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Growth and Development During the Toddler Years

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Table of Contents

Chapter 13

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The toddler years commence at about 10 to 14 months, with the beginning of creeping and crawling movements, and extend to the third year, when the child has developed the motor skills, language, cognitive activities, and defenses sufficient for separation-individuation and the autonomy needed for the nursery school experience.[1] This developmental interval is also referred to as the anal-muscular phase; developmentally it lies between the oral phase and the phallic-oedipal phase.

During the anal-muscular phase the child grows from lap babyhood to toddlerhood. Erikson refers to this phase as one of autonomy versus shame and guilt. The erogenous zone has shifted from the mouth to the anus-rectum with the development of anal erotism and a conflicting biological mode—namely, fecal retention and elimination. The phase is characterized by vigorous self-assertion in the service of separation-individuation and autonomy. The toddler strives for independence as a separate individual with his own identity in the family group. The child acquires a sense of autonomy

to combat his sense of doubt and shame. His physical, psychological, and social dependency, however, fosters doubts about his capacity and freedom to assert himself. His urge to prove muscular strength and mobility is ever present. It is hard for him to stay in one activity or space. He wants to explore and accomplish new feats and skills. He is now increasingly capable of controlling his anal and urinal sphincters. His diet has been changed so that his stools are harder, and they are easier to control.

The child in this stage of development experiences intense self and object ambiguity and ambivalence. He wishes to hold on and to let go, not only with his hands, but also with his mouth, eyes, and sphincters. His muscular control is more refined.[2] Movement has developed to the point where he is able to creep, crawl, stand, and walk and also to hold on, clutch, and release. He now has a strong desire to manipulate objects. As the child's locomotion increases, the mother begins to say "no" to him. The "no" is a prohibiting gesture. The mother is afraid that he will hurt himself. The child understands the mother's prohibition through identification and imitates the negative headshaking movements; this is the child's first abstract concept. How is this concept acquired? Spitz has suggested that the sign of negation evolves from the neurophysiological rooting reflex. At six months visual and muscular coordination makes rooting unnecessary for sucking. Sucking is then changed to withdrawal and refusal when the child is sated. At 15 months the motor behavior has taken on an ideational content. Then the head

movement means a refusal. On the other hand, the prototype of the affirmative gesture is different. Head nodding is not derived from rooting. The young infant's neck muscles are not strong enough for extension. From three to six months of age the infant is able to support his head. Visual orientation is then possible. The affirmative head nodding is based on the vertical approach movement of the head to the nipple. The affirmative nodding retains its affirmative function. At two years it takes on an expressive meaning after the negative is acquired.

Early oppositional behavior can be noted in infants. A mother will refer to her baby who is slow to wake up for feeding as stubborn. She sees her child as resistive to being fed. Stranger anxiety at eight months may be confused with shyness and stubbornness. At ten to eleven months displays of independence through rejection of the offered spoon are seen. The child can also spit out food he does not like, an early manifestation of the development of independence, which increases in children up to two years of age. Negativism appears when the child feels a need for protecting this developmental process. Oppositional behavior includes mutism, food refusal, bowel and bladder incontinence, and willfulness. Oppositionalism is not necessarily a displacement from anal erotism; it is intrinsic to the developmental process. Resistance to external influences is the most characteristic aspect of this behavior, but individual differences are noteworthy. The capacity to resist external influence is the toddler's first

flowering of self-determination and autonomy. Oppositional behavior fosters separation, protects against compliance, energizes the child to overcome ego immaturities, and helps him to develop and use his own controls.

The toddler faces separation-individuation with a rate determined in part by neuromuscular and language development. Central nervous system development leads to increased myelination and functioning of the stretch reflex in the gamma afferent loop systems. At 12 months the child is able to pull himself to the standing position, at 14 months to stand alone, and at 15 months to walk awkwardly. His new locomotion gives him a great deal of pleasure but also causes conflicts and struggles with his parents. The maturation of motor function seems independent of learning and experience.

This is not true, however, of language, where maturation and learning work hand in hand. Language hastens the child's integration into the family and allows him to start using secondary process thinking and expression. Under one year he has used principally vowels. From one to two years he switches more to consonants and begins using single words and some grammatical structure. The vowel- consonant reversal after age one occurs because of his introduction to solid foods, the appearance of dentition, the decrease in buccal fat pads, the increase in size of the mouth, and the attainment of erect posture. Language development is fostered by secondary reward and generalization learning. Identificatory learning is also important

in this aspect of development. Girls surpass boys consistently in language until age three, when boys' articulation improves.

Toilet training becomes part of the overall communication between the child and the mother. Reward and punishment are critically involved in this behavioral acquisition. Many children, however, are not trainable until one and a half to two years. And frequently children are not dry at night until well after two years.

The child begins to play at age two, but shows little interest in reciprocal play and affiliation with his peers. Later he is able to play cooperatively in the preschool period from three to five years. In his play he engages in exploratory behavior and learns a safe range of autonomy. He manipulates objects and is able to affect changes in his world. From walking, exploring, and manipulating come some feelings of confidence. His play activity satisfies his intrinsic need to deal with the environment. If a self-initiated response is rewarded, then it is permissible to be curious.

By six months the child tries playing with many playthings in his microsphere or thing-world. In early infancy playthings are soft and cuddly, reproducing the mother's body and providing a transitional object for the child's security at bedtime. By nine months the child is able to play pat-a-cake and peekaboo with the mother, turning passivity into activity in order to

assimilate the anxiety of object loss. Such symbolic play expresses separation from and retrieval of the mother. In the toddler stage movable toys with strings extend this separation play. In addition, the toddler uses socially acceptable substances for symbolic excrement play involving filling, emptying, and messing.

Galenson has extensively reviewed cognitive aspects of nonverbal play. The use of symbols with no fixed meaning and the lack of negation are aspects of primary process thinking as well as presentational symbolism, both apparent in play behavior and its manifestations as nonverbal thinking.

Bowel-Bladder Pleasure and Control and Transformations in Personality Development

With myelination of the neural pathways for micturition and defecation, the toddler is ready to assume control of his sphincters. At the same time the bowels and bladder bccome associated with physiological tension and pleasure. The mother imposes her adult standards on the child to force him to give up pleasurable retention and elimination, as well as play with the feces. She cannot control his sphincters as she controlled his rhythmic nutritive and non-nutritive needs. She now has to negotiate with the child by pleading, begging, and cajoling. This interaction, once thought to be the most important aspect of toddlerhood before the separation-individuation subphases were recognized, is still central to this phase of development.

The child may retain feces to prolong the pleasurable sensation of evacuation. He may retain to defy the mother, an act that may mark the onset of stubbornness or be a part of his need for mastery. He may retain feces to incur the mother's pleasure. He may let go to defy the mother. Soiling and smearing are hostile acts and are often precursors to anal, urethral, and phallic profanity. The child may urinate and move his bowels to please his parents. The feces may be regarded by the child as valuable possessions, his own creation. The mother may regard the feces as a laudatory product or, on the other hand, as dirt and filthiness. Frequently both attitudes are expressed at one time or another. The child may view defecation as getting rid of something bad or dangerous.

Urination for boys provides an aggressive and libidinal pleasure owing to the powerful stream. This play may evoke envy in little girls. If a child is frustrated too much by toilet training, his frustration may result in chronic anger or in timidity and submission. For boys stimulation of the genitals during defecation often leads to erection, retraction of the testicles, and simultaneous contraction of the sphincter anuses. The stimulation may lead to confusion about whether the fecal mass or the genitals are dropping off during defecation.

In order to understand bowel-bladder pleasure and control and their transformations into personality development, it is necessary to trace the

development of anal erotism and body awareness. Anal erotism refers to the drive qualities of the anal phase of development when the erogenous zone has shifted to the anus and rectum. The erotism is experienced during defecation and in connection with anal masturbation and anal retention. Stimulation of the mucus membranes lining the anus and rectal canal leads to erotism. The pleasure is autoerotic. In this way the child negotiates with the mother over sphincter control so that the erotism becomes object related. With the appearance of teeth, the increase in musculature and strength of sphincteric functions, anal and sadistic impulses emerge. As in oral erotism, there are two distinguishable stages to anal erotism. The first is characterized by destructive impulses. The second is reflected in impulses to keep and possess.

Freud first referred to the anal phase in a letter to Fliess in 1897. Freud commented on how money and excrement have long been associated in history. In the 1905 edition of the "Three Essays" Freud described excitation of the anal zone. He indicated that children enjoy anal erotogenic stimulation in holding back stools to the point where the accumulation results in a violent contraction. In addition, he indicated that anal masturbator pleasures are derived from stimulation of the anal zone. In his paper on "Little Hans" he referred to Hans's fantasy of taking big children to the toilet to make them "widdle" and to "wipe their behinds." Freud felt that the fantasy indicated that Little Hans had been looked after as an infant in much the same way and this

had been a source of pleasurable sensations to him. Freud suspected that Little Hans had been a child who enjoyed retaining his feces so that he could enjoy "a voluptuous sensation from their evacuation." In his paper on "Character and Anal Erotism" Freud indicated a connection between anal erotism and character traits of orderliness, parsimony (connected with an interest in the product of defecation), and obstinacy (which is associated with the act of defecation), as well as the child's unwillingness to comply with the mother's wishes. Later he indicated that anal erotic aims are unserviceable culturally and must undergo sublimation. Later in the analysis of the "Rat Man" Freud revealed ways in which anal erotism appeared in the man's illness. For the "Rat Man" the rat had many meanings such as money, worms that bury in the anus, and dirty animals feeding upon excrement. In "Disposition to Obsessional Neurosis" Freud indicated that there is a pregenital sexual organization, thus using for the first time the term "pregenital." At this point of development he thought that the component instincts have already come together for the choice of an object and that the primacy of the genital zones has not yet been established. He believed that the component instincts that dominated the pregenital organization of sexual life are the anal erotic and sadistic ones. He also indicated the mechanism of reaction formations against anal erotic and sadistic impulses and the possibility of regression in instinctual life to the pregenital sadistic and anal erotic stages.

Freud characterized the sexual aim of anal erotism as two in number, active and passive. Activities are supplied by instinctual mastery. The passive trend "is fed by anal erotism whose erotogenic zone corresponds to the old undifferentiated cloaca." In "Three Essays" Freud stated that "the activity is put into operation by the instinct for mastery through the agency of the somatic musculature; the organ which, more than any other, represents the passive sexual aim is the erotogenic mucus membrane of the anus. Both of these currents have objects which however are not identical."

In 1917 in "The Transformation of Instincts with Special Reference to Anal Erotism" Freud remarked on the complex unconscious relationship between the ideas of feces, child, and penis. He later elaborated on this in his study of the "Wolf Man" who preferred copulation from behind and was attracted to the female buttocks, all part of his anal erotic disposition. And in "Three Essays" Freud further elaborated on the unconscious meaning of feces, suggesting that they are at first for a child a "gift" and later acquire the meaning of "baby," one of the sexual theories of children. In his study of the "Wolf Man" Freud also concluded that the fecal mass stimulates the erotogenic mucus membranes of the male and is the active organ just as the penis stimulates the vaginal mucus membrane. In this sense the fecal mass acts as though it were a forerunner during the cloacal period. Freud felt that giving up feces was a prototype of castration, the first time a child is made to part with a piece of his body in order to gain the love of an object. Feces, baby,

penis thus all form a unity, “the little ones” that can become separate from one’s body.

In another paper Freud remarked that the child must dccide between a narcissistic and an object-loving attitude. As he makes the choice of autoerotic satisfaction and becomes defiant, his attitude comes from his narcissistic clinging to anal erotism. He remarked that a large part of anal erotism is carried over to the eathexis of the penis. He further remarked that fantasies of patients were filled with the equation of feccs-money-gift-baby-penis. Interest in the vagina occurs later and springs from anal erotic sources. He quoted Andreas-Salome, who referred to the vagina as “taken on lease” from the rectum; this is most commonly seen in the fantasies of homosexuals, where the vagina is represented by the rectal canal.

Thus Freud viewed the anal phase as the second phase of libidinal development in which the discharge of dammed up instinctual energy is connected with the act of defecation and the accompanying pleasurable sensations. The child’s interest at first lies in retention and expulsion of feces, which he regards as a valuable creation, a prized personal possession, that unfortunately he must eventually relinquish. Finally the child repudiates his anal wishes and sublimates the energy into activities such as playing in the sand, staying clean, and painting. If the child is not permitted to give up his anal investments slowly and is forced into a traumatic situation, he is apt to

use the mechanisms of repression and reaction formation in an attempt to rid himself immediately of such interests. Repressed unconscious anal wishes may continue to play a large part in his life and produce various warped defense mechanisms.

The Creation of the Representational World

The child creates his representational world out of images of the external world that he comes to experience as the "external" world. The representational world also contains the child's own body sensations as part of his body schema, along with representations of instinctual drives as need and affect representations. Piaget has studied the maturational process by which images are formed into lasting representations during toddlerhood (about 16 months). At this stage object constancy is perceptual, followed at about 36 months by libidinal object constancy. From body representations arise self-representations, which are enriched by activities, experiences, identifications, and, with the resolution of the Oedipus complex, introjection of parental authority.

From the development of sensorimotor and representational intelligence the toddler's representational world arises. Piaget has described this process over a period of some years.

The neonatal cycles of tension—quiescence, sleep, wakefulness—

continue through the first year. A fatigued and satisfied infant goes to sleep until hungry and restless. If not immediately fed, he then begins sucking his finger, which gives him experience in eye and mouth activity, the basis of primary circular reactions. This activity leads to tension reduction by mental images that are satisfying for a while until hunger increases, and the infant cries and becomes more restless. The mother then responds with milk. The infant then lies in an alert, active state, playing and exploring to the point that he again becomes fatigued and falls asleep. Thus the sleep-waking cycle is completed. Sensorimotor intelligence is dependent for its development on gratification of instinctual needs.

Whenever the infant's oral needs are satisfied, the baby uses sensorimotor schemata for explorations and short excursions by which he acquires increasing knowledge of his environment. He explores his world until fatigue sets in and he is forced to go to sleep.

During the first two years of life the child goes through six stages of cognitive development. The basic biological processes whereby he acquires knowledge are assimilation and accommodation. By assimilation Piaget means that the organism takes in aliments from the world about him. He makes constant perceptual and motor adjustments to the world on several levels. At the biological level there are physiochemical incorporations into the organic structure of the body. At a primitive psychological level the organism

incorporates sensory and motor components of behavior into endogenous reflex schemata that are then activated in later psychological development. The mind incorporates ideas about the external world and products of mental activity into already existing schemata of sensorimotor activity. By accommodation Piaget means a process whereby what is assimilated is so changed as to bring about an adjustment within the environment. Accommodation modifies the experience of new stimuli or conditions. Intelligence is a capacity to distinguish objects from the self in respect to space, time, and form. It is a capacity to manipulate intrapsychically symbols and schemata to solve problems of the environment. The child's cognitive development is facilitated when his instinctual needs are satisfied and he is provided with a sense of safety by the mother.

The first stage in the development of intelligence (birth to four weeks) is made up of reflexes needed for survival, such as sucking, rooting, and grasping. These reflexes are the building blocks to intelligence. At this stage of development the baby is able to differentiate the nipple from the blanket. He can recognize satisfying or unsatisfying objects. Successful repetition of the reflexes results in an assimilation in the neural apparatus. The assimilated pattern of behavior is called a schema, which may be a mental experience and at a later stage an image. It is an adjustment to the environment.

At the second stage the primary circular stage (one to four months) the

infant practices rhythmic mouthing and hand movements. He watches his mother and visually pursues her. The sensory stimuli in his environment provide the aliments for activity. The human face is a visual schema. The human voice is an auditory schema. At four months sucking becomes adjusted to a new type of schemata. The assimilation of grasping and visual pursuit leads to new accommodations. The child is now able to grasp what he sees. He now is capable of intersensory coordination, but he is still not able to identify things in space as having identity. For instance, if a toy is hidden under a cover, the toy is totally lost to him. The image is no longer a stimulus when the object is gone.

The third stage is the secondary circular reaction (four to eight months). It is the first time the infant performs an intentional act. The baby acts upon things and uses relationships as a means toward an end. For instance, he will grasp a suspended rattle, strike it, or swing it. If he is supine he will swing at the rattle rather than grasp it. He will practice with pleasure. He may make the rattle swing by shaking the crib. Thus the schemata are reciprocally assimilated. In following the mother, the baby will use these gestures to perpetuate a variety of spectacles. He may induce another person to make the rattle move. Still objects have no independence outside of the movement of the baby in respect to them. For example, if an adult hides a ball under a cover, the baby will look for it as an extension of his own visual environment, or he will look into the adult's hand. There is now some kind of permanence

of images for him at this stage. Space has become a function of the images of prehension and motor activity; which exist in a trajectory of visual and motor activity. This marks the beginning of interest in causal relations. Imitation begins as a means of inducing a person in the environment to repeat interesting acts.

The fourth stage, coordination of sensory schemata and their application to new situations (eight to twelve months), is a stage in which the infant assigns to external objects a consistency independent of himself, but without permanence. He pursues ends not immediately attainable. For example, if an object is hidden, he will remove the object with one motion and then take hold of it with another. He has the capacity to keep in mind his goal. He uses instruments as intermediary means to an end. For instance, he will push the adult's hand away. Signs and symbols indicate specific events. At this stage the infant will turn toward the sound of footsteps. He will explore objects as though trying to understand them. He will grasp relations between size and distance. He is now well aware of three dimensionality. In this stage eighth-month anxiety appears with the recognition of the mother's face. He can now only tolerate short separations.

At the next stage, tertiary circular reactions (12 to 18 months), the baby discovers new means to active experimentation by adapting himself to unfamiliar situations not only by using schemata acquired earlier but also by

seeking and utilizing new means to do it. He no longer is satisfied with producing familiar results. If he has a new toy, he will feel it, pick it up, drop it. His interest is taken up with what is new and different about the toy. He may also, for instance, take a ball and roll it and delight with the new activity he has given the object. He will search for novelty and be overjoyed if he finds an entity that can be made to do different things. He may use a stick or string to bring things nearer. Spatial and causal relations are extended. For instance, if a ball is hidden at point A, he will find it. If the ball is then hidden successively under B, C, and D, he will go immediately to D. He is able to take into account visual displacement. Objects have an identity and a relationship to continued perceptual cues that reach the baby's mind.

The child is capable of discovering and utilizing complex relations among objects. This is possible through extensive experimental study of distance as well as space. He studies movements of objects from place to place. The exploration of equilibrium, rotation, reversals, positions, and content is possible, yet knowledge of the relationships does not transcend perception.

In the sixth stage of development (beginning at 18 months) the invention of new means through mental combinations marks the start of true intelligent behavior. The child is able to conceive of objects as entities with dimension, qualities, spatial, temporal, and causal relations, even when the

objects are no longer perceived. Thus the child has attained conceptual object constancy. He forms mental representations that include the object not only as it is actually perceived but also as it might appear under other circumstances. External objects are identical to the self, separate from the self and his actions, regardless of how displaced or hidden. The child will search for hidden objects or displacements not visible to him. He is able to imagine displacement in space and to internalize cause-and-effect relationships. The child's body can be subjectively experienced as an independent object, differentiated from inanimate objects and from persons. He now has the capacity for mental representations of the self.

At the end of the 24 months the child enters a new phase of intelligence. He has left the sensorimotor stage of intelligence and is now in the period of preparation for the organization of concrete operations. Now the child is capable of crude symbolizations. Piaget has divided this phase of development into two parts. In the preoperational representation phase, from two to four years, there is the beginning of representational thought. Then from four to five and a half simple reproductions or intuitions occur, followed from five and a half to seven by articulated representations or intuitions. At age seven the child enters the stage of concrete operations. He is now capable of conceptual organization that takes on stability and coherence by series of groupings. After age 11 to about 15 the child is in the period of formal operations. New structures, visuomorphic to groups and lattices of logical

algebra are now possible.

Separation-Individuation during the Infant-Toddler Years

Through her early studies of young psychotic children, Mahler has identified and described the process of separation-individuation during the first three years of life. Many of her concepts relate to or interdigitate with those of Piaget and Sandler. She has helped develop the view of the life cycle as involving progressive stages in distancing from and internalizing the symbiotic mother and negotiating the eternal longing for the actual or fantasized "ideal state of self"—a symbiotic fusion with the "all-good" symbiotic mother, who at one point in infancy is part of the self, as the core to the blissful state of well-being.

During the neonatal period the infant attempts to achieve homeostasis, at first through the help of the mother and later through the development of increasingly protective neuro- physiological mechanisms. The infant begins to differentiate between pleasure and pain through expulsive activity and maternal gratification.

By the second month of infancy he begins to have an awareness of need-satisfying objects. Mother and infant are a dual unity with a common boundary. At this point there is no difference between the "I" and "not-I." The inside and outside are experienced together. At this point the infant has

formed a maternal symbiosis that strengthens the inborn instinctual stimulus barrier and protects the child from premature phase-specific strain. The symbiosis is an hallucinatory somatopsychic omnipotent fusion with the representation of mother and the sense of common boundaries. It is necessary that displacement of libido take place from the inside to the outside of the body.

During the normal autistic phase there is an absolute primary narcissism. The infant is unable to differentiate between "self" and "not- self." By the third month, however, there is increasing awareness of need satisfaction coming from part objects. Still the infant views the outside as continuous with an omnipotent, symbiotic dual unity. Gradually there is demarcation of the representation of the body ego from the symbiotic matrix. The body ego becomes increasingly differentiated. There is a shift of proprioceptive and enteroceptive cathexis to sensoriperceptive cathexes of the outside world, which is essential to body ego formation. In addition, there is rejection by projection of destructive aggressive energy beyond the body's self boundaries. The infant begins to develop an inner sensation for the core of the self. Feelings of the self form the beginnings of a sense of identity. The sensoriperceptive organ further demarcates the self. Object relations start to develop as the infant differentiates from the mother-infant dual unity and enters a normal phase of human symbiosis. There then is a transition from lap babyhood to toddlerhood; this progresses through steps of separation-

individuation only made possible, on the one hand, by autonomous ego development and, on the other hand, by a host of identificatory mechanisms. The process of growing away from the baby- mother symbiosis involves a mourning process, which, as part of every step toward independent functioning, is associated with the threat of object loss. This is especially prominent in the separation-individuation process from the fourth to fifth month to the thirtieth to thirty- sixth month. The separation-individuation phase has been divided by Mahler into four subphases: differentiation, practicing, rapprochement, and "on the way to libidinal object constancy."

The first phase, differentiation, takes place from four to five months of age at the peak of symbiosis. In the symbiotic months the infant comes to identify the mother as the specific object toward whom he forms a specific bond. The symbiotic unit is created through entero-proprioceptive and contact-perceptual information. Sensoriperception attention-cathexis expands his perception beyond the symbiotic orbit and fosters a perceptual conscious system and a permanently alert sensorium during periods of wakefulness. From six to seven months the child is fascinated with the mother's face and body, which he explores with his available sensory modalities. In addition, he plays peekaboo games. He is now able to recognize his mother and check out unfamiliar objects against the already familiar; Brody calls this activity "customs inspection." He attempts for the first time to break away from his passive lap babyhood. He does this in miniscule ways by

pushing back from his mother's hold, sliding down her lap, and sitting at her feet, all providing him with increasing distance from the mother and new views of the maternal object. As he sees new objects distinctly different from his mother, he experiences "stranger reactions." He is curious about and full of awe at every new strange thing he sees. If he is trustful of his mother, anxiety is manageable.

The second phase, practicing, overlaps the phase of differentiation to some degree. The second phase occurs from seven to ten months and lasts up to fifteen to sixteen months of age. Activity in this period justifies dividing this phase into two parts: (1) the early phase, which overlaps differentiation and is marked by the infant's early ability to push away physically from the mother through crawling, righting himself, and climbing, yet at the same time holding on; and (2) the practicing phase proper, which is characterized by free, upright, bipedal locomotion. The child's increasing awareness of separateness is involved in rapid body differentiation from the mother, the establishment of a specific bond with her, and the growth and functioning of the autonomous ego apparatus in close proximity to the mother.

Because of his new relationship with the mother he can now look beyond her at other human and inanimate objects. He can play with toys of all sorts and explore them with his eyes, nose, hands, and mouth. One or more of these objects are apt to become transitional objects. Part-objects of the

mother are used to assuage anxiety during her absence at night. During this phase of development the infant must move and explore. As he does so he makes brief sorties away from the mother, returning periodically to "home base" in order to refuel through physical contact. In this early practicing subphase there are brief periods of separation anxiety. The infant tries not to lose sight of his mother. Much depends on the mother's comfort in seeing the child moving away from her. Walking has for the mother, as for the child, an enormous symbolic meaning. If she is able to believe that the child is capable of moving progressively away from her, she contributes to his feeling of safety, and perhaps as Sandler has indicated, he gives up some of his magical omnipotence for autonomy and developing self-esteem.

In the practicing subphase proper, once the child attains upright locomotion, he has, as Greenacre has said, a "love affair with the world." Libidinal cathexis goes into the service of the growing autonomous ego and its functions. The child appears to be ecstatic with his new faculties and the wonders of his new world. He seems to regard himself as indestructible by injury. He acts as if he could not care less about his mother's presence. His relationship with his new faculties and world is also a defensive maneuver to avoid absorption into the mother's protective sphere. The toddler has now gone from a passive peekaboo game to an active game that aims at avoiding reengulfment by the mother. By fleeing from her he is able to retain her actively, as she eventually catches him and reminds him of her potential

comfort. He plays these games and activities in various moods. Although he gives a semblance of indifference to the mother's presence, he nevertheless returns periodically, seeking a sense of physical proximity. The toddler's moods become, as Mahler has phrased it, "low-key" only when he is aware that the mother is absent. His motility diminishes as docs his interest in his surroundings, and he appears to be preoccupied with inwardly concentrated attention, which has been called "imagining." The low-keyness has been compared to a miniature anaclitic depression. If the child is separated from the mother and a different person returns to comfort him, he is apt to burst into tears. When he is reunited with the mother, his low-keyness diminishes. Mahler believes that such behavior results from the child's effort to hold onto a state of mind that Joffe and Sandler have termed the "ideal state of self."

The third subphase of separation-individuation takes place from 16 to 25 months and commences with the mastery of upright locomotion and a diminishing excitement in that ego function. The toddler is now increasingly aware of physical separation. He is now not quite so resistive to frustration; neither is he as seemingly indifferent to the mother's presence. Increasing separation anxiety and awareness of object loss is apparent. His behavior becomes much more active with the mother. He now wants his mother to share with him all his new skills and experiences. Mahler has referred to this subphase of separation-individuation as the period of rapprochement. The earlier refueling type of contact is now replaced by a quest for constant

interaction of the toddler with the mother, most markedly evident in both vocal and nonvocal communication, as well as symbolic play. The toddler now begins to experience the impediments to his anticipated conquest of the world. With the marked increase in autonomous ego functions, there is an increasingly clear differentiation between intrapsychic representation of the object and self-representation. At this point the ego has created a representational world. As he reaches toward a greater height of mastery, it becomes apparent to the toddler that the world is not quite his oyster; he realizes that he must learn to cope with increasing independence even though he is still a relatively small, helpless individual unable to command the world by voice, gesture, and feeling since he has relinquished much of his omnipotence. One finds the child now actively wooing his mother; this is often perplexing to her because he should now be more independent and self-assertive. Frequently mothers during this phase find the child's demandingness unbearable and inexplicable. Other mothers find it difficult, even if the child does return to woo her, to view the child as increasingly independent and separate. In the third subphase individuation proceeds very rapidly just as the child is becoming increasingly aware of his separateness and uses a number of ploys to avoid separation from the mother. He finds that he must use verbal communication more and more with his mother. Gestural communication and preverbal empathy between mother and child no longer provide the same sense of satisfaction and well-being that they used to. The

junior toddler realizes and must accept that his parents are separate individuals with their own individualistic tendencies and interests. He is forced to give up the delusion of his own omnipotence and grandeur. This Mahler has termed the rapprochement crisis, the crossroad where three basic anxieties of early childhood come together: namely, the fear of object loss, the fear of loss of love, and signs of castration anxiety. It is the crossroad between fusion and isolation, part of the lifelong struggle with separation-individuation.

The fourth subphase of separation-individuation is that of increasing attainment of object constancy in the Hartmann sense. The child is "on the way to object constancy." This subphase occurs from 25 to 36 months. At the beginning the child is gradually able to accept once again separation from the mother as he did during the practicing subphase. The verbal communication that had begun during the third subphase develops very rapidly during the fourth phase and replaces to some degree gestural language, affective motility and primary process language. In this regard the mother must often play along with the toddler, providing him with secondary process language and ways of viewing the world. In addition, the toddler in this subphase shows a more constructive and purposeful type of play, often associated with fantasy, role playing, and make-believe. The child is increasingly interested in adults other than the mother. His sense of time develops along with a capacity to tolerate delay of gratification. He is better able now to endure separation at a

time when individuation is also progressing. Oppositional behavior is more prominent than during the rapprochement phase. Now he actively resists the demands of adults and at times is quite negativistic in his behavior.

As the child is "on his way to object constancy," he obtains a unified representation of the parental object, which then becomes in- trapsychically available to him as a love object. Now separation and individuation are more closely connected to developmental processes. Yet if development is disturbed, they can proceed divergently as a consequence of the lag in one or the other. If a rapprochement crisis occurs, it may result in unresolved interpsychic conflict, which is then established as a fixation point interfering with later oedipal development.

Oral, anal, and early genital forces and conflicts are found at the time of the rapprochement crisis. Symbiotic omnipotence must be renounced in the face of increasing awareness of body and its sensations and pressures at zonal points. Awareness of bowel and urinary sensations during the toilet training process can heighten the child's reaction to the discovery of anatomical sex differences, causing him prematurely to experience castration anxiety.

The father's role in separation-individuation is not as clearly defined, partly because of his lesser importance during the early infancy months. The

baby's relationship with the father begins during the symbiotic phase, as manifested in the infant's smiling response to the father. At this time the father becomes somewhat familiar to the infant and is no longer just an object toward whom he may experience stranger anxiety. From the very beginning of infancy the infant is more reactive to the mother and even to siblings than to the father. In the differentiation subphase attachment to the father occurs, but it becomes pronounced only at the beginning of the practicing subphase, at which time the father is truly the second parent. The father is now the more interesting object, in space away from the mother and readily available for exploration. The infant's elevated mood seen during this period is most conspicuous with the father, with whom exuberant play takes place.

It has been observed that girls attach themselves to the father earlier than boys and are more cautious with strange men and with all unfamiliar people. Boys are able to approach male objects earlier, a fact probably related to their greater interest in distance, space, and inanimate objects. Even at the age of two years girls tend to be passive in seeking affection from the father and his substitutes. Boys, on the other hand, are more distant and show a dichotomy between the symbiotic and the nonmaternal world.

Toward the end of the practicing subphase toddlers seek out the attention of more than one adult. Children of this age are quite competitive, manifesting considerable envy and aggression toward one another.

Competition toward the father is not evidenced at this point, but the child's relationship to the mother shows increasing ambivalence during the rapproachement crisis. After the beginning of the rapprochement crisis the paternal object appears in the fantasy world of the toddler as a more powerful parent. This image of the father may be essential for the attenuation of the child's ambivalence to the mother during the rapprochement position. The child at this stage has three mental representations, those of the self and parental objects, which provide the necessary triadic elements for the Oedipus complex.

Roiphe and Galenson have found that in the separation-individuation phase, particularly between 15 and 24 months, there is increasing genital manipulation, masturbatory activity, and curiosity about and reactions to anatomical sex differences. They suspect that there is at this time an increase in endogenous genital sensations, associated with bowel and bladder activity, that is probably independent of toilet training. They suggest that this part of separation-individuation be considered an early genital phase, necessary for consolidation of self and object representations and the establishment of a primary schematization of the body and genital outline. They have found that castration anxiety is apparent after awareness of anatomical differences for some children who have not formed stable body schema. Castration anxiety is most apparent in those children who have suffered physical illnesses, surgery, or birth defects or have lost a parent. Their observations come from nursery

school experiences, but analytic child and adult data also indicate much the same thing. During the rapprochement phase the vulnerability of this subphase is heightened if the child experiences excessive castration anxiety. The anxiety leads to a regressive breakdown of toilet training, with massive enuresis and negativism. The child's increasing ambivalence results in splitting of the good and bad mother images and turning of aggression against the self, with depressive mood and collapse of self-esteem. Castration anxiety weakens ego functions and brings about inhibition of curiosity and play.

Studies of the early genital phase indicate that children are well aware of genital parts and are readily upset by becoming aware of genital differences. It is not unusual for toddlers, if given the opportunity, to examine each other's genitals. A little girl may reach out to touch a boy's penis in order to sec whether the penis is really there or to give vent to an incompletely inhibited aggressive impulse to take the penis.

Toilet training has traditionally been viewed as an activity imposed upon the child by the parents, with the expressed aim of giving the child autonomy, but at the same time making the child struggle for independence. The toddler's sexual curiosity, interest, and activities are also typical of this period and have strong influence on the entire toilet training process. Castration reactions at this phase can disrupt toilet training and, if part of the rapprochement crisis, deflate the child's selfesteem at a time when he is

already bereft with the loss of his omnipotence and the uncertainty about the presence and availability of his mother. With dissolution of the toilet training routine, the child is put into a further crisis with the mother and is more apt to develop a hostile, dependent, paralyzing relationship with the mother.

With the attainment of bowel-bladder control and libidinal object constancy, the child enters firmly into the triadic world of his family. Growth and development during the phallic-oedipal phase is discussed in Chapter 14.

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Notes

[1] See references 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 38, 42, 46, 53, 54, and 55 in the Bibliography at the end of this chapter.

[2] Mussen, Conger, and Kagan have described in detail the toddler's progressive development in movement, language, perception, and cognition. P. H. Mussen, J. J. Conger, and J. Kagan, *Child Development and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963).