

PSYCHOANALYTIC THERAPY THE THERAPIST'S VIEW.

The therapist aims, through analysis, to lead Albert to gain **insight** into the causes of his fear of death and related symptoms. As a Freudian analyst he believes the symptoms are rooted in **childhood experiences** and are motivated by **factors outside Albert's conscious awareness**. The process **may take several years**, during which Albert will see the therapist on a regular basis. (Hopefully Albert's dad has lots of money!) The analytic view is that it took a long time for the patient to become the way he is, so it will take time to treat him.

Through analysis, Albert should not only become aware of the reasons for his morbid fears but also overcome them. He will be able to develop a deeper understanding of himself and will not need to divert so much of his energies to the maintaining of his counterproductive **defence mechanisms**.

Everything in Albert's case history points towards **the Oedipus complex**, especially his earlier feelings of resentment towards his father and corresponding wishes that his father would die.

The initial interpretation of Albert's **resistance during free association** would also confirm this. **He breaks off** at the point at which he was about to reveal his feelings towards his father. Additionally Albert's **lateness and occasional "forgetfulness"** are indications of resistance and of a desire to keep the problem intact.

Analysis of Albert's dream revisits the Oedipal theme. The **manifest content** (his father leaving on a journey) symbolises death (**the latent content**). That he remains with both his mother and his ex-girlfriend (a mother substitute?) suggest that his father's interference has reactivated a deep-seated Oedipal conflict. The therapist will choose an appropriate time in the analysis to **interpret** this to Albert.

In his outburst to the therapist concerning the holiday Albert is exhibiting **transference**, using the therapist as a "love object" to express repressed feelings. Albert is reacting emotionally to the therapist in the way that he probably wanted to react to his father when he was left with the neighbour but on that occasion he didn't dare. It is also likely that underlying all his other fears Albert has a deep-seated fear of being "left" by a person he loves.

The therapist will encourage the development of these feelings until a **mini-neurosis** or **transference neurosis** develops. It is quite likely that Albert will have a "**controlled breakdown**" in the consulting rooms as he relives the feelings that he has for his father.

Finally, Albert's fear of death is a **displaced** reaction to his wish to see his father dead. This is a feeling which he cannot help but which he also feels a great deal of guilt about. That guilt takes the form of a feeling that he deserves to be punished. However rather than manifest itself as an obvious **castration anxiety** it has been redirected into a fear that he has a brain tumour.