

Freedom and its Discontents

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Abstract Content (EN)

Freedom is determined by the ideas of autonomy, self-legislation, willpower and spontaneity. Its emergence in psychosexual development seems to go hand in hand with the mental formation of a dialectical mental structure during the process of weaning. Although freedom is one of the highest human goods and, especially in states of war, can even take precedence over the value of life, its obverse is by no means without significance. Not least because of its largely antithetical position to security, but also under certain socio-cultural conditions, freedom can prove to be a burden, an imposition and a tyranny, that manifests itself in a variety of ways and in clinically relevant images. Freedom only attains its validity as self-empowerment, so that it can neither be bestowed nor given. This is followed by the other restriction, which is based on the power of heteronomous and unconscious factors. There is always something illusory about freedom, so that it is only ever given to us as a half-freedom. In this limited space, we encounter, among other things, the consumerist promises of unlimited freedom of choice, the self-deception of 'free choice of partner', the 'paradox of forced choice' or the oddness of 'Neurosenwahl'.