INQUIRY, DETAILED INQUIRY A unique technique of *interpersonal psychoanalysis in which the analyst actively asks questions in order to facilitate the patient's articulation of experience. Whereas the traditional model suggests that once repression is lifted a well-formed thought or experience can be exposed, *Sullivan perceived experiences as often *unformulated (pre-symbolic, non-representational) due to the intensity of anxiety. Inquiry would help the patient mentalise, give representation to these previously diffuse experiences. Asking questions and being curious with the patient was seen by Sullivan as a necessary correction to the formulaic, at times, highly theoretical interpretations he observed in the 1930s and 40s. The focus of inquiry also broadens the analytic investigation to include not simply the patients' representational world of *affect and *imagery but also the interpersonal and observable behaviours - attitudes, manner of speech, etc. Though this technique has been criticised as superficial, the inquiry into what appears to be mundane often leads to transference, conflictual experience. Levenson emphasises that the use of inquiry is an 'indirect approach . . . without any dynamic formulation in mind . . . [unlike] a directed inquiry [which leads] the respondent to some inevitable conclusion . . . The function of a detailed inquiry, then, is not to construct a veridical or instrumentally useful narrative about the patient's life . . . It is to deconstruct the story, locate the omissions and investigate them.'

J. A. Ber.

INSISTENCE Insistence is the mark of *conflict, or the presence of the opposite idea in the unconscious. In Hamlet this knowledge of psychic functioning is expressed in the famous line, 'The lady doth protest too much, methinks'. The *reaction formation observed in obsessive conditions is an insistence on the opposite of what is repressed.

J. Mar.

INHIBITION A process is inhibited if it is "switched off" by the operation of some other process. For example, fear can inhibit sexual desire. Inhibition is usually carried out by the ego or *super-ego; the inhibited process is usually an instinctual impulse. Neuroses are regarded as inhibitions in the development of the libido and thus inhibition can be seen as a *symptom.

See also: compromise formation; neurosis