

Quotations: Sigmund Freud

- A belligerent state permits itself every such misdeed, every such act of violence, as would disgrace the individual.
- A certain degree of neurosis is of inestimable value as a drive, especially to a psychologist.
- A civilization which leaves so large a number of its participants unsatisfied and drives them into revolt neither has nor deserves the prospect of a lasting existence.
- A man should not strive to eliminate his complexes but to get into accord with them: they are legitimately what directs his conduct in the world.
- Analysis does not set out to make pathological reactions impossible, but to give the patient's ego freedom to decide one way or another.
- Anatomy is destiny.
- Being entirely honest with oneself is a good exercise.
- Children are completely egoistic; they feel their needs intensely and strive ruthlessly to satisfy them.
- Civilized society is perpetually menaced with disintegration through this primary hostility of men towards one another.
- Devout believers are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of certain neurotic illnesses; their acceptance of the universal neurosis spares them the task of constructing a personal one.
- Dreams are often most profound when they seem the most crazy.
- Every normal person, in fact, is only normal on the average. His ego approximates to that of the psychotic in some part or other and to a greater or lesser extent.
- Everywhere I go I find that a poet has been there before me.
- From error to error, one discovers the entire truth.
- He does not believe that does not live according to his belief.
- He that has eyes to see and ears to hear may convince himself that no mortal can keep a secret. If his lips are silent, he chatters with his fingertips; betrayal oozes out of him at every pore.
- I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father's protection.
- I have found little that is good about human beings on the whole. In my experience most of them are trash, no matter whether they publicly subscribe to this or that ethical doctrine or to none at all. That is something that you cannot say aloud, or perhaps even think.
- If a man has been his mother's undisputed darling he retains throughout life the triumphant feeling, the confidence in success, which not seldom brings actual success along with it.
- If you can't do it, give up!

- If youth knew; if age could.
- Illusions commend themselves to us because they save us pain and allow us to enjoy pleasure instead. We must therefore accept it without complaint when they sometimes collide with a bit of reality against which they are dashed to pieces.
- Incidentally, why was it that none of all the pious ever discovered psychoanalysis? Why did it have to wait for a completely godless Jew?
- It is impossible to overlook the extent to which civilization is built upon a renunciation of instinct.
- It might be said of psychoanalysis that if you give it your little finger it will soon have your whole hand.
- It would be very nice if there were a God who created the world and was a benevolent providence, and if there were a moral order in the universe and an after-life; but it is a very striking fact that all this is exactly as we are bound to wish it to be.
- Just as a cautious businessman avoids investing all his capital in one concern, so wisdom would probably admonish us also not to anticipate all our happiness from one quarter alone.
- Just as no one can be forced into belief, so no one can be forced into unbelief.
- Like the physical, the psychical is not necessarily in reality what it appears to us to be.
- Love and work... work and love, that's all there is.
- Man has, as it were, become a kind of prosthetic God. When he puts on all his auxiliary organs, he is truly magnificent; but those organs have not grown on him and they still give him much trouble at times.
- Men are more moral than they think and far more immoral than they can imagine.
- Men are strong only so long as they represent a strong idea. They become powerless when they oppose it.
- Most people do not really want freedom, because freedom involves responsibility, and most people are frightened of responsibility.
- Neurosis is the inability to tolerate ambiguity.
- Neurotics complain of their illness, but they make the most of it, and when it comes to talking it away from them they will defend it like a lioness her young.
- No one who, like me, conjures up the most evil of those half-tamed demons that inhabit the human breast, and seeks to wrestle with them, can expect to come through the struggle unscathed.
- Obviously one must hold oneself responsible for the evil impulses of one's dreams. In what other way can one deal with them? Unless the content of the dream rightly understood is inspired by alien spirits, it is part of my own being.
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- One is very crazy when in love.
- One might compare the relation of the ego to the id with that between a rider and his horse. The horse provides the locomotor energy, and the rider has the prerogative of determining the goal and of guiding the movements of his powerful mount towards it. But all too often in the relations between the ego and the id we find a picture of the less ideal situation in which the rider is obliged to guide his horse in the direction in which it itself wants to go.
- Opposition is not necessarily enmity; it is merely misused and made an occasion for enmity.
- Our knowledge of the historical worth of certain religious doctrines increases our respect for them, but does not invalidate our proposal that they should cease to be put forward as the reasons for the precepts of civilization. On the contrary! Those historical residues have helped us to view religious teachings, as it were, as neurotic relics, and we may now argue that the time has probably come, as it does in an analytic treatment, for replacing the effects of repression by the results of the rational operation of the intellect.
- Religion is an illusion and it derives its strength from the fact that it falls in with our instinctual desires.
- Religion is comparable to a childhood neurosis.
- Religion originates in the child's and young mankind's fears and need for help. It cannot be otherwise.
- Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar.
- The act of birth is the first experience of anxiety, and thus the source and prototype of the affect of anxiety.
- The conceptions I have summarized here I first put forward only tentatively, but in the course of time they have won such a hold over me that I can no longer think in any other way.
- The conscious mind may be compared to a fountain playing in the sun and falling back into the great subterranean pool of subconscious from which it rises.
- The doctor should be opaque to his patients and, like a mirror, should show them nothing but what is shown to him.
- The ego is not master in its own house.
- The first human who hurled an insult instead of a stone was the founder of civilization.
- The first requisite of civilization is that of justice.
- The goal of all life is death.
- The great question that has never been answered, and which I have not yet been able to answer, despite my thirty years of research into the feminine soul, is "What does a woman want?"
- The interpretation of dreams is the royal road to knowledge of the unconscious activities of the mind.

- The liberty of the individual is no gift of civilization. It was greatest before there was any civilization.
- The mind is like an iceberg, it floats with one-seventh of its bulk above water.
- The poor ego has a still harder time of it; it has to serve three harsh masters, and it has to do its best to reconcile the claims and demands of all three...The three tyrants are the external world, the superego, and the id.
- The psychical, whatever its nature may be, is itself unconscious.
- The psychoanalysis of neurotics has taught us to recognize the intimate connection between wetting the bed and the character trait of ambition.
- The tendency of aggression is an innate, independent, instinctual disposition in man... it constitutes the most powerful obstacle to culture.
- The voice of the intellect is a soft one, but it does not rest until it has gained a hearing.
- Thinking is an experimental dealing with small quantities of energy, just as a general moves miniature figures over a map before setting his troops in action.
- Time spent with cats is never wasted.
- We are certainly getting ahead; if I am Moses, then you are Joshua and will take possession of the promised land of psychiatry, which I shall only be able to glimpse from afar. Sigmund Freud, Letter to Carl Jung, January 17, 1909
- We are never so defenseless against suffering as when we love.
- We believe that civilization has been created under the pressure of the exigencies of life at the cost of satisfaction of the instincts.
- We have long observed that every neurosis has the result, and therefore probably the purpose, of forcing the patient out of real life, of alienating him from actuality.
- What a distressing contrast there is between the radiant intelligence of the child and the feeble mentality of the average adult.
- What progress we are making. In the Middle Ages they would have burned me. Now they are content with burning my books.
- What we call happiness in the strictest sense comes from the (preferably sudden) satisfaction of needs which have been dammed up to a high degree.
- Where id was, there ego shall be.
- Whoever loves becomes humble. Those who love have, so to speak, pawned a part of their narcissism.