

*Withdrawn or Aggressive Behavior:* In either case the danger signal has been hoisted. However, we should not overlook the very important fact that aggressive behavior within limits is a valuable ingredient in personality development. Delinquent behavior often stems from misdirected or unchallenged aggressiveness which needs to be understood both in terms of what the aggression means to the child himself and how it can be re-directed into socially acceptable channels.

*Social Relationship:* This factor may in a sense only be a refinement of the previous one but it is important enough to warrant special mention. It is a well-known fact that emotional disturbances can block learning. Inability to form meaningful social relationships is often the result of emotional disturbance and hence a teacher who has an eye and an ear which is sensitive to a child's "rapport" with classmates gains a further insight into the problem of unsatisfactory social adjustment.

The years between 12 and 17 have been very aptly described as the "age of conflict" and it will be well worth our while to consider why this is so.

Of all the human beings on this earth the adolescents seem hardest for us to understand. They are certainly the ones that most often drive us to distraction and complete despair. They are harder to understand than the mind of a woman, and that covers a lot of ground! What, then are some of the problems and characteristics of this age group?

1. Perhaps the most distinguishing characteristic of adolescents is their rebelliousness, their hostility or resentment against the authority of their parents and teachers, which they once accepted without question. Parents often have great difficulty in giving up the role of authoritarian adults who have for so long attended to their children's physical needs and forbidden and comforted them for so many years. So often, unfortunately, parents interpret this rebellious behavior as the worst possible kind of ingratitude

and say so in the oft repeated phrase "after all I've done for you!" instead of recognizing it as part of the growing up process.

2. This typical reaction on the part of their parents leads us to a second general characteristic of adolescents, a more or less continual state of anxiety, insecurity and confusion. They are worried by this revolt from parental authority and not infrequently feel inwardly guilty and hence become uncertain and confused about their proper relationship with adults, impelled as they are on the one hand to exert their freedom and independence and anxious and confused on the other hand about the possible consequences. The confusion is confounded by the conflicting demands which face the adolescent. This morning the adolescent is told "you are old enough to know better, act your age" but tonight the same adolescent is told "you are not old enough to do that" and so between being exhorted to be responsible, to make decisions, to show sound judgment, and then being expected to be submissively obedient to parents and teachers as a dutiful son or daughter, or student, the adolescent is kept in a continual state of uncertainty and anxiety as he or she struggles to form a new image of self as an emerging man or woman.

3. Almost as a means of solace or refuge from the difficulties which these two characteristics present, a third characteristic of adolescents emerges; that of seeking reassurance from their own peers and a marked tendency to become snobbish, members of gangs, to discriminate and exclude others. This development is a good defensive mechanism which both relieves anxiety and reassures the adolescent that he or she really belongs—a basic need of all of us. Thus all adolescents have a feeling of strong loyalty and devotion to the group and they will do amazing things to belong to and win the approval of their peers.

4. In the struggle to escape from childhood and in the reluctance to face the