

Creative Thinking development from a Psychoanalytic Perspective

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Abstract:

Creative critical thinking is a cognitive skill that encompasses the ability to analyze information and experiences objectively, in order to identify the factors that influence a position, behavior, or information and evaluate them. This begins with the ego's ability to self-assess and assimilate information, from recognizing values, positions, standards, beliefs, and the factors that address this information. In addition, Critical thinking is the outcome of creative thinking, contributing to decision-making and problem-solving by allowing the introduction of information as a subject and exploring possible alternatives and their different consequences, beyond one's own personal experience. In this research, we shed light on the development and constructive process of creative thinking and its principles, at the intersection of all the psychological growth outcomes. Focusing on the contributions of prominent psychoanalytic theories, starting from "Sigmund Freud" regarding the nature of the ego-growth and the relationship with the mother (maternal breast) as the first external psychological subject for the child, towards the significance of encoding ability according to "Melanie Klein", through the continuity of the emotional subject (maternal breast), and the emergence of the transitional psychological space according to "Winnicott", as a field for creative thinking with its factors and principles in how the ego invests the subject as information and regulates it as a conscious and controlling capacity.

Keywords: Creative thinking growth, Critical thinking, ego, psychological subject, transitional psychological space.

1- Introduction:

Human thought is in no way aligned with the image of robotic or artificial intelligence that records, calculates, and repairs. It is, on the contrary, a psychological process of distortion, meaning altering what is recorded, as (Claude Le Guen, 1981. p 1121) mentioned: " *Its focus is not so much on the original text retained but rather on erasure, deletion, and changes. It does not focus heavily on the original text as much as it does on the reasons that led to the distortion of this text. If we assume the existence of writing, the meaning is not in the writing but in its alterations*"; Cases of ignorance, and even denial, are essential in the context of thought, with regard to cognitive sciences, which constitutes a radical change in perspective. If it is the psyche's task to define reality, this is not its primary function or ultimate goal, but merely a satisfying desire. This is something that psychoanalysts have insisted on as a fundamental proposition in psychological analysis.

(Green A. 1995. p 317) indicates that " *the psyche is not primarily a device for recognizing and recording perceptions of reality, but it is also an ability of dreaming, imagining, and creating. The unconscious mind is not only responsible for errors and delusions that can affect awareness, but it is also one of the important sources of creativity*". Therefore, it is no longer possible to study perception, creative critical thinking, the mechanisms of discovery and invention, not to mention artistic creativity, while neglecting the role of the psyche and its metapsychology in the emergence of intellectual growth. In the next discussion, we will explain deeply how human infant is born powerless and needs a suitable environment in order to become independent.

2- Metapsychology of the Mental Apparatus and Psychological Employment:

Human infant is born powerless (psychologically, emotionally and intellectually), as compared to other species of beings, thus, he undoubtedly needs the attributes of adults as his assistants in a complete range of basic functions. This is clear for physical needs: the child needs his mother to provide his food, safety, cleanliness, health, love and psychological containment, and gradually, in an attempt to separate and

become independent, he will assimilate these various functions and take responsibility for them until he can execute them on his own.

The same applies to thinking. Initially, the child needs another person to think about his own concepts, a person who, if I may say so, lends him his "thinking device". Alone, the child will be naked and directly face the surrounding world. From this perspective, the ability to think grows in parallel with the growth of the mental apparatus. As it is known in Freudian psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (1923) presented an analysis of the components of the mental apparatus. He referred to it as the metapsychology of this apparatus, which he classified according to three aspects as follows:

2-1- From a Topographical Perspective:

It consists of six basic psychological agencies: the unconscious, preconscious, and conscious in contrast to the id, the ego and the super ego. The unconscious represents the location and place of desires and psychological contents subject to the pleasure principle in initial psychological processes. On the other hand, consciousness is the place where information coming from the internal or external reality of the individual is recorded, and it is subject to the reality principle. Preconscious is the place of transformation of unconscious components and contents under censorship that does not allow their passage to consciousness except after modification.

As for the he, it is the repository of unconscious impulses and desires, as long as they are subject to the pleasure principle; they are considered unconscious processes. The higher ego, on the other hand, is the ethical requirement and conscience that should monitor desires and impulses. If it succeeds, these processes or sequences are considered secondary by introducing them to the reality principle in which the individual lives. As for the ego, it is the representative of the psychological device, represents the speaker and the experience of one's internal reality and psychological reality.

2-2- From a Dynamic Perspective:

If mental conflict occurs as the sum of the presence of conflict between the psychological agencies of the mental apparatus, either as an internal reality or in relational external reality with the other, the ego intervenes through defense mechanisms, which reduce the mental tension resulting from internal and/or relational mental conflict.

2-3- From an energy and economic perspective:

The individual's mental apparatus needs energy, from which it derives all its activities, whether emotional, intellectual, or social. Sigmund Freud (1923) considered all human or psychological device activities as libidinal pulsional activities, as the primary entity of the individual in the general sense. In his view, desire, has primarily a bodily source, but its purpose is emotional and human. Moreover, desire is sought through a means or what he called the object, which by it, he lowers the libido-induced tension. For example, the individual's eating activity is human; through hunger as a motive, a libidinal excitement is created, its source is physical in the digestive system; the individual will seek a mean or an object through which he will achieve his goal, which is the reduction of hunger-induced excitement, and the ego as a psychological entity is responsible for selecting the mean or object to achieve the goal.

In the psychoanalytic literature, libido energy is divided into two parts: a section specific to the ego, called narcissistic or ego- libido, and another section specific to the object or the other, called object-libido. The criteria of libidinal energy direction are met by the concept of investment.

3- Narcissism Growth and Development:

The term "narcissism" is derived from the myth of the boy Narcissus, who fell in love with himself, which is the reason behind naming narcissism, considered one of the stages of development that all individuals go through. In the first year of life, we find the young child centered around himself, and after several years, he shifts to being centered around others, meaning he begins by loving himself and then loving others. The narcissistic person is described as being fused with others, treating them as if they were an extension of himself. According to Sigmund Freud (1914), narcissism can be divided into two forms:

3-1- Primary Narcissism:

Freud describes this as a primitive state, it is the primary narcissism for the beginning of the existence of the individual, characterized by a complete absence of connection with the environment and a complete undifferentiation between the ego and other. This state has its initial model in the womb and the act of sleeping, which represents its recovery. According to him, primary narcissism occurs when there is a meeting between the narcissism generated by the child and the narcissism projected by the parents. This is

the realm in which parental images and conversations are recorded, and he says about the narcissism of parents, that it appears as a consequence of their love towards the child.

Growth or Development Narcissism, as Freud (1914) calls it, represents the content of psychic investment, where the ego is ready for incorporation before establishing any relationship with the object.¹ It takes place before the child invests his mother as an object, as it is in a bilateral state (Trans-Narcissism), here, Freud considers it as a movement of a narcissistic and autonomous nature (Narcissistic and Auto Erotic). The narcissistic investment in the economical dimension of energy is an ongoing activity, serving as the basis for all psychic employment; thus, the concept of the ego, meaning narcissism in its healthy form, signifies the ego's ability to differentiate the self from the mother as an external object (the recognition that the maternal breast is separate from himself), and his ability to love and respect oneself, where a portion of this process becomes non-libidinal (Desexualization Track), focusing on thinking and sublimation.

3-2- Secondary Narcissism:

Secondary narcissism is characterized by the return of libidinal from the object back to the ego, and the withdrawal of psychological energy from the object towards the self, following the incorporation and integration of the love subject "maternal breast" as a symbol in the psychological space of the individual. But if the incorporation of this symbolic representation fails (due to an absence of security), this can result in the individual feeling that their ego is weak or fractured, signifying pathological narcissism. It represents a withdrawal of narcissistic investment, as a form of narcissistic rift, partial or total destruction, also in cases of excessive narcissistic investment, it can indicate a narcissistic perversion or paranoia state.

5- Building the Relationship with the Object: Cognitive Construction:

In the psychoanalytic context, as mentioned by Roudinesco E. (1997), the object is a concept used by Sigmund Freud and his followers to define the imaginative structural models of the individual's relationship with the external world. This is a fundamental concept for individual growth, as previously discussed. In her reception of her child as a being with a psychological need to understand himself and his surroundings, the mother will invest herself as an object. Its symbolism and psychological significance begin from the maternal breast as the first psychological object, where the child is supposed to establish a relationship with it, starting from the possibility of providing care and attention by his mother, and the child's capabilities of incorporation and to keep this issue as part of his narcissism and himself during the early stages of the child's development, the child's ego is not yet fully conscious and cannot distinguish between his own body and his mother's.

Freud saw that the libido, as an object, represents relationship with the object or the other, as a person, a thing or a physical state, a conscious or unconscious imagination of the other. This object can be located in the external space or in the individual's internal psychic space as a mental image, or a fantasy thanks to the development of the capabilities of incorporation and projection for intervention and integration. And if the libidinal object is invested, this represents a love for the object in its healthy form. It may also express a pathological state when there is an excessive investment in the libidinal object, as a form of emotional dependency or unhealthy attachment to the other, or the withdrawal of investment from the object by a weakened ego in cases of loss, separation, and pathological grief.

Freud (1923) also views that the concept of the relationship with the object goes through various individual's developmental stages, according to the successive organization of sexual relationship with the subject, which is based on the satisfaction pattern, such as oral gratification, where the oral relationship with the subject is what feeds the child, meaning it involves the activity of integration. During anal gratification, the child's ego establishes a dependent relationship with this subject, leading to the duplication of the imagery and genital satisfaction, where the father figure symbolizes authority, creating a reproductive relationship where his desires suppress the child's inclination towards the initial subject, which is the mother, due to castration anxiety.

The British psychoanalyst Melanie Klein (1943) considers that the child's relationship with the maternal breast is characterized by incorporation as a good object that gives satisfaction, also by projection as a bad object onto which the child projects their aggression and frustrations within the bounds of the active oral phase (teething). During this period, which is characterized by the shattering of the subject, the child experiences the depressive position, which he can overcome by unifying the subject to enter the quasi-schizophrenic-paranoid position. After establishing the concept of the subject's emotional continuity, meaning that the mother's presence is present in his psyche despite her absence, it allows the ego to overcome and prepare psychologically for this situation.

As for the structural psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, he believes it is essential to explore the depths of human personality, where the self is seen as an image or a relationship with the other. Whether the subject is integrated, erased, repressed, or the opposite by being saturated, raises questions about the relationship with the subject in the concepts of lack and loss, in a standardized manner that gave the concept of the relationship to the subject sequential attachment models, such as, deprivation, frustration, and castration, based on the three registers of the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic. According to him, deprivation is defined as a real lack for the actual subject, frustration as an imaginary lack for the real subject, and castration as a symbolic lack for the imaginary subject.

As mentioned earlier, we observe that both the Kleinian and Lacanian approaches share a common focus on the individual's libidinal and unconscious life to emphasize the primary role of the mother in shaping the object to the child.

In this context, the British psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott (1971) introduces the concept of the transitional object. This tangible object, often chosen by an infant (between 6 and 10 months of age), especially during moments of sleep, can be a piece of fabric, part of a blanket or a towel, which the infant uses it as a substitute for the mother's breast as the primary object of satisfaction. Through this transitional object, the infant engages in various oral activities, such as comforting himself. D W Winnicott notes that from a libidinal perspective, this oral activity takes on the concept of primary creativity. Through early oral activity with the mother's breast, the infant recreates the breast, meaning the establishment of the relationship with this object.

D W Winnicott further explains that the status of the object is the only thing that changes, meaning by possessing a substitute for the mother's breast marks the child's transition from a state of unity with the mother's body to recognizing the mother as a distinct object; thus, the child departs from a symbiotic relationship with his mother (not an ego) to the symbolic stage of objective reality, where the ego is established and this object's value retains its importance in the subsequent development of phenomena and transitional space. This grants the individual the ability to position themselves in the realm of imagination, belonging to both fantasy and reality. This duality becomes particularly significant in creative cultural, artistic, religious, and scientific activities. It is noteworthy that the initial formation of the ego coincides with the emergence of initial thinking. This provides the capacity for encoding the missing or the void as the first creative act.

In conclusion, both narcissism and the relationship with the object determine the internal and relational psychological poles in the individual's psychic employment as psychological, dynamic and economic structures. It's impossible to address one without the other, as they mutually explain and elaborate on the development of thought for the ego, serving as the fundamental core upon which all critical and creative thinking activities are based.

4- The Thought Process from a Psychoanalytic Perspective

4-1- Formation of Concepts and Associations:

Sigmund Freud (1980) posits that perceptions record the effects of memory in the mental apparatus. Various psychological mechanisms utilize these recorded effects to construct "concepts." Importantly, concepts are always the result of the mental effort of transformation. This notion is what Freud referred to as "metapsychology" or "the science beyond psychology." According to this perspective, psychological phenomena are exclusively composed of increases, transformations, and reductions in the energy of concepts. This unconscious energy itself only becomes conscious effects in response to sensations of pleasure, enjoyment, or pain and discomfort they generate. As (S Freud. 1980. p.488) states, "*Consciousness is a kind of sensory organ for understanding mental qualities, which can be subject, during one's waking life, to two kinds of excitations: first, peripheral excitation, excitation of the sensory perceptual apparatus, and, secondly, excitation of pleasure and pain, which has proved to be almost the only mental quality distinguishing transformations of energy within the mental apparatus.*" Therefore, a concept may find itself temporarily charged with energy, whose conscious effect, whether pleasure or discomfort, is termed "emotional impact" or "passion." However, according to the principle of determinism, this event, even though momentary, is not coincidental but finds itself carrying the energy merely because it was in a state allowing it to receive it from another concept.

To illustrate this functional associational principle, Freud employed the concept of "binding" or "linking." This is a mechanism that contributes to the progressive organization of the mental apparatus,

facilitating the retention and retrieval of memories. In this context, Freud goes so far as to suggest the mechanism responsible for producing and strengthening these associational links. He calls this mechanism the "repetition binding mechanism" and explains it as follows: *"During the passage of the quantity (Q), resistance is first removed and then re-established, but only to a level corresponding to the quantity (Q) that has passed. In this way, the quantity (Q) can, on the next occasion, cross in a smaller quantity, and so on."* (S Freud. 1980. p. 109).

Nevertheless, Freud (1980) ultimately restricts his focus to the functional aspect of linking, leaving aside its material basis. He argues: *"We shall soon see with perfect clarity what the mental apparatus is like. But please do not ask what it is made of, for that has no psychological significance, and it remains as indifferent to psychology as the walls of the telescope for optics, whether they are made of metal or cardboard."*

4-2- Desire as the Basis and Impetus for Thought and a Defensive System Against Libidinal Stimulation:

It takes some learning, to learn how to satisfy the desire; learning that allows contentment and satisfaction, the moment desire returns, to start awareness. According to Freud (1980), establishing a suitable course of action is the responsibility of thought. The realization of this plan can only be achieved by an impact from past experiences. However, desire alone is what sets the mental apparatus in motion; there is no thought without desire, and no desire without a body. For any simulation there are psychological phenomena, even computer simulations, this mental apparatus possesses a characteristic: its products cannot be completely distinguished from its construction. They are necessarily individual, historical, and dynamic, as perceived from their perspective, as opposed to the perspective of the network of associations established among themselves.

Indeed, Freud points out that these are the characteristics of any mental apparatus "constructed for linking" since it can constantly gather and exploit new experiences, enriching those from the past. With a view to this continuous improvement of individual mental organization, Freud coined the term "autopoiesis," referring to its structured modeling. Otherwise, it would be unable to respond to the history of its development. He also noted the fact that modifying the individual's knowledge and actions to achieve a better goal can be compared to the mechanism of feedback, and thus we return to the field that is the origin of cognitive sciences: for automatic control (Cybernetics) in the 1940s.

Freud introduces a new element, suggesting that the constructive feedback mechanism of thinking leads only to the satisfaction of libidinal desires. In other words, libido consists of two components: an emotional incision involving desire, emotion and passion, and the incision of perception, which carries the image or imagination of this emotional incision and desire. The connection between them is a primary (unconscious) intellectual connection within which in its general context is formed with the associations with other libidos of the so-called thinking that takes its meaning in exchange for reality. This same process constitutes what is called the system of defense against libidinal stimulation for desire consciousness.

According to the psychoanalyst and psychiatrist Bernard Glöse (2010), the child's libidinal protection system consists of two parts: one part is taken care of by the adult, ensuring the role of motherhood (protection, comfort, etc.), while the other part is immediately managed by the child through self-regulation and during periods of alertness, facilitated by the processes of adaptation, as notably demonstrated by the Brazelton Neonatal Behavioral Assessment Scale.² Through the "disentanglement" capacities and through early capacities for primary mental representation, the child can confront reality indirectly.

2-3- Ego's Ability for Emotional-Cognitive Encoding and Containment:

Sigmund Freud (1923) introduced the concept of "For-Da", which translates to "Presence-Absence" in German, based on an observation of a child playing with a reel (the coil) in a German play in 1920. In this game, when the child pulled the thread, the reel would appear, and the child would shout "Da." However, when the child let the thread go, the reel would disappear, and the child would exclaim "o-o-o-o," signifying that it had gone away. Freud related this play to the child's experiences of the presence and absence of the mother, which were reflected in the game. Through this game, he imagined that the absent mother was still somewhere nearby and would return. It is the absence and return that ultimately lead to the development of the encoding function.

According to Jean Piaget (1960), cognitive development of a child progresses to the point of achieving representation and encoding during the second year of life. In fact, the sensory-motor stage must

be completed to enable the child to reach representation through mental images in the abstract concept, thanks to the ability to continue the perceived topic; that is, the absence of the perceived topic does not mean its non-existence. For example, if a child rolls a ball under a table, he expects it to reappear on the other side, indicating that its absence does not equate to its non-existence; this leads the child into a preoperational symbolic intelligence phase, in which he becomes able to deal with images as alternatives to the object and will be able to think by creating links between the images. The child interacts with these images in the same way they do with physical objects during the sensory-motor stage.

Therefore, mental imagery is constructed based on individual perception and understanding, incorporating what the child has absorbed from his surroundings, like any building in the field of intelligence, where Piaget (1960) has pointed out, mental images result from imitating stimuli, and their comparison with perception does not signify direct inheritance but rather the imitation's goal of presenting an active version of perceptual images. Thus, the capacity for mental representation gradually becomes a part of an individual's psychology. Melanie Klein provided an example of the continuity of emotional subject matter (encoding capability) by considering the absence of the maternal breast as a psychological object; its absence does not mean its non-existence, but it continues to exist in the child's mind or psyche as a symbolic object. This encoding capacity is made possible by the introjective identification, which corresponds to Piaget's concept of imitative incorporation. It is essential to emphasize the fundamental role of the mother-child relationship in this acquisition. The quality of very early encounters with the mother and those in her vicinity allows the child to integrate the mother's symbolic capacities within himself.

Additionally, D W Winnicott (1971) emphasized the role of the mother's primitive mirror, presenting her face as a reflection of her child in each encounter. Similarly, the British psychoanalyst Wilfred Bion (1967) highlighted the "maternal reverie" function and its capacity to receive and discharge a child's primitive fears, which ultimately helps the child tolerate frustration and loss. Bion (1962-1967) claimed that children do not begin thinking until they can bear frustration, at which point they form the container ego, which holds information, absorbs it, examines it, and develops it. On this occasion, he talks about the thought apparatus, as a result of the psychological system, through his relationship with the mother as a primary hobby for the child, and its effects are reflected on the child's ego. Bion (1962-1967) discussed the development of thinking based on physical and emotional experiences, rooted in the relationship with the mother.

In the same vein, Anzieu (1985) proposed the "skin ego", considering the shared skin between the mother and the child at the beginning of the relationship, which allows to understand how the mother must maintain the child's excitement at an acceptable level and perform the function of protection against the child's excitement in the early relationship, to be able to identify it, until it becomes part of himself, which helps the child later develop the capacity for a symbolic skin ego that resists narcissistic emotional excitation.

4-4- The Ego as a Struggling Actor in Thinking:

The ego, which represents the psyche, is responsible for its mental functioning. It plays a crucial role in cognitive science as it helps avoid pain and discomfort and seeks ways to satisfy desires through the work of thought. The ego is responsible for testing reality to select a satisfying approach, leading to a place where the ego engages in conflicts:

- Conflict with inappropriate or repressed desires, leading to suppressed desires. The ego still participates in the work of thought through alternative mental images that are more ethically acceptable.
- Conflict between ethically acceptable desire demands and the constraints imposed by reality to satisfy them.

Consequently, cognitive development requires the ego to be capable of resolving ongoing conflicts during thinking processes. Thinking involves following existing connections, through selective choices among these thinking connections. Moreover, "*there is criticism and this criticism eliminates some ideas that appear after the perception, and it cuts the path of an interconnectedness so that it is not even able to exceed the threshold of consciousness and it is suppressed before it is perceived.*" (S Freud. 1980. p. 95).

Therefore, thinking under these constraints becomes a challenging task and may lead to reasoning errors, which can manifest in the form of consciousness (by the speaker or interlocutor) by not consistency in the sequence of ideas, and lack of consistency due to the parasitic effect of perceptions or unconscious links. Nonetheless, the ego must maintain a cognitive distance and critical distance from its psychological constituents to critically evaluate all the necessary memories for proper execution of the principle of reality,

including unpleasant or inappropriate ones. So that the ego has the ability to take into account the potential development of resentment and pain, then act on the perception of the source of discontent, in order to prevent this development, and this is not only the essence of the mechanism of repression, but the essence of all defense mechanisms. That is why the ego, here again, takes advantage of the idea of cleansing: it is a matter of creating connections that will transform energy from perceptions that if shipped, would generate resentment.

Therefore, there are two potential fates for psychological material:

- Gradual and normal forgetting, occurring because of non-use of links related to the representation.
- Defensive forgetting, in which the defense mechanism prevents communication.

5- Principles of Creative Thinking Growth from a Psychoanalytic Perspective:

The fundamental psychological process of creative thinking is subject to individual characteristics. Some individuals possess more evident creative abilities, while others may struggle. The latter group often has a highly defined and rigid frame of reference that discourages the emergence of original or creative ideas, also discourages finding solutions by adding something new to their existing ideas, productive artistic behaviors, or orientations that can contain a certain position and control it in the manner that develops interaction with it.

In this regard, the psychoanalytic dynamic approach serves as an essential framework for explaining and elaborating the creative thinking process based on its growth principles. It regards creative thinking as a stable psychological function, depending on the way personality self-regulation is structured. The founders and authors of psychoanalytic dynamics, concerned with the psychological utilization of the individual, have explored the nature of the underlying hidden psychological processes behind creativity as a unique human function that distinguishes individuals as thinking beings. So that the self-analytical approach supports the idea of the influence of the psychological pillars of various psychological aspects of the psyche in their interactions with adaptation mechanisms, participation in production and creative thinking; which we will discuss, clarify, and determine its function in relation to creative thinking.

5-1- Narcissistic Balance:

The American psychoanalyst Hanz Kohut (1974-1991) concurs with Freud regarding the critical role of narcissism in creative production. He also emphasizes the incompatibility of narcissistic excess towards the creative process which does not appear until the ego has moved beyond the narcissistic state, where he points out that "*the ability to be empathetic, after overcoming narcissistic excess, has the potential to awaken true creativity.*" (H Kohut, 1974-s1991, p. 332)

On the other hand, Artaire (1984) adopts the positions of both Freud (1914) and Kohut (1974) by elucidating the relationships between the ego, narcissism, and the creative process. He asserts that creativity and invention are psychological choices individuals are forced to make to maintain their balance when their narcissism is damaged. He draws connections between creative production, whether it's cognitive or behavioral, with adaptation and compensation mechanisms, and suggests that these mechanisms can be more or less effectively employed, depending on the balance or shortcomings in the individual's personality structure. He also noted that creatives are more capable of controlling the engulfment of their narcissism during psychological shocks. (Artière, M. 1984 p. 35) says: "*Creatives have this possibility, that everyone who has suffered narcissistic trauma does not share, to invest in a search or an Object on which the libido goes to be able to reinvest.*"

Moreover, Morhain (1991) supports Artaire's idea that the creative process has a therapeutic act that offers the possibility of reshaping and rebuilding the subject, which subsequently contributes to mending the narcissistic cracks rooted in the individual's primitive experiences; thus, creativity plays an essential role in regards to the unique style of narcissistic regulation. It is highly reasonable to say that the ego or an individual's psychological self-regulation is excessively dependent on the strength or weakness of narcissistic growth, which, in turn, is restricted to the possibility of creativity. Narcissistic psychological balance stimulates the ego towards heightened creative production.

5-2- Capacity of Sublimation:

Many psychoanalysts insist on the connection between the concepts of creativity and sublimation. In this context, Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, presented the idea in his book "*The Sexual Life*" (1914-1957) that there is a close relationship between the sublimation process and creativity. He formulates the hypothesis that sublimation enables individuals to recognize and realize possible potentials, redirecting

their desires and making them latent as a suitable way to satisfy their urges. He adds that this adaptive transformation allows the appearance of residual antagonistic effects and resistance from the sublimation of sexual impulses and desires.

Freud (1923-1989) believes that the creative process operates within the unconscious through sublimation. Creative production requires the withdrawal of sexual desire from the ego, separating this energy from libidinal and sexual desire to advance toward desexualized activities, in other words, sublimated activities. Consequently, the creative process modifies and redirects the libido's drive, transforming it from a bodily energy into a libidinal object then intellectual and cultural energy. The creative individual, through the process of sublimation, provides a new pattern and template for his imagination, parallel to the reality he inhabits. Therefore, creativity and sublimation make it possible to reorganize the perception of reality, building and structuring a new connection that enhances positive adaptation to the environment. This is often observed in children's inclination to play by building and dismantling objects, then reassembling them according to their unique vision, serving their adaptation.

In this context, S. Freud points out that creative and sublimation processes bring satisfaction and fulfillment to the ego, preventing the morbid deviation of desires and urges in reality. This is well captured in Sigmund Freud's words as relayed by "Fossi": "*And thus in a certain way, the hero, the king, the creator, the preferred one who wanted to be, actually become so without going through the tremendous detour that requires the effective transformation of the outside world.*" (G Fossi, 1985 p. 216).

In the same vein, both Braconie and Marcel (1988) consider that sublimation connects the libidinal and psych cognitive dimensions of an individual's personality. They illustrate that sublimation involves the transformation of libidinal aims from sexual-narcissistic objectives to intellectual and cognitive objectives, linking this new intellectual curiosity with creativity. Hence, the sublimation process enables access to the new energy available for creative thinking.

Furthermore, Didier Anzieu (1995) argues that this new, active, and available libidinal energy usually tends to manifest in human activities as creative behaviors, rather than being discharged libidinally through actions without providing an opportunity to calm it and psychologically prepare it. This occurs when the individual's ego is flexible enough to fend off internal and external libidinal stimuli related to their external reality.

This means that instead of libidinal discharge randomly proceeding to action, sublimation directs libidinal motives into creating a real intellectual or practical activity. Anzio also contends that the use of sublimation and creative production plays a significant role in the maturation process, allowing a child to channel his impulses, anger, opposition, psychological tension, and even his dreams into positive and productive energy through sublimation.

From this standpoint, Anzieu (1995) supports Freud's view that sublimation is the last adaptation mechanisms prepared psychologically during sexual psychological development. It emerges from the specificities of the pulsional economy, indicating significant accomplishments on emotional, social, and relational levels during childhood and becoming more apparent during adolescence. Bergeret (1985) further supports this perspective by introducing the concept of personality traits in sublimation, which is a concept that is associated with the satisfaction of libidinal motives through avoidance by resorting to suppression, to enhance the characteristics of the transcendent personality, linking these traits to a balanced and functional structure. Sublimation, in another sense, is the ego's capacity to integrate two sets of motives: libidinal and aggressive. Anzieu also argues that curiosity becomes linked with sublimation by arousing interests related to social, cultural, or artistic areas, after having been primarily instinctual during the early Oedipal stages. This curiosity can be connected to the concept of sensitivity to problems that the child may face in their psycho-social developmental stages, which has been developed as one of the eight basic skills of creative production according to Guilford (1973).

5-3- The capability of regression in service of the Ego:

The psychoanalyst Kris (1952) suggests that creative production is directly associated with the interaction between primary and secondary processes. He links creativity to a state of regression and retreat of the ego, indicating a regression in the development of personality structures with a focus on the fluidity and dynamics of psychological components within the mental apparatus. He observes that creative individuals are more capable of transitioning between the primary and secondary processes. Therefore, in his view, creative production is a blend of two stages: inspiration and psychological preparation. The first stage of inspiration includes regression and retreat into a conscious state specific to the primary process, where in

this stage, the associative character allows the primary process to discover new mental structures; thus the creative individual has the psychological security and balance to engage with the unconscious without being overwhelmed or dominated by the primary process. In the second stage of psychological preparation, access to the libidinal material of the unconscious becomes easy without surveillance, and the ego becomes responsible for organizing it; this is achieved through the secondary process, which involves shaping these materials into a social context, linking and integrating the principle of reality, ultimately facilitating productive creative communication. In summary, the capacity for regression and retreat in service of the ego is a functional method and style for the ego to access the components of the id while maintaining control over primary processes; this retreat does not serve as an escape from reality but, rather, enriches it with new perspectives. Several researchers and psychoanalysts from the scientific community, such as Scheffer (1958), Shentoub (1981), and Fossi (1978), support this psychoanalytical viewpoint developed by Kris (1952).

In the same context of the psychoanalytical perspective, we find the psychoanalyst Kubie (1958, 1967), who accepts the concept of regression but excludes the Freudian concept and Kris's concept of the connection between creativity and psychological structure. Kubie asserts that creativity occurs in the preconscious rather than the unconscious, as envisioned by Freud (1914-1957, 1923-1989). According to Kubie, the contents of the unconscious (conflicts, themes, goals, unacceptable motives) are too rigid and patterned for the individual, where symbolic representation cannot occur within it; on the other hand, the preconscious is a creative part of the construction of personality, free to accumulate, assemble, compare, and blend ideas. Kubie (1958) sees the subconscious mind as a rich and flexible domain, inclined to reveal creative possibilities.

Aritie (1976, 1980) maintains the fundamental idea of regression in service of the ego between primary and secondary processes but adds the concept of the third process, which is similar to the preconscious or what Kubie (1958) and Fossi (1985) referred to as preconscious; therefore, the third process is considered a transitional space, where self-experience is transformed into an objective experience through the involvement of both primary and secondary processes. Shentoub (1981), on the other hand, endorses the theory of regression in the service of the ego in explaining the creative process, where she emphasizes two crucial and compulsory conditions during creative production, namely the capacity for regression toward unconscious components and the ability to conceive and imagine. This dual movement, which serves the ego, plays a crucial role in the creative process and necessitates relatively stable emotional and affective structures, as long as there are particular relational risks for the subject.

The concept of sublimation is defined in the same way as the operation of creativity, with (V Shentoub, 1981. p. 67) as *"the capacity to retreat and regress may face the risk of becoming disorganized or disturbed, or so on, through the use of effective and superior mechanisms, it is capable of delving deeper into the latent content to find, in this immersion, incentive and harmony, then returning these materials for transformation towards others."*

Shentoub (1981) reaffirms that the ego plays a crucial role in transforming primary materials into creative intellectual activity, which is then conveyed and transformed to others. The defensive and integrative functions of the ego in reality allow a breakthrough in the unconscious content of the field of dreams and daydreams or illusions in the context of interpersonal communication. In this regard, Shentoub (1981) agrees with Kris (1952) on the level of interaction of the primary process (of latent content) and the secondary process (intellectual production or communication within the subject's relational reality).

6- Stages of creative mental activity:

Anzieu (1995) posits that creative production goes through five distinct stages, which include creative shock, followed by psychological awareness, the formulation of the code or symbol, configuration, and finally external expression.

The first stage of creative shock is associated with an internal crisis fraught with risks to libidinal balance, leading to partial regression and temporary disintegration. The latter is less destructive than what leads to pathological irregularity. In fact, this crisis represents the culmination of intensive preparatory work (incubation), where during this stage, a portion of the ego is allocated to regressive or retreating processes to transition into the primary unconscious processes, while the other part remains conscious and actively preserves attention, awareness, observation and boundaries between what is normal and pathological for the ego, but remains fragile and wavering during this stage until creative action contributes to maintaining psychological balance. (D Anzieu. 1995. p. 95) states *"reative work can allow the ego to avoid severe psychological, organic, or behavioral disturbances. However, this is merely a temporary delay of the final*

emergence of the disorder." With that, Anzieu supports Kohut's (1974-1991) position, which Morhain (1991) reinforced, regarding the creative process as an adaptive and restoration influence in the face of the structure and narcissistic framework.

During the second stage, the ego's consciousness captures unconscious psychological representations; the fragmented portion of the ego responsible for self-monitoring remains conscious during the process of regression and disintegration, then it integrates unconscious psychological representations, which have been suppressed, repressed, and, therefore, filled then removed by conscious, by using fixed positional transformations. Thus, creative production is connected to the ability to transfer self's suppression to conscious awareness of the unconscious content, and allowing the preconscious to present this content and subject it to coding.

The third stage, according to Anzieu (1995), involves the formulation of the code and giving it space and scope for achievement. In this stage, the preconscious mind engages in connection activity by transforming primary psychic products (unconscious representations) at the heart of the potential creative organization. This organizational nucleus acts as a symbol, allowing the decoding of specific data in a new way from external or internal reality. The code or symbol cannot be achieved without the presence of the container ego, which is receptive to the content.

The fourth stage of creative activity remains the actual configuration for the creative ego, which involves the psychological preparation of psychological components and the reshaping of creative production. This does not preclude the possibility of unconscious subjugation, but it can be overcome with continuous support from the higher ego as a moral-social requirement.

As for the fifth and final stage, it consists of external creative activity and production. It is important to note that during this latter period, there is sometimes intense resistance from the unconscious, and the task of announcing the end of creative production is performed by subjecting it to external judgments. In this context, Anzieu (1995) believes that the creator must overcome their final obstacles and feelings of shame or guilt to navigate through this last stage.

Anzieu (1995), also adds that creative capacities differ from one individual to another. Creativity requires a dynamic and flexible alternation of employment records during the development of creative production. Anzieu states that the first stage of creative shock is the most deterministic, yet the least accessible for some personality configurations. (D Anzieu, 1995. p. 98) says that "*the creative regression is slowed and suppressed due to defensive rigidity and excessive character traits, through the subject's ganglia shield (...). Resistance to regression is a form of resistance to change: fear of the unknown, disturbing unfamiliarity, and fear from transformation.*" Thus, individuals with obsessive traits or even narcissistic traits are likely to have difficulties in their capacity for creative regression. Without a doubt, regression forces an individual to effectively negotiate with their unconscious psychological representations to avoid either regression failure or ego disintegration.

Conclusion:

Many people believe that critical creative thinking requires exceptional rationality, which necessitates avoiding imagination and steering clear of delving into dreams, as it makes it impractical and illusory. Nonetheless, imagination and vision are sacred in its entirety, as dream is creativity for it grants desire to the reality in which we live and the things we aspire to and hope for. Our perception of reality is not just consumed information at the ego level to be drained in a sterile manner; in reality, everything that has been accomplished began as a dream and a mental vision; rather, it is the subject that the ego may find a vessel to re-digest and reframe it, justifying the role of the intellectual and critical ego.

In this regard, we found that the psychoanalytical perspective, by attempting to understand the psychological apparatus and the meta psychological use of the psyche, has clarified the path of creative thinking's growth and its principles, so that we can say that the human being is inherently a thinker, and the first signs of their creative thinking are the growth of the psychological ego, as long as they have been equipped to conceive the unimaginable mentally, to rise above the tangible subject with their creative mental perception, due to the psychological ego cannot be attributed the task of linking perceptions and encoding responsibility unless it has been created for that, even if it is compelled to work in an unfavorable or adverse environment.

Consequently, the task of the creative and critical intellectual ego is nothing but to reinforce the skills of engaging with reality or internalizing it, thus opening up to new ideas and information, perceiving

things from different perspectives, helping to scrutinize his data, and critically solving his problems, so he can be more productive by gaining self-confidence, deepening his understanding and comprehension of his world, and understanding his relationship with others.

Footnotes

¹ A defensive mechanism, which is to integrate the maternal breast, as a sign of food for physiological gratification, fullness, and emotional satisfaction for the ego of the child.

² BRAZELTON TB. Echelle d'évaluation du comportement : néonatal. Neuropsychiatrie de l'enfance, 1983.

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