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Quotes about Psychoanalysis

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Psychoanalysis pretends to investigate the Unconscious. The Unconscious by definition is what you are not conscious of. But the Analysts already know what's in it -- they should, because they put it all in beforehand.

- Bellow, Saul

The human mind is indeed a cave swarming with strange forms of life, most of them unconscious and unilluminated. Unless we can understand something as to how the motives that issue from this obscurity are generated, we can hardly hope to foresee or control them.

- Cooley, Charles Horton

Psychoanalysis can unravel some of the forms of madness; it remains a stranger to the sovereign enterprise of unreason. It can neither limit nor transcribe, nor most certainly explain, what is essential in this enterprise.

- Foucault, Michel

The analytic psychotherapist thus has a threefold battle to wage -- in his own mind against the forces which seek to drag him down from the analytic level; outside the analysis, against opponents who dispute the importance he attaches to the sexual instinctual forces and hinder him from making use of them in his scientific technique; and inside the analysis, against his patients, who at first behave like opponents but later on reveal the

overvaluation of sexual life which dominates them, and who try to make him captive to their socially untamed passion.

- Freud, Sigmund

Analysis does not set out to make pathological reactions impossible, but to give the patient's ego freedom to decide one way or another.

- Freud, Sigmund

Psychoanalysis cannot be considered a method of education if by education we mean the topiary art of clipping a tree into a beautiful artificial shape. But those who have a higher conception of education will prize most the method of cultivating a tree so that it fulfils to perfection its own natural conditions of growth.

- Jung, Carl

The psychoanalysts pick our dreams as if they were our pockets.

- Kraus, Karl

The ultimate aim of psychoanalysis is to attribute art to mental weakness, and then to trace the weakness back to the point where, according to analytic dogma, it originated -- namely, the lavatory.

- Kraus, Karl

Considered in its entirety, psychoanalysis won't do. It's an end product, moreover, like a dinosaur or a zeppelin; no better theory can ever be erected on its ruins, which will remain

for ever one of the saddest and strangest of all landmarks in the history of twentieth-century thought.

- Medawar, Sir Peter

Analysis brings no curative powers in its train; it merely makes us conscious of the existence of an evil, which, oddly enough, is consciousness.

- Miller, Henry

Psychoanalysis is an attempt to examine a person's self-justifications. Hence it can be undertaken only with the patient's cooperation and can succeed only when the patient has something to gain by abandoning or modifying his system of self-justification.

- Szasz, Thomas

Aided and abetted by corrupt analysts, patients who have nothing better to do with their lives often use the psychoanalytic situation to transform insignificant childhood hurts into private shrines at which they worship unceasingly the enormity of the offenses committed against them. This solution is immensely flattering to the patients -- as are all forms of unmerited self-aggrandizement; it is immensely profitable for the analysts -- as are all forms pandering to people's vanity; and it is often immensely unpleasant for nearly everyone else in the patient's life.

- Szasz, Thomas

The more one analyses people, the more all reasons for analysis disappear. Sooner or later one comes to that dreadful universal thing called human nature.

- Wilde, Oscar



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