

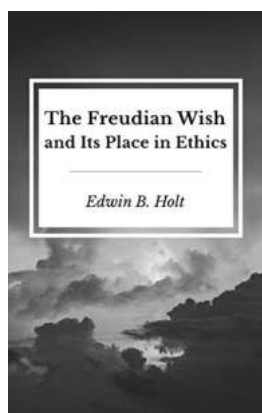
# The Freudian Wish And Its Place In Ethics

When it comes to understanding human behavior, Sigmund Freud remains one of the most influential figures in the field of psychology. His theories on the unconscious mind and the role of desires in shaping our actions continue to spark debates and offer valuable insights into the human psyche.

In this article, we will explore the concept of the Freudian wish and its relevance to ethics. We will delve into how our unconscious desires can influence our moral decisions and ethical judgments.

## The Freudian Wish: A Definition

According to Freud, a wish is an instinctual desire or impulse that arises from a person's unconscious mind. These wishes can be both conscious and unconscious, and they often reflect unconscious desires for pleasure or avoidance of pain.



## The Freudian Wish and Its Place in Ethics

by Edwin B. Holt (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

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Print length : 96 pages

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Freud believed that wishes play a crucial role in shaping human behavior. Our wishes, in conjunction with our moral values and societal norms, influence the choices we make and the actions we take.

## **Desires and Ethical Decision-Making**

When it comes to ethics, desires and wishes can significantly impact our decision-making process. Freud argued that our unconscious wishes can sometimes conflict with our conscious beliefs and moral values.

For example, let's say a person consciously believes in honesty and integrity, considering them to be important moral virtues. However, at an unconscious level, they may have a strong wish for personal gain or success, even if it means engaging in dishonest practices.

In such a scenario, the Freudian wish can create a moral dilemma. The conflict between conscious ethical values and unconscious desires can lead to internal struggles, ethical compromises, and potentially unethical actions.

## **The Role of the Unconscious in Ethics**

Freud's work emphasizes the significance of the unconscious mind in understanding human behavior, including ethical decision-making. He argued that our unconscious desires, often influenced by early childhood experiences and repressed memories, can shape our ethical frameworks.

When faced with a moral decision, our unconscious wishes can influence our perception of right and wrong. These unconscious desires may act as hidden motivators, guiding our ethical judgments and actions without our conscious awareness.

It is important to note that not all unconscious desires are inherently unethical. Our wishes are shaped by a complex interplay of various factors, including our upbringing, cultural norms, and personal experiences.

## **Unveiling the Unconscious: The Role of Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis, the therapeutic approach developed by Freud, aims to bring unconscious desires and wishes to the forefront of consciousness. By exploring the unconscious mind, individuals can gain a better understanding of their desires and their potential impact on ethical decision-making.

Through various techniques such as dream analysis, free association, and interpretation of slips of the tongue, psychoanalysis helps individuals uncover repressed wishes and conflicts. This newfound awareness can assist individuals in making more conscious and ethical choices.

## **Applying the Freudian Wish to Ethical Dilemmas**

The concept of the Freudian wish can serve as a valuable tool when facing ethical dilemmas. By acknowledging and exploring our unconscious desires, we can better understand the motivations behind our actions.

When confronted with a moral decision, individuals can reflect upon their wishes and assess whether they align with their conscious ethical values. Recognizing potential conflicts between conscious beliefs and unconscious desires can help individuals make more thoughtful, ethical choices.

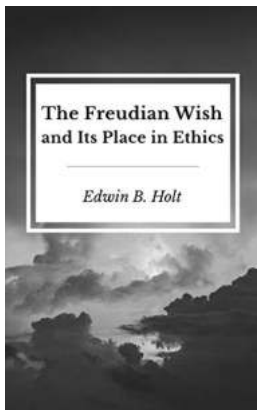
## **The Connection to Personal Development**

Understanding the Freudian wish can also aid in personal development and growth. By uncovering and addressing unconscious desires, individuals can work towards aligning their conscious values with their deeper motivations.

This introspective process allows individuals to become more self-aware and make conscious efforts to become more ethical in their decision-making. It can lead to personal growth, increased moral integrity, and the development of a more coherent ethical framework.

The Freudian wish plays a significant role in ethics by shaping our moral decision-making processes. By recognizing the influence of unconscious desires, we can better understand the complexities of ethical dilemmas and strive towards making more conscious, ethical choices.

Through psychoanalysis and personal introspection, individuals can uncover their unconscious wishes and work towards aligning them with conscious moral values. This journey of self-discovery and ethical growth paves the way for personal development and the creation of a more harmonious ethical framework.



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”A man’s conscious thoughts, feelings, and desires are determined by unconscious thoughts or ‘wishes’ which lie far deeper down, and which the upper,

conscious man knows nothing of. ... In fact, conscious thought is merely the surface foam of a sea where the real currents are well beneath the surface.”

In “The Freudian Wish and Its Place in Ethics,” originally published in 1915, Edwin B. Holt (1873-1946) analyzes the Freudian concept of the unconscious “wish” and what it implies for our understanding and discussion of ethics. Holt also delves into topics such as consciousness and behavior. In the last part of the book is added a reprint of a lengthy article, in which he goes even deeper into some of these areas.

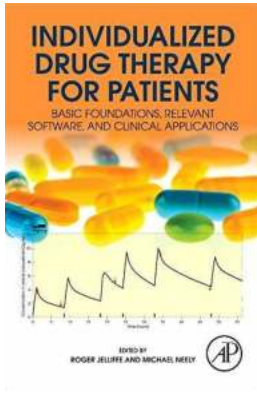
“The Freudian Wish” is written in clear and often beautiful language, and is a highly recommended read for anyone interested in Freud, behavior, consciousness, the history of psychology, or psychology in general.

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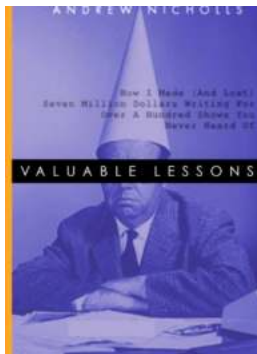
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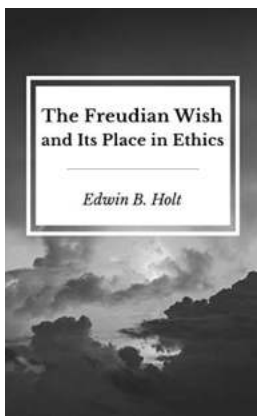
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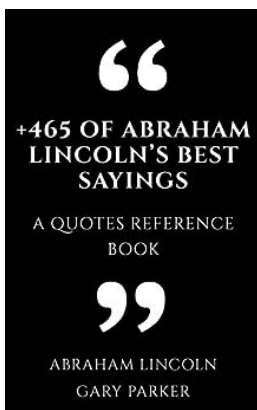
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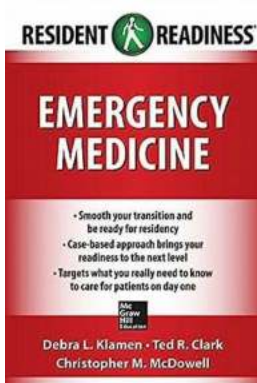
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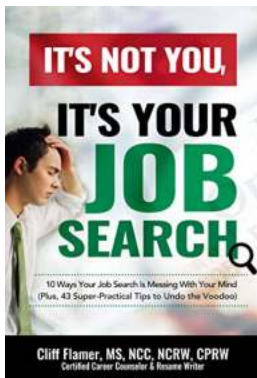
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