, and then becoming to a degree like her, including especially the emotional quality of relating that his mother experienced with him nurturing, loving, and caregiving..

It is important to note that the boy's identifications are made with the mother's nurturing, loving, respect for, and interest in caring for another human being -- and **not** with the mother's **femaleness** and gender identity. Speaking for Western culture, the mistaken notion that to love one's baby, to nurture and protect one's baby is equated with being female, is at the basis of many fathers becoming emotionally distant, unresponsive,

and more feared than respected by their daughters and sons, as young children and as adolescents. Although there have always been many magnificent fathers, it may also account for the fact that the parenting of many a man is insensitive, not well attuned to the child or adolescent, and harsh. Fortunately for generations to come, there now seems to be a more positive trend in our culture, in how men engage in their fathering.

The explanation given in the preceding paragraphs, inferred from observable normal behavior and much clinical experience, supports the view that every boy who experiences a sufficiently valued relationship with his mother identifies with the mothering functions which he has experienced as a child. Later when we discuss the question of an instinctual or instinctive contribution in the male's becoming a father, this particular issue of the boy's identifying with his mother and her mothering functions during the first years of life will become an important consideration. What will be asked then, is, to what degree does the boy's identifying with his mother and her mothering functions lay down the nucleus in the male of **male** parenting, that is of **fathering**. We will return to that below.

We emphasize in terms of the psychodynamic theories advanced here, that the kind of mothering the child gets during the early years of his life will determine the character of those parenting functions he will later perform **as a father**.

There is much observable evidence in both boys and girls of identification with their mother during the second, third, and subsequent years of life. For example, it is not uncommon to see a two year old boy respond to an infant who is crying by getting the infant's bottle and presenting it to him or her, giving evidence of doing for a child younger than himself the kind of thing that he experienced as a child at the hands of his own mother. Close observation frequently will reveal that attitudes and small movements that accompany feeding will be characteristic of the way the boy's mother handled and nurtured him. One often sees a child observe his and other mothers' actions toward himself and other infants. In a few instances we have been privileged to observe, we have also seen a boy do or carry out certain small patterns of behavior that are characteristic of his father's nurturing activities. Special experiences a young boy has may intensify or lessen activity imitative of mothering functions. Quite commonly, too, painful experiences will lead a boy to nurture differently from his mother. For example, a two year old boy who was excessively frustrated in nurturing by his traumatized, deeply hurt young mother from 6 months of age through 12 months, became acutely sensitive to the crying of infants smaller than himself, would not only express facially feelings of sadness, but would very seriously focus on the crying infant and at times insist on feeding that infant himself. We saw this reaction on a number of occasions. On the other hand, another boy who was made very irritable by allergies that were difficult to treat would invariably respond to a crying infant with much irritation and occasionally show harsh anger toward the crying infant. Rather than reacting by wanting to comfort or nurture the distressed infant, this boy would threaten the already distressed infant and it was necessary to protect the infant from being hurt by him.

The Boy's Identification With His Father

In the First Three Years

During the first three years of life in the boy, as in the girl, the father plays a significant part in two ways especially. Around his first birthday a child is in a developmental phase in which a great deal of motor activity is of special interest to him. The same is true of girls. In these activities very frequently the father becomes a special partner for play and pleasure. Fathers are enjoyed by their one-year-olds, in such activities as being tossed in the air, being thrown a ball, in playing with toys, and in exercising locomotor skills. All of these activities engage the father and child in such a manner that the child (boy and girl) enjoys and begins to seek the father's company and in the process begins to also demonstrate behavior imitative of the father. We are speaking here of the kind of activity identified essentially as "rough-housing" for which fathers throughout the world are well known. Pertinent to this, in studies of the role of fathers in families through different cultures, the father is found to play with the child more often than mothers, while the mothers are more often nurturing and caregiving than fathers. The second way in which the father is especially important to the child during the first three years is in helping the child pull out, in a normal healthy manner, from the very close early mother-child dyad. Although a very close mother-child dyad is highly desirable in early life, the child has to **gradually** emerge from it if normal development is to proceed. Drs. Margaret Mahler and Phyllis Greenacre (both psychoanalysts) have described how the father is experienced by the child as a "knight in shining armor" who helps the child move from his or her close tie to mother during his or her earliest infantile efforts at becoming an individual, separate and apart from his or her mother. In this, a benevolent and affectionate fatherly attitude toward the child makes the environment outside the dyad with mother safer, attractive, exciting, and reasonably gratifying. Of course, mothers too help the child to individuate, to move out of the tight dyad, in a pleasurable healthy kind of manner, even without the help of a father. But where the father-child relationship is sufficiently positive and affectionate, the father's contribution can be an enriching thrust toward the child's becoming a separate self, an individual. This applies equally to the boy and to the girl.

From the Third Through the Sixth Year

During the developmental period extending from the third year through the sixth, the boy's sexuality, like that of the girl, begins to express itself in a number of ways. During this period, the boy's primary and biological maleness begins to express itself in behaviors usually considered as masculine. This type of behavior is described in Unit 3. In the expression of the boy's maleness much identification with his father becomes evident. The boy will in many instances carry his body as his father does, walk like his father, show an interest in objects (tools, for instance) used by his father, and in activities

carried out by his father. The boy's love feelings for his father express themselves in his wish to do things like his father and to be like his father.

By far, however, the greatest contribution at this time to the boy's wanting to someday become a father arises out of two factors in his childhood family romance, his Oedipus complex psychoanalysts say, which occur during this developmental phase. First of all, the child's family romance, stimulated and created by the normal boy's emerging sexuality, brings with it the boy's wish to have a baby by the female in whom his affectionate and now emerging sensual love feelings are most and normally invested, namely, his mother. This experiencing of affectionate and sexual feelings associated with the wish to make a baby create in the boy a sense of wanting to be a father. Below, we will discuss in greater detail, the development of normal infantile sexuality and the infantile form of wanting to be a father as compared to adult sexuality as well as the adult form of wanting to be a parent.

The second very important force which motivates the boy's wish to be a father arising out of his childhood family romance, is the boy's experienced rivalry, jealousy, and thereby anger and hate toward the father who by this time, he loves. Where good fortune has it that the boy has a good relationship with his father, and thereby loves his father deeply, these normal but troublesome feelings of jealousy, anger, and hate toward the beloved father create an acute but ultimately very growth-promoting conflict within the boy -- this we shall detail in Unit 3. In brief here, where conditions are sufficiently optimal in the father-son relationship, the son will reconcile himself to the fact that he must give up his wishes to someday marry his mother, attach his affectionate (and largely repressed sexual) love feelings to another more "appropriate" female, perhaps a little neighborhood friend, and make great and repeated efforts to undo the rivalry experienced with his father. In part, the boy will be able to give up the rivalry with his father and rather than take his father's place, will intensify his wishes **to be like** his father. In this, he will further identify with his father, an identification that will be very powerful and that, even more than before, will make the boy's image of himself as a father akin to that of his actual father.

Is There an Instinct to be a Father?

It is assumed by a number of specialists who address themselves to this question that the female's motivation and wish to become a mother are secured to a large degree by an instinctive mechanism or an instinctual drive. It is assumed that in the female the sexual drive has a strong component of maternal instinct which is part and parcel of the aim of the sexual drive, namely reproduction and the caregiving of the young, essential features of the preservation of the species.

With regard to the male the question of whether or not there is an instinct to be a father is not so clear. There are, in fact, some scientists (e.g. Dr. Theresa Benedek) who

propose that in humans there is no instinct or instinctual drive in the male that pushes for or secures his being a father. There are, of course, certain elements in the male's sexuality that seem biologically protected and secured, as they would be by an instinct or an instinctual drive. Such factors, for example, as the production of sperm and the contribution of sperm in sexual life, the nature of heterosexuality, the large interest in sexual activity, all seem to be biologically insured and, of course, significantly contribute to reproduction. But this does not secure **being** a father, acting like a father. As we will discuss later, sexual activity, sexual interests are much more closely tied to the process of making a baby than they are to that of being a parent. We all know only too well that many an individual has a baby without becoming or being a parent.

There is surprising observable evidence in 3 to 6 year old children's behaviors to show that in addition to the biological programming of sexual maturation and the eventual production of sperm in the male, that the boy's interest in genitalia, the arousal of his genital zones, his notions of impregnation and of sexual intercourse, may be biologically determined, innately structured patterns of behavior. If one looks closely and with an **open mind** at 3 to 6 year old normal children's play activities, one recognizes in these the playing out of some of their fantasies, and the observer will frequently be able to identify themes of a sexual nature. In both boys and girls, some of their fantasy play may reveal quite sophisticated fantasies, which many people believe do not exist, until they look at children objectively, kindly, without intent to criticize, to judge, or to depreciate.

For example, one nearly 3 year old boy who had been showing much evidence of sexual interests, one morning in play activity with a caregiving female young adult, to whom he had become recently warmly attached, stood by her, a pistol in one hand and a plastic spoon in the other. In play, he emptied the content of his toy pistol (pretending to shoot) into the plastic spoon, put down his pistol, and much to her surprise gently lifted slightly the skirt of his adult play partner and put the spoon under her skirt toward her pelvis perhaps two or so inches. He then withdrew the spoon and went on to further play activities. That surprising action had taken perhaps two seconds. It had occurred so quickly that even the play partner did not immediately recognize the meaning of that brief activity. For the team of observing behavior scientists who had known this boy from birth, and had followed him with sufficient frequency to know him well, this activity suggested a fantasy possibly of both pelvic sexual encounter and impregnation. Although many people may doubt the meaning of such fantasy play in children this age, scientists engaged in research on children propose the hypothesis that this kind of activity is evidence of the child's primitive fantasies of sexual activity and impregnation. Observing children with an open eye and an **open mind** will readily reveal activities, perhaps not as clear and not as explicit as the one just described, but sufficient to suggest that in normal, healthy children, such sexual interests are amply evident.

Also probably instinctually determined is the emergence of activity on the part of 3 or so year old boys and girls that can be identified as of an heterosexual nature. The emergence of heterosexuality from the third year of life on no doubt contributes to the boy's identification as a male with his father, to his role playing fantasies and interests in being and becoming a father. Of course, normal boys will also play at being mother,

and girls at being father, without it meaning that a problem exists in the child's core sexual identity formation.

These findings and the hypotheses to which they lead support the proposition that sexual activity and the wish to have a baby are instinctually determined. That, however, only suggests an underlying instinctual drive toward being a father but is not sufficient to assert that the male has within him an instinctive mechanism or instinctual drive that directly insures his becoming, **being**, and functioning like a father.

The Mystery of Procreation

We sometimes find a small boy between 2 and 6 years of age showing much interest in his mother's or another woman's having a baby, and we at times find such a boy expressing the wish to have a baby in his own abdomen, stuffing a pillow into his shirt and saying that he has a baby in his tummy. Nonetheless, on the whole, the young boy's expressed wish to have a baby is limited in behavioral expression. However, many a young man, and even an adolescent male, marvels at the capability of the female to procreate, that marvel to "make" a baby in her own body.

Many a healthy male then envies the female's incomparable creative capability. Some react to that envy by denying its importance, by belittling its role in life, belittling its importance even in the face of its prime function of insuring the preservation of the species. Some other males feel quite left out of the procreative process, and of the family formation process, feeling that they contribute "only the sperm". In some instances too, where the mother-infant dyad is tightly closed, many a young father feels left out of what he experiences as an exclusive mother-child symbiotic dyad. These instances are detrimental to family formation, and are a loss for all concerned, baby, mother and father.

It may be that this marveling by the male of the female's procreative capabilities, creates in many a man the wish to participate in both procreative and nurturing processes. For many a male it adds an aura of awe toward his wife, the baby, and nature; and it increases his sense of parenting; it intensifies his becoming **and being** a father.

The Male's Reaction During His Mate's Pregnancy

The experience of the mate's being pregnant, where the mate is loved and respected, leads to a reaction in the male of wanting to protect woman and baby, and of wanting to provide for their safety and health even well before the baby is born. This reaction brings with it a greater or lesser emotional investment in the not yet born baby.

The reaction of many a healthy male to a pregnant woman is one of warmth, gentleness (carefulness), and protection. For example, some time ago in a building in Washington, DC, a group of armed terrorists had forced a number of men and women to not leave a given hall. The hostages were subjected to a variety of abuses while the

kidnappers demanded their ransom and negotiated for it. The group of hostages seemed to tolerate with little resistance the abuses carried out against them by their kidnappers until the kidnappers threatened and began to abuse a young pregnant woman. At that point several up to then passive male hostages rallied, surprised their kidnappers, and overpowered them. It was not until a pregnant woman was endangered that the men briskly mobilized their strengths, risked their lives, and overpowered their kidnappers. This type of feeling in the male, evidence of both his collective biological and developmental experiences, is part of what makes the male wish to be a parent.

The Contribution of Normal Narcissism in Becoming a Father

All normal and healthy human beings need to experience a reasonable degree of self-appreciation, of self-valuing, of self-love. This is needed for good self-esteem. Most human beings experience the wish to have a child in order to perpetuate oneself, and to carry on "the family name", a perpetuation of one's family. To a large degree this kind of healthy narcissistic gratification is experienced by many males and females in the process of procreation. Also, to a reasonable degree it is common that having a child is experienced by many a man as an indication of his potency, as evidence of his virility. And, again to a degree, in a normal individual the child is experienced as an extension of, as a part of the self.

All these normal narcissistic needs and reactions when **too** intense however, are likely to interfere with the child's developing sense of self and individuality and may create large difficulties for the child. The father who experiences his child principally as an indicator of his potency and his virility may expect the child, in the course of growing, to continue to be evidence of the father's potency and virility. He will thereby impose restrictions on the child's evolving sense of self, of individuality, freedom of choice, and create distortions in the directions in which she or he may grow. In such cases, of course, the father's needs become a burden for the child and interfere with the child's healthy development. In other words, where the wish to perpetuate the self, the family name, etc., outweigh the needs and best interests of the child, there the narcissism of the parent may cause harm to the child's development.

The Large Variation in Fathering Behavior

Studies of fathers, both cross-cultural as well as cross-species, reveal that there is much greater variation in the behavior of fathers toward children than in mothers. Mothering tends to be remarkably uniform, pertaining to the bearing of the children, and the nurture and caregiving of the young. By contrast, fathers perform quite different functions, in varying degrees, characteristic for each species and culture. For example, in some animal species the fathers play very little part in the caregiving of the children or in

family life while in others they play a significant part in child rearing and family life. Humans too show a great deal of variation in these functions from one culture to another. For example, where the survival of a culture is especially determined by warfare, the fathers, whose principal function is to serve as warrior and protector of the community, play very little part in family life and in the nurturing and caregiving of the young. In cultures that subsist primarily by agricultural means, the fathers' activities are close to home, and in many such cultures the fathers play a significant part in family life, and form close relationships to their young. Interestingly, some family functions seem especially to fall to fathers throughout various cultures. For example, in many cultures discipline seems to be generally in the domain of the father's functions, that discipline varying from harsh cruelty with the use of weapons to much more benign and benevolent constraints and punishments.

Even within a given culture, as within a given species, fathering will vary according to the experiences of the individual on the one hand, and the biological dispositions and inclinations (temperament) of that given individual, on the other. It is believed by specialists in the field, that within culturally determined norms, the individual experiences of a given male most strongly determine the character of his fathering.

Taking intraspecies variations, as well as interspecies and intercultural variations into account, fathering behavior in general tends to not be the same as mothering behavior in all its dimensions; at least, it has not shown to be so to date. That is, fathering behavior can substitute quite well but seems, according to professional viewpoints, to not be equivalent to mothering behavior in all its important features. We shall talk about this further below and in Unit 3. There are, unfortunately too many instances of quite poor mothering. In such instances, children are fortunate if the father is able to be a good nurturer and comforter. Good fathering, fatherly caregiving and nurturance, can ably meet the young child's emotional needs, if it is of sufficient quantity; that is, if the father is sufficiently physically and emotionally available to the child. But, in equally well-motivated parents, the mother's bonding to her baby and her attachment-facilitating (on the part of the baby) caregiving behavior seems to better enhance the child's earliest development than most fathers can provide. This, however, like many other issues, is not a closed topic. As noted earlier the father's parenting functions increase as the child grows older.

The Wish to Have a Baby and the Wish to Become a Parent

The wish to have a baby and the wish to become a parent are not equivalent, although, they often occur in the same person at the same time. Knowing how difficult it is to rear a baby, knowing what a baby needs and how time and energy consuming a job it is, may increase in some persons and decrease in others, the wish to have a baby.

It is important to point out that there is a normal **infantile** and an **adult** form of wanting to have a baby as well as of wanting to be a parent. The adult form of wanting to have a baby and wanting to be a parent is very well known and recognized by adults and

children. It has taken a long time, however, for scientists to recognize that there is an **infantile form** of wanting to have a baby and of wanting to be a parent which is part and parcel of a child's normal and healthy development. In fact, many people have yet to recognize this development in children. Important is the fact that although these wishes are in their infantile form, they play a large part both in determining the quality of total emotional development of the individual and the character of the person's eventual adult wish to have a baby and to be a parent. Indeed, the infantile form of these wishes lays the foundation for their adult form. Because of this, it is important for parents and educators to recognize that such infantile wishes occur in a normal child in the course of her or his development and it is in their child's best interest for parents to deal with these experiences in their young children appropriately and constructively, and not as if these were pathological developments, or as some parents have expressed to us, as signs of perversions.

The Infantile Form of Wanting to Have a Baby and Wanting to Be a parent

As we said earlier, mothering and fathering emerge within the child during the phase of the childhood family romance, the period extending from the third through the sixth year of life. Prior to about 2 1/2 years of age, both boys and girls show an interest in babies that derives especially from their identifications with the mother and the father of their infancy. The attraction to and interest in a baby then changes dramatically especially in little girls at about 2 to 2 1/2 years of age. Little boys that age do not seem to show the same awed, affectionate, and nurturing reaction to infants we have seen in girls. In the girl the reaction toward babies takes on the appearance of the little girl's wishing to have a baby. In fact, some little girls readily verbalize and give much evidence that they wish to have a baby **of their own**. As one little girl said in rejecting her mother's offer that she take a doll to snacks with her rather than her infant sister, " I want a **real** baby"!

This new wish to have a baby intensifies especially during the girl's emerging childhood family romance. In the boy, by contrast, during the emerging of his childhood family romance, what psychoanalysts call the Oedipus complex, the experience toward a baby seems different. There also is a novel interest in babies; but it is especially expressed in terms of the wish that the boy's beloved mother have a new baby, the makings of which he would like to have a central part in.

The **psychological** component of wishing to become a mother, arising out of and superimposed on the **biological** elements that make the girl wish to become a mother, precipitates out of her wish to have a baby herself and out of her identifications with her mother's imagined sexual and mothering activities. In the same way, the psychological component of wishing to become a **father** in the boy precipitates out of the wish to make a baby happen in his beloved mother, and the boy's identifications with his father's imagined sexual and fathering activities.

Especially from the changes in the psyche that arise out of the emerging of the child's sexual drive, which occurs from about 2 to 2 1/2 years of age, comes the girl's wish to have a baby apart from her wish to have a mate. In other words, there seems to be a brief period from about 2 to 2 1/2 years of age¹ when the girl's prime interest seems to be wishing to have a baby without considering the need for a mate to carry out that activity. It is of interest that many an adolescent and even a young woman may wish to have a baby without having a consonant interest in having a mate. It is especially from the childhood family romance and good prior emotional relationships that the wish to have a baby with a love-mate arises.

Mothering and Fathering Functions

Traditionally, for western society and most other societies (primitive or advanced), mothering and fathering functions while often similar have been complementary rather than simply the same and interchangeable.

Mothering has particularly encompassed physical and emotional nurture of the infant and the small child as well as a large concern with rearing the child through his or her long years of growth and development. The psychobiological origins of motherhood and socio-economic factors surrounding family life and caregiving of the young have created the mother's primary role of rearer and nurturer of her offspring and manager of the home. Generally speaking, by contrast, fathering has particularly focused around the provision of basic physical needs like food and shelter, territory, and the protection of the mother and offspring, leading to his primary management of family life focusing outside of the home. The search for food that required hunting has been essentially provided by the father beginning in pre-historic times with his roaming away from the shelter site in search of this food. Where the provision of food has depended especially on agriculture, especially in smaller communal or family agricultural undertakings, the mother has as often and at times more often than the father been involved in the provision of this food.

The question of the role of the mother and of the father, other than for the general characteristics and tendencies just noted above, is not simple. There is much variation depending on the nature and structure of a culture.

In addition to variations in cultures and ethnic groups there are variations from one individual parent or parenting couple to another in the same culture or ethnic group. Of course, there are differences between male and female that have a large biological contribution, which usually seem to make one gender more effective than the other in the performance of certain functions. For example, some behavior researchers point out that mothers tend to be more effective in calming a crying child than are men. Also, mothers tend to be able to sit with an infant in their arms or laps longer and more comfortably

¹ Figures as these are only "on the average". In some normal children the phenomena described may appear somewhat earlier or later.

than fathers tend to be. On the other hand, fathers throughout many cultures, tend to create a greater degree of excitement in young children, to engage more in playful activities with their children, to complement the child's interest in exploring his or her environment than many mothers are inclined to do. Again, let us emphasize, that individual variations arise out of individual dispositions and experiences. That is to say, some fathers are very good at calming young children; some mothers are very good at enhancing their child's tendency to explore his or her environment and to play and even rough-house excitingly with children.

It is a common observation, although it is challenged by some, that with regard to parenting functions there are differences in the feeling tone among women and men. For example, many a woman tends to be more gentle, to be softer, more affectionate, to rock more softly than many a man. Many a man tends to create more of an atmosphere of excitement, of heightening tension in a child, than many a woman. Again, individual characteristics in individual men and women make for variations in the generalizations just stated. The same can be said for modes of handling young children, and modes of carrying out certain activities relating to young children.

Somewhat similar tendencies exist in males and females with regard to children in early school years, as well as in adolescence. Whereas the mother's modes, feeling tones, tendencies tend to be more needed by the very young child, during the three to six years period and even more so during the middle years of childhood and adolescence, the modes, feeling tones, and specific parenting tendencies within the mother and within the father are equally needed and desired by both boys and girls. Where the functioning is favorable, parents play a complementary part in fulfilling the needs of their growing children.

Perhaps one of the largest indicators of basic differences (biological, psychological, cultural, and/or individual experiential in origin) in male as compared to female parenting may be found in the fact that a large number of women have reared children virtually single-handedly, whereas very few men have done so. While every behavior scientist knows many women who have reared children beautifully, single-handedly, most scientists know of no single instance where a man has reared his children single-handedly, let alone beautifully! What does this tell us? To try to answer this question would take us too far afield from our present purposes. Some of us would caution against the assumption that cultural forces are the only or even the primary factors responsible for so widespread a phenomenon.

We must also include here, the fact that although we speak especially of parents in the plural, of a mother and father working hand in hand in rearing their children, we all know of other commonly found sets of parents. Historically common for centuries, is the single parent, invariably a mother who finds herself having to rear one or more children for whom she has sole emotional, physical, and financial responsibility. Increasingly more common, are pairs of parents who due to prior marriages and remarriages are rearing children some of whom are biologically their own and some not. And there are still other types of parental sets we need not detail here. Although we will continue to use the model of a mother and father working hand in hand in rearing their own children, in no way do we intend to convey thereby that this is the only model that can work well.

Many single parents (mothers) and many divorced and remarried parents have reared their children beautifully, richly, fully. On the other hand, many parents of the type of our basic model, a mother and father who rear their own (biological) children, have failed painfully in rearing their children in growth-promoting ways. The principal goal of this entire curriculum on education for parenting is to avoid just that result. Let us now return to the question of mothering and fathering functions.

The role of the mother and the role of the father can be examined from the standpoint of the need of the child at a given time and during a given period of development. For example, the much younger child will need more cuddling, more being held and nurtured than will an older child. The child in the course of his or her growth will identify the fulfillment of specific needs as relating to the mother, and at other times, other needs as relating to the father. For example, when an infant is upset, fussy, tired, she or he usually will turn to mother for calming, for being loved and rocked into a decrease of internal tension. Most children identify this function with their mothers. On the other hand, a child who wishes to play, wishes to engage in exciting and tension mounting activity, will seek out the father in most instances. Or, when a middle years child, 6-7 years of age, is frightened during the night of a fantasized bear, that child may very well call for his father, to protect against a fantasized large, frightening assailant. In this sense, as we said before, children tend to expect certain functions to be performed by their mothers and others by their fathers; and, in many instances, there is an interchangeability which makes the child turn to either the mother or the father depending on existing conditions. Also, where one parent may not be present at a given time of need, a child may adapt by turning to the parent who is present for the fulfillment of a function which is usually carried out by the absent parent.

To some degree what the parent provides is biologically determined; to a significant degree what the parent provides is experientially determined, depending on the life experiences of the parent, on the one hand, and the child, on the other. What the parent provides is also significantly influenced by environmental factors, individual personality factors of the parent, as well as societal and cultural factors.

Changes in Parenting in Modern Western Society

Diverse changes in modern western society, and probably also in other societies, are fostering a decrease in sex-determined stereotypes of parental roles as well as of individual behavior. The degree to which these changes influence parental roles varies as the cultural changes vary. Those cultures where the rearing of children is turned over to the community where in the past child rearing was carried out in family life, will lead to changes of a much greater character than in those societies where (even though parenting functions are changing), parenting is nonetheless still carried out in the context of family life. For example, in Russia, even more so in China, the rearing of children in some communities is turned over to a certain group of nonfamilial work teams. In Israel, in some areas family life continues to be the main form of parenting that is carried out;

whereas in a small percentage of the population, children in "kibbutzim" are reared in communal houses by a communal team although the relationship to their parents is maintained through a programmed pattern of family life carried out for several hours during the day. In much of western Europe, the United States, and numerous other countries the major form of child rearing continues to be based in family life, although communal experiments can be found in these countries as well.

In western Europe and in the United States, where family life continues to be the major context in which children are reared, mothers are increasingly sharing in providing a family's financial resources whether or not this is an economic necessity. Increasingly, mothers are engaging in the out-of-the-home environment to meet psychological self needs unrelated to their mothering self-image and functions. The component of a woman's self-image which complements in the woman the component of her self-image as mother is being fulfilled more and more at the present time than has been possible even in the recent past. That is to say, because of societal changes, many a woman who from perhaps the age of 5 years, has wanted to both be a mother **and** a teacher, doctor, musician, writer, or businesswoman, etc., is now more and more able to fulfill not only the first of these component self-images but the second one as well.

Hand in hand with these changes in women's functions and activities, fathers are increasingly giving direct physical and emotional care to younger children and are increasingly participating in the overall nurturance and rearing of the child from earliest childhood to maturity. These changes bring with them benefits for all concerned, women, men, and children. The degree and quality of these changes in terms of their influence on women, men, and their children is an important field for study.

Taking into account the diverse forms and types of parenting found, it remains to be seen whether the adaptive capability of human beings allows the possibility that mothers can successfully be or learn to be fatherly, and whether fathers can give care and nurture equivalently to mothers. A number of difficult questions have arisen out of these changes: what specifically is mothering in contrast to fathering? Can fathering give to young children the basic emotional ingredients children need for optimal emotional and cognitive growth? This is a complex problem to sort out, one about which at the present we know too little.

We have sufficient knowledge, however, to be able to say that whatever function a given father or a given mother performs, the more that function is performed with genuine love for the child, respect for the child, a proper assessment of the needs of the child at a given time, the better its influence will be in helping the child to grow psychologically (emotionally and cognitively) and physically. Gender specific stereotypes are a complicated phenomenon. How much are they contributed to by biological givens in an individual person? by the individual experiences of each of us? and by overall influences of our cultures and our societies? No doubt, all 3 of these major sources play a part.

***PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
A TEXTBOOK***

INTRODUCTORY UNIT

CHAPTER 3

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

General Principles

Development begins with conception and ends with the death of the individual. We can fruitfully consider human development as consisting of 2 major aspects: (1) physical or somatic; and (2) mental (emotional, psychological) or psychic. The interrelation of the soma and the psyche, between the somatic and the psychic, has long been the subject of what has come to be known as **the mind-body problem**. The problem regarding the mind and body (psyche and soma) arises from the fact that scientists ascribe varying degrees of interrelation between them, from those who believe them to be separate entities with little mutual influence upon one another, those subscribing to the **dual** mind-body theory, in contrast to those who consider the interrelations between soma and psyche to be extensive if not constantly at play, those subscribing to the **unitary** mind-body theory.

The position of the authors of this work (curriculum) is that there are extensive reciprocal and mutually influencing relations between the somatic and psychical sectors of the individual's life and growth. In our view, the soma and the psyche are in a continuum, i.e., are one, and it is only for the sake of instruction and to highlight the importance of this sector of development, that we focus the attention of this course on human **psychic** development. The better somatic (physical) development proceeds, the better the chances are for good psychic development to occur; and, the better psychic development proceeds, the better are chances for good physical development to occur. We know now, for instance, that in the first year of life, failures to grow physically may be due solely to the failure of emotional experiences and lack of sufficient emotional growth. We underline then, that while all aspects of human development are of the utmost importance to parents and parenting, in this work we turn our attention specifically to the sector we define as human psychic development .

We can definitely assume that psychic development in humans begins at birth. In contrast to physical development which begins immediately at conception, it is not clear how much psychic development occurs prior to birth. Certainly, intra-uterine factors that

act as irritants to the soma will also cause psychic irritability which can readily be inferred from observing some newborns. By the way especially here, in the newborn, the line between what is physical and psychic can only vaguely be drawn.

We can also assume that adaptation to aging requires new efforts in the individual and that, therefore, psychic development continues to occur even in old age. **Psychic development** then, begins at if not before birth and continues throughout the individual's life. Of course, because the area of our concern is parenting, we shall examine in greater detail the psychic developments from birth through adolescence than those that occur in adulthood.

Let us define several terms two of which we have already used a number of times, namely **development** and **psychic**.

Maturation is a process of change in structure and/or function of an organ, (organ) system, or organism, in the direction of greater differentiation and specificity resulting from an inborn preprogrammed schedule for that differentiation. For a given species, schedules of maturation tend to be constant in their sequences in the order in which they unfold. Each child, however, has her/his own timetable for her/his schedules of maturation. We shall say more about this later.

Development is a process of change in structure and/or function of an organ, (organ) system, or organism, in the direction of greater growth, ability and/or specificity resulting from the interplay of its maturation, experiences, and efforts at adaptation. Development is generally considered to occur toward better and greater ability and function. Maldevelopments, of course, also occur; they consist of developments in an inoptimal direction, where, for example, efforts at coping and adapting serve the needs of the moment but in the long run create an organ or system of functioning that is uneconomical or even distorting and deviant.

Epigenesis is a term now used both by embryologists and emotional development specialists. Erik Erikson defines the epigenetic principle as follows: "anything that grows has a **ground plan**, and that out of this ground plan the **parts** arise, each part having its **time** of special ascendancy, until all parts have arisen to form a **functioning whole**. For our present concern it means that the child's psyche and personality unfolds, "not by developing new organs, but by a prescribed sequence of locomotor, sensory, and social capacities . . . (which) obey inner laws of development." Rate and sequence of development are governed in each child by that child's inner psychobiological maturational program. The child's psyche and personality develops "according to steps predetermined in the human organism's readiness to be driven (from within) toward, to be aware of, and to interact with, a widening social radius, beginning with the dim image of a mother and ending with . . . that segment of mankind which 'counts' in the particular individual's life" (Erikson, 1959, p. 52).

These 3 terms apply to both **somatic** (or physical) and **psychic** (or mental) factors and phenomena in the child.

Psychic (or psychical) is an adjective that pertains to **psyche**; we mean by it what many call that which is **psychological, emotional, or mental**. We can, with some care, loosely use the term **psychic** interchangeably with psychological, emotional, and mental.

Human Development Is a Continuous Process

In general, the largest steps in development, both physical and psychological, occur in the earliest months and years of life, with later development continuing in progressively smaller steps and quantities. A diagrammatic overview of development would show that in general it follows a **logarithmic** curve (design).

Both Maturation and Development are Characteristics of Living Systems and Organisms

In any living structure, organ system, or total organism, any one step in development can occur only out of its prior developments. In other words, **earlier developments are and create the foundation and the substrate out which all subsequent developments arise**. This condition that current and future development arise out of past developments, makes **the earliest years of life crucial for and determining of total development of the individual**. Essentially then, the better the beginnings in an individual's life, the sounder and more stable will subsequent development of that individual tend to be. It is important to note, however, that to a substantial degree there are many occasions and many ways in which difficulties in earlier development can be compensated for and even repaired by later life experiences.

Our Earliest Emotionally-Invested Experiences Are Indelible

Pertinent to this view is another factor, theorized by Sigmund Freud, which makes the child's earliest experiences and developments critical. It is Freud's well substantiated theory that the earliest emotional investments we make, our earliest feelings and modes of relating to others and to ourselves, our earliest patterns of behavior and experiences are stamped indelibly in our psyches. This means that we subsequently carry in our characters, in our ways of feeling about ourselves and of relating to others, the quality and character of our earliest life experiences.

Epigenetic Development of the Human Psyche

Scientists of human development and behavior, like embryologists, find that human psychical (emotional, psychological) development, like physical development, although continuous, tends to occur in steps or stages. Each step or stage is recognizable and definable by the development of a functional part-system and dominant mode of adaptation, predetermined by an innate schedule of maturation which triggers its emergence. The development of each of these functional and adaptive part-systems occurs in a series, the sequence of which is constant in all organisms of the species. Such series of stages reflect the developmental steps taken by each individual line of development of unique adaptive-functional systems. In psychic development, a number of such systems or lines of component development have been teased out and formulated by some of our most eminent psychic development specialists. These include, for example, S. Freud's **psychosexual** stages of development, Erikson's **psychosocial** development, Piaget's development of **intelligence**, Mahler's self-object theory of **separation-individuation**, Spitz's development of the **libidinal object** (loved person). Each of these scientists has found that specific component lines of development occur, that they do so in discernible stages, phases and that these stages follow the same sequence of development in every organism of our species. We shall briefly detail these in a moment.

Erikson's proposition that psychic development occurs epigenetically, as the human embryo unfolds physically, alerts us to a most important consideration. As occurs with the intrauterine embryo, Erikson proposes that there is a time, and a duration of time, when the development of a given functional-adaptive part-system in the psyche will take place, and that inner laws determine the rates and sequences of their maturation and development. Whether or not, or to what degree if any, psychic development is bound by the all-important critical periods hypothesis of embryological epigenesis is still not known. The **critical periods hypothesis** holds that if a given maturation and development scheduled to occur during a given time period does not occur, or occurs insufficiently, that development will be arrested where it stands when its scheduled time period is ended. If this applies to psychic development, as it does for embryological physical development, then any functional-adaptive part-system that fails to achieve its prescribed level of maturation and development in time will be thwarted and further maturation and/or development unlikely.

Some mental health scientists believe that at least some psychic functional-adaptive systems are indeed governed by this law of critical periods while other scientists believe this hypothesis does not apply to psychological-emotional development. If this law operates it would especially do so during the earliest years of life, perhaps up to the fifth or so year. Of these, the first year would be the most vulnerable. The debate will go on for many years to come, unclarity being especially created by both the enormous complexity of factors that influence psychic development and the remarkable adaptive capabilities of human beings from infancy through adulthood. Nonetheless, it is well to respect the proponents of the critical periods hypothesis -- as well as those who argue

against it -- and secure as healthy and stable early development as is possible. This not only because it is better to be safe than not, but also because of the unquestionable principle stated earlier, that the earliest developments are the matrix, the substrate, out of which all subsequent developments arise.

Component Psychic Systems Develop Simultaneously and Influence Each Other

Like physical maturation and development, total psychic development results from the interplay of from insufficient to optimal maturations and developments of a number of functional-adaptive systems. As S. Freud, A. Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Spitz, Bowlby, Mahler, and others have taught us, each system or developmental line has its own schedule and constant sequence of phases, each of which can be examined individually providing us with a number of useful frames of reference from which to observe and evaluate both parts of and total psychic development. But all of these systems mature and develop either simultaneously or in fairly close overlapping fashion. This makes for reciprocity of influence of the status and conditions of development of any one system upon the others. For example, because early cognitive and emotional maturations and developments occur from around the same time, from the first weeks and months of life on, a number of mental health specialists believe that insufficient emotional development of the mother-child relationship will retard the development of a number of other functional-adaptive systems including that of intelligence. Similarly, we have found that efforts to undo retardations in the development of one system, as intelligence, without attending to retardations in other psychic systems, as the development of emotional relationships, tends to bear little fruit, to the great disappointment of all of us.

Each Child Has Her or His Own Schedules of Maturation and, Therefore, of Development

We have said that each psychic system has its sequence of developmental stages, or its developmental line, which has an orderly progression that is the same in all human beings. In this sense all children start in stage A which is followed by stage B, then by stage C, etc. But, within certain normal ranges, **each child has her or his own timetable for the emergence** of each stage of these psychic systems. For example, one child's beginning to walk at 10 months is no more normal nor necessarily better than the timetable of a child who begins to walk at 14 or 16 months of age. In addition, each child has his or her own preference for the development of one part-system component before another. Again, this does not mean that one pattern of development is better or more normal than the other. For instance, one child may learn to talk from 18 months of age

while another does so from 24 months, while the first child learned to walk at 14 months and the second at 10 months. Why such variations occur is not known to date, but we assume that much of the disposition for such variations come from the child's own innate inclinations and the unconscious wishes and desires of the parents.

What Causes Development to Occur in Stages?

Taking from what defines a stage or phase or step in development, speculation allows us to say the following. As we have said, each psychic system (or sector of psychic functioning) develops in a series of stages or phases. Each stage is both identifiable for its kinship to the other stages of its psychic system by its function characteristics, but is also distinguishable from the others by discernibly different features. We must assume that what gives each phase its specific features is that in a given psychic system, a specific maturation dictated by an innate, constitutional timetable, inner forces and unfoldings, propel the child to meet his or her environment at a new level and in a new mode of experiencing which requires a new level and mode of adaptation. The adaptation required is not caused **primarily** by external environmental demands, but rather by the powerful need to adapt to and master the new level of experiencing and internally-driven functioning (adapting). In other words, the inner demand to adapt is by far the greater force compelling the child to develop than is the demand of the external, parental and societal, environment. That, however, does not prevent experience and the environment from facilitating or even seriously obstructing healthy development.

In this sense, development is a constant process of meeting the demands, the task, of each maturational phase. It is by meeting the new challenge each phase presents to the organism that each psychic system develops step by step. Since several psychic systems develop simultaneously or in an overlapping fashion, the child, develops, not step by step, but rather steps by steps. What this means then is that development is a constant process of meeting new challenges and gaining mastery over these challenges.

Development Is Constant Work

Development, then, is constant work. Erikson gives us a useful model. He proposes that each stage of development "comes to its ascendance" and has its principal task. In meeting it, the child experiences each stage first as a challenge, with its excitements, uncertainties, inabilities. During the second period of a stage as efforts are made to cope, frustrations, successes, anxieties, pleasure in function and achievement, are experienced which create a **crisis** of varying intensities and patterns. During the third

period of a given stage, adaptation and mastery are achieved to a greater or lesser degree (1959, p. 53).

Observation of children shows that as soon as one phase is sufficiently mastered, the child is confronted by the demands of the next phase of development. It is this phenomenon, that requires the human organism to be constantly at work in the course of her/his development; constantly at work adapting to the new demands made by growth as well as by the environment in which he or she lives. If one assumes, therefore, that a child's development is easy, is full of fun and pleasure, one is being cognizant of only a small aspect of development. The fact is, that development requires constant efforts on the part of the child, the overcoming of constant feelings of not being able to do something, of learning how to do it, and eventually feeling comfortable enough and secure enough that one can do it with satisfaction. It is important for individuals to recognize that development entails hardships rather than assume that growing up is just plain fun.

Frames of Reference for Detailing Human Development

As we said before, the development of various sectors of psychic experience and functioning have been formulated by Freud, Erikson, Piaget, Spitz, Bowlby, Mahler, Parens, and others. These formulations detail aspects of psychic development covering different spans of time. For instance, the brief spelling out of these well studied and formulated sectors of development which we will do in a moment, show that, whereas Erikson's formulation covers the human's entire life span and that of Mahler covers only the first 36 months of life. Let's briefly outline them now.

Erik H. Erikson's Theory of **Psychosocial Development**

ERIKSON'S EPIGENETIC MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT

Erikson's model addresses the development of the person's self-identity, that is, not just the development of who the child becomes, but how the growing child becomes the person he/she *feels himself or herself to be*. While Erikson considered this development to occur in stages, he proposed that each of the 'attributes' of the self each stage is targeted to achieve exists as a potential from birth on. Thus, each 'attribute' is scheduled to emerge during a specific period of time, as occurs with the development of the embryo in the mother's uterus. During this scheduled development, each stage has an assigned 'organ' or 'system' or 'attribute' that must then develop during its schedule time period. This is referred to as "epigenetic development". Each attribute emerges as a function of what the child is capable of at a given point in psychological development. The first stage, if well enough achieved, will facilitate a successful achievement of the second stage; the first two stages, if well enough achieved, will facilitate a successful achievement of the third one, etc.

Here, taken from Erikson's *Identity and the Life Cycle* (1959, p. 120) is a partial representation (from "Infancy" through "Adolescence") of his "epigenetic model of development".

Infancy	Trust vs. Mistrust				
Early Childhood		Autonomy vs. Shame, Doubt			
Play Age			Initiative vs. Guilt		
School Age				Industry vs. Inferiority	
Adolescence					Identity vs. Identity Diffusion

Erikson proposed that the cardinal functional self-identity 'attribute' the child will achieve for each specific stage of development is:

During Infancy (The first year): “Trust versus Mistrust”, which essentially means that the child will progressively feel he can trust his primary caregivers and in complement with that the child will feel that he is worthy of that trust. By the end of Infancy, this aspect of self will now become part of the child’s self-experience. Note that this development is felt by the child to include his feelings about himself and about his caregivers.

During Early Childhood (1 to 3 years): “Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt”, which means that the child is developing the confidence that he can act on his own or, if his overall experiencing is predominantly negative, that he cannot trust that he can act on his own, that he needs the caregiver to do what, or get him what he needs. He will or will not begin on the path to self-reliance.

During Play Age (3 to 6 years): “Initiative versus Guilt” means that the child will acquire the sense of deciding what he wishes to do and what he, age-appropriately can do; whereas if his experiencing is too often negative he will feel that what he wishes to do will be bad or be disapproved of and he therefore will have much difficulty doing something that is age-appropriate self-reliantly.

During School Age (6 to 12 years): “Industry versus Inferiority” speaks to the child’s ability to develop the discipline of working, that is, of actively learning in school, studying and doing his/her homework, being helpful around the house and even in the community. This growing capability raises the child’s self esteem, self-confidence and self-reliance. Failing to achieve such capability leads to a lowering of the child’s self-esteem, self-confidence and leads to developing a sense of inferiority over others.

During Adolescence (12 to 18/21): “Identity versus Identity Diffusion”. The development of one’s sense of self, of one’s ‘identity’ peaks during adolescence. While much more development lies ahead, the organization of the sense of self in adolescence is highly determining of later success in life, in work and in love relationships.

Sigmund Freud's Theory of **Psychosexual Development**

THE THEORY OF PSYCHOSEXUAL DEVELOPMENT

As with all aspects of a human being's functioning, human sexual and reproductive development begins very early in life. Mental health professionals have recognized that sexual experiencing is an important part of every human being's emotional life. It is for this reason, that they have studied not only the human's sexual development from early childhood on, but have especially studied it from the vantage point of the part it plays in the child's emotional, or **psychic**, life. This is why they labeled this developmental theory: **Psychosexual Theory**. Psychosexual theory details an important part of human development.

Psychosexual development occurs in 6 phases.

1. From birth to around 18 months of age is the **Oral Phase** of psychosexual development. The word "oral" refers to activity that makes use of the mouth. The specific way in which it is important is that oral activity in this theory is considered to be the most dominant form of erotic experiencing of which infants seem capable. Two factors play a part in this "erotic" experience: pleasure in sucking and pleasure in tasting. The most specific "feeling" of the mouth is, of course, taste. Sucking pertains to that critical factor which is that the mouth, the oral cavity as physicians say, is the entry port of that most vital of all functions, to take in order to digest food. Food intake, along with the need for oxygen and the effects of pain, is of such importance that it can waken an infant from sleep, and lead him to exhibit very demanding behavior. Given that, both the inner layer of the mouth (the mucosa) consisting of very sensitive cells, and that the gratification of both sucking and hunger is so pleasurable, and that in addition, the intake of food is vital to life, it is not puzzling that during the early months, and to a significant degree from then on, the child's mouth is a major body structure around which much important special experiencing occurs and becomes organized. Yet another easily observable important use of the mouth is that it also becomes one of the infant's earliest means of exploring his environment. He feeds, feels, tastes, explores, and experiences much pleasure or frustration through the activity of his mouth.

2. Next comes the **Anal Phase**, roughly from 18 months to 3 years. In psychosexual theory, this part of the body is given special importance during this age period, because this body part and the basic function it serves come under a good deal of attention by the child as the child begins to feel the need for developing control over both this body part and its vital functions. Again, this is a vital body activity in that it is necessary for survival. We must rid our bodies of waste products or we would not survive.

Most people have a good deal of a difficult in recognizing that humans (and probably all animals as well) feel a specific form of pleasure in the course of ridding our bodies of the waste products that accumulate within our large intestines and our urinary bladder, the remains of the foods and fluids we take in that we do not digest and take into our cells. Part of this form of pleasure, again, has to do with the fact that the surface layer of the exit port of our digestive tracts, our rectum and anus, consists of "mucous cells" which makes it very sensitive to stimulation. It may be because the rectum and anus are anatomically located quite close to our genitals that the nerves that serve the areas where and by which we feel the need to excrete waste products from our bodies sometimes stimulate our genital parts as well. For instance, all parents have discovered that baby boys will often have an erection when, in the course of being diapered, they urinate.

But there is much else too that leads the child's attention to the anal part of his body and its functions, namely, that it is perceived by the young child as a body function over which the child wishes to gain control and mastery. It becomes a crucial task for the 2 to 3 year old to learn to control those muscle rings we call the anus and the bladder sphincter. This is the period when the young child is concentrating on toilet training, and when this is achieved, derives much pleasure and a sense of accomplishment or, when he does not, experiences much frustration and feelings of failure.

3. The third phase of psychosexual development, which runs from about 2 1/2 to 6 years of age, is what developmental researchers propose to be the **First Genital Phase**. This is the era of the human's life when sexuality as most people understand it begins. Now erotic feelings become directly aroused by and experienced in the genital parts of the body, of course, in the boy his penis and scrotum, and in the girl, her clitoris and external as well as internal vaginal areas. This "first genital phase" also includes the Oedipal Complex (which in this Curriculum, in Unit 3, we call the "Family Romance"). During this 2 1/2 to 6 years period, the child is pre-occupied with and usually much concerned about sexual feelings, fantasies, sexual differences, and, when permitted often will ask questions about their own genitals and those of others, and about babies. We talk extensively about the "family romance" as well as major details of the preoccupation with both genitals and the origins of babies in Unit 3 (3 to 6 Years).

4. Then comes the **Latency Phase**. This phase is so labeled because, in comparison with the 3 to 6 years period child's pre-occupation with genitals and the "family romance" dynamics on the one hand, and the striking sexual body developments and upsurge of sexual interest of puberty, the period from 6 to 10 or so years of age is rather quiet with regard to sexual concerns and interests, or sexuality is relatively dormant and thus, "latent", as if inactive but ready to become active at a biologically prescribed time. This does not mean that there is no sexual pre-occupation or expression of interest at all but that, rather, it is not so dominant as it is before and will be at puberty.

One wonders, thinking of the challenges sexuality is to humans, whether the wisdom of nature has a hand in this since this 6 to 10 years period is when throughout cultures, children are expected to start the arduous and taxing journey toward becoming a contributor to society by being a "worker". Industrial countries especially have made it obligatory that children be made to put much adaptive energy into learning now not only at home but especially at a much accelerated rate now in school, on building a remarkably wide range of skills, on learning to take responsibility and do homework, and on developing (nonsexual) relationships with peers more.

5. The fifth phase of psychosexual development is the **Pre-Adolescence Phase**, ages 10 to 13 or so. This period has more recently come to be recognized as an important "transitional" phase, between being a "latency-age" child, or elementary school age child, to becoming an adolescent. During this transitional phase, the biological stirrings that will lead to puberty are believed to be set in motion, and begin to influence the child's feelings, concerns, and behaviors. Thus, while continuing to focus much energy and attention on ever developing skills in schoolwork and elsewhere, the 10 or so year old is beginning to feel those unique bodily changes that come with getting ready for puberty, that remarkable biological process that ushers in and thrusts the youngster into Adolescence.

Two terms that are key in psychosexual theory are puberty and adolescence. **Puberty** is that **biological** process and **time period** from about 11 to 14 years of age that brings about the metamorphosis of the child as sexual being into the beginnings of the future adult as sexual being. It is the biological process that begins the conversion of "infantile sexuality" into "adult sexuality". It does so by virtue of a genetically programmed activation in the child 10 or so years of age of hormones that start the maturation of not only the total youngster into his or her adult form and but especially so of his or her reproductive system. This brings about the well known physical metamorphosis including marked enlargements of the body as a whole, and of secondary sex characteristics. **Adolescence**, initiated by puberty, is that decade-long developmental period, physical and psychological especially, that bridges childhood and adulthood. During this long period, the child gradually evolves into the adult. Developmentalists believe this period to be so complex in its development that they subdivide it into 3 phases. In this Curriculum we address adolescence in these 3 phases.

6. **Adolescence**: As just noted, from about 12 or so years until about 20, in psychosexual theory is the period of remarkable sexual transformation from childhood to adulthood. Physically and psychologically, in terms of his or her evolving sexuality, the child gradually is developing into a man or a woman. Sexuality now becomes a major pre-occupation, source of great challenge, much concern, and it organizes one's

experiencing of oneself as an individual person with a clear and stabilizing sense of gender-self. This crucial further organization and stabilization of one's gender-self influences importantly the character of one's relationships to others.

Although not included as parts of psychosexual theory, the following notes might usefully be added here.

Adolescence is further challenging to both the growing child and parents by virtue of not only the enlargement of the skeleto-muscular system in both female and male but by a clear upsurge in physical strength and in **aggression**. This becomes particularly challenging in the face of the normal anger, hostility, and occasional hate that may be experienced by the growing youngster toward those persons he most values in life. This challenge becomes even more daunting for both the growing individual, his parents, and society, when, because of lifelong abuses, neglects and deprivations, the growing young person is loaded with hostility, hate and rage, which now, when discharged can have a powerful destructive impact on himself, those around him and society.

This also is the time when a young person gradually becomes more independent from his or her family of childhood, one of the most challenging tasks of this decade-long developmental period. The adolescent has to enter adulthood having achieved the critical **shift of the center of his relationships** being occupied by his family of childhood to that center becoming progressively occupied by the peer group. This is essential for healthy development because it is from this peer group that the young adult will eventually select a mate, and achieve the end point of sexual development which is the preservation of the species. This does not mean that all adults must reproduce to fully be adult. It does mean that reproduction when it occurs in the course of normal healthy development is a function of adulthood. We see only too often, the harm done to both child and young mother, when reproduction occurs in mid adolescence, when it too prematurely makes its enormous demands on the adolescent who has not yet sufficiently done the work of development that can take it safely and with stability into the rigors of adulthood.

Enormous developments in intelligence, the ability to learn and to develop skills makes adolescence a remarkable developmental period that prepares the growing individual for his/her life work. The adolescent is now setting the stage to either go to college or take an income earning job.

7. Adulthood and Parenthood: During this over-21 years of age period the person becomes self-supporting, and usually marries and becomes a parent. This of itself, is the end-point of psychosexual development: **reproduction**. As we noted earlier, one can be a fully mature adult and elect not to reproduce. While sexuality is a major factor of our humanness, it is not the totality of being a human being.

Margaret S. Mahler's Theory of **Separation-Individuation**AN OUTLINE OF **SEPARATION-INDIVIDUATION THEORY**

Age of Infant	Name of Phase	Description of Phase
0 - 6 wks*	Normal Pre-symbiotic Phase	The newborn is most aware of what he feels inside himself. He has feelings -- hunger, fullness, cold, warmth, etc. He cannot tell the difference between what is inside and what is outside himself. However, newer research shows that an infant can recognize his mother's voice and smell, and is already beginning to show interest in the world around him, particularly in his caregiver.
1 - 6 mos.	Normal Symbiotic Phase	Slowly he begins to see the difference between himself, and the world outside of himself. He thinks of his mother and himself as being together in one membrane, as if they were together in an eggshell. He develops a special attachment to his mother. He molds into her when held, and most of the time at this age seems to like to be held.
6 - 36 mos.	Separation-Individuation Phase	NOTE: This phase consists of four subphases , described below.
6 - 9 mos.	Differentiation Subphase	While still in the symbiotic phase he begins occasionally to turn away from Mother, wanting to do things himself (e.g., he may grab a spoon from her.) However, he still has a strong symbiotic attachment to her. He begins to look more alert, an appearance which led Dr. Mahler to describe this as a "hatched" look, as if he just came out of his symbiotic shell. He vaguely senses that his mother is a different person from himself, and is anxious when she goes away.
9 - 14 mos.	Practicing Subphase	More and more he has a clearer idea of what is

inside and what is outside himself. Although separation reactions are still there, they subside somewhat during this period. While still attached to his mother, he gradually becomes very attached to father and others in the family. He finds the "outside of himself" very exciting. He practices his newly acquired skills and capabilities and has a sense of elation doing so a good part of the time.

14 - 24 mos. Rapprochement
mother during
around her
aware that they are

Subphase

The child fairly easily separated from the practicing subphase now hovers because he is now more clearly

separate people. This awareness brings about a mood of low-keyedness. There are times when the child is in conflict, one moment wanting to be "a big boy", and the next wanting to be a little baby again, enclosed with the mother in one shell. At such times, he is puzzling to his mother, because he can't seem to make up his mind what he wants to do.

24 - 36 mos. Toward Self and
Object Constancy
Subphase

Progressively during the third year, the child knows who he is and who his mother and father are. When they go away he can picture them in his mind, and more importantly, he has within himself the sense of having a mother and a father who care about him, and can be depended upon. Even when he feels troubled, he has an emotional awareness of who he is and that his parents are there for him.

*The ages listed in this table may vary with individual children.

**Dr. Mahler originally labeled this phase the Normal Autistic Phase.

This was later changed by some of her students.

There are other useful formulations of the development of other sectors of psychic experience and functioning which, however, we shall not detail here. Just mentioning some of them for the interested reader (student), there are Sigmund Freud's (1926) **Danger Situation Series** which details the series of anxieties experienced in the course of normal development; Rene Spitz's theory of the development of the **Libidinal Object** (i.e., the **attachment** to the Loved Person); Henri Parens's (1971) **Epigenesis of Dependence** in normal humans, also a self and human relationships theory, and his **Epigenesis of Aggression**. There are also the theories of Drs. Louis Sander and of Stanley Greenspan, both highlighting the interactional influences of infant and its parents on the infant's emotional development during the first 3 to 4 years of life.

Our Plan for Presenting Psychic Development

Each of these provides us with a frame of reference which can help us examine, detail, and understand human psychic development. But in order to do so, in this work we find it useful to follow especially the stages of development proposed by Erikson's Psychosocial theory, using broadly stated age periods. As can be seen from the formulations of Mahler and Spitz, however, certain developments do not follow yearly anniversaries and it is best to not hold rigidly to viewing development year by year, but in terms of developmental processes and stages of development. Bearing this in mind, we propose to follow development subdividing it into the following parts much as Erikson has done, and as is utilized by most students of psychodynamic human development:

1. **Infancy** which extends from birth through the first 12 months of life;
2. **The toddler years** which extends through the second and third years of life;
and
3. **The preschool years** which extends from years three through six.
4. **The middle childhood years** which extends from about 6 years through 10 years of age;
5. **Preadolescence** which extends from 10 or so to about 13 years of age; and
6. **Adolescence** extending from about the twelfth year to about twenty years of age.

We emphasize again that the years suggested for these periods of development are only used as general landmarks. Human developmentalists do not believe that a given phase of development occurs according to a very specific age, but rather according to the physical and emotional timetable of each specific child. Hence, the given years are

intended only to be approximations of how long a given period of development on the average may last.

In our examination of human psychic development we will take each of the above stages (or periods) in turn, and first examine aspects of **physical development** pertinent to the psychic development we expect to find at this time. We will then follow with a detailed examination of **psychic development**. In terms of psychic (or mental, or emotional, or psychological) development, we shall first look at what is most observable in the child's behavior. From the behavior we shall infer meaning as has been learned in observational research and clinical work during the past century with humans. Because of its complexity, psychic (or mental, emotional, psychological) development will be subdivided according to clusters or sections of psychic activity. We shall first look at the child's developing **abilities to adapt** (part I), including his patterns of feeding and establishing wake-sleep patterning as well as the development of cognitive capabilities. We shall then also look at the young child's developing the ability to fantasize and to play. Then we shall look at the child's social development, that is, the development of the child's sense of **self and of relationships to other human beings**. This will be followed by some spelling out of the evolving of the self as a **sexual** being, and how the child experiences and deals with his or her **aggression**. This will be followed by another section of the development of **adaptive abilities** (part II) crucial to coping well, now informed by an understanding of the development of self, human relationships, sexuality and aggression. These adaptive abilities pertain to the evolving dependence and self-reliance, to mechanisms of defense, including the sublime capabilities of empathy, altruism, and sublimation. The last section then is on the development or **conscience**.

Each of these sections in turn will have a number of subsections, or "issues", which we shall address one at a time from 2 or 3 vantage points, a key characteristic of our approach. For example, Feeding, or Wake-Sleep Patterning, or Human Attachment will be viewed from the vantage point of **human development**; this will give an understanding of what a child is normally capable of at a given age period. Then each issue is addressed from the vantage point of **child rearing**; and where pertinent it will be examined from the vantage point of **parenthood**, apart from child rearing. Thus in our approach, we present development and child rearing side by side, emphasizing especially the need to do one's child rearing based on understanding the specific child's development, -- e.g., needs and capabilities. We stress that parenting is a complex set of functions, complex work, and that it can be better understood and examined by subdividing parenting into the 3 domains (and standpoints): human development, child rearing, and parenthood. The student who can appreciate the perspective each standpoint provides will have no difficulty integrating these 3 as is eventually necessary.

***PARENTING FOR EMOTIONAL GROWTH:
A TEXTBOOK***

INTRODUCTORY UNIT

CHAPTER 4

CHILD REARING

General Principles

Every day, and with every strain, a parent should ask her or himself: "Am I treating my child as I would have wanted to be treated? "

Child rearing begins at or near birth. It continues through adolescence during which time it gradually decreases and fades away. Child rearing must take into account the needs of the child, of the parents, and at times of society. It must also account of the child's developing capabilities to adapt to and comply with the parents; and society's expectations. When it does this and is based on such taking into account, child rearing **changes** in its character, that is, in form and content, as the child passes from infancy through adolescence.

Let us define child rearing: **Child rearing** is a constellation of activities that parents (or other caretakers) do for and to children from infancy through adolescence, the goal of which is to promote the development of that child into a social being and reasonably self-reliant person. In optimal circumstances it promotes that development toward attaining the desirable potentials with which the child is born.

We say that the character of child rearing changes. Child rearing changes **in its form** in as much as the 2 year old is an individual who, for a number of reasons, is cared for in a very different way from a 7 year old or 16 year old. It is not appropriate for a parent to consider and care for a 2 year old as for a 7 or 16 year old. Each requires its age-appropriate approach in a variety of rearing issues. The form of child rearing also changes in the way it is carried out. For instance, one does not talk to, nor set limits with, a 2 year old as with a 7 or 16 year old.

In addition, the content of child rearing changes in accord with the child's age. For instance, toilet training issues are typical, normal and desirable, at 2, 3, and 4 years of age. These are occasional and troublesome at 7 or 8, and except for specific disordered persons, rare at 16.

Why is Child Rearing Necessary?

There are two fundamental reasons and sources of pressure for child rearing. First, are the demands and expectations imposed by society on parents for the socialization of their children. That is to say, society imposes certain expectations and demands on how their members will behave; how children behave is in the hands of parents and a given society makes its expectations known to its parents. The second source and pressure for child rearing comes from the children's own needs, demands and inner pressures, that call for guidance, limit-setting, protection, help in development.

Societal-Parental Demands and Expectations

It is well known, for example, that toilet training is required by society as well as by parents. Some nursery schools for instance, will not accept children unless those children are toilet trained. The reason is simple: it is a very large burden for nursery school caregivers and teachers to do their job as nursery school teachers if they also have to tend to matters such as toilet training in 10-20 young children. Similarly, children are expected to learn to share things, to not destroy things that belong not only to themselves but especially things that belong to others; many such rules of conduct are set down by society. We also know that it is highly desirable, and parents especially experience this: that children learn to like themselves, like others, like their parents, and heed reasonably the demands made by the parents. The reason such self caring is encouraged by parents, is that children who don't like themselves are often self destructive as well as hostile toward others. We also recognize that it is important that children learn to take care of themselves, to become able to perform certain functions for themselves. Children are also expected to learn to take care of others where needed; for example siblings are expected to take care of each other, indeed, in some societies, such as in China, children are expected to learn to care for other children from very early on in life. Of course, children are expected to learn, to work in school, to work in the house, to work outside the house, to become eventually a functioning member of society. In addition, children are expected to learn to comply with the demands of societal authority, whether that authority is that of the parents themselves, of teachers and officials at schools, and community authorities, such as police officers.

Children's Needs for Child Rearing

Children first and foremost need to be loved, appreciated, respected and they need to be understood, emotionally and intellectually. In addition, in the course of normal development, children also need help in containing some of the feelings they experience such as anger and hate; they also expect help in controlling the sexual pressures that arise

from within them and make enormous demands on their abilities for self control. Children expect parents to help them know what is dangerous and what is safe, expect their parents to help them learn skills such as to dress oneself, to feed oneself, to cook, to ride a bicycle, to read and to write, etc. There are many ways in which parents as well as teachers, are enormously instrumental in helping a child become an organized individual with capabilities that will increase the child's ability to rely on himself or herself, and lead toward eventual self-reliance.

Parents sometimes do not recognize that children expect parents to set reasonable limits on their behavior. Many times a child will want something very strongly and the parents may say that the child can not have this or that. While the child may be angry at the moment of refusal, at the time when his wishes are thwarted, further thinking and the passage of time will often help the child see that the parents acted in the child's best interest. It is not uncommon for a child in a good relationship to be able to say to his or her parents "Thanks Mom for not letting me spend my money on this (or that). It really would have been a waste." Even more important is the appreciation children experience when they are protected by their parents against some of their own normally hostile and destructive feelings or excessive sexual feelings, the expression and the discharge of which could have gotten the growing child into a great deal of trouble. It is important for parents to recognize that children want help in developing better inner controls, in developing self discipline, in developing useful skills, and in developing good judgment.

Goals of Child Rearing

Closely related to the need for child rearing, are the goals of child rearing. These goals are determined by several sets of factors: parental factors, cultural and societal factors, and factors imposed by the child.

Parental Factors

Parents experience their growing children as individuals in need of socialization, training, molding. They experience this from several aspects recognizing the child's psychological limitations and capabilities, the requirements dictated to them by the preservation of their child's health and well being and from the child's own stated and evident needs. The child becomes the representative and perpetuator of the family and of the parents themselves. Many parents experience their children as their representatives of immortality. Consequently, the parents feel (consciously and unconsciously) a great pressure to mold that representative and perpetuator of the family in given images that have indeed been imposed on them by their own parents. In addition, parents have emotional needs that can be fulfilled by their children if their children assume certain characteristics, function in certain ways, and bring them pleasure. These emotional needs that parents have regarding their children are to a degree found in all parents, to a degree

are healthy, but where they are found to an excessive degree may be neurotic and undesirable. If these emotional needs on the part of the parent are too great they will create individual. In addition, philosophical, religious, educational and other personal convictions, contribute to the goals that parents have in the rearing of their children. These will strongly influence the character of that rearing.

Cultural and Societal Factors

These factors of course, are to a degree very similar to those stated above under Parental

Factors, the reason for this is that parents are the representatives to their children of their own culture and society. It is through the parents that culture and society bring their impact on the rearing of the child. In addition to the parents' influence, the child's experiences at school and in the community, will contribute to the kind of group member the child becomes. Many efforts combine toward making him a part of and a contributor to a given society, be it in the form of that person's becoming a homemaker, a farmer, a lawyer, a baker, etc. Again religious and educational factors both through the vehicle of the parents, as well as directly through religious education, through regular school education, exert their influences. Cultural traditions make themselves felt as well as socio-economic limitations and pressures, all being factors that bear on the goals of and the way children are reared.

Factors Imposed by the Child

Factors arising from within the child that influence goals of child rearing, include variations in psychobiological givens and capabilities of the child. To parents who are sensitively attuned to their child, the developmental timetables of their given child will guide the demands these parents make on their child in his or her rearing, along with the extend of these demands and the timing of their introduction in each child's rearing. Children have different developmental capabilities which also will influence the goals of the rearing carried out by the parents; for example a cerebral palsied child cannot be expected to perform and develop his or her capabilities at the same rate, to the same degree, as can a child who is not afflicted in this manner. Even where there are no major afflictions, children have different timetables, different rates of maturation, different innate capabilities, different degrees of intelligence. All of these play a large part in parental and societal expectations and thereby have an influence on the goals of child rearing. In addition sexual roles, sexual identities, and expectations that the child has and experiences as pressures arising from within her or him, also give shape to and provide goals in child rearing. Of course, this factor will also be in part imposed upon the child by his environment and by the parents.

Child Rearing is Molded by the Environment in Which It Takes Place

The Principal responsibility for and task of child rearing falls to the parents of a given child. If we consider just that factor we will recognize that child rearing is highly variable throughout the world. For example, for some children it is two parents who essentially assume the responsibility of that child's socialization. Where there is but one parent in a family it may be just that one parent, without other significant relatives, who plays the major part in the child's early rearing. In other cases, one or more significant relatives, as a grandmother for example, contribute(s) to the child's socialization. And then, some children grow up in environments where the nuclear family is established in a neighborhood network, often a support system, in which a number of individuals may have a significant input even early into the child's life and rearing. Let us also add that some socialization input surely also come these days from daycare settings where young children may spend many or few hours a day.

Also, consider some of the communal forms of living where child rearing essentially falls to a particular nucleus of people who will attempt to treat all children very much in a similar manner. For example, in some of the communes that have been established in the past decades in the United States, and in the "kibutzim" in Israel, a cluster of families live together, with the children being essentially cared for during the day by a team of specialists from that particular commune. Consider too the infant and child nurseries in China and in Russia, and in other European countries, where some children even from birth are physically located and remain in a nursery where they are raised more or less uniformly. To date too little is known about what the impact of such group rearing will be on these children; it is, however, probably inaccurate to assume that the children do not get many of their basic needs met, and some positive results probably will yield from that kind of upbringing. One might add parenthetically that some of the experts who rear children in such communal living may be extremely sensitive and capable people who can achieve remarkable developmental results with children. Study of these practices is needed to document the outcome of such upbringing.

Other forms of group upbringing for children of course have been known for centuries all over the world. For example, we have long had orphanages and shelter programs for the orphaned young, or young from the very poor. The work of Rene Spitz and that of Sally Provence and Rose Lipton, indicate significant difficulties in the development of children who are cared for in even good orphanages and shelters. The reasons for this will be detailed later. A number of factors created by the environment in which the child is reared impinge on that upbringing: such as the quality of the relationship between the child and the upbringing parent or parents; the degree to which the child's needs are taken into account by the upbringing environment; the attitudes and feelings the parents have toward child rearing; the quality of the relationship between the parents as that relationship impinges on the child's upbringing; the status of physical and emotional well-being of the parent or parents, and other very pertinent factors. Of these

we would like to comment on two points especially: (1) perhaps most important, is the influence of the biological parent on childrearing in contrast to the rearing being carried out by individuals who are not the child's biological **and psychological** parents; and (2) the influence of disagreement between parents regarding issues of child rearing.

Rearing by Biological (and Psychological) Parents and by Non-Biological Parents: Probably one of the most important factors influencing child rearing has to do with the **quality** of the **emotional** investment made in the child by the child rearer. Personality development, that will influence an individual for his or her entire life, very much depends on the kind of relationships the child makes with the persons in his or her environment. Child development specialists believe that the deeper and more significant and the more positive the emotional investment the parents make in the child, and in turn, the child makes in his environment, the more will that child's psyche and personality develop in its many potential variations, the greater and most optimal will that development be. By contrast where emotional investment in relationships is weak or is poor, or is sufficiently laden with rage and hostility, the influence of this type of relationship will lead to a heightened development of conflicts in the individual on the one hand, and on the other hand, will lead to thwarted development of the potentialities innate in a given individual.

One of the principal mechanisms at work in the influence of relationships on the development of personality and character is that of identification. Identification has to do with the child's taking into her or his own personality, and being profoundly influenced by the dictates, the demands, and the characteristics of the individual to whom the child is emotionally attached. The more optimal the human relationships, the more optimal then the identifications, and the more optimal will be their influence on the development of character and personality.

In the normal infant's formation of relationships, we have said that one of the most important ingredients is the **degree to which the child is invested emotionally by the caregivers**. Close observation over years of child caregivers including parents, teachers and day care workers, confirms that the degree to which the parents invest emotionally in their children is far greater and has a **unique quality** which non-parent caregivers cannot emotionally bring into their caregiving and their relationship to the children with whom they are charged. This applies to even excellent caregivers, teachers, physicians, etc. to all those who have frequent contacts with children. There is a uniqueness in the quality and the degree to which a healthy parent invests emotionally in his or her own child. It is this factor that warrants the distinction that parents form a **primary** relationship with their child in contrast to the **secondary** relationships children form with other valued persons as teachers, caregivers, etc. We shall say more about this in Units 1 and 2.

It is this unique **qualitative emotional investment** that plays such a large part in the often found differences between children who are and children who are not reared by their own parent(s) -- whether the parents are the biological, or adoptive parents, or even

well devoted grandparents. According to the best estimates of Western child development specialists, a child requires being **sufficiently valued emotionally**, sufficiently touched, related to emotionally, shown signs of affection, love and consideration, and **must attach sufficiently emotionally** to one or two specific parenting persons to develop optimally in all areas of his or her personality, and have the chance to attain his or her inborn developmental and adaptive potential. As we said earlier, Provence and Lipton studied children in institutions as orphanages, where these children's physical needs were met quite satisfactorily but no opportunity existed for a close emotional tie with a constantly-present-enough adult. These researchers found marked deficiencies in age-adequacy in these children's expectable adaptive capabilities. With conviction, they ascribed these deficiencies in expectable development to the lack of a deep primary human relationship. Related findings are also reported in other human studies carried out by R. Spitz, M. Mahler, S. Brody, S. Fraiberg, S. Greenspan, as well as in studies of other animals as by H. Harlow on monkeys, by H. S. Liddell on goats, and others still.

Regarding Disagreement Between Parents on Child Rearing Issues: It is important to acknowledge and accept the fact that often parents will disagree on how to handle a given situation pertaining to the child's rearing. Many factors contribute to this, all depending on the specifics of the parents personalities, philosophies and viewpoints on life, etc. We believe, in fact, that disagreement between well-meaning parents is unavoidable. Disagreement between parents in and of itself need not cause problems for the child; in fact, it can even be a positive factor in child rearing. One of the principal reasons these can be a positive experience is that the child too will often be in disagreement with others, be it siblings, peers, and eventually a mate. Seeing his parents disagree and how they deal with such may be most helpful. Learning to deal with each other appropriately, reasonably, in our disagreements with others is important both for personal and for social reasons. Inevitably, at one time or another, we will disagree even strongly with people we value, or need, or even with those we love dearly.

But not all disagreements between parents turn out to be positive experiences for anyone, including the child. When disagreement between parents cause harm to children it is because of the character of the parents' disagreements. That is to say, where parents are excessively angry, or outright hostile or even insulting with each other, when they obviously do not respect each other, or when they depreciate each other either as a person or in terms of her or his ideas, under these circumstances disagreement will cause harm to the child. It is not the disagreement that causes the harm but rather the hostility, the mutual depreciation of the child's parents.

No harm will come to the child whose parents, who love each other and respect each other, disagree in front of their child on an issue pertinent to that child's upbringing.

Cultural Variations in Child Rearing

Studies of child rearing in a variety of cultures reveal that some aspects of child rearing tend to be quite universal whereas other elements in child rearing vary from culture to culture. For example, in general there is an interesting contrast between the roles played by mothers and by fathers throughout cultures. Mothers, throughout most cultures, are the prime caregivers of the young infant. By contrast, the role the father plays in the relationship to the young infant varies quite significantly from one culture to another. In addition, there are variations that are of a regional kind such as variations that arise out of climate or socio-economic conditions. Similarly there are aspects of child rearing that vary from North America to South America, as well as from Africa, etc. Some variations occur even within a given territorial space depending on subgroups coexisting in a given territory. For instance, the United States is well known to be a melting pot of many ethnic subgroups. In addition, variations arise in cultural translocations of families, where coexisting former traditions are modified by encroaching current modes of child rearing. A study of variations in child rearing is an enormous and fascinating undertaking.

Constant and Changing Aspects of Child Rearing

In the first paragraphs of this chapter we noted that child rearing changes in character in the course of a child's development. In some respects, however, child rearing does not change, some of its aspects remain constant. The study of any one family would be an excellent way of examining aspects of child rearing that are constant and aspects that change. In all families that are sufficiently stable and well structured, parents will entertain certain goals and modes of child rearing that will be constant from one child the next. However, if they are sensitive to their children's individual variations in innate givens and capabilities, parents will make varying demands on one child as compared to another. Thus the parent who recognizes a child with marked intelligence will probably make demands on that child that will be different from the demands made on a child whose intelligence is recognized by the parent to be more limited. Also, some demands will be made according to the child's gender.

Important and of much interest, is the fact that many parents in the course of rearing their children become more stable as child rearers, as they learn more about children, and how to help them grow better; such parents will change their techniques and demands in rearing a child who comes at a later time, after having learned much in rearing their first and second child. Not uncommonly for older children feel and rightly tell their parents "You never would let me do that when I his or her age." No doubt this statement has been made justifiably by many a child. After all, parents do learn a great deal about children by the process of rearing them. Again, the fact that children differ temperamentally, that children have different developmental timetables, also makes for

some variations in the way parents will rear one child as compared to another. However, again, although many factors lead to changes in parental conduct in child rearing, important elements of the parents' child rearing do not change.

Variations in Child Rearing Arising Out of Variable Factors in Different Child-Parent Relationships

Ultimately of course, the greatest factor that makes for variations in child rearing arises out of the character of a specific mother-child, father-child, parents-child relationships. Each parent brings to the child-parent relationship his or her own personality, hopes and wishes, and expectations. These have the very distinct stamp of each individual parent. And then, there are differences in each child even from infancy on. Differences in temperament (already emerging personality) appear such in degree of stubbornness, irritability, facility in molding, in responding to experiences and in handling, to name a few. In addition, each child has biological limitations and assets pertaining to her or his intelligence, maturational rate, motor-muscular coordination, perceptual apparatuses and more. Extremely important in the character of the child-parent relationships is the degree to which the parents and child develop an emotional dialogue characteristic for their relationships, a dialogue where there is sufficient reciprocity, mutual empathic sensitivity, mutual respect, and mutual affection. The more positive these elements the better the child-rearing will proceed.

Child development specialists indicate that a harmonious, positive, mutual dialogue between child and parent, can and is already carried on, not only at a verbal level, but well prior to the child's ability to speak. This refers especially to the emotional interplay of communications. This mutual emotional dialogue between child and parent is determined by the characteristics of the mother's and father's personalities and those characteristics with which the child is already equipped and are already visible near birth. Sometimes a mother-child relationship dialogue is strained because of differences in their characters or because of a struggle in the tensions that exist within each individual and the way these different tensions come into conflict with one another. For example, some mothers who tend to be rather slow moving and prefer a calm environment in which to be, may find it difficult to deal with a child who is very active from birth on, a child who makes a good deal of noise and tends to prefer to move about rather than to sit still. Or, the other way around, a mother who tends to be quite active and constantly moving may find a placid, calm, comfortable child disappointing, perhaps fearing that there is something wrong because the child tends to not move as much as she does. With such personality clashes some difficulties may be encountered.

On the other hand, let us emphasize that both parents and the child tend to do a great deal of mutual adaptation where differences in personalities exist. We assume, in fact, that many he or she has no rights to an opinion or to a feeling of his or her own. In

the activities and relationships of child rearing some give and take has to be yielded by all the members involved. There are times when a parent has to yield to a child's insistence on doing something a way that is different from the way the mother would like the child to do it. Sometimes the change of mind on the part of the parent may have to do with a short term demand that is being made, an event that is occurring here and now. For instance, a child who is very much in the need of some play time with his peers may ask to be permitted to go out even though there may not be much time before dinner. It may behoove the parent at times to yield and allow the youngster to go out for 10 or so minutes and insist that the child then come in time for dinner thus yielding to the child's wishes.

On the other hand, of course, part of the task of parenting and child rearing is to know when to say "No" to a demand and to a request. The best guide is good common sense and evaluation of appropriateness of the demands made either by the parent or by the child. There is no substitute for using one's judgment, using one's good common sense, and sorting out whether a demand made by the parent or a demand made by the child is an appropriate one given the child's age, the child's needs, and the child's ability to deal with the situation in question.

Age Adequacy and Child Specificity in Child Rearing

What we have in mind here is that all elements in child rearing ought to pass the test in the form of the following questions: "Is what I am asking my child to do something my child in fact can do, that is, is developmentally capable of doing." Secondly, "Is what I am asking my child to do something that is in this particular child's best interest at this time."

The fact that children vary in their innate reactivities and capabilities, and in their developmental timetables, as well as in the characteristics of their needs, is what gives reason to the principle that **one cannot treat every child the same way**. In fact one cannot even treat the same child the same way all the time! This is why it is important for parents to observe and study their children, attempt to understand their child's personality characteristics, the stresses created in him or her by the needs he or she experiences and where the child is at any given time in terms of his or her "state" (how one feels at any given moment) and developmental capabilities. Can the child meet the demand that the parent is making of the child at this moment? One makes as great an error if one demands too much as when one demands too little, if one expects too much and if one expects too little of a child. Where parents actually attempt to understand their children as human beings who have needs and capabilities that change over time, the parent is more likely to come closer to what will be a sufficient demand, a sufficient expectation for a given child at a given time.

Because of all of these factors, child rearing differs with each child as each child differs from other children. And perhaps, one of the most useful questions a parent might ask from time to time during the course of a day of child rearing is "Is the demand I am making, is the expectation I am having of my child, growth-promoting, or will it be growth-inhibiting?" Although this question may not always be easily answered by a parent, the parent who has this question in mind will more often be able to answer it than the parent who does not ask it. In other words, we have found much concern on the part of parents to understand their children and to do as good a job in child rearing as they can; but one gains the impression from working with parents that they are too often not patient enough with studying their children, with asking the kinds of questions we are suggesting here. It is not possible to rear a child well without giving much thought to the child's emerging and developing personality, the child's needs, sensitivities, vulnerabilities, as well as remarkable strengths and capabilities. The better one is aware of the characteristics and the needs of our children the more likely will our child rearing be growth-promoting.