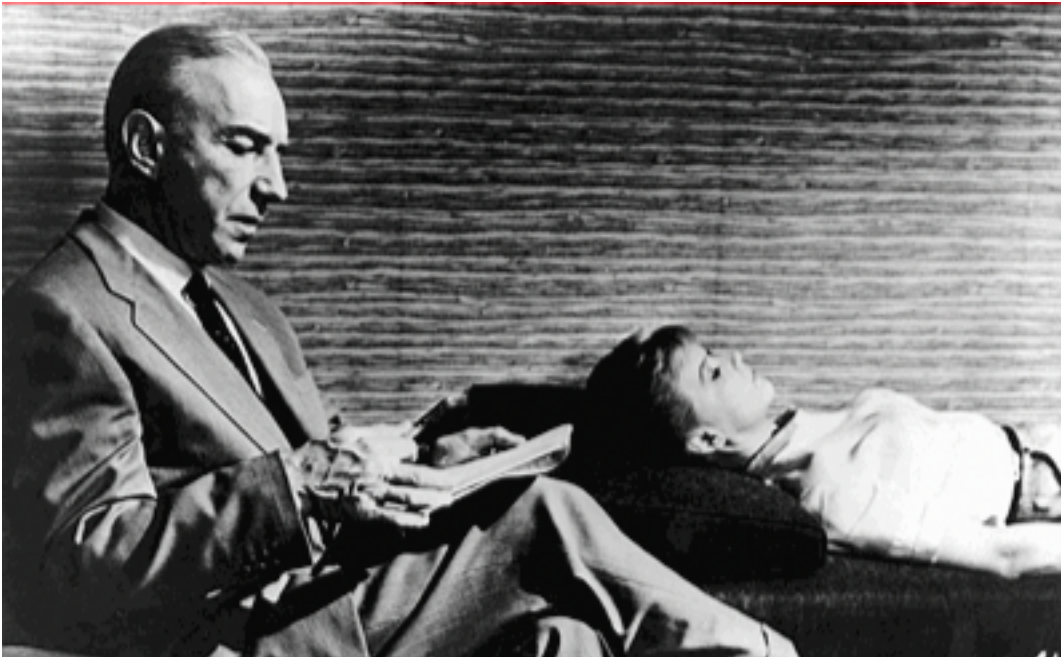


Repression of traumatic events



Sigmund Freud proposed that psychological disorders (especially neurosis) are caused by the traumatic events in the (early) childhood. These events were repressed, pushed away from the conscious mind to the unconscious and as repressed unconscious complexes result in the neurotic symptoms. In the process of psychoanalytic therapies, the repressed contents became aware of again and the symptoms at least partly disappear.

Since then, the belief on repressed trauma became a psychoanalytic dogma. Yet, the truth is that most neuroses are caused by personality trait labeled neuroticism and not to the single traumatic events. Freud himself claimed that neurosis can be due to both traumatic events and/or to “constitutional” factors, but his successors massively ignored this opinion.

Moreover, the psychoanalysts accepted a further dogma, namely that most traumatic events tend to be suppressed or repressed and so put into the unconscious. The truth is rather the opposite: the traumatic events are experiences that are most remembered by the majority of us. According to the scientific evidence, only a small part of traumatic events are really suppressed and even those more in disorders as posttraumatic stress disorder than in neurosis. There is no single scientifically proven case of neurosis that was undoubtedly caused by repressed “memories”.