

EDITORS PAGE: Humanity's Most Important Task

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Raising emotionally healthy children is mankind's most important task. What should be the most natural of functions remains almost as impaired today as it has ever been. Most parents, not fully in contact with the child's needs, act not on what is best for the child, but rather according to their own individual structures. Irrational and destructive practices, overt or subtle, continue to cripple infants and children. This occurs because try as they may, without help, parents cannot see clearly and act appropriately.

Wilhelm Reich discovered that this tragic situation is the inevitable result of chronic armoring. Just how far humanity is from an understanding of proper child rearing and the causes of childhood disorders is evidenced by the fact that the very existence and significance of armoring remains virtually unknown. It is specifically because of ocular armor that the individual distorts perception, sees the infant according to his own particular narrow view of life, and through destructive child rearing practices, ensures the perpetuation of the armoring process from generation to generation.

As a consequence, healthy childhood development governed by the natural laws of self-regulation has been replaced by armored functioning. The result has been the need for moral regulation. It does not matter whether this is used in the service of conservative child rearing practices employing the "tried and true" methods of the past, or as a reaction to it, the progressive methods advocated by liberals. History has proven that both approaches to child rearing - the traditional and the modern - are incapable of improving the emotional and biological health of present and future generations.

The destructive effects of an authoritarian social environment on the developing child are overt and usually easy to recognize in common sex-negative attitudes and practices. The effects of contemporary anti-authoritarian child rearing are less immediately obvious but even more deadly to the child's development. These take the form of compulsive permissiveness, a blurring of the boundaries between parent and child, and advocacy of "sexuality" and "freedom" with little attention to the critical issue of individual responsibility.

Added to these authoritarian and anti-authoritarian child rearing practices are the harmful consequences inherent in the mechanical-mystical approach to infants and children. The mechanist "sterilizes" life by seeing the child as basically little more than a chemical-genetic machine. This can be clearly seen in modern obstetrical and post-partum practices, in the increasingly commonplace administration of psychoactive medication by psychiatrists to symptomatic children, and in general belief among laypersons and professionals alike that

traumatic early-life experiences cannot have a lasting harmful effect because they cannot be consciously recalled. Those inclined toward mysticism, and this includes the religious, do damage with their distorted perceptions of natural functions, especially sexuality. They hold to the belief that life is explainable and understandable through God or "universal" forces. The implication is that life is unknowable and that no attempt at a functional understanding is necessary.

Collectively, these attitudes, expressions of contactlessness, damage or destroy the natural vitality of children. From outside the perspective of armored society we see that the child must give up its natural functioning in order to meet society's irrational demands. This can only be effected through the process of armoring with all of its destructive consequences.

Another deleterious influence on responsible child rearing is found in "New Age" attitudes and practices. Although more "natural" approaches to life and its difficulties are encouraged, they often include a modernized version of mystical ideas. The rational desire to alleviate and overcome anxiety, stress, conflict, intolerable emotional states, or the inner deadness and loneliness resulting from chronic armor cannot be realized through "ONE-ness," "transcendence" (idealized human relations), "crystal healing," or "moving energy." Furthermore, with the blurring of distinctions inherent to mysticism, there is a continued negation of genital sexuality.

More than fifty years ago, Reich pointed out the way to improve child rearing. He stated that the living must be understood not from the standpoint of armored human experience, but rather according to life's natural biological laws. The medical orgonomist, following Reich's precedent, views the development of infants and children from the perspective of biological energy functions which determine the individual's growth and development. This approach equates the protection of the vitality of infants and children with the prevention of chronic armor formation from the very beginning of life. Without this functional (energetic) orientation there may be hope but certainly no prospect of ever improving the "human condition."

This is not utopianism. The difficult transformation, over many generations, from an armored to a relatively unarmored society requires that those health care personnel responsible for infants and children be themselves structurally capable of providing education and treatment according to the biological needs of the living. The American College of Orgonomy's training program in medical Orgone therapy enables the physician to address the problem of armoring in children in a number of ways.

- Orgone therapy of prospective mothers can reduce or eliminate maternal armor enabling the individual to undertake and complete pregnancy in a manner that safeguards bioenergetic functioning of the embryo and fetus in utero.

- The responsible utilization of organomic principles during labor and delivery minimizes the effects of trauma at birth.
- Evaluation of infants and children can detect the presence of armor in its early stages when it can be more easily eliminated.

These measures are capable of preventing the formation of chronic armor in many children and of lessening its destructive effects in the majority of others where it has already taken hold. Clinical examples of the beneficial effects of armor removal in infants, children, and adolescents will be presented in this and subsequent issues of the Journal.

It is hoped that physicians and others not yet acquainted with medical organomy and organomic concepts will come to utilize this knowledge of the functional (energetic) needs of newborns and children. There are some hopeful signs in this direction. Exceptional physicians like Brazelton have an intuitive grasp of the organotic functions in children. By exerting their influence they will slowly produce a positive effect on the field of child development and related disciplines. We salute their efforts which provide fresh observations confirming basic medical organomic concepts.