

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF
DEALING WITH PEOPLE

WENDELL WHITE

NEW EDITION

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THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
NEW YORK · BOSTON · CHICAGO
DALLAS · ATLANTA · SAN FRANCISCO

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
LONDON · BOMBAY · CALCUTTA
MADRAS · MELBOURNE

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
OF CANADA, LIMITED
TORONTO

The Psychology of Dealing with People

SERVING THE NEED OF
A FEELING OF PERSONAL WORTH

By

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The Psychology of Making Life Interesting

NEW EDITION
COMPLETELY REVISED AND RESET



NEW YORK
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1946

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Set up and electrotyped. Published January, 1936.
Reprinted, May, July, August, September, October, 1936.
Reprinted January, June, November, 1937, December, 1939.
New Edition, set up and printed, published, March, 1941.

Reprinted October, 1941
Reprinted September, 1942
Reprinted November, 1943
Reprinted July, 1945
Reprinted March, 1946



PREFACE

IN ANY science, the eagerness of the ablest minds to discover new truths often keeps them from making their findings available to the people. Leading psychologists, attracted by the many opportunities for investigation and discovery, have not given dissemination of knowledge the attention that it deserves. The psychological problem of greatest concern to most people, that of dealing successfully with others, is one on which the public has been given little help. College students, for the most part, have not been offered much of the available material pertaining to procedures in human relationships, and people in general have been given meager information concerning this vital problem.

There is available much helpful literature pertaining to the psychology of dealing with people. It consists of reports of scientific investigations, of recorded procedures of some of the great leaders of humanity, and of accounts of contemporary practices in the workaday world. But that material is, for the most part, fragmentary; and, being fragmentary, it has less value than the same material woven into a connected and extensive discourse. There is, therefore, need of a systematic treatment of the psychology of dealing with people.

This volume is divided into four parts; namely,

Part One: Dealing with People in Life Situations in General.

Part Two: Preventing Wrongdoing.

Part Three: Preventing Mental Abnormality.

Part Four: Furthering Mental Health.

Moreover, this volume is restricted in its treatment of these subjects to serving the *need of a feeling of personal worth*. Another volume, similarly organized and based on the *need of variety*, was published under the title *The Psychology of Making Life Interesting*.¹ I have also in preparation for publication two manuscripts: one devoted to the *sex need*, and the other to the *need of a livelihood*. These manuscripts also are divided into the four parts mentioned.

There is an advantage in thus studying one want at a time in relation to these various fields, rather than taking these fields separately and studying the different wants that have to do with problems arising within them. This method emphasizes the *interrelation* of the problems of these four classifications, and thus indicates the need of a broad conception of the subject of human motivation.

Assistance in the preparation of this material was received from evening students of the University of Minnesota, to whom preliminary drafts were given in mimeographed form. Haldor B. Gislason, member of the staff of the University of Minnesota, and Harm White of Cleveland, Ohio, were valuable counselors throughout the writing of this book. Curtis E. Avery of the University of Minnesota studied the entire manuscript, and made many valuable criticisms. I am very grateful to all these associates and to other colleagues and friends who have assisted me. For contributing toward the development of this book in every way, I am much indebted to my wife, Margaret Byram White.

¹ White, Wendell, *The Psychology of Making Life Interesting*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1939.

INTRODUCTION

LIFE, for most of us, is social; we have social objectives, and we have occupations that involve human relationships. Successful living therefore necessitates ability to deal with people. In our strivings for happiness and in our attempts to help others achieve it, we need to be adept in getting people to respond favorably to us and to our suggestions. As our relationships with other persons grow in complexity, proficiency in getting along with others and in stimulating them to activity becomes increasingly important. Today, we feel a constant need of being versed in the science, and skilled in the art, of dealing with people.

Methods of dealing with people must be formulated in terms of human nature. Man has certain *fundamental wants*, certain *fundamental motives* or *needs*, that initiate and sustain all of his activity. Although other factors steer man, passion is the gale. The fundamental wants usually act together and, on different occasions, in different combinations. Seldom can a given response be attributed to a single motive; and seldom can its recurrence, in the same or in different individuals, be attributed to the identical combination of motives. But to understand the combined influence of human wants upon human behavior we must know something of the part played by each.

One of the fundamental wants—that to which I shall devote this volume—is the *want for a feeling of personal worth*.¹ This want is a significant factor underlying most

¹ For information as to my treatment of the subject of dealing with people in terms of other fundamental wants, see the Preface.

of what man does. It obviously finds expression in a multitude of ways, and lies hidden in a variety of disguises. In addition to being pervasive, this want is forceful and persistent; it gives rise to some of the most intense activity, and presses forever upon us. How hard man struggles to avoid a feeling of worthlessness—to achieve a feeling of importance! How insistently he demands that his worth be acknowledged! How high he places humankind in the order of existence! And how much he prides himself when he feels that he is, and is considered to be, of especial significance among his fellow men!

What is the strength of the want for a feeling of personal worth in comparison with that of the sex want, the want for a livelihood, or the want for freedom from extreme monotony? None of the fundamental wants can be called a master passion, for each in turn may swallow the others. But the gratification of the want for a feeling of personal worth takes precedence no less frequently than does the gratification of any other want. Often pride walks out on love, disdains a fortune, or remains on a treadmill to keep itself unassailed. There are many occasions in the life of man when he can forgo everything but a sense of personal worth.

Feelings of personal worth may be achieved through self-approbation and the approbation of other persons. But usually the approbation of other persons, to be gratifying, must be thought merited; for approbation that is clearly unmerited makes the one receiving it conscious of his failure to measure up to the standard with which he is credited, and so it becomes mortifying to him. Moreover, unmerited approbation may be regarded by the recipient as insincere, and hence as dispraise or an indication that he is considered a

dupe. Those who in the spirit of approbation paint other persons most truly praise them best.

If people usually take pride only in approbation that they think justified, why do so many persons truckle to flattery? Worth in certain human traits is very intangible and subjective; hence, to a vain person almost any praise may be deserved praise. And some who do recognize flattery as undeserved approbation—especially people with feelings of inferiority—nevertheless like it because it proves that their favor is sought after, and therefore valued. But they would take more pride in merited than in unmerited approbation. Thus there is little to be said in favor of praising people for qualities in which they are in reality weak, instead of acknowledging their good qualities.

Whether people help others find cause for self-approbation or whether they express approbation for them depends much upon their willingness to have them enjoy such feelings. There are, on the one hand, persons who are so unsympathetic with others that they do little to give them cause for self-esteem, and who are so desirous of gaining ascendancy that they see little merit in others. Moreover, when they express approbation, however niggardly, they do so with insincerity. Some of the most ingenious can disguise their insincerity with subtlety, but they can ordinarily do so for only a short time.

There are, on the other hand, persons who are generous and modest—who enjoy seeing their fellows experience self-regard, and who do not think first of chiseling a monument to themselves out of every human relationship. Such persons are disposed to perceive and acknowledge the merit of others, and to help them become more praiseworthy; they are disposed to do what this book suggests. But the

disposition to help other persons find cause for self-approbation and to express due approbation of them is not enough; one needs also to be versatile and artful in methods of procedure.

Everyone is chiefly interested in those methods of dealing with people that pertain to his own particular human relationships. There are, however, methods that have a universal application. I shall limit my discussion primarily to such methods, and shall illustrate their use in solving different occupational and social problems. My purpose in doing so is to present methods helpful to everyone, and to make their value more apparent than one could through less extensive illustration of them. The methods of universal application that I shall discuss are methods of establishing and maintaining amicable human relationships, and of fostering various pride-sustaining experiences. By pointing out the widespread use of these methods one should make very evident their merit, since a method used successfully in twenty fields is confirmed in twenty ways.

The methods that I shall present for dealing with people can be used effectively and honorably, for they serve well the need of a feeling of personal worth, and they can be used with sincerity.

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PART ONE

**DEALING WITH PEOPLE IN LIFE
SITUATIONS IN GENERAL**

CHAPTER I

PRESENTING ONE'S IDEAS INDIRECTLY

PRESENTING an idea indirectly consists in presenting it as having originated, more or less, with the other person. It is a means of leading without a leash. If you are observant of people and remember what you observe, you will usually find in another person's life at least a spark that you can kindle into the idea you wish him to accept. And often you may recall that he has previously expressed in almost identical form the idea you have in mind. The indirect method can, therefore, be used extensively.

Why should one present indirectly the ideas one wishes to convey? Because the indirect presentation of ideas appeals to another's want for a feeling of personal worth. It does so in different ways:

1. *By Sparing Another from Feeling Inferior.* When a person presents his ideas directly, he implies that those whom he instructs or advises are inferior. Such an attitude can make them uncomfortable even when the person giving counsel in no way attempts to show his wisdom at their expense; for the learner is always, in respect to what he is learning, inferior to the instructor. But when a person presents his ideas as having originated, more or less, with those whom he counsels, he does not make them feel inferior.

2. *By Sparing Another's Feelings of Independence.* When you get another person to look upon your idea as representing to some degree his own thinking, you do not give the im-

pression that you are trying to dictate his behavior, and so you spare his feelings of independence. Every human being likes to think that he is considered capable of making his own decisions and free to do as he chooses—that he is a self-determining being. In using the indirect method you permit him to enjoy such feelings, and so do not make him averse to the ideas you convey.

In using, on the contrary, the direct method of presenting an idea to another person, especially if your attitude is paternalistic or dictatorial, you may override his feelings of independence to the extent of making him think that you regard him as a mere puppet, and so you make him unalterably opposed to your suggestion. Failure to realize this is often manifested by the ill advised use of *telling* and *compelling* technique. Lincoln emphasized the futility of such methods when he said:

Assume to dictate to his [man's] judgment, or to command his action, or to mark him out as one to be shunned and despised, and he will retreat within himself, close all the avenues to his head and heart; and though your cause be naked truth itself, transformed to the heaviest lance, harder than steel, and sharper than steel can be made, and though you throw it with more than herculean force and precision, you will be no more able to pierce him than to penetrate the hard shell of a tortoise with a rye straw. Such is man, and so must he be understood by those who would lead him even to his own best interests.¹

Man's unwillingness to have either his ideas or his behavior prescribed is revealed in many ways. Often a person refuses to accept an idea that is presented directly, or to perform an act that is requested in a mandatory way, but acquiesces later when the dictatorial person is not observing

¹ Lincoln, Abraham, Temperance Address, Feb. 22, 1842.

him. In like manner, the displeasure in being dictated to is manifested widely by such common statements as "What right does he have to tell us what to do?" "Says who?" and "I don't need your advice." Almost everyone has had occasion to observe responses such as these to "back-seat" driving, for example. Similarly, the cry for liberty one hears everywhere is, among other things, an expression of a desire to feel free to order one's own life. After the Civil War a colored woman was asked by her former master whether she did not have to work as hard as before for what she got. She replied, "Yes, but there's the feeling." It was, undoubtedly, a similar attitude that led women to agitate for the elimination of the word "obey" from the marriage ceremony. Observations such as these seem to support the view that people oppose the direct method because it frustrates their desire to be considered capable of making decisions for themselves and to be free to do as they please.

People differ, of course, in the degree to which they resent having their ideas or actions dictated. On the one extreme, there are those who are very tractable. They accept readily the opinions of others and comply unhesitatingly with requests. On the other extreme, there are negativistic persons, of whom two types may be noted: passively negativistic persons—persons who refuse to accept ideas that are prescribed directly, or to perform acts that are requested in a mandatory way; and actively negativistic persons—persons who adopt ideas or perform acts that are directly opposed to the ideas or acts prescribed. Although people differ in their resentment at having their ideas or actions prescribed, no one likes to be continuously led by the halter in every phase of life; and those who are thus led often either break their halters or strangle themselves in trying to.

Thus we see that the continued use of the direct method is opposed by all, because it destroys feelings of independence, which the use of the indirect method spares.

3. *By Affording Another the Satisfaction of Having More or Less Originated the Idea.* When you present an idea indirectly, the other person may, as a matter of course, take credit for it, and so may obtain a feeling of importance. And the notion of being the originator of an idea is to many persons the greatest and most enduring satisfaction. People will often struggle ceaselessly to gain distinction for original thinking. Because man takes pride in ideas that he regards as his own, the indirect method of conveying one's views is an effective means of gaining acceptance of them.

4. *By Making Another Fear That Unless He Adheres to the Idea with Which He Is Credited He Will Lose Prestige.* With the crediting of anyone for an idea often goes fear on his part that he will lose credit if he fails to abide by that idea. Thus, the indirect method gives the individual a reputation to live up to.

In so far as the indirect presentation of ideas spares another from feeling inferior, spares his feelings of independence, or gives him the satisfaction of having more or less originated the idea, it constitutes *positive* appeal to the want for a feeling of personal worth; in so far as it creates in him fear that unless he adheres to the idea for which he is credited he will lose prestige, it constitutes *negative* appeal to this want.

Since the indirect method appeals in various ways to the want for a feeling of personal worth, it is an important means of persuasion. Anyone who would be considered generally qualified to handle people must be ready to present an idea to others in such a way that they will think it

originated with themselves rather than with him. Successful persons are frequently distinguished from unsuccessful ones by their skill in presenting ideas indirectly.

The indirect method of presenting ideas is often called *suggestion*. This term has, however, a broader meaning; it refers to more than the indirect presentation of one's views. I shall, therefore, refrain from using the word "suggestion" in speaking of the indirect imparting of ideas.

There are different ways in which one can present one's ideas indirectly:

I. TAKING DESIRED BEHAVIOR FOR GRANTED

When you take for granted that the other person will do what you wish him to do, you attribute such behavior to him. In doing so you also compliment him, for the silence that accepts merit as the most natural thing is the highest praise. And the esteem that you express for the other person in this way is a significant factor in stimulating the desired behavior. May Robson expressed this view when she said, "I try to be what those who love me think I am."

The following statements suggest that, in various situations in life, it is possible to make people what we wish them to be by thinking them so:

An athletic coach, in a short talk on training, remarks, "It is needless for me to say anything to fellows of your age and intelligence about smoking. You are aware of its detriment to the physical fitness of an athlete."

A community fund advertisement designed for women, but ostensibly addressed to men, reads, "When you tell her [your wife] that you have given more than you had planned, you will see no censure in her eyes, but love. Trust a woman to understand the present need."

A safety poster shows a tool left on the edge of a scaffold, and reads, "You know better than this. When the other fellow doesn't, tell him."

A mother in trying to get her son to take a bath says, "Here is a bath towel for you."

An article supporting an enactment of the federal government reads, "The Recovery Act was written with the confident belief that the great majority of business men are ready to cooperate with their fellows and their government."

A wife says to her husband, "You will have time to shave before dinner."

An employer says, "I know that I can depend on you."

A judge says, "I believe you have sufficient character to build a new life. I will give you that chance."

"We have all a part to play in the war, and I know you will not fail in yours."

"I do not think it necessary for me to do more than indicate the need."

"A correspondent writes, 'We trust that . . .'"

Even when an individual's behavior is not the desired behavior, this method of taking the desired response for granted can be used effectively, as is suggested by the following statements:

"This is not very good work, but I know you will do better next time."

"It isn't like you to do that."

"I was asked to call your attention to the 'No smoking' signs in this building."

A mother says to a child, "I am sure you would have come home earlier if you had known the time."

"If you had stopped to think, you wouldn't have done it."

“Apparently some of you do not realize that your talking is annoying to others who are trying to hear.”

Although the taking of desired behavior for granted is conducive to such behavior, this method alone is not enough to assure continuance of it. For acts to be repeated, they must in one way or another be rewarded.

2. CREDITING ANOTHER WHEN HE HAPPENS TO MAKE THE DESIRED RESPONSE

No one is always in the wrong. Keep alert, and sooner or later you will find the other person doing what you wish him to do and continue doing. Then compliment him for what he did. In so doing you get your idea to him indirectly.

The following statement by Burr in regard to crediting men in industry when they happen to make the desired response is also suggestive of the value of this method in dealing with people in other situations:

The whole technique of inaugurating new ideas by making the worker think that he discovered the idea is quite effective, not only in foremanship, but also in other aspects of industrial relations. If the person you wish to convince makes any suggestion remotely resembling what you want, you can say “there is an idea” and later bring forth the original proposition you had in mind, giving him credit for it.²

Some persons make the error of calling the individual's attention always to his mistakes; never to the desired responses he makes. Thus they impute to him only failure to do what is desired, never the doing of it, and so they judge

² Burr, Harold Ernest, *Psychology and Industrial Efficiency*, p. 293. New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1929. Used by permission of the publishers.

him by his lapses or inabilities. This method, being not only direct but also unfair, may be most offensive.

Various applications of this principle of crediting the individual when he happens to make the desired response can be cited:

When a patient is good-natured, a doctor says, "I admire you for the way you take this."

In trying to make a person who has performed a thoughtful act more thoughtful, the one favored says, "You are very considerate."

A man whose wife is inclined to grow tense while serving the guests compliments her, when the situation warrants his doing so, on the calm and relaxed manner in which she waited upon them.

A teacher, when finding a dilatory student working industriously, says: "I like the way you're applying yourself. Why can't you always put yourself into your work as you do now?"

When a child eats all that is served him, a mother remarks to him: "You ate everything on your plate. That's fine."

A merchant says to a new customer who, for several months, has paid what he owed without delay, "I like to extend credit to you because you are very prompt in paying your bills."

3. CREDITING ANOTHER WITH ALREADY KNOWING WHAT ONE SAYS

Bad as it sometimes is to tell a person directly what he does not know, it is often worse to tell him what he does know. But when you credit the other person with being more or less versed in the subject that you bring up, whether you bring it up for the purpose of discussion or for the purpose of arousing him to action, you show respect for him and avoid giving him the impression of arrogance. To pre-

sent, on the other hand, something known to the other person as if it were unfamiliar to him would be to assume a superiority that one does not possess. And such unfairness in dealing with people is a poor policy.

When one does not know whether the other person has certain information, one often has the right to assume that he does possess it; and, in such cases, he has the right to be credited correspondingly.

This method of crediting another for already knowing what one says is illustrated by the statements:

“As you know from your own experience . . .”

“This is nothing new to you, but . . .”

“I tell you that which you yourselves know.”

“As you said some time ago . . .”

“A factor to be taken into consideration is, of course, the fact that . . .”

“As all of you know . . .”

“It is a matter of common knowledge that . . .”

“Let me remind you . . .”

Pope expressed the view taken here in regard to dealing with people when he said:

Men must be taught as if you taught them not,
And things unknown proposed as things forgot.³

Contrast this technique of crediting another person for already knowing what one says with the “I’m telling you” attitude.

³ Pope, Alexander, *An Essay on Criticism*, lines 547-575.

4. CREDITING ANOTHER WITH HAVING SUGGESTED WHAT ONE ADVOCATES

Often an idea evolves from discussion—is a product of different minds—and the person who stated it first in its fully developed form may have contributed little toward its development. But for anyone to take undue credit for an idea tends to arouse resentment, as is expressed in such common statements as “You took it right out of my mouth!” and “That’s what I said a few minutes ago!” To appropriate to oneself an idea which was originated jointly may so destroy its luster for another person who contributed to it that he will reject the idea, regardless of its merit. More unkind feelings and friction in discussion groups than is generally realized result from this human failing of taking the entire credit for an idea that has had at least a few roots in one or more other members of the group. He should work alone who cannot be honest, and even generous, with associates to the extent suggested in the following statements:

“I wonder if this isn’t what you have in mind. . . .”

“If I understand you correctly, you mean to say that . . .”

“Suppose we word it this way. . . .”

“I believe I see your point. . . .”

“That gives me an idea.”

“I don’t like the way you put it, but I believe you’re on the right track. Suppose we put it this way. . . .”

“I am of the opinion that Mr. Brown expressed at the opening of this meeting, when he said . . .”

The crediting of another person with having suggested what one advocates strengthens one’s influence, because of

the honesty of doing so and because of the indirectness of this method of conveying one's ideas.

5. PRESENTING IDEAS AS BEING RELATED TO VIEWS OR ACTS OF ANOTHER OR HIS ANCESTORS

When one presents an idea as being in harmony with something said or done by the other person, one enables him to feel that he shares in the underlying principle and, consequently, in the idea presented to him. The kinship of ideas is so wide that the apprehending mind can usually see a relationship between what it advocates and what the other person has at some time or other advocated through word or act. You usually can, therefore, make your instruction or advice harmonize with another person's way of thinking, and thus enable him to feel that he stands with you on common ground; that he is not on a lower intellectual or moral level. Moreover, to always present your ideas as being foreign to everything in the other person's life would be as unfair to him as it would be inexpedient.

An individual often identifies himself so closely with his ancestors that he tends to look upon what they said as representing also his own views. Hence presenting an idea to the individual as in harmony with views of his ancestors is an indirect means of presenting it to him.

The following examples of presenting an idea as harmonizing with a view or act of another person or of his ancestor suggest clearly the value of this method:

“Here is something in line with what you have been saying. . . .”

“Knowing you as I do, I am inclined to think that you would favor . . .”

“It isn’t like you to do that; it would be more like you to . . .”

“I wish you would work as hard as you play. You went after that fly ball as if you intended to get it, and you got it!”

“In Julius Caesar, Brutus is thus addressed:

‘O, you and I have heard our fathers say,
There was a Brutus once that would have . . .’”

“I propose to go on in faith and loyalty to the tradition of our race. I propose to build upon the foundations which our fathers laid over one hundred and fifty years ago.”

“Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers . . . It is for us . . . to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who . . .”

“Let us reincarnate the spirit of our fathers, and say to those who would destroy the liberty they wrought out . . .”

“What we need is more of the spirit of the pioneer in search of new frontiers. There is always something unthought of waiting to be done.”

The spirit of seeing and of pointing out a common ground upon which you and those whom you would influence stand was expressed by Shaw when he said, “There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it.”

6. GIVING FACTS WITHOUT DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

When you present facts without drawing a conclusion, you leave to the other person the drawing of the conclusion. Such a procedure is therefore an indirect means of presenting an idea, provided, of course, the other person arrives at the conclusion you wish him to reach.

This method of presenting facts without drawing a conclusion is used in child training. Some elementary school-books devised to stimulate classroom discussion of moral traits are kept free of forthright statements as to what con-

stitutes proper behavior.⁴ And educators, in the selection of stories for developing proper attitudes, give preference to those stories in which the moral is not pointed out. They select many fables—stories in which the chief characters are animals or inanimate things—because fables present human traits or foibles most indirectly. Note the indirectness of the instruction in the following fable and the opportunity that the indirectness affords the child to come to an important conclusion seemingly of his own accord:

Once upon a time there was an old man and his wife, and they had a speckled hen. One day the hen laid an egg, not an ordinary one, but a gold one. And the old man tried as hard as he could to break it, and couldn't. And his wife tried as hard as she could to break it, and she couldn't. . . . Then the old man and his wife began to cry, but the hen clucked and said: "Don't cry, don't cry. I'll lay you another egg, and this time not a gold one, but an ordinary one."

Dramatists use extensively this method of giving facts without drawing conclusions from them. When they wish to advocate social changes, they portray for us the deficiency of the established order. And without telling what ought to be done they leave us to make that decision on the basis of the facts they present. Ibsen said: "I answer not. My work is but to question."

In all occupations there are leaders who simply drop a remark occasionally—refrain from expressing their views completely—because they recognize that people like to think of themselves as acting on their own, and not on another person's, decisions.

⁴ Charters, W. W., Rice, Mabel F., and Beck, E. W., *Conduct Problems, Grades 4, 5, 6, 7, 8—5 vols.*). The Macmillan Company, New York, 1931.

Some artful persons when discussing subjects with others, in addition to refraining from stating conclusions, make such statements as "What this all signifies is a little hard to say," "Use your own judgment," and "Do as you see fit." Thus, they not only avoid affecting superiority or exercising rulership but also make it clear that they have no such intentions.

7. PRESENTING IDEAS IN QUESTION FORM

A question put to another person stimulates him to thought. If the question is well formulated, it brings to his consciousness the idea with which you wish to impress him; and, as he expresses that idea, he makes it his own. Presenting an idea in question form is decidedly indirect, in that the response it brings forth is not simply a thought but a thought made articulate.

When an executive asks his employees to prepare for him a written statement of what they are doing or plan to do for self-improvement, he holds before them the need of self-improvement; but, in doing so, he stands in the background. When a personnel manager of a retail store gives employees a questionnaire on which they are to rate themselves for courtesy to customers, knowledge of merchandise, personal neatness, and other qualities, the thought that they should manifest these qualities occurs to them, and it seems to arise spontaneously. When a school administrator asks teachers for opinions as to what the faculty might do to increase its service to the students, he instills into the teachers a thought which they may develop into a plan for enlarging activity. When a teacher gives children printed forms for rating themselves in respect to various character traits, she prompts them to infer that the traits specified are

desirable. When an official of the federal government inquires of governors, mayors, and city managers what they are doing to alleviate unemployment, he makes those who may not have given much serious thought to the subject at least wonder whether they ought not to do something. And when anyone puts his ideas into such queries as "Wouldn't you say that . . ." and "Don't you think that . . ." he presents them somewhat indirectly. Much of the art of effective instruction consists in skillful questioning.

8. STIMULATING ANOTHER TO SELF-EXPRESSION OF ONE'S IDEA

The method of stimulating another person to self-expression of an idea that you wish him to accept serves to get him to tell you something, instead of your telling it to him. This method, like that of presenting an idea in question form, is decidedly indirect, in that the response it brings forth is not simply a thought but a thought expressed.

Educators make considerable use of this method. In character education, teachers sometimes request the pupils to put into scrapbooks clippings illustrating noble deeds, and to show and discuss their scrapbooks at a meeting of the class. In health education, children are sometimes encouraged to enter essay contests. And in all types of education students are stimulated to self-expression. The chief justification of learning through self-expression is, of course, that such learning is more permanent; but such learning is justified also in that anyone is more prone to follow principles to which he has given expression than to follow principles urged upon him.

9. PRESENTING IDEAS THROUGH EXAMPLE

Many persons have a tendency, as everyone knows, to imitate others. It is believed that they may do so—

a. As a direct response to the perception of another's behavior.

b. Because they feel that what others do is the most advantageous act.

c. In order to gain approval and to avoid scorn.

d. In order to think themselves like the models they imitate.

Whether imitation is ever a direct response to the perception of another's behavior is open to question. But when following a set pattern of behavior for any reason, people often feel that they are acting upon their own initiative. And it is for this reason that a good example is the best sermon.

In industry, the seasoned workers whose attitudes are favorably established and well developed are frequently transferred to departments where they will mix with other employees who need a little change in viewpoint. The example set by the loyal worker is often far more effectual than preachments or threats from the foreman. In military training, seasoned men are often put with recruits in order to impart the idea of subordination and obedience to officers. Such practices in the army and in the navy, as in industry, are effectual. In schools, the better students are frequently by necessity in close contact with the poorer ones, and have a greater influence upon them than the admonitions of the teacher.

Although behavior witnessed by an individual frequently induces similar behavior in him, it may not do so. When the

person setting the example obviously does it for effect, he makes the presentation of his idea direct; and by his obvious attempt to exercise "backstairs influence" over others he ruffles their pride severely. It mortifies anyone to find that in one way or another a veiled attempt is being made to take him off guard, and thus control his thoughts or actions; for to be thought subject to influence is to be thought insignificant. Moreover, persons whose judgment is not respected, and persons whose approval or disapproval is of little concern to anyone, or less likely to be imitated than are those who have prestige or whose approval is sought after. But the behavior of anyone who commands respect tends to stimulate similar behavior in others.

10. AFFORDING EXPRESSION OF NEGATIVISM

The method of affording others opportunity for expression of negativism is effective in handling either passively negativistic persons (persons who refuse to accept ideas that are prescribed directly, or to perform acts that are requested in a mandatory way) or actively negativistic persons (persons who adopt ideas or perform acts that are directly opposed to the ideas or acts prescribed). Before considering such methods let us give some thought to the satisfactions achieved through negativism, and to its origin.

A negativistic person may enjoy his negativism because it affords him feelings of superiority or of independence, or because through it he gets attention. Although the attention obtained through negativism is usually unfavorable attention, the negativistic person generally finds such attention less annoying than being utterly ignored. A negativistic boy once said, in reference to his teacher, "She never pays any attention to you when you do only what you should do."

Persons of any age may become negativistic to gain notice or to achieve feelings of superiority or of independence.

Negativism may originate in different ways. Nearly all children are negativistic for a period during the third or fourth year after birth. At this age the child discovers and takes delight in his ability to direct his own actions. He delights as much in his newly discovered freedom of action as he delighted in his first realization of being able to walk or talk; and he eagerly asserts this independence. But there is negativism at all ages that is not normal. Much of it is developed through learning. The person who gains notice or freedom by being negativistic is likely to develop such attitudes. Negativism may also be an expression of a haughty attitude that always regards another as being in the wrong, or of a domineering attitude that likes to override another's suggestions. It may furthermore be provoked by a feeling that the person making suggestions is haughty or domineering. For the sake of asserting their independence, husbands who feel henpecked and wives who feel browbeaten often go contrary to requests made.

The problem of dealing with a young child in the normal stage of negativism is one not of suppression, but of accomplishing your objectives despite his negativism. You can often, by a little management, enable such a child to be negativistic in complying with your wishes, as readily as in opposing them. If he refuses to eat, serve small portions, and let him have additional portions upon his insistence. In this way you may change his refusal to eat to a refusal to accept small portions, and thus may get him to assert himself through eating, instead of through refusing. If he refuses to take a bath, give him but a few inches of water, and he may insist upon a full tub. Letting a normally negativistic child

have but a minimum of anything is often an effective means of getting him to demand more.

Although negativism at the age of three or four is a normal factor in the child's development, the outgrowing of negativism in due time is also a factor. Too prolonged negativism can often be checked by suggesting to the child that he do something he knows would give him pleasure. This method is especially effective when negativism would obviously result in discomfort or privation. One might say, without warning: "Take this nickel and buy yourself an ice-cream cone"; "Come with me, and I'll buy you a new pair of shoes"; or, "Let's go to the zoo." Such methods are effective because they teach the child that various benefits may be achieved through compliance with other persons' wishes.

One should strive to keep children from becoming extremely negativistic, as well as to overcome extreme negativism when they develop it. Since the child is negativistic because he desires to exercise independence, it is possible to prevent much negativism by presenting certain matters to the child for his own decision. Letting the child decide, for example, upon such things as the color of a garment to be bought for him gives him the feeling of freedom that negativism affords, and so it prevents him from becoming extremely negativistic.

What are effective ways of getting on with negativistic persons of any age? Often you can get a child or an adult to react favorably to what you have prepared, procured, or planned for either or both of you by saying, in reference to it, "I may have made a mistake," or "You may not like this." Often you can get a person to react favorably to various suggestions by saying, "You don't think that . . . ,

do you?" "You wouldn't say that . . ., would you?" or, "You wouldn't care to . . ., would you?" In a comic strip a woman, desirous of making plans with her husband for an outing on the Fourth of July, said to him, "You're not planning on us going anywhere for the Fourth, are you?" The effectiveness of her method was suggested by the next picture in the comic strip, showing them motoring down the highway: she with seeming meekness, and he with a proud demeanor. This illustrates not only the possibility of influencing a negativistic person by affording him expression of negativism, but also the fact that, during the many centuries of male dominance, women have surpassed their "betters" in the art of presenting ideas indirectly. The negativistic person feels such strong resentment at having his ideas or actions dictated, and delights so much in thinking and acting independently, that he responds readily to opportunities for expressing negativism.

Much of the success that is achieved in dealing with people, whatever may be the nature of one's human relationships, comes from proceeding in accordance with methods discussed in this chapter: from leading without a leash.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTING ONE'S IDEAS DIRECTLY IN AN INOFFENSIVE MANNER

ALTHOUGH the direct method of presenting an idea does not credit the other person with having more or less originated that idea, as does the indirect method, it can be equally inoffensive to him, and hence equally effective in influencing his behavior. Usually the direct method is inoffensive when it is used in accordance with principles such as the following:

I. GIVING THE IMPRESSION OF MODESTY

Offensiveness in the direct presentation of ideas can be avoided by giving the impression of modesty. People like to have you think of them not simply as having merit in themselves, but also as having merit at least somewhat equivalent to your own. So if you overrate yourself, you underrate others and thereby offend them. But in being unassuming you give the impression that you view them favorably in comparison with yourself; and so you do not give offense.

By giving the impression of modesty you avoid not only discrediting others, but also bringing discredit upon yourself. A man who comes up to his own idea of greatness must have a very low standard. He to whom mediocrity is greatness is himself mediocre. The arrogant bring discredit upon themselves also, because they give the impression that they are unappreciative of achievements different from their own.

Beauty must appear modest lest she seem to have a narrow conception of the qualities that make up a woman; brawn must not strut lest it seem unaware that intelligence too is a desirable attribute; wealth must not seem ostentatious lest it seem ignorant of the superior pleasures that some in moderate circumstances get out of life.

Of course it is often necessary to make one's strong points known, for most people are too busy with their own affairs to have time or energy to gauge other persons' worth. A person who is, at the same time, very deserving and inexpressive of his merit may long be overlooked. But arrogance is an impediment to making one's good qualities known, because it is antagonizing and blinds people to whatever merit one may have.

Can a person be modest and yet make his good qualities known? Certainly. That this is so will become apparent when we consider the following ways of giving the impression of modesty:

a. Comparing Oneself to an Ideal or Standard Higher Than Oneself. An effective means of appearing modest and yet making known one's merit is to compare oneself to an ideal or standard higher than oneself. The person who does so reveals his merit and an awareness of his limitations. Thus he reveals both merit and modesty. Anyone may usually claim, for example, all the knowledge he possesses without seeming arrogant, provided he admits that he has much to learn; and a person who reveals or admits his knowledge with the attitude that he knows very little reveals that he has even more than knowledge: he has wisdom. When Socrates was asked why the Delphic Oracle pronounced him the wisest of all the Greeks, he said, "It is because I alone of all the Greeks know that I know nothing."

In attempting to inform other persons of their merit without seeming boastful, people commonly compare themselves to a standard higher than themselves. They do so by mentioning their strong points and, at the same time, by speaking of them as if they were no great accomplishments. There is both modesty and self-advertising in such common statements as the following, if made in response to inquiry:

“I haven't traveled much; but I have had some very pleasant trips, especially in the last three years, during which I . . .”

“I cannot say that I have been very successful financially, but I have managed to lay aside enough to live comfortably.”

“I have had only three years of college work.”

“I don't know much about story writing, but I have written a few stories that were accepted by . . .”

Minimizing the significance of one's accomplishment when speaking with a person of little achievement is, of course, rude because it makes him feel insignificant. This means of giving the impression of modesty must, therefore, be used with discretion.

b. Attributing One's Success to Opportunity or Chance. Not all persons are free to take the way of life that would give them the greatest satisfaction; and frequently persons of the same aptitude, embarked upon similar ventures, meet with wholly different fortunes. The same wind that carries one vessel to port may, because of chance circumstance, carry another off its course. The statement one so often hears, “I was lucky,” is not always without foundation. Even in scientific discoveries the factor of chance is a significant one. A person who imputes his success to opportunity or chance seldom gives the impression of arrogance.

c. Expressing Gratitude. By expressing gratitude a per-

son attributes his success, at least partly, to someone else, and so he tends to give the impression of modesty. A man who says that his success was due to the inspiration or direct help of his wife may speak of his accomplishment and yet seem modest. An administrative officer of any organization who speaks of the splendid cooperation that he has received may review his accomplishments without appearing boastful. And anyone who expresses his belief that it was through the help of God that he achieved what he did may, without his humility being questioned, dwell on the work he has done.

d. Admitting Distinction in One Quality Only. Persons who are successful in but a single kind of activity can, if necessary, put much emphasis upon their accomplishment and yet give the impression of modesty if they admit that they have accomplished only one thing: Bobby Jones, the greatest golfer of all time, often expressed his regret that he never had shone in anything but golf.

e. Minimizing One's Merit. Minimizing one's merit is not essential to modesty, but is a means of giving the impression of being modest. However, it is good judgment to belittle oneself only when this is necessary for giving the impression of modesty. Lincoln in speaking as follows, was knowingly or unknowingly, minimizing his ability rather than simply being modest—an attitude that was necessary to avoid reflecting, at the outset, upon the wisdom of the men whom he opposed:

Fellow-citizens of the state of Ohio: I cannot fail to remember that I appear for the first time before an audience . . . that is accustomed to hear such speakers as Corwin, and Chase, and Wade, and many other renowned men; and remembering this, I feel that it will be well for you, and for me, that you should not

raise your expectations to that standard to which you would have been justified in raising them had one of these distinguished men appeared before you. You would perhaps be only preparing a disappointment for yourselves, and, as a consequence of your disappointment, mortification for me. I hope, therefore, that you will commence with very moderate expectations; and perhaps, if you will give me your attention, I shall be able to interest you to a moderate degree.¹

Antony, in *Julius Caesar*, minimized his ability, presumably with the direct purpose of giving the impression of modesty, when he said:

I come not, friends, to steal away your hearts:
I am no orator, as Brutus is;
But, as you know me all, a plain blunt man,
That love my friend; and that they know full well
That gave me public leave to speak of him:
For I have neither wit, nor words, nor worth,
Action, nor utterance, nor the power of speech,
To stir men's blood: I only speak right on;
I tell you that which you yourselves do know;
Show you sweet Caesar's wounds, poor, poor dumb
mouths,
And bid them speak for me.²

It is only when a public speaker finds his audience prejudiced in favor of his opponent, or when a person finds another extremely sensitive, that it is necessary to be self-depreciating. In normal human relationships a person may claim his due merit, provided he does not seem to have a better opinion of himself than others have.

Some persons depreciate themselves for no reason other than to distinguish themselves for being humble. A man of

¹ Lincoln, Abraham, Address at Columbus, Ohio, Sept. 16, 1859.

² Shakespeare, William, *Julius Caesar*, Act III, scene ii, lines 220-230.

little achievement may try to be a Socrates by saying, "I know absolutely nothing." Such a person usually gets no credit except for telling the truth.

Although one can readily speak of one's merit without seeming boastful, it is usually unnecessary to mention it. Merit when not overshadowed by arrogance is, as a rule, quickly recognized. Moreover, to say nothing for oneself often implies that there is no need of saying anything. "The less you speak of your greatness, the more shall I think of it." The person of known accomplishment who makes no reference to it is praised twice; praised for his accomplishment and praised for being too modest to mention it.

f. Refraining from Overpositive Statements. A person who refrains from overpositive statements need not, to avoid seeming arrogant, keep his light under a bushel. An introductory phrase such as "It seems to me," "I am inclined to think that," "As I look at it," or, "Much could presumably be accomplished by," when expressed in the right tone of voice, usually gives modesty to the subsequent statement.

A person who refrains from overpositive statements also is freer of embarrassment when he happens to be in the wrong than one who speaks without restraint; and he can change his view with less mortification.

2. RESPECTING THE OPINIONS AND RIGHTS OF OTHERS

By respecting the opinions and rights of others, as well as by giving the impression of modesty, a person can avoid giving offense. And those who, when expressing their views, tell others to do as they like usually achieve a great following. Such acknowledgment of another person's ability to make a satisfactory decision in regard to the idea one pre-

sents, and of his freedom to do as he chooses in regard to it, is illustrated by the statements:

“I wish you would consider . . .”

“This is just a suggestion.”

“If it's agreeable to you. . . .”

“Will you please . . .”

“I think that . . . but it's all up to you.”

“This is a thing for you to decide. There are, however, some things to which I should like to call your attention because most of us tend to overlook them.”

“You have a right to live your own life, but we can all profit by talking things over.”

“I am aware of your prerogative in this matter.”

“Gentlemen, you have heard both sides. The case is now in your hands.”

“We do not seek to control any man's vote. We feel, however, that the coming election is so important to industry and employment that our employees should know our views.”

“You are now old enough to choose for yourself, but I wish you would consider this before making your decision.”

“I come to you at the opening of the regular session of the Seventy-third Congress, not to make requests for special or detailed items of legislation; I come, rather, to counsel with you . . .”

Violations of the principle that one should respect the opinions and rights of others are common. Parents sometimes attempt unduly to dictate their children's thoughts and actions. There is a great lag in the adoption of new methods of managing children in the home, as they attain new levels of development. In some cases the paternalistic attitude is never relinquished—not even after the children

have reached adulthood. The tendency to persist in managing our children through their advancing years in the same way in which we managed them when they were babies results from the fact that we are governed largely by habit. Not only in the home but in life in general many persons, trying to influence others, disregard opinions and rights by belittling what they say, by commanding them unnecessarily, or by openly expressing the intention to "convince," "manage," or "Americanize" them, or to "mold public opinion." Violations of the principle that one should respect the opinions and rights of others are about as numerous as are the applications of the principle.

Although in respecting opinions and rights of other persons one avoids offending them, extreme regard for their views might operate to one's disadvantage—for instance, when it is interpreted as oversolicitude for what they think, and hence as an indication that one lacks courage, decisiveness, conviction, or some other quality necessary for leadership or for simply doing something by oneself. In such cases, some indifference to the opinions of other persons may be more effective in inspiring confidence.

3. SHOWING CONCERN FOR ANOTHER'S INTEREST IN ONE'S IDEA BEFORE EXPRESSING IT

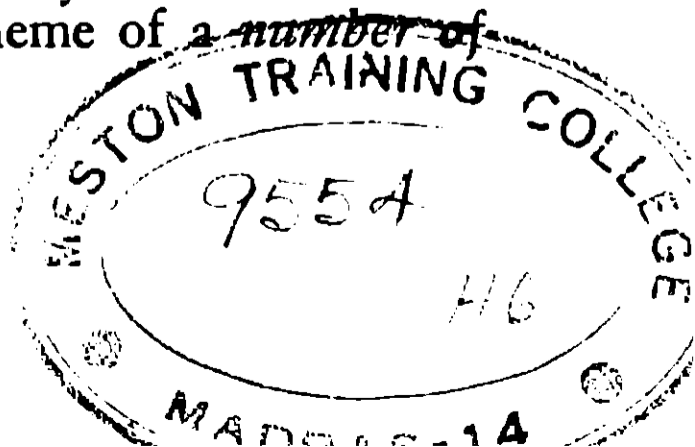
If you should give another person an unasked-for opinion, whether information or advice, he might think that you were trying to show your wisdom at his expense, or to dictate to him; and so, however useful your counsel would be, he would be likely to reject it. But if you give him your opinion after he has shown interest in receiving it, he is unlikely to think you presumptuous. Modesty in expressing one's views frequently depends on whether one has been

asked for them. To be accepted gratefully and to do good, counsel must never intrude. And it need not intrude, because most people usually desire information and tend to give a ready hearing when approached with concern for their interest. Mindfulness of another's interest in what one has to say is commonly expressed by such statements as "If you care for my opinion . . .," "May I say a word?" and "Since you have asked me to tell you what I think . . .". By thus respecting another's interest in your counsel you can generally present your ideas directly without giving offense.

4. APPEARING AS A SPOKESMAN

One can frequently present one's views directly without giving offense to another person by approaching him merely as the spokesman for a third person or group. This is largely because such a procedure avoids giving the impression of being egotistical or dictatorial. Appearing as a spokesman is especially commendable when advocating a worthy cause. Seldom is it discreet to advance an important cause as your own. Great men do not do so: they present themselves as representatives of groups with which they identify themselves. Benjamin Franklin did so when he solicited funds for building a city library. He attests to his success in proceeding in this way, saying:

The objections and reluctance I met with in soliciting the subscriptions, made me soon feel the impropriety of presenting one's self as the proposer of any useful project, that might be suppos'd to raise one's reputation in the smallest degree above that of one's neighbors, when one has need of their assistance to accomplish that project. I therefore put myself as much as I could out of sight, and stated it as a scheme of a ~~number of~~



friends, who had requested me to go about and propose it to such as they thought lovers of reading. In this way my affair went on more smoothly, and I ever after practis'd it on such occasions; and from my frequent successes, can heartily recommend it.³

Further applications of this principle of appearing as a spokesman when presenting one's ideas are revealed by such statements as, "I have been requested to say that . . ."; "As chairman it devolves upon me to . . ."; "I do not like to do this, but I have no choice in the matter"; "If you do so, I shall be forced, as representative of . . . to . . ."; "I should like to let you call on her, but the doctor said that she shouldn't have any company," and "Fellows, there is one thing that I should like to have you understand, and that is that I am only the president of this organization."

But statements such as these often give the impression that one is trying to shift to someone else the responsibility for what one says or does. This cowardly and often unfair practice of hiding behind another person invariably arouses indignation. Appearing as a spokesman is therefore commendable only when it serves, as it often does, as an escape from appearing egotistical or dictatorial.

5. EXPRESSING AN IDEA WITHOUT DIRECTING IT TOWARD THE OTHER PERSON IN PARTICULAR

Expressing one's idea without directing it specifically toward the person addressed avoids giving the impression of singling him out as being in need of information or guidance. Such a procedure is less likely to affront the indi-

³ Franklin, Benjamin, *Autobiography* (in his account of methods used in establishing the Philadelphia public library in 1730).

vidual than is a statement directed to him in particular. There are various ways in which one can keep another person from regarding the idea presented as being intended for him alone.

a. Addressing One's Ideas to the Group. An idea addressed to the group is ordinarily regarded as having been intended for everyone and, in such cases, is less likely to become offensive to some one person than when it is addressed to him alone. Furthermore, when an idea is presented in this way the individual may even assume that it was not intended for him at all, but he may, nevertheless, be prompted to acquiesce in it. When addressing an idea to the group causes the individual to respond thus, one is making an indirect presentation.

There are numerous indications that a person as a member of a group will tolerate a dictatorial attitude which he as an individual would resent. Large audiences are often mentally bludgeoned into the acceptance of an idea, and yet offer little protest.

There are, however, individuals who will not react favorably to ideas presented to them as members of a group. To some of them, such methods are too impersonal to be effective. Others, realizing that an idea addressed to the group is intended for them in particular, would prefer to be approached individually in a candid manner.

b. Presenting an Idea as Being a Good Policy. When one presents an idea as being a good policy, rather than as something that the other person should do, one's suggestion is less personal and, consequently, does not give the impression of domineering. This technique is apparent in the statements: "It is generally well to . . ."; "It is a good idea to . . ."; "It pays to . . ."; "One ought to . . ."; "It is

the thing to do"; "One never goes wrong by . . ."; "The secret of success is . . ."; and "The way to get on with people is to . . ." Since such statements are less offensive than direct requests to do things, they are frequently very commendable.

c. Stating That We Should Do a Certain Thing. By stating that *we* should do a certain thing, rather than that the other person should do it, a speaker not only avoids directing his statements specifically toward the other person, but also puts himself on a common basis with him, and so avoids becoming antagonizing.

This method of stating that *we* should do a certain thing is employed wisely in both individual contacts and public address. One frequently hears statements such as "Let us . . ."; "If we work hard . . ."; "It is up to us to . . ."; "We must carry on this . . ."; and, "United we stand." A slogan to which currency was given by officials at Washington is: "Let's all pull together."

The need for presenting one's ideas in accordance with methods suggested in this and the preceding chapter is especially urgent if one is speaking about something that lies in the other person's field of endeavor and is apart from one's own experience. Lawyers do not care to have laymen tell them how to do their work; nor do teachers, physicians, clergymen, or engineers.

Opposition to advice given by outsiders is often expressed by referring to them as "meddlers," and by statements such as "We do not need anyone to tell us what to do." When dealing with people in general, and especially with persons who feel that one is not justified in expressing a view, one can avoid offending them by proceeding in accord with the methods suggested here.

Thus, in various ways, one can present one's ideas directly without giving offense. Whether one should use the indirect or the direct method in communicating one's ideas depends, of course, on the situation.

CHAPTER III

OPPOSING IDEAS INOFFENSIVELY

The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
Decide no question with their tedious length,
For opposition gives opinion strength.¹

WE HAVE not only the problem of getting other persons to accept our ideas, but also the problem of getting them to give up objectionable ideas of their own. Overcoming ideas thought objectionable is a delicate procedure, a more delicate procedure than simply gaining acceptance of ideas; for it implies not merely that the other person is uninformed but that he is wrong. Such an implication may wound his pride severely—so severely that he will tend to defend the position he has taken as a means of vindicating himself, however soundly you have opposed it. Often truth or expediency is much less important to persons engaged in controversy than pride. Many are willing to fight and die for their ideas, not because of the ideas themselves, but because they are theirs. Such persons are, as were historic warriors, out for sensational trials of strength or for spectacular victories. To get a person to give up an idea one must, therefore, frequently proceed in a manner that safeguards that person's pride.

Methods used for overcoming ideas thought objectionable should not only serve this purpose effectively, but also

¹ Cowper, William, "Conversation," lines 85-89.

be civil for the sake of civility. To wound another's pride unnecessarily when trying to awaken him to error is an inexcusable breach of politeness. But the methods that I shall suggest for opposing ideas inoffensively do not lack civility. As we consider these methods, their civility as well as their effectiveness will be quite apparent.

I. MAKING A CONCESSION BEFORE REJECTING THE IDEA EXPRESSED

When you make a concession before rejecting another's idea, you do not affront him as you would in objecting to his view in an unqualified manner. This is because you, in making the concession, show that you recognize that there is at least some truth in what he says, and thus you take the sting out of your rejection. We can never win a person to our way of thinking until we have admitted whatever validity there is in his position. Much of the art of persuasion consists in considering other people's views, in trying to understand them clearly, and in doing justice to them.

Usually a concession in regard to another's view is the only intelligent response that can be made to what he says, for to understand life is to recognize the many-sidedness of truth. Seldom can it be said that there is but one way of looking at the question. When a person denounces an idea as a whole, his position is generally as untenable as were the positions of the knights who quarreled over the metallic composition of the shield that was in reality gold on one side and silver on the other.

The application of this principle of making a concession before objecting to the idea expressed by another person is illustrated by such current statements as:

“Much might be said on either side.”

“I can’t quite agree with you.”

“Under normal conditions your idea is a good one, but this is an unusual situation.”

“We agree in essentials. We differ only in details.”

“There seems to be some truth in what you say, but I believe that . . .”

“It looks to me like a fifty-fifty proposition. Nevertheless . . .”

“I think that occasionally it is well to do so, but as a general policy . . .”

“It can be done that way, but . . .”

“Your plan has its good points, but I am wondering whether it cannot be improved upon.”

“Your method, I believe, is very suitable for dealing with mature people, but in handling children . . .”

“It might work out all right, but I am rather skeptical about it.”

“The one you favor is very good, but I believe that this one is a better value.”

“I believe that we are not so far apart that we cannot get together on this.”

“Your suggestion seems to have much to commend it. Nevertheless . . .”

“That, I think, may serve very well as a general plan, but I believe it is in need of certain modifications.”

“That sounds logical. Yet . . .”

“Your statement is correct as far as it goes. However, when one takes everything into consideration . . .”

“There seem to be good reasons for doing as you suggest, yet I wonder whether your plan would work out.”

“One may look at it in any number of ways, but I am inclined to think that . . .”

“What you propose might work out all right for a short time, but in the long run . . .”

“Your idea is a good one, but it doesn’t fit into our . . .”

“I agree that it’s a fine lake, but wouldn’t you like to go somewhere else for a change?”

If we would usually, before disagreeing with people, consider wherein we agree, we not only should be more effective in persuasion, but should also do our part to make the world a more pleasant place to live in.

2. REVEALING A DELIBERATE ATTITUDE REGARDING AN IDEA BEFORE REJECTING IT

By revealing first a deliberate attitude regarding an idea expressed by an individual, one can later reject that idea with less danger of affronting him. This is true, because when proceeding in such ways one does not give the individual the impression that one considers him obviously wrong and, consequently, ridiculously in error.

From the standpoint of courtesy for its own sake, as well as from the standpoint of effective persuasion, this method is commendable; for politeness frequently requires that we give hospitality to opinions we cannot share.

The deliberative attitude can be revealed by pondering the idea before raising an objection, or by simply recognizing the idea when expressed and by rejecting it a day later. These methods are illustrated by remarks such as the following:

“That may be worth thinking about.”

“I should rather not give an opinion offhand.”

“I should like to go into this a little before deciding upon it.”

“We might talk this over more at length.”

Although manifesting a deliberative attitude before objecting to an idea enables one later to object to that idea inoffensively, this method may also have the unfavorable effect of strengthening the individual in the ill advised position he has taken because it countenances to some degree the view he expressed. This method must, therefore, be used skillfully in order not to encourage the objectionable idea more than one discourages it.

3. SUGGESTING THAT THE OTHER PERSON GIVE MORE THOUGHT TO WHAT HE HAS SAID

One can often dissuade an individual from an idea by suggesting that he reconsider. Such a suggestion expresses a doubt as to the desirability of the idea, and it is less offensive than an unqualified statement of disapproval. In objecting to an idea expressed by another person, one should be no more positive than is necessary to get him to see the undesirability of that idea. When admonishing the individual to deliberate on the idea he has expressed is sufficient to get him to see that the idea is not a good one, it is unwise to inveigh against it with positive statements.

Expressions such as the following may often serve to get the individual to deliberate on the desirability of the idea he expressed:

“In matters like this a person should act only after much deliberation.”

“A little meditation now might save a lot of grief later.”

“This is a matter that does not need to be decided now.”

“It might be advisable to investigate this very carefully before going ahead.”

“I wouldn’t act hastily in this matter.”

“It is better to be sure you are right before going ahead.”

“Have you considered this from all angles?”

“This is too important a matter to be decided hastily.”

“If I were you I would get the opinion of other persons on this matter before going ahead with it.”

“Have you thought this over carefully?”

“It’s a good policy to think twice before one acts.”

“I would try it out on the members of this group before going ahead with it.”

“There is no need of deciding this now.”

The method of suggesting that the other person deliberate on the idea he has expressed may operate unfavorably for the same reason that the method of revealing a deliberative attitude may operate unfavorably: it gives support to the idea expressed by the individual, and so it tends to strengthen him in the stand he has taken. This method, therefore, like the preceding one, must be used skillfully.

4. STATING THAT THERE ARE OTHERS WHO AGREE BEFORE ONE DISAGREES

Telling another person, before rejecting his idea, that there are other persons who share his view protects him against feeling that you consider him alone to be wrong. Any statement to the effect that there are others who also are in error acts as a buffer to a later statement of disagreement.

Such methods are effective not only in bringing about a change of mind but in furthering amicable relationships for their own sake—an obviously desirable end.

There are many current statements that illustrate this method of saying before one disagrees that there are other persons who agree:

“You are not the only one who takes that view.”

“I have known others under similar circumstances to take the view you do.”

“You are not alone in your opinion. Just the same . . .”

“That’s the general opinion. However, . . .”

“I realize that it is being done that way. Nevertheless, . . .”

“One often hears that view expressed. But I, personally, . . .”

“There is a school of thought taking that view. However, . . .”

“Some like it the way you do, but others . . .”

This method of stating, before one disagrees, that there are other people who agree may have an unfavorable effect similar to that of methods discussed previously. It gives support to the individual’s view, and so may make it harder to dissuade him from it. But the fairness of such statements often gives them force in bringing about a change of mind.

5. AGREEING AND STATING THAT OTHERS WILL NOT AGREE

By agreeing with another person one safeguards that person’s pride, and by stating that other people will not agree with him one raises a question as to the soundness of his idea. Thus, this method also serves to remove objectionable ideas inoffensively. Statements such as the following are effective in most cases:

“I agree with you wholly. But you can never get the public to accept that view.”

“Your idea is sound, but the time is not ripe for introducing it.”

“I think you are correct, but Mr. Smith will never approve of that.”

But this method, likewise, gives countenance to the objectionable idea expressed by the individual, and so it tends to strengthen him in the position he takes. Therefore, this method, too, may be used unprofitably.

6. RESTATING THE INDIVIDUAL'S IDEA AND ASKING IF THAT IS WHAT HE MEANT

To restate another's idea and to ask him if that is what he meant implies, if done in the right tone of voice, hesitancy to accept it. Moreover, most people speak carelessly and say more than they mean. For these reasons, by holding before the individual his statement for affirmation or rejection, one can often get him to modify it in order not to seem ridiculous. And in so modifying it he is likely to restate his position more conservatively. This method of restating the individual's idea and of asking him if that is what he meant constitutes, therefore, *negative appeal* to the want for a feeling of personal worth.

The replies to statements quoted below illustrate the use of this method:

“The schools mollicoddle the children. They should train 'em to do distasteful things. What's taught doesn't matter because it's forgotten anyway.”

“In other words, you say, do you not, that it doesn't matter what you teach them so long as they do not like it?”

“I'm against going to war under any circumstances.”

“You mean, do you not, that you stand for peace at any price?”

In using this technique one must beware of distorting another's idea and thus, through one's own dishonesty, making him ridiculous. It takes considerable skill to restate an extreme view expressed by another person without appearing to exaggerate what he has said.

7. SAYING THAT WHAT IS OBJECTED TO IS A MATTER OF CHOICE

By saying that the thing objected to is a matter of choice, one avoids crossing the person who favored it, and this enables him to change his opinion without thereby admitting that he was wrong. When, for example, a customer says, "I don't like the color," the salesperson, assuming that the color is becoming to the customer and that he would come to like it, may well say, "Color is a matter of preference," or, "We all have our likes and dislikes," and proceed to give reasons why the particular color would be a good selection for the customer to make. Refusal to countenance a customer's objection to even a minor point frequently results in a refusal to make a purchase, however much the customer may otherwise have desired to make it.

This technique of saying that the thing another person objects to is a matter of choice is suitable in various situations, and it is often put effectively to use. Life offers many instances in which the pursuit of different courses by persons having the same objective is justified on the basis of personal preference. Often persons, in various situations, say to those whom they wish to influence that preference as to a course of action is a matter of choice; and thus they gain their respect and sympathetic attention. There are others who, on the contrary, fail to allow for another's per-

sonal preference when evaluating his course of action; and thus they offend him and arouse his resistance.

We can often bring about a change of mind simply through reason and direct instruction. But when reason and direct instruction jeopardize pride, they are usually less effective than a procedure that involves the pride-sustaining method of saying that what the other person objects to is a matter of choice.

8. EXONERATING THE INDIVIDUAL FROM BLAME FOR THE VIEW HE HAS EXPRESSED

Often an individual takes an incorrect position through no fault of his own. When his error is more or less excusable, the thing to do is to exonerate him from blame for saying what he has said; for in doing so one disparages his view without reflecting upon his judgment or motives. The following statements illustrate this inoffensive means of correcting objectionable ideas:

“I feel confident that you would not have taken the position you take if you had had all of the facts.”

“There seems to be some misunderstanding. What I meant was . . .”

“I see that I did not make myself clear.”

“I know you wouldn’t want me to . . .”

“I am confident that you are not aware of the risk involved.”

“There are many details of this problem of which you may be unaware.”

“I realize that this is not an everyday occurrence for you as it is for us.”

“I believe that we are looking at this from different angles.”

“Let me explain this more fully.”

"Your great disappointment has clouded your vision. Let me talk this over with you."

"I must have given you the wrong impression."

"It is easy to get the wrong idea there."

As you exonerate the individual from blame for the view he expressed, you enable him to retract with little embarrassment; and you make him, by the fairness of your attitude, receptive to your suggestions.

9. REFRAINING FROM BEING OVERPOSITIVE IN OPPOSITION TO ANOTHER'S VIEW

As when giving an opinion, so also when opposing another's view, one should refrain from overpositive statements; for such statements make another's error inexcusable by making it certain, and assume a definite superiority in information or in judgment. Moreover, being overpositive in regard to the various concerns of man is not frequently justified, and so it may reveal an immature mind as well as affront the other person.

Many men who were quite definitely set in their opinions have been influenced by persons who, in expressing disagreement, refrained from being overpositive by making such remarks as:

"I am inclined to disagree with you."

"You may be correct, but I can't quite see it that way."

"That's contrary to the impression I got."

"I am somewhat skeptical about that."

"Don't take my criticism too seriously, because I haven't given the matter much thought."

"I'll tell you what I think. But take my criticism only for what it's worth."

The following statement made by Franklin is applicable to what I have said here:

A Quaker friend having kindly informed me that I was generally thought proud; that my pride show'd itself frequently in conversation; that I was not content with being in the right when discussing any point, but was overbearing, and rather insolent, of which he convinc'd me by mentioning several instances; I determined on endeavoring to cure myself, if I could, of this vice or folly. . . . I made it a rule to forbear all direct contradiction of the sentiments of others, and all positive assertion of my own.²

What is the relationship between restraint in expressing one's views and one's ability to inspire confidence? Refraining from being overpositive in objecting to another's view or in simply advancing a view of one's own may inspire or destroy confidence. Being positive implies that one is justified in saying what one says, and thus it tends to be persuasive. A lack of self-confidence implies an inadequate basis for what one says; and, for this reason, the person who seems doubtful of his words cannot expect his audience to believe in them. He is likely to be considered uninformed or lacking in decisiveness. But the positive speaker, whether opposing the view of another person or simply advancing a view of his own, must exercise care lest he give the impression of being overconfident, and therefore uninformed, narrow-minded, or egotistical. He must also, if he is to maintain the confidence which he inspires, prove to be correct more often than incorrect. A positive attitude therefore tends to inspire confidence in the long run only in so far as it is justified. The man who talks overconfidently

² Franklin, Benjamin, *Autobiography* (in his account of methods used in trying to acquire virtues).

usually must move along; he is usually a talk-and-run speaker.

The confidence that a person inspires depends, of course, not only upon himself but also upon his audience. Intelligent people tend to rely upon the words of the man who speaks with no more assurance than the facts warrant. Some persons are, however, influenced as much by the confidence with which a man speaks as by what he says. The extent to which positive statements are necessary to gain the trust of others is a variable factor and must be judged sensitively.

A person who never makes a positive statement is, of course, monotonous. But it is not so much positive statements that irritate another person as overpositive ones.

10. PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE INDIVIDUAL BEFORE OBJECTING TO HIS VIEW

People take disagreements quite gracefully if the disagreements do not constitute personal disparagements. Many people are sufficiently objective to realize that an attack upon what they say is not necessarily an attack upon them. But most sensitive persons take every disagreement to heart, and consider it as much a condemnation of them as it is of what they say. To avoid mortifying such a person when correcting him, you should not come right to the point, but should first minister to his pride by paying tribute to him.

Fairness to those whose ideas one opposes, as well as effectiveness in persuading them, sometimes demands that we pay tribute to them when objecting to what they say, for no one is as unworthy as the worst of his words.

There are several ways in which one can pay just tribute to an individual before objecting to his view:

Conceding That His Motives Are Worthy

"I know that you want to do the proper thing."

"You have always been fair-minded."

"I admire your idealism and admit your sincerity, but I believe that your plan is hardly feasible."

Telling Him That the Idea He Has Expressed
Is Unworthy of Him

"What you say doesn't do justice to you."

"It isn't like you to say that."

"I give you credit for better judgment."

"You're not living up to your reputation."

Telling Him That He Is Generally Right

"That's one time you're wrong."

"In this particular case I cannot agree with you."

"I know you're an authority on this, but . . ."

"I hesitate to reject your advice, but . . ."

Tributes such as these often praise more than they dispraise, and when they do praise they serve well the purpose of removing objectionable ideas inoffensively.

II. BANTERING

To engage in banter is to meet an objectionable idea with good-natured ridicule. Such ridicule may leave the other person somewhat in doubt as to whether or not you mean what you say. And his doubt in the matter may keep your remark from being offensive to him, and may cause him to give thought to the soundness of his statement. In banter-

ing you not only pull your punches but also express, because you are good-natured, a degree of fellowship; and so your bantering may have sufficient warmth to avoid giving offense when it quite obviously overlies seriousness of thought. And the friendliness of bantering keeps criticism from being taken personally; makes it simply criticism of the thought itself. Bantering when recognized as expressing seriousness of thought differs from ridicule in that it is not only acid but also honey. Of many influential persons of all ages it may be said, as was said of Horace:

Sportive and pleasant round the heart he played,
And wrapt in jest the censure he conveyed.³

When a situation is tense with hostility, the ability to banter artfully is the greatest of virtues, for it can break a tenseness that nothing else can cope with.

12. BEING COURTEOUS IN REJECTING IDEAS

Frequently it is the attitude with which one opposes another's view, rather than one's opposition to it, that gives offense. Many minds are open to courteous disagreement but are closed to discourtesy. Our objections to another person's ideas lose all of their force when we express them without civility. There is courtesy in each of the methods I have discussed in this chapter, but there are still further means of exercising this virtue.

Courtesy says no more than is necessary. Thus it credits the individual with understanding, and avoids emphasizing his error. And when saying no more than is necessary, courtesy meets with little resistance, and so it makes an effective

³ Persius, Drummond's translation. Quoted in Russell, Frances Theresa, *Satire in the Victorian Novel*, p. 8. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1920.

impression. Brevity is never more essential than when expressing disagreement. In all your disagreements with the views of others, remember to be brief.

Just as the courteous person usually offers another the best chair or serves him first at table, so also he usually lets him have the last word. Such a gesture of courtesy can usually be made without weakening one's side of the argument, since courtesy always argues in one's favor. Moreover, if you yourself have the last word, you may lose the argument because the other person later, instead of weighing carefully what was said, has thought up a "good" reply.

Courtesy is mild rather than forceful, and so it does not give the impression of being censorious or coercive. Usually the more softly one's criticisms fall, the deeper they penetrate. Harshness, on the other hand, makes the slightest error a serious fault, and has a coercive air. For these reasons it is repulsed with vigor. "Minds are like flowers; they remain open to softly falling dew, but close up to the violent downfall of rain."

Courtesy also lends a helping hand; and, in doing so, it expresses appreciation of the other person. To disagree with another in a spirit of helpfulness is, therefore, an inoffensive means of correcting his ideas. Kindness in objecting to another person's view makes a contradiction a sweet instruction.

13. RECOGNIZING ANOTHER'S VIEW WITHOUT REPLYING TO IT

Withholding comment is often an effective expression of disagreement. Silence can be eloquent and courteous, and when it has these attributes it ranks with the other methods

that we are considering for bringing about a change of mind inoffensively. It is an especially suitable method for correcting ideas that are highly personal to the individual expressing them: wrong ideas that he expresses in self-defense or for self-glorification. When people, for example, tell you things that you feel are not true in regard to their relationships with other persons, it is usually best to express no judgment of what they say. Your silence, if courteous, will cause them to reflect upon their own statements without embittering them toward you; and silence is not necessarily a breach of courtesy, for courtesy does not demand that we express an opinion whenever another person does so. Should the other person ask you a cornering question, such as "Don't you think I am foolish to put up with it any longer?" you may have to fall back upon one of the other methods discussed in this chapter.

14. DISREGARDING THE OBJECTIONABLE IDEA AND DIVERTING ATTENTION FROM IT

Letting another's objectionable remark go unheeded frequently gives the impression that one did not take notice of what he said, and so it provides him with a cover under which he can later make an inconspicuous retreat. And by diverting his attention from the idea he expressed, one frequently makes him forget his comment.

In all types of occupational and social situations this method is used, and should be used more widely; for, more often than most people realize, the best reply is no reply. But one cannot remove all objectionable ideas by disregarding them; one must often meet the objection made. The method of overlooking the objectionable idea is suitable primarily in cases in which a view is expressed with insincerity.

The fact that many people, especially children, say much that they do not mean gives scope to the possible use of this method.

15. EXPRESSING SURPRISE AT ANOTHER'S VIEW

When you show that you are surprised by what another person has said, you impress him, without attacking his pride, with the need of reconsidering what he has said. And the less you contradict him, the less he is likely to rise in defense of himself. If left alone he may in his thinking even retreat in order to avoid producing a similar shock in the future. Such replies as "Is that so?" "I didn't know that to be the case," "I've never heard it put that way before," "You're the first one I've known to put it that strongly," "That's news to me," are apt to make persons who speak carelessly look for cover, which you can provide by changing the subject of conversation.

16. REFUSING TO TAKE THE INDIVIDUAL SERIOUSLY

By refusing to take the individual seriously, you show that you object to the idea he has expressed and you enable him to relinquish that idea without appearing to retract. Furthermore, this method is complimentary to him because it implies that he has a sense of humor.

Fairness to the individual, as well as effectiveness in persuasion, frequently requires the use of this method; for people, often simply to make conversation, say things they do not mean. And when they talk to you for the sake of being courteous, you ought to be generous in your interpretation of what they say.

The best of applications of this principle of refusing to take the individual seriously is that of simply smiling when

the objectionable idea is expressed. Other applications of this principle are embodied in many current statements:

“You don’t mean it. You’re joking.”

“You don’t think that I am going to take you seriously, do you?”

“Stop clowning.”

“You’re a good kidder.”

“You missed your calling. You should have been a comedian.”

“Let’s talk seriously.”

“This is no time for joking.”

“You’re funny.”

“It’s a good thing I know how to take you.”

“That’s all right, Mr. Jones. We all say things that we don’t mean.”

“You wouldn’t think of doing that.”

“You can certainly keep a straight face when you want to.”

“You’re trying to shock me.”

“Are you in the habit of saying what you don’t mean?”

“I like your sense of humor.”

“All joking aside, . . .”

“Now let me tell one.”

“Go ahead and have your fun.”

This method of refusing to take a person seriously cannot be used successfully in all situations. There are times when such a procedure, instead of being inoffensive, is antagonizing. This is true when the individual is insistent in his beliefs. In such cases the use of this technique puts him into a position of defending an idea that you have designated as

ridiculous. The individual's natural response to such a situation is to proceed at once to show that his view is not an absurd one. The only situations in which this method of refusing to take the individual seriously can be used successfully seem to be those in which the other person does not speak with conviction.

17. AGREEING WITH ANOTHER WHEN HE IS RIGHT

Success in any human relationship depends not simply upon one's attitude at the time, but also upon one's past attitudes; it depends upon the kind of person one is known to have been, as well as upon the method that one at the moment uses. Often other persons stubbornly refuse to accept our corrections only because we previously have stubbornly refused to accept their correct statements. To become able to dissuade others from error, one must be receptive to truth when they do express it. If one agrees with another person whenever that person makes a correct statement, one may be able, when that person is incorrect, to disagree in a straightforward manner without offending him.

Does fairness in conversation make unnecessary the use of such methods as those previously discussed? No. For as I have said, their use expresses courtesy. Moreover, when dealing with a sensitive person one cannot, however fair one may have been, successfully oppose his statements in a straightforward way, but only in a way that safeguards his pride.

All the methods of bringing about a change of mind discussed in this chapter are means of disparaging an idea expressed by the individual without affronting him. Since these methods serve to maintain good will while bringing

about a change of mind, they may be designated as conciliatory means of persuasion.

The numerous examples cited in this chapter suggest that the conciliatory methods discussed are being employed by people in all kinds of life situations, as they indeed are. Nevertheless, disputatious procedures—the antithesis of conciliatory methods—are apparently being used far more frequently. The most common way of trying to bring about a change of mind is through argument, which frequently develops into contentiousness. As a result, the person whom one would influence thinks of himself as being engaged in a battle of wits, and he becomes chiefly concerned with gaining a victory. When the individual is in such a state of mind he may ignore the truth, however clearly one may point it out to him, in order to avoid being discredited. No adversary wishes to be “convinced”; and if convinced against his will he does not alter his behavior. A battle with words is sometimes as ineffective in bringing about a change of mind as a battle with arms is ineffective in ending hostility between warring nations. Conciliatory methods, such as those we have considered here, are more effective than disputatious procedures, because they respect another’s need of self-respect.

CHAPTER IV

ACKNOWLEDGING THE PERSONAL WORTH OF OTHERS INDIRECTLY

PEOPLE DESIRE the respect of others because it gratifies, in one way or another, various wants. One of these wants is, as I have said, the want for a feeling of personal worth. I have indicated various means of showing respect for other persons when one is trying to get them to accept one's ideas, and when one is opposing ideas of their own. But there is need of showing respect for other persons in all of one's human relationships.

Appreciation of the worth of other persons can be expressed either directly or indirectly. These two methods consist respectively in *declaring* one's regard for another, and in saying or doing things that prompt him to *assume* that one appreciates him. Indirectness in acknowledging another's worth is usually less embarrassing to both persons than directness. To a direct compliment, the recipient must generally make some reply. If he is deserving of the compliment, usually the sensible thing to do is to accept it; but in accepting it he must give the impression of modesty. This he can do readily if he is artful; but most people are not adept in accepting a compliment with modesty, and so they find direct praise embarrassing. Should the recipient of direct praise be undeserving, he ought to declare himself so; but this he cannot always do without embarrassment, since no one likes to admit a shortcoming. Direct praise, whether justified or unjustified, may be embarrass-

ing to the recipient also when he cannot repay the compliment in the same coin but feels that he is expected to do so.

To the person who bestows praise, directness can be as embarrassing as it can be to the one praised; for if the latter declares himself undeserving he reflects upon the sincerity of the person who praised him or upon that person's conception of praiseworthiness. Such embarrassment is common because many persons when complimented have the erroneous notion that they must decline the compliment, however deserving they may be.

There are times when direct approbation is desired. It is said in many languages that love delights in praise. But praise that is not substantiated by indirect expressions of approbation is like sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. The indirect method is, therefore, fundamental. It also requires more skill than the direct method. Hence, this method alone need be considered here. Most of the procedures that I discussed in the first three chapters illustrate the use of the indirect method of acknowledging another's personal worth. There are, however, many additional methods of expressing appreciation for other persons.

I. REVEALING KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS PERTAINING TO OTHER PERSONS

Appreciation of another person is often reflected in the information revealed regarding him. Almost everyone is aware of this, and so when an individual finds that things about him are known and remembered he is highly complimented. Realizing this fact, many persons make it a point to acquaint themselves with another person or his interests, and to reveal such information with the purpose of expressing appreciation of him in a circuitous way. Per-

haps it was *Pithecanthropus erectus* who first said, and said with insight into human nature, that if you mean to have another person think you appreciate his worth you must know his name. The teacher who does not learn the names of those under her instruction, the foreman who refers to the workers with an expression as "You there," and the professional man who forgets the names of his clients, may find other means of expressing appreciation quite ineffective. And everyone, to make his respect for someone else felt and to have influence, must reveal knowledge of one kind or another in regard to him. By observing things pertaining to another person—things ranging from little artistic effects whereby a woman makes herself more charming or makes the home more attractive to great achievement—we make ourselves pleasant associates.

2. TALKING ABOUT THINGS PERTAINING TO OTHERS

By becoming interested in people we often become interesting to them. Since man's interest is frequently reflected in his conversation, one can show concern for another person by speaking of things pertaining to him. Talking about matters relative to the individual is an indirect means of acknowledging his personal worth, because it prompts him to *assume* that, since his interests are appreciated sufficiently to be made the center of conversation, he himself is regarded highly.

There are persons who fail to center the conversation on things pertaining to others, not simply because they fail to appreciate the importance of doing so but because they prefer to talk about themselves. If such a person analyzed himself he would have to say: "There are two reasons why I would rather talk about myself than about you. In the

first place, I should like to have you realize that I am more wonderful than you may have been thinking I am. In the second place, centering the conversation on myself makes conversation easier for me, and so it enables me to feel that my remarks are apt, witty, and sparkling, and keeps me from being outshone."

While it is sometimes necessary to talk of oneself in order to make one's good qualities known, one cannot do so very often without arousing displeasure. And it is not permissible to speak of yourself when another is trying to advance something in his own favor. Doing so would be setting your stage too close to his. To be liked, it is generally necessary to keep one's own affairs in the background and to converse instead about things pertaining to others.

If you obviously drag in a subject because it is of interest to the other person and not to yourself you mortify him. No one can enjoy a serving that you prepare for him if you cannot also enjoy it. To make a special dish for a person that he alone can relish is to make him feel odd.

There are numerous occasions when a person does not wish to be introspective, and when he is especially unwilling to converse about matters concerning himself. Trying to get him to discuss such things, therefore can become very annoying to him. But talking about things pertaining to another person is usually to him the source of much satisfaction. Sometimes he will permit no other conversation.

3. LETTING ANOTHER PARTICIPATE IN CONVERSATION

When you pause frequently in conversation to let the other person express himself, you show that you consider his conversation worth while. You also give him an opportunity to make an impression and thus to gain further

recognition. But if you deliver a monologue, especially if you are learned or brilliant, you may make him feel like an ignorant schoolboy. Charm in conversation consists less in displaying one's own wit and intelligence than in opening the way for the other fellow to display his. "No siren did ever so charm the ear of the listener as the listening ear has charmed the soul of the siren." One should ordinarily use up no more than a half-minute before pausing to let another speak. If Emily Post says it is impolite to interrupt another person, she should add that it is the height of rudeness to make it necessary for another to interrupt in order to share in conversation.

Of course, charm in conversation involves not only listening well; it involves also taking an active part in the talk. There are persons who sit back and contribute neither information nor wit.

So barren sands imbibe the shower
But render neither fruit nor flower.¹

Whether your tongue or your ear should play the major role depends in a measure upon the other person's wishes. Whenever you converse with another person you should consider whether he has a greater inclination to hear you, or to have you hear him. The latter is the more general desire. And most people, to be pleasing, need to train themselves not to talk more, but to listen longer.

4. ACKNOWLEDGING THE WORTH OF ANOTHER'S OCCUPATION

Many think their occupations the most significant aspect of their lives, and so their self-esteem is largely determined

¹ Cowper, William, "Friendship," lines 184-185.

by the esteem in which their occupations are held by other persons. Consequently you can give another a feeling of importance by expressing appreciation of his occupation. The fact that people like to hear their occupations valued highly has always been appreciated by persons who have extolled, although not always with wholly altruistic motives or with sincerity, the careers of others. Clever politicians have often expressed appreciation of the people's work. They style the farmers, the "backbone of the nation"; the bankers, the "pillars of society"; and say to the women voters, "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." Similar technique is used in selling. An advertisement of an encyclopedia reads, "Since a teacher's work is the most important work in the world, our every effort is directed toward helping her." An advertisement of an article for nurses bears the caption, "Season's greeting to the noblest of professions." In industry, in the professions, in the army, and in the navy, importance is attributed to the individual's work by designating his occupation by title, or by speaking of it as a significant contribution toward a finished product. Thus, in diverse situations attempts are made to give the individual a feeling of worth-whileness by enabling him to think that he is part of a significant process and is contributing to society.

A very suitable means of acknowledging the worth of another's occupation is to emphasize the interdependence of man. In doing so you enable the individual engaged in the simplest part of a project to feel that he shares in the complete enterprise. Those who said, "All are but parts of one stupendous whole," "What seems but idle show strengthens and supports the rest," and "They also serve who only stand and wait," proclaimed that, in the compli-

cated life of man, a drummer is more than a drummer; he is part of an orchestra.

By emphasizing the interdependence of man you also make the routine worker's task seem indispensable to the enterprise of which it is a part, or to human welfare in general. And by letting the task seem indispensable you make virtues of usefulness and dependability, and thus you give everyone who pursues well his occupation, however menial it may be, a sense of personal worth.

In expressing appreciation for the individual's occupation you must guard against giving him the impression that you think it the right occupation for him. Although every worker likes to be considered a good man for his job, not everyone likes to have his job considered a good one for him. To tell a man engaged in a simple task that his work is the right type for him is to imply that it represents the limits of his ability. Most people engaged in mediocre work do not consider their occupational status a true measure of their worth and do not like to have it so regarded by others; they consider themselves, and like to have others consider them, capable of rising within their occupations or of attaining more important careers. Many persons make a practice of belittling the work in which they are engaged as a means of declaring themselves above it.

Many people are, as they consider themselves to be, capable of something beyond their accomplishment. A person who has aptitudes that overflow the narrow bounds of his occupation, and has his sails set for better goals, deserves the credit he desires: the credit for having real value above his temporary value. And to give him credit for this potential ability is a most effective means of giving him pride, for most people who think themselves bigger than their jobs

take pride more in being told that they could be successful in other occupations than in having their actual achievement acknowledged.

But in telling a person that he could be successful in a certain occupation, one should do so indirectly. An artful nurse, in trying to hearten a young woman in her care, is not likely to say, "You would make a good nurse"; usually she will inquire instead, "Did you ever think of becoming a nurse?" By this question the nurse will give her patient the impression that she sincerely considers her capable of taking up nursing. But if she were to tell her patient directly that she considered her capable of taking up nursing, her patient, expecting to be flattered because of being ill, might assume that the nurse was simply trying to humor her.

When should you extol another's occupation, and when should you give him the impression that you consider him capable of a higher one? You should always give another's occupation the recognition it deserves; and, when you can do so sincerely and without making him overconfident, too self-satisfied to feel the need of proving his worth by actual performance, or too dissatisfied with the occupation in which he is engaged, you should give him recognition for all the ability that you think he possesses.

5. ACKNOWLEDGING ANOTHER'S FINANCIAL POSITION

Social distinction today, in some countries more than in others, is based to a considerable degree on the wealth one possesses. Material worth is widely considered as a real criterion of personal worth. Whether the individual worked for the things he has, or whether he grabbed them, unfortunately does not necessarily determine the pride he takes

in his possessions. As a result, a poor man is often very sensitive, and a rich man is frequently exceedingly vain regarding financial matters. The one is chagrined upon being "caught" in acts of frugality, such as shopping in a ten-cent store; the other is pleased to have people notice that he makes his purchases in exclusive places and does not inquire about price.

Because of the emphasis put on wealth, a man sometimes feels highly complimented when he is acknowledged to be in good financial position. This is especially true when the compliment implies, rather than directly states, that he has means. Salespeople, realizing this, first show, or reveal an inclination to show, to a customer who desires distinction for his wealth, the very best in the line of goods in which he is interested. They refrain, when catering to such trade, from displaying price tags and mentioning the cost unless the customer inquires, and then they quote the price in a most casual manner. They do not speak to this customer of easy payment plans, but they refer to a charge account, only as a convenience to him.

People differ, of course, in their response to this technique. There are many persons for whom material possessions beyond those necessary for the comforts of life stand rather low in the scale of values. Such people are not likely to be much influenced by implications that they are in good financial circumstances.

6. DOING THINGS THAT OTHERS DO

To like what other men like is pleasing approbation; to disparage their customs and usages would be most insulting. And anyone who is genuinely appreciative of another person usually patterns some of his behavior on the behavior

of that person. Friends tend to take up each other's interests, rather than to try to convert each other to their own. A person who is appreciative of a group with which he is associated conforms to some of its customs. Doing things that others do is a desirable means of acknowledging their personal worth, because it is an indirect means of expressing appreciation of them.

Although a certain amount of conformity to the behavior of other persons shows appreciation for them, excessive conformity bores anyone. Those who are sensitive and hunger for expressions of approval desire more conformity to their behavior than do others, but no one likes a man who always imitates others; everyone likes to see some originality and independence in other persons. And the one who habitually sacrifices his tastes for the tastes of others has no tastes, and is soon regarded a nonentity and a bore. But he who never conforms to the behavior of anyone has no taste except a taste for being different. A discreet conformity to the behavior of other persons is necessary for gaining their respect and showing respect for them.

7. BEING PLEASED WITH ANOTHER PERSON

In the enjoyment of anyone there is usually sufficient acknowledgment of his personal worth to make further acknowledgment unnecessary. There are few words that are packed more with praise than the word "welcome" when uttered sincerely. And if your countenance brightens in the presence of someone, you need no other language to express esteem for him. Moreover, the pleasure people take in having their birthdays or anniversaries remembered is the pleasure of being appreciated. The art of pleasing consists much in being pleased.

Indeed, the art of pleasing consists also, as I have said, in bringing entertainment to others. The person who does not do so is monotonous. But it is easy to err by striving to be entertaining instead of enjoying another's entertainment, for people usually prefer being admired to being amused.

The next chapter is, as will be noted, a continuation of the subject of this chapter. The methods that I shall present in that chapter not only indirectly acknowledge another's worth but also indirectly acknowledge his superiority in traits in which he excels.

CHAPTER V

ACKNOWLEDGING SUPERIORITY IN TRAITS IN WHICH ONE IS EXCELLED

IF PEOPLE with whom you live and work find you always conscious of your superiority—never of their superiority—they are humiliated. Although you may praise them fully for what they are in every trait, if you, at the same time, claim to be better than they are in them all, your praise is to them a taunt. But if you acknowledge another's superiority in even a trivial matter, he will usually be pleased and will recognize your superiority in matters of importance. To acknowledge superiority in traits in which one is excelled is, therefore, an excellent means of establishing rapport. There are different ways of giving another person, in some respect, a sense of superiority.

I. ASKING FOR FAVORS

Asking another person for a favor often gives him a sense of superiority in the matter to which the favor pertains. A crestfallen individual may be made to walk erect by asking him for the time of day, to direct you to a place in the city, to do something that you are obviously incapable of doing yourself, or to share with you a possession of his. Should someone think you a snob, ask of him a favor, and he will decide that he has misjudged you. Benjamin Franklin tells of having turned an enemy into a friend by asking for the loan of a book. I assume that Franklin returned the

book. Whenever the asking of a favor concedes superiority it becomes a favor conferred.

Favors asked should not be unnecessary favors, nor favors that require undue expenditure of time or energy, for one expresses little appreciation of another person by simply putting one's pack upon his back. Asking for such favors may also discredit one by revealing lack of self-sufficiency. If you should pull your car to the curb and ask someone to direct you to another city, he might think: "Can't that fellow learn to follow a road map?" Despite the possible abuse of the technique of asking for favors, its discreet use is a means of putting at ease someone who feels you hold him inferior.

Should we not, in order to express appreciation of another person, sometimes confer a favor upon him? Generosity is a universal expression of good will, of friendship, and of love. Often some generosity is desired by another person as an expression of approbation of him, despite whatever other expressions of approbation he may receive. It is not the highest expression of approbation, but it is frequently a necessary one. There is, however, danger in the conferring of favors—the danger of making the recipient feel that you think him in need of the favor, and hence inferior to you. This danger is especially great because favors sometimes are, in fact, conferred with the intention of gaining a sense of superiority or of displaying superiority. This danger can, however, be kept to a minimum in the bestowing of favors, by bestowing small ones. The conferring of a small favor may express as much regard for another person as the conferring of a great favor, without indicating a feeling of superiority. Usually it is only when the other person is able to make some return for a favor that a large one can be

conferred upon him without hurting his pride. To express esteem for another person and yet avoid hurting his pride—granted that he is unable to make return for favors—be beneficent, but beneficent in small things. However, one can usually get the person one has favored to do something in return, often something beyond one's own ability, and thus one can keep him from feeling inferior.

2. ASKING FOR EXPRESSIONS OF OPINION

Most people are ordinarily pleased to know that their counsel is sought. To admit that one stands in need of another's information or advice gratifies him sometimes because it gives him a sense of superiority in the matter in which he gives counsel. And many persons will bow to you, if you bow to them in this way.

Usually asking for an expression of opinion gives the other person simply a feeling that his judgment is respected, rather than a feeling of superiority. But even such acknowledgment of personal worth can be very gratifying. Radio announcers sometimes have the audience report their preference for radio talent by postcards or telephone calls to the broadcasting station. In doing this they give the listener a feeling that he is being called upon to participate in an important matter. Managers of ballrooms and directors of community singing frequently have an audience request musical selections to be played or sung, and thereby enable many of them to feel they have a hand in ordering the procedure. In some organizations employees are urged to drop suggestions into boxes put up in convenient places, while in other organizations they are asked personally for their opinions. Skillful instructors encourage competent students to express their opinions and contribute information, and

thereby they give the students recognition and enrich the classroom period. Keeping wide open the lanes whereby others may bring to you information or advice is an expression of esteem that they appreciate.

3. ADMITTING ONE'S DEPENDENCE UPON ANOTHER PERSON

If we wish to please others, we dare not stand apart from them haughtily—we dare not look upon them as dispensable. Our lives are interwoven with the lives of other persons; and, unless we admit that we are dependent upon them as they are dependent upon us, we give them the uncomfortable feeling that we regard them as beneath ourselves. Frequently the admission of being dependent upon another in some one respect saves his pride, though he is the dependent in all other respects. There are times when admitting to another person that you are dependent upon him is to give him the highest praise. The satisfaction that the individual derives from having you admit dependence upon him in a certain respect is the satisfaction of being considered superior in that respect, or simply of being considered needed.

4. ACTING WITH DEFERENCE TOWARD OTHERS

By acting with deference toward another person—that is, by yielding to his judgment or wishes out of respect for him—one imputes superiority to him. Few things are more complimentary to anyone than a respectful yielding to his judgment or wishes. Many persons are pleasing to others because they defer to them through statements such as “Whatever you think,” “Whatever you say,” “I guess I’m wrong,” “Oh, is that so? I’m glad to know that,” and “I will do it if you want me to.” Such methods, however, usu-

ally concede general superiority. Wives can attest from experience that this method is effectual.

Despite the pleasure that deference toward another person may give him, the continuous use of this technique is difficult and unwise because it involves the subordination of self. One cannot always take toward other persons the religious attitude of "Lead thou me on," or "Thy will be done," and yet maintain self-respect. But deference where deference is due is courtesy, and is a means of conceding superiority.

5. LETTING OTHERS OCCASIONALLY OUTSHINE YOU

Sometimes an individual, in his engagements of one kind or another with other persons, is so imbued with the idea of outshining these persons that he does not entertain sufficiently the thought of letting them occasionally outshine him.

Of course we all know the conversational superman; he has been with us since boyhood, to which period of development he properly belongs. He is always capping your modest contributions with something bigger. If you have slain your thousands, he has slain his tens of thousands. You timidly intimate that your assessed valuation is two thousand dollars; he cries that his is four. You say that you are to speak in Freeport; he says that they previously had asked him. You tell how long it took to drive a certain route; his time was better by hours. It does not matter that you happen later to detect much exaggeration in these quick rejoinders—as that his assessment is only about half yours. The mischief is done, or, rather, the success achieved. For evidently the skill of the thing lay in thinking quickly of the better story and putting it over convincingly. It is not a matter of fact, but of art.

Such men are not liars. They are great hearty boys who have never learned the art of being outshone. Their fish are always

bigger, their scores lower, their losses greater, their winnings larger, their operations dreadfuller than yours. . . . Their simple art is to snatch a reflected glory from every other's remark and multiply it thirty, sixty, a hundred fold.¹

To be always right when in controversy with another person, to be always the winner when competing with him in play or work, or to always entertain him more lavishly than he entertains you, is definitely not a social asset. To be liked by a person with whom one lives, one must occasionally admit that one is a beaten man.

6. ACKNOWLEDGING QUALITIES OF OTHERS NOT POSSESSED BY ONESELF

Man is a creature of many traits, and no one can be superior in all. The diversity of human qualities and the limitations of every person make it easy for anyone, granted that he notices merit other than his own, to concede to another some superiority over himself. But not all find it easy to see the merit of other persons. Those who keep themselves preoccupied with their own ambitions and achievements take little notice of merit unrelated to their own. But more unmindful than they of the merit of other persons are the contemptuous and the egotistical. Such persons, like lovers, are blind; but blind to another's good qualities. They make themselves the measuring stick of mankind; no matter what your qualities may be, to be different from them is to be inferior to them. And just as there are individuals whose contempt for others and good opinion of themselves keep them from seeing the good in others, so also there are groups and nations that, for the same reasons,

¹ Goodspeed, Edgar J., "The Art of Being Outshone," *The Atlantic Monthly*, Dec., 1929.

are unmindful of human worth different from their own.

To put at ease those whom we excel in certain traits, especially persons with whom we are constantly associated, we must concede their superiority in other traits; we must live the attitude, "I never met a person that wasn't superior to me in some respect." When we find it a little difficult to assume this attitude, we can readily clear up the difficulty by looking a little closer at the other person or at ourselves.

Much marital discord grows out of attempts of the husband or the wife to gain ascendancy. When the husband looks upon his wife as subordinate to him, or when the wife regards the husband's remarks as unimportant or always in need of correction, friction is inevitable. In various human relationships, discord is often due to persons trying to overshadow each other, and it could be kept down by each conceding some superiority to the other.

Not only do we gratify others by occasionally conceding to them some superiority over ourselves; we also dispose them favorably toward us. Teachers and parents when playing games with children, and persons engaged in controversy, often win by losing.

We might well reflect on the difficulties in which many people find themselves, and note how methods such as those that I have presented for acknowledging the worth of others help them out of their predicaments. Almost everyone accepts the view, or some modification of the view, expressed by William James² that "the deepest principle of human nature is the desire to be appreciated," and so realizes that there is need of acknowledging the worth of others. At the

² To his class at Radcliffe College (*Letters of William James*, ed. by Henry James, Vol. II, pp. 33-34, Boston, Atlantic Monthly Press, 1920).

same time, almost everyone has had the sad experience of being rebuked as a flatterer on paying tribute to other persons. The way out of the dilemma is to acknowledge the personal worth or superiority of others, but to do so indirectly. By proceeding thus, one's approbation of another person, if genuine, is likely to be regarded so, and to become a significant factor in the establishment of amicable relationships.

The question has been asked, "What happens when two psychologists meet?" On the basis of what I have said in this volume, this question can be answered by asking another question, "What happens when two magnanimous persons meet?" But not all applications of psychology are made in the spirit of magnanimity. And for this reason I shall devote the next chapter to a consideration of the abuse of psychology.

CHAPTER VI

MISUSE OF PSYCHOLOGY

IN OUR human relationships there is not only need of having influence over other persons, but also need of being resistant to those who would take advantage of us. Many people are grossly misled by self-seeking individuals who use psychology with sinister motives. Swindlers are exacting millions of dollars from the public each year in the sale of useless things, worthless securities, and ineffective or even harmful "remedies." They accomplish their objectives through the use of deceptive methods which they call "sales strategy." Exploiters hold out false hopes to their victims, and so cause them to give time and energy in vain. Unscrupulous politicians often gain the support of the public through artifice. There have been many occasions in which "government by the people" has been a misnomer for "government by the demagogue with the sanction of the people." In the whole realm of human relationships there are unprincipled individuals who, through the misapplication of information regarding human nature, cunningly victimize other persons. Since man is thus extensively beguiled, he must be fortified against the abuse of psychology as well as be qualified to use it for the accomplishment of acceptable ends.

Adequate protection against the unprincipled use of information pertaining to human nature cannot be obtained through legislation. Malpractice in influencing people is too elusive to be outlawed. Attempts to prevent deception by

legislating against it have been made only in regard to commercial abuses, and have met with disappointing results.

One can, however, be safeguarded against the wiles of designing persons by being informed as to the means by which human behavior is influenced. Such information enables one to analyze the methods of others and thereby to detect selfish motives that may lurk behind intriguing language. An understanding of how the self-seeker lays snares for the unwary is the surest protection against being victimized.

Any one of the methods of psychology can be an instrument of good or evil motives. The method is simply and entirely what the man is who uses it. Therefore, in speaking here about the abuse of certain principles, I do not mean to imply that these principles are not also put to good purposes.

Let us look at the misuse of psychology first from the standpoint of the indirect method. This method, as I have said in pointing out its merits, is effective because it appeals in various ways, to the want for a feeling of personal worth. But it is effective for still another reason. Most people, having learned through experience to be wary of the judgment and intentions of other persons, are skeptical of ideas that they recognize as coming from someone else. But when an idea is conveyed indirectly—conveyed in such a way that the other person thinks of it as his own idea—he assumes that he must have once accepted it for good reasons, and so is uncritical of it.

That the individual sometimes adheres to an idea simply because it in some way or other got into his mind is suggested by the fact that many people accept as general principles such contradictory sayings as:

“You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.”

“A man is never too old to learn.”

“Out of sight is out of mind.”

“Absence makes the heart grow fonder.”

“He who hesitates is lost.”

“Look before you leap.”

“When poverty comes in at the door, love creeps out of the window.”

“Love lives in cottages as well as in courts.”

“Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.”

“Jack of all trades and master of none.”

“Opposites attract.”

“Birds of a feather flock together.”

“Two heads are better than one.”

“Too many cooks spoil the broth.”

“Hitch your wagon to a star.”

“Do not attempt the impossible.”

“A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush.”

“Nothing ventured, nothing gained.”

Many persons, knowing that men tend to be critical of ideas that they recognize as coming from someone else, and knowing that they tend to be uncritical of ideas after they have once adopted them, use the indirect method as a means of taking advantage of others. A form of the indirect method that the cunning person frequently uses to accomplish his ends consists in expressing a thought directly—not to convey that thought, but to lead you to *infer* another thought which he intends you to accept, but which he could not present directly without arousing your resistance. When this method succeeds, it does so because you, centering your attention on what he says directly, and not noticing that he is presenting another idea under cover, do not offer resist-

ance to that idea. The first statement in each of the following paired statements says something directly; the second statement expresses what the naïve would *infer* from the first statement but would doubt if expressed directly:

“We sell for less.” What they sell is just as good.

“What a whale of a difference a few cents makes!” What they sell is better.

“Accept no substitutes.” Theirs is the best.

“Compare the values.” Theirs is the best for the money.

“Read what leading critics say.” Leading critics say it’s good.

Although the following statements differ in their *direct* meanings, all have the same *implied* meaning; namely, that great demand exists for what the persons making the statements aim to promote.

“Every article merits the confidence of you who, year after year, rely on the —— label.”

“Since only a limited number will be admitted to the ballroom, you are urged to make your reservations early.”

“To meet the constantly growing demand for —— . . .”

“The thing people like about —— is . . .”

“Doesn’t the opinion of hundreds of women count for anything?”

“The leadership of —— was achieved through . . .”

“If your local druggist is sold out, write to ——”

“Enrollment will be limited to ——”

Getting the individual to *infer* that great demand exists for a certain thing is effective, not only because of the indirectness by which this notion is conveyed, but also because of the strong tendency to conform to the opinions and

actions of other persons. So strong is the tendency toward conformity that even a direct statement to the effect that an idea is favored by many people often brings others into line.¹ The Romans had a phrase that they used frequently in trying to gain acceptance of an idea pertaining to home, church, or state; namely, *Semper, ubique, et ab omnibus*—"Always, everywhere, and by all." Statements like this may be effective in leading man to a fuller life or to perdition.

Getting others to infer that an idea is favored by a person of prestige, like getting them to infer that it is favored by many persons, is frequently effective because of the idea expressed and of the indirectness with which it is conveyed. Such practices as the following suggest the possible good uses and abuses of this method:

A prominent person is often put in charge of a meeting, employed to referee a game, appointed to a board of directors, or portrayed in a piece of advertising copy as using a certain article.

Important persons are frequently seated on a speakers' platform.

Salespeople sometimes wear articles from lines of goods they aim to sell.

A manufacturer of an article for household use sends samples of his product to teachers in rural districts for distribution among pupils.

Producers frequently attempt to get the government to use their products.

An article is often named after a distinguished person.

A speaker says, "Let us not overlook the opinions of authorities such as ——— who say . . ."

¹ Dashiell, John Frederick, *Handbook of Social Psychology*, Chapter XXIII, Worcester, Mass., Clark University Press, 1935.

A nurse is pictured carrying on a tray a bottle of a certain refreshing drink.

An advertisement for a patent medicine reads, "Doctors know."

"When your doctor tells you to get ——, be sure that you get the genuine."

"Eat —— if you want to become like . . ."

"In this matter of loveliness I took Hollywood's advice and got ——."

"You will feel safer when you have in your home this great antiseptic that hospitals use."

"Ask your dentist about ——."

"In making your decision on this issue do not overlook the fact that many of the country's leading statesmen are its ardent supporters."

Another abuse of the indirect method consists in getting the individual to commit himself favorably to an idea before asking him to act upon it. Usually it is easier to get him to commit himself favorably to a proposition than it is to get him to act accordingly. But after he has once expressed himself favorably to a proposition or some aspect of it, that proposition becomes to a certain extent his, and can later be presented as such. The effectiveness of this method is due to the fact that it makes those who commit themselves to an idea feel that unless they act in conformity with their commitments they lose respect. Getting someone to commit himself favorably to an idea as a means of getting him to act upon it later is, however, not necessarily an abuse of psychology. In some of the examples I shall cite the motive may be sufficiently worthy to justify the procedure. But the use of this method generally has a shady purpose.

An instigator of discord may say, "Henry, don't you think that we are being treated unjustly?" An affirmative answer lays the basis for the indirect presentation to follow later; namely, "As you agreed, Henry, the last time I spoke with you . . ." Likewise, an automobile salesman may say, of a car: "You like the body lines, don't you? Isn't this new feature a wonderful improvement? You noticed the upholstering, didn't you? Doesn't this car have pick-up?" Similarly, a book agent may say, "You have children, have you not, Mrs. Smith? A lot of work, but certainly a joy and comfort, aren't they? I am sure you feel that your children are entitled to the same educational opportunities other children are enjoying, do you not? And you realize, do you not, Mrs. Smith, that to become truly educated one must have good books to read?" In like manner, a clothing salesman may say, "You want a garment that's warm but not heavy, that's serviceable, that looks well, and that's comfortable, don't you?" By answering "Yes" to a series of questions such as these, the prospective buyer shares in the idea that the contemplated purchase is a judicious one. Consequently, refusing to buy would involve taking back what he said, would result in a loss of pride.

In many situations we see a more subtle application of this technique of getting the individual to commit himself favorably upon a proposition as a means of getting him to act upon it later. In a political campaign, the voter is given a button to wear in the lapel of his coat. If he is an undecided voter, he may accept and wear the button for no particular reason. But in wearing it he becomes a standard bearer for that party, which he may later support for the sake of being consistent. Likewise, leaders sponsoring social causes often form organizations, and take people into membership. The

individual may join for social reasons, or simply to have something to go to. Whatever his motives for joining, he commits himself favorably to the ideas for which the organization stands when he becomes a member. Later he may support those ideas because of having taken a favorable stand on them. In like manner, ideas sponsored by certain groups are often put into song. The individual may sing for the musical effect, or in order to have his voice heard. But as he sings he preaches to himself, and that is the kind of preaching that makes a lasting impression. It has been said, "Let me write the songs of a people, and I care not who writes their laws." Similarly, in many fields, slogans are devised that will be repeated because they are "catchy," rather than because of the ideas they express. However, in repeating a slogan, one lays claim to the thought involved, and later may support it for that reason. Recently the safety councils of various cities mailed to drivers of automobiles reply postcards containing the following questions:

"Does the periodical inspection of the mechanical condition of motor vehicles make for safer conditions on our streets and highways?"

"Are expenditures required of car owners for adjustments and repairs justified?"

"Should the city continue to conduct inspection of cars twice a year?"

"Should a nominal fee of about a dollar per year per car be charged to pay operating costs?"

By being persuaded, in one way or another, to make a favorable commitment on a proposition or some aspect of it, an individual is often led or misled into acting in accordance with what he has said.

Not only the indirect presentation of ideas but, as I have said, any one of the methods of psychology is subject to misuse. I shall cite but a few more of these methods; a few that are misused extensively. One of these consists in openly declaring an act creditable or discreditable. Statements such as the following have sufficient force to sell things to some persons that their judgment tells them they ought not to buy:

“The smart woman knows she is judged by her luggage.”

“For the man who cares.”

“As distinctive as the woman who prefers to drive it.”

“It’s smart to . . .”

“For scintillating people.”

“Don’t be a piker.”

“A home owner is a good citizen.”

“Don’t be the kind of person who is easily swayed.”

“Men of good taste today wear ——.”

“Women of prominence now use ——.”

Frequently, instead of openly declaring an act creditable or discreditable, the cunning propagandist or advertiser speaks of that act with a word which connotes approval or disapproval. This method is subtle and, by the same token, effective. The attitude of many a person in regard to a particular idea can be made favorable or unfavorable by speaking of it with such words as:

enthusiasm	fanaticism
bravery	foolhardiness
frankness	tactlessness
co-operation	collusion
helpfulness	officiousness

self-confidence conceit
 freedom licentiousness
 determination stubbornness
 sympathy sentimentalism
 caution timidity
 leniency laxity
 thrift hoarding
 wit wisecracking
 frugality stinginess
 modesty shyness
 planning scheming
 righteous wrath hotheadedness
 loyalty servility

The victors in a battle that was fought through a wooded and rocky area were referred to by one commentary as having cleverly taken advantage of cover, and by another commentary as having sneaked and skulked behind rocks and trees.

Because of the fact that speaking of an idea with a certain word determines the attitude of many persons toward that idea, the cunning person usually puts his trust, not in the right argument, but in the "right" word. The extent to which such technique may achieve its objective has been found to be considerable.²

Ridicule is another method that can be used effectively in the achievement of good or evil purposes, and is one that lends itself readily to abuse. Almost anything can be distorted to appear ludicrous, and most people tend to avoid doing what would make them a laughingstock. Unscrupulous persons therefore often use ridicule to assail views or practices that are, in reality, sound. The most common abuse

² Raskin, Evelyn, and Cook, Stuart, "A Further Investigation of the Measurement of an Attitude Toward Fascism," *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol. IX, pp. 201-206 (1938).

of ridicule is that of giving an exaggerated account of a view expressed or an act performed. And when ridicule is embodied in a figure of speech it is most effective, not only because a figure of speech is a vivid means of conveying thought, but also because it makes the derision seem well founded. Capital and labor both have used the metaphor "cart before the horse," to deride attempts to bring about general prosperity by legislating to the immediate advantage of the other group. The realization that such an arrangement of horse and cart will never get anyone very far on a journey may lead many people to regard the economic policy referred to by the metaphor to be likewise absurd. The misapplication of ridicule, as well as of other methods, suggests that people should, as I have said, understand psychological techniques in order that they may not be misled by them.

The extent to which ridicule can be used successfully for good or evil purposes is limited. This method is usually effective only in cases in which the other person has not taken a favorable stand regarding the course of action derided. In cases in which he has done so, ridicule has an acidity that arouses strong opposition.

A common form of trickery consists in conferring upon someone an apparent favor as an expression of appreciation, when the real motive is to take him in. An act of seeming benevolence is a ready means of making a catch because most people to avoid being rude accept an apparent favor; and then to free themselves of embarrassment they require the obligation. Unprincipled individuals in every kind of human relationships, by exploiting these human virtues of courtesy and fairness, get other persons to accept unordered merchandise, and make them pay dearly for it.

The person who confers a seeming favor for purely selfish motives reveals himself by his attitude when the recipient is unresponsive to his wishes. The purely selfish person, when not receiving great praise for his act of apparent benevolence, or when not receiving in return the favor he desires, accuses the recipient of ingratitude, or tells others that this person is ungrateful. The one who confers a genuine favor is less likely to complain that his favor is unappreciated.

Since the acceptance of things that are not bestowed in the spirit of generosity can prove costly, a person has not learned to live unless he has learned to decline many such things. Nor has a person learned to live if he has not learned to bestow small favors in the spirit of generosity, for such favors have a warmth that make for congeniality.

Any means of appealing to the want for a feeling of personal worth can be as cogent in trickery as in magnanimity. The possible abuse of all such methods by the nefarious can be given sufficient mention here by telling in substance an old fable. Once upon a time a cookie was left on the table. Having seen what happened to the other cookies, he flopped over, rolled from the table toward the door, out the door, down the lawn, down the street, out into the open country and into the forest. There he was stopped in turn by a wolf, a bear, and a lion, each of whom said to him, "I will eat you!" But, through cleverness of tongue, he persuaded them all to go their own way. Next he was stopped by a fox who greeted him: "Hello, Mr. Cookie. How handsome you are, and how well baked you are! It is a pleasure to know someone like you. Would that we might become better acquainted." And that was the last of the cookie.

Lamentable as is the nefarious use of psychology, equally

lamentable is the wide discord that arises, as I have said, in all types of human relationships from ineptness of many persons of good intentions in making themselves understood. And misunderstandings cause roughness wherever they exist; they cause marriages to go on the rocks, businesses to founder, and professional relationships to grow tense. Persons magnanimous in spirit need to make themselves understood. This they should be able to do by proceeding in accordance with methods such as those presented in this volume; methods that respect another's need of self-respect, and that do justice to his merit.

What I have said in Part One of this volume has been said often, although in less systematic ways, by others; hence, to many, there is nothing new here in subject matter. But that is never too often repeated which the majority of people have not sufficiently learned.

I have pointed out in Part One methods of dealing with people in life situations in general, and I have indicated ways in which these methods are put into practice in various human relationships. One of these methods in particular, that of presenting one's ideas indirectly, is essential, as I shall point out, to the solution of problems to which most of the remaining chapters of this volume are devoted.

PART TWO
PREVENTING WRONGDOING

CHAPTER VII

PREVENTING WRONGDOING

WRONGDOING, like acceptable behavior, is an attempt to satisfy human wants. It is a disapproved means of gratifying desires that are not gratified in approved ways. And any of the fundamental human wants when frustrated may cause wrongdoing.

Various wants and, from time to time, various combinations of wants may motivate an individual in a particular form of wrongdoing. To view, on the contrary, a particular evil act as being due wholly to a single motive, or to view its recurrence on the part of the same person or on the part of different persons as due to the same combination of wants, would seem an oversimplification of the problem of preventing wrongdoing. There are, however, many types of wrongdoing that are motivated primarily by the want for a feeling of personal worth.

Some wrongdoing motivated by this want is an attempt to *maintain* feelings of personal worth in the face of circumstances that discredit the individual, and so it is designated as *defensive* activity. Other wrongdoing is an attempt to *attain* feelings of personal worth not afforded to the individual in other ways, and so it is designated as *compensatory* activity. Whether a particular evil act is engaged in as a protection against loss of pride, or whether it is engaged in as a substitute means of attaining a feeling of importance, depends on the individual and not on the nature of the activity.

Wrongdoing committed by the individual to achieve a feeling of personal worth, whether of the defensive or of the compensatory type, may be simply an attempt to appear impressive; or an attempt to debase others, and thus appear superior to them.

Wrongdoing¹ motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth ranges all the way from minor faults to crime. It consists of:

1. CRITICIZING EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING

A common form of wrongdoing motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth consists in finding fault with everyone and everything. A man not versed in drama but wishing to make an impression may, upon leaving a theater, say: "The actors are wooden, the settings are offensive, the plot is incoherent, and the whole play is preposterous. The author must be a half-wit." Similarly, a person of this kind who is appointed to an administrative position may proceed at once to reorganize the department and its methods. While he may introduce an innovation for justifiable reasons, he sometimes makes changes in order to criticize thereby the former system or the persons responsible for it. And in social relationships there are chronic faultfinders who sit in judgment on the words or acts of other persons, and brand as incorrect or improper almost everything that is said or done. Faultfinding is such a source of satisfaction to many people that they will belittle their own friends and prostitute their own honest opinions for the feeling of importance they gain from playing the role of critic.

¹ Some of the types of behavior presented here as wrongdoing could with equal appropriateness be designated as abnormal behavior, and so might be treated in Part Three. The classification of such behavior is, therefore, somewhat arbitrary.

When the faultfinder tells you of a deficiency in someone else, he may be simply trying to impress you with his own merit or trying to impress you with his superiority over the one he criticizes. In either case, he unwittingly reveals his own inferiority.

Often faultfinding is engaged in not for the satisfaction that playing the role of critic provides but in order to disparage that in which the faultfinder is deficient; and thus he excuses himself for his shortcomings. Men physically frail or lacking in physical courage may scorn athletics as a waste of time or as brutal; men surpassed by women in the occupational world may, for that reason alone, say that woman's place is in the home; and anyone unable to adjust adequately to an innovation in industry may, for that reason, declare the innovation unsound.

Criticizing everyone and everything is, depending on the individual's state of mind, defensive or compensatory activity.

2. BEING SNOBBISH

Snobbishness involves avoidance of other persons, but depends upon the motive in so doing. It does not consist in the common practice of evading people simply because of the feeling that they are of a different class. Social interaction based on class differences is inevitable, and, within limits, it is desirable. This is true because the greatest mutual pleasure and benefit are achieved through similarity of interests and attainments. It is the rebuffing or excluding of others with an air of personal or class superiority that constitutes a snob. The aloofness of the snob gives him a sense of personal worth, and so it is a form of compensatory activity.

The snob may keep others at a distance not simply to be impressive, but also to avoid being outdone by them or having them discover his weaknesses. A man may suddenly "high-hat" a woman with whom he has been keeping company because he realizes that through further companionship with him she would discover that what he has told her about himself is not all true. A person in a responsible position may keep others, especially subordinates, at a distance to avoid having them learn that he is not as competent as his position suggests, or that they themselves are more capable of carrying on his occupation than is he. Much misunderstanding is due to failure to realize that people often hold themselves aloof because they fear close scrutiny. Thus snobbishness may be defensive activity, as well as compensatory activity.

3. REFORMING OTHERS

The person who devotes himself to reforming others may gain a feeling of superiority, because to be engaged in such activity implies that he is on a higher plane than those whom he is trying to set right. Exhorting others to reform increases self-regard very readily, because individual differences in the moral realm are indeterminate. Merely to admonish someone else to modify his behavior is, therefore, frequently sufficient to establish the supremacy of the one giving such counsel.

There are, of course, persons who in trying to reform others are wholly altruistic in the sense that they seek, not to gain preeminence, but to help others find a better way of living.

Reformers actuated by different motives can be distinguished readily by the type of behavior with which they

concern themselves. The person who is actuated by an interest in human betterment is discriminating in the behavior he seeks to modify, while the one who is simply seeking self-aggrandizement may attempt to modify almost any act or custom that he witnesses.

4. CONVERTING OTHERS

Many persons try to bring others to their political, social, or religious views in a magnanimous spirit—in the spirit of sharing with others what they themselves enjoy. The satisfaction of sharing something with another person is the satisfaction of seeing him enjoy it and of having contributed to his happiness. The same magnanimity that motivates one person to attempt reforms may motivate another to convert people to his views.

Some persons, however, try to convert others, not for the purpose of benefiting them, but for the personal satisfaction of looking condescendingly upon them. Many of the attempts people make to win others to their secular or religious views are motivated by vanity. For example, one person exhorts another to join his particular church. He may think that he is advising the change in religious affiliation in order to further the welfare of the other person; in reality, he may be doing so only to convince himself and the person he is trying to convert that his own judgment is superior in matters pertaining to religion.

5. KEEPING OTHERS WAITING

An individual often keeps someone else waiting in order to give the impression that he is a very busy person, or doesn't consider the other one significant enough to be met at once. Sometimes he delays meeting people simply so that

he may feel considered important enough to be awaited by them. Such a person often busies himself about his home or office before meeting those who have come to see him, and he is frequently late in going to an appointment. There are persons whose efforts to achieve a feeling of superiority by keeping others waiting are carried to such an extent that they menace business or professional success, and decrease their own social fitness.

6. DEMANDING SERVICE

Some persons, instead of rendering services to others, demand that they be served. In their domestic lives they make childish demands upon members of their family. Sometimes they employ persons who are not needed, and style them "servants" simply as a means of gaining a feeling of superiority. They are, moreover, very exacting in the service they demand in general. When they dine or shop, they complain that the service is poor. When they ask for favors they expect others to drop everything at once to wait upon them. When they send clothing to a cleaning establishment or to a laundry they demand "one-day" service. When they wait for an elevator they ring the bell incessantly. When they write a letter they expect an immediate reply. Some veterans of the first World War discontinued their army insurance because they felt that the government was slow in answering their letters. Thus, in various ways services are demanded in the interest of self-regard.

7. DOMINEERING OVER OTHERS

There are people who, to achieve a sense of personal worth, strive to make the world adapt itself to them, but never adapt themselves to the world. They enjoy domi-

neering because doing so is an expression of superiority, and because any compliance with their dictates is admission that they are superior. They may even, for the sake of seeing their subordinates dance to their tune, reverse the orders they give them. Such persons may also deprive others of what they have the right to expect or of what actually belongs to them. Those who delight in domineering are, furthermore, as unreceptive of another's opinions or suggestions as they are unrelenting in the demands they make upon him; they are always right and never give in. The domineering person is generally one who is conscious of personal inferiority, or one who occupies a position of servitude or a position which involves condescension. His domineering attitude is but an attempt to repair his crushed self-esteem.

The desire to exercise arbitrary sway over fellow beings is manifested occasionally by people at every stage of development. This desire finds expression in situations ranging from childhood strife to international discord. It is often manifested by a desire for an authoritative position. The overbearing individual craves an executive post and, when he gets it, makes a tactless administrator. He does not attempt to lead others by subtle means. On the contrary, he cracks the whip over people's backs in order that his power over them may be obvious. Such a person, when in control of others, likes to see his subordinates bow and cringe before him; and when they fail to do so he hurls at them accusations of insubordination and demands their respect and obedience. He domineers over other persons, not for the purpose of furthering the commonweal, but for the gratification he obtains from seeing others groveling at his feet. Such persons are like the Irish schoolmaster who, after he had whipped a pupil, said, "It isn't that I hate ye that I bate

ye; it's to show my authority over ye." Parents sometimes lord it over their children for the satisfaction they get from having their wishes complied with. Such a parent, by ordering a child around, is able to forget, for the time being, the subordinate position that he may occupy in his other human relationships. Bullies in school, on the playground, and in shops; dictatorial husbands or wives; intimidators in business and in the professions; terrorizing organizations and, to some extent, conquering nations—all are motivated by a desire to exercise arbitrary sway over others in order to gain a feeling of importance. Many unpleasant working and living conditions and social discords are due to individuals or groups who, having feelings of insufficiency, domineer over other persons as a means of elevating their self-regard.

Despite the extent to which man desires to domineer for the feeling of superiority that doing so affords him, it is possible to overemphasize this desire. Warring nations are sometimes motivated at least as much by a desire to become secure against domineering as by a desire to domineer. But domineering by inferior persons is motivated not only by a desire to achieve security but also by a desire to achieve a sense of superiority.

8. FIGHTING

There are human beings who will fight over something of no consequence to them in order to achieve in the fighting something else of great consequence to them—namely, self-esteem. Some, to achieve this satisfaction, even provoke others to engage in combat over nothing. For the same reason, certain individuals would rather acquire things possessed by others through combat than through conces-

sion; and certain nations would rather acquire possessions through conquest than through negotiation. In such cases the aggressor is sometimes an inferior individual or nation; but the aggressor may instead be a victim of previous domination by the individual or nation that he now assails to vindicate his honor. In most human broils there is haughtiness on the part of the aggressor and pride on the part of the one defending himself.

9. DOING THINGS THAT ATTRACT ATTENTION

Few things are more painful than to be forever passed by unobserved. Hence, the individual who is unable to attract attention by doing acceptable things is apt to do anything else to gain notice. He is often less concerned with the acceptability of his actions than he is with getting into the limelight. Much wrongdoing in which men, women, and children indulge is attributable to a misguided desire to be noticeable on the stage of society. This sort of improper behavior takes different forms:

a. Relaying Rumor, or Gossiping. The tendency to spread rumor is motivated primarily by the desire to occupy the center of the stage; to have the eyes and ears of others directed toward one. The relaying of rumor is often an effective means of capturing the limelight, because almost every person has an attentive ear for unusual information and gives a ready hearing to the one who conveys rumor.

Because of the intense interest that some have in the affairs of others, many persons, desirous of attention, give out first-hand or second-hand information in regard to another's personal matters, and find their gossip a quick and certain means of winning a hearing. Many who have few other means of commanding attention crave an audience so

much that they will even betray confidences to become the center of attention.

Frequently, gossiping is indulged in not so much to attract attention as to show others up and, thereby, reveal superiority. Children often tattle to convince parents or teachers that they are better than are those whose behavior they tell about. Gossiping in adulthood is frequently a continuation of the tattling of childhood, and may be similarly motivated—by a desire to reveal personal superiority.

Gossiping is not necessarily indulged in for the elevation of the talebearer. It may be simply an attempt on his part to please a friend in his company. Frequently there is nothing more interesting to the listening ear than tales about people, especially people whose lives are mildly exciting; and some gossiping is nothing more than a response to this interest. The desire to please is often so great that a discreet and amiable person sometimes gossips before he realizes what he is doing, and wakes with a start to find that he has impaired the reputation of Peter, who is absent, to please Paul, who is present. But the gossipier who aims to please may at the same time be trying, like other gossipers, to increase his self-esteem through derision of others.

b. Giving False Testimony. False testimony is sometimes given as a publicity stunt. This tendency to misrepresent facts in order to gain attention is occasionally revealed in court procedures. A person sometimes makes his way to the witness stand by implicating another person in a social offense. By claiming to have made a certain observation the individual may rise from a position of obscurity to a place as chief witness in a sensational trial. Persons have been known to perjure themselves in order that their names might be published in large type for the testimony

they gave. But the feeling of importance that such a person gets by perjuring himself is usually of short duration, since consciousness of having violated the ideal of honesty is mortifying to most persons. For raising self-esteem, dishonesty is therefore a poor policy.

c. Taking Unnecessary Risks. Foolhardiness is a means of getting into the limelight. If one should ask a person, for example, why he drives his car at breath-taking speed, he is not likely to say that he is trying to display skill or fearlessness in order to attract attention—but that is often the motive for fast driving. The yearning for a place in the sun is so great that people will frequently hazard their lives in attempting to gain it. This tendency to expose oneself to unnecessary peril in order to attract attention is widespread.

d. Being Disagreeable. To keep you from passing them by unnoticed, some persons make themselves disagreeable in whatever way they can. They complain that you disturb them or in other ways inconvenience them; they express contempt for anything you favor; challenge everything you say; and in various ways make nuisances of themselves. And if you chide them you please them. Such a character once said, "Ay, do despise me, I'm the prouder for it; I like to be despised." Anyone who is totally ignored may try to make you take notice of him by being disagreeable.

10. BREAKING CONVENTIONS, RULES, OR LAWS

An individual who violates a convention, rule, or law does not necessarily do so because of a dislike of doing what it demands doing, or because of a desire to do what it forbids doing; he frequently does so for various reasons:

a. To Appear Clever or Courageous. Everyone takes

pride in activity through which he can show marked traits of character. Many boys and young men like especially to distinguish themselves in cleverness and courage. Some youngsters do mischievous things, destroy property, "cut" school, or "swipe" something because of a dare, or for the sake of adventure. Some persons of various ages, not finding in normal life opportunities for exercising cleverness or courage, are lured by the prospect of doing so in crime. Not a few who commit crimes, especially those whose imagination have been fired by "pulp" stories, moving pictures, or radio dramatizations of gangster activities, think of themselves as matching wits and courage with the police. If caught and freed after serving sentence, they may turn again to crime to vindicate their honor. The would-be heroes in evil are as adventuresome and as persistent as are heroes in good.

b. To Be Popular. Wrongdoing is frequently motivated by a desire to be popular. Children may steal pennies in order to buy candy or toys whereby they may win favor or keep themselves from being outdone by other children who have such things. The more some children are permitted to dazzle the group with spending money, the stronger is the tendency of many others to steal in order to be "as popular as Jane or John." Children may steal also because they need money to pay their share toward picnics or play equipment. Or they may join evil-doing groups for the satisfaction of being accepted. Adults, too, break conventions, rules, or laws—some break almost any such restrictions—in order to be popular.

c. To Express Dislike of Another Person or of a Group. The individual who dislikes other persons never conforms willingly to their behavior nor to their rules or laws. Much

nonconformity in matters ranging from the trivial to the serious is motivated by personal dislike.

Often the nonconforming person dislikes another person, or dislikes the group of which he is a member, because he is disdained. Some of the cantankerousness with which parents, teachers, foremen, or officials must contend is brought about by their own haughty attitudes in dealing with others. Similarly, a group that regards itself as superior to other groups is seldom able to exercise much influence. "I am sure from all I have ever seen or read of social revolt and unrest, that this injured self-feeling, or defense against the sense of personal inferiority, while not the only motive, is the most powerful one at work."²

The dislike of the other person underlying nonconformity may be due also to excessive correction or extreme severity of punishment. Anyone embittered by unreasonable punishment may carry his nonconformity to any extreme. Constantly nagging parents or teachers, "hard-boiled" foremen, and "hounding" officers of the law are often criminal makers. Punishment when disproportionate to the offense always tends to make people rebellious.

II. DOING EVIL OUT OF ENVY OR JEALOUSY

The word "envy" is used here to mean chagrin and resentment due to being excelled in things desired. The pride of many people is touched as they see themselves outdone in respect to their personal qualities or possessions; and often their touched pride steers them into wrongdoing through which they aim to undo their betters.

In different ways the envious person may try to bring

² Martin, Everett Dean, *The Behavior of Crowds*, pp. 171-172, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1920.

those who have advantages over him to his own level. He may give them a cold reception, minimize their attainments, point out and exaggerate their weaknesses, or ridicule their ambitions and even put obstacles in their way. Sometimes a person bent upon doing something original must proceed with caution lest he be held in check by an otherwise ineffectual person who happens to occupy a position of superiority. In extreme cases the envious person may, to remove the disparity between himself and those whom he envies, destroy their property or injure them personally. Some envious persons design their whole lives with the aim of harming others.

Jealousy is frequently chagrin and resentment due to another person having something claimed by oneself, and may operate in much the same way as envy. Often a person's pride is shaken severely as he beholds in the possession of another person something to which he feels he has a rightful claim. Although he may have little interest in the thing itself, he will lose self-esteem when it is withheld from him. A child contentedly playing by itself may feel jealous upon seeing its mother fondle another child; a man keeping company with a woman in whom he has little interest may feel jealous upon finding that someone else is interested in her. And often the wounded pride of jealousy has the fierceness of a wounded lion, and finds expression in outrageous crime.³

Behavior of the types that I have discussed here is often, as I have said, only a minor fault, and not necessarily wrongdoing; but frequently it is wrongdoing of a serious nature.

There are methods effective in counteracting wrong-

³ MacConnell, Sarah Warder, *Rivalry*, New York, Macaulay Company, 1927.

doing of any of the types that I have mentioned. Indeed, any attempt to correct such behavior that does not include the use of one or more of these methods will be quite unsuccessful. Other methods might serve to check a particular objectionable act, but their exclusive use would probably result in equally objectionable behavior.

Methods effective in preventing or checking wrongdoing motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth are:

a. Informing the Individual as to the Cause of His Wrongdoing. When one informs the individual that his misconduct is motivated by a desire to gain a feeling of importance and indicates failure on his part to gain such satisfaction in other ways, he will not want to give a public demonstration of inferiority by engaging in such behavior. The technique of pointing out to the individual the cause of his improper behavior makes a negative appeal to the want for a feeling of personal worth; that is, it makes him aware that if he performs that act he will lose prestige.

In revealing to the individual the cause of his wrongdoing, one should generally present the information indirectly in order that the individual may not be offended and, consequently, offer resistance to the idea presented. There are several ways in which such information may be conveyed indirectly. One may, without revealing one's purpose, get the individual to read literature descriptive of cases like his own, and thus one may enable him to understand the cause of his improper act. When such literature is not available, one should tell the individual that there are people who do the objectionable thing without suggesting that he himself does it; and one should state the reason for their action. If there is danger that the individual may see through one's design when proceeding in this way, one

should simply state that one has heard that there are such cases, and should ask him if he thinks it is true.

b. Providing the Individual with Acceptable Means of Attaining a Feeling of Personal Worth. Because of the persistent and driving nature of man's primary cravings, the correcting of behavior necessitates provision for the gratification of these cravings. Rebuking the individual for his waywardness does not in itself constitute generalship in human management. Reproach alone may induce the individual to refrain from one objectionable type of behavior, but it may also give rise to other equally objectionable forms of activity as alternative means of satisfying wants.

Good substitutes for wrongdoing as means of attaining the feeling of personal worth consist, in the first place, of activities that call for the manifestations of ability. In attempting to counteract bullying tendencies teachers strive to give children opportunities to reveal ability through general school work, dramatics, music, committee work, directing of school traffic, and athletics. They recognize that the best way to keep an individual from becoming a problem case is to give him some acceptable activity in which he can excel. The introduction of sports into our schools has done more to decrease fighting than any other factor. In our plans for "fighting the crime wave on a hundred fronts," we should equip our schools adequately to enable every child to manifest ability in one way or another, so that his desire for a sense of importance may be gratified in acceptable ways.

Other good substitutes for wrongdoing as means of attaining the feeling of personal worth are activities helpful to other persons. The knowledge that one counts for something in the lives of others has a sustaining effect on one's

pride. The satisfaction which many people feel in their careers is largely that of knowing that they are of service to other persons. In trying to counteract wrongdoing of the types discussed in this chapter, one can do no better than help the individual take a useful part in life.

c. Modifying the Situation. When a person changes a situation, however slightly, he provides the misbehaving individual with an excuse for modifying his conduct. This technique of changing a situation is often effective because there are many persons who want to reform but are kept from doing so by their pride. When one makes the situation apparently a different situation, the recalcitrant person can change his ways without admitting thereby that he has been in the wrong. This method is applied when an obstreperous pupil or employee is transferred to another teacher or another foreman.

Many additional methods of preventing wrongdoing can be gleaned from what I have said on the subject of removing objectionable ideas.

Thus, we see that the prevention of wrongdoing of the types considered here is a complex problem. How much more intricate must be the whole problem of counteracting wrongdoing! It is lamentable that some people today in charge of others have but one method of keeping the individual from doing wrong: namely, reproof or punishment. Such persons are comparable to those who would attempt to cure all physical ailments with but one medicine. The checking of wrongdoing consists in scientific procedures based on knowledge of human nature. It necessitates formulating preventive and remedial measures in consideration of all human needs, as is done here in respect to the need of a feeling of personal worth.

PART THREE
PREVENTING MENTAL
ABNORMALITY

CHAPTER VIII

PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS

ALMOST everyone is deeply interested in the oddities of behavior he observes in others. There are few subjects on which information is sought more fervently by people in general. Our chief reason for wanting to understand queer persons is to help them overcome their weaknesses, and at the same time to save ourselves from having to endure their eccentricities. But, interested as we are in the subject, most of us feel an appalling lack of ability to deal adequately with abnormal individuals. There are few problems that confront and baffle more people than that of getting along with, or managing, an odd relative, friend, neighbor, or fellow worker.

Psychology lays no claim to formulas for transforming all abnormal people into normal beings. Scientific knowledge is still inadequate; it does not yet enable us to deal effectively with the majority of eccentric people. Nevertheless, there is available much practical information for handling the milder cases of many types of mental disorder met with by most people in everyday life.

Viewed in its complexity, the treatment of abnormal behavior might seem to be a problem that should be left to the specialist. Many laymen, however, are in constant association with abnormal people and, therefore, must deal with them in one way or another. For this reason, the question is not whether the average person should handle eccentric

individuals, but whether his technique of doing so can be improved by the dissemination of information on the subject. People who have some scientific information, provided they realize that their information is limited, make fewer errors in dealing with those inclined to or possessing abnormalities. Since counteracting queer behavior necessitates intelligent action by all persons associated with those disposed toward mental aberrations, dissemination of information relative to the psychology of abnormality is essential to the furtherance of mental health.

Many types of mental abnormality, although by no means all of them, are forms of behavior through which primary wants that are not gratified normally find expression. Frustrated desires often give rise to unsuspected types of morbidity. One of the basic facts in regard to mental disorders is that fundamental human wants are undeniable; and that, when thwarted in one form of expression, they reestablish themselves along another course. Any apparent suppression of the fundamental human wants is but a modification of their means of gratification. So forceful and furtive are these wants that if you oppose them in a thousand ways they go through a thousand twists and changes, and often become unrecognizable to the casual observer, as when pride disguises itself in humility. Try to subdue human wants, and you will only distort their form of expression.

Although all basic wants, when thwarted, play a part in the causation of certain morbid mental states, the only aberrations to be considered here are those motivated by the frustration of the want for a feeling of personal worth. The thwarting of this want is universally recognized by psychologists as the cause of many mental abnormalities, and it is regarded by Adler as being more conducive to the

development of abnormal behavior than the thwarting of any other want. Adler's view, however, is still open to question.

Mental abnormality motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth, like wrongdoing thus motivated, may be either defensive activity (activity motivated by a desire to *maintain* feelings of personal worth despite discrediting circumstances) or compensatory activity (activity motivated by a desire to *attain* feelings of personal worth not afforded in other ways). In developing mental abnormality whereby he escapes self-censure, and in developing mental abnormality whereby he achieves a sense of personal worth, the individual distorts his own opinion in regard to himself. Instead of heeding the admonition of Aristotle, "Know thyself," he heeds the admonition of the voice within himself, which says, "Fool thyself." And often the most deluded are the self-deluded. They can escape self-censure when performing acts for which they would censure others and for which the world censures them, and they can remain convinced of their claims to great personal worth even when their claims provoke ten thousand sneers. This is so because the abnormal person, in fooling himself and often others, is clever. When you reflect upon many of the abnormalities that I shall discuss here you will feel as did Saxe,

How shrewdly men contrive to hide,
E'en from themselves, their wounded pride.¹

Whether abnormal behavior motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth is defensive activity or compensatory activity depends on the individual's state of mind, and

¹ Saxe, John, "The Fighting Cox."

not on the nature of the trait. This will be apparent when we consider the various types.

Mental abnormalities of the types that I shall discuss are normalities carried to an extreme. It has been aptly said, "Abnormal people are like normal people, only more so." Hence it is not the trait itself, but the extent to which it is developed that determines whether a particular person may be classified as a normal or as an abnormal person.

CHAPTER IX

EXCESSIVE PRIDE AND VANITY

PRIDE is self-esteem; vanity is an inordinate desire for the notice, approval, or praise of others. One may be proud without being vain; but a vain person, whenever receiving approbation, is excessively proud. This is because the vain, unlike normal persons, seek approbation chiefly for the gratification of the want for a feeling of personal worth. The vain even sacrifice other wants to gain the good opinion of other persons; they sacrifice the doing of enjoyable things for the sake of being in fashion, they sacrifice prosperity for the sake of being thought prosperous, they sacrifice love for the sake of marrying someone who dazzles other people.

The extremely proud are abnormal in that their pride is excessive; the vain are abnormal in that they seek the good opinions of others excessively, and seek them to achieve self-esteem more than other gratifications.

Excessive pride and vanity are involved in each other to varying degrees in the different forms they take. The following adjustments are typical examples of the combined operation of inordinate pride and vanity in the individual's striving to maintain feelings of personal worth.

I. UNBOUNDED AMBITION

There are persons whose ambitions in life are boundless; there is no limit to what they hope to achieve. They aspire

to take up occupations that, for one reason or another, are definitely beyond their reach, or aspire to achieve more in what they do than is possible for them or would be possible for anyone else to achieve. When contemplating marriage, they consider only persons who are far more attractive than they. If their thoughts turn toward some social issue, they become ambitious to bring about a world-wide change in social practice. When the overly ambitious come to realize the futility of their efforts, they turn to other activities with the same intense ambition. Some redirect their energies in this way and achieve nothing throughout their entire lives. Others, still more ambitious, aspire to achieve success simultaneously in many different pursuits; they have many wagons, each hitched to a star. They too, when meeting with defeat, redirect their efforts, and thus they go through life touching upon everything and accomplishing nothing.

Often the overambitious, in their choice of careers, give evidence that they are less concerned with what they do than with surpassing others in doing it. To them only one thing matters—to be in every race and to be ahead. And as long as there is anyone ahead of them they think themselves last. The repeated shifting of the overambitious from one pursuit to another also suggests that they are less concerned with the nature of their pursuits than with gaining distinction; for normal interest is somewhat persistent and tends toward concentrated application.

The overambitious, thinking only in terms of distinction and bent solely upon gaining ascendancy, put their friends to flight and never get along with anyone. As a result of failure in their human relationships and in their occupations, they develop feelings of inferiority, and so they find that

the medicine they took to build up mental health is poison.

2. STRIVING TO BE UNUSUAL

Having witnessed the glory of individuality in certain persons, some of those who are overeager for distinction develop unusualness at the cost of genuineness of character. They strive to gain distinction by merely being different. Such persons seldom conform to the behavior of others. Before deciding upon a course of action, they look about themselves; then reject what others favor, and favor what others reject. The desire to be unusual may prompt an individual to dress overmeticulously, shabbily, or in an extreme fashion, to be eccentric in speech or deportment, or to hold tenaciously to a peculiar opinion. Some, to gain distinction, adhere to everything old. In doing so, they are no less vain than those who take up everything new.

Often eccentricity is not only an expression of a desire to gain distinction, but also an expression of scorn for other persons. Just as admiration for someone may cause the individual to strive to be like him, so also scorn for someone may cause the individual to strive to be unlike him. Some of those who have little appreciation of people in general are extremely eccentric.

So much they scorn the crowd, that if the throng
By chance go right, they purposely go wrong.¹

Those who strive simply to be different from others, for the purpose either of gaining distinction or of expressing scorn, are generally laughed at, or disliked because they are irritating, and so they suffer from deflated pride.

¹ Pope, Alexander, "Essay on Criticism," lines 426-427.

3. NARCISSISM

The word "narcissism" denotes a state of being in love with oneself. But narcissism, like love for another person, usually involves admiration. The narcissist is everywhere seeking for a mirror in which to admire his own image. But he wants reflected more than his physical image; he wants reflected also his other personality traits. For a mirror of his various qualities he looks to the words of other persons; and when they paint of him a glorifying portrait and express love for him, his own love is aroused, but directed inward; it is a self-embracing love. The more praise or love another person expresses to the narcissist, the more he responds with a *you're right* and *say-it-again* attitude. His test of another's worthiness is whether that person loves him as much as he loves himself. Just as the Narcissus of Greek mythology looked into the pool and saw, not the water lilies, the crystal depths, and the fish, but only his own image, with which he fell in love, so also the narcissist in the real world looks into the faces of other persons, not *with* love, but *for* love. Because of his staggering inability to love anyone but himself, the narcissist receives little affection, and thus soon suffers from starved love, which involves suffering from starved pride.

4. POSING

Inflated pride and vanity often result in posing—that is, in pretending to have merit, rather than endeavoring to achieve merit. The pride that the individual takes in being "a tin god" is often very great. Some of the more common types of posing are:

a. Simulating Lofty Ambition. The person who simulates

lofty ambition considers himself, and hopes to be considered by others, to be as lofty in merit as he seems to be in purpose. The fact that his purpose is feigned does not necessarily disturb his self-esteem because he may hide his insincerity even from himself.

The person who poses may also avoid all struggle for achievement in order to avoid the chagrin of failure, which he thinks would be inevitable. The pride of such a person seems to whisper to him: "Nothing ventured, nothing lost."

b. Predicting Events. A common means of posing consists in forecasting events. Prophesying is a very likely means of gaining prestige and involves little risk of embarrassment. Errors in prediction cannot always be foreseen, and therefore the would-be prophet, upon making a forecast, may be given credit for having the uncanny ability to foretell coming events. Should time prove that the forecast was wrong, everyone may then have forgotten that the prediction was made. If on the other hand the prophecy materializes, the individual can say, "I told you so." It is because forecasting events is so much a "can't lose and may win" proposition that this form of posing is widely popular.

One frequently hears people predicting what is going to happen, and hears them adding, with a confident air, "Mark my word," "Wait, and you'll see," "I'd bet anything that I'm right," "If it doesn't come true I'll eat my hat," or "I'm willing to stake my reputation on what I am saying."

The foretelling of events in order to gain distinction can be observed most widely in unsettled times, when everyone is wondering what is going to happen. A national or an international crisis always produces would-be prophets in abundance.

c. Purporting to Be Inventing Something. There are persons who strive to gain prestige by masquerading as inventors. They tell their friends that they cannot discuss with them the thing on which they are working because the idea must remain a secret until they have procured a patent. Furthermore, when thus posing successfully they get favorable recognition. Since claiming to be an inventor ordinarily does not require the assumption of a defensive position and often affords a high degree of satisfaction, it is a rather inviting form of posing.

d. Trying to Appear Intellectual. It is not uncommon for a man to pose as being intellectual. In affecting intellectualism he may declare excessive appreciation of something. Of course, appreciation of anything prompts most people to tell of their appreciation for it, but there are persons who express admiration of something a hundred times to impress you with their capacity for appreciating it. Such persons mark themselves off from those whose appreciation is genuine not only by the excess of their praise, but also by the things that they praise; they praise things renowned—a sunset, a symphony, or an eminent person—rather than things for which praise has not often been sounded.

Another means of trying to appear intellectual consists in referring excessively to literature in conversation. Distinguished writers are not always quoted because what they say is pertinent, nor because their manner of expression gives variety to the individual's style; often they are quoted by the poser to show that he is familiar with what they have said. Many persons think that they talk well whenever they connect what they say with the works of persons of literary fame. Their conversation is guided not by what they have to say, but by their stock of sayings. Should you

approach the subject of the weather, one of these persons might delight in the opening to reply, "As Mark Twain said, 'The weather is something that everybody . . .'" Such persons hope to be judged by the company they seem to keep.

Some strive to appear intellectual by analyzing things excessively. Analysis is essential to understanding, and correct analysis indicates intelligence; but accuracy of analysis is not always discernible. For these reasons, it is sometimes possible to achieve a sense of importance by any attempt at analysis. There are persons who try to analyze you definitely, or to reduce any artistic production to a few simple principles. Their satisfaction in picking things to pieces is not simply the satisfaction of appearing learned, but also that of appearing more learned than you.

Another means of trying to appear intellectual consists in using showy language or language that is unintelligible to you. Such language may consist of obscure terms or of terms unduly technical, and of a roundabout expression that swells the bulk of such terms. By using showy language the individual hopes to be impressive, and by using language that is unintelligible to you he hopes to make you feel small. Not a few would-be philosophers and scientists put a wall of unfamiliar language around their thoughts in order to make you feel that what they say is magnificent and inaccessible to other minds. They do not use simple language because it would at once shrivel their thoughts into mere truisms. Their favorite occupation is to distort plain facts into complicated questions. They are like the Scottish professor of divinity who used to say to his graduates, "Now, lads, tak' my advice, and preach aince a year, aince a year and no oftener, a sermon that nobody can understand."

Showy language and language that is unintelligible is to the one who uses it a mark of his profundity.

Whether a man strives to use such language depends upon his intellectual equipment. A person with a wealth of ideas likes to communicate those ideas, and tries to do so in the simplest and clearest language. He knows that to be able to put big ideas into little words is the finest art. He uses technical terms only in so far as they are necessary to convey thought. But a person whose intellectuality is a sham is less concerned with conveying thought than with strutting in gaudy or stunning verbal dress.

e. Boasting, and Flaunting Oneself. Bragging, dressing showily, driving conspicuous cars, and building extravagant homes are common ways of posing. Persons who harp on their own attainments and make ostentatious displays of themselves frequently hope thereby to climb the social ladder. This fact is so well known that it needs no further elaboration.

f. Disparaging Oneself. Self-disparagement may appear at first thought the very opposite of posing, but it is in reality one of the many unsuspected ways in which the individual strives to maintain or attain a feeling of personal worth. In disparaging himself the individual may try to gain distinction for humility. The humble person has been extolled in every age. Consequently, self-depreciation has become a means of attaining a feeling of personal worth. As a result there are many persons who humble themselves in order that they may be exalted in their own eyes and in the eyes of others. Such people are proud of their humility; they are like Dickens' Uriah Heep in *David Copperfield*, who said, "I am well aware that I am the umblest person going." The story is told that Socrates said to a speaker who had mounted the platform in old and bedraggled

clothes, "Young man of Athens, your vanity peers out through every hole in your robe." Most self-mortification is self-praise.

Self-disparagement may also be an attempt to gain recognition for honesty. One of the ideals of society is honesty. Consequently, integrity is a means whereby distinction can be gained. Many abnormal persons are too clever to attempt to gain prestige by openly boasting of their rectitude. They proceed in more devious ways. A man may, for example, confess that he stole a postage stamp, and may simulate remorse for his act. He may do so because he assumes that people will think his standard of honesty must be high when they see him stricken with remorse over his trifling indiscretion. An interesting case of this type is thus described and interpreted by Adler:

A patient of mine, a second child, suffered very profoundly from inescapable feelings of guilt. Both his father and his elder brother laid great emphasis on honesty. When the boy was seven years old he told his teacher in school that he had done a piece of homework by himself, although as a matter of fact, his brother had done it for him. The boy concealed his guilty feelings for three years. At last he went to see the teacher and confessed his awful lie. The teacher merely laughed at him. Next he went to his father in tears and confessed a second time. This time he was more successful. The father was proud of his boy's love of truth; he praised and consoled him. In spite of the fact that his father had absolved him, the boy continued to be depressed. We can hardly avoid the conclusion that this boy was occupied in proving his great integrity and scrupulousness by accusing himself so bitterly for such a trifle. The high moral atmosphere of his home gave him the impulse to excel in integrity. He felt inferior to his elder brother in school work and social attractiveness; and he tried to achieve superiority by a sideline of his own.²

² Adler, Alfred, *What Life Should Mean to You*, p. 32, Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1931.

We see, then, that a confession of having committed a trivial indiscretion is not necessarily an indication of remorse; it may be merely a pose.

Another motive in self-disparagement may be that of gaining recognition for having ability. Frequently an individual speaks depreciatingly about one of his accomplishments in order to convey the idea that his usual performance is of a high standard. Everyone who engages in sports has heard statements such as "I don't know what's wrong with me today." Similarly, many a hostess has declared that her dinner is a failure in order to impress upon her guests the idea that she is capable of preparing an even more delectable meal. Thus it is apparent that self-disparagement is often a means of self-aggrandizement.

Those who habitually pose develop an incapacity for naturalness, and so they become not only absurd but also uninteresting; for nothing in another's personality is pleasing to you that is not his own.

5. GOING TO EXTREMES TO GAIN ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF PERSONAL WORTH

Some people must always receive expressions of appreciation. They require their associates to be constantly absorbed in them or to be voluble in their expressions of devotion, and they exact whatever expressions of approval they can from others indiscriminately. So eager are some for approbation that they rejoice in any interest manifested in them by any admiring person, and always take the stage. They are abnormal, in that their hankering for the approval of many persons is disproportionate to the further significance that those persons have for them.

People who are abnormally eager for approbation turn every conversation to matters in which they hope to sparkle.

They consult you in regard to something they plan to do, but only to have you admire them. Such persons may also seek incessant affection, not simply for its own sake, but also for the sake of the esteem it expresses. And if the person from whom they desire affection does not express it, they may express affection for him excessively as an offering for affection from him in return. Mothers not living normal lives may be profuse in their expression of affection to their children in order that the children may lavish them with affection in return. Institutional children, who receive no affection, and unwanted children in homes are pathetically grateful to any stranger who shows the least sympathy for them. Their attitude and the attitude of mothers such as those I have referred to may be due as much to desire for esteem as to desire for affection itself.

People who are abnormally eager for acknowledgment of personal worth sometimes demand as expressions of appreciation sacrifices that sustain their pride, although otherwise of no benefit to them. Often they reveal this attitude by requiring some useless sacrifice of time, money, or conviction, saying, "You ought to be glad to do this for me."

Another way in which the abnormally eager for approbation strive to gain it is by being docile and subservient. Frequently they conform to the thoughts and actions of other persons in general, obey superiors like a child, yield readily to salesmen, refuse to criticize others, and tend always to serve everyone upon his beck and call. They find this means of currying favor most effective when dealing with others of their kind, for vanity is always honored by another's self-abnegation and subservience.

Those who crave continual acknowledgment of personal worth like to work in the company of sympathetic persons, and to spend all of their leisure with them. Greet them, and

you will find it difficult, however long you have tarried, to wrest yourself from them; call upon them, and they will return your visit too promptly; express a feeling of warmth for them, and they will cling to you. And when alone such persons are exceedingly restless because they feel forsaken.

Eagerness for the company of responsive persons is not necessarily due to eagerness for assurance of personal attractiveness. Often it is due to boredom when alone; to dependence upon other persons for stimulation. But a person starving for acknowledgment of personal worth is never contented when alone.

6. SENSITIVENESS AND CENSORIOUSNESS

There are some whose feelings are easily hurt, and some who are prone to hurt the feelings of other persons. Usually sensitiveness and censoriousness are attributes of the same individual; the one who is quick to take offense is usually equally quick to give offense. Let us look at these touchy and at the same time hard individuals first from the standpoint of their sensitiveness.

A lapse in attention to the sensitive in favor of other persons is to them a slight; and a request for a change of appointment, or tardiness in keeping an appointment with them, is to them an indication that they are thought unimportant. And should your delay in keeping an appointment with them be due to your being occupied with someone else, however necessarily, they become jealous. Such persons also consider suggestions, disagreements, or criticisms as affronts, and simply cannot take a joke. In response to the most humorous thrust they may sulk and say, "I won't take anything from you," or speak of vindicating their honor. Over the face of a touchy person there may

come at any time a cloud. And when it comes, your engagement with him, if it is a social engagement, at best loses its promised zest; if it is a business or professional engagement, it becomes strained.

The thin-skinned are also timid; and, by avoiding everything that may prove embarrassing to them, they never achieve anything. Afraid of being thought ignorant, they refrain from asking for information or advice; afraid of being thought wrong, they never speak at all; afraid of being declared unqualified, they refrain from asking for good jobs; afraid of being rejected, they refrain from making advances to the opposite sex. As a result of their inhibitions they never get anywhere, and so they grow more sensitive. Their increase in sensitiveness is followed by an increase in timidity, and hence a demoralizing circle is set in motion.

Many extremely sensitive people are equally censorious of you for real or imaginary neglect of them or unfairness to them. Often they are ridiculous in their reproaches of you. They find you at fault in matters of no consequence, they object on the most trivial grounds to what you say, they quarrel with you over nothing. Being captious, caviling, and carping, they find everyone vulnerable, and would wound the pride of everyone with their thrusts.

Excessive pride and vanity, whatever the form of expression, may be due to various factors. They may be due to inferiority. Persons of merit do not always strive to prove their worth, nor are their feelings mortally hurt by every criticism and disapprobation. But many of the infinitely little are infinitely proud and vain. Pope implied these facts when he said, "Those best can bear reproof, who merit praise," and in the lines,

Whatever nature has in worth denied
 She gives in large recruits of needful Pride.³

Many extremely proud and vain persons were either coddled or neglected by their parents. Any child that receives excessive attention or affection from a parent overrates his importance, and so he anticipates and strives for similar treatment from others. Later, measuring what he gets by what he got, he begins an unremitting struggle to become once again the constant object of affection that he was.

But for everyone who grows egotistical and vain when coddled there is one who develops these abnormalities when neglected. Anyone who feels that he is unappreciated tends to build up defensive self-esteem and to strive to have his good opinion of himself confirmed. And the more he feels that injustice is done to his merit, the higher he tends to rate himself. Expressions of appreciation for the individual are as essential to keeping his pride and vanity within bounds as is an avoidance of excess appreciation of him.⁴

In counteracting the development of mental abnormalities such as these, one should inform the individual as to why he does what he does. One should, however, present such information indirectly in order to avoid scorching his already singed pride, and to avoid antagonizing him. One should, moreover, help the individual find wholesome means of gaining self-respect. Successful treatment of excessive pride or vanity and, as we shall see, of any other type of mental abnormality, necessitates removing its underlying cause.

³ Pope, Alexander, "An Essay on Criticism," line 583 and lines 205-206.

⁴ See Reemer, Morris D., "Loving Versus Spoiling Children," *Mental Hygiene*, 24:79-82 (Jan., 1940).

CHAPTER X

DAYDREAMING

DAYDREAMING is an adjustment whereby satisfaction of fundamental wants is sought in the world of phantasy rather than in the world of reality. The person who assuages his desires through daydreaming does so because he has failed to get out of an actual life situation the satisfaction he craves. Everyone daydreams, but some do so more than others because they suffer greater thwartings. Daydreams consist of two rather distinct types:

I. "CONQUERING-HERO" DAYDREAMING

Conquering-hero daydreaming is imagining oneself to be having experiences that are wholly gratifying. It serves to endow one with the beauty, bravery, strength, or other admirable qualities that one does not possess, and it serves to gratify impulses that cannot be gratified expediently through direct action.

Daydreaming of the conquering-hero type may be motivated by any thwarted wants. One of the wants which, when unfulfilled, often gives rise to such daydreaming is that for a feeling of personal worth. People smarting with feelings of inferiority frequently strive to sustain their self-regard by imagining themselves as possessing some extraordinary quality—a marvelous sense of humor, rare athletic ability, unmatched beauty, a great gift for public-speaking, unusual intelligence, death-defying courage, unequaled busi-

ness sagacity, unparalleled benevolence, or cleverness that baffles the best detectives.

Frequently the individual in his daydreaming visualizes himself as being some other person of distinction in whom he sees a fulfillment of his own frustrated desires. Such a daydreamer is a conquering hero through *identification*.

The conquering hero may, therefore, imagine himself as attaining distinction either through living his own life more fully, or through living the life of the person with whom he identifies himself.

The striving to overcome feelings of frustration by becoming more or less unconscious of one's own identity and thinking of oneself in terms of another person who appears to be enjoying the things one longs for, is very common. It is manifested by the person who likes to think that some of the world's foremost men are of his nationality, religion, or political party; that great men have been engaged in occupations similar to his, have been born in the same community or even on the day of his own birth. This tendency to identify oneself with a prominent person is the basis of much hero worship. We often laud a distinguished individual because we identify ourselves with him.

Fondly we think we honour merit then,
When we but praise ourselves in other men.¹

This striving to overcome feelings of frustration by putting oneself into the place of another in whom one sees a fulfillment of one's own desires is revealed also in parents who identify themselves with their successful children. Presumably many a parent has attained great satisfaction in thinking of a precocious child as a "chip off the old block." Sometimes a parent having an unfulfilled ambition

¹ Pope, Alexander, "An Essay on Criticism," lines 454-455.

strives to realize his objective by having a child with whom he identifies himself carry on in the same line of endeavor. The striving to accomplish in this way his own ambition makes many a parent direct his child to a career for which he has neither interest nor aptitude. Such a means of self-realization on the part of a parent is likely to lead to the child's undoing. Identifying oneself with one's children, while often a source of much satisfaction, must not be indulged in to such an extent that it becomes a detrimental factor in determining the child's career.

Frequently an individual, instead of identifying himself with some one other person, pictures himself as a member of a group which appears to enjoy the satisfaction he desires. The alumnus or the student who, although not on his school's ball team, boasts of its success is identifying himself with the players, and in this way is assuming a measure of credit for their accomplishments. People tend, likewise, to identify themselves as closely as possible with other organizations and institutions which seemingly attain their own unfulfilled ambitions. In doing so, as when identifying themselves with some other person, they lift themselves out of their frustrated lives and ride to victory on borrowed strength. They take as much pride in themselves as did the fly that sat on the axletree of the chariot wheel and said, "What a dust do I stir!" Although the group does not countenance boasting about oneself, it delights in the person who boasts about the group, and so it stimulates the development of this means of achieving self-esteem. The pleasure many persons obtain from identifying themselves with successful organizations may be partly responsible for the growth of those organizations and for their numerous honorary membership lists.

Identification may also consist in imagining oneself to be

some inanimate thing in which there is suggested an expression of one's own unfulfilled desires. The boy who simulates the sound and motions of a steam engine is identifying himself with the locomotive and, in this way, is obtaining a feeling of power. The man who takes pride in the achievements of a machine he possesses is often identifying himself with it. Personification in literature, although it may usually be intended to serve other purposes only, nevertheless enables the reader to identify himself with the thing personified, and thus to appropriate its qualities. The possibility of identifying oneself with nature when personified is suggested in the poem, "The Cloud." Some of the personal qualities Shelley attributes to the cloud are: beneficence—"I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers"; beauty—"From my wings are shaken the dews that waken . . ."; power—"I wield the flail of the lashing hail"; freedom from anxiety—"And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile"; and immortality—"I change, but I cannot die." By identifying himself with the cloud, the reader of this poem can think thus of himself and obtain feelings of exultation.

Many persons utilize physical aids to identification. An extremely deranged man may, to support his imagination that he is Christ, let his hair grow. And quite normal people often use aids to identification in their conquering-hero daydreams. A boy may smoke a cigarette to support his dream of being a man; an adult male may smoke a cigar to aid him in playing the role of a big business man. I once asked a man the reason why he was always enveloped in, or trailing, clouds of smoke. He said, "It gives me self-confidence." Some fathers name their sons after themselves as an aid to identifying themselves with their offspring. Richard Smith is more able to think himself con-

tinued in his son, if his son's name is also Richard.² For many persons the reading of fanciful literature is a ready means of identification, since in such literature the reader may "lose himself in the story" and live the life of a character who overcomes all obstacles in the achievement of a desired goal.

Conquering-hero daydreaming, whether imaginary achievement in one's own right or a form of identification, may be either compensatory or defensive activity. There are, on the one hand, persons who because of sickness, injury, disease, or old age find their intellectual, social, or physical powers waning. To keep themselves from the realization that they are deteriorating, they imagine themselves to be extraordinarily competent. In this way they fortify themselves against a loss of pride. In such cases, conquering-hero daydreaming is a defense adjustment.

There are, on the other hand, persons who engage in conquering-hero daydreaming, less in order to counteract a feeling that they are slipping than in order to attain a sense of importance. Children in particular do so. In such cases, this adjustment is compensatory activity. However, any conquering-hero daydream may be a combination of both defensive and compensatory activity.

The influence of conquering-hero daydreaming on the individual's well-being must be considered from different standpoints.

² In naming children after the father, parents are sometimes thoughtless as to how the son may later feel about it. Some sons of great men become but shadows of their fathers, and so cannot live up to the glamour associated with the label. To be merely recognized as the son of a great man may involve a heavy burden of public expectation, whatever the first name may be. But to bear the entire name of a great man may impose an intolerable burden of public expectation, or lead to ridicule. It may be as much of a handicap to a boy to be given a name that he is unable to live up to, as to be given a name that he has to live down.

a. *The Influence of Conquering-Hero Daydreaming on Effort or on Character Development.* From the standpoint of motivation, conquering-hero daydreaming may have either a good or a bad effect. When it consists in an imaginary attainment of the goal toward which one in reality strives it may give impetus to activity, because imaginary success, like actual success, is often stimulating. Presumably many men who have attained greatness have found that by engaging in conquering-hero daydreaming while climbing the heights they were incited to press on. A distinguished novelist who, while producing his work, visualized it as being a "best seller," may have found his daydream an incentive to effort.

Similarly, conquering-hero daydreaming of the identification type may stimulate a child or young person to emulate the character of the person with whom he identifies himself. This type of daydreaming should, to some extent, be encouraged and directed because of its possibilities of leading to the development of human virtues.

But although conquering-hero daydreaming may lead to greater effort or to the development of character, it does not necessarily do so. Thorndike says that an individual might picture himself as having written a dozen sonnets surpassing Shakespeare's and Milton's, picture the consequent joy of friends, read the praises of reviewers, smell the incense of literary clubs, and yet not move his hand an inch toward the pen nor his mind an iota toward poetic creation.³

Under what conditions does conquering-hero daydreaming stimulate effort? It tends to do so when it simply fills the necessary gaps between periods of actual performance,

³ See Thorndike, Edward L., *The Psychology of Wants, Interests, and Attitudes*, p. 82, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1935.

rather than when it is engaged in to avoid the exertion, the discomfort, or the risk of failure or of embarrassment; when it is a secondary rather than a primary means of gratification.

Frequently, the individual, in striving for satisfactions, vacillates between actual performance and daydreaming, and so his daydreams become distractions from his actual pursuits. Persons in any occupation may, in this way, enfeeble their efforts and make them ineffective, and thus jeopardize their success. It is, however, not only daydreaming but any diversion of thought that enfeebles effort, and renders it ineffective.

b. The Influence of Conquering-Hero Daydreaming on the Making of Decisions. Imaginary experiences, as well as actual experiences, often influence decisions. Consequently a person who has visualized himself as attaining great success in pursuing a certain course is likely to follow that course, even though it is a very irrational one for him to take. This is true, for example, in the choice of a life work. A person who repeatedly pictures himself as a great minister of the gospel, an army officer, a movie star, a lawyer, or a physician may distort his judgment in choosing a vocation. Many a person has made an unwise selection of a vocation because he allowed his daydream to become his guiding star. Stories and pictures of the "success" type are responsible for numerous misfits in the occupational world.

Decisions regarding marriage are often influenced more by the daydream than by relevant facts. A woman, finding a certain man attractive to her, may thereupon daydream of a marriage with this man and, in her daydream, visualize him to be a very successful person and a devoted and delightfully entertaining husband. The more romantic novels

she reads, the more she is guided by her air castles in marrying the man she has thus idealized.

Daydreaming also has an extensive influence on decisions relative to purchases and investments. Frequently an advertiser or a salesman gets his prospect to daydream of attaining certain desired ends by purchasing the thing offered for sale. By paging through any popular magazine or by listening to the radio, one can observe attempts by certain sellers to start daydreams in the minds of the public. A person who excessively visualizes certain satisfactions before they are realized is likely to be taken in by such sales strategy. A daydream, although often a pleasant companion, is a wretched guide.

Since conquering-hero daydreaming usually interferes with the making of rational decisions, it follows that important counsel for many persons is: "Instead of daydreaming, think."

c. The Influence of Conquering-Hero Daydreaming on Mental Health. From the standpoint of mental health, to be dealt with at length in Part Four, conquering-hero daydreaming may have a good or a bad effect. When it is engaged in to fill the necessary gaps between the periods of actual gratification of wants, and when it is engaged in by old people, invalids, or children to whom real accomplishment is impossible, it is often defensible. In the case of children, however, much is done today in schools to provide means for achieving feelings of self-regard and for meriting recognition, with the result that children are now getting more of such satisfactions out of actual life situations, and so have less need of daydreaming; and much is done to provide adults with leisure activity that sustains their pride. But in the lives of all persons there still remains time that

cannot be devoted to actual achievement; and, in such cases, it is often of benefit to the individual to imagine that he is where he is not, and that he is attaining desired ends. To persons who are unavoidably restricted from engaging in real activity, imaginary achievement is indispensable to mental health.

From the standpoint of mental health, conquering-hero daydreaming is unwise when the indulgence decreases actual achievement. This is because imaginary satisfaction is inadequate for gratifying one's wants, and so it cannot take the place of genuine satisfaction. It takes real water to quench thirst. Furthermore, when daydreaming becomes a substitute for actual achievement it often defers the development of ingenuity in dealing with real life situations; and, consequently, it makes accomplishment more and more difficult. The boy who spends his time dreaming of being a leader of a gang is not learning how to get along with other boys, and every delay in associating with his fellows makes it more difficult to adjust himself to them. Mental health demands, therefore, that a person, instead of occupying his mind for the most part with imaginary achievements, devote his thoughts primarily to the devising of methods for attaining genuine satisfaction.

From the same standpoint, conquering-hero daydreaming is also unwise when it makes for discontent with real life situations, as it often does. A man may, for example, go to the theater and identify himself with one of the characters on the screen or stage. Consequently, he may have the imaginary satisfaction of being cheered by the crowd when he rides by in a luxurious car, of being waited on by servants as he enters his palatial residence, and of being surrounded by admiring friends as he dines in splendor. But

after the show, he has to go out into the cold, wait fifteen minutes for a trolley car and, when he gets home, be told to poke up the fire. The realization that one is no longer a bird of paradise but a sparrow is most disconcerting. Such realization is likely to make a man feel that life is dealing harshly with him. Discontentment with actual conditions, to which extreme indulgence in daydreaming gives rise, is well expressed in Edwin Arlington Robinson's poem "Miniver Cheevy":

Miniver Cheevy, child of scorn,
 Grew lean while he assailed the seasons;
 He wept that he was ever born,
 'And he had reasons.

Miniver loved the days of old
 When swords were bright and steeds were prancing;
 The vision of a warrior bold
 Would set him dancing.

Miniver sighed for what was not,
 And dreamed, and rested from his labors;
 He dreamed of Thebes and Camelot,
 And Priam's neighbors.

Miniver mourned the ripe renown
 That made so many a name so fragrant;
 He mourned Romance, now on the town,
 And Art, a vagrant.

Miniver loved the Medici,
 Albeit he had never seen one;
 He would have sinned incessantly
 Could he have been one.

Miniver cursed the commonplace
 And eyed a khaki suit with loathing;
 He missed the mediaeval grace
 Of iron clothing.

Miniver scorned the gold he sought,
But sore annoyed was he without it;
Miniver thought, and thought, and thought,
And thought about it.

Miniver Cheevy, born too late,
Scratched his head and kept on thinking;
Miniver coughed, and called it fate,
And kept on drinking.⁴

Although conquering-hero daydreaming often makes sordid the world of reality, it does not necessarily do so. People differ in the extent to which their daydreams are to them realistic; the more abnormal the individual, the more he fails to distinguish between reality and unreality. And it is usually only the extremely abnormal whose taste for reality is blunted by daydreams. To the more normal person, phantasy, being a thing apart from reality, does not make reality sordid; and, by virtue of the diversion from reality which it provides, phantasy gives freshness to life.

d. Conquering-Hero Daydreaming As a Preventive of Contention and Strife. Some aggrieved persons desire to revenge themselves, but are unable to do so at the time of the offense. In that event, upon going their ways, they may in imagination squelch the offender with a well turned phrase, or flog him; and after having done so they often feel somewhat revenged and satisfied. Later, when meeting the one who provoked their wrath, they may, because of having retaliated in imagination, refrain from actual retaliation. If the aggrieved persons did not have imagination as a means of redressing their grievances, there would be more verbal and fistic bouts than there are now.

In checking conquering-hero daydreaming one should,

⁴ From *The Town Down the River*. Copyright, 1910, by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. Used by permission of the publishers.

in the first place, inform the individual as to why he devotes his thoughts to imaginary achievements. As the dreamer comes to know that pretending to be a distinguished person is a sign of failure to command respect, he will not want to give demonstrations of such weakness. Great caution should, however, be exercised in getting the individual to understand himself. A direct statement to the effect that he is not the distinguished person he claims to be should never be made. It would cause him to develop further delusions regarding his accomplishments in order to convince himself and others that he is telling the truth. The individual should generally be informed indirectly about himself in order that he may not feel he is being censured.

One should, in the second place, make the adjustment involved in daydreaming unnecessary. This can often be done by helping perplexed or baffled persons do things that merit recognition, and by acknowledging their desirable qualities and responses. No treatment can be deemed adequate that does not provide for the attainment of satisfaction in an actual life situation. Heroes in phantasy suffer from feelings of inferiority, and unless they get help in overcoming such feelings there can be little hope that they will refrain from excessive daydreaming.

2. SUFFERING-HERO DAYDREAMING

Suffering-hero daydreaming consists in imagining oneself to be undergoing certain abuses whereby one obtains a feeling of self-importance. Such daydreaming is, therefore, similar to conquering-hero daydreaming in the satisfaction it provides, but differs from it in the method through which the satisfaction is attained. The satisfaction is attained through imaginary abuses, rather than through imaginary

achievements. There are different ways in which suffering-hero daydreaming may give rise to a feeling of self-importance.

a. By Imagining Complimentary Reasons for Being Abused. The suffering hero imagines not simply that he is mistreated; he also makes up reasons for being abused that he regards complimentary to himself. Sometimes he imagines that he is mistreated because others are jealous of him. In this way he develops the belief that he is superior to his alleged persecutors in the matter provoking their jealousy. A woman may fancy that her husband is keeping her from attaining distinction because he is afraid of being "out-done" by her; and an unqualified employee may imagine that he is kept in the background by his superior for a similar reason. By developing the idea that he is persecuted because of jealousy, the suffering hero grows in self-esteem.

Frequently the suffering hero imagines that he is mistreated because he is feared, and so develops the belief that he is a person of power. Such a one often fancies that he is abused not simply by some ordinary individual, but rather by a prominent person or a number of people who have conspired against him. The thought that a distinguished person or group is trying, in self-defense, to bring ruin to him gives the suffering hero more satisfaction than he could obtain from picturing himself as the victim of a mediocre man. The one who imagines that he is kept by officials from lecturing before large audiences because of a fear of what he might say, gets the pleasant satisfaction of thinking that such persons would be seriously concerned. An employee who fancies he was discharged because the foreman was afraid that he himself might otherwise eventually be displaced by the employee, a prisoner who imagines the

real reason he was incarcerated is that the authorities were afraid he might become an effective leader of a revolution, and a person who fancies a number of others are attempting to kill him in order to prevent his disclosing information damaging to them, likewise develop through their suffering-hero daydreams the belief that they count for something in the minds of many or of important persons, and so grow in self-esteem. Thus we see that suffering-hero daydreaming may actually involve conquering-hero daydreaming.

b. By Imagining Oneself Getting Sympathy. Often the individual, when imagining himself abused for reasons complimentary to him, imagines also that he is getting sympathy. Imaginary sympathy affords him self-esteem by enabling him to think of himself as the object of attention and to feel that he is considered as a meritorious and blameless person. Hence, suffering-hero daydreaming may afford feelings of importance indirectly through imaginary sympathy, as well as directly through self-esteem.

Thus we see that suffering-hero daydreaming is engaged in not because of a morbid interest in the unpleasant, but rather as a means of obtaining a feeling of self-importance.

The suffering hero often tries to make his claims of being wronged seem plausible. This he may do in various ways. In some cases he selects something actually done by another person and exaggerates it. By thus choosing a vulnerable point of attack the suffering hero makes his accusations seem logical, and by enlarging upon the thing done by the accused person he guards against appearing ridiculous in complaining of being wronged.

When the suffering hero fails to find a vulnerable point of attack he may even lead his intended victim into a position of plausible guilt and then proceed in accordance with

the strategy mentioned above. By putting the other person slightly in the wrong and then exaggerating his act, the suffering hero makes his claim of having suffered injustice seem truthful and serious.

In other cases the suffering hero may misconstrue another's motive for doing what he did. By reading an evil purpose into an innocent remark or act, he provides grounds for making an accusation. Thus misunderstanding may sometimes be due to a *desire* to misunderstand. In such cases it is futile to try to convince the suffering hero that he is not the victim of the abuses he claims.

Thus in striving to make plausible his alleged abuses the suffering hero proceeds shrewdly. When trying to decide whether the persecutions of which an individual complains are real or imaginary, one must take into account that the suffering hero is a good strategist in making his accusations appear logical.

In determining whether the abuses of which the individual complains are real or imaginary, it is helpful also to observe the extent to which he claims to be mistreated. If he declares himself to be abused in every way by almost all persons with whom he comes in contact, he may be suffering from abuses that are purely imaginary, he may have *delusions of persecution*. The extent to which the individual claims to be treated unfairly is, however, not a dependable criterion for judgment as to whether or not he is a suffering hero, because the abuses of which he complains, however extensive, may be real.

In counteracting suffering-hero daydreaming, as in counteracting conquering-hero daydreaming, one should inform the individual of the reasons underlying his daydreaming, for he can ordinarily overcome it only when he understands

himself. Care must be exercised, however, in giving such information. A direct presentation of the facts may so disparage the individual that he will refuse to admit them. Man, especially abnormal man, is too vain to be receptive of ideas presented in a manner discrediting to him. One should, therefore, when informing a person as to why he engages in suffering-hero daydreaming, generally do so indirectly.

One should, furthermore, make suffering-hero daydreaming, as well as excessive indulgence in conquering-hero dreams, *unnecessary* and *unprofitable*. That is, one should make it possible for the individual to achieve self-respect in wholesome ways, and one should withhold recognition and sympathy when suffering-hero methods are used for gaining such satisfaction. It would, however, be a serious error merely to withhold recognition and sympathy when the individual is engaging in this form of behavior, and not to minister at other times to the need which led to the development of the habit of daydreaming. Effective treatment of abnormalities such as these consists not in direct suppression, but rather in helping the individual to find acceptable means of expression.

Thus, excessive conquering-hero daydreaming that is motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth and suffering-hero daydreaming are similar in causation and should, for the most part, be counteracted by similar methods.

CHAPTER XI

REVERSION TO THE PAST

WHEN a person meets with difficulties in attaining satisfaction in actual life, he frequently draws upon past experiences for the gratification of his longings. Any want or combination of wants when not gratified may cause a turning to the past. Therefore—although in this volume we are interested primarily in abnormalities arising from a thwarting of the want for a feeling of personal worth—what I say here is equally true of other thwarted wants. Reverting to the past is similar to conquering-hero daydreaming, in that it consists in dwelling upon thoughts that are gratifying to one's longings; but it differs from such daydreaming, in that the experiences are primarily recalled experiences rather than imaginary. Some people revert more completely to the past than do others. This will be seen when we consider the following degrees of reversion:

I. REMINISCING

To recall pleasant experiences and to muse upon them is, of course, quite normal. Everyone indulges in reminiscing occasionally. But of two persons, one well satisfied with life and the other discontented, the latter is more likely to reminisce. The woman who goes to the attic, dusts off a box, and takes out old letters, photographs, or keepsakes to enjoy them once more is presumably less happy than the one who throws them into the waste basket. The one reverts

to the past because the present does not satisfy her needs, while the other is indifferent to the past because her desires are gratified in the present. Immoderate contemplation of bygone days is a symposium of defeat in the present.

In so far as dwelling upon memories of happier days is a means of attaining satisfaction that is not afforded in one's present experiences, it is compensatory activity.

People of all ages reminisce, but chiefly those who have reached senility. An aged person whose powers have waned often finds the present comparatively barren, and so he turns to the past for satisfaction. Such a person cherishes, for example, old songs that remind him of situations in which he was successful. He likes to unfold the past because to him it is a more fruitful source of happiness than the present. The influence of reminiscing on the individual's well-being, like that of conquering-hero daydreaming, must be considered from different standpoints:

a. The Influence of Reminiscing on Effort. From the standpoint of providing an incentive to actual performance, reminiscing may have either a good or a bad effect. Recalling one's earlier success in a certain line of activity, on the one hand, often becomes a spur to further activity. It is frequently the best way to muster strength for new encounters. On the other hand, a person may find reviewing his earlier achievements such an easy way of attaining satisfaction that he will not strive for actual accomplishment as a means of gratifying his desires. Contemplating one's past success may, therefore, decrease or increase effort.

b. The Influence of Reminiscing on Mental Health. From the standpoint of furthering mental health, as from the standpoint of influencing effort, reminiscing may be

beneficial or harmful. When it is engaged in to fill necessary gaps between periods of actual accomplishment, it is often conducive to mental health. In the case of aged persons and invalids who are restricted in ability to command recognition, this form of adjustment frequently furthers their mental health.

When, however, reminiscing is engaged in to the extent that it becomes a substitute for actual accomplishment by those who are able to achieve, it is objectionable from the standpoint of mental health. Reminiscing, like daydreaming, results in a gratification that is not genuine. Real satisfaction comes out of the present rather than out of the past. Moreover, reminiscing, like daydreaming, may be injurious to mental health because it makes for dissatisfaction with reality. The woman who thinks constantly of the luxurious home she enjoyed with her parents often finds the restrictions of a simpler home provided by her husband disconcerting. Reminiscing, therefore, may affect mental health unfavorably as well as favorably.

2. REPEATING BEHAVIOR OF ONE'S EARLIER LIFE

Frequently an individual failing to gratify his desires in normal ways engages in activities such as satisfied his wants in an earlier stage of his life. This individual often reverts to the behavior of his childhood. In many cases, he does not merely perform acts characteristic of an earlier period, but actually believes he is living in that period. Such doubling back on one's course of development constitutes a form of insanity. The person making this adjustment may toddle, use baby talk, get down on the floor and play gleefully with toys, may address any real or imaginary person as "mamma" or "teacher," and recite nursery rhymes in

childish fashion. The histories of such individuals often reveal that they have suffered severe disappointments in adult life. This adjustment whereby the individual adopts the simpler methods of his earlier life is known as *regression*. It is compensatory activity.

Frequently what is taken for regression is in reality a lag in development—failure to develop at the normal rate. But a lag in development leaves the individual ill adapted to his environment, and so it disposes him to regress. Therefore, while anyone may under severe conditions regress, a person whose development has lagged is more likely to do so. For this reason, the prevention of regression involves dealing with children so that they will develop progressively through and beyond the various stages of childhood. The regret of some parents at seeing a child grow up often causes them to discourage the child from adopting new and more suitable methods as he matures. An understanding of the dangers of fostering infantile habits in children should, however, help parents avoid such mistakes.

Reversion to either of the two degrees is due not only to disappointments experienced in present life but also to satisfying memories of earlier years. The more pleasant the memories, the greater is the inclination to regress. There is, however, a tendency to remember the past as having been more glorious than it actually was. Intervening years throw glamour over the events of youth. The distorted view of former days may be explained by the contrast between the individual's disagreeable present and his more agreeable past, which gives him an exaggerated recollection of the pleasantness of his earlier experiences. It may also result from his having reviewed and thus fixed in memory agreeable events, and from his having kept from consciousness

unpleasant events. Both of these views are suggested by Tennyson when he asks,

And is it that the haze of grief
Makes former gladness loom so great?
The lowness of the present state,
That sets the past in this relief?

Or that the past will always win
A glory from its being far;
And orb into the perfect star
We saw not, when we moved therein? ¹

The exaggeration of the agreeableness of one's past is aptly described by Frederick B. Knight as the "old oaken bucket" delusion.

When dealing with a person who inclines toward excessive reversion to former days, one should acquaint him with the foolishness of making a golden age out of the past. A person who realizes his view of the days of yore is often a distorted one is less likely to acquire a mistaken notion that he should have continued in his former job, remained in the home town, or that he would be happier if he had married the other woman. By exposing to the individual the old oaken bucket delusion, one decreases his tendency to revert to the past.

One should, furthermore, help the individual acquire attitudes and skills necessary for successful living so that he will not have to rely upon earlier days for gratifying his longings. The prevention of abnormal reverting to the past necessitates ability to satisfy primary human needs in normal ways.

¹ Tennyson, Alfred, "In Memoriam," xxiv.

CHAPTER XII

RATIONALIZATION

RATIONALIZATION is an attempt to maintain self-respect amid discrediting circumstances, and therefore it is a form of defensive activity. A person in a humiliating situation often finds this adjustment an effective means of preserving his pride. There are different ways in which rationalization may safeguard one's self-esteem:

1. MAKING ONE'S IRRATIONAL BEHAVIOR APPEAR RATIONAL

A person's behavior is not always rational; he frequently does things without knowing why. But the thought of being irrational is humiliating. He can, however, avoid such embarrassment by inventing reasons for his actions. When a person attempts to explain his own behavior without really understanding it, he is engaging in a form of rationalizing. Thus, rationalization may safeguard a person's pride, in the first place, by enabling him to think his irrational behavior rational.

2. JUSTIFYING ONE'S IMPROPER BEHAVIOR

The maintenance of self-respect demands that one's conduct be proper as well as rational. But a person's actions are not always prompted by socially acceptable motives. At times one does things for unacceptable reasons. But the thought of being actuated by a socially unacceptable pur-

pose is generally too humiliating to be faced. Consequently, a person may when doing something that he considers improper invent acceptable reasons for his actions. This adjustment, whereby he ascribes acceptable motives to his own behavior at the same time that he considers this behavior objectionable, is another form of rationalizing. Rationalization, then, may be an attempt to safeguard one's pride, in the second place, by justifying one's improper behavior.

Thus, rationalization of these two types may serve on the one hand to make a person's irrational behavior appear rational, and on the other hand to justify his improper behavior. Rationalizations of these two types, however, are generally mutually involved to varying degrees; that is, while a person is trying to make an irrational act seem rational he is also trying to justify it.

In every walk of life instances of these two types of rationalization can be observed. A mother dependent upon her son for companionship and affection may denounce the woman he contemplates marrying, because she herself is unwilling to give him up. She may or may not be aware of her motive in opposing the marriage; but to appear to be either irrational or selfish in the matter would be humiliating. Consequently, she invents reasons that will make her attitude seem rational and justified. In doing so she may single out some inconsequential thing in the life of her son's fiancée and make it appear to be detrimental to a successful marriage, or she may misconstrue or exaggerate some remark of the young woman. By raising such objections to the contemplated marriage the mother is able to deceive herself into thinking that she is rational and justified in opposing it. Likewise, a parent may dominate a child for

the satisfaction of exercising control; but he may think that his motive is to discipline the child to respect authority and thus make him a good citizen. An individual who regards a physical sex interest as dishonorable may marry because he finds the other person both mentally and physically attractive, but think himself actuated wholly by spiritual love. A man may favor a certain political party because of family tradition or because he has something to gain from the success of that party in an election. But he would not admit to himself that he is acting irrationally or with a selfish motive; he is more likely to convince himself that he supports the party because its position on some public issue is for the welfare of the people as a whole. By thus rationalizing he is able to save his self-respect.

Most mortifying acts are ignoble rather than irrational, and so we generally rationalize not so much to make our behavior seem to us rational as to make it seem righteous. One who because of stinginess is indisposed to contribute toward charity may say that charity is demoralizing to those who receive it. A person inclined to punish others for the sake of revenge may declare that punishment is necessary for preventing similar offenses. An exploiter of men in industry may refer to those whom he victimizes as uninterested in and incapable of attaining higher standards of living. Those with a lust for power may declare that the masses are unable to govern themselves. A lobbyist interested solely in personal gain may oppose legislation intended to protect the health or savings of the people. In doing so he may declare that the contemplated bill would, if enacted, have an adverse effect on employment, and he may point out the far-reaching consequences of unemployment. He may also declare the bill to be an encroachment

on freedom of enterprise and, therefore, to be un-American. Such reasons as these may be given by the lobbyist not simply to defeat the bill, but also to convince himself that he is not working against the people's interests—that he is, on the contrary, a patriot. In brief, a designing person using strategy to deceive others as to his motives may also use it to keep himself from recognizing his behavior as discreditable.

Rationalization invariably goes with the plundering of another nation. When a nation looks with covetous eyes at territory belonging to another nation, it never admits avarice; and when it takes possession, it makes conquest a noble purpose. It may wait until it somehow gets the notion or the burning conviction that in the name of religion, morality, or law and order its solemn obligation is to subjugate and reform the other nation. And after having made the conquest it takes the resources of the vanquished as a reward from heaven for the noble sacrifices made in spreading religion or its own civilization. An aggressor nation may keep in the right also, by somehow coming to feel called upon to extend its sway over a precious portion of the earth as a means of protecting it from being swallowed by another nation, which, unlike itself, is a greedy nation. And, after having taken possession, it establishes over its new subjects not an autocratic government but (a significant verbal difference) a protectorate. Then the conquering nation takes at its own terms the trade of the new colony as a reward for protecting it. Another way in which the aggressor nation may keep in the right is to imagine that its own security is threatened by the nation on which it has designs, and to strike the first blow as a matter of military strategy. And when the aggressor nation

establishes its rule over the conquered, it does so in the name of national honor or of liberty. The greedy nation that seeks dominion on an alleged principle that is noble, does so for the sake of maintaining self-respect or the respect of the world. But it is only when it cloaks its avarice in a worthy principle for the sake of maintaining self-respect that it rationalizes. A nation, in its ruthless subjugation of other lands, can always to its own good self be true so long as it is able to rationalize its exploitations.

Frequently we try to rationalize our irrational and improper emotional states. A man may be unaware of the cause of the emotion he experiences, and when aware of the cause he may feel ashamed of himself. He may, however, be unwilling to admit that he does not know why he is emotional, and be reluctant to give an improper reason when he is aware of it. To avoid the humiliation of being in an irrational emotional state unbecoming to him, he may attribute his emotion to an incidental factor. This adjustment is referred to as *emotional displacement*.

The cause of the emotional state is often distorted in the case of anger. A man enraged over something in his occupational or marital relations may berate the weather, the city in which he lives, or an innocent bystander. A person who does so is likely to be described by people in general as a man who gets angry over nothing. The correct explanation in many such cases is, however, that the enraged person, in order to hide the real cause of his anger and to make his emotional state appear rational, attributes his anger to an incidental factor.

Melancholia is another emotional state, the cause of which is often distorted. Hart writes that one of his patients who was in an unusually depressed state of mind attributed his

dejection to having seen two foreigners brutally treated. Hart's interpretation of this person's case is, however, that the real cause of his melancholia was a breach with his father. The mistreatment of the foreigners, according to Hart, was simply an incidental factor to which the patient attributed his depression in order to conceal its actual cause.¹

In cases of fear, also, one can see the cause of emotional states distorted by the process of rationalizing. A person is sometimes afraid of something that could in no way be considered by others as an adequate cause for fear. In such cases the irrational fear becomes intelligible only when one comes to understand, among other things, the principle of emotional displacement—the tendency of some individuals to attribute their emotional state to an incidental factor in order to make the irrational emotional state seem rational, or to obscure the real cause of the emotion.

In summary of our discussion thus far, it may be said that rationalization protects a person's pride by making his irrational behavior seem rational, and by justifying his improper behavior. The behavior referred to may be emotional or otherwise. There is, however, still another way in which the process of rationalizing may safeguard one's self-esteem.

3. EXCUSING ONESELF FOR ONE'S FAILURE

Failure to attain worth-while ends is humiliating. To avoid the unpleasant thought of being unable to meet a situation, an unsuccessful person often attempts to explain his failure in a manner that will keep his self-respect. This

¹ Hart, Bernard, *The Psychology of Insanity*, p. 88, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1931.

adjustment is another form of rationalizing. Thus, rationalizing may safeguard one's pride, in the third place, by excusing oneself for failure. There are several ways in which, through the process of rationalizing, a person may free himself from blame for being unsuccessful:

a. Declaring the Unattained to Be Undesirable. A person frequently declares the unattained to be undesirable in order to excuse himself for failing to attain it. This attitude of denying the desirability of something one fails to attain is often referred to as "sour grapes" adjustment; the term is suggested by Aesop's fable of the fox who decided that he didn't like the grapes that were in reality beyond his reach.

It is easy to confuse the person who denies the value of a thing because he fails to attain it, with the person who does so because his reason dictates that it is not worth while. One cannot always tell whether such a statement as "I wouldn't spend the best four years of my life on the grid-iron" indicates reasoning or the "sour grapes" form of rationalizing. To decide the matter, one must know whether the person uttering it failed in an attempt to qualify for playing football. Likewise, statements such as "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," "The job doesn't amount to much," "The winner in the campaign may be the loser," and "I'm lucky she turned me down" may be conclusions reached as a result of rational deliberation, or they may simply be attempts to excuse failure. The difficulty in knowing whether another person is reasoning or rationalizing can be further illustrated by referring to the stoic and to the ascetic. The stoic makes a vice of having the things generally thought desirable, as in the charge "Love of money is the root of all evil," and he makes a virtue of not possessing them, as when he says, "To want little is wisdom." The

stoic may take this attitude in order to change defeat into triumph. The ascetic spurns worldly pleasures for spiritual values. He may do so in order to turn defeat into sanctity. But it would be frightfully incorrect to say that the pronouncements of the stoic and of the ascetic are always motivated by desire to avoid the chagrin of defeat, for often they are solely expressions of genuine belief. This is true especially of devoutly religious people, to whom spiritual matters are of such transcendent value that most earthly pleasures, in comparison with them, quickly pall. But the stoic or the ascetic may, when he least suspects himself, be simply rationalizing indolence or failure. Thus, to be able to distinguish the "sour grapes" form of rationalizing from reasoning one must know of the individual's aspirations.

b. Declaring One's Present Status to Be Satisfactory. By saying that his present status is satisfactory, a person may delude himself into thinking that he really has never tried to change it, and he, therefore, cannot be a failure. Of all our faults, that which we most readily admit is indolence. Ten thousand will concede that they are lazy to one who will admit incompetence. Declaring one's present status satisfactory is referred to as "Pollyanna adjustment," because it is exemplified by Eleanor Porter's cheerful heroine, Pollyanna. This attitude is also designated as "sweet lemon" adjustment, the opposite of the "sour grapes" attitude. It consists in seeing only the bright side of one's condition. Although the Pollyanna form of rationalizing is not as common as is the "sour grapes" form, everyone is familiar with this adjustment.

The "sour grapes" and the "sweet lemon" adjustments not only serve to excuse one's failure, but also serve to make the things one cannot have seem less desirable than they are, and to make the things that one does have seem more

desirable than they are. But to decry the things that are beyond reach, or to declare adequate the things that are inadequate, cannot assuage fundamental cravings; it can only abate secondary wants of a superficial nature.

c. Attributing One's Failure to Some Other Person, Thing, or Circumstance. By attributing his failure to an extraneous factor, a person excuses himself for being unsuccessful. Everyday life abounds with illustrations of such attempts to save one's self-respect in time of defeat. A parent responsible for the unwholesome behavior of a child may attribute the child's waywardness to bad influence of other children. An incapable teacher may claim that her classes are not the right size for obtaining good results, that the students were not properly taught in the early grades or engage in too many social activities. An outfielder missing the ball may feign sun blindness. A man failing in his work may say that he got a raw deal, had a bad break, or never was given a chance. Any unsuccessful person may attribute his failure to vicious practices by competitors. Seldom is anyone fairly beaten. Moreover, however much an individual may be responsible for his wretched condition, he may attribute it to fate.

This is the excellent foppery of the world, that, when we are sick in fortune,—often the surfeit of our own behaviour,—we make guilty of our disasters the sun, the moon, and the stars: as if we were villains by necessity; fools by heavenly compulsion; knaves, thieves, and treachers by spherical predominance; drunkards, liars, and adulterers, by an enforced obedience of planetary influence; and all that we are evil in, by a divine thrusting on.²

In summary, we may say that the process of rationalizing safeguards one's self-esteem—

² Shakespeare, William, *King Lear*, Act I, scene ii, lines 129–138.

1. By making one's irrational behavior appear rational.
2. By justifying one's improper behavior.
3. By excusing oneself for one's failure—
 - a. By declaring the unattainable to be undesirable.
 - b. By declaring one's present status to be satisfactory.
 - c. By attributing one's failure to some other person, thing or circumstance.

Within certain limits, rationalization may be justified. There are times when a person's acknowledgment of his own shortcomings would be so humiliating as to leave him mentally deranged. In so far as self-deception serves as a protection against unbearable self-abasement, it is a worthy adjustment. Almost everyone at some time or other has need of breaking the force of a humiliating experience by rationalizing his behavior. And rationalization is a ready means of saving face, because self-deception is easy. The danger of rationalizing is that the individual, by justifying his ill advised action, may be encouraged to make similar mistakes in the future. Self-deception often stunts growth in the making of adequate adjustments to life. As a general rule, rationalizing may be regarded with approval when its conclusions are used to prevent severe humiliation over acts committed, rather than to guide one to further conduct.

To counteract rationalization one should expose the rationalizing process; that is, one should make the individual aware of his reasons for engaging in this form of self-deception. To do so is to make a negative appeal to the want for a feeling of personal worth. Such information, however, should generally be presented indirectly in order that the individual may not offer resistance to the idea conveyed. Moreover, one should help the individual obtain satisfactory means of maintaining self-respect.

CHAPTER XIII

EXTRUSION OF IDEAS FROM CONSCIOUSNESS

MAN'S primary cravings do not always find expression in harmonious ways; in gratifying one basic desire we frequently frustrate the gratification of another of our primary wants. Some individuals, for personal or environmental reasons, experience more incompatible behavior tendencies than do others. When fundamental urges are in conflict with one another, the individual often strives to free himself from the resulting anxiety by extruding from consciousness thoughts pertaining to either or to both of the antagonistic desires. The want for a feeling of personal worth is usually involved in mental conflict leading to the extruding of thoughts from consciousness.

The tendency to extrude certain thoughts from consciousness is very common. It is a well-known fact that there are people who are unaware of faults in themselves or members of their families but recognize them readily in others. Observations that some married persons close their minds to each other's shortcomings have given rise to the witticism, "The tie that blinds." It is also apparent that most people are more apt to forget debts that they owe than debts due them, and are more likely to forget to perform a disagreeable task than a pleasant one.

Willful forgetting differs from ordinary forgetting in that it consists in actually doing things that remove unpleasant thoughts from consciousness. This will be apparent when

we consider the respective methods whereby ideas are extruded from consciousness.

1. ENGAGING IN DIVERTING ACTIVITY

Attempts are often made to remove thoughts from consciousness by becoming engrossed in activity unrelated to the unpleasant experience. The more one is absorbed in ideas or activities foreign to that which one wishes to forget, the more effectively are the disagreeable thoughts, for the time being, obliterated. In extreme insanity thoughts are often removed completely from consciousness for long periods of time by the individual's becoming intensely occupied with other thoughts.

Activity engaged in to obliterate unhappy memories can be observed widely. One man drives a car at a terrific speed in order to banish his troubles from his mind. Another one constantly moves from place to place, and in this way tries to forget his maladjustments. Still another may take up a hobby in order to free himself from anxiety. Someone else may, upon hearing an unpleasant remark introduced into a conversation, talk rapidly about other things. This speaking suddenly about something unrelated to an unpleasant idea brought up is called "press of conversation," and is a common form of activity engaged in to forget unhappy thoughts.

This method whereby the individual strives to free himself from unhappy memories may be either commendable or unwise. When an individual experiences frustration, granted that the frustration is irrevocable, it is the part of wisdom for him to engage in diverting activity, provided it is wholesome. People in distress are frequently urged to devote themselves to things that will divert the mind from

the unpleasant circumstances. Medicine puts much emphasis on occupational therapy. In hospitals for the physically disabled and in mental hospitals certain patients are coaxed, urged, or commanded to do things that will absorb their attention.

This method of extruding thoughts from consciousness is frequently detrimental to well-being when the individual engages in diverting activity unconsciously, and so does not choose his activity rationally. In such cases, his behavior serves no rational purpose, and, consequently, the individual is classed as definitely abnormal. As a result, this adjustment may give rise to mental distress that is far worse than the anxiety it alleviates.

2. SIMULATING OR DEVELOPING THE TRAIT OPPOSITE TO ONE'S UNDESIRABLE TRAIT

An individual often strives to banish ideas pertaining to a personal deficiency by simulating or developing opposite qualities or attitudes. A man guilty of thievery may speak vociferously on the importance of being honest, and may become extraordinarily righteous in minor monetary affairs. A person who regularly fleeces the public may attempt to cover his tracks by giving generously to churches or other social institutions. A person wishing the death of another may develop extreme solicitude over his welfare. A timid individual may pretend to be brave. A man whose agility wanes unusually early may adopt a sprightly gait. One physically frail sometimes trains to the extent of overdeveloping his physique. An individual with a limited income may live very extravagantly. A person feeling guilty of sex indiscretions in thought or act may become prudish. Children, when feeling the onset of sex interest, usually

react, if other children or adults are present, in a way that to the casual observer would suggest sex aversion. Boys are seemingly reluctant to have girls take part in their play, and girls are seemingly disgusted with the behavior of boys. But much of this apparent antipathy is surface antipathy, feigned to conceal real interest.

The individual often reveals his attempt to extrude thoughts from consciousness by the excess to which he simulates or develops the quality opposite to his disturbing quality. In striving to make a good appearance he goes to extremes. It is an adjustment in which a person uncovers the very thing he would hide. This tendency to go to extremes has been termed "overcompensation." But such an adjustment is defensive rather than compensatory activity, which makes the term inappropriate.

Frequently an individual simulates or develops a quality opposite to his undesirable quality in a more disguised way, by developing fear of the thing desired. A woman ostensibly afraid that there might be a man under the bed, may actually wish that one were there. In such a case, the fear is simply a cloak to hide a desire that would, if contemplated, give rise to feelings of guilt. The fear on the part of certain women of being abducted may be similarly explained. There is a case on record of an unmarried woman, aged sixty-four, who imagined she saw attractive men in automobiles circling around her residence and thought that she heard them plotting to take her away in a yacht. She was so frightened that she called the police for protection.

The extruding of thoughts from consciousness by simulating or developing the trait opposite to one's undesirable trait may, like the preceding method of doing so, have a wholesome or an unwholesome effect. In certain cases it

overcomes the undesirable trait, and so it removes the cause of anxiety. Generally, however, this adjustment too is made unconsciously and, in that event, is not only carried to extreme but manifested also in other irrational ways. A person feeling guilty of some improper act may, for example, simulate moral cleanliness by washing his hands incessantly. In doing so he sometimes frees himself from remorse, but often at the price of insanity. Thus the individual making this adjustment may lose far more than he gains.

3. PROJECTING ONE'S DEFICIENCY TO ANOTHER PERSON

Frequently an attempt is made to remove the thought of a personal deficiency by projecting that deficiency to another person—that is, by regarding the fault seen in oneself as the fault of someone else. This means of avoiding mental conflict becomes readily apparent when we consider the case of a typical figure, John Doe. This man has a wife and five children. He has been out of work for some time, and is seeking vainly for employment. He and his family are badly in need of food and clothing. The few necessities which he is able to procure are parceled out very carefully and at long intervals. Doe is a very righteous man to whom the thought of acquiring the necessities of life through unlawful means has never occurred. But now, as hunger grips him, and as he views his slowly starving family, the idea of stealing comes to him. At first he is horrified by the thought; then he regards it as a passing fancy, and brushes it aside as being something foreign to him. Time goes on, and the idea recurs to him repeatedly. Soon it becomes a part of him. But the thought of taking things through theft is intolerable to his self-respect. Consequently, he strives to free himself from the shameful idea of having

an inclination to steal. One means of providing himself with convincing evidence that he is an honest man is denouncing another person for a similar weakness. Accordingly, Doe may, despite his affection for his family, violently attack one of his children for a trivial theft, or may falsely accuse almost anyone of stealing. The fault against which he inveighs is in reality his own inclination. He berates his victim for the weakness as a means of exonerating himself from the trait concerned. Because he denounces another for a fault that is in reality his own inclination, John Doe may be said to project his inclination to that person for the purpose of maintaining his self-respect.

The adjustment whereby the individual strives to maintain his pride by arrogating his mortifying desire to someone else is made frequently by persons having extramarital sex desires. A woman constantly experiencing an illicit sex urge may imagine that she is pursued by men with amatory intentions. She may even write to an innocent man accusing him of annoying her with advances, and request him to stop doing so. In extreme cases, such a woman may write ardent letters to herself and sign some man's name to them.

A woman of this type is amenable to suggestion and so, upon hearing slight sounds outside her window at night, is likely to peer out, imagine that she sees a man, and call the police.¹

We see, then, that, when an individual who has projected

¹ When a woman complains unjustly that some man is annoying her with amatory advances, she is not necessarily simply projecting her sex inclinations. She may be making any or all of three adjustments: she may be projecting her sex inclination; she may be making a suffering-hero adjustment for the satisfaction of thinking that she is able to attract men; and she may, by calling the police, be simulating the opposite of her real desire.

his own inclination to another makes groundless accusations regarding that person's character, his motive is not to malign someone else; he merely hangs his own fault on another in order that he may remonstrate against the fault and thereby convince himself that he does not possess it.

This form of suppressing ideas may be due to a feeling of guilt arising from a mere inclination of an evil nature or from an unapproved act actually performed. Anything in the life of the individual giving rise to remorse may cause him to denounce another person for the weakness he senses in himself—that is, to project his fault, and thereby save his self-respect.

Since the individual projects his fault as a means of removing from consciousness the thought of it, the degree of unawareness of the fault in himself is an indication of the extent to which he has achieved his objective.

A person who projects his deficiency to another, and consequently, develops a false belief regarding that person, is said to have a "delusion." Cases of this type are found in every mental hospital. Such a person may actually attack the one to whom he has projected his own fault, and thus he may reveal his mental disturbance over his own shortcoming.

This means of obliterating ideas may free the individual from remorse, but it may also leave him completely out of joint with his associates. One who unconsciously interprets other people's actions in the light of his own unrecognized tendencies is invariably antagonistic toward them, and they, in turn, are likely to accuse him of being pretentious or malicious. The irrationality of an attempt to further one's

well-being in this way is due to the fact that it is made unconsciously.

4. PROJECTING ONE'S OWN CRITICISM OF ONESELF TO ANOTHER PERSON

Attempts are often made to banish not so much the thought of one's deficiency, but rather one's self-criticism. This is frequently done by regarding one's self-criticism as criticism coming from someone else.

In extreme cases, the individual may regard his self-criticism as criticism coming from an entirely imaginary person or even from a number of imaginary persons and, consequently, think that he hears voices of persons in the next room or outside the house, voices of persons speaking to him "by radio," "by electricity," or "by wires," or voices "of spirits." Such a person does not often imagine that he sees those whose voices he thinks he hears. The reproaches that he imagines he is receiving from others are self-criticism externalized for the purpose of avoiding mental conflict. A person who mistakes his self-accusations for accusations by someone else—who has a false sense impression of something for which there is no objective reality to justify his impression—is said to have an "hallucination."

This means of banishing ideas may prevent feelings of remorse. However, in falsely claiming to be accused by others the individual is likely to be severely reprovved for lying. Moreover, his misconceptions regarding other persons misguide his behavior, and so they lead to still more distress. The peace of mind obtained by this means of obliterating ideas may, therefore, be completely overshadowed by the anxiety it creates.

5. FORGETTING ONE'S IDENTITY AND ASSUMING ANOTHER PERSONALITY

In order to free himself from unpleasant thoughts in regard to himself, a distraught person may forget who he is. Such forgetting is a form of "amnesia." He may further the process of forgetting by traveling; by becoming a "fugue." An individual who forgets his identity usually does, after some time, "come to himself," especially when he is identified and spoken to by a member of his family. But he does not know, if in a strange place, where he is, and does not remember any of the experiences he had during the period of his amnesia. He does, however, remember his life previous to that state.

The distraught person may not only forget his identity but also assume another identity; however, sooner or later he becomes himself again. Or he may alternate between a state somewhat normal to himself and one or more other personality states. Such a person is said to have "multiple personality." The more normal state is the "primary" state, and any other state is a "secondary" state. When in the primary state, the individual is unable to recall what he has done in the secondary state; and when in the latter state, he may remember the primary state but speak of it as belonging to another person.

Thus, not being able to alter distressing circumstances, the individual may alter himself. He does so, however, not deliberately but through the strength of his craving to escape unpleasantness. Most readers of newspapers have read sufficiently of amnesia and multiple personality to make the citing of cases unnecessary.

6. TAKING DRUGS

A common motive in taking alcoholic beverages, opium, or other drugs is to achieve freedom from distressing thoughts, which usually involve self-criticism and the criticism of others. To be sure, the individual who drinks to excess in order to make himself insensible to his distressful life ordinarily makes his life even more distressful. He may, however, because of extreme distress, knowingly hazard all for the sake of present relief.

And, as the excessive drinker becomes free of self-criticism and free of thoughts of being criticized by other persons, he may imagine himself socially clever and equal or superior to others in any respect. He also gains self-confidence through self-esteem, but he becomes insensitive to the wishes of other persons, and so antagonizes them.

Often, in drinking to excess, the individual strives to free himself of inhibitions in order that he may indulge freely in tabooed language or acts, and in order that he may at the same time be free of fear or remorse, which are barriers to the full enjoyment of anything tabooed. The same individual may also be motivated by a desire to be able later to rationalize his conduct—to be able to attribute it to intoxication, and thus in a way to save face. Such a person usually achieves the objectives of indulgence in something tabooed and face saving most readily, of course, when those in his company likewise are intoxicated. And he then also achieves fellowship, for intoxication removes barriers between persons. Hence, the heavy drinker often urges others to drink heavily with him.

There have always been persons, who, because of exces-

sive desires, personal deficiencies, or extreme social restrictions have been frustrated, and have found intoxication a means of obtaining satisfactions. They are abnormal persons, not necessarily because of what they seek, but because of the method they employ. Thus, the prevention of excessive drinking is not a matter of crusading against it, but a matter of education and of formulating social policies in harmony with human nature. If you should take from any abnormal person his abnormality, which to him is a crutch or a shield, you would probably make his life even more distressful, and hence fail to achieve your purpose.

Much of what I have said in regard to excessive drinking, is equally applicable to the use of opium and other drugs.

7. GRATIFYING AN OBJECTIONABLE DESIRE INDIRECTLY

An individual having a strong desire that conflicts with self-respect often gives expression to that desire in such a devious way that he himself is unaware of the motive of his act. By gratifying an objectionable desire in a manner deceptive to himself, the individual is able to attain satisfaction without a loss of pride. When, for example, a person has a strong physical sex inclination but considers it dishonorable, he may abandon the normal sex aim and give expression to this urge in ways that conceal its true nature. He may gossip repeatedly about real or imaginary sex lapses of other people, and inveigh against the practices of which he tells. But he may do so simply for the satisfaction of contemplating sex matters against which he inveighs in the guise of criticism. Such a person may also disguise his sex craving as being an interest in art, and devote his thoughts to masterpieces that he finds suggestive of sex, or attempt to produce similar works of art. Since it is

always plausible that a person who deals with sex material does so primarily with an artistic interest, such a procedure serves as an effective disguise. An individual may give still more veiled expression to a sex interest by couching it in symbolic form. Such cases are illustrated by the individual who, as Freud points out, having a sexual interest in another person, adopts a mannerism possessed by that person, and by the individual who becomes preoccupied with material things suggestive of the genitals of either sex, or of sex function.² By thus disguising his objectionable sex desire the individual can give expression to it without a loss of pride, and so save himself from remorse.

Like some of the other methods of extruding thoughts from consciousness, this method may be salutary or unwise. On the one hand, giving indirect expression to a desire for which there is no acceptable normal outlet may, provided the substitutional way of attaining satisfaction is not too far removed from the normal means of expression, reduce mental conflict considerably. Persons are often urged to divert into new channels desires that cannot be fulfilled ethically in a normal way. Society often requires that we thus sublimate primary cravings that cannot be gratified in a forthright manner.

On the other hand, this method is often engaged in unconsciously, and so it consists in adopting substitutional activity irrationally. As a result, the individual's behavior becomes incomprehensible to his associates, who classify him as insane. Thus, by disguising the fulfillment of a basic desire an individual may become more and more maladjusted to life.

² Freud, Sigmund, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1914.

A person who has obliterated, in one way or another, the thought of a certain weakness in himself usually will not tolerate other people who manifest the same weakness, even in the slightest degree. This is because seeing his own fault in another tends to remind him of his shortcomings, and so to interfere with forgetting it. The one who continually demands unreasonable rectitude on the part of others may, therefore, be a person who finds it hard to maintain a guiltless feeling in respect to the trait concerned. Hart says, "In general it may be said that whenever one encounters an intense prejudice one may with some probability suspect that the individual himself exhibits the fault in question or some closely similar fault."³

The means of extruding thoughts from consciousness dealt with here embody the principle involved in recalling anything. A thing is reinstated in the mind as one thinks of something with which it is associated. When, for example, vacations are discussed, a person may recall a particular trip. Similarly, the process of keeping a thought out of one's mind seems to consist in refraining from giving attention to anything associated with it. Any thought flickers out for the time being when the attention is diverted. The basic principle governing the banishing of anything from consciousness appears to be that governing the recalling of anything. It may be stated thus: An idea can exist in consciousness only when another idea with which it is associated is thought of.⁴

Counteracting the unwholesome extrusion of ideas necessitates the counteracting of mental conflict. The avoid-

³ Hart, Bernard, *The Psychology of Insanity*, p. 131, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1931.

⁴ See Gates, Arthur I., *Psychology for Students of Education*, pp. 237-241, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1930.

ance of conflict in which the want for a feeling of personal worth is one of the antagonistic desires alone involves many problems. It consists, in some cases, in arranging conditions so that the individual will be able to attain due gratification through normal channels and will not be disposed to take recourse to objectionable methods for satisfying his fundamental cravings. In other cases, the problem seems to be that of taking a less censorious attitude toward some of the individual's ways of gratifying his desires. This can often be done without lowering ethical standards, because the behavior one designates as improper is not necessarily really improper. There are parents who chastise children severely for things that are universal and inevitable in childhood; a credulous and sensitive child may thus be made to feel steeped in guilt. In many cases they intensify the child's anxiety regarding his behavior by declaring that the disapproval they express emanates from God. Discretion should be exercised in reprimanding children in order that they may not develop excessive feelings of guilt.

Adults, too, are often imbued with unwarranted feelings of guilt. It often happens that a respectable person is made to feel his behavior, although in reality normal, reveals depravity. An understanding of human needs and an interest in the well-being of others should make one less censorious and, consequently, less prone to induce in others unwarranted feelings of guilt. The individual's self-respect is, however, generally determined more by the ethical standards of the group than by those of one person. The preventing of unjustifiable feelings of guilt is therefore primarily a social responsibility.

The extruding of thoughts from consciousness, because it is largely an unconscious adjustment, can be further

counteracted by informing the individual of his being engaged in it. Such information makes him conscious of his aberration, and so enables him to see that it is irrational and, therefore, likely to entail grave consequences. Such information has remedial value also, because it serves as a negative appeal to the individual's desire for self-respect. The information should, however, in most cases, be given indirectly because man, especially abnormal man, is *too vain to be receptive to ideas presented in a manner discrediting to him*.

Thus, the counteracting of abnormal behavior involved in extruding thoughts from consciousness is largely a matter of preventing the development of distraught minds. The giving of information regarding the nature of such an adjustment, however, facilitates its prevention not only by revealing the evil consequences that may ensue, but also by serving as a negative appeal to the want for a feeling of personal worth.

CHAPTER XIV

WISHED PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

THUS far we have considered abnormalities that are mental in symptom as well as in origin. In addition to these abnormalities there are others of mental origin that are physical in symptom. Such disabilities are not organic but functional; that is, they do not consist of impaired physical structures, but of mental conditions that prevent the structures from functioning properly. There are various mental states that may incapacitate the body to perform normally, one of which is a desire for a physical disability in order to attain some ulterior end. Frequently the end sought in this way is the gratification of the want for a feeling of personal worth. Disabilities developed in the interest of this want may be characterized in different ways:

1. DISABILITIES DUE TO A DESIRE TO ESCAPE HONORABLY FROM A RESPONSIBILITY

There are times when a person is confronted with a situation that he may be unwilling to meet for any of a number of reasons. In such cases, he tries to think of a means of escape, preferably an honorable one. A possible means of evading a responsibility without a loss of self-respect is the development of a physical disorder, and such a method is often resorted to by desperate people.

Many of the most pronounced cases of disability developed in order to escape honorably from a responsibility were observed in the First World War. Men motivated

by a desire for self-preservation, and possessing sensibilities and humane feelings, found it difficult to adjust themselves suddenly to military service. Moved by an overwhelming fear and horror of combat, many of these men desired to escape duty; but they did not wish to be considered as "slackers" or deserters. Their fear and horror on the one hand and their pride on the other led to a desire for temporary physical disability, which was the only means of escaping honorably from service at the front. Such a desire in itself did not bring about a disability, but it made individuals very receptive to suggestions that they were physically impaired. Any minor ailment, or the effect of any trivial blow upon the body resulting from an exploded shell, was often exaggerated by the individual to the extent that he was unable to move, and lay prostrate. A significant fact is that the disorders of which such persons complained were generally in parts of the body that were essential in military life.

In civilian life, too, there are persons who develop disabilities in order to become honorably released from unpleasant responsibilities. This is especially apparent in the occupational world. Many persons who consider their tasks disagreeable or their efforts futile wish to give up the struggle for existence. But since it is generally considered disgraceful for an able-bodied person to shrink from work, an individual who desires release will often magnify a minor ailment into a disabling one in order to evade his responsibility honorably. Cases of this type are similar in development to those of soldiers who acquire disabilities in order to escape military service.

Likewise, children frequently develop disabilities for the purpose of evading a task without being censured for doing

so. In a recent cartoon, "Sonny" was pictured on his knees with his hands pointing heavenward, saying, "Dod, make me sick on Monday morning." Children frequently try to evade school by complaining, "It hurts here," or by giving a more dramatic expression of illness through the development of a habit of vomiting. The parent who is influenced by such methods sows the seed of a similar and more serious adjustment problem in adult life.

Thus we see that an individual often develops a physical disability for the purpose of escaping honorably from a responsibility. In so far as this adjustment is an attempt to save his self-respect, it constitutes defense activity.

To counteract the development of a disability in order to escape honorably from a responsibility, one should inform the individual as to the cause of his disorder. This helps him come to an understanding of himself and also makes a negative appeal to the desire for self-respect. When instructing a person regarding the origin of his difficulty one should generally proceed by the indirect method. A circuitous presentation of the facts is inoffensive, and so leaves the individual receptive to such instruction. One might, without revealing one's purpose, give the individual access to literature describing cases like his own. There are, however, times when it is well to inform him directly as to the cause of his disorder. The indirect method is sometimes too impersonal to be effective. Some individuals may be told that there are persons who bring on their own disabilities for an ulterior end, and yet fail to realize that they themselves have done the same thing. When it becomes evident that an individual is impervious to indirect instruction regarding the origin of his difficulty, one should proceed directly in a manner as inoffensive as possible. How-

ever, in dealing with a patient who seeks the cause of his disorder with a willingness to face the facts, the direct method may be preferable. A patient of this kind is likely to respond favorably to a frank discussion of his condition.

In most cases, merely informing the individual, directly or indirectly, as to why he developed the disability is inadequate for effecting a cure. One must also change his desire for the disability to a desire for an unimpaired physical condition. If the individual is merely informed as to the cause of his disorder, he may develop some other symptom for the accomplishment of his purpose. There are persons who, upon finding that their symptoms are recognized to be affected, drop them and take up symptoms of other disabilities with astounding rapidity.¹ In attempting to change the individual's desire for the disability to a desire to be well, one should change the situation so that the disability will be unnecessary. The possibility of bringing about a cure in this way was revealed by the signing of the Armistice. At that time disabled soldiers had to remain in hospitals awaiting improvement in their conditions while those who had recovered sufficiently were permitted to go home. Consequently, in patients who were disabled because they consciously or unconsciously wanted to be, the desire for the disability changed to a desire to get well and to get out of the hospital. The result was that many of these soldiers soon threw away their canes or showed other signs of marked improvement, and asked to be released. Gates comments on such cases:

The remarkable, and yet wholly intelligible, thing was the rapid disappearance of the psychoneurotic disorders after the

¹ See Adler, *What Life Should Mean to You*, p. 63, Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1931.

Armistice was signed. The motivation, the incessant stimulus which kept them alive, was suddenly removed; and as subtly as the symptoms appeared in the face of war, they began to disappear with the certainty of peace.²

The technique of changing the situation so that the desire for the disability will change to a desire for an unimpaired condition should be employed in handling a school child who develops disabilities for the sake of escaping school work. This can be done by rearranging the work to suit the child's ability and by providing incentives for the child to go to school. Such techniques are used extensively and with great success in our kindergartens.

Another method of handling an individual with a disability acquired to escape responsibility is to excuse him from the responsibility without letting him know why he was released. A soldier, for example, may be transferred from the front to the safety zone, on the alleged ground that his record revealed qualifications for another type of work for which a man was needed there.

Sometimes one should do the opposite, and refuse to excuse the individual from a responsibility despite his complaints of physical ailments. In many cases the development of physical disabilities is an adjustment that the individual has found to be an effective means of accomplishing his objectives. He must be taught that it is no longer effective. In choosing between this and the aforementioned technique, discretion is necessary.

Still another treatment consists in providing a dignified means of recovery. The circumstances of life often change so that a disability no longer serves the purpose for which

² Gates, Arthur I., *Elementary Psychology*, pp. 265-266, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1925.

it was developed. If, however, the individual should let his trouble disappear suddenly without receiving some special treatment, he would put himself in a bad light; he would make it evident that he had developed the disorder for an ulterior end, and, consequently, would be humiliated. To get the individual to give up his ruse of developing disabilities, one should enable him to do so without embarrassment. This can be done by having him move to a community in which his symptoms are not known, or by transferring him to another hospital. Hollingworth, in discussing this method, concludes, "Transferring patients becomes a recognized technique of therapy."³ Other dignified means of recovery that can be provided consist in having the patient take medicine, having him visit a physician, or having him go to a resort renowned for effecting cures.

Finally, one should provide the patient with a treatment suggestive of healing power. Such treatment is most effective for those whose disabilities no longer serve the purpose for which they were developed, and who now wish to recover. The desire to get well can become as effective in making the individual *receptive to suggestion that a certain treatment will effect a cure*, as the desire for the disability was effective in making the individual *receptive to suggestion that a certain event had a disabling effect upon him*. It is today considered plausible that treatments intrinsically ineffective but suggestive of healing power have wrought cures for those who wanted to be free from the disabilities that they had brought upon themselves by wishing for them. Many cures have, presumably, been effected through the power of suggestion by pills, massages, or other treat-

³ Hollingworth, H. L., *Abnormal Psychology*, p. 239, New York, Ronald Press Company, 1930.

ments from a doctor whose personality inspires confidence, by prayers, the royal touch, and by healing springs or sanitariums with reputations for effecting cures. Wished physical disabilities arise from the acceptance of bad suggestions, and the cure seems to involve suggestion that recovery is at hand.

Thus, in counteracting the development of physical disabilities brought on as a means of escaping honorably from a responsibility, one should—

- A.* Inform the individual of the cause of his disability—
 - 1. Indirectly in most cases.
 - 2. Directly in the case of those—
 - a.* Who will not respond to the indirect method.
 - b.* Who are honestly seeking an understanding of themselves.
- B.* Change the situation so that the desire for the disability will change to a desire to be well.
- C.* Excuse the individual, in certain cases, from the responsibility shunned.
- D.* Provide a dignified means of recovery.
- E.* Provide a treatment suggestive of healing power.

Some of these means of counteracting the development of physical disabilities brought on by a desire to escape honorably from a responsibility are equally effective in counteracting the development of other wished physical disabilities, as will be pointed out.

2. DISABILITIES DUE TO A DESIRE FOR ATTENTION

Disabilities developed in the interest of the want for a feeling of personal worth may be, in the second place, attempts to get attention. A person of mediocre accomplishment is likely to be overlooked by his fellow men. Such a

person may resort to physical disablement as a means of getting the attention he desires. He may do so because he has learned that when he is incapacitated he becomes an object of attention from his associates in general, and makes his family solicitous about his condition. In so far as this adjustment gives the individual a feeling of importance it is compensatory activity.

This tendency to develop a physical disability as a means of getting attention is widely recognized. It has been made the theme of comic strips in newspapers, skits on the stage, and of novels and plays. The repeated inquiry in *Abie's Irish Rose*, "Have you heard about my operation?" serves as an illustration. In discussing one of his patients of this type Morgan writes, "Many times she would gather the family around her bedside, saying that she was dying, and would bid them all an affectionate farewell, only to recover and repeat the heart-rending performance later."⁴

This adjustment often has its beginning after a period of illness. When a child recovers from a sickness, he recalls that a fuss was made over him when he was ill. Consequently, to be pampered again, he may develop another ailment. Sometimes a child who notices how another child, through sickness, became the center of attention will wish to be sick himself, and will even kiss the sick child in hope of contracting the disease.

In counteracting this tendency to develop a disability to gain attention, one should, in the first place, withhold attention when the patient is manifesting the disability, but give him all the attention of which one is capable when he is not doing so. The individual manifests the physical disorder

⁴ Morgan, John J. B., *The Psychology of the Unadjusted School Child*, p. 192, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1924.

because he has found it a means of getting the attention he craves. He must now be taught that the adjustment is *unprofitable* and *unnecessary*. Many persons in treating a patient who develops disabilities to get attention make the great error of withholding attention when the individual manifests the physical disorder, without giving him the desired attention when he is not doing so. It must be borne in mind that the patient making this adjustment is not getting the attention he longs for, and that no treatment can be deemed adequate that does not supply the need.

One should, in the second place, help the individual develop himself so that he will merit recognition. This is the most fundamental technique that can be employed. In order to receive continuous recognition from his associates the individual must merit it.

Idealizing health is also helpful in counteracting wished physical disabilities due to a desire for attention. Doing so enables the individual to obtain a feeling of amounting to something by developing a good physique, rather than by getting attention for having a poor one. This can be done by emphasizing the part played by intelligence in the maintenance of health, and by pointing out that some people inherit stronger constitutions than others. The latter technique is effective because everyone likes to think that he comes from a strong stock rather than from a weak one.

Furthermore, one should get the individual to make a proper appraisal of himself in order that he may not crave an abnormal amount of attention, and, consequently, develop disabilities in order to get it. Overestimation of one's worth makes for discontent with the amount of recognition received, and is a factor leading to the adoption of ruses

such as the development of a physical disorder for getting attention.

In addition to administering these treatments, one should use some of the methods that were suggested for treating a person who develops a disability for escaping honorably from a responsibility: one should change the situation so that the desire for the disability will change to a desire to be well; inform the individual, preferably indirectly, as to the cause of his disorder; provide a dignified means of recovery; and administer a treatment suggestive of healing power.

Thus, it may be said that, in counteracting the development of physical disorders brought on by a desire for attention, one should—

- A.* Withhold attention when the individual is manifesting the disability, but give him all possible attention when he is not doing so.
- B.* Help the individual find meritorious activity.
- C.* Idealize health.
- D.* Help the individual make a proper appraisal of himself in order that he may not expect too much attention.
- E.* Change the situation so that the desire for the disability will change to a desire to get well.
- F.* Inform the individual, indirectly in most cases, as to the cause of his disorder.
- G.* Provide a dignified means of recovery.
- H.* Provide a treatment suggestive of healing power.

The desire to escape honorably from a responsibility and the desire for attention are often both involved in the development of a physical disorder; that is, a person who acquires a disability in order that he may have an honorable means of evading a responsibility may also do so for the purpose of gaining attention.

3. DISABILITIES DEVELOPED IN ORDER TO COVER SOME OTHER PERSONAL DEFICIENCIES

Man frequently makes his physical body the scapegoat for other personal shortcomings. The tendency to develop physical disorders as a means of hiding failure to measure up to certain standards in other respects is defense activity.⁵

This adjustment is very common. Its beginning stage is sometimes revealed when an individual, upon meeting with defeat because of a lack of ability or initiative, says that he was not feeling well. The more such a person develops a physical disability, the more he is able to think of himself as confronted with an insurmountable barrier to success; and hence the more he is able to excuse himself for accomplishing nothing. Sometimes the disorder is developed to counteract a growing realization that one is losing one's mind. Persons upon becoming mentally deranged are very likely to complain of physical ailments in almost any part of the body, and to develop characteristic symptoms. The development of physical disabilities in order to cover some other personal deficiency is therefore rationalization.

The treatment for counteracting this tendency to develop a physical disorder as a means of covering some other personal deficiency depends partly on the trait that the individual tries to hide in this way. To prevent the development of physical disabilities designed to cover a loss in mental fitness, we must remove the stigma often attached to mental peculiarities. In the early days an incapacitated mind was considered to be due to the influence of evil spirits or

⁵ See Hadfield, J. A., *Psychology and Morals*, p. 59, New York, Robert M. McBride and Company, 1923.

to sin. Consequently, mental deficiency became associated with depravity. Today we recognize that the individual may be no more responsible for a deranged mind than for a broken bone. Furthermore, mental deficiencies are being elevated to the respectability of actual physical impairments by designating the institutions in which such persons are kept as "mental hospitals," and by using the expression "mental patients" in referring to the inmates. When society comes to realize that it is no more degrading to be mentally ill than it is to be physically ill, the victims of mental abnormalities will not further complicate their difficulties by developing physical disorders.

When the physical disorder is found to be a smoke screen designed to hide such personality deficiencies as a lack of application to his work, the individual needs training in assuming responsibilities.

Individuals who develop disabilities for the purpose of covering some other personal deficiency, as well as those who do so for the aforementioned reasons, should be informed, indirectly in most cases, as to the nature of their adjustments. The ideal situation for imparting such information indirectly is the classroom, in which the subject is discussed without any personal reference being made.

Should one, on the contrary, inform the individual directly as to his motive for developing a physical disorder, that person might develop further symptoms of the disability in order not to appear to be malingering, and thus save his pride. Hamilton states, "The nervous patient is apt to be on the defensive as to the reality of his symptomatic discomforts and disabilities, and I have known cases where it has been evident that the skeptical attitude of the family

and attending physician has driven the patient to a defensive bed-invalidism.”⁶

A question naturally arises as to whether the disabilities described are real, or whether they are mere pretenses. Presumably in the beginning stage of most cases the individual is simply malingering, but the deliberate simulation of a disability progresses readily to a state where it takes on the character of reality. There are numerous cases on record in which the wished physical disorder is as real to the individual as any ailments that are wholly physical in nature.

Wished physical disabilities are, in reality, poor imitations of the traumatic disorders that they simulate, and so can be distinguished from them. An individual may, for example, report that he has lost sensitivity of the hand completely and that the insensitivity terminates abruptly at the wrist. Traumatic anesthesia, however, follows the course of the nerves, and, therefore, an otherwise alleged localization of a disability is anatomically impossible. Likewise, a limb that is paralyzed because the individual wants it to be will contract when electrically stimulated, while one in which the nerve is diseased will not do so. A person who is unable to talk because of a desire for such disability can cough, while one whose laryngeal nerves are diseased is unable to do so. In the case of wished physical disabilities, the ailment may skip about from one part of the body to another, may be a different ailment from time to time, may make its appearance when the individual is confronted with a certain person or situation, may disappear under dif-

⁶ Hamilton, G. V., *Introduction to Objective Psychopathology*, p. 297, St. Louis, C. V. Mosby Company, 1925.

ferent conditions or when his attention is distracted. In such cases there is generally a possibility that the individual needs psychiatric, rather than medical, treatment.⁷

This discussion of wished physical disabilities should not be concluded without a word of warning to the layman. Remember that there are such things as real physical disabilities; and remember that to treat a person who has an actual physical ailment as if he were a mental case is to harass rather than to comfort him.

The general facts in regard to the various types of mental abnormality that I discussed in this volume may be thus summarized:

Aberrations of personality, such as these, are means whereby the individual seeks to assuage fundamental cravings—primarily, in most cases, the want for a feeling of personal worth. People who develop peculiar behavior of these types generally do so unconsciously and, in such cases, make unwholesome adjustments. The irrationality with which the abnormalities are developed generally destines them to have an adverse effect on the individual's well-being in general.

The development of peculiar behavior of the types considered frequently has its beginning in childhood. Children often adopt such means for attaining satisfaction and, finding them effective, continue such ways in adulthood. The behavior of an abnormal adult is often simply the behavior of a child carried to an extreme degree. This fact indicates inadequate knowledge on the part of parents, teachers, and others as to how to proceed in training the child to satisfy his primary needs in acceptable ways, and thus forestall

⁷ See Hollingworth, H. L., *Abnormal Psychology*, pp. 218-220, New York, Ronald Press Company, 1930.

the development of mental deviations so common among adults. By making methodical attacks along lines such as those suggested in this volume and elsewhere much can be done to prevent and to arrest the development of abnormal tendencies in children.

In checking abnormal behavior of the type dealt with here, one should acquaint the individual with his reason for making the adjustment; that is, one should bring the unconscious motive underlying his behavior to consciousness. In doing so, one reveals the futility of the adjustment and makes a negative appeal to the desire for self-respect. When informing the individual as to why he does peculiar things, one should generally do so indirectly in order to avoid wounding his pride.

In counteracting the development of peculiar behavior it is not enough merely to give information as to its cause. One must also help the individual find a better solution of his problem. The abnormality is often developed to meet what would otherwise seem to be an intolerable situation, and is a means of reducing tension when frustration becomes unbearable. If the individual is forced to give up his defense while he still believes the danger to be imminent, he may produce a new symptom or develop extreme anxiety. There are, therefore, cases in which it is against the individual's best interest to deprive him of his aberration before the need for it has diminished. In some cases it is even impossible to do so.

The cause of peculiar behavior often lies beyond the ill advised methods used by parents, teachers, and others in dealing with the individual; it frequently has its origin in social attitudes and conditions. The prevention and correction of abnormalities, therefore, is an intricate community

enterprise. One cannot expect an individualistic therapy to cure a social malady.

Any abnormal personality trait may be due to various factors, and only one basic cause has been pointed out here—namely, the frustration of the want for a feeling of personal worth. Since there are many symptoms that may have various causes, it is dangerous to attempt to treat an individual before all of the possible causes of his symptom are known and correct diagnosis is made. *Anyone may well use the methods discussed herein as a preventive measure, but only those whose knowledge extends beyond the information given in this volume can safely attempt remedial work.*

PART FOUR
FURTHERING MENTAL HEALTH

CHAPTER XV

PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS

THE subject of mental health is that branch of psychology that studies human nature with the purpose of furthering human happiness. This phase of psychology is the most recent one to receive the attention of men in the field, but has made significant advancement. It is today studied by many of the most capable psychologists, and is given an important place in our colleges and universities.

The interest in the problem of mental health is due not only to a desire to further human happiness for its own sake, but also to a recognition that the development of healthy minds is an integral part of the problems to which the first three parts of this volume are devoted. The need for maintaining the individual's mental health in attempting to get him to make certain responses or to refrain from making others was implied throughout the foregoing chapters.

The furtherance of mental health is both a complex individual problem and a problem of an intricate social nature. The complexity of the problem of mental health from the standpoint of the individual is due to the interrelation of his primary wants. Sometimes when one desire is gratified another desire suffers such a complete frustration that the total effect on mental health is unfavorable rather than favorable. Furthering mental health, therefore, necessitates training the individual to act after consideration of all his interests, both present and future, rather than upon the promptings of a single and immediate urge.

The intricate nature of the problem of mental health from a social standpoint is due to the interdependence of people which gives rise to conflicts of interests. Training individuals to engage in relationships that will be mutually advantageous is essential to the furtherance of mental health of people as a whole.

The furtherance of mental health, although a complex problem for the individual and for society, is reducible to the problem of satisfying fundamental human needs. The behavior of individuals in their daily pursuits—the behavior of the rational and of the irrational, of the noble and of the ignoble, of profound and of shallow natures—definitely reveals that all seek, in their divergent courses, gratification of fundamental needs, and find happiness in achieving fulfillment of those needs.¹

Is the gratification of our fundamental needs compatible with unselfishness, farsightedness, and nobleness of character? Both the selfish and the unselfish person are impelled by fundamental needs; but the first seeks gratification without regard for the needs of other persons, and the second seeks gratification by serving the needs of other persons. Moreover, driven by their primary needs, people often forgo present gratification for future satisfactions; or have, as purposes, social betterment of their contemporaries or of future generations, or preparation for an after life. Thus, it is not the gratification of our needs but our point of view that makes us selfish, shortsighted, or ignoble.

Mental health is influenced by all human wants. Its furtherance will, however, be considered here only from the standpoint of the want for a feeling of personal worth. The urge to be of consequence presses forever upon us, and its

¹ McCall, William A., "My Philosophy of Life and Education," *Teachers College Record*, 35:360-372 (April, 1934).

gratification gives zest to life. Mark Twain said, "I can live for two months on a good compliment."

Self-esteem, to maintain mental health, need not be excessive. Indeed some unfulfillment is a necessary stimulus to wholesome activity, and a necessary and inevitable check upon misguided behavior. But without a modicum of self-respect one lacks the zest that makes life worth living or endurable. There is no such thing as human happiness without self-regard; no repose in a feeling of worthlessness.

What I said in the first three parts of this volume on the subjects to which they are devoted is equally applicable to the subject of furthering mental health, and so might well be thought of in relation to this subject before proceeding with the following chapters devoted to it.

CHAPTER XVI

FOSTERING PRIDE-SUSTAINING ACTIVITY

WHAT we do is the chief means whereby we establish our personal worth in our own eyes and in the eyes of others. When meeting new acquaintances we gladly tell or we shrink from telling of our work or other activity. So sensitive are many persons about their occupations or other pursuits that to ask, when introduced to a stranger, "What do you do?" is a social blunder. Since there is nothing that establishes an individual's importance more than what he does, life, to be pleasant, or even tolerable, must afford opportunities for pride-sustaining activity.

The subject of encouraging pride-sustaining activity involves many considerations.

A. THE NATURE OF PRIDE-SUSTAINING ACTIVITY

The forms of activity in which one may take pride are numerous, but such activities, in the main, can be simply classified:

1. *Activity That Manifests Ability.* In the exercise of intelligence, ingenuity, or any physical ability, man always achieves a sense of personal worth. Often a person struggles unceasingly to develop unusual proficiency simply for the exalted feeling it affords him. To people of all ages a sufficient reward for doing any one of hundreds of things is the realization of being able to do it.

That the manifestation of ability gives rise to feelings of

personal worth is apparent on every hand. Infants delight in exercising their little strength effectively upon anything within reach, and older children, young people, and adults take pride in manifesting ability of one kind or another. Anyone knows that when playing solitaire or working puzzles in solitude one would rather succeed than fail, and that a feeling of personal worth is the only satisfaction that can arise from success as against failure in such activities. Newspapers and magazines that contain puzzles or tests of any kind are often taken up with avidity. In amusement places and in some business places there are devices for testing skill; and into the slots of these devices or into the hands of the barkers standing beside them many people put their small change as long as they are able, by means of these devices, to exhibit proficiency. All forms of athletics are enjoyed because they provide opportunities for showing what one can do. School children, too young to see the value of what they study, often take their lessons as "stunts" to be mastered (as spurs to their self-assertion), and so find learning interesting. Moreover, many adults enjoy their work, not simply because of the livelihood they achieve through it, but also because, in pursuing it, they obtain feelings of elation through the manifestation of intelligence, ingenuity, or skill. With every indication of ability in work or other activity there goes a rise in self-esteem.

The satisfaction derived from manifesting ability depends upon a number of conditions:

a. The Challenge Presented. Achievement in an undertaking that confronts the individual as something that may be too difficult for him is far more satisfying than achievement in an undertaking that is obviously simple. In all occupations there are persons who take little pride in what

they do because it does not indicate their capability. This is so especially in periods of unemployment after many of the more capable employees have moved down in the scale of occupations to displace less capable ones in the lower brackets. Also in education, work below the individual's capability becomes insipid. Teachers, from primary schools to colleges, know of the difficulty in making class lesson assignments that will be interesting to precocious members. For any achievement to be most satisfying it must represent all of the individual's ability in that activity. And of achievements of various types, other things being equal, that which represents the individual's greatest ability gives him the greatest satisfaction.

An individual may be challenged not only by a difficult undertaking, but also by a word or look from another person indicating that the undertaking is a difficult one. And success after having been thus challenged, like success after having been challenged simply by the difficulty of a task, is gratifying. To many a person, the satisfaction of doing something is increased a hundredfold by being told that he cannot do it.

In every stage of development, from infancy to old age, doing what someone else has declared difficult is a source of great pride. If you take a young child several blocks from home and tell him that he cannot find the way back alone, he will in all probability arrive there breathless, and glowing with pride. When Tom Sawyer, about to whitewash the fence as a number of boys approached his home, said to them, "I reckon there ain't one boy in a thousand, maybe two thousand, that can do it the way it's got to be done," he not only got those boys to do the work for him, but also, we may assume, enabled them to take

pride in doing the work well. The following statements are suggestive of the extent to which one can, by challenging the individual, make his accomplishment sustain his pride:

“If you need any help, I should be glad to have you call on me.”

“You’re good if you can do that.”

“Let’s see if you can dress as fast as your father can.”

“We may lose this game, but we’ll do the best we can.”

“I wonder if you children can work out a plan for dramatizing this lesson.”

“They say you can’t, but I believe you are able to do it.”

“Show them that you can . . .”

“I suppose that after smoking as long as you have, it’s impossible to quit.”

“My fingers are too clumsy for doing this. I wonder if you could do it for me.”

“This will require skill.”

When the individual is led to believe that his undertaking is a difficult one, he is doubly challenged—by himself and by the other person; and, if he succeeds, he finds his achievement doubly satisfying.

b. The Freedom Involved. The satisfaction of achievement consists not simply in executing but also in planning a piece of work. There is little satisfaction in doing anything in which the worker is merely the instrument of someone else, for in such a case the enterprise does not become the worker’s enterprise, and consequently achievement is not credited to him. Recently a mother said to me that her daughter had no interest whatsoever in helping

her with the housework, and asked, "Why is it?" In talking with her I found that she took her daughter into the kitchen and said: "Evelyn, peel the potatoes. Now, Evelyn, slice the cucumbers. Put the potatoes on the stove. Now set the table. Slice the bread. Now, Evelyn, mash the potatoes. Evelyn, get me the salad dressing. Now, Evelyn, pour the water." This daughter found housework uninteresting because in it she was made subservient to a plan not her own. By being told what to do, how to do it, and when to do it, she was denied the possibility of having achievement credited to her. Had she been allowed to prepare and serve a meal in her own way, she might have enjoyed the work. Many servants find their work unpleasant for the same reason; the fact that they are denied freedom to plan their work. Woodworth says:

The main difficulty with the master-servant relation is that the servant has so little play for his own self-assertion. The master sets the goal, and the servant has submissively to accept it. This is not his enterprise, and therefore he is likely to show little zest for the work. . . . When the master, not contented with setting the main goal, insists on bossing every detail, continually interfering with the servant's work, the servant has the least possible chance of adopting the job as his own. But where the master is able, in the first place, to show the servant the objective need and value of the goal, and to leave the initiative in respect to ways and means to the servant, looking to him for results, the servant often responds by throwing himself into the enterprise as if it were his own—as, indeed, it properly is in such a case.¹

For any person to find the greatest satisfaction in his accomplishment, it must be his own.

¹ Woodworth, Robert S., *Psychology*, pp. 277-278, New York, Henry Holt & Company, 1929. Used by permission of the publisher.

c. Standards of Merit. To take the fullest pride in his accomplishment the individual needs some means of evaluating what he does. The one who is given no criterion of creditable performance often expresses a desire for some statement as to the quantity or quality of work that is expected of him by asking such questions as, "What constitutes good work?"

It is not always possible to set up for the individual standards whereby he may evaluate his accomplishment; but in the simpler performances this technique is often practicable, and is employed widely. Athletic directors provide, for those participating in track and field events, local, state, and national records; and for golfers they provide *par*. Teachers sometimes inform the student, after he has written an examination, how his accomplishment compares with that of many students who were enrolled in the same course or in previous courses. They usually do so by giving him his *percentile rank*; the per cent of the group that he surpasses and equals. Sales managers often use the quota system, whereby each salesperson is given information on how much he is expected to sell in his department or territory.

Although standards of merit often heighten the satisfaction of accomplishment, they ordinarily do so only for persons of superior attainment. To persons of inferior accomplishment, standards of merit, as a rule, are humiliating rather than pride-sustaining.

d. Measurement of Achievement. Achievement to be gratifying must be clearly manifested. By means of various measuring devices many types of accomplishment are made more discernible than they would otherwise be.

In athletics, achievement is ascertained in definite quantitative terms by means of the tapeline, the timepiece, or

tallies. The satisfaction afforded by such devices is suggested by the interest that contestants always manifest in the keeping of the score. In education, learning is sometimes uninteresting because there is no satisfactory means of making accomplishment apparent. The traditional essay examination, the unreliability of which has been demonstrated experimentally, was always recognized by the student as a very inaccurate measuring device. Consequently it did not make studying as pleasurable as the tapeline and the timepiece and the tallies made athletics. Recent years saw the development of a new kind of test, which, *when properly constructed*, is a much more definite means of measuring certain types of achievement. The examinations at the close of this book will serve as illustrations. By attempting these tests, you will obtain first-hand information as to the personal satisfaction that such exercises can give.

It is far from possible today to measure all achievement. But by determining the various abilities necessary in an occupation, and by developing testing technique, the use of measuring devices can be extended.

e. The Recording of Achievement. Any successful person finds his achievement more gratifying when it is recorded, and thus continuously indicated, than when no record is made of it.

The pleasure taken in recorded achievement is widely apparent. Inscribing attainments of athletes on parchment or on metal, entering marks earned by students in the registrar's books, and keeping "no-accident records" for employees adds to the enjoyment that proficiency gives.

f. The Tangible Nature of Accomplishment. A person likes activity that gives shape to his power. This is largely

because accomplishment in such activity is observable and constitutes a permanent record.

The interest in tangible evidence of the individual's own accomplishment is apparent in schools. Manual training, home economics, and the fine arts offer the most notable examples. The construction of charts and maps in geography, and the dramatization of certain facts of history are also examples of activity that is pleasurable because it leads to palpable results. Likewise, 4-H Club work—in which boys and girls do not simply listen to talks on how to cultivate corn, feed calves, or can fruit and vegetables, but actually engage in growing corn, raising calves, or canning food—is interesting to them because it results in concrete accomplishment. The satisfaction of achievement is always enhanced by tangibility of what one accomplishes.

g. The Competition Involved in the Activity. The pride taken in manifesting ability depends much on the competition that the activity involves. Many people pride themselves doubly on successful activity in which competition plays an important part; they pride themselves on their ability and on their superiority over other contestants.

Competition is often incidental to the achievement of various ends other than a sense of superiority; but in the competitive activities of many people the desire to gain ascendancy simply for the pride it gives them is either a contributory motivating factor, or is the only one at work. The desire to gain ascendancy may incite competition that leaves all other wants unappeased or that does violence to them.

Individuals differ in strength of desire for competitive activity, and everyone feels this desire more in some situations than in others. Many people enjoy competition

greatly, but not all children and not all adults care for it. In the social life of some persons of every age, competition is stressed; in that of others, cooperation is more often emphasized. And people seem to differ in interest in competitive activity in accordance with the emphasis that is put on competition in the social life around them.² People apparently differ in this interest also in accordance with their general levels of achievement. Children of inferior ability seem to take more interest in competing with one another than do their superiors.³ A very apparent cause of individual differences in interest taken in competition in childhood and adolescence is difference in age. Growth in the competitive spirit begins around the age of four and develops quite steadily to around the eighteenth year.⁴ Another quite evident factor underlying differences in strength of desire for competitive activity is mental balance. Most neurotics seem to enjoy successful competition more than do normal persons, but they feel such great anxiety when engaged in competitive activity that they tend to shrink from it.⁵ An individual's interest in competition apparently varies much with different activities and with different competitors. When the individual feels capable of doing a certain thing and considers his competitors to have ability approximately equal to his, he often seems to take great pleasure in competition. But when he feels that, because

² See Maller, J. B., *Cooperation and Competition*, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

³ See Hurlock, E. B., "Use of Group Rivalry as an Incentive," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 22:278-290 (1927).

⁴ See McGhee, Z., "Play Life of Some South California Children," *Pedagogical Seminary*, 7:459-478 (1900). See also Maller, J. B., *Cooperation and Competition*, New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1929.

⁵ See Horney, Karen, *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time*, pp. 188-229, New York, W. W. Norton, 1937.

of difficulty of the task or because of superiority of his competitors, he could not compete successfully, or when he considers his competitors decidedly inferior to himself, he appears to take little interest in competition.⁶

We are interested in competition not simply because of its relation to mental health, but also from the standpoint of motivation. There is no fixed relationship between the enjoyment of competition and its motivating value because much intensive competition is enforced. But most competitive activity, whether elected or enforced, makes the contestants, for one reason or another, exert themselves vigorously.⁷

In saying that competition intensifies effort, I do not mean that the greater effort it causes is necessarily effectual. It is possible that competition, by giving rise to excessive excitement and distraction from the activity itself, is less effectual in the complex mental processes than in the simple mental and physical functions.⁸ Much competitive activity in school and in life in general is presumably hindered by disruption of thought due to intense competition. The driving power of competition should, therefore, not be taken as an adequate criterion of its value as a motivating device.

What influence does competition have upon the establishment of friendship? Friendship depends upon common interests, rather than upon conflicting interests. Enforced or

⁶ See Vaughn, James, "An Experimental Study of Competition," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 20:1-15 (1936).

⁷ See Vaughn, James, and Diserens, Charles M., "The Experimental Psychology of Competition," *Journal of Experimental Education*, 7:76-97 (1938).

⁸ See Farnsworth, P. R., "Concerning So-Called Group Effects," *Pedagogical Seminary and Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 35:587-594 (1928). See also Anderson, C. A., "An Experimental Study of Social Facilitation As Affected by Intelligence," *American Journal of Sociology*, 34:874-881 (1929).

voluntary competition tends, therefore, as everyone has observed, to make for friendship between the members of a team, but enforced competition tends to alienate persons or groups competing. Voluntary competition, on the other hand, tends to befriend the competitors by making them contestants for each other.

Thus, from every standpoint, it is not competition in general, but competition within limits that may be fostered advantageously.

h. Knowledge of Progress. Knowing that one is doing better than formerly, like knowing that one is surpassing other persons, heightens the satisfaction of achievement.⁹ Whether progress made or successful competition gives the greater satisfaction depends upon whether one is interested in self-improvement or in achieving superiority over others. While there are many who delight more in achieving superiority than in making progress, there are many others of all ages to whom the satisfaction of merely beating someone is small in comparison with the satisfaction of knowing that they are progressing.

As the following statement made by a school principal suggests, some of the views that I have expressed regarding competition and knowledge of progress represent actual practice on the part of good schools:

In the days when the curriculum was centered in subject matter, individual competition was stressed; competitive charts, which listed pupils and indicated achievement by percentages or graphs, were displayed to the glorification of successful children and to the public humiliation of the unsuccessful ones.

Today, we aim to make schools child-centered; and so, recog-

⁹ See Hurlock, Elizabeth B., "The Psychology of Incentives," *Journal of Social Psychology*, 2:269-273 (1931).

nizing the evils of individual competition, we have banished competitive charts. We now aim to stimulate interest in achievement by the use of individual record or graph books, which the children keep in their desks. Each child has before him goals, individualized according to his ability, and records his daily progress toward those goals.¹⁰

The manifestation of ability under one or more of the conditions that I have mentioned here does much to sustain pride. Let us now consider another form of pride-sustaining activity.

2. *Activity That Is of Social Benefit.* Great self-respect is often achieved through activity that enriches the lives of other persons. Everyone likes to feel that to others he counts for something; that they are better off because of him, or that they will be better off because he lived. Usually those who can achieve their personal interests equally well by serving others or by exploiting them are prompted by pride to take the former course. The parasite ordinarily makes his living at the expense of other persons, not out of preference, but because he is unable to achieve his purpose with equal readiness as a benefactor. Ultimately he develops feelings of inferiority, and looks with envy upon persons to whom others express indebtedness. In giving vocational guidance, you cannot counsel the individual too much that if he desires a career which will enable him, while acquiring a living, to live in the sense of enjoying the greatest self-esteem, he must look to the social value of vocations; he must try to recognize socially useful courses, and try to pursue such a course.

Much activity that is of social value also manifests ability, and is, for that reason, especially pride-sustaining.

¹⁰ Probst, Ella M., in a talk given at the Minnesota Education Association, Oct., 1940.

B. PERSONS HAVING INADEQUATE PRIDE-SUSTAINING ACTIVITY

Unfortunately many persons find their occupations so simple, and regard them as so limited in social value, that they take no pride in what they do. This is so in the case of various persons.

1. *Routine Workers in Industry.* Workers in industry who have unskilled and seemingly unimportant jobs fail to achieve through them a sense of personal worth; and, in many cases, lose self-esteem. The central fact in the life of many unhappy employees in industry is that since they are not engaged in effective or useful work, they have never been able to convince themselves or others that they amount to something. In a study of the causes of dissatisfaction of five hundred workers, Fryer concludes, "The dissatisfaction seems more the result of a general thwarted desire to be 'somebody,' either in the environment at large, or especially in the occupation."¹¹

A routine task in industry often fails to sustain pride, not only because of the nature of the task itself, but also because it keeps the worker from advancing in knowledge or skill. To understand labor unrest fully, one must appreciate the fact that self-respect blossoms in personal development, and shrivels in personal stagnation.

2. *Many Married Women.* There are also many married women who, because of the nature of their housework, fail to maintain self-esteem. They may appreciate fully the value of their work to other members of the family and yet take little pride in it because it does not provide oppor-

¹¹ Fryer, Douglas, "Industrial Dissatisfaction," *Industrial Psychology*, Vol. I, No. 1, p. 28 (Jan., 1926).

tunities for using all of their abilities, and because much of it can be done easily by unskilled help. The present-day housewife seems to be suffering more than did her grandmother from lack of opportunity to use ability possessed. Today she lives in an apartment consisting of one room and several nooks called rooms by the landlord; she purchases ready-made clothes, household furniture, and prepared foods; and she has mechanical devices for doing the work that is to be done. But in former generations when the home was more self-sufficient and equipped with fewer mechanical aids, the woman, although she may have been shamefully burdened with household drudgery, nevertheless found in her cooking, sewing, laundering, rearing of large families, more opportunities for using her ingenuity and skill than the woman of today finds in the home situation. That housewives desire occasions for revealing their talents is suggested by such common statements as, "I should just like to do something once," or, "I'm tired of doing only housework." At the root of much of the restlessness and instability of women today is the thwarting of the desire to manifest more of their abilities and to play more important roles in life than their housework alone makes possible.

The pride of housewives who are tied down to long days of household routine, like that of many laborers in industry, is diminished not simply by the nature of their work itself, but also by the realization that what they do keeps the level of their intellect from rising. And the pride of housewives who have no children, and who, by choice or because of public opinion, are not engaged in occupational life outside of the home, is diminished even more than that of those engaged in endless routine because they are unable to keep down completely feelings of futility.

3. *The Unemployed.* More than the employees in industry and the housewives that I have referred to, the unemployed lose self-esteem, for they come to feel wholly impotent and worthless. Especially the unemployed who are not self-sustaining suffer embarrassment, because no indigent person can think himself half a man. The unemployed do not compare favorably with even the most unskilled workers. Therefore, work of any kind, as against unemployment, may constitute pride-sustaining activity. But the pride taken in unskilled work is of short duration; it soon subsides and gives way to a feeling of being unimportant, but not to the feeling of worthlessness to which unemployment gives rise.

4. *Persons Retired Because of Age.* Many persons who because of age are retired likewise fail to maintain self-esteem. Such persons are likely to feel the years weighing heavily upon them; to find life empty and to wander about disconsolately. Their distraught minds are less a direct result of advancing years than a result of feelings of futility.

C. PRIDE-SUSTAINING ACTIVITY FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR WORK

For those whose work neither manifests much ability nor appears to be of much social value, there are open other forms of pride-sustaining activity.

1. *Hobbies.* The employees in industry and the housewives who are unable to achieve a sense of personal worth through their work can achieve such satisfaction, in the first place, by taking up hobbies. And anyone can have pride-sustaining activity upon retirement by developing, in his early years, a hobby to which he can devote himself when he retires. I say "in his early years" because hobbies

for the retirement period cannot be developed readily at that time. This is because aged persons are not facile in acquiring new interests. They can, in the main, renew old hobbies or continue in those in which they have persisted, but they cannot develop new ones.

A hobby is any activity of a non-vocational type that is persistently engaged in, and that manifests ability of one kind or another. Hence it is apparent that everyone can have a hobby of some kind, and that through it he can maintain more or less self-esteem. In some cases the individual finds his work so humiliating, and his hobby so productive of pride that his hobby becomes to him an oasis in a desert. With a hobby a person can reveal his ability, even though he has given up his work or has work that is generally considered unimportant. Hobbies are effective compensatory activity for achieving a sense of personal worth.

I have spoken of the value of hobbies to persons who do not have occupations that require much ability. There are, however, many people having careers that require proficiency, who can also profit from hobbies because satisfaction comes not alone from the degree of ability manifested, but also from breadth of achievement.

In addition to serving as compensatory activity, hobbies have value as diversions. And as diversions they are often most valuable because they engross the mind, and at the same time sustain pride.¹²

Hobbies are also means whereby the lonely may achieve social experience, for a person not interesting to others may, by developing a talent of one kind or another, become interesting to them. As a matter of fact, hobbies are some-

¹² See White, Wendell, *The Psychology of Making Life Interesting*, pp. 147-153, New York, The Macmillan Company, 1939.

times the only effectual means through which those left out of social life can make their companionship wanted. Anderson, speaking of his clinical experiences, says:

The social relationships of withdrawn and unsocial children are not improved by telling them to be more social, or even by inviting other children to their parties. In my observation, the best procedure is to examine the child's own repertoire in order to find a skill or potentiality that, if developed, will give the child prestige in his own group. Thus, one withdrawn boy had much musical training because his mother valued piano-playing highly. But his associates did not regard piano-playing as significant. We persuaded the mother to purchase a trombone for him; shortly he was playing in the school orchestra and mingling with the other boys. The trombone-playing won their respect and made associations possible. This is an indirect rather than a direct approach to building social relations and is consonant with the practice found effective by many adults. A strongly developed interest, hobby, or activity facilitates the making of social contacts.¹³

No one with a good hobby, unless he makes himself obnoxious by continuously talking about it, is likely to be elbowed to the wall.

Valuable as hobbies are, they may constitute an unwise expenditure of energy. When an individual engages in a hobby to the extent that he neglects to qualify himself for work, he is acting unwisely. To forgo preparing oneself for a career, in favor of a pet pursuit, is a sign of weakness because it generally means that the easier course leading to less possible satisfaction is being pursued. Since taking up hobbies sometimes constitutes misdirected effort, prudence must be exercised in having persons engage in such activity.

¹³ Anderson, John E., "The Development of Social Behavior," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XLIV, No. 6, p. 581, May, 1939.

Because hobbies can have an important bearing on mental health, it is vital that parents, teachers, and others recognize their value and stimulate children to develop interest and proficiency in such activities as well as in careers. It is, however, not enough merely to urge a person to pursue a hobby; he must be given opportunities for doing so. Many industrial managers realize this fact and provide their employees with facilities for carrying on such activities. Likewise, civic organizations have established community centers for skating, for swimming, for playing ball, for reading, and, in some cases, for painting, sculpturing, or studying music. The community centers that have been provided are meager in comparison to those that could be readily established. Nevertheless, they are signs of progress toward community enterprises in the furtherance of mental health.

2. *Simple Deeds of Benefit to Other Persons.* Activity is, as I have said, pride-sustaining when it manifests ability and when it is of benefit to others. The hobby, therefore, has limited value as a means of achieving a sense of personal worth because it usually provides only the satisfaction of having ability; it need not, and generally does not, have social value. And many people take more satisfaction in work that is of social value, or in simple deeds that enrich the lives of other persons, than they take in seeing their power made apparent in socially valueless ways.

In attempting to help a person find happiness whose work does not sustain his pride, you can do no better than to get him interested in doing little things for persons who are in need of assistance. In training children, you should get them to learn early in life the fact that a good deed gives pleasure to the benefactor as well as to the beneficiary. In counseling anyone regarding the achievement of happi-

ness, do not fail to convey to him the thought that he should *strive always to achieve his own personal interests by enriching the lives of others, rather than by exploiting them*, for it is primarily when we do so that we achieve genuine happiness.

CHAPTER XVII

FOSTERING A RESPECTABLE STANDARD OF LIVING

SINCE man lives by pride, as well as by other things, a standard of living to be adequate must be respectable. Important factors in the determination of the individual's standard of living, factors as important as what he does, are his living and working conditions. The question, "Where do you live?" or "Where do you work?" can, in fact, be more embarrassing than the question, "What do you do?" The pride that an individual takes in his living or working conditions depends, of course, not simply on the conditions themselves, but also on whether or not he thinks them good. Nevertheless, everyone has some standard of respectability in regard to conditions of living and working, and the pride that one takes in one's conditions depends on their deviation from that standard.

For many of their own living conditions people are themselves responsible, and the pride that they take in such living conditions is the pride of good taste or the pride of achievement. Persons who plan and build a house that is attractive in appearance, that is bright, that is well heated and ventilated, that is adequately equipped and furnished, that gives them privacy, that has pleasant surroundings, may enjoy it as much because of the good taste or achievement it exhibits, as because of the degrees to which it affords them other satisfactions. All conditions of living for which

a person is himself responsible may, as they manifest his taste or achievement, increase or decrease his self-esteem.

The individual often regards the living conditions which other persons provide for him as expressions of appreciation. Children whose parents do what they can to improve the living conditions for everyone in the home feel wanted. The inhabitants of a city in which the authorities do things to make living in the city more pleasant to all feel respected. Guests who find that their hostess is looking to their comfort feel welcome.

Similarly, people whom others subject to living conditions that are unpleasant feel unrespected. And the thought of being unrespected, to which the unpleasant conditions give rise, can be very disagreeable. People who must endure noises or loud talk during the night may have disturbed sleep, less because of the auditory stimulation itself than because of the disrespect shown them by the persons responsible for the disturbance.

The disagreeableness of unpleasant living conditions for which other persons are responsible depends much on whether those persons are apologetic. When your neighbor has called upon you, saying, "We're having a party tonight, and I sincerely hope that our guests will not keep you awake," you may feel, if the guests do get noisy, that your neighbor does, at any rate, have consideration for you, and so sleep quite undisturbed. But if an apology is to mitigate the effect of a disturbance, that disturbance must, of course, be reasonably unavoidable or unintentional.

Responsibility for people's working conditions, as in the case of their living conditions, may rest with themselves or with other persons; but since most workers are employees, it rests for the most part with the employer. And the indi-

vidual often regards the working conditions for which the employer is responsible, as expressions of appreciation for him. Employees who see that the management is trying to make conditions of work attractive from the standpoint of comfort, health, safety, and appearance of place of work, feel that they are considered not as machines but as human beings. Similarly, employees who work in poorly heated or poorly ventilated rooms may suffer more from the management's apparent indifference to their physical discomfort than from the discomfort itself.

The disagreeableness of unpleasant working conditions, like the disagreeableness of unpleasant living conditions, depends much on whether persons responsible for them are apologetic. If the management in industry enables the individual to see that the unpleasant working conditions for which it is responsible are unavoidable, and that it regrets them, they lose some of their unpleasantness. Builders sometimes send to people living near where construction is taking place letters in which they make such apologies as, "May we hope that you will bear with us as patiently as possible during the noisy week that lies just ahead as the steel frame of our new building is going up?" or post signs to the same effect.

Working conditions usually influence the individual's pride not only in that he regards them as expressions of appreciation for him, but also in that they contribute toward his occupational efficiency, for work that is carried on under unfavorable conditions involves wasted effort, and no one can take pride in what he does if it underrates his ability. One of the satisfactions of using new machines or new equipment is the satisfaction of greater achievement.

As we come to recognize the full effect of living and

working conditions upon the individual's self-esteem and, consequently, upon his attitude toward us and toward his work, we are not likely to be remiss in improving conditions. So much is known about silencing devices for machines that there is no need for installing noisy machines. So much is known about the noise-absorbing structures and materials that there is no need for building rooms in dwellings or in shops that do not absorb noises. So much is known about heating, ventilating, and lighting that there is no justification for not installing good systems for controlling indoor atmosphere or illumination. And it is so simple to provide sanitary facilities, rest rooms, recreation rooms, congenial places for eating lunch, good lockers, and shower baths for persons engaged in dirty work, thus enabling them to feel respectable when they go out on the street on the way home, that there is no need of withholding these conveniences.

In so far as the individual's living and working conditions are within his own control, we can bring about improvements in them by calling his attention to the many little and inexpensive things that he can do to improve his conditions, and by developing in him interest in making, in so far as he can, the larger improvements. Fostering respectable living and working conditions is a matter of stimulating the individual to provide such conditions for himself, as well as a matter of providing them for him.

A respectable standard of living also involves, of course, adequate subsistence, and leisure for recreation and for personal development; it involves all of the experiences essential to complete living. And the more the individual is able to achieve a good standard of living through thrift, skill, or ingenuity, instead of obtaining it as a gratuity, the more

it sustains his pride. Most men and women can recall the first money they earned. The social order should, therefore, provide opportunities for the development of abilities and opportunities for effective effort; it should, rather than bestow a standard of living upon the individual, clear the way for him to achieve it. A good standard of living is essential to self-esteem; and the more it represents virtues on the part of the individual, the more it sustains his pride.

CHAPTER XVIII

USING POSITIVE APPEALS IN MOTIVATING BEHAVIOR

THE use of methods of dealing with people needs to be considered not simply from the standpoint of motivation, but from the standpoints of both motivation and mental health. Those methods that are as effective as others in motivating behavior but, at the same time, more conducive to mental health than other methods are the more commendable.

In motivating behavior by appealing to the want for a feeling of personal worth, we can, as I have briefly indicated in earlier chapters, make either positive appeals or negative appeals. Making a positive appeal consists in expressing approbation of another's actual or potential behavior; making a negative appeal consists in expressing disapprobation of another's actual or potential behavior. Positive appeals always have a more favorable effect upon mental health. This is apparent when one notes the positive and negative appeals made by each of the following statements:

“Wise men change their minds; fools never do.”

“Modesty heightens all the virtues which it accompanies; conceit diminishes them.”

“Some grief shows much of love; but much grief shows still some want of wit.”

“Heroes carry on when a ship is sinking; cowards desert.”

As to motivation, is there a difference in the effectiveness of positive and negative appeals? The subject of motivation is complex; individuals often respond differently to the same method of dealing with them, and each may respond differently to the same method used upon him from time to time, in different situations, or by different persons. Several experiments have been conducted to determine the comparative effects of praise and reproof on achievement in school work. One of these experiments¹ is especially significant because of the number of cases involved, and because of the care exercised in equating groups and in controlling conditions. The subjects of the experiment were one hundred and six school children of the fourth and sixth grades. Their work in the experiment consisted in adding, for a period of fifteen minutes a day for five days, columns of six three-place numbers. This work was, of course, equated for difficulty. The children were listed in four groups of equal ability; but the children of three of the groups worked ungrouped (as a class), and the others worked in another room. The children of one of the three groups that worked as a class were each day called to the front of the room, and were then told, in the hearing of all, that their work was excellent, and were praised for working rapidly and carefully. The children of the second of the three groups that worked as a class were, likewise, each day called to the front of the room, but were told, in the hearing of all, that their work was poor, and were reproofed for being slow and careless. The children of the third of the three groups that worked as a class were ignored, but were able to hear the other members of the class praised or

¹ Hurlock, Elizabeth B., "An Evaluation of Certain Incentives Used in School Work," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 16:145-149 (1925).

reproved. The children of the group that worked in a separate room (the control group) received no incentive whatsoever. The following table indicates the results of this experiment:

AVERAGE SCORES MADE ON ARITHMETIC TESTS BY GROUPS WORKING UNDER DIFFERENT INCENTIVES OVER A PERIOD OF FIVE DAYS²

GROUPS	FIRST DAY	SECOND DAY	THIRD DAY	FOURTH DAY	FIFTH DAY
Control	11.8	12.3	11.6	10.5	11.4
Praised	11.8	16.6	18.8	18.8	20.2
Reproved	11.8	16.6	14.3	13.3	14.2
Ignored	11.8	14.2	13.3	12.9	12.4

Thus, on the fifth day, the control group accomplished about what it accomplished on the first day, the praised group made marked improvement, the reproved group made some improvement, and the group that was ignored but heard the praise and reproof of others made little improvement. However, on the second day, the reproved group did as well as did the praised group. And the reproved group and the ignored group did their best on the second day. The improvement from the first to the fifth day for the praised group differs from that of the reproved and the ignored groups, not only in that it is marked, but also in that it is steady.

The results of other experiments in the comparative values of praise and reproof as incentives to study in the case of school children likewise suggest that praise is generally more effective than reproof, and that the superiority of praise over reproof increases with the repetition of both praise and reproof.³

² Reproduced by permission of Warwick & York, Publishers.

³ For a brief summary and evaluation of these experiments see Charles Bird, *Social Psychology*, pp. 66-76, New York, D. Appleton-Century Company, 1940.

In the experiments that have been conducted, the praised groups presumably accomplished more over a number of days than did the reproofed groups, not only because praise has greater motivating value over a long period, but also because it facilitates learning. As everyone has observed, learning seems to take place most readily in studies which the learner enjoys; and no one enjoys a study in which he feels that he is unsuccessful, and in which he is reproofed for failure.

Some of the experiments indicate further that poor students are stimulated more by praise and less by reproof than are good students. This has been interpreted to be due to the fact that praise is a somewhat novel experience for poor students, and to the fact that reproof is a somewhat novel experience for good students. The same investigations show that younger children respond better to reproof than do older children. This, too, has been interpreted as being due to the greater novelty of negative appeals in the case of younger children, who were recently coddled. Observation of human scenes indicates quite clearly that, in any human relationships, continued use of the same type of appeal has less motivating value than the somewhat novel type. There are times when an individual, long accustomed to positive appeals, becomes so adapted or inured to such appeals that he cannot be influenced by them, but can be jolted into a modification of his behavior by a negative appeal.

Reproof may also be more effective than praise in motivating persons who doubt the sincerity of praise but take reproof seriously. Many persons, expecting to be somewhat flattered, tend to take praise more lightly than they take reproof.

Reproof may, furthermore, be a greater stimulus than praise in a narrow pattern of behavior. But the methods that we use in human relationships should, in addition to stimulating a particular response, have a good effect upon the individual's entire behavior. If you reprove the individual, he may feel that you dislike him personally; and so, to spite you, he may, when you are not supervising him, perform ineffectively or, for instance, damage property which you own or are responsible for. If, as Emerson said, the secret of education lies in respecting the pupil, teachers should be wary of using many negative appeals, for such methods do not express respect.

The practices of successful persons may be somewhat instructive as to the wisdom of using positive or negative appeals. Which type of appeals do good teachers tend to use, and which type do poor teachers tend to use? The results of an investigation of this subject reveal that one of the factors that distinguish good teachers from poor ones is the nature of the appeals they make in motivating children. Good teachers were found to nod approval, speak encouragingly, and make other positive appeals when the child's reactions were appropriate ones. Inferior teachers were found to concentrate upon the child's unfavorable reactions by means of such negative appeals as faultfinding and scolding.⁴

Viewing the subject of motivation in the broadest sense, we may say that disapprobation is not the usual language of friendship and of love. So, if you try to stimulate the other person to desired behavior by expressing disapproba-

⁴Barr, A. S., *Characteristic Differences in the Teaching Performance of Good and Poor Teachers of the Social Studies*, Bloomington, Ill., Public School Publishing Company, 1929.

tion when you might accomplish your purpose in other ways, he may (depending upon the closeness of your relationship) always remember it, and you may always regret it.

If it is impossible to use a positive appeal, or if a positive appeal fails to elicit the desired response, what is there for you to do but make a negative appeal? You may, however, use negative appeals effectively, and without incurring the far-reaching evil effects sometimes attendant on them, by being mild rather than severe, and kindly rather than taunting. The mere hint of dispraise, especially when expressed with kindness, may be as effective and far-reaching in bringing about desired responses as an expression of approbation. But to dispraise anyone repeatedly, however mildly or kindly, may prove far more disadvantageous than complete disregard.

Most of the methods that I have presented in Part One of this volume—methods of dealing with people of every age and in every station of life—constitute positive appeals. Although such appeals are not effective in all cases, they presumably are far superior to negative appeals in motivating behavior in most situations. But I have presented those methods not simply because of the greater motivating value that they seem to have in most cases, but also because, unlike the negative appeals, they are conducive to mental health. I presented some negative appeals despite their unfavorable effect upon mental health because such appeals may sometimes be necessary for getting the desired response.

It is widely accepted today that techniques for motivating behavior should be chosen for their influence on the individual's mental health, as well as for their motivating value; and this view is growing in favor. Accordingly, there

is an increase in the use of positive appeals in dealing with people. Such methods are gaining support not only because of a growing interest in mental health, but also because of a growing realization that they appear to be, as I have suggested, generally superior in motivation.

Despite the growing realization that in dealing with others one should choose techniques for their effectiveness in furthering mental health, as well as for their motivating value, both of these considerations are often overlooked. Just as some teachers are given to speaking approvingly to children, others are given to speaking disapprovingly to them. They strive to further school accomplishment by embarrassing or censuring children or by keeping them in constant dread of not being promoted. By doing so extensively they reveal a disregard for the mental health of the child and a lack of understanding of the relative effectiveness of positive and negative appeals in motivating study. The proper training of teachers involves emphasizing the use of methods that stimulate accomplishment, and that, at the same time, further mental health.

Likewise, there are parents who in training children use methods that irritate the child and fail to influence him. Much of the mental distress and obstreperousness of children is due more to the methods by which they are trained than to the demands made upon them. A child that is non-conforming in trivial matters is sometimes made to feel that his action reveals depravity, and is chastised severely. In this way a thoughtless parent makes a sensitive child feel steeped in guilt. While such methods are often effective in bringing about the desired behavior, they usually do so at an unnecessary cost of mental health, for the desired response can often be obtained more readily by exonerating the child

from blame for doing what he did, expressing confidence in him, and later giving him credit when he happens to make the desired response or does something in harmony with it. Excellent results are achieved today in homes in which approbation for desirable behavior greatly exceeds disapprobation for undesirable behavior.

In like manner, some foremen in industry use negative appeals excessively, and thus offend the workers and make them indolent, when positive appeals might make the workers feel respected and become industrious. Anyone in charge of employees might well give thought to using positive appeals more extensively, if only to get employees to apply themselves more fully to their work. Praising the worker when he reveals industry, skill, or originality rather than reproving him when he fails to do so; giving him publicity when he comes up to a certain standard rather than advertising him when he falls below it; and giving him some assurance of permanency of tenure or promotion when he proves himself deserving rather than threatening him with demotion or dismissal when his work is unsatisfactory, are methods that further mental health and tend to stimulate accomplishment. Their efficacy lies in the fact that they cause the employee to associate satisfaction rather than discomfort with his work.

Similarly, many minds are somewhat distraught by advertising. Although most advertisers make positive appeals, some hint of social failure or other dire consequences to persons who do not procure their products or services; and they do so with more or less success. An advertisement for a certain gasoline pictures a motorist and his son being left behind on the highway, presumably because of an inferior gasoline used. The son calls his father's attention to his

inability to keep up with the other motorists, saying, in a crestfallen manner, "Gee, Dad, they're all passing you." To persons who take all advertising seriously, and who are unable to buy the things graphically portrayed as essential to their welfare, positive appeals are usually less distressing than negative appeals; for, while both types of appeal make the individual aware of not having the things advertised, positive appeals are more pleasant, and often stimulate the individual to daydream of having those things.

Inferior people often use negative appeals in their human relationships because, in doing so, they are able to satisfy their own desire for a feeling of importance. A man smarting from an awareness of personal deficiencies often disparages or berates others, as I have said, for the purpose of thereby putting himself into a better relative position. Embarrassing or censuring another, therefore, is not necessarily an attempt to modify his behavior, nor necessarily an expression of a rational belief in the effectiveness of such methods; it may be simply an ill advised means whereby the reproving person strives for a sense of superiority.

Thus, while negative appeals—appeals that jeopardize another's self-respect—may sometimes be necessary, they appear more frequently to be unjustifiable. This is especially true when one views them from the standpoints of both mental health and motivation. A disposition to evaluate negative appeals on this broader basis distinguishes the person who thinks of the well-being of the individual as a whole from the one who gives thought merely to getting a particular desired response. Much emphasis is given by modern psychology to this *more inclusive* conception of our responsibilities in dealing with people.

CHAPTER XIX

LETTING OTHERS HAVE DUE FREEDOM

EVERYONE, to maintain mental balance, needs some degree of liberty, for liberty is the paramount essential of human happiness. Domination, especially if prolonged, becomes exceedingly irritating; and most persons, if continuously prohibited from doing some things, or compelled to do other things, cry for freedom.

Is freedom wanted simply because it spares one from restrictions or compulsions, or is it wanted also as an end? Man does not like to be a stall-fed domesticated brute, helpless to fend for himself, however good may be the supervising care of an owner or master. Many a person would rather (borrowing a familiar phrase) go to hell in his own way than do under coercion something for his betterment. "All that is done on compulsion is bitterness," said Aristotle. Since coercion is disliked not simply because of the privations or distasteful acts it enforces but also because of the humiliation it engenders, some degree of freedom is essential to self-esteem.

Freedom requires ability to exercise it advantageously, involves responsibility for one's actions, and is often hard to maintain. Hence, some persons willingly surrender it for the ease, for the irresponsibility, or for the peace of letting someone else decide things for them. Persons who have not been self-reliant, and persons who have been dominated much, may decline freedom, as do some prisoners who have

served long terms, because of their inability to exercise freedom to their advantage. But those who, for one reason or another, have permitted their entire life to be dictated are, nevertheless, mortified by the clanking of their chains.

The average man is not averse to having some restrictions put upon him as a member of a group, for he realizes that some restrictions upon all give the greatest freedom to each. Cicero said, "The laws are the foundations of the liberties we enjoy—we are all the law's slaves that we may be free." But a law is an indignity unless it is enacted in the spirit of protecting freedom.

People sometimes willingly surrender most of their liberty in the interest of solidarity, and pride themselves on doing so, as when confronted with a national crisis. But they do so only to the extent that, and only so long as, circumstances demand united action; for, in so far as circumstances do not demand united action, dignity demands freedom of action.

In considering the wisdom of leaving people unfettered, we should consider not only their insistence upon freedom, but also their development in the exercise of freedom. To allow people little freedom is to stultify them, for anyone must, to become a man in the fullest sense of the word, be largely self-determining. But we are concerned here primarily with the subject of letting others have due freedom as a means of furthering mental health.

In the first chapter of this volume, and also in one of the sections of the second chapter, I presented methods that enable the other person to enjoy feelings of independence. Although such methods do not give the individual actual freedom, but only feelings of freedom, my justification of

their use, which emphasizes man's desire for freedom, has a bearing on the subject of this chapter.

In a section of the chapter on fostering pride-sustaining activity, I said that one's activity is pride-sustaining when one has freedom of action, since freedom in planning and in carrying on an undertaking makes the accomplishment one's own. Thus, the subject of this chapter was indirectly dealt with to that extent in the chapter on furthering pride-sustaining activity. I shall now enlarge upon the subject of letting others have due freedom.

a. Giving the Individual a Choice. An individual who has no preference still likes to be given a choice; a choice of what he is to do, a choice of time for doing what is expected of him, or a choice of what he is to receive as a benefit. Sometimes it is possible to give the individual a choice so broad that it affords him a feeling of complete freedom. The gift of a choice between alternatives is often enjoyed primarily because it respects the individual's judgment, and keeps your authority from becoming oppressive. Parents, teachers, and foremen, by giving the individual a choice, contribute significantly to his mental health.

Letting the individual have a choice is a technique that one can frequently employ in human relationships, for seldom does the attainment of one's objective in dealing with others necessitate that one be arbitrary. Moreover, by giving an individual a choice you create in him an attitude favorable to you, and thus increase your influence over him. Hence, this technique has value from the standpoint of motivating behavior, as well as from the standpoint of furthering mental health.

b. Waiving Occasionally Your Prerogative, or Your Rights As a Partner. A person in a subordinate position, or

even a partner, may develop feelings of being restricted that are distressful to him. But you can free him from such feelings by occasionally relinquishing your prerogative or your rights as a partner. There is practically no position of authority in which it is always necessary to give directions to subordinates; and there is practically no partnership in which one cannot occasionally be a silent partner. A teacher or foreman who waives his prerogative by telling those in his charge to use their own judgment keeps it from weighing heavily upon them. A woman managing a home who waves her prerogative by letting her help make decisions in regard to their work keeps them from feeling needlessly subservient. A husband who frequently waives his rights as a partner makes his wife feel respected. And anyone who occasionally waives his authority or his rights keeps himself from becoming oppressive.

By sometimes waiving your prerogative or your rights as a partner, you not only further another's happiness; you also increase the possibility of control at other times. Rulership is of short duration for those who demand complete subservience. A man is never more in danger of being ruled over by a woman than when she promises to obey; a woman is never more in danger of being made slave than when a man is at her feet; a conquering nation is never more in danger of eventually being conquered than when she rules excessively over the affairs of the vanquished. Human nature does not tolerate complete submission. People have overthrown even gods who were too arbitrary. In every position of authority, whether absolute or joint, he governs longest who does not govern always.

c. Refraining from Laying Down Unnecessary Rules. Rules, like the more personal restrictions that are often put

upon the individual, may vex less because they hamper than because they subjugate. Since rules are intended, ostensibly or in reality, for all members of the group, they usually are less annoying than the more personal restrictions, but everyone chafes more or less under them. A man always feels himself less a man when bound by a rule. An ideal program for governing the behavior of people, with the furtherance of their mental health through the furtherance of their self-esteem as one of the objectives, involves a minimum of arbitrary restrictions upon them.

Often rules not only irritate people, but also become a challenge to them, and thus stimulate them to do things that the rules are intended to prevent them from doing. Many a person has done something for no reason other than that there was a rule against doing it. Forbidden fruit is sweetest because, in taking it, the individual unfetters himself.

Whether a rule will provoke behavior that it is intended to prevent depends much upon whether punishment for its violation is specified in a threatening manner. A rule that defies tends to make people unruly because no one likes to feel, or to give the impression, that he can be frightened into conformity. There was once published in a college bulletin a requirement of students followed by the statement, "Those failing to comply with this request will be automatically expelled." The same idea might have been conveyed without intimidation by the statement, "In fairness to those who may fail to comply with this request, they are hereby informed that their registration will be canceled." Such a statement, expressing a desire to deal fairly with students, would not be likely to be interpreted as an attempt to scare them.

A rule that specifies punishment in a threatening manner tends not only to provoke violation, but also to be more irritating than a rule that involves no intimidation. So, from the standpoint of safeguarding the mental health of others, as well as from the standpoint of controlling their behavior, the worst of rules are rules that prescribe punishment in a threatening manner.

d. Being Tolerant. Everyone feels that he has a right to certain opinions and actions, and demands, in the interest of self-respect, forbearance on the part of those who are not in accord with him. And anyone is especially insistent that others shall be tolerant of him if they expect him to be tolerant of them. The person who is intolerant, especially if he also demands tolerance, implies that he is superior, and may be offensive as much for this reason as for attempting to limit another's freedom.

Persons who are intolerant not only are offensive; they also provide fuel for the fires that they would extinguish. The history of religious persecutions gives glowing examples of this fact; it shows repeatedly that, as has been said, the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. And people who fought over their religion did not all fight primarily because of a zeal for it; some fought largely because their pride was being overridden by persons who tried to coerce them into a change of creed.

You cannot be tolerant of a person who is not tolerant of you. But tolerance is a mutual achievement, and there can be no harm in being the first to take a step or two toward forbearance. This is especially true if a person is himself a bigot. There is no other way than tolerance whereby discordant persons can achieve amicable relationships, as well as freedom of thought and action.

e. Establishing a Democratic Form of Government. Man can with dignity delegate rulership over himself, and he often does so in the interest of efficiency, or in the interest of being spared from doing bothersome things; but he cannot with dignity permanently surrender his liberty. This is not only because man likes to think himself to be free of the control of others, but also because he feels that, by virtue of being man, he has a natural and inalienable right to independence equal to that of other persons. Many persons, moved by the conviction of having an irrevocable right to the independence to which others have a right, have fought with pride to gain it. And many people in democratic countries, although often neglecting to vote at an election, have become most indignant and hostile toward those who threatened their democratic order. Government of the people and for the people and by the people is fundamental to maintaining the dignity of the people.

Although everyone, to maintain mental balance, needs some degree of freedom, absolute freedom is not, of course, essential to human happiness; and some limitations of freedom are necessary for the protection of the many against the possible abuses of the few. But freedom within limits such as I have indicated can be given to everyone, and is, as I have said, essential to mental health.

CHAPTER XX

ALLAYING ENVY AND JEALOUSY

IN A consideration of mental health we need give thought not simply to the basic means of achieving it, but also to the allaying of envy and jealousy, which always lower self-respect. The maintaining of personal worth, so essential to human happiness, is impossible with an envious or jealous state of mind. Whatever self-respect an individual may achieve in any experience is smothered when envy or jealousy creeps in. Envy and jealousy lower self-respect directly, and indirectly by making one unacceptable socially. Keeping up mental health necessitates, therefore, keeping down envy and jealousy.

I. ALLAYING ENVY

Envy is, as I have said, chagrin and resentment due to being excelled in things desired. The nature of envy suggests several means whereby people may be kept from growing envious.

a. Prescribing Uniform Living Conditions. Attempts have often been made to prevent individuals from feeling outdone by others through prescribing uniform living conditions. Various leaders and groups have required the wearing of authorized garments, have limited, in the case of schools, the amount that may be spent by individuals on a social function, and have even organized themselves into colonies and, in the case of Russia, into a state in which

they have standardized living conditions. Such policies have, however, generally been protested so vigorously by some members of the group that they have in relatively few cases been long effective.

b. Developing Appreciation for the Things Possessed. It is not simply how much a man has, but also how much he appreciates what he has that determines his longings for the enjoyments of others. Many persons look with contentment upon others in possession of various enjoyments that they themselves do not have. To them the wealth, the power, and the renown of other persons are not disquieting facts. But their contentment is not contentment without what they do not have; it is contentment with what they do have. They are, to borrow a phrase from Corinthians, as having nothing, and yet possessing all things. Such persons have learned, as poets teach, that the seemingly commonplace is often the truly wonderful. When Emerson was asked why he did not travel about to see the beauties of the world, he answered, "Why should I seek the beauties of foreign places when I have not even exhausted the beauties of my own garden?" Anyone appreciative of the things he possesses is not prone to envy.

But many persons, instead of being sensitive to the possible joys around them, are obtuse to those possible joys. They may work the mine diligently, but they always come forth without ore because they do not recognize it. Being unable to appreciate the things in the midst of which they stand, they count the blessings of others and pine begrudgingly for them. A poor man may envy a rich man for his wealth, while the latter envies the former for his health. Youth may envy age for its power, while age envies youth for its freedom. A single woman may envy a married

woman for her home, while the latter envies the former for her career. A wife whose husband devotes his thoughts primarily to his work may begrudge the woman who married a family man, while the woman whose husband gives most of his time to his family may wish that she had married a "hustler." Persons who always count the blessings of others and never their own remind one of Untermeyer's fable of the willow and the river.

The willow and the river
 Ripple with silver speech,
 And one refrain forever
 They murmur each to each:

"Brook with the silver gravel,
 Would that your lot were mine;
 To wander free, to travel
 Where greener valleys shine—
 Strange ventures, fresh revealings,
 And, at the end—the sea!
 Brook, with your turns and wheelings,
 How rich your life must be."

"Tree with the golden rustling,
 Would that I were so blessed,
 To cease this stumbling, jostling,
 This feverish unrest.
 I join the ocean's riot;
 You stand song-filled—and free!
 Tree, with your peace and quiet,
 How rich your life must be."¹

Many persons can greatly augment their happiness by becoming fully appreciative of what they have.

¹ From "Envy," by Louis Untermeyer in his book *Challenge*, 1915. By permission of Harcourt, Brace and Co., N. Y.

c. Keeping the Individual from Being Constantly Reminded of the Good Fortunes of Others, but Not Concealing Them. Since envy involves chagrin, it follows that to keep the individual from being reminded repeatedly of what persons of greater fortune possess is a means of keeping him from growing envious of them.

The possibilities of keeping the individual from being constantly reminded of the good fortunes of other persons are many. Keeping conversation from drifting to elaborate homes when with the indigent, to costly forms of recreation and to investments when with people in very moderate circumstances, to examples of physical excellence when with the infirm; getting people to spend more time with their equals than with their superiors; and encouraging the establishment of residences in places in which the family's level of attainment is the common experience of the community—these practices and other similar ones should serve to keep people of small fortune from being more than dimly conscious of the disparity between themselves and persons of greater attainment.

In trying to keep anyone from being conscious of the good fortunes of others, one should not proceed in a stealthy manner, for stealth, when recognized as an attempt to obscure the superiority of others, emphasizes it, and is always an affront. Moreover, a deliberate attempt to blind the individual to the possessions of others implies that he has a right to share in them, and so makes him especially resentful.

Rather than to proceed stealthily in trying to keep the individual from being constantly reminded of the fortunate experiences of others, one should enlist his cooperation by acquainting him with the fact that he may be making himself unhappy by thinking too often and too long of the

personal qualities and possessions of others. There are many people who do not realize that they aggravate their own unhappiness by always comparing themselves to others, and who would discontinue doing so if they understood themselves. By informing people of this self-imposed barrier to happiness one can prevent much envy.

It should be noted, however, that there are some persons who advise the disregarding of the superior position of the more fortunate for purely selfish motives—to reconcile the less favored to exploitation. People living in destitution ordinarily need to be given opportunities and stimulation to better themselves rather than to be made obtuse to their inferior condition. Therefore, this technique of discouraging self-comparison to others, while serving a wholesome purpose in many cases, is subject to abuse, and should be protested when misused.

d. Encouraging Industriousness. The person who busies himself about his own affairs often develops personal qualities or acquires possessions that lessen his feelings of inferiority. And the more he develops himself, the more he can endure the good of others. He also spends little time in thinking of the greater possessions of other persons, and so becomes less conscious of the disparity between himself and them. But when inferiority, instead of striving for achievement, walks the streets and beholds the achievements of other persons, it invariably becomes filled with envy, which industriousness seldom feels. Whatever other means one may also adopt, one should always look upon the stimulation of the individual to improve his life, in one way or another, as the primary means of keeping down envy.

e. Limiting Ambition to Attainable Goals. Envy depends much upon one's ambition. He who has limited aspirations

can be envious only of those who excel him within those limits, while he who aspires to attain superiority in every type of activity and to possess the universe will be envious of all who achieve anything beyond his own attainment. There are many persons who cannot take pleasure in any performances of others because they dream of themselves excelling in them all. If Hadrian, the emperor, instead of being ambitious to gain distinction as a painter and as a poet and as an artisan, had been satisfied to be just a good emperor, he might have enjoyed the works of the artists and the craftsmen which he in envy destroyed.

f. Reminding Superiority of the Need of Being Modest and Respectful of Persons of Lesser Achievement. When superiority is modest and respectful of persons of lesser achievement, those persons do not feel the chagrin nor the resentment that they feel when superiority struts and disdains them. Much superiority is envied little because it is modest and magnanimous. Successful persons who persist in identifying themselves with the group in which they rose are envied less than equally successful persons who abandon the group of their origin with an air of having outgrown it. Since envy is incited less by superiority than by arrogant and contemptuous superiority, the allaying of envy involves the development of modesty and generosity on the part of those subject to being envied.

To prevent being envied, the successful person must be especially modest and respectful of those of lesser achievement if he was previously, in one way or another, associated with them. Almost anyone is more chagrined when a childhood playmate, a member of his graduating class, a neighbor or a fellow worker eclipses him than when someone with whom he never had anything in common does so. To keep

from inciting the envy of his former peers, the successful person must therefore keep up or extend his relationships with them.

Rising to distinction suddenly, like rising above former associates, makes great demands upon the successful person to be modest and respectful of those of lower estate. This is because people tend to look upon sudden advancement in public recognition as undeserved, and to suspect the favored one, unless he gives evidence to the contrary, of thinking himself more superior to them than his merit justifies. That envy attends a sudden rise, and that to keep it down the advanced person must be modest and magnanimous, Adam Smith avers when he says:

The man who, by some sudden revolution of fortune, is lifted up all at once into a condition of life greatly above what he had formerly lived in, may be assured that the congratulations of his best friends are not all of them perfectly sincere. An upstart, though of the greatest merit, is generally disagreeable, and a sentiment of envy commonly prevents us from heartily sympathizing with his joy. If he has any judgment, he is sensible of this, and instead of appearing to be elated with his good fortune, he endeavours, as much as he can, to smother his joy, and keep down that elevation of mind with which his new circumstances naturally inspire him. He affects the same plainness of dress, and the same modesty of behaviour, which became him in his former station. He redoubles his attention to his old friends, and endeavours more than ever to be humble.²

A person who is modest and respectful of those of lesser achievement may let his possessions and achievements be known without provoking envy.

g. Acquainting the Individual with the Ill Fortunes of Others. By acquainting the individual with the ill fortunes

² Smith, Adam, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p. 63, London, Cadell & Davies, 1811.

of others, one enables him to see himself in a more favorable comparison with people in general, and, consequently, makes him less envious. Poets have repeatedly expressed this view in passages such as:

In such a world, so thorny, and where none
Finds happiness unblighted, or, if found,
Without some thistly sorrow at its side,
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguished than ourselves, that thus
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,
And sympathize with others, suffering more.³

Not only have poets expressed the view that the individual may find consolation in seeing himself in a favorable comparison with others, but they have also comforted the distressed in this way. In the literature of every age this consolation is offered in such poetry as:

“‘Loss is common to the race’—
And common is the commonplace.”⁴

Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.⁵

The course of true love never did run smooth.⁶

And I think how many thousands
Of care-encumbered men,
Each bearing his burden of sorrow,
Have crossed the bridge since then.⁷

³ Cowper, William, *The Task*, Part IV, lines 333–340.

⁴ Tennyson, Alfred, *In Memoriam*, vi (quoted and commented upon by Tennyson).

⁵ Gray, Thomas, “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.”

⁶ Shakespeare, William, *A Midsummer-Night’s Dream*, Act I, Scene i, Line 134.

⁷ Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth, “The Bridge.”

Religious literature of both the Western world and the Orient also emphasizes man's kinship in sorrow. In the Hindu scriptures we are told that a woman who had lost her only child, came, frantic with grief, to Buddha, and said, "I have heard that thou art a great healer. Restore my child to life." Buddha replied, "Woman, I will do as thou hast commanded me if thou wilt bring me a mustard seed from a home into which death has not entered." For weeks and weeks this woman traveled about, but sought in vain for such a home, and finally the idea that Buddha had tried to convey came to her, and her grief subsided.

The medical profession, too, is cognizant of the mental therapy often involved in a realization that there are others in a similar or worse condition. Doctors have found that the burden of a patient can sometimes be lightened by telling of more severe cases, or by letting the patient have contact with them. For this reason a distinguished physician has said that the place for certain patients is in the ward.

Concentrating excessively upon the less fortunate lot of other persons may make for contentment to the neglect of achievement. Many persons need often to be reminded of the accomplishments of other persons in order to be stimulated sufficiently to accomplish something themselves. The man who, in answer to a question as to why he sat every morning on a stump in his pig yard, replied that he did so for the purpose of overcoming his inferiority complex, never rose much above his environment. Although the principle of centering attention upon persons whose lot in life is unenviable is subject to abuse, one should not be blind to the mental therapy involved in doing so. Many unfortunate persons unable to alter conditions can maintain mental health only by knowing of others equally unfortunate.

2. ALLAYING JEALOUSY

Jealousy often involves, as I said on the subject of wrongdoing, chagrin and resentment due to another person having something claimed by oneself. The jealous person, by thinking himself unfairly treated in favor of someone else, falls in self-esteem. He also makes himself unlikable to persons with whom he might otherwise have relationships, often very close relationships, which results in a further lowering of self-esteem, as well as in other disadvantages. The nature of jealousy suggests several ways of keeping the individual from becoming jealous of other persons.

a. Treating Everyone Justly. Many people are satisfied with someone else having more than they if they can feel that he received it through merit rather than through favoritism, because, in that case, they do not look upon what he has as something belonging to ~~the~~ ^{themselves}.

One of the major personnel problems in industry and in the professions is to advance some employees in rank or in salary without making others jealous of them. But this can usually be accomplished with a fair degree of success by treating everyone in the spirit of fairness. The same problem is involved in the making of appointments to public office in democratic countries, for there are always many people who consider themselves qualified to fill a vacancy, and must likewise, if jealousy is to be avoided, be treated in the spirit of justice. However, in monarchies in which the royal family is acknowledged to be preeminent, a member of the royal family when assigned to a position in the government of the country, does not incite jealousy of equally qualified persons outside of that family because the public concedes the right of the royalty to those positions. In the

home and the school, as in industry and the professions, to keep jealousy from arising it is necessary to deal with everyone in the spirit of fairness.

The just treatment of everyone involves the conferring of only merited honor, for to bestow special recognition upon someone who does not deserve it is an injustice to other undeserving persons and to persons who through merit came to similar honor. Therefore, in so far as injustice creates jealousy, the conferring of an undeserved reward makes those from whose ranks it lifts the recipient and those in whose ranks it places him jealous of him. Much jealousy is due to lifting persons to higher ranks prematurely, through favoritism or misjudgment, and could be kept down by treating everyone justly.

b. Establishing Right of Possession Wisely, and Developing Respect for It. The establishment of right of possession with discretion would tend to prevent, as anyone can see, much jealousy. It is a sociological problem, and lies outside the realm of this book. But jealousy is not necessarily due to an individual's misconception of his right of possession; it may be due to another person's disregard of it, for when the individual's established rights are violated to an extent detrimental to him, he inevitably becomes jealous. Establishing right of possession, however wisely, is of no avail in preventing jealousy without also developing respect for it. Thus the prevention of jealousy, in addition to being a sociological problem, is a broad educational problem.

Some of what I have said in regard to allaying envy and all of what I have said in regard to allaying jealousy are equally applicable to the allaying of either envy or jealousy. And to keep down these barriers to human happiness is to do much to keep up mental health.

CONCLUSION

MAN is forever striving to achieve a sense of personal worth. And in the pursuit of all his other objectives he at the same time strives in one way or another to maintain self-respect. So persistent and furtive is the desire for a sense of personal worth that when man finds insurmountable barriers to the gratification of this desire in normal ways, he develops unwholesome behavior (wrongdoing or mental abnormality) whereby he achieves some fulfillment. To be aware of the reality of the want for a feeling of personal worth and of the various disguises in which this want, when opposed, finds expression is to understand the key of the strongest human motives.

A sense of personal worth is a human need, a need so fundamental that life, if it is to be enduring, must be thought respectable. Thus when we, in one way or another, safeguard or augment the pride of others, we significantly further their happiness; and we establish amicable relationships, which are basic to success in dealing with people.

All of us have social objectives, and many of us have occupations that involve frequent human relationships. Those who have but few personal contacts in their occupations nevertheless find those contacts important to them. And all of us influence the lives we touch. Thus, everyone who would achieve happiness, and who would further the happiness of other persons, must be informed in regard to human nature. "What man is, what his needs are, what elevates and what degrades him, what invigorates and what

weakens him," said Pestalozzi, "this is what is necessary for the highest and for the humblest to know."¹

Although many people understand human nature and are inclined to act in keeping with the needs of others, the inclination to do so is not enough, for human nature is intricate and is too proud to be dealt with crudely; one must also be versatile and artful in procedure.

I have presented the subject of dealing with people in four parts—dealing with people in life situations in general, preventing wrongdoing, preventing mental abnormality, and furthering mental health. I have thus viewed the subject of dealing with people, not simply because most of us are confronted with problems in all of these classifications, but also because there is an interrelation between those problems. Had I simply discussed methods of getting on with others or of stimulating them to activity, I might have failed to give a broad indication of our responsibility in human relationships.

The methods of dealing with people that I have presented are fundamental, since they are in harmony with a fundamental human need—the need for a feeling of personal worth.

¹ Pestalozzi, John Heinrich, "The Evening Hours of a Hermit."

SELF-TESTING EXERCISES

SELF-TESTING EXERCISES

Check those of the following statements that pertain to or exemplify topics that have been discussed in Part One of this volume. Twenty-seven should be checked.

1. "To be right all the time is definitely not a social asset."
2. "You know as well as I do what this calls for."
3. "Often we praise people to show discernment."
4. A policeman inquired of a librarian, "Got any mystery stories in which the cop solves the murder?"
5. A mother gave her child a new toothbrush, saying: "The man who sold this one to me said it's a good one. I wish you would tell me, after you have tried it out, how you like it."
6. A Sunday school teacher appeared before her group one Sunday morning, pleased to have with us again those of you who present a few times."
7. "Intolerance is a . . ."
8. "The world will . . . long remember, what we say here, but . . ."
9. "Aloofness passes off dullness for depth."
10. "Though you have truth on your side, beware of barking too long at the heels of error."
11. "A smooth sea never made a skillful mariner."
12. "You are familiar, of course, with . . ."
13. "Nothing truly can be called one's own."
14. A mental patient, upon overhearing a conversation regarding his country's embarrassment over its war debt, asked

how much the debt was and wrote on a scrap of paper a check for the amount.

15. "A spoke is more than a spoke; it is part of a wheel."
16. "Believe that story of another false that ought not to be true."
17. "A very absurd foible of vanity is positiveness. If you are in the right, it lessens your triumph; if you are in the wrong, it adds shame to your defeat."
18. A mother attempts to control her elder child by asking him to see that the younger one doesn't do anything that shouldn't be done.
19. "The villain's extorted censure is his praise."
20. "He that sips of many arts drinks of none."
21. "You can convince others by using your arguments; you can persuade them only by using it for you."
22. "Fables conceal instruction."
23. "Things we haven't seen are despised."
24. "May I offer a few . . ."
25. "When do you please . . ."
26. "If it is agreeable . . . I would like to . . ."
27. "I am glad to see you this morning. Punctuality enables us to start . . ."
28. "Unsolicited advice is not for a hearing."
29. "Half our forebodings of our neighbors are but our wishes, which we are ashamed to utter in any other form."
30. "Men take pride in fancying themselves abused in order to persuade themselves and others that they are worthy to be the butt of fortune."
31. "There are persons who never admit being fairly beaten."
32. An expert skier said: "I was raised with it. There's nothing to it if you keep practicing."

33. "To certain persons, wishes *are* horses, and they do ride them."
34. "If a parent expresses constant fear of a child being hurt or becoming ill, one is entitled to wonder to what extent those fears indicate an unconscious wish."
35. "Do not say it is not good; say, 'I personally do not like it.'"
36. "I live in memory among my souvenirs."
37. "Never does a man portray his own character more vividly than in his manner of portraying another's."
38. "They would not look with you at the new moon out of respect for the old."
39. "Remorse is often only a pretext devised for the purpose of reveling in pleasant remembrances."
40. "Last week I imagined myself telling my boss just what his shortcom . . . (He took it, and I felt satisfied.)"
41. "The favorite has no friend."
42. "We name our follies 'experience.'"
43. "You're wise in keeping her, as she says."
44. "Those who act witsaid; "We areives drape themselves with the cloak of so who have been . . ."
45. "Perhaps many tiorm of egotismeeek inclined to . . . and have overlooked, il little not . . ."
46. "Swiftly flies each " . . . ne or folly."
47. "Silence is golden."
48. "The infinitely little have a pride infinitely great."
49. "It is, as you say, attractive; but isn't it quite similar to what you have been wearing?"
50. "The best way to do good to ourselves is to do it to others; the right way to gather is to scatter."
51. "Better keep your eye on the speedometer. You're now going . . ."

52. "Look for great fear in courageous words."
 53. "Wisdom is not in doing without what others possess, but in enjoying what one has."
 54. "Great is work which lends dignity to man."

In each of these exercises the correct answers vary from one to all of the choices given. Check them. Seventy-eight should be checked.

1. The indirect method of presenting one's ideas—
 - a. may safeguard another's self-respect.
 - b. may jeopardize another's self-respect.
 - c. may have no influence upon another's self-respect.
 - d. is invariably an insincere procedure.
 - e. is invariably essential to the avoidance of being offensive.
 - f. consists in giving another credit for them.
2. The use of the indirect method was advocated—
 - a. in Part One.
 - b. in Part Two.
 - c. in Part Three.
 - d. in Part Four.
3. The section on negativism in one of the chapters of this volume—
 - a. mentions several causes of negativism.
 - b. mentions several causes of negativism.
 - c. suggests methods for keeping any negativism from developing.
 - d. suggests methods for overcoming negativism.
 - e. suggests direct but inoffensive methods for getting on with a negativistic person.
4. Indirectness in acknowledging another's personal worth—
 - a. is usually less embarrassing to oneself and to the other person than directness.
 - b. has a slyness about it that tends to make it seem less sincere than directness.

- c. when regarded as sincere, gives more pleasure to any-one than directness.
 - d. requires more courage and less skill than directness.
 - e. consists in actions rather than in words.
5. Arrogance—
- a. may be an overrating of oneself.
 - b. may be an underrating of other persons.
 - c. may indicate a low conception of greatness.
 - d. may indicate a narrow conception of greatness.
 - e. may blind others to one's merit.
6. Methods used to motivate desired behavior may influence—
- a. wrongdoing.
 - b. mental abnormality.
 - c. mental health.
7. An incentive may be provided —
- a. by the realization that one is achieving.
 - b. by imaginary accomplishment.
 - c. by the recall of one's earlier success.
 - d. by the questioning of one's ability.
8. Words suggestive of what is desirable regard to the use of positive and of negative affect are
- | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| a. first day | r. inferior persons |
| b. fifth day | s. successful teachers |
| c. hobbies | t. unsupervised behavior |
| d. modesty | u. rationalization |
| e. learning | v. routine workers |
| f. novelty | w. friendship and love |
| g. mildness | x. self-mortification |
| h. kindness | y. self-confidence |
| i. freedom | z. inferior persons |
9. In the chapter "The Misuse of Psychology" it is stated—
- a. that the indirect method is often more effective than the direct method because it avoids arousing resistance.

- b. that repetition of an idea tends to fix it in mind, rather than to make it seem to be a good one.
 - c. that keeping the individual passive until one's entire proposition has been presented to him is usually effective persuasion.
 - d. that a direct statement, when inoffensive, usually influences people more than a thought implied.
 - e. that the best protection against the unprincipled use of psychology is to know how the self-seeker lays snares for the unwary.
10. Compensatory activity, rather than defensive activity—
- a. is an attempt to protect oneself against loss of prestige.
 - b. may be an attempt to attain a sense of personal worth.
 - c. is illustrated by extrusion of ideas from consciousness.
 - d. is illustrated by the direct gratification of fundamental desires.
 - e. is intensified, rather than substituted, activity.
11. Criticizing everyone and everything is defensive activity in so far as it is engaged in—
- a. to express sup
 - b. to disparage
 - c. to overcome
- the faultfinder is weak.
inferiority.
12. Domineering over is compensatory activity in so far as it is engaged in—
- a. to express superiority.
 - b. to gain another's admission of one's superiority through his submission.
 - c. to become secure against domination.
13. Relaying rumor or gossiping is compensatory activity in so far as it is engaged in—
- a. to attract attention.
 - b. to show others up, and thus to achieve a sense of superiority by comparison.
 - c. to gratify another's curiosity regarding the lives of other people.
 - d. to maintain feelings of personal worth.

14. Wrongdoing motivated by the want for a feeling of personal worth may be an attempt—
 - a. to put oneself above others.
 - b. to put others below oneself.
 - c. to attain a feeling of importance somewhat independent of the prestige of others.
15. Rationalization consists in attempting—
 - a. to make one's irrational behavior appear rational.
 - b. to justify one's improper behavior.
 - c. to excuse oneself for one's failure.
 - d. to compensate for personal deficiency.
 - e. to fool oneself rather than others.
16. Conquering-hero daydreaming always has an unfavorable influence upon—
 - a. effort
 - b. mental health.
 - c. contention and strife.
 - d. the making of decisions.
 - e. character development.
 - f. contentment with reality.
 - g. the keeping of attention from wandering when at work.
17. Suffering-hero daydreaming appeals are:
 - a. exalting oneself.
 - b. mortifying oneself.
 - c. accusing oneself.
18. Identification is a form of—
 - a. conquering-hero daydreaming.
 - b. suffering-hero daydreaming.
 - c. reversion to the past.
 - d. narcissism.
 - e. rationalization.
19. There were only two general classifications made of the subject (or subjects) of—
 - a. reverting to one's past.
 - b. daydreaming.
 - c. rationalization.

- d. the nature of pride-sustaining activity.
 - e. wished physical disabilities.
 - f. excessive pride and vanity.
 - g. presenting one's ideas directly in an inoffensive manner.
20. Wished physical disabilities—
- a. are usually understood by persons who develop them.
 - b. are usually good imitations of the disabilities they simulate.
 - c. have their beginnings, in most cases, in childhood.
 - d. should be explained to the individual and disparaged whenever developed.
 - e. can be counteracted very effectively by simply making them unprofitable.
 - f. are usually brought on directly by desiring them.
 - g. are usually overcome readily by desiring to be well.
 - h. when developed to gain attention, are usually treated effectively by simply withholding attention.
 - i. can usually be treated more effectively in an unchanged than in a changed situation.
 - j. are usually treated effectively by exposing the individual's what in developing them.
 - k. may be overcome by psychological reasons when the individual is there will.
21. Terms that were mentioned in the chapter "Extrusion of Ideas from Consciousness" are:
- a. fugue.
 - b. delusion.
 - c. hallucination.
 - d. amnesia.
 - e. sour grapes.
 - f. sweet lemon.
 - g. occupational therapy.
 - h. recreational therapy.
 - i. percentile rank.
 - j. reminiscing.
 - k. press of conversation.
 - l. multiple personality.
22. The excessively proud and vain—
- a. are censorious and sensitive.
 - b. probably, as children, were coddled rather than neglected.

- c. are usually less desirous of approval than normal persons.
 - d. are more desirous of gaining ascendancy than normal persons.
 - e. usually prefer working alone.
23. Excessive drinking may be motivated by desire—
- a. to extrude distressing thought from consciousness.
 - b. to strengthen inhibitions to tabooed activity.
 - c. to increase the enjoyment of tabooed activity.
 - d. to be able to rationalize tabooed activity.
 - e. to increase one's alertness to the wishes of other persons.
 - f. to prevent the loss of, rather than to gain a sense of, personal worth.
24. The methods that have been presented in this volume for preventing mental abnormality can be used safely—
- a. by anyone as preventive measures.
 - b. by anyone as remedial measures.
 - c. by a capable person whenever an abnormality develops.
25. Successful treatment of mental abnormality may be effected by a person who has developed a mental abnormality—
- a. making it an effective means of obtaining satisfaction.
 - b. making it unnecessary for obtaining satisfaction.
 - c. making it an ineffective means of obtaining satisfaction.
26. Competition—
- a. between children of inferior ability seems to be of little interest to them.
 - b. is usually motivated primarily by desire to gain ascendancy.
 - c. is enjoyed independently of age.
 - d. is enjoyed independently of the nature of the activity or of the competitors.
 - e. seems to be as enjoyable to persons accustomed to cooperation as to those accustomed to competition.
 - f. is enjoyed especially by neurotic persons.

- g. always increases effort.
 - h. always increases accomplishment.
 - i. may further mental health.
 - j. invariably makes for friendship between contestants.
 - k. invariably has greater motivating value than knowledge of progress.
27. The furtherance of mental health—
- a. is a complex problem for the individual.
 - b. is a complex problem for society.
 - c. is reducible to the problem of satisfying fundamental needs.
 - d. consists primarily in serving the need of a feeling of personal worth.
 - e. is an integral part of the problems to which the first three parts of this volume are devoted.

In each of the following exercises there are five topics that have been discussed in one or more of the chapters of this volume. Write on the margin the number of chapters in which the five topics of each exercise have been discussed.* Three of the answers are 1, two of the answers are 2, two of the answers are 3, three of the answers are 4 and two of the answers are 5.

- a. Recognizing another's view without replying to it.
- b. Bantering.
- c. Being courteous in rejecting ideas.
- d. Refraining from being overpositive in opposing another's view.
- e. Exonerating the individual from blame for a view he has expressed.

EXERCISE 2

- a. Acknowledging the worth of another's occupation.
- b. Being pleased with another person.

* These exercises are designed to test for knowledge of organization of subject matter.

- c. Asking for favors.
- d. Giving the individual a choice.
- e. Letting others occasionally outshine you.

EXERCISE 3

- a. Taking desired behavior for granted.
- b. Affording expression of negativism.
- c. Respecting the opinions and rights of others.
- d. Forgetting one's identity and assuming another personality.
- e. Simulating or developing the trait opposite to one's deficiency.

EXERCISE 4

- a. Striving to be unusual.
- b. Appearing as a Spokesman.
- c. Reminiscing.
- d. Reforming others.
- e. Taking drugs.

EXERCISE 5

- a. Recording achievement.
- b. Adopting the simpler methods of one's earlier life for gratifying desires.
- c. Projecting one's deficiencies on another person.
- d. Expressing gratitude.
- e. Asking for expressions of opinion.

EXERCISE 6

- a. Criticizing everyone and everything.
- b. Agreeing with another when he is right.
- c. Acquainting the individual with the ill fortunes of others.
- d. Keeping others waiting.
- e. Presenting ideas through example.

EXERCISE 7

- a. Declaring the unattainable undesirable.
- b. Domineering over other persons.

- c. Justifying one's improper behavior.
- d. Going to extremes for acknowledgment of personal worth.
- e. Being tolerant.

EXERCISE 8

- a. Standards of merit.
- b. The tangible nature of accomplishment.
- c. Disparaging oneself.
- d. Sensitiveness and censoriousness.
- e. Persons having inadequate pride-sustaining activity.

EXERCISE 9

- a. Occasionally waiving your prerogative, or your rights as a partner.
- b. Expressing an idea without directing it at the other person in particular.
- c. Conferring favors.
- d. Refraining from laying down unnecessary rules.
- e. Fostering pride-sustaining activity for those who cannot take pride in their work.

10

- a. Developing appreciation for things possessed.
- b. Prescribing uniform living conditions.
- c. Encouraging industriousness.
- d. Establishing the right of possession wisely, and developing respect for it.
- e. Keeping the individual from being constantly reminded of the good fortunes of others, but not concealing them.

EXERCISE 11

- a. Acknowledging qualities of others not possessed by oneself.
- b. Admitting one's dependence upon another person.
- c. Acting with deference toward others.
- d. Expressing surprise at another's view.
- e. Making a concession before rejecting another's idea.

EXERCISE 12

- a. Giving facts without drawing conclusions.
- b. Presenting ideas in question form.
- c. Stimulating another to expression of one's idea.
- d. Presenting ideas being related to views or acts of another or his ancestors.
- e. Crediting another with already knowing what one says.

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