Karen Horney

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Karen Horney

The birthdate of Karen Horney is Germany and her birthdate is mentioned as September 6, 1885, in Germany. Her parents were protestants, her father used to be a ship captain and he also got German citizenship, although he was a Norwegian. Her mother was of Dutch origin. She started her medical studies in the University of Freiburg. She initially moved to the University of Gottingen and later she transferred her degree to the University of Berlin; transferring and attending different universities was a common activity to complete a medical degree (HORNEY, 2000). After spending years in depression, she moved to Chicago and later to Brooklyn, which gave her opportunuty to meet and work with Sullivan and Erich, where they were her analyst friends. She also worked with the New School for Social Research and the New York Psychoanalytic Institute.

When Karen was in Brooklyn, she contributed to develop number of theories, linked with neurosis and personality. She developed these theories based on her experiences of psychotherapy. In 1937, the Neurotic Personality of Our Time was published, and this was a popular book by her. Being a psychoanalyst, her perspectives about neurosis were different. She was more interested in the study of neurosis and collected data for her study from patients. She believed that neurosis is a never-ending process that occurs periodically in an individual’s life. She believed that to understand the neurosis of a child, one has to understand the parental intentions towards their children, and their children are most likely to oppose their perceptions (Erel, 2019). Sometimes a child may have lesser feelings and emotional attachments towards their parents because of some events and factors. There is also a possibility that parents may not fulfill the emotional promises and they may fail to fulfill their demands. These events, according to Karen, may have impact on the mental states of children. According to her experience being a psychiatrist, she developed 10 neurotic needs which were based on her experiences that have to be required by all human beings to succeed in their life. She believed that these 10 neurotic needs were the individual's neurosis. The neurotic needs according to Henry include:

1. Humans need affection and approval to please others and they have to be liked by others too.
2. There is a need of a partner who will love an individual and that individual may also love back their partner.
3. Humans need societal recognition, status, and attention.
4. Individuals, apart from social status and recognition, also need a personal admiration to develop their inner and outer features, which have to be valued.
5. Individuals have to possess authoritative skills and they should have guts to control over others, while this will be admired by neurosis.
6. Individuals have to compete with people to succeed and to become a better human. Sometime they also have to act like a controlling power.
7. One needs to be independent and self-sufficient.
8. One has to be perfect and they have to ensure their well-being.
9. Individuals have to follow some difficult practices in their life as much as possible to become stronger

Based on her experiences, she also developed other theories like Feminist theory and also delivered lectures on this topic in Berlin. She presented the ideas and perspectives about women’s fear of actions. Her contributions to the field of psychology are based on her life experiences and events which she faced during her lifetime. She developed perspectives about gender issues specifically highlighting the issues of men and women in society based on their life experiences. Henry depicted the role of women in the society, particularly highlighting the role of mother, the mental stages through which she has to go through, and also reflected the impacts on the well-being of children (Cohen, 2001).

References

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