

Obsession (ideas) and Compulsion (actions)

Wilhelm Stekel, Compulsion and Doubt, NY Grosset & Dunlap 1962 (pb)

219 'Compulsions serve as substitutes for tabooed actions, which are not permitted to penetrate into consciousness. Obsessions serve the same purpose.'

253 'Our experiences show that it is precisely physical pleasure which turns an experience into a trauma. Organic pleasure demands repetition.'

'An experience becomes a trauma only when it demands repetition. The compulsive need for repetition in the neurotic rpe represents the desire for a (forbidden) pleasure. Obviously t is strong pleasure which demands repetition cannot be forgotten even though it often appears to be.'

345 'To this patient's repetition compulsion we may apply the formula which I evolved in Psychosexual Infantilism: Compulsions are substitutes for other desired actions which are strictly forbidden by the moral ego. The affect connected with the suppressed acti n is transferred to the substitute action. Since the substitute action is only a symbolic illustration of the intended action, it can never give full satisfaction, and thus the need for it never ceases.'

345 'It is predominatnly masturbation which turns an experience (through repetition) into a trauma. It is needless to point out that I consider masturbation as physically harmless. But, still! While it does not affect the physical side of sexuality, it does influence the psychic part of it. Masturbation connects an experience, in itself devoid of pleasure, with pleasurable sensation which then becomes the root of a repetition compulsion.'

346 'As the consequence of a traumatic experience connected with touch, either a touch phobia may arise... or a touching compulsion... Fear and compulsion are closely related. Any attempt to master the compulsion causes fear.'

346 'All compulsives have the tendency to force others to participate in their rituals. They turn to those persons with whom)347(they expect to find the least resistance.'