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## Guilt and Children

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# Chapter 13 - Guilt and Mental health

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#### Publisher Summary

Guilt plays a prominent role in cognitive theories of mental illness as well. Guilt has been associated with a number of internalizing disorders, but most frequently with depression. When guilt is chronic, it becomes closely linked with symptoms of mental illness. Perhaps the most important implication of the present work is the importance of alleviating guilt constructively and effectively. Lewis suggests that reaction formation or sublimation might be therapeutic for the individual experiencing chronic guilt. Even if the other person is dead, the guilty individual might provide indirect reparation by giving to charity in memory or honor of the deceased or by providing social or financial support to the deceased person's family. Religious confession and penance, participation in Yom Kippur services, and ministerial or rabbinical counseling may all help alleviate chronic guilt. Chronic guilt from day-to-day hassles may be lessened by participating in amnesty days for overdue library books or delinquent tickets. Individuals might be encouraged to seek forgiveness for transgressions they have committed even when these lapses occurred long ago. Indeed, if guilt feelings are still operative years later, this may provide all the more reason for individuals to work to resolve them.

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Laughter and liberation, unconscious repels light loamy regressive

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