

1 principles of morita therapy

Shisō-no-mujun: Contradiction between Ideas and Reality

I coined the term *shisō-no-mujun* to define the opposing tension between one's desire that life and a sense of self be a certain way, and the facts about how life is and who one is. *Shisō-no-mujun* is directly translated as "the contradiction by ideas."

What I call "contradiction by ideas" results from one's attempt to create, manipulate, or modify facts by means of ideas, without knowing the difference between ideas and reality. Ideas are linguistic descriptions, explanations, or inferences of facts. Additionally, concepts are nothing but names or labels for things. They are like reflections on a mirror. Ideas and concepts are such reflections; they are not real entities or facts. That which is called *akuchi* (misplaced knowledge) in Zen, or *tendō-mōsō* (upside-down illusory thoughts) mentioned in the Prajuna Sutra, is manifest in the contradiction by ideas. For example, one could imagine possessing a divine power and flying in the air, and one could project such a thought into her or his dreams. However, it remains as imagination and is not a real fact.

Generally speaking, there are often contradictions and incompatibilities between one's subjectivity and objectivity,

between emotion and knowledge, and between intellectual understanding and experiential understanding. These contrasting elements are not identical. Contradiction by ideas occurs when one fails to acknowledge such distinctions. Therefore, when one moves away from contradiction and faulty thinking and returns to the true state of reality, one becomes free of contradiction by ideas and appreciates reality as it is. However, in the human process of intellectual development, a person often creates a wide gap between ideas and facts. The process is like making an error by one inch that results in a future difference of one thousand miles. Stimulus and reaction, and objectivity and subjectivity are accordant, much like sticking a needle into the skin and feeling pain, or catching a flu virus and feeling unusual about one's body. Similarly, there is little inconsistency between feeling affection toward one's own mother and the idea that one should love and respect her, and between understanding the distance between two objects and experiencing that distance.

However, when a person departs from one side of the fact and becomes progressively preoccupied with the other, s/he creates painful attachment to inner conflicts and repeats faulty thinking. Thus, as expressed in Zen, one creates "misplaced knowledge" and enters deeply into a state of confusion. I wonder if *satori* (enlightenment) means to break through such confusion and become one with the present reality, to go beyond verbal processing—where the external environment, the ego,* objectivity and subjectivity, and emotion and knowledge all become one and free of incongruities.

Subjectivity and Objectivity

Some clients complain of insomnia, heavy feelings in the head, dulled consciousness, and obsessional thinking. In

*The concept "ego" was translated into Japanese as *jiga* following Freud's introduction. However, Morita's reference to ego was Zen based. See "Ego or Ego-Centered" in *Editor's Glossary of Morita Terms* for clarification.

fact, these complaints are often reported by those diagnosed with *shinkeishitsu*. However, these are momentary feelings and they can vanish from a person's consciousness if s/he is unaware of such symptoms or if s/he simply acknowledges such symptoms in passing without dwelling on them. However, once a person focuses attention on a fleeting experience, a world of image is established and one becomes trapped in an illusory subjective world, independent of any objective stimuli that correspond to subjective feelings. In this instance, one's subjective experience is no less real than an objective one. Therefore, it is futile for a therapist to objectively manage and attempt to control their clients' minds by saying such phrases as, "Get hold of yourself," "Forget about the pain," or "Don't think of the symptoms." This kind of intervention is ineffective because clients are in a dreamlike state in which they cannot distinguish reality from nonreality; they believe the dream to be reality. I discuss the distinction between subjectivity and objectivity later in this text.

Emotion and Knowledge

A person's fear of death or fear of ghosts is a natural human response. The exaggeration of these fears is due to contradiction by ideas; it is useless to try to eliminate fears by intellectually saying to oneself that, "One can live one's life fully because of one's fear of death" or "Ghosts do not exist." According to "ordinary logic," one may objectively criticize emotional reactions by saying that there is no need to fear death. This is the reason I have discussed "emotional logic" and "emotional facts." The fear of death is a subjective fact in human emotional experiences. The descriptions and explanations of subjective and objective phenomena are referenced as "science." One's systematic and linear reasoning is called "logic," while one's unconditional obedience to absolute facts is called "faith." It is, therefore, faulty common sense to try to ignore or reject such emotional facts by intellectual means. I believe that one can

make accurate clinical judgments by assessing emotional facts and by applying proper knowledge to them.

As an example of this relationship between emotion and knowledge, a person's feelings of discomfort and fear when facing a hairy caterpillar are emotional facts. While at the same time, the person knows that this insect will not spit poison or attack. A person who is governed by emotion would close her or his eyes and exit at the sight of a caterpillar. It is the intellect that guides the person to approach the insect and remove it. That is, one's ability to approach the caterpillar, in spite of the emotional discomfort as it factually exists, reflects the coexistence of emotion and knowledge. This is a reasonable response and a correct attitude, and it reflects an acceptance of the inner experience as it is, at that moment. On the other hand, it is the contradiction by ideas ridden with "faulty knowledge" that prompts one to first eliminate the uncomfortable feeling and produce a positive feeling in its place before approaching the caterpillar; this faulty process creates fertile conditions for the formation of an obsessive disorder.

Taitoku (Experiential Embodied Understanding)
and *Rikai* (Intellectual Understanding)

Taitoku is the knowledge and awareness obtained from direct practice and experience, while *rikai* is abstract knowledge used to judge how things should or should not be and is based upon inference. Deepest understanding, therefore, arises after a person's concrete experiences bring realization in the body=mind. This can be compared to the fact that I cannot know how something tastes until after I have eaten it.

Personal interests and avocations are cultivated by repeated practice of corresponding behaviors. It is easy to understand with one's intellect about the sacred nature of work and to convince others of its importance. However, practicing what one advocates is quite difficult.

Shakamuni Buddha's great *satori*, attained after his six-year tribulation, can be condensed and understood as "impermanence," wherein nothing remains in the same state forever. This is manifested in the fact that all people eventually die; this is something that even a primary school child realizes. *Satori* involves the subjective experience of being one with the state of impermanence. This understanding is not theoretical. Following *satori*, intellectual understanding and experiential understanding become compatible with each other. And yet, when one is trapped in the contradiction by ideas and a state of confusion, there is an endless gap between intellectual and experiential embodied understanding.

Beliefs, Judgments, and Errors of Logic

Beliefs are formed as a person combines knowledge from her or his subjective, emotional, and experiential nature. A person translates experiential knowledge directly into actions that become expressions of her or his character. In contrast, intellectual knowledge and judgment influence one's behavior and character indirectly.

William James (1890) divides philosophy into the soft-minded and hard-minded schools. Thus, depending upon one's temperament, one's philosophy may have either an inclination to the subjective and mentalistic or the objective and materialistic. Therefore, the nature of one's attention, occupational interests, and judgment are influenced by one's psychological inclinations. On the one hand, the ways in which one develops personal ideas arise from one's temperament and belief system. When compared to beliefs that are acquired through experience, knowledge and ideas that are imposed arbitrarily are rarely effective or worthy.

The relationships between objectivity and subjectivity, and between knowledge and emotion require significant consideration in the treatment of *shinkeishitsu*. If a client's emotional base is ignored, any intellectual pursuit (by the therapist) only serves to increase the distance between the

experiential mastery and therapeutic resolution. This inverse relationship is described by a Zen phrase, *keroketsu*, which is the state of a donkey tied to a post. That is, a donkey that is tied to a post by a rope will keep walking around the post in an attempt to free itself, only to become more immobilized and attached to the post. The same applies to people with obsessive thinking who become more trapped in their own sufferings when they try to escape from their fears and discomfort through various manipulative means. Instead, if they would persevere through the pain and treat it as something inevitable, they would not become trapped in this way; this would be similar to a donkey grazing freely around the post without getting bound to it.

Shinkeishitsu symptoms (such as a heaviness in the head or insomnia) result from a client's mental preoccupation with her or his own subjective experience. When such symptoms originate while one is in an emotional state, and one imposes logical evaluations to explain the symptoms, investigating the latter will never lead to reasonable solutions unless the fundamental subjective states are examined. This is similar to a common saying, "Affirmative and negative judgments made in a dream state are both unreliable." Taking a right-or-wrong judgment in the middle of mental confusion is also unreliable.

DuBois (1908) used his persuasion therapy for treating neuroses. He emphasized logical explanations and instructed clients to "totally eliminate the fear of illness" and to "become free from the past." It is likely we have all heard such comments from time to time and such advice appears within the realm of perfect common sense. Nonetheless, this approach ignores the reality of human emotionality. This belief is the same as convincing someone to love a caterpillar or to taste unpleasant medicine as something delicious. Furthermore, the psychological process of developing obsessions is linked to this type of mistaken logical thinking. For example, when a person thinks about uncleanness or facial flushing incessantly and attempts to suppress or ma-

nipulate her or his feelings through ordinary logic, s/he increases suffering. This approach-avoidance thinking only leads to more minute inquiry with one's mind and recovery becomes futile. An obsession originates from faulty judgments. If there were no flawed judgments, then this type of suffering from complicated ideational conflicts would not start in the first place. This is the reason that young children and those with intellectual disabilities rarely develop obsessive disorders.

Theories of the Unconscious*

Those who observe another person's death from heart disease, nurse a hemiplegic parent for a long time, or look at the body of someone drowned from a love suicide may later develop symptoms of anxiety in response to their experiences. Many investigators, including Freud and DuBois, have attributed neurosis to the unconscious or subconscious influences on the mind. However, neither of these investigators explain how certain emotional experiences enter the unconscious.

From my perspective, the mind does not stay still for one moment. The mind is always active and in flux. Zen proposes that, "Our mind changes according to various circumstances and the very point of change is very subtle. When one realizes her or his true nature according to the flow of the stream of mind, one transcends the world of emotional vicissitude." (See calligraphy by Shōma Morita, MD. on the following page.) In studying the mind, therefore, it is necessary to consider its dynamic flow and change between external events and the self. Freud and other investi-

*This section on the "Theories of the Unconscious" has been extracted from Part One of Morita's original text. Morita's use of the term *unconscious* is different from the meaning given by Freud. According to Morita, the unconscious is actually a phenomenon of consciousness that has a natural dynamic flow; disorder occurs in the mind when the natural flow is disrupted.

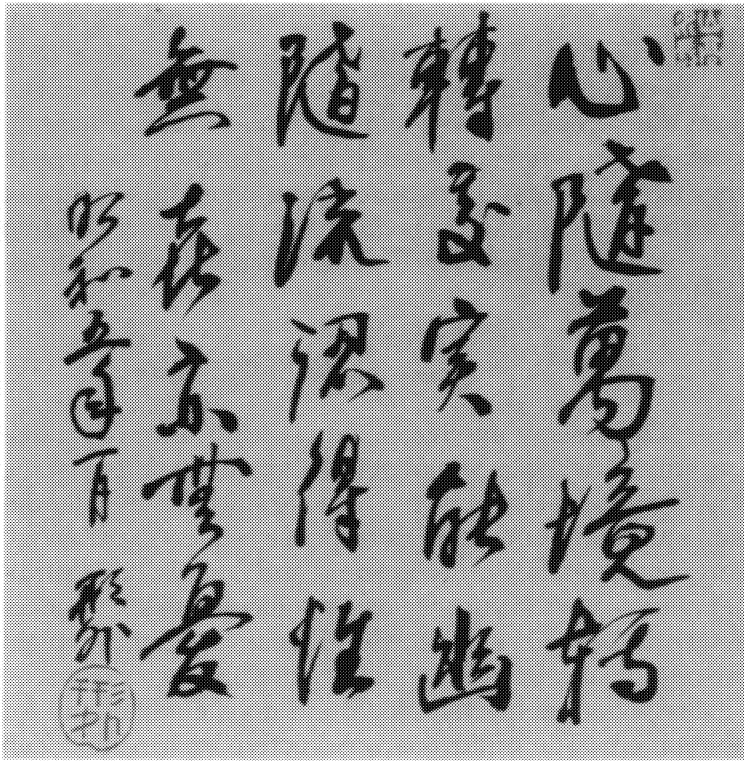


Figure 2. Calligraphy of Zen saying rendered by Shōma Morita, MD., signed as *Keigai* (circa 1920s).

gators have divided consciousness into concrete and separate parts that are personified and housed in the mind. I do not share this view. We have a song in Zen that goes as follows: "I wonder if the bell itself tolls or if the stick that rings the bell creates its sound. No, the sound arises from the space between the bell and the stick." This is analogous to saying that mental activity develops when the mind is stimulated by external events. Further, the mind is not located between the bell and the stick. No real or fixed body of "the mind" exists. Just as burning wood cannot maintain a constant form, so the mind is always active and chang-

ing; it moves between internal and external events. The mind is neither wood nor oxygen; it is the phenomenon of combustion. When the stick strikes the bell as an external event, the bell vibrates as an internal event, and an entirely new psychological phenomenon occurs. It is not true that the space between the bell and the stick strikes the bell. Likewise, it is not true that disorder develops because a specific active entity called the unconscious or subconscious is present.

“Complex,” as described by Freud (1915) and other theorists, refers to a collection of images and ideas that cluster around particular experiences that carry strong emotions in a person. The agony a person feels after experiencing trauma (such as a severe heart attack or a major earthquake) is impressed deeply within the person’s mind=body and may eventually become a source of anxiety. Thereafter, events such as an illness, an accident, family problems, or an episode of bad luck may be associated with a past experience (through association of ideas) and evoke the unpleasant memories regardless of the person’s state of consciousness. The previous emotion becomes regenerated, reformulated, and exaggerated and forms the so-called complex (or constellation of associations).

Consider an experience I had seven years ago when my child suffered from pertussis at the age of four. Years later, a child in our neighborhood had the same illness and I could hear the child’s fits of coughing. Whenever I heard this neighbor’s child coughing, the previous emotion associated with my own child’s illness flashed through my mind like lightning. I became concerned about my child and felt compelled to check his well being. When I told my wife about my response, she reported the same experience. The same emotion reappeared in me after many years. This illustration shows how adequate conditions and associations can stimulate a recurrence of a previous emotion.

The development of a complex is a common psychological process that can occur in many situations. Anxiety disorders occur when a person has a tendency toward

hypochondriasis, which is not related to the presence of a complex. For example, individuals with hypochondriac tendencies may develop palpitations because of the anxiety or fear they experience when observing the agony in a person with severe heart disease. When the person later encounters similar conditions associated with the past experience, s/he may develop a panic attack instantly via the process of *seishin-kōgo-sayō*. However, if the person's hypochondriac tendency is very mild, *seishin-kōgo-sayō* will not occur even if a so-called unconscious movement is present; the fear will be experienced merely as a simple fear, without developing into symptoms of anxiety.

According to Freud (1916, 1917), psychoanalysis enables the person to pursue a complex and unravel it, or to uncover the cause of her or his anxiety or the past experience associated with the emotion. Thus, Freud assumed that the client could be healed or cured by uncovering and verbally and emotionally expressing any previous experiences associated with the emotions, or by understanding the relationship between the past experience and the present disorder. However, I think that Freud's practice is similar to the religious practice of confession and falls within the range of nosotropic therapy.

From my viewpoint, the treatment of anxiety-based disorders does not require the time or energy needed to uncover a particular cause, regardless of whether the anxiety originates at the moment a client witnesses or experiences a trauma. Essentially, I think it is sufficient to either eliminate the fear associated with *seishin-kōgo-sayō*, or to make an appropriate balance between fear and *seishin-kōgo-sayō*.

Nature and Artificiality

People tend to create various contradictions by ideas because of their confusion surrounding the relationships between such things as nature and artificiality, purposes and means, and results and conditions. Physical, emotional, and psychologi-

cal activities of the human being are natural phenomena and cannot be artificially manipulated. However, people tend to believe that they can freely control these activities by will and by ordinary thinking. This is particularly true with regard to the psychological realm. For instance, most people know that they cannot physically lift their bodies in the air at will. When it comes to psychological matters, however, they believe erroneously that other people do not understand their mind, and they dogmatically think that they can freely do whatever they desire. Realistically, however, what one does is limited by the focus of consciousness on accomplishing an objective. The true nature of consciousness is to focus on the object and not the means to attain control of the object.

Mental activity is controlled by one's volition only when ideas are working toward a purposeful goal. Usually, however, ideas occur at random. Our sensations and moods, the sudden formation of ideas and dreams, and the human tendency to forget are definitely natural phenomena governed by the law of causality. They cannot be manipulated or managed at will.

Freud (1915) states that "forgetting" is caused by a psychological mechanism of repression due to an unconscious process. By looking only at the result, Freud regarded forgetting as a repressive mechanism. However, if this term is not interpreted as an unconscious process and is regarded as a person's conscious attempt to reject a certain thought, then unpleasant emotions enter awareness, get stuck in the foreground of awareness and become more difficult to forget. In this regard, forgetting is a natural phenomenon whereby certain thoughts become discharged from the incessantly flowing consciousness stream and become unavailable to conscious association and recall. A person cannot deliberately forget. Forgetting occurs in a split second. Not being able to understand when and how one forgets is comparable to not being able to remember when and how one falls asleep. Therefore, if one tries to forget something, to fall asleep in a hurry, or to suppress psychological

activities, such attempts increase psychological conflict and disrupt the flow of consciousness. Ideational conflict results in consequences that run counter to one's intended purposes and the natural flow of consciousness. Such a phenomenon clearly illustrates nothing but the contradiction by ideas between nature and artificiality, and between purposes and means.

DuBois (1908) instructed his clients with such phrases as, "Be brave," and "Have confidence in yourself." There are comparable Japanese common sayings like, "Be determined in your death." "Be absolutely committed to the present moment." "Become free from intentions and ideas." These are all intended to motivate the achievement of certain purposes and results. What is meant by these sayings is that it would be desirable to attain such mental states. If, however, no effective methods and conditions are developed to help a person accomplish such states, then s/he will only become tired of futile attempts encouraged by these sayings; in essence, s/he ends up with unnecessary fatigue and opposite results. Responding to such encouragement is like riding a horse against a wall while hurrying in vain to a destination, or trying to wrestle with *noren* (a cloth curtain that is placed at the entrance of Japanese restaurants and shops). Paradoxically, attempts to induce a brave feeling create more timidity, and attempts to become unconcerned about death make people even more governed by their fear of death. True courage occurs when one is not aware of her or his own braveness. A true and resolute state of mind in response to imminent death is achieved only when one is not formulating ideas about death. Similarly, when a person tries anxiously to develop a strong religious faith, s/he moves farther away from one. One tells lies when forcing a confession, and one becomes impolite by trying to be perfectly polite.

The experiences of mindlessness, absolute commitment that extends beyond life or death, and enlightenment become images of the mind when one strives to attain them. Like an image reflected on a mirror, one becomes an object

that is projected externally for observation, and therefore one is not "self" as s/he is. When people are fully mindless, absolutely committed, and become one with the present moment, they can no longer be aware of their own states. This is akin to the fact that one can neither see her or his own face directly, nor observe the whole image of a mountain when once s/he enters into it. The reason that people do not understand such a distinction is because contradiction by ideas governs their minds and confuses their abilities to distinguish between subjectivity and objectivity, purpose and means, and results and conditions.

Objective Projection of Ideas

One cannot generate courageous and self-confident feelings by will. Likewise, pain and suffering cannot be manipulated by one's desire to be free from them.

There are two ways of freeing oneself from uncomfortable feelings. One way is to completely become the pain or the suffering itself. When one is in a purely subjective state, one is entirely beyond evaluations due to dualistic or "subject versus object" ways of thinking. This is similar to one's inability to see her or his own face. This attained state is discussed in the section, *Obedience to Nature*.

The other way to free oneself from uncomfortable feelings is to focus attention on the pain, and to observe, describe, and evaluate it, without attempting to eliminate the discomfort or to distract oneself. In this way, the pain and suffering become liberated from being the object of subjective attachment; they become objective entities projected onto the external world. The attainment of this freedom is comparable to seeing one's reflected image on the mirror for what it is or observing a mountain by stepping away and keeping distance from it.

Some people use confession as a means to reduce suffering, just as clients with a fear of blushing confide their feelings to others. By sharing with and placing themselves

in a third person's perspective, they reduce the weight of their mental burden and become more free from the suffering. Some people use poetry to describe their feelings and objectify themselves, thus lessening the pain and soothing their agony. However, these are specific means one can use to attain certain purposes. Be aware that means and purposes are not identical.

The reason that clients with *shinkeishitsu* constantly complain about their symptoms to family members is because they want others to acknowledge their suffering and give sympathy and special care to them. Paradoxically, this practice of complaining increases clients' suffering. The more they detail their complaints, the more they focus their attention upon the complaints. They become egocentric and conclude that they alone suffer while others are free from pain. Thus, they create a large gap between others and themselves, build a castle of egocentric emotions in which they confine themselves even more, and lose correct judgment regarding facts. This is a totally different psychological process than the act of confession and blatant self-disclosure.

Individuals with *shinkeishitsu* resent others who do not understand their condition. They talk about the positive feelings they hold toward others, but do not let others know their less desirable feelings because it might disadvantage their relationship. Those with *shinkeishitsu* do not normally face tribulation in a quiet and solitary manner. They do not expose themselves entirely and with objectivity; and they are unable to appraise themselves accurately from a third person's perspective. Rather, they use all their energy on futile attempts to avoid agony, multiply their suffering by envying others, and lament their adversity. I think they generate suffering and confusion because they fail to enter into either a totally subjective experience or take on a completely objective position. Instead, such individuals vacillate between the two perspectives in a middle stance and thus remain in suffering and confusion. I have discussed my observations from the perspective of contradiction by ideas.

Needless to say, the above points can also be discussed in terms of emotion and attention.

I would like to add a few explanations about contradiction by ideas. One becomes conflicted when s/he projects her or his experiences and subjective facts onto the external world as an objective model. It is similar to seeing one's face reflected on the surface of a mirror. Thoughts are reflected as surface images, and often show inaccurate, reversed images and contradictions. For this reason, when a person takes an idea for a fact, s/he becomes preoccupied with it. This is like a man who struggles to adjust the angle of a razor when he shaves his beard by using a mirror as his guide.

Clients with *shinkeishitsu* tend to get attached to a thought and force it into action as though it were reality. This produces idiosyncratic behaviors and contradiction by ideas. Herein, I advise my clients to use a thought as a guide while acknowledging its limited caliber for choosing action. This is comparable to using a mirror only to identify a certain spot on the face while relying on a natural hand movement to guide the razor. Similarly, clients who try many different ways to fall asleep only end up with insomnia; as they try to forget pain, they become even more attached to it. Also, as they forcefully attempt to suppress obsessive thoughts, they become more agonized by them. In essence, these experiences result from clients' preoccupation with the contradiction between ideas and reality.

People often deceive themselves by such contradiction by ideas. Clients with *shinkeishitsu* say, "I could cope with dying from another illness, but I don't want to die of this one (*shinkeishitsu*)," or "I would persevere with any other suffering, but can't stand this one." Also, those with mysophobia may find the agony that accompanies hand washing unbearable and say, "I'd rather cut off my hands." These remarks are the expressions of their contradiction by ideas by which they deceive their mind at the moment. They do not realize that they would reject most torment and would not want to die of any illness, regardless of its nature. In

addition, these clients remain engaged in self-deception and self-defense due to the contradictions in their thinking. They use various excuses in order to seek comfort, maintain lazy behaviors, and avoid responsibilities.

Many people entertain beliefs similar to, "I would not mind dying after I reach seventy," or "I want to die quickly and in peace." They take these idealistic preferences for factual truth, and fail to notice that they are deceiving themselves. No one among such self-deceptive persons would be prepared to follow a self-instruction like, "Die suddenly, now." They prefer not to die now or ever.

A close relative of mine died at age one hundred and three. His children lamented his death while sitting beside his body. Some neighbors who witnessed this response laughed secretly at the family's emotional reactions because they believed the deceased person lived to such a rich old age. Yet, it is natural for humans to be saddened by death regardless of how long a deceased person had lived. Grieving is endless. Family members may wish for the dead person's presence during the next New Year's celebration, or during the great grandchildren's graduation ceremonies.

The prevalence of contradiction by ideas among people seems to be caused by the following processes: (1) a person forms an idea that is incongruent with reality; (2) s/he objectifies such ideas; (3) s/he projects these objectified ideas onto the external world; and (4) s/he expands the boundaries of her or his projected ideas. The perpetuation of these processes leads a person's mind astray and leads her or him farther away from reality. This sequence is known as *akuchi* (misplaced intellect) in Zen.

Obedience to Nature

It is essential that the therapist comprehend the importance of dismantling the clients' contradiction by ideas when treating those with *shinkeishitsu*. How can a client dismantle her or his methods of faulty thinking? In short, the solution lies in assisting a client to discard artificial tactics and manipu-

lations and to observe and obey nature. Trying to control the self by manipulation and willpower is like trying to choose numbers willfully on a thrown dice or to push the water of the Kamo River in Kyōto upstream. As a result, the client aggravates the original agony and feels unbearable pain because s/he fails to get what was desired; hence, a sense of powerlessness increases.

What is nature? In Japan, it is natural that the summer is hot and the winter is cold. One is not in accordance with reality if one tries not to feel the summer's heat or the winter's cold. It is more natural to obey and persevere with the reality of the seasons. One day, a monk questioned Dōsan, a Zen master: "How can we avoid the arrival of heat and cold?" Dōsan answered: "Go to a place where hot and cold do not exist." The monk asked him to elaborate on this. He answered: "When it's cold, lose yourself in the cold. When it's hot, lose yourself in the hot." This means that one can immerse the self in a state of the hotness or coldness when it is hot or cold, respectively. One can, therefore, become oblivious to temperature, as in the saying, "Heat is also cool when one is in a mindless state." This is what I mean by "obedience to nature."

Fearing death, disliking discomfort, lamenting calamities, and complaining of that which one cannot control are all natural human responses and emotions. These are as natural as water flowing to a lower latitude. Also, one gets heaviness in the head after oversleeping, discomfort in the stomach after overeating, and heart palpitations when startled. These are also governed by nature's laws and cannot be exempted from the nature of causality. These phenomena cannot be manipulated to conveniently suit one's wishes. Therefore, one need only to obey nature.

The Opposing Function of Mind

Among humans' psychological activities, there is a phenomenon called the "opposing function," that is, the function of counterbalancing or self-harmonizing. The opposing function

operates much like the movement of muscles. For example, the flexor muscle and the extensor muscle of the upper arm are called the opposing arm muscles. These arm muscles, when the arm is bent or stretched, work harmoniously and adjust their tension to create smooth movements.

Without this opposing muscle function, one's movements would be like that of a mechanical doll. When the muscles on both sides tense concurrently, the arm becomes tight and immobilized. When such muscles become over stimulated, they start shaking, develop spasms, and exhibit other reactions. When the muscles of one side become paralyzed or tightened, the arm will stiffen and remain in the same bent or stretched position. The mental function is understood in a similar manner.

Examples of the psychological opposing or balancing function are as follows: when one develops a fear, the opposing wish to not fear emerges; when one is showered with compliments, one surely thinks of things about her or himself that are undeserving of another's praise; when a person is rich, s/he worries about becoming poor; and when one desires to buy something, one also thinks of its wasteful nature. When a person goes out the front door, s/he looks at the door to see if it is closed. When someone hits a nail with a hammer, s/he uses both strong and weak muscle forces. These opposing and self-inhibitory processes are natural phenomena of human functioning. Neither the opposing function of the mind nor that of muscular movements is at the service of willful manipulation.

If a client's opposing function is deficient, then s/he develops uninhibited, impulsive behaviors as exhibited by infants and those with intellectual disabilities. When this function is paralyzed or slackened, a client may exhibit unmonitored and impudent statements and behaviors as shown by extreme drug or alcohol abuse, or certain types of psychotic disorders. However, when the self-inhibitory part of this function becomes too strong, one loses spontaneity in speech and action, as seen among depressed clients.

This also applies to people diagnosed with schizophrenia (catatonic type) when they develop mental agitation or delirium. Such phenomena are comparable to the alternate rigid cramping of muscles. The various sufferings and loss of spontaneity are due to an exaggerated tension between desires and inhibitions.

What Freud calls "repression" is also a phenomenon of the psychologically opposing function. For example, the opposing function is mobilized when sexual desire is accompanied by the thought that it is immoral and antisocial to have such a desire. Yet, it is normal that the sexual desire is different from other desires, such as the desire for food. Sexual desire is accompanied by a self-inhibiting response because of the socializing contexts in which people live, even though this is not necessarily the case with other animals. Therefore, we encounter various complex problems in living our lives as humans.

Freud (1896b) explains that hysteria and other neuroses are caused by the mechanism of repression of the sexual drive. Aside from a discussion of his strained interpretations, I believe that the cause of neurosis is not limited to the repression of the sexual drive. Rather, it is caused by the desire for life (*sei-no yokubō*) and the natural fear of death. The opposing function of sexual inhibition is a natural phenomenon that exists in all humans. Therefore, such a function of mental opposition can help therapists understand more clearly how, when, where, and in what kind of relationships inhibition operates in children, those with intellectual disabilities, and those with hysteria, *shinkeishitsu*, and other psychological disorders.

Some scholars explain the pathology of shoplifting by the term *split personality*. However, shoplifting can be explained by the mental opposition between the desire to obtain something and the awareness that stealing is an antisocial act. A person shoplifts for various reasons. For instance, one with hysteria behaves from the mental confusion that occurs during heightened emotion when one

desires something; or one with an intellectual disability may act out of undeveloped inhibitions. Those with *shinkeishitsu* develop an obsessional fear of stealing due to an inner conflict arising from the psychological opposing function. If a therapist makes a diagnosis of split personality in a boy who exhibits antisocial behaviors, then s/he contends that the boy is acting by his first personality when he understands moral teachings and refrains from stealing. When the boy exhibits impulsive behaviors, he is acting by his alternate personality. And when he regrets his behavior, he is considered to have returned to his first personality. Such explanations, however, only becloud the actual psychological meaning of stimulus or drive.

When the first impact of a stimulus or impulse in the mind is strong, the self-inhibitory or fear-avoiding reaction is correspondingly very strong. Therefore, a person's torment can become increasingly stronger when the "contradiction by ideas" is operating, particularly in the presence of other complicated psychological conditions.

The opposing function is also manifested in a client's attempt to persevere when s/he wants something or feels scared; it may also occur in the various ways s/he denies desire. A person's denial of desire creates complicated inner conflicts regarding life problems. The degree to which the opposing function operates in a person is part of her or his natural human emotional process and reflects her or his level of psychological development.

Choice of Circumstance

The contradiction by ideas will diminish as one accepts the feelings of coldness, pain, fear, or agony as they are and does not use artificial and cumbersome tricks to eliminate these feelings. To accept one's feelings as they are implies obedience to nature, which is the absolute obedience to facts or truth.

Such an obedience to nature is the subjective attitude to be developed and fostered in clients through therapy. This

attitude is necessary for therapists to adopt when applying my therapy, despite the fact that clients try to obtain an ideal state of mind. The methods and the conditions that assist clients to develop this attitude are quite a different matter. If clients contrive ways to obey nature or endeavor to achieve a "proper" attitude by themselves, then their activities are no longer natural. By contriving or endeavoring, one attempts to treat oneself objectively as a third person and subsequently ignores her or his real self. Therefore, what is required to achieve the natural psychological attitude is simply the choosing of external situations or circumstances. For example, one can make a firm resolution that surpasses life and death concerns only when one cuts off one's avenues of retreat. Similarly, it is not until a person experiences complete solitude that s/he realizes that others cannot be relied upon for sympathy or assistance. It is self-deceptive to imagine an extreme situation, or to speak about the importance of independence and self-reliance simply from one's intellect. One cannot obtain true courage or take determined actions only through imagination and discussion. This is more fully explained when I discuss my therapy for acute stress disorders.

Consider the following case that serves to represent this obedience to nature. A client complained of poor memory and comprehension. He stated that it was causing him great disappointment and pain and believed his symptoms were evidence of his declining brain function. When I asked him whether he had ever felt disappointment or pain with regard to his eyesight (nearsightedness), which is clearly a pathological abnormality, he replied that he had never felt this way. In replying so, he revealed his obedience to nature. He was ready to accept the inconvenience and annoyance of nearsightedness as integral to this condition. In contrast, he struggled to recover from a suspected decline of his brain function without seeking a medical evaluation to determine if it were an actual brain disease or definite abnormality. His agony and subsequent inner conflict arose from his anxious drive to fulfill his desire. However, theoretical persuasion is not always useful in treating clients.