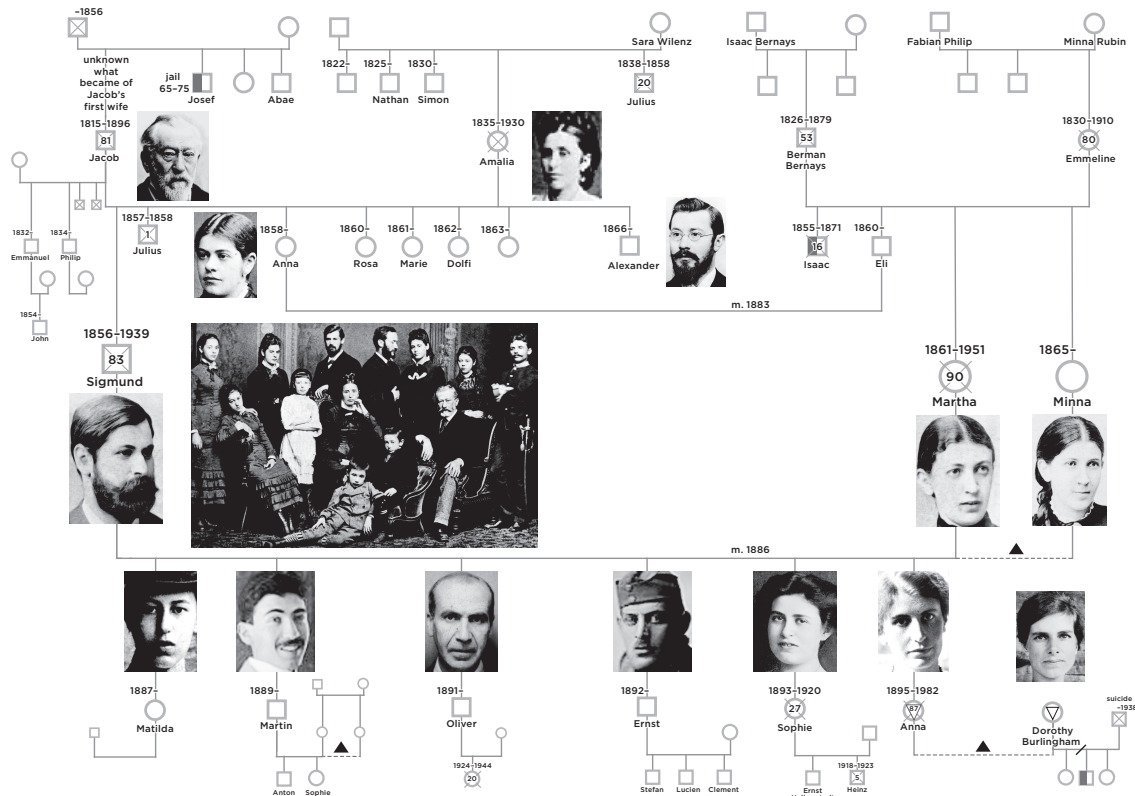


TRACKING THE FREUD FAMILY THROUGH THE LIFE CYCLE

By Monica McGoldrick



Tracking family history over the life cycle is a pivotal pathway toward understanding any person or family. Clinically it is particularly useful for clients to do the genograms for their family from a life cycle perspective in order to understand their family legacies. Considering Freud's place as our psychological ancestor, his legacies may shed important light on our own heritage. Actually, however, Freud, like many other people who are embarrassed or pained by aspects of their background, preferred to downplay his family history, so it takes some digging to uncover. Nevertheless, the genogram of the Freud family can help us to see him in life cycle context.

Courtship and Marriage of Freud's Parents: The Joining of Families

Since the life cycle is circular and repetitive, we can start at any point to tell the story of a family. With the Freud family, we might begin a few years before the birth of Sigmund, at the time of his parents' courtship.

A genogram of the time of marriage or remarriage shows the coming together of two separate families, indicating where each spouse is in his or her own family life cycle. To start a new family, both partners must come to terms with their families of origin. The genogram gives clues to the role and connectedness of each spouse in his or her own family of origin. If one

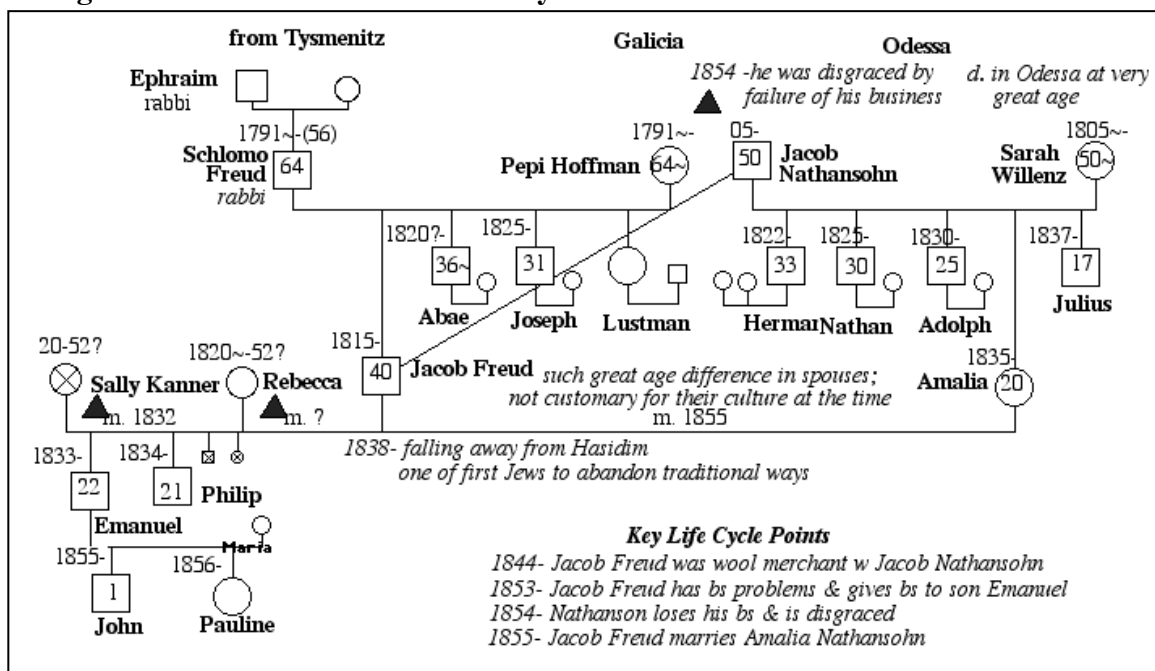
spouse feels competitive with the other's family of origin (as happened with Freud) or if parents do not approve of their child's marital choice, in-law triangles are likely to develop. The genogram also shows the previous relationships that may affect or interfere with the marital bond. Unfortunately, we know virtually nothing of the in-law relationships in this generation of the Freud family.

Chronology 1 The Freud Family at Time of Jacob and Amalia's Marriage

1832	Jacob Freud, age 16, marries Sally Kanner.
1833	(April) Jacob and Sally's first child, Emanuel, is born.
1834	Jacob and Sally's second child, Philipp, is born.
1835?	Third child is born. Gender, date of birth and date and cause of death are unknown.
1837?	Fourth child is born. Gender, date of birth and date and cause of death are unknown.
1852	Jacob's first wife, Sally Kanner, is recorded as alive. Did they divorce? Did she die by end of year?
1852	Jacob Freud marries a second time, to Rebecca. Two entries list Jacob's wife as Rebecca aged 31 and 32 (Krüll, 1986).
1852	(October-December) Rebecca dies (?)
1853	(December) Jacob, who appears to have business problems, hands over his business to son Emanuel. It is unclear what work Jacob ever did after this point in his life. (His son will also have career issues at midlife).
1854	(or earlier) Emanuel marries Maria.
1854	(or slightly earlier) Amalia's father loses his fortune and is disgraced.
1855	(July 29) Jacob and Amalia are married. Jacob is listed as widower since 1852.
1855	(August 13) Emanuel's first son (later Sigmund's nephew) John is born.

As can be seen on the Chronology (1) and the Genogram of the Freud family in 1855 (Genogram 1),

Genogram 1: Freud Nathansohn Family 1855



the marriage of Jacob Freud and Amalia Nathanson, the daughter of a man he had been in business with 10 years earlier, before both men had serious business problems, had a number of atypical aspects. Jacob, who was 40, was marrying for the third time. Amalia was just 20. In

fact, she was even younger than Jacob's sons from his first marriage. Virtually nothing is known about Jacob's first wife, Sally Kanner, or the two children from that first marriage who died; even less is known about Jacob's second wife, Rebecca. We do not know what happened to either wife, whether the couple divorced or the wives died. In addition, Jacob's first marriage took place when he was only 16, suggesting the possibility of an unexpected pregnancy (Anzieu, 1986). The second marriage is even more mysterious. Rebecca was never mentioned by any family member and we know of her existence only from public records. She appears to have married Jacob in 1852. Jacob's sons Emanuel and Philipp were grown and would obviously have known her. Surely Amalia would at least have known of her existence, as they all lived in the same town and Jacob had worked with her father; yet, if anyone ever did mention her to Freud, he never told anyone else. Was there something about her of which the family was ashamed? Mental Illness? Suicide? In any case, Jacob and Amalia obviously began their new family in the shadow of Jacob's earlier marriages and the loss of two of his first four children.

When examining a genogram, it is particularly important to note the ages of family members as they move through the life cycle. With any newly married couple, it is important to note the spouses' positions within the life cycles of their respective families. Jacob was already a grandfather, whereas Amalia, 20 years younger and a peer of his sons, was at the young adult phase. How did these two happen to marry? We know that such age differences were not the custom at this time and place (Krüll, 1986). One wonders what led Amalia to agree to marry a man so much older, with grown sons and two previous marriages. Perhaps her father's recent loss of his fortune and being disgraced, may explain her need to settle for an older man (Swales, 1986). In any case, Amalia was a vivacious young woman, one of the youngest in her family. Jacob, for his part, had done fairly well in his thirties as a traveling salesman with his maternal grandfather, but he seemingly came to a standstill in midlife. One would predict, upon seeing these differences in experience and expectation on a genogram, that this might be a problematic life cycle transition for the next generation. Unresolved issues in earlier phases of the life cycle tend to lead to more difficult transitions and complexities in later life cycle stages. Thus, it is likely that with Jacob's previous marriages, his mysterious past, the discrepancies in their ages and expectations, as well as their financial precariousness, Jacob and Amalia entered their marriage with many complex issues unresolved.

There are at least two predictable triangles in the genogram of a remarried family: (1) that involving the two new spouses and the previous spouse (or the memory of the previous spouse), and (2) that involving the two new spouses and the children of the previous marriage. We know nothing of Amalia's relationship with Jacob's previous wives. Nor do we know details of her relationship with Emanuel and Philipp. We do know from comments Freud made in his adult life that in his fantasy his mother and Philipp were lovers, and that within three years of the marriage Jacob helped to arrange for his sons to emigrate to England, which he may have done partly to put them at a safe distance from his wife.

The Transition to Parenthood and Family with Young Children

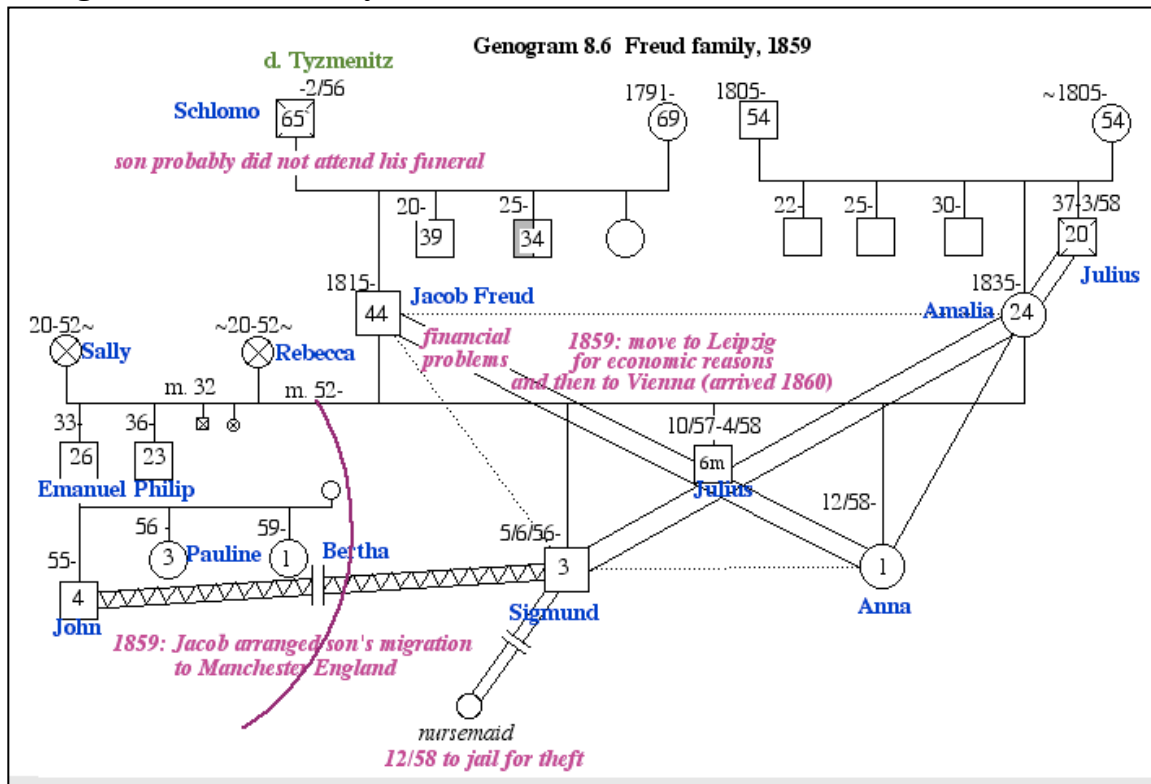
A genogram of the early parenting years often reveals stressors that could make this phase difficult. By providing a quick map of the sibling constellation, the genogram may reveal the particular circumstances surrounding the birth of a child and how those circumstances may have contributed to a child's special position in that family. Finally, the genogram will show the typical mother-father-child triangles of this period.

Chronology 2 :The Freud Family, 1856-59

- 1856 (Feb. 21) Schlomo Freud, Jacob's father dies. (Jacob is 40 and his wife is 6 months pregnant with her first child, Sigmund.) (Later Jacob will die when Sigmund is 40!)
- 1856 (May 6) Sigmund is born to Jacob and Amalia in Freiberg, Moravia (Now Pribor, in the Czech Republic).
- 1857 (October) Sigmund's brother Julius is born.
- 1858 (March) Amalia's 20-year-old brother, Julius Nathansohn, dies of tuberculosis.
- 1858 (April 15) Sigmund's brother Julius dies.
- 1858 Wilhelm Fleiss, for many years Sigmund Freud's closest friend and "brother" is born. Sigmund identified Fleiss with his brother Julius.
- 1858 (December) Sigmund's sister Anna is born.
- 1859 (January) Sigmund's nursemaid is reported and jailed for theft by Sigmund's half-brother Philipp during Amalia's confinement with Anna.
- 1859 (August) Sigmund's half-brothers, Emanuel and Philipp emigrate with their families, including Sigmund's nephew, John, to whom he is very attached.
- 1859 (August) Freud family moves from Freiberg to Leipzig, apparently because of economic reversals.

Sigmund was born in 1856 in Freiberg, Moravia. As can be seen from the genogram of the Freud family for 1859 (**Genogram 2**)

Genogram 2: Freud Family 1859



and **Chronology 2**, much was going on in the family around the time of his birth. His specialness for his father may have been intensified by the death of Jacob's father less than three months before Sigmund was born. Sigmund was named for this grandfather, Schlomo, a rabbi. Sigmund was, perhaps, raised to follow in his footsteps to become a kind of rabbi- a teacher and intellectual leader. Sigmund's family role was obviously also influenced by his innate brilliance. Another factor accounting for his special role was probably that he was born

at the high point in the family's hopes. Shortly afterward the family had to migrate twice and Jacob suffered significant business failures, from which he seems never to have entirely recovered. Sigmund's younger sisters, particularly Anna and Dolfi, may have borne the brunt of these negative changes on the family.

Equally important, Sigmund's brother Julius, born when Sigmund was 17 months old, lived for only seven months. The death of a child tends to intensify parental feelings about the surviving children. The child nearest in age, especially a child of the same sex, often becomes a replacement for the lost child. Thus, Sigmund may have become even more important to his mother after the death of her second son. The loss of this infant would itself have been intensified by the fact that, exactly one month before his death, Amalia's youngest brother, also named Julius, died at the age of 20 from pulmonary tuberculosis (Krüll, 1986). Undoubtedly she knew that her brother was dying when she named her son for him six months earlier. The naming is especially interesting, since it goes against the Jewish custom of naming a baby in honor of someone who has already died. Is the emotional imperative somehow more powerful here than the cultural custom, which had been followed for Sigmund? In later life Sigmund said that he had welcomed this brother with "ill wishes and real infantile jealousy, and his death left the germ of guilt in me" (cited in Krüll, 1986, p.____).

The oldest sometimes resents the later born, feeling threatened or displaced by the new arrival. From a very early age, Sigmund may have seen his sister Anna as an intrusion, and she may have resented his special position and privileges in the family. She was conceived the month before the loss of the second child, Julius. Discovering she was pregnant at virtually the same moment she experienced the tragic death of her baby must have been intensely difficult for Amalia. Sigmund's sibling rivalry with his sister Anna may have been compounded by family ambivalence about her as the first child born after a lost son. These feelings of rivalry can linger into adulthood. Sigmund's relationship with his sister Anna seems never to have been very close and they were alienated as adults.

The first phase of this new family, of which Sigmund was the first child, finally concluded with a splitting and emigration of part of the family. We do not know really know why the Freud family left Freiberg. When Sigmund was three, his stepbrothers and their families emigrated to England, and Jacob moved his family first to Leipzig, and then to Vienna, probably in part because of economic reversals. It is possible they had been involved in a counterfeiting scheme, which made escape a necessity (Swales, 1986). Emanuel and Philipp may also have been reminders to Amalia of Jacob's earlier family. And, as mentioned, maybe the possibility of an extramarital relationship between Amalia and Philip led Jacob to want them at a distance. In any case, Jacob and Amalia shared a nursemaid with Emanuel and his wife, and the children played well together, so their family's departure was a significant loss. Another complicating factor in terms of the sibling rivalry constellation can be seen on the genogram. For the first three years of his life, Sigmund was raised almost as a younger brother to his nephew John, who was a year or so older than he. Sigmund commented on the importance of this relationship to Ernest Jones:

Until the end of my third year we had been inseparable; we had loved each other and fought each other and . . . This childish relationship has determined all my later feelings in intercourse with persons my own age. (1953, p. 8)

Another loss for Sigmund was the nursemaid, who was dismissed for stealing, while Amalia was confined for the birth of Anna. Thus, within a period of only three years, Sigmund experienced a multitude of losses: the death of his brother, the dismissal of the nursemaid, the

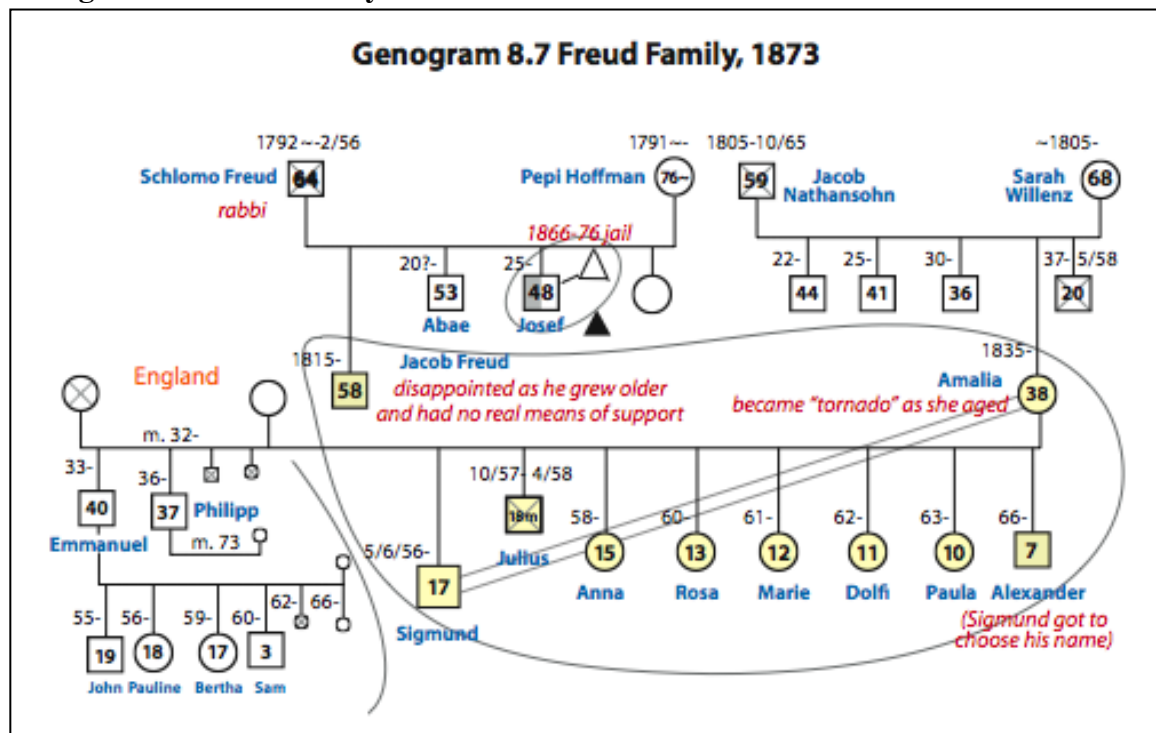
emigration of his stepbrothers and their children, the birth of his sister which took his mother away, and finally the uprooting of his whole family. The Freuds were never to be as financially stable again.

Chronology 3 Freud Family, 1860s and 1870s

1860	Freud family settles in Vienna.
1860	(March) Sigmund's sister Rosa is born.
1861	(March) Sigmund's sister Marie (Mitzi) is born.
1862	(July) Sigmund's sister Dolfi is born.
1863	(May) Sigmund's sister Paula is born.
1865	(July 20) Uncle Josef Freud arrested for counterfeiting.
1865	(October) Maternal grandfather (Jacob Nathansohn) dies.
1866	(February) Uncle Josef Freud sent to prison for 10 years.
1866	(April) Sigmund's brother Alexander, named by Sigmund, is born.
1868	Sigmund enters gymnasium.
1873	Sigmund enters medical school.

Sigmund was the first of eight children (**Genogram 3**) and **Chronology 3**). The genogram shows the family until the year Sigmund finished gymnasium and began medical school.

Genogram 3: Freud Family 1873



It is the birth of the first child, more than the marriage itself, that most profoundly marks the transition to a new family. For the new spouse, the child tends to signify greater legitimization and power of the current family in relation to the family of origin. Sigmund definitely seemed to have a special place in his mother's heart. He had an intense relationship with her and she always referred to him as her "Golden Sigi." By all accounts he was the center of the household. There is a well-known family story that when his sister Anna wanted to play the piano, their mother bought one, but got rid of it immediately when Sigmund complained that the noise

bothered him. His sister received no further piano lessons. Sigmund's special position is further indicated by the fact that the family gave him the privilege of naming his younger brother, Alexander, born when Sigmund was ten. (In his own marriage, Sigmund named every one of the six children, all for his male heroes or their female relatives! The Freuds' cultural preference for sons further exalted Sigmund's position in his family.

Family with Adolescents

Once children reach adolescence, the task is to prepare the family for a qualitative change in the relationships between the generations, as the children are no longer so dependent on their parents. During this period two common patterns of triangles are likely to develop, the first involving (a) the adolescents, (b) their peers, and (c) their parents, and the second involving (a) the adolescents, (b) their parents, and (c) their grandparents. As adolescents are seeking their identity and emerging into their sexual and creative potential, parents are often struggling with the realization of their own limitations in terms of both work and relationships, which may add to the intensity of intergenerational conflicts.

We have little specific information on family events during the years of Freud's adolescence, but the genogram suggests a family with many child-rearing burdens, since there were seven children, all still in the home. We may wonder also whether the discrepancy in age between Jacob and Amalia might be felt even more at this stage of the life cycle. Jacob, in his fifties, may have been feeling his age. Sigmund later described his father as having been rather grouchy and disappointed in his older sons Emanuel and Philipp. In contrast, Amalia, 20 years younger, was still energetic, attractive, and youthful. We do not know whether these differences in age, energy level, and outlook led to tension or conflict between Jacob and Amalia, but, given her devotion to Sigmund and the demands of a large household, it is likely that her energies were more focused on her children than on her spouse. Sigmund later reported that he felt as though he had to make up for his father's emotional absence. Jacob's brother Josef was jailed during this period for counterfeiting, the pain and humiliation of which, Sigmund later said, turned his father's hair gray. It appears that Jacob was implicated in the scheme--or at least his Emanuel and Philip were, which, as mentioned earlier, may have accounted for their earlier move to England (Krüll, 1986; Swales, 1986).

It is during adolescence that children begin to have interests outside the family, both in school and with friends. Sigmund did very well in school and was at the top of his gymnasium class for six of his eight years there. His success with his peers was less spectacular. By all accounts he was a shy, intense, serious young man who focused more on his studies than on socializing. The genogram will sometimes indicate important peers in a child's life and whether family boundaries easily expand to embrace outsiders. We know of Sigmund having only one close friend at school, Eduard Silberstein, with whom he corresponded and formed a "secret society." At 16, he had a crush on a friend's sister, Gisela Fluss, but never expressed his feelings to her. Perhaps he was responding to a mandate from his family: to excel in school and to succeed in life, and so justify his special position in his family and make up for their other disappointments--in the older half brothers and in Jacob, who never seems to have made a real living in Vienna.

Family at Midlife: Launching Children and Moving On

The launching phase, when children leave home to be on their own, in the past usually blended into marriage, since children often did not leave home until they married. Now most go through an increasingly lengthy period of being a single adult. This phase, the cornerstone of the modern family life cycle, is crucial for all the other phases that are to follow. The short-

circuiting of this phase, or its prolongation, may affect all future life cycle transitions. The genogram often reveals the duration of the launching phase, as well as factors that may contribute to a delay of launching.

The information that we have on the Freud family during the launching phase is quite scanty. As has already been mentioned, Sigmund held an almost exalted position in his family. Sometimes this can lead to difficulties in launching, when a young adult is hesitant to leave such a favored position and the parents are unwilling to let their special child go. This was true for Sigmund, who lived with his parents until he was 30, when he married Martha Bernays and they moved to an apartment together. As was customary, one other daughter, Dolfi, never married and remained at home to be the parental caretaker, as Sigmund's daughter, Anna, did in the next generation.

One interesting fact from the perspective of the life cycle is how long it took Sigmund to complete his medical studies (**Chronology 4**). He took eight years to get his degree, and did not practice for quite a few years after that. This was unusual in those days, particularly for students who were not independently wealthy. Perhaps he was hesitant to finish and move on to the next phase--supporting himself. Or perhaps he felt that his mother needed him to stay with her. In any case, he, apparently, did not think seriously about supporting himself until he wanted to marry Martha. When a delay in moving on to the next phase is indicated by the genogram, as in Freud's case with his prolonged time as a student and his lengthy engagement, the clinician should explore the impediments to moving on in the life cycle. In this case they appear to have been both financial and emotional.

Chronology 4 The Freud and Bernays Families in the 1880s

1855	Bernays oldest son, Isaac, born
1856	Bernays have miscarriage of second child
1856	Bernays have another son, who died at 3.
1857	Bernays have a daughter, who died at 2.
1859	Bernays 2 nd son died at age 3.
1859	Bernays baby daughter died at age 2.
1860	Bernays Son Eli born (Who will eventually marry Freud's sister Anna)
1861	Bernays daughter Martha born (Who will eventually marry Freud)
1865	Bernays youngest daughter Minna is born (who probably had affair with Freud)
1867	Berman Bernays, the father, goes bankrupt and is arrested for fraud.
1868	Berman goes to prison.
1868	Martha's oldest brother, Isaac, who already had many problems, dies at 17.
1873	Sigmund enters medical school.
1879	Berman dies, leaving the family in great debt.
1881	Sigmund completes medical school after eight years.
1882	(April) Sigmund meets Martha Bernays.
1882	(April) Sigmund destroys his papers and letters just after meeting Martha.
1882	Eli meets Anna.
1882	(June 17) Sigmund and Martha Bernays become secretly engaged.
1883	Minna Martha's sister, becomes engaged to Ignaz Schonberg, close friend of Sigmund. Ignaz has TB.
1883	(June) Martha and Minna move with their mother to Hamburg, a move arranged by Eli, probably because of the debts and embarrassment. Sigmund is very upset by the distance and blames Eli for it.
1883	(September) Sigmund's friend, Nathan Weiss, commits suicide.
1883	(October) Eli, Martha's brother, marries Sigmund's sister, Anna. Sigmund does not attend or even mention the wedding in letters to Martha.

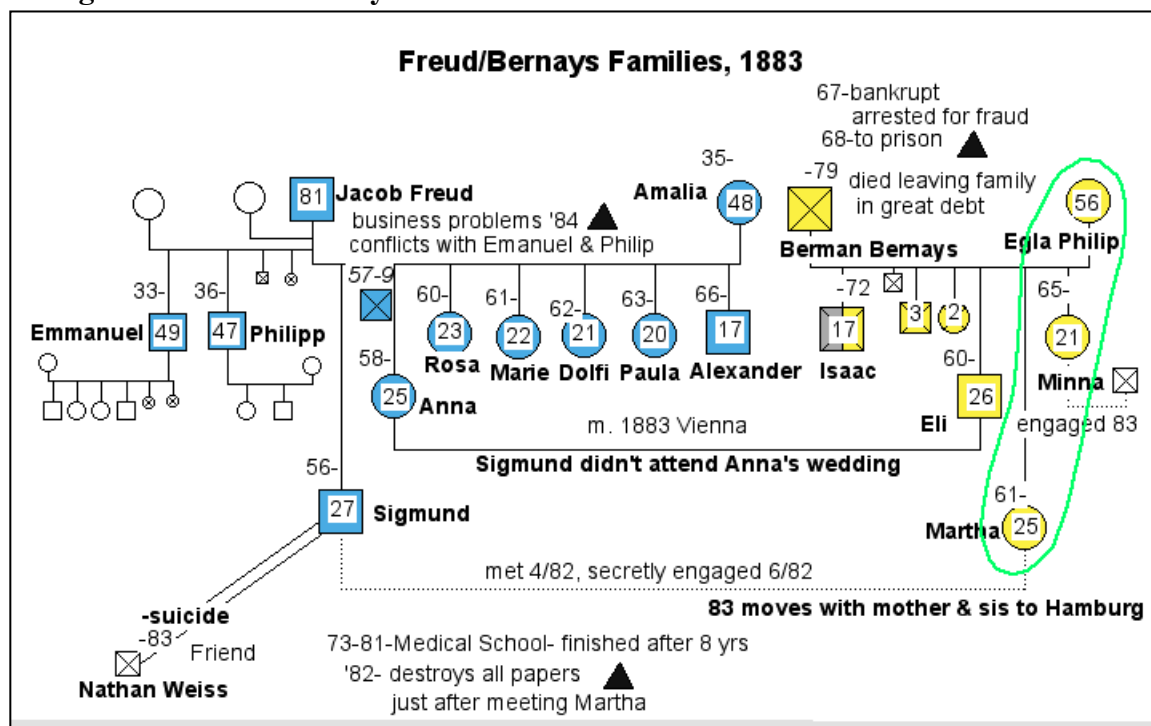
- 1884 (July 18) Sigmund becomes involved with cocaine and recommends it to others. He publishes cocaine paper. Evidence suggests that Freud went on using and recommending the use of cocaine until the mid 1890s (Isbister, 1985).
- 1884 Jacob Freud has business problems.
- 1885 (April) Sigmund destroys all of his papers again.
- 1885 (June) Ignaz Schonberg breaks his engagement to Minna.
- 1886 Schonberg dies of tuberculosis.
- 1886 (September 14) Sigmund and Martha are married, enabled by a gift of money from Martha's aunt.
- 1887 (October) Sigmund and Martha's first child, Mathilde, is born (named for colleague Breuer's wife).
- 1887 Sigmund meets Wilhelm Fleiss, who becomes his most important and intimate friend until their break in 1904 over an accusation of plagiarism.

Marriage, the Next Generation

Having gone through several transitions of the Freud family life cycle, we come to the next phase: the marriage of Sigmund Freud and Martha Bernays. A genogram of the time of marriage will often provide valuable clues to the difficulties and issues involved in the joining together of two family traditions in a new family.

If we look at the genogram (Genogram 4) and Chronology 4 of the family of Freud's wife, Martha Bernays, we see certain striking parallels with the Freud family.

Genogram 4: Freud/Bernays Families: 1883



The Bernays family, like the Freuds, had to deal with the death of young children, and the oldest surviving son, Eli, was very similar to Sigmund, the oldest surviving son of younger sisters. In 1867, when the children were not even teenagers, the father was arrested and jailed briefly for fraud, bringing disgrace to the family, very similar to the shame Sigmund and his family experienced when their uncle and perhaps father and half-brothers were involved in counterfeiting. There may also be a parallel in the previous generation with Freud's maternal grandfather, whose

business failed, leaving the family with a sense of ruin and disgrace when Amalia was 18. Similarly, when Martha Bernays Freud was 18, her father having earlier disgraced the family, died of a heart attack, leaving the family in great debt. Like the Freud family, with Jacob's apparent unemployment in his later years, it is not clear how the Bernays family survived. Martha's older brother, Eli, who took over the running of the family, eventually fled Vienna to avoid bankruptcy and the payment of debts owed to friends. Martha's mother moved with her daughters to Hamburg, which infuriated Sigmund, who had met Martha in 1881 and was secretly engaged two months later. We might speculate that the similarities of disgrace and secrets in the background of Sigmund and Martha may have been part of their attraction for one another.

What is immediately apparent from this genogram is the unusual double connection between the Freuds and Bernays in Sigmund's generation. Such unusual configurations often suggest complicated relationships between the two families, as well as possible triangles. The oldest son in each family married the oldest daughter of the other family. As mentioned earlier, Sigmund and his sister Anna never got along. Perhaps Sigmund felt ordinary sibling rivalry of an oldest child with a younger sister. Or perhaps he associated Anna's birth with many losses (see Chronology 8.2). Whatever the reasons, Sigmund seemed to resent the fact that Eli had the money to marry Anna and *did not even attend their wedding!* In fact, he did not even mention the event in his letters to Martha, although he wrote to her almost daily and shortly after the wedding discussed the possibility of attending the wedding of one of her cousins, certainly a much less important family event. He resented Eli and Anna's being able to marry, when his own marriage seemed so far off because he couldn't afford it. Indeed, it appears that Eli's control of a small legacy from Martha's from an aunt was at least part of the reason Sigmund and Martha could not marry sooner (Young-Bruehl, 1988).

Sigmund's negative feelings toward his sister and brother-in-law seemed to intensify later when the couple moved to New York and the less educated Eli became very wealthy, while the highly educated Sigmund had to struggle to support his family.

Triangles were created around the polarization of Eli and Anna's family having money, but being materialistic and having bad values, while Freud and his side of the family eschewed money but thought of themselves as having intellectual superiority.

Triangles emerging at this life cycle stage often involve one partner and the family of the other, and indeed, such triangling was prominent in this case. Even before their marriage there were difficulties between Sigmund and Martha regarding their families. Both came from families with financial problems, and financial concerns stood in the way of their marrying for more than five years. Sigmund blamed Eli for Martha moving with her mother and sister to Hamburg the year after they were engaged, which meant they had to go for long periods without seeing each other. Freud felt threatened by Martha's relationship to her family of origin and was demanding, possessive and overtly jealous of her loyalty to her brother Eli. During their long courtship, he wrote to her:

Are you already thinking of the day you are to leave? It is no more than a fortnight now, must not be more or else, yes, or else my egotism will rise up against Mama and Eli-Fritz. And I will make such a din that everyone will hear and you understand, no matter how your filial feelings may rebel against it. From now on you are but a guest in your family like a jewel that I have pawned and that I am going to redeem as soon as I am rich. For has it not been laid down since time immemorial that the woman shall leave father and mother and follow the man she had chosen? (letter to Martha, 8/14/1882, Freud, 1960, p. 23).

Sigmund even threatened to break off their engagement if Martha did not give up her loyalty to her brother, writing her:

You have only an Either-Or. If you can't be fond enough of me to renounce your family for my sake, then you must lose me, wreck your life and not get much yourself out of your family. (cited in Appignanesi & Forrester, 1992, p. 31)

Nevertheless throughout their marriage, Martha did maintain contact with other members of her family and remained true to their faith, Orthodox Judaism, despite her husband's rejection of religion. After many years of marriage, she said that Sigmund's refusal to let her light the Sabbath lights from the first Friday night after her marriage was one of the most upsetting experiences of her life (Appignanesi & Forrester, 1992). As soon as Sigmund died, Martha, who was then 68 years old, began again to light the candles every Friday night.

Parenthood; the Next Generation

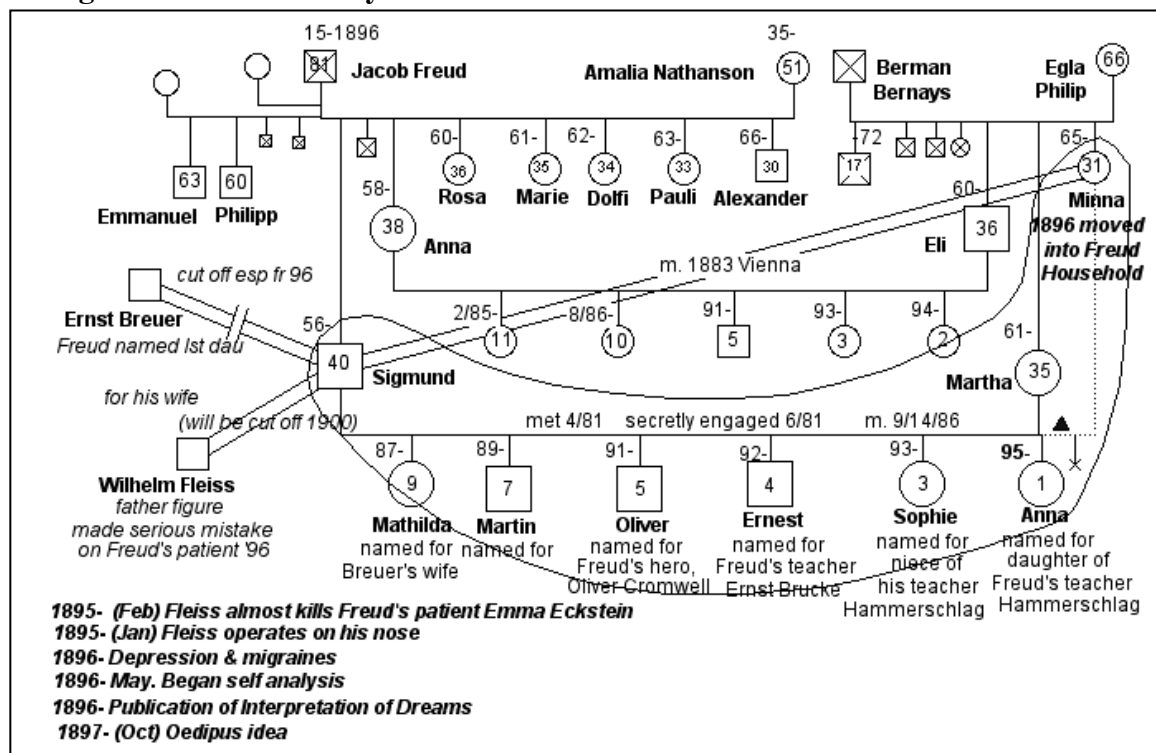
Chronology 5 The Freud Family around 1896

- | | |
|------|--|
| 1891 | (February) Oliver, the third child is born (named for Freud's hero, Oliver Cromwell). |
| 1892 | Beginning of Freud's estrangement from colleague, Breuer. |
| 1892 | (April) Ernst, the fourth child is born (named for Freud's teacher, Ernst Brucke). |
| 1892 | Eli Bernays, Martha's brother, goes to America. |
| 1893 | Eli returns to take his wife, Freud's sister, Anna, and their family to the U.S. (Two daughters, Lucy and Hella, stay with Freud's family for a year.) Sigmund gives Eli some money for the trip. |
| 1893 | Sophie, Freud's fifth child, is born and named for the niece of his teacher Hammerschlag. |
| 1894 | Sigmund is having heart problems, but does not tell his wife that he fears dying. He tries to give up smoking. He suffers depression, fatigue, and financial problems |
| 1895 | (February) The "Emma Eckstein episode" begins. Freud has his friend Fleiss operate on his patient and Fleiss makes a mistake, leaving gauze in the wound, which almost kills her. |
| 1895 | (March) Anna is conceived. |
| 1895 | Still depressed, having cardiac symptoms, Freud treats himself with cocaine. He starts smoking after giving it up for over a year. Decides to begin self-analysis. Fleiss performs a nasal operation on him. |
| 1895 | (December) Anna, the sixth and last child, is born, named for Freud's teacher Samuel Hammerschlag's daughter, a young widow and patient of Freud's (Anzieu, 1986). Freud connects the expansion of his practice with Anna's birth. |
| 1895 | (December) Martha's sister Minna comes to live with the Freud family. |
| 1896 | Sigmund develops extremely negative feelings about friend and colleague, Breuer. |
| 1896 | (April) Sigmund writes of migraines, nasal secretions, fears of dying. |
| 1896 | (May) Sigmund writes clearest account of seduction theory: belief that women's anxieties are based on actual childhood sexual abuse. His presentation scandalizes his audience. |
| 1896 | Medical community isolates Freud for his ideas. |
| 1896 | Freud calls Emma Eckstein's hemorrhages "hysterical." |
| 1896 | (October 23) Jacob Freud dies. (Sigmund is 40 at the time.) Jacob had been very ill for a month or so. Because Martha is away on her first trip in 10 years to visit her mother, only Minna is there to console Sigmund over the loss of his father. |
| 1897 | (January) Sigmund is passed over for a university promotion. |
| 1897 | (February) Freud is informed that he will finally be proposed for the title of professor. |
| 1897 | (March) Sigmund's disgraced Uncle Joseph dies. |
| 1897 | (July) Freud takes the first of at least 17 vacations with Minna. |
| 1897 | (March) Daughter Mathilde has a very bad case of diphtheria. |

- 1897 (May) Sigmund is again passed over for promotion--becomes anxious.
- 1897 (May) Sigmund has incestuous dream about daughter Mathilde.
- 1897 (September) Sigmund renounces belief in "seduction theory" (he had thought that his father had an inappropriate sexual relationship with Freud's sister Anna). In despondence he feels need for self-analysis; outlines "Oedipal theory."
- 1897 (October 15) Freud develops ideas of Oedipus complex.
- 1899 Freud writes Interpretation of Dreams.
- 1900 End of Sigmund's self-analysis.
- 1900 Trip with Fleiss ends in falling out that would turn out to be permanent.
- 1900 Trip with Minna in Italy. Did Minna become pregnant by Sigmund and have an abortion at a clinic? They traveled together extensively from September 12, 1900 through mid February 1901 (Swales, 1982). Jones said she was treated for TB, but there is no other mention of her having that illness.

The early years of a family with young children are always eventful, though often difficult for marriages, with so much of the spouses' energy necessarily taken up with their children and work. As can be seen on the **Genogram 5**

Genogram 5: Freud Family Immediate Household-1896



and **Chronology 5**, Sigmund and Martha married and had six children within eight years. While Martha handled virtually all parenting responsibilities, Sigmund struggled to enlarge his medical practice and began some of his most creative intellectual work. When a family is in this phase, the clinician should be alert to child-rearing pressures and normative strains in the marriage.

The birth of the last child may be an important turning point in family life. It seems that Martha became very preoccupied with raising her six children, while Sigmund, who was

not very involved with the children, moved closer intellectually and emotionally to his sister-in-law, Minna, whom he had described in May 1894 in a letter to his friend Fliess as “otherwise my closest confidante” (Masson, 1985, p. 73). Minna moved into the Freud household the same month that his last and favorite child, Anna, was born. Fourteen years earlier she had been engaged to Sigmund’s close friend, Ignaz Schonberg, who had broken off the relationship shortly before his death from tuberculosis. Sigmund’s view in that early period was that he and Minna were alike because they were both wild, passionate people, who wanted their own way, whereas Ignaz and Martha were good-natured and adaptable (Jones, 1955).

Minna had never married. When other relatives appear as household members on a genogram, we should speculate about the possibility of triangles involving the spouses and the children. By all accounts Sigmund and Minna had an extremely close relationship. Minna’s bedroom in the Freud household could be entered only through the master bedroom (Eissler, 1978). Minna and Sigmund took many vacations alone together (Swales, 1986), apparently because they both enjoyed traveling, whereas Martha did not, at least not at Sigmund’s pace (Freeman & Streat, 1981). Minna was much more interested than Martha in discussing Sigmund’s ideas. Indeed, Martha said of psychoanalysis: “If I didn’t realize how seriously my husband takes his treatments, I should think of psychoanalysis as a form of pornography” (Appignanesi & Forrester, 1992, p. 45). Recent research supports Jung’s report that Minna told him that she and Sigmund had an affair. There is evidence that she became pregnant and had an abortion in 1901 (Swales, 1986). We know nothing about Martha’s attitude toward her husband’s relationship with her sister. Interestingly, as will be seen, Sigmund’s oldest son, Martin, repeated this apparent pattern and had an extramarital relationship with his wife’s sister (Freud, 1988).

Repeating his father’s changes at midlife, Sigmund experienced a major life crisis during this phase of the life cycle. In Freud’s case it led to his greatest intellectual discoveries and his major formulation, and then recantation of the seduction theory (Masson, 1992). During these years Sigmund also showed symptoms of depression and “pseudo” cardiac problems. He complained of lethargy, migraines, and various other somatic and emotional concerns. He was clearly in a great deal of distress. He began his famous self-analysis and constructed the edifice of a new theory, which led to the publication of his most famous work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

A look at the genogram may elucidate why this was such a turbulent, but productive, time in Sigmund’s life. In December 1895, Anna, the last child, was born. Martha, worn out by five pregnancies in nine years, had been surprised and unhappy to learn that she was pregnant for the sixth time. It seems that after this last child Sigmund and Martha decided not to have another. Sex between the couple apparently diminished considerably from this point (Anzieu, 1986; Roazen, 1993). Anna was conceived exactly at the time of one of Freud’s most explosive professional consultations. He referred his patient Emma Eckstein to his friend Wilhelm Fleiss, who believed in operating on people’s noses to cure them of sexual problems, which Fleiss thought resulted from masturbation. Fleiss made a mistake during the operation and left gauze in the wound, which almost killed the woman. Freud, whose relations with Fleiss had been extremely intense, experienced a profound sense of disillusionment and distress over this situation.

Often the last child has a special position in the family. This was true of Anna, who was, by the way, named not for Freud’s sister but for the daughter of his friend and beloved

teacher, Samuel Hammerschlag. This young woman, Anna Hammerschlag Lichtheim, was herself a friend of the Freuds (Krüll, 1986). Anna Freud apparently felt that she was not the preferred child and spent an enormous amount of effort all her life trying to win her father's approval. She, rather than his wife, took care of him when he was ill. He became her analyst, beginning in 1918, when she was 23. She went in his stead to his own mother's funeral for him! She alone among his children never married, devoted herself to her father, and chose to carry on his work.

In 1896, less than a year after Anna was born, Sigmund's father died, a loss Sigmund said was the most significant and upsetting event in a man's life. At the time of his father's death, Martha was away visiting her mother for the first time in many years, and Minna was the only one there to console him, which may have contributed to the close tie they developed. The death of a parent marks a critical point in the life cycle. He wrote shortly after his father's death:

By one of those obscure paths behind official consciousness, the death of the old man has affected me profoundly. . . . His life had been over a long time before he died, but his death seems to have aroused in me memories of all the early days. I now feel quite uprooted. (Masson, 1985, letter of November 2, 1886)

In addition to the loss, a parent's death is a painful reminder of one's mortality and of the passing of the mantle of tradition and responsibility to the next generation. Now Sigmund had his mother to support as well. In addition, his disgraced uncle Josef and an uncle of Martha's had died that year.

About this time Sigmund adopted his friend Fliess as a father figure in his self-analysis, which seems to have reflected his own midlife crisis, perhaps precipitated by a number of events in the family and his own life cycle. In addition to the loss of his father, the birth of his last child, and his changing relationship with his wife and Minna, he was having career problems and he had just turned 40. He was struggling to support a large family. Just as the midlife period for Freud's father was marked by a new love relationship, occupational shift, and migration, Sigmund's crisis seemed to involve changing intimate relationships and career upheaval. He was able to resolve it more positively than his father with the consolidation of his career, the publication of his book, his appointment as a professor, and his growing recognition as the founder of a new theory.

Family in Later Life

As members age, families must come to terms with the mortality of the older generation. As each generation moves up a level in the developmental hierarchy, all relationships must be reordered (Shields, King, & Wynne, 1995; Walsh, 1998). There are special problems for women, who are more often the caretakers (Dolfi and Anna) and who tend to outlive their spouses (Freud's mother and wife Amalia and Martha). When the last parent dies, the relationships between siblings become independent for the first time. Often the genogram will reveal which child was delegated to become the caretaker of the aging parents, as well as common triangles among siblings over the management of these responsibilities. Sibling conflicts and cut-offs at this point usually reflect triangles with parents, which have persisted from much earlier life cycle phases, especially with regard to who was the favored sibling in childhood.

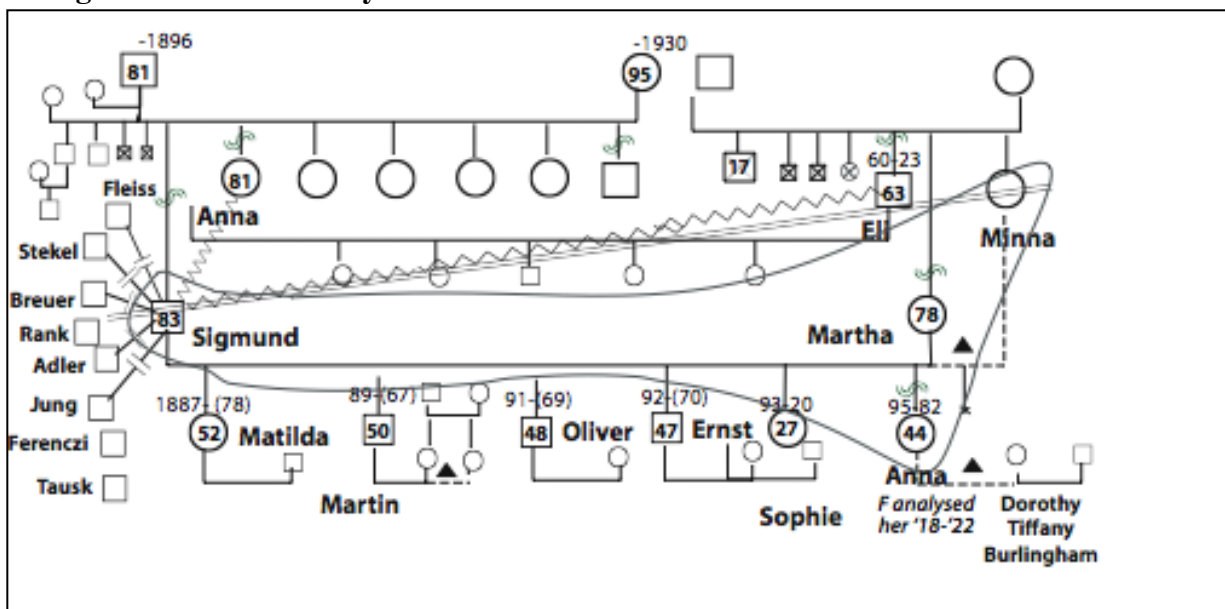
Chronology 6 The Freud Family after 1900

1902	(March 5) Sigmund becomes Professor Extraordinary.

1909	Daughter Mathilde marries.
1911	Death of half-brother Philipp.
1911	Cut-off with Alfred Adler. Freud called it "the disgraceful defection of Adler, a gifted thinker but a malicious paranoiac" (letter of Aug 20, 1912 to James Jackson Putnam, quoted in Kerr, 1993, p. 416).
1912	Cut-off with follower William Stekel.
1913	Cut-off with Carl Jung.
1913	Daughter Sophie marries.
1914	First grandchild is born (Ernst Halberstadt, who later became an analyst and changed his name to Ernest Freud).
1914	Death of half-brother Emanuel.
1918	Freud begins analysis of his daughter Anna, which seems to have lasted at least until 1922.
1919	Important follower, Victor Tausk, commits suicide.
1920	Daughter Sophie contracts pneumonia and dies.
1923	(May) Sigmund is diagnosed with cancer and has first of 33 operations.
1923	(June 19) Favorite grandson, Sophie's son, dies of TB. Sigmund weeps for the first time. He never gets over the loss, which follows so shortly on his own illness.
1923	(October 4) Sigmund has a second cancer operation.
1923	(October 11) Sigmund undergoes a third operation. Over next 16 years he will undergo more than 33 operations.
1923	Eli dies in New York. Sigmund writes bitterly about his money and suggests that maybe now his sister Anna will do something for her four indigent sisters.
1924	Break with follower Otto Rank. Rift with Ferenczi.
1926	Theodore Reik is prosecuted for "quackery."
1930	Freud's mother, Amalia, dies.
1938	Family is finally able to emigrate.
1939	Sigmund Freud dies in London.

Sigmund's father died in 1896. Amalia was left to be cared for by her children for the next 34 years. Sigmund and his youngest brother, Alexander, took financial responsibility for their mother and sisters, although it was the middle daughter, Dolfi, who remained at home, unmarried, with their mother. Sigmund also lived a long time, to the age of 83 (**Genogram 6 and Chronology 6**)

Genogram 6: Freud Family 1939



and was cared for by his daughter Anna. Anna became her father's main follower and intellectual heir. Although Martha Freud was still alive (she lived until 1951), it was Anna who became his primary caretaker through his many operations for jaw cancer. For Anna, as for Dolfi in the previous generation, this meant that she was never able to leave home. She was 44 at the time of her father's death. He had been unwilling to function without her for many years. Though she had been briefly in love with her first cousin, Edward Bernays, in 1913, she later said it was good that the relationship had not worked out because, since he was her double cousin, it would have been double incest. She had early dreamt that her father was the king and she the princess and people were trying to separate them by means of political intrigues. She resolved on becoming partners with Dorothy Burlingham, an American mother of four children, who was the youngest of eight daughters of the glass millionaire, Louis Comfort Tiffany. Though Dorothy never officially divorced, she and Anna lived and vacationed together for the rest of their lives. Together they ran a war nursery, a psychoanalytic training institute, and a world famous children's clinic. (Dorothy's husband committed suicide in 1938, having tried in vain to convince her to return to him.)

The genogram may be helpful for understanding or predicting the reactions of family members to key events at different stages of the cycle. For example, Sigmund had a very strong reaction to the death of his three-year-old grandson in 1923, shortly after he himself was diagnosed with cancer (**Genogram 8**):

He was indeed an enchanting little fellow, and I myself was aware of never having loved a human being, certainly never a child, so much. . . . I find this loss very hard to bear. I don't think I have ever experienced such grief, perhaps my own sickness contributes to the shock. I worked out of sheer necessity; fundamentally everything has lost its meaning for me. (in E. Freud, 1960, June 11, 1923)

A month later he wrote that he was suffering from the first real depression of his life (Jones, 1955, p. 92). And three years later he wrote to his son-in-law that since this child's death he had not been able to enjoy life:

I have spent some of the blackest days of my life in sorrowing about the child. At last I have taken hold of myself and can think of him quietly and talk of him without tears. But the

comforts of reason have done nothing to help; the only consolation for me is that at my age I would not have seen much of him.

Sigmund's words suggest he was struggling to come to terms with his own mortality. This was particularly difficult, not only because his grandson's death was so untimely, but also because his daughter, Sophie, the child's mother, had died three years earlier at the age of 27.

Contrast this grandson's death with Sigmund's reaction to the death of his own mother seven years later, in 1930:

On the surface I can detect only two things: an increase in personal freedom, since it was always a terrifying thought that she might come to hear of my death; and secondly the satisfaction that at least she has achieved the deliverance for which she had earned a right after such a long life. No grief otherwise, such as my ten years younger brother is painfully experiencing. I was not at the funeral. Again Anna represented me as at Frankfort. Her value to me can hardly be heightened. This event has affected me in a curious manner No pain, no grief, which is probably to be explained by the circumstances, the great age, and the end of the pity we had felt at her helplessness. With that a feeling of liberation, of release, which I think I can understand. I was not allowed to die as long as she was alive, and now I may. Somehow the values of life have notably changed in the deeper layers. (quoted in Jones, 1955, p. 152)

In this case Sigmund, at 74, (see **Genogram 6**) was more reconciled through his years of struggling with cancer, with his own eventual death. He was relieved that the sequential order of the life cycle would be honored: first, the parents die and then the children. The untimely or traumatic loss of a family member is typically extremely difficult for families to mourn, and therapists are urged to pay especially careful attention to untimely deaths on a genogram and to be alert to dysfunctional patterns that develop in response to such losses (McGoldrick & Walsh, 2004; Walsh & McGoldrick, 2004).