

the differences between the guilt axis and the shame axis in personality that have been noted earlier. They are in no sense polar opposites. Both the guilt axis and the shame axis enter into the attitudes and behavior of most people, and often into the same situation. But there are for different persons different balances and stresses between the two, and it does matter whether one lives more in terms of one or of the other. The particular comparisons listed are only suggestive; no two persons would experience these contrasts in exactly the same way. The differences are presented in this way only for the sake of comparison; in experience shame and guilt are usually not so sharply separated.

*Guilt Axis*

Concerned with each separate, discrete act

Involves transgression of a specific code, violation of a specific taboo

Involves an additive process; advance to healthy personality by deleting wrong acts and substituting right ones for them

Involves competition, measurement on a scale, performing the acts prescribed as desirable

Exposure of a specific misdemeanor, with emphasis on to whom exposed; exposure of something that should be hidden in a closet

Concern about violation of social codes of cleanliness, politeness, and so on

*Shame Axis*

Concerned with the overall self

Involves falling short, failure to reach an ideal

Involves a total response that includes insight, something more than can be reached by addition

Involves acting in terms of the pervasive qualitative demands of oneself, more rigorous than external codes; each act partakes of the quality of the whole

Exposure of the quick of the self, most of all to oneself; exposure of something that can never be hidden in a closet, is in the depths of the earth or in the open sunlight

Concern about unalterable features of one's body, way of moving, clumsiness, and so on

*Guilt Axis—Continued*

Feeling of wrongdoing for a specific harmful act toward someone one loves

Being a good, loyal friend, husband, wife, parent

Trust built on the conception of no betrayal, no disloyal act, as a preliminary to giving affection

Feelings of anger, jealousy, meanness for certain socially recognized causes

Emphasis on decision-making; any decision is better than none

Feeling of guilt toward someone who has denounced one for adequate or inadequate cause

Emphasis on content of experience in work, leisure, personal relations

Surmounting of guilt leads to righteousness

*Shame Axis—Continued*

Feeling that one may have loved the wrong person, or may be inadequate for the person one loves

Having an overflowing feeling for friend, husband, wife, children which makes goodness and loyalty a part of the whole experience with no need for separate emphasis

Trust that is a process of discovery which gradually eliminates fear of exposure, which is not the result of an act of will but unfolds with the unfolding experience

Inwardly deep feelings of anger, jealousy, meanness in outwardly slight situations known to oneself only

Ability to live with some indecisiveness (multiple possibilities) even though it means living with some anxiety

Feeling of shame toward someone who trusts one if one is not meeting that trust

Emphasis on quality of experience, not only on content

Transcending of shame may lead to sense of identity, freedom

This comparison, as well as Erikson's analysis of stages of development, would seem to suggest again that a sense of identity cannot be reached along the guilt axis alone, that more is needed than discarding specific wrong acts and substituting specific right acts for them. Can confronting experiences of