Clarence A. Taylor



The Anti-Recidivist Booklet 21st Century

...YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THIS TIME

THE ANTI-RECIDIVIST BOOKLET

(Combat Repeat Offenderism)

Part One:

C. Anthony Taylor

- FOREWORD -

This Booklet is written to address a class of juvenile delinquents and adult offenders that society may never address the needs of. It is for those who want to change and who have struggled to change, but been unable to to their own bewilderment and disappointment.

I call this class the Compulsive Offender Class. They are individuals who began committing unlawful acts during or before teenhood, and who – despite repeated episodes of incarceration – continue to commit crimes, do time, get out and commit more crimes even though they don't want to be criminal and may dislike themselves for being, but feel helpless toward whatever emotional and psychological forces make them that way.

I call it compulsive offenderism because it is against the conscious will that they act as they do. If they were free to choose in the normal sense of the word then they know as well as I that they would have stopped the cycle of crime and imprisonment already. The problem has partly been that they have never really understood that they were not acting out of free rational choice. And they futilely have always accused themselves of choosing the wrong path and people. But where have all the self-accusations and self-criticism gotten them? Are you still doing the same old things? Are you worried that when you get out you'll probably be back? Then this booklet is for you.

It is written for those society wrote off without ever asking a question as simple as why, and then when you probably would have answered, "I don't know," as a child or young teen – saw therein an indication that unconscious compulsions were at work.

- PSEUDO-SOLUTIONS -

A lot of things that work to change the thinking and behavior of other offenders don't work for the compulsive offender. They are therefore pseudo-solutions to his problems, even though he pursues them with feelings of sincerity. For example: Vocations, religions, G.E.D., even some college. While these achievements may change the lives of some offenders who are not compulsive in their criminality, the compulsive offender must achieve something much greater. He must achieve the inner power of free choice and self-determination, both of which are sadly lacking in his character, and of which he may not even be aware, nor others who observe the individual.

A pseudo-solution is a solution that appears to be the answer to a problem, (such as criminality for example), but eventually proves not to be. What makes so many conventional achievements "pseudo-solutions" to the compulsive offender is that the root of his problem does not rest in the absence of conventional goal achievements, but in the obstruction of healthy emotional and psychological fulfilment, such as self-acceptance, self-esteem, self-knowledge, and self-confidence. He may appear to have all these basic psychic necessities on the surface, but if they're deficient in the unconscious then most of his constructive desires and efforts will be undermined.

In order to function despite an absence, or severe deficit in, the basic psychic necessities – a person must develop some means of coping with the world around him and the tormenting conditions within him as though he is a typically average person. This means of coping, in general, (and from what I gather from personal experience with the Psycho-Analytic theories of Karen Horney, M.D.), is the development and maintenance of a neurotic pride system. I'll just say pride from here forth. The pride is not the product of some conscious decision, but the end result after years of suffering and emotional-psychological torment from the basic-needs deficit within. The Pride becomes a knight in shining armor in the literal sense. And anyone who attempts to penetrate that armor will become the target of a compulsive, hostile, counter attack. The neurotically compulsive repeat offender (or any neurotic for that matter) has two courses: (1) Sustain the Pride or (2) be plunged into the tormenting emotional and psychological abyss that the Pride (knight in shining armor) protects him or her from.

For the compulsive repeat-offender the scenario is very real. He commits criminal acts over and over again because the objective of the crime operates as a pseudo-solution to the absence of, or severe deficiency, in his basic psychic needs fulfilment. When I say basic psychic I mean mental and emotional, (psycho-social needs).

Almost everything in this condition of compulsive criminality exists as part of a self-perpetuating, vicious cycle that the individual himself is actually overwhelmed by. He is a slave to the unconscious forces that drive him, as well as to the Pride that he mistakenly thinks can free him from those forces of enslavement, vulnerability, and self-hate.

The self-perpetuating, vicious cycle may go something like this:

At some earlier point in life the conditions of his or her relationships robbed the individual of self-esteem. This lack of self-esteem undermined the development of self-confidence, which in turn thwarted genuine efforts toward achievement, which denied feelings of self-worth. Eventually, these reinforced one another until self-contempt and self-hatred developed, both of which had to be repressed, and hence the Pride System comes to the desperate, artificial rescue.

Each of the psychic necessities mentioned above are indispensable from the functioning and well-being of a person. They must be fulfilled healthily or be pathologically compensated for. This

means that where healthy fulfilment is not attained, pathological fulfilment will be pursued. However, the pathological fulfilment is always temporary and insufficient, and that is the second dynamic of its compulsive nature, it cannot render real and lasting fulfilment or satisfaction.

Example: We take an individual who is void or deficient in all the psychic necessities. A tormenting lack of self-worth looms in the forefront of his psychic assailants. Within the context of society's cultural values, money becomes the pseudo-solution (compensation) for his lack of feelings of self-worth. The possession of it gives him a sense of worth and prestige in the eyes of others. Without money he fears that he will be perceived by others as he unconsciously perceives himself – as meaningless and worthless. His means of frequently possessing money is through crime, hence, his criminality becomes compulsive because he is driven to maintain the artificial structure of self-worth and prestige that he has built around money. Without money he can feel no value or worth at all in himself, nor perceive how others could, so it is these feelings that must be avoided at all cost.

What is not understood is that the pattern of thought that compels his actions and reactions is unconscious. He is not able to consciously admit that he hates and resents who he is, that he has no self-esteem or self-confidence. He cannot consciously admit that he feels meaningless and is out of control. Therefore, he can't even begin to really see the causes and depth influences of his conduct and attitude in life.

(Each individual must identify his own pseudo-solutions to basic psychic needs in relation to the nature of his own compulsive criminality.) Or any other compulsive behavior.

- THE PRIDE SYSTEM -

In the theory of advanced psycho-analysis (far beyond the reactionary concepts of Freudian thought) the Pride System consist of the sum total of excuses, illusions, denials, rationalizations, and unconscious defence mechanisms employed to protect one from the psychic torment of self-hate and all that it involves. The Pride System is also a protector of the Idealized-self, which is itself a desperate counter to self-hatred. So, according to Karen Horney, M.D. (1885-1952), Pride and self-hate are one and the same. From experience I am more than inclined to agree.

The difference between neurotic pride and healthy pride is that neurotic pride is not based on substantial achievements or qualities within oneself. It is based on the all consuming need to glorify oneself, to raise oneself above one's real condition and status, not by actual work and achievement, but by imagination. The magical formula of 'I think, therefore, I am.'

I will tell you now that as long as the pride system operates as the mainstay of one's emotional and psychological sense of stability and confidence one will never be able to put forth

realistic efforts, because one will be oblivious to one's own real needs in terms of a conscious acceptance.

What this means is that in order to meet your real needs you must begin to see yourself realistically, and that means decreasing your degree of, and dependence on, neurotic pride.

A firmly entrenched pride system generally functions independent of your conscious will. In fact, it can compel you to act and react in many ways that aren't in your best interest, and then you condemn and criticize yourself for having done so. This, in itself, becomes a self-depreciating cycle.

In order to weaken the pride system you must simultaneously decrease the condition of self-hate, otherwise the pride system will simply switch from one compulsive expression to another. This process begins by realizing that self-esteem is solely dependent on your relationship with yourself. It is not dependent on others or how they think and feel about you. No one else can add to or take away your self-esteem. If, at an unconscious level, you hate yourself then you have greatly over exaggerated your faults, feelings of inadequacy, weakness, etc. Just as some people imagine themselves to be more than they are, others imagine themselves to be less. In general, both over exaggerated conditions exist in the same (one) person. For example, one person driven to unrealistically see him or herself as more than their actual condition and achievements show, must at the same time be greatly undermining themselves unconsciously. One has to struggle to get back to middle ground (so to speak) where one is not unrealistically elevated or submerged, but standing face to face with the reality of his or her life.

Unlike self-esteem, self-confidence arises from one's successful exercise of his intellectual, creative, and physical powers. You must do to achieve and you must achieve to build confidence.

Since neurotic pride is a pseudo-solution to self-confidence not being in the character structure, you need to be careful about the possible illusion of having self-confidence. False confidence always expresses itself as anxiety and frustration when put to the test because it is an illusion created within the pride system. Real confidence rest on a solid foundation of effort and achievement, thereby giving one the belief that future success is possible.

If you took a self-evaluation survey of the prison population over 80% of the people would check the squares that say: I love myself, or like myself, and yes, I have a lot of confidence and self-esteem.

Well, the national statistics on recidivism begs to differ in numbers. If there's a 65%-75% rate of repeat offences and re-imprisonment, then how can it be true that 80% or more of repeat offenders have confidence and like themselves? In fact, being compulsive caught up in a cycle of crime and imprisonment tends to unconsciously make one self-condemning, self-hating, and void of real confidence even more. There is a point where repeated failure at trying to so-called, 'go straight,' begins to influence a trend toward resignation. This means that a compulsive criminal

starts entertaining the idea that maybe the condition of his life is the manifestation of predestination. Nothing could be further from the truth, but his repeated efforts proving futile at conquering the compulsive criminal mentality can make him begin to think so. He is not aware of the role that unconscious forces play in his compulsive behavior. He is not aware that in order to overcome his compulsive criminal mentality, he must uproot the conditions within himself that perpetuate it, and for the majority sheer will-power, religion, vocations, and academics won't get the job done.

I've seen people who've earned college degrees, been religious devotees, written a book, taught advanced mathematics while in prison – go home and return for new offences. It isn't always what you do with yourself, but what you undo within yourself that uproots the condition of the compulsive criminal mentality.

If you are one of those people sitting in a prison cell right now after having already served two, three, or however many other terms of incarceration as a juvenile and/or adult, and you are still castigating yourself under the causative guise of 'simply' having made another mistake or bad decision, what are you going to say the next time? Get it in your head that you aren't so stupid that you'd keep coming back over and over again if you were really free to choose otherwise. Admit that you have been enslaved by the condition of compulsive criminality, then begin the long, hard process of uprooting that condition within yourself.

- THE REAL SOLUTION -

Understand, first and foremost, that because of its defensive-value the pride system is an autonomic system, and because of this it will resist just about any effort you make toward real growth and the dismantling of it. With each step along the way you must not only muster the strength to rebel against the pride system, but sustain faith in your ability to endure and conquer it.

In challenging the pride system you are actually embarking on a journey to war. A war within yourself. And unless you stand up and fight at every challenge, despite feelings of vulnerability, fear, helplessness, etc. – the autonomous pride will defeat you.

For most people the word unconscious is vague and undefined. It is a mysterious thing that they simply cannot grasp. For most of my life I heard the word and read about it in books, but couldn't really grasp the reality of it myself, even though I was profoundly driven by its content. I didn't really grasp the meaning of the unconscious until I began the psycho-analytic techniques of self-analysis. Writing down childhood experiences as accurate and honestly as possible. Allowing myself to feel what I felt from the experiences and even to feel what I had repressed from them. Hurt, anger, resentment, rage. One has to bear in mind through the pain of it all that feelings can hurt, but they can't kill. However, the compulsive behaviors that repressed feelings compel us to act out can kill, as well as destroy our lives in several other ways.

Which is the wiser choice: (1) To temporarily feel confused, lost, hurt, vulnerable, unstable, afraid – with the chance to rebuild and end your compulsive criminality and cycle of imprisonment or (2) To continue trying not to face yourself by using pseudo-solutions, and therefore remaining a slave and victim of the same old patterns of thought and behavior?

You have a choice. You can continue to suffer needlessly for who knows how much longer, years, decades, a lifetime; or you can suffer for an intense, brief period for a purpose. Either way there's going to be suffering – so why not get something out of it.

Anytime basic psychic needs are unfulfilled or deficient in the character it is a painful condition. How much depends on the individual and his personal life history. You have to take a clear, honest, and level look at yourself and your life to acknowledge what basic needs you need to work at fulfilling. If you do not do this then the power of your repressed basic needs will compel you toward artificial or pathological expression of them.

- THE UNCONSCIOUS (subconscious) -

The unconscious mind is an area that we can access through complete, unreserved expression and bring things up from, but it's not an area that we can control and edit like the conscious. Therefore, any feelings, anxieties or fears that we push into the unconscious are out of our reach in terms of turning them off and on or regulating them. In the unconscious they generally become our master, and while we are hardly aware of their true power, they compel us to act in ways that we often feel unable to control or understand.

While these feelings, anxieties, and fears that we have repressed in order to cope with life lurk like tyrants in the subconscious, they torment our conscious lives with all sorts of compulsive behavior, depending on who we are. Some people feel driven to eat themselves into obesity and poor health. Others feel driven to drink to the point of alcoholism – Others helplessly driven to use narcotics, or commit crimes for something. There are many forms of behavior that are destructive to our lives, yet we may feel unable to stop the behavior. But – what really keeps us from stopping or controlling these self-destructive behaviors is the fact that for the most part we refuse to become conscious of the repressed (hidden) feelings that influence them.

As long as they are repressed they have pathological control over us. But when we develop the strength to consciously feel and experience them – we have the opportunity to take control and do what we want with them. The point is not to avoid them, but to face them in order to transform them, thereby uprooting the conditions that bring our self-defeating attitudes and behavior into being, including compulsive criminality.

- CONCLUTION - Part One

It is up to each individual who has had difficulty understanding the causes of his problems in the past and now – to do an honest self-evaluation of himself and his life. To pinpoint and set upon a real, constructive path to overcoming his internal and external difficulties. This begins by first accepting yourself as worthy of any and all effort you can put forward to overcome the compulsive criminal mentality and any other form of reactionary, compulsive behavior.

In the words of an ancient Japanese philosopher: "*The test of a real soldier is to conquer himself.*" Of course, we can take for granted that he didn't mean the constructive, positive self.

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PART TWO: THE JUVENILE DELINQUENT

Anti-Recidivist Work For Parents

The repeat juvenile delinquent is inevitably destined to become the repeat adult offender if special intervention doesn't change the course of his or her development and, therefore, life. What I mean by special intervention is that the problems must be recognized as the symptoms of unfulfilled or deficient development of basic human needs. Those needs mentioned in the first section. The need to feel worthy, acceptable, lovable, wanted. The need to have self-esteem, confidence, etc. When children are deficient in their basic fulfilment of human needs – they too employ repression, denial, etc. to cope with life, to continue to function as best they can as typical human beings while avoiding the pain within themselves.

It is during this period of their lives that subconscious driving forces begin to take root. In other words, their conscious freedom of choice and self-determination become impaired by rigid, compulsive behavior. Almost everything they do is done as a reaction to some experience or circumstance. They have little power to act on life.

If you ask the repeat juvenile delinquent why he or she commits crimes, most likely the answer will be: "I don't know." Take a moment to think about that: "I don't know." Well, the reason he or she doesn't know is because the root of the behavior or complicity in the behavior is subconscious. In the child's conscious mind he or she is against the criminal act committed. He or she knows it is wrong and feels the shame and guilt of it all. But he or she still does not understand or have the power to repel the subconscious influences toward crime or other forms of sociopathic behavior. If grown men and women can't understand why they are repeat offenders, how can we expect children to?

Parents need to understand that repeat juvenile delinquency is just as compulsive at age 13, 14, 15, as it is in adult offenders at age 21, 30, or 45. The unconscious knows no sense of time, so there's no such thing as chronologically aging out of sociopathic thinking and behavior. The character conditions that sustain them must be uprooted. This leads us to the question of how to successfully intervene in juvenile delinquency before the child reaches adulthood.

- PARENTAL FOCUS -

The solution to juvenile delinquency before the child reaches adulthood begins with the parent(s) honestly trying to identify the basic psychic needs that are disturbed in the child's life. This may involve needs that the parent(s) themselves are unwittingly responsible for depriving the child of, therefore, the parent(s) may find it difficult to face the truth about their contribution to the child's delinquency and attitude.

When it comes to these type of issues parents shouldn't take too much for granted. For example, parents may think that because they love the child and take care of material provisions – that the child automatically feels loved. This may not be true at all. And it is possible that things outside the parent-child relationship could inhibit a child's ability to feel lovable to anyone. A parent always needs to bear in mind when delinquent or criminal behavior is manifest, that the less a child or youth is healthily nurtured in basic emotional and psychological needs, then the more prone he or she is to become compulsively delinquent or criminal because of the drive to artificially compensate for basic need deficits.

Parent(s) also need to question their children more about the condition of their relationships with other children and youth. How does a certain peer or person that your child regularly encounters in school effect your child's attitude toward him or herself? How does it effect your child's attitude toward other people in general? Without questioning these type of relationship conditions unproductive personality traits could be given free rein to develop in your child. One should never underestimate the primary role of human relationships in the type of personalities that people ultimately develop.

If a parent(s) spends too little time with or expresses no noticeable affection toward a child, then a child could develop an affection-deficit. The need for affection is a basic human need that can't be divorced from one's sense of wholeness and acceptableness. And any time a basic human need is unfulfilled, the pain of absence causes the mind to repress the need. The problem with this is that repression only magnifies the need to irrational proportions.

So the child, who was deprived of affection from the parents, tries to repress the need for affection and develops the unconscious belief that he/she is unlovable. This unconscious belief must be proven untrue, so the feelings responsible for it compel the child (sometimes throughout the whole lifespan) to artificially and sometimes desperately seek affection. (Which may translate into acceptance, love, or any range in between).

Some children steal or commit other group participation crimes because they fear rejection if they go against the group. To fear rejection is to fear a loss of acceptance or affection in another sense. There are other children who purposely steal to get attention because in their minds the attention functions as artificial affection in the same way that false pride serves the function of artificial confidence in part one. What people in general should understand is that artificial affection to a child or youth in almost any form or fashion is preferable to the anguish and torment of no affection at all. This holds true for most adults too.

But an affection-deficit is only one deficit among basic psychic needs that can easily result in unconstructive, compulsive behavior. All basic need deficits tend to create and perpetuate a self-debilitating and self- depreciating subconscious belief system. This belief system can travel within the psyche of an individual from childhood to old age. It can even evade countless efforts on the part of the individual to change it. This is because its influence on behavior can't be changed until its condition as a subconscious reality is uprooted.

If parents make an honest (objective) evaluation of the type of delinquent or criminal behavior their child or youth is committing, they can identify the emotional needs that behavior is geared toward artificially fulfilling, then intervene with constructive, healthy direction toward fulfilment of the need in a genuine way.

There is a much greater chance at preventing or changing a child's compulsive delinquent or criminal behavior than there will ever be if that person reaches adulthood unchanged. It is mainly up to the parents to save the lives of their children from compulsive adult criminality and recidivism. You may be his or her only chance, if this has given you the insight to give your child one. Confronting the repressed emotional-deficit needs of your child or youth requires that you have an enduring patience and understanding that internal changes aren't easily visible on the surface. You also need to constantly bear in mind that healthy nurturing takes years of consistency and can not be achieved through irregular, half-hearted attempts to communicate. "I'll tell you what I think

is wrong this month, and check back with you next month to see if you've changed." It doesn't work that way. You have to understand every day destructive emotional/psychological feelings and thoughts are working on your child's personality, and they both are undermining his or her self-esteem, self-confidence, efforts to achieve, freedom of choice capacity as we know it in the normal sense, and self-determination. The productive (internal) condition of all of these words with self as a prefix basically depends on one's relationship with oneself being, first and foremost, a meaningful and optimistic experience. If life for your child is predominantly experienced as unmeaningful and pessimistic it may not even be obvious to you after his or her first or second arrest, or expression of pathological tendencies, because you are not aware of the influences of subconscious (unconscious) emotional /psychological attitudes.

If your child or youth is arrested twice for illegal activity or repeatedly exhibits sociopathic behavior, it is time to seek insight into the subconscious and to identify unfulfilled basic needs. Failure to do so leave your child at the mercy of powerful subconscious forces that he or she may never understand, even in need of saving their lives from compulsive criminality.

- AFTERWORDS -

Nothing written in part one or two of the foregoing booklet is the product of mere intellectual study, or philosophical belief. I had to learn these things through years of consistent emotional and psychological struggle while always maintaining the faith that no matter how weak and unstable the process made me feel at times – if I stuck with the self-analysis wholeheartedly – in the end I would come out stronger and more knowledgeable about the reality of myself and others in a similar situation.

It is an extremely difficult task to become conscious of and confront one's repressed psychic contents, no matter how desperately one needs to. Most people would rather stick with the artificial relief of pseudo-solutions than to feel the pain, insecurity, doubt, self-hatred, etc. hidden within the depths of themselves. They instinctively know – metaphorically speaking – that the unconscious is like the pitch-dark woods where all the monsters and torturers lie waiting for us to journey through. What has to be acknowledged for the most part is that – as long as one is afraid to travel through the woods he or she may never find the way home. He or she may forever remain a wanderer, alienated from the most basic powers and freedoms of the human soul. Alienated from the true will and knowledge of self.

I am not a doctor or a psychologist. I am merely a man that has struggled within myself and been fortunate enough to gain a meaningful understanding of my experiences. It is not given that everyone understands their experiences in life. For most of my years I was really unable to myself.

I dedicate this writing to all the parents who need to save their children; all the adults who still suffer and want freedom from the compulsive criminality that has haunted them since childhood, and all the victims who have the humanism to forgive and work toward trying to decrease the problem of crime in their own way. Free the Mind.

Sincerely. C. Anthony Taylor

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- The difference between a sociopath and a psychopath is that the sociopath, while in the "habit" of committing crimes, ultimately wishes from a moral standpoint that he were not doing so.
- It's a tragic reality that most compulsive offenders will never change because they are too weak to confront themselves even though given insight and direction of how to approach the problem. This writing will influence some, though, and motivate them to change their characters and lives as adults. The statistics of hope are much greater for juvenile delinquents if parents persevere, which they must if they want their children to lead constructive lives once again.

For the compulsive criminal offender, crime is a two edged sword, whether society at large wishes to acknowledge the truth or not. Every crime and arrest intensifies the rejection, contempt, and hatred he feels toward himself, and then these feelings intensify his compulsiveness even more. It is another vicious cycle that creates more victims and further debases his humanity. Feeling sorry for his crimes is not a solution. He carries tons of remorse. But sooner or later the remorse becomes unbearable and his mind must automatically evade such feelings to protect him from the torment of destructive, instead of constructive, guilt and shame.

In order for guilt, shame, remorse, and feeling sorry to really mean something and have a productive effect on the compulsive offender's psyche, he must nurture his real human needs and decrease the condition of psycho-emotional repression within himself. By these steps he/she will be able to better embrace his or her own humanity and, therefore, place greater active value on that of others in society.

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