

A Renegade Psychiatrist's Story

Paul Rosenfels

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[*EDITOR'S NOTE*: Rosenfels' autobiography is divided into 17 sections which are neither numbered nor titled. To help the online reader move around, I have numbered and added a title to each section.]

1. My Life Story

When I reflect on my life story I find it remarkable that I was consistently able to walk away from conventional sources of security. When I have turned my back on all things that men are supposed to hold dear to advance into an unknown world, it has not been with a sense of crisis. It has been more like a casual walk into an unfamiliar section of a forest where I already feel at home. This conduct might seem inconsistent with my phobic personality structure. To have agoraphobic tendencies implies anxiety in the face of unfamiliar expanses of space. This symptom nullifies any simple joy someone might feel in running loose in space. But I discovered long ago that I had the ability to carry a surrounding space with me in a fashion not too dissimilar to the tortoise and his shell, and with this sense of secure orientation I could nullify agoraphobic threats. In fact, the apparently familiar, by which I mean the conventional structure of the human world as it supposed to be, turned out to be more a source of phobic anxiety than experiences which were fresh and novel. I was easily overstimulated by the false promises inherent in conventional social relationships. This touched off the phobic mechanism which originates when intensity is too great for the experience which stimulates it. The phobic reaction means that the individual is burning in the fires of his own feelings and therefore cannot retain a sense of the simple reality of experience.

The one thing that I could not allow myself to accept was the sense of being a finished product, and this means that I wanted to continue to grow throughout a lifetime. The kind of growth I had in mind did not consist of the mere expansion of the scope of my adaptive capacities, but rather an openness to a revision of the basic architecture of the life process itself. I was profoundly convinced that if self-development was the real goal of living that nothing could defeat the human personality. The guiding principles had to do with internal things such as self-knowledge and self-control. There is really no way to be a finished product without rejecting the need for more self-awareness and self-mastery, because these things are inherently incomplete. The key to a good life is the ability to like and enjoy oneself as an incomplete person. Then there is always room for that reaching into something more which brings intensity and excitement into living. The sense of being fully alive is born of this vividness, and when a person has everything he expects to get in life, and cannot change anything lest the whole structure collapse, the kind of aliveness which is generated from within dies and his apparently perfect world becomes a nightmare.

As a child when I was presented with a picture of the world where everything worthy of attention was in the notch that was appropriate for it, I got a shrinking feeling deep within myself, as if confronted with a dangerous masquerade. I could only trust people who were dissatisfied with the way the world was put together. I remember having a strong sense of dread about reaching that status of maturity called "manhood." Although I saw it as a mysterious state, I was sure of one aspect, that when one was trapped in manhood no real changes were possible, nor was the joy of living accessible any more.

I have known since I was a small child that I wanted to devote my life to helping bring a better world into existence. There were things about society which anyone could agree were false, sick, and immoral, but people had a talent for ignoring the connection between these things and the social phenomena which were generally admired. It was during World War I that I saw that a society which engages in this kind of behavior must be judged to be mentally ill, and if a single individual were similarly irrational and violent, he would most certainly be locked up. To me, the sickness of society was just a fact, not an occasion for anger and hostility against it. I knew that no one really wants to be sick, and therefore the acceptance of ignorance and immorality as a normal human state must stem from some gigantic mistake people were making in their vision of what human nature is really like. I was not attracted by the revolutionary political position. The first step in facing the need for fundamental social change was not a determination to make everything right, but instead an openness to understanding why the human undertaking was not working as it should. Obviously, civilization had been on a wrong track for many centuries, and the remedy could not be expected to arrive overnight. I perceived at an early age that you cannot understand something in a spirit of anger at it. The love of mankind has to be bigger than the hatred for its corrupt and degenerate aspects.

My feeling about war as a child was not directed toward joining a pacifistic push against it. I would not have joined Bertrand Russell in jail during World War I, nor did I respect the outlawry of war movement in the

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twenties. How many people today know that war was formally renounced as an instrument of national policy by the Kellogg–Briand pact in 1928? In the thirties there were the signers of the Oxford oath, refusing as a matter of principle to take part in any future war. These bright eyed dreamers faded out of sight as the figure of Hitler loomed larger on the horizon.

The goal was clear to me, to understand why men fight wars. It was also clear that the answer must be psychological, and once attained would be all that was necessary to bring such madness to an end. The source of this understanding would have to be the individual himself. As each human being were reared to accept the obligation of self–understanding, a society could be forged in which large aggregates of people could display understanding at a social level. There could be no such thing as a sane society without sane individuals in it.

My ability to purge my soul of anger at society made it possible to be keenly aware of the human scene as it really is, always willing to be the observer in a true scientific sense. I knew that a scientific system was absolutely necessary if the complexities of human interactions were to be reduced to clear cause and effect relationships. At first I tried to believe in the contributions of the educational system, thinking that higher education would bring me the scientific insights I longed to reach. It did not take long to discover that universities were not interested in the kind of human issues that I knew were central to a scientific system. I turned to Freud's psychoanalysis as a superior source of scientific thinking, and since psychoanalysis at that time was operated as a closed club for physicians, I undertook to abandon my social science specialization at the university in favor of a medical education. As the years of practicing psychoanalysis went by, I had to reject its rigidity and impersonality, recognizing that it attained only a pseudo–objectivity by this approach. What my disappointments taught me was that there was no science of human nature in existence for me to learn, and if I needed one I would have to find it for myself.

I made a distinction between hate and anger in dealing with the cultistic dogma of psychoanalysis. I saw it was harmonious with my development to hate pretentious ignorance, but when my reaction overflowed into anger too much of my personality became involved and all that was left was polemics. I saw that many critics of psychoanalysis were traveling this path and it was putting them no closer to the truth about human nature. I saw no reason to belabor the Freudian system with criticism when the errors could have been apparent to any man on the street whose mind was open to human realities. What the world needed was not more rhetoric about man's failure to understand himself, but instead the opening of a pathway where scientific psychological thinking could develop.

2. My Family

I grew up in a family in which there were high levels of hate and anger in the air. My father was an angry man, and my mother a good hater, but she was lost when angry, as my father became irrational when hating. Although I did not really understand the basis for this kind of polarity in those days, I found it possible to accept the fact that there were valid reasons for these negative reactions to the world they lived in. When I was quite small we had a visit from a cousin from Holland who lived with us several weeks. Near the end of her visit I overheard her say to someone that our household was a sick one, characterized by gloom and depression. "There is something wrong here" she said. I immediately and with strong conviction reacted against this statement. I sensed her smugness and her discomfort at being deprived of the spirit of sweetness and light with which she ordinarily faced life.

The key to growing up well in our household was independence. Each individual was given a great deal of freedom to find his own sources of pleasure and enjoyment. At those times when this system did not work, usually because my father thought there should be greater family closeness, there was real trouble in the domestic atmosphere. As individuals found fault with each other, the hate and anger built up and turned inwardly, creating high stress levels. I learned an important psychological lesson, that if I was to maintain my ability to protect my inner security, I would have to learn to keep my mouth shut. This process was not one of self-suppression, but instead the development of the ability to withdraw from those situations where intolerable stresses might develop. It was simply a matter of declaring that many human situations were none of my business. I have a memory which I believe dates from nine years of age, of standing apart from my parents' world in a gloomy but healthy way, saying to myself I wanted nothing to do with these people. I do not remember what frustrations lay heavy in the air at the time. It was an affirmation that I was a person in my own right. The image was one of psychological peace, paid for by the willing abandonment of a full scale participation in their domestic lives.

The withdrawal which worked well for me as a child was temporarily overwhelmed on entering puberty. The psychological awareness of the world which I had kept keenly alive during childhood now became increasingly turned toward myself, and I was forced to accept the challenge of attempting to know what was going on in my inner psyche. The emergence of a biologically mature sexual capacity creates a mysterious force within the adolescent personality. A personality which has access to sexual pleasure is more intense than before. Sex acts like a catalyst. It does not itself increase the warmth level of the self. This warmth level is directed toward the self as well as others. It moves the individual increasingly in independent directions where self-knowledge and self-control begin to take over. The individual feels life is opening up in new and perhaps strange ways. My former security, based on withdrawal from overstimulating forces, was threatened.

The unknown and the chaotic emerged out of what appeared to be nothing, producing a period of severe phobic anxiety with episodes of panic. The symptom picture was one the world often refers to as a "nervous breakdown." As I look back on this period, I recognize that I was making a strong effort to be a conventionally acceptable person, and this was trapping me in a world where self-awareness was a handicap instead of an asset. It was a jarring kind of transition which numbed my sense of being a real person. Cut off in this way from independent experience, my intensity had nowhere to go. I was ready to try to love, but any effort to do so undermined my dawning so-called social adequacy. Life became a burden and the sky fell in.

I overcame my period of disability through simplification. I found a very down to earth friend who became my constant companion for a while. He liked to do things of an ordinary adventuresome sort and I tagged along. He must have valued having me there because I have no memory of his finding the circumstance unpleasant. The acute phase of the anxiety was mastered by avoiding being alone at night. I exacted a promise from my mother not to go out in the evening. This basic pattern of vulnerability to anxiety was to be repeated periodically throughout my life, but I never buried the problem again. I undertook to remain open to life in a fully sensitive way, and at the same time attempted to accept responsibility for maintaining my own mental health, but conventional standards of success did not die easily in my personality. It was always when I had gone a long way toward conforming to society's image of a normal and healthy person that inner crises developed. "He whose soul is flat the sky will cave in on him by and by," in the words of Edna St. Vincent Millay, came often to my mind.

I knew I could not protect and develop my mental health without self-knowledge, and if this was not to be a

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patchwork of intuitive guesses, brought into being by the emergencies of the moment, it would have to be based on an objective science of human nature. It would not work to ignore the claims of self-understanding simply because things were going well for the moment, and then desperately seek human truth under the pressure of psychic pain. Emotional distress provides motivation for instant understanding, but this destroys objectivity. A science of human nature has to find its roots in the calm waters of self-development. When it came to dealing with patients, it was not enough to develop an impressive rhetoric which validated itself in the fees it could earn. I soon realized that only growing people could understand the growth process. If growth is not shared between therapist and patient, the therapist's personality takes on a finished quality which is falsely idealized, and at the same time the patient's personality is fragmented into a series of symptoms which has no dignity or value.

At first I was determined to be a good student in the conventional sense. I wanted to accept the work of Freud and his followers in their own terms. I did not want to reject something I had not tried, and I certainly would rather have had a science of human nature handed to me on a silver platter than undertake the struggle of finding one on my own. I went through two so-called training analyses in an effort to come to peace with my own nature. This was an undertaking foredoomed to failure because I was dealing with professionals who were thoroughly committed to the acceptance of the conventional standards of society, whereas I was on a much more independent track. World War II interrupted my psychoanalytic training and I went through a number of years of suspended animation as far as finding acceptance of my inner self was concerned. It was a time when I lived conventionally in the sense that survival was the primary business of living. If survival is at stake, it is of course appropriate that it should crowd out other considerations. One does not develop independent identity when the need is to escape from a burning building. Misplaced individuality renders people incompetent.

I was aware that finding oneself required that artificial obstructions be cleared away. These obstructions consist primarily of emergency situations which have a prior claim on the individual's life energies. I knew that if a man could get rid of the false crises that growth would just happen as a natural phenomenon. The first step in living a natural psychological life was to eliminate the false sense of self-importance associated with being a survivor. Adaptive crises are high drama, painted in vivid colors. No matter how much a person puts into his survival activities, they remain just that, and do not enter that quiet territory of the growth of individuality where self-importance is to be found. Putting adaptive matters in their place means that vision will not be dimmed by flashing lights nor hearing dulled by loud noises. Self-importance is directly related to living a higher quality life than circumstances appear to make possible. As the self rises above circumstances in this way, psychological tools are forged for the potential benefit of all mankind. Contentment and happiness are too important to be left to the chance circumstances that lie outside the individual's control. When adaptive crises are not allowed to take on an expansive life of their own, the individual remains free of both nostalgic preoccupation with the past and anxious anticipation for the future. The here and now becomes real and open to that full sense of being alive which all men wish to find.

3. Medical School

The years of medical school, internship, and residency were primarily adaptive in structure, and when it seemed there was space opening up for more genuine inner development, World War II came along and put its adaptive stamp on four more years. But the greatest adaptive demands of this ten year period came from my marriage. Getting married came as a gift from my two experiences in being analyzed. If I was going to play the conventional game, I wanted to give it every chance of success. Nothing proves one's right to regard the self as normal as well as walking through life with a marital partner at one's side. I picked a woman of boundless energy who obviously needed the kind of stability and security I thought I could supply. A lifelong struggle against homosexuality (which I had associated with my overintensity and its accompanying anxiety) came to some kind of turning of the ways in the courtship phase of this relationship. In the company of my future wife I could stay more at the surface in casual social relationships. In bed I was at long last capable of accomplishing the sex act, treating it as an isolated athletic performance in the best tradition of our culture. There was just one disconcerting little cloud in my sexual potency sky. In order to reach orgasm, I had to fantasy a homosexual relationship. I put this matter aside, however, as secret and therefore without threat to my new masculine statue. It was quite obvious that the feeling I had was for the sex act, not for the person who was my sexual partner. At the same time I sensed that something better was possible for us if we could become more real to each other. Every attempt I made to bring my wife into a more psychological world proved an unwelcome assault on her conventional sense of security, and the schism grew.

I had now reached that goal desired by so many in our culture of being society's version of a mature and well adjusted adult. I had arrived at the "manhood" I had formerly regarded with deep suspicion. I emerged from the 1940's as a real person in the eyes of my professional contemporaries. On returning from military service with my new Lt. Colonel insignia, having been promoted from my entering rank as Captain, I visited one of my former psychoanalysts who paid me this compliment, "Well, Paul, I see you have become a real doctor after all." A central theme of this emerging social adequacy was my ability to carry out a sexual performance with a woman. I was now ostensibly prepared to face life in the pattern taught at the prestigious Institute for Psychoanalysis in Chicago. The stamp of approval conferred by colleagues promised to go a long way in covering up uncertainties about my ability to pursue worthwhile goals in life.

As I built a psychotherapeutic practice, I became increasingly aware that my independent insights were worth far more in helping the patient than the psychoanalytic theories dispensed at the Institute for Psychoanalysis. I became an overnight success in that my patients believed in me and referred others to me. My income rose rapidly and I soon cut myself off from the futile efforts of the Institute faculty to educate me. The heart of the classical psychoanalytic position lies in its insistence on the impersonal quality of the therapist-patient relationship. I totally rejected this position, believing that only a full sharing of communication, based on a recognition that both therapist and patient are growing people, could keep the psychotherapy in a healthy mental state. But if the therapist is genuinely involved in a growth process himself, how can he offer himself as a model of stable normalcy? To be this model he must be allowed to cover up a great deal of information about his psychic functioning, and this is incompatible with genuine communication.

If the foundations of my new found professional normalcy were on shaky ground, the basis of my marital heterosexuality was even shakier. Pressure existed from very early in my marriage to encourage psychological growth in my wife, and this readiness to welcome change on y part was in direct conflict with her socially supported need to see that relationship as a finished product. What I understand now, but only in retrospect, is that my new found sexual potency was threatened by the bringing of our incompleteness into focus. When there is a fully stated and healthy mated relationship, the serious aspect of the relationship can be laid aside for the moment in favor of the honeymoon atmosphere. Where there is a continuing struggle to take each other seriously, a damper is put on the sexual aspect of the relationship. Since my marriage rested on the false basis of making sexual adequacy possible, it is no difficult to understand that pressure toward mutual growth was received by my partner as an alien and dangerous influence.

There were many days, and more especially nights, of high tension struggle between us. I remember a

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particular night which proved to be a major turning point in my personal development. We were in an adversary relationship about some issue or other which is now long forgotten. I refused to compromise my position, and lay stiffly and silently in bed beside her, hoping to convey the importance of my position by my willingness to bear stress in the maintaining of it. The pervasive silence stretched on and on. Then a thought came into my head which was to guide the development of the rest of my life, and constitute the real beginning of my independent search for a science of human nature. I suddenly recognized "I am feminine." This image had no necessary implications of a homosexual status for me, nor did it touch on that bizarre territory in which transvestites and transsexuals dwell. It was simply an affirmation of what I was really like inside, and in the accepting of it my gender masculinity went on as before. It brought a healing peace, and with it a deeper inner security which no external frustrations could undermine.

I now saw that submission was my way of life. It soon became apparent that this was not an across the board submission, but rather a chosen and selected one. Years later I was able to define more precisely the psychological mechanism by which this selection is carried out. The mechanism is one of partial withdrawal in situations that threaten to be oppressive and overwhelming. The healthy submissive personality does not negate submission through anger and recklessness, but keeps his submissive orientation because he is able to choose the nature of the experiences which he allows to become real to him. There is a continuity in all this, conferring a sense of identity which cannot be fragmented by external events. My submissive nature became my private shield and weapon which was bigger than any force the world could muster. With submissive capacity deeply engrained in my personality, I knew I was ready for the two things on which I could base a good life, the development of a truly giving love capacity, and its intimate ally, the search for human truth. Although my new image of femininity ran counter to the socially reinforced view of what I was supposed to be, I saw that it produced a sense of worthiness in myself that could not be reached in any other way. This reinforced in me a crucial lesson, not to rely on society's dicta in the search for mental health.

I was now in a position to become a fully independent human being. I had met the issue inherent in my old fear of manhood. Before me stretched a vista of potential growth, inviting me to explore the relationship between my inner self and the world around me. The first challenge in this expansive process was my relationship between my inner self and the world around me. The first challenge in this expansive process was my relationship with my wife. Although I did not have a clear picture of the dominant nature of her personality at the time, there was a strong push toward treating her as a real person with considerable idealization of her inner strength. This rush of genuine romantic feeling and its accompanying pressure to open up the channels of communication led to repeated efforts to cement closeness, but the problems were bigger than the tools being used. The world which was so inviting to me proved alien and hostile to my wife. The attempt to leave behind the fixed images of man-woman roles threatened to deprive her of her ability to feel for herself, and was depersonalizing to an extreme degree. There was an obsessive need for feeling in her which had an old well established pathway, namely promiscuous sexualization. She saw new freedom for herself only as an open door for this old problem to emerge. While this struggle was going on, I began to reach out to a full scale relationship with a man, and here sexual problems threatened to undermine the human development which was at stake. I was attempting to deal with my emerging homosexuality, and Ed, the object of my romantic interest, found in my wife a suitable object for a mutually shared promiscuous heterosexual tendency. Their shared sexual obsessiveness brought them into a dream world which proved to be an entrapping nightmare for both, but especially for my wife.

It was not as if I was newly aware of homosexual capacities in myself. Some years before my marriage I had had two transient homosexual attachments. In retrospect, it is apparent that neither relationship left room for falling in love. The fact that these relationships were definitely classified in my mind as blind alleys constituted a major kind of decision making on my part. My exploration of homosexuality was now committed against opening the door to sexuality on the loose. If men were to come together in a mated kind of way, it was to be for the mutual expansion and enrichment of the whole life process. I insisted that the liberation which homosexuals experience when they come out must have a serious foundation and not be simply a matter of overthrowing prohibitions in an eat, drink, and be merry spirit. This firm decision against the promiscuous position cut me from the vast majority of individuals who were socially identifiable as homosexual. I respected the human potentials of homosexuality but could not extend this feeling to most of the visible gay people of that time.

To match my emerging femininity, I needed to find a forceful masculine type worthy of the idealization which

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a deep love brings into being. I didn't want to invest someone worth loving, I wanted the impact of what he really was to reveal itself to me. This emanation of strength and beauty could come from anywhere, provided it really existed. My first effort to find this kind of presence, as I have said, was directed toward my wife. As this failed, my attention turned toward those men in my life whose need for love was most apparent. A pattern began which was to persist for many years. I chose as love objects men who were living straight lives and thought themselves committed to this style of living, even though they were able to send signals of a latent homosexual nature. It was as if avowed homosexuals suffered from a contamination deriving from superficiality, whereas the straight individual could reveal his need for a serious and strong attachment to another man, based on a desire for the kind of submission from him which could offer a deepening understanding and a capacity for service. Such relationships often had severe unavowed limitations which surfaced when their radical implications became apparent.

I was now to find out what the psychology of dominance was all about. I knew that submission could not be the rag doll variety that went nowhere except into a sense of being a second class person. To submit in a fashion that increased the psychological dimensions of both the self and the person being served was a prerequisite. A polarized relationship provides an opportunity for each individual to live up to the best in himself. Mindless submission which was not tailored to a dominant reality could only bring overstimulation, anxiety, and phobic symptoms. I was about to become the willing servant of persons and situations I could idealize. Out of this sense of service to the strength, beauty, and integrity of the masculine principle was emerging the pride in myself that I needed to remain in contact with reality. What I had tried to do before was to find this dominant principle in society itself. As a child I had given up my idealization of most of the aspects of my father's personality. He had been unable to make room for me as a real person, different from himself. All that remained of my effort was a respect for his angry reaction to the immorality he perceived in the world. Now my attempt to idealize the lives and work of professional psychoanalysts was disintegrating in the same fashion that my respect for academic psychological wisdom as found in universities had long ago faded out. Deep submissive capacity was not to become a lost cause, however. I was entering on my independent search for those human qualities which would justify and enrich a submissive life.

The only way to take submission seriously is to make of it an unalterable and lifetime commitment. Feelings that accompany falling in love, or characterize devotion to the welfare of mankind in general, have an enthusiastic depth which puts a lasting stamp on the whole personality. Submission has two sides. It begins with an intense idealizing warmth which moves the individual toward the desire for involvement with the loved object. It is not yet genuine submission until the individual patterns his response to provide service to the loved object. This process of devoted functioning I call power surrender. If an intense love is not paired to such a power surrender it can only become self-indulgent. Since my new need to take love seriously had been frustrated in my relationship with my wife, I was ready to build a thoroughgoing emotional commitment outside the conventional boundaries of marriage. I did not assume that I knew how to make such an attachment. I did know that I wanted to live up to the best in myself, and this effort would require a partner who aspired to the same kind of self-development.

4. A Private Practice

The turning point in opening up my opportunity for choices in human contacts came with the establishing of a private practice. Ed was one of my patients. This attractive youth insisted on treating me as just another human being, stripping the relationship of its conventional professional structure. I was a willing participant in this process, because I saw that my own development was at stake. I wanted to explore a friendship which was total in the sense that it was not governed by conventional prohibitions, but at the same time had no necessary implications of sexual activity. My submissive self entered wholeheartedly into this affectionate liaison, and I gloried in the feeling that I was genuinely in love. It was the first immersion in such an experience in my life, and although other relationships were to follow which could advance my psychological purposes on a much greater scale, this experience has that special place reserved for the first time a human being falls in love.

I saw that Ed's warmth capacities were underdeveloped. His dominance threatened to condemn him to living in an icy world governed by hate. I felt it was necessary to give of my own warmth without stint if the relationship were to make a fundamental difference in his life. The crucial issue was to deepen his warmth level without entrapping and seducing his personality. I accepted the challenge of welcoming and understanding what masculine dominance was really like, because only if his dominant position was stated and accepted in an unequivocal way could the seductive potential of my romantic intensity be neutralized.

Ed's heterosexuality was based on dealing with women as sex objects. When he attempted to take a woman seriously, he was captured by an unrealistic idealization which put her out of focus, and again the sexualization surfaced. He wanted from a woman some kind of absolute acceptance which rendered further growth unnecessary. Whenever this primitive form of the mated mechanism came into focus, it cast a conventional aura over his whole personality, and since he was poorly equipped to be a conventional person, he found himself living in an obsessive world where fantasy and reality could be kept apart.

My initial goal was to forge a friendship with Ed which could be shared with my wife, thus enriching and expanding the psychological dimensions of the marriage. The influx of warmth between these two dominant personalities broke down what flimsy dam existed in each against heterosexual promiscuity. Ed felt he had nothing to lose in this situation, but my wife was keenly aware of the dangers in such experience for her. There is a thrill, as Oscar Wilde said, in feasting with tigers, and she went into it anyway, believing as she did in the inevitability of sexual attraction between individuals of opposite gender. I had long known that this obsessive belief operated as a defense against strong but latent lesbian tendencies. Ed likewise found homosexual pressures coming from our relationship relieved by this turn of events.

My sense of shock at this situation proved the first test of my newly emerging power submission. I felt I could not claim to love Ed if I did not leave room for him to handle his own sexuality. If the growth of both Ed and my wife was to be real, they must be free to make their own psychological statement, whether it proved to lead anywhere or not. The angry urgings of my brittle pride were not heeded by me. Instead, I gave my full acceptance to their sexual relationship, and dealt with it as a legitimate aspect of the experiment of building a relationship among three people. It was part of my exploration of an independent life, in which the freedom of the loved person to establish what is right remained paramount. I knew that willfulness on my part would destroy the delicate structure of the closeness I was trying to bring into being. At this phase of my development I told myself if I could save just one life, that is, release Ed from the tyranny of the masochistic could which hung over his existence, that my life would have justified itself. In later years I was to comprehend that the search for human truth was justified by my own need of it, but I did not ignore the fact that it is truth that makes love effective in the human scene.

I was now in a position of throwing away the whole conventional superstructure of the socially validated success I had attained. I was refusing to protect those accomplishments by which men recognize that they are worthy of the respect of other successful people. I had thrown my status as a husband, father, and clinician making lots of money into the cauldron of my independent search for the meanings and values of human phenomena which was different from that promoted by other socially talented people. I took this radical position without a sense of choice, guided by an inner sense of direction which drew its form and energy from being in

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love. This love was not only for a single human being, but for the subject of human nature itself. Once my feet had found this path I knew I would never turn back. In times to come, the few occasions when I took backward steps proved to be painful in the extreme. Moving forward was always healthy for me, no matter how alone I found myself or how intangible my progress was at any given time. I was in a position to scorn conventional images of security. From now on, I would carry my security within myself.

I felt I had relinquished the control of my life to an external force, the search for human truth. I saw that recognition of what is right would guide the experiences on which the exploration of truth would be built. There was no way in which I would be compelled to make a success in conventional terms of any particular human effort, and this applied to my relationship with both my wife and Ed. Allowing events to unfold in their own pattern was all that was required. My job was to remain loyal to the promptings of love. This meant doing everything I could to guide events in a constructive direction without giving way to irritability, anger, or the reckless desire to mold events in accord with some image in my own head. I saw I could find my own kind of order and harmony in events without regard to how chaotic they might seem to others.

It did not take long for the fake psychological union between the two sex-guided lovers to fall apart. Ed continued to press for his version of a perfect union, but nothing could breathe life into something which was so poor in psychological content to begin with. My wife retreated into her version of a safe place, which was nothing more or less than a rejection of any need to find a greater warmth level in her life. Growth meant risk, and risk was fast proving too expensive. In this situation I offered her an effort toward rehabilitation of our relationship. She rejected this approach outright. In the presence of danger she froze. I saw that my pursuit of self-knowledge had no future in that relationship.

After several weeks of increasing distance in the marriage, I accepted the fact that there was no road open, and after a particularly trying day I quietly left our house without any further effort to communicate. We had just returned from a trip to the suburbs to visit my mother, and my son had fallen asleep in the car. I carried the sleeping boy to his bed and left, never to return. I was turning my back on a marriage of fifteen years, a dearly beloved five year old son, a recently remodeled thirteen room house, and, after a suitable transitional period of six months in which I prepared my patients for my departure, on a successful psychoanalytic practice. In front of me lay the promise of a fuller psychological life, anchored in participation in elemental human things. They would say after I left that I could not handle responsibility. I knew that my sense of responsibility came from a different place than the one they occupied. I would never meet my wife face to face again. Until I rocked the boat she had loyally done her part to fill the niche society assigned to her. Not the least of her many contributions to our family life was the money she had earned to help put me through a medical education. We were divorced twenty-five years later, and at that time she received half of the inheritance which had come to me at my mother's death.

5. Ed and I

Ed and I took an apartment together. We slept in the same bed, but I respected his wishes to avoid a sexual relationship. I saw clearly that his obsessive promiscuous heterosexuality was an undermining force in his personality. It was equally clear that a direct attack on this symptom would undermine the growing warmth of our relationship. Aside from adaptive things, the whole focus of my life of simple and ordinary experience took its structure from my submission to Ed. The sense of security which our relationship brought into his life lightened the oppressive quality of his masochistic self-criticism. A pattern was taking form which was to be repeated with other men many times in the years to come. I was discovering that the most direct way to help an overstimulated masculine personality was to provide him with a period of freedom from adaptive stresses. This meant simply to use money as a tool of devotion, providing the loved person with the kind of pleasurable and secure environment that could be taken for granted. Such behavior deemphasized money, and made it clear that the constructive exploitation of a submissive resource was a fully respectable kind of giving on the part of the dominant individual. Using another person in a way that increases the inner dimensions and sense of importance of both was becoming well established in our relationship. When Ed attempted to handle warmth out of his independent capacities it usually went astray, because it went into a seduced dream-like world that readily sexualized. To remain well put together he had to be cold. My ambition was to thaw this coldness without destroying the structure of his dominant nature. The only physical form this effort took was massaging his back at night. Otherwise, any wish he had that would contribute to the esthetics of living in the here and now was indulged. He had a long time interest in guns. We bought a collection of the best rifles and handguns and spent many pleasant and enjoyable hours practicing marksmanship at rifle ranges. Another long cherished wish of his was to go to Europe. He was interested in a woman he wanted to take along, and he also wanted me to be accompanied by someone of the opposite sex. Again, my power submission was equal to the task. I picked out an ex-patient of mine who was willing to occupy this niche.

After about six months of living with Ed in Chicago, the four of us sailed for France. At Ed's insistence each heterosexual pair found separate living quarters in Paris. After three months of little communication with Ed, he announced his intention to go to Germany without me, and there to marry his companion. This statement brought out a confrontation of major proportions. It became immediately apparent that the first great love affair of my life was over. To submit further to Ed's psychological world could only undermine my mental health. The separation could easily have been received as a numbing loss, but instead my ability to set limits on my attachment to Ed came to me as a fresh breeze of independence. There was a transitional period of twenty four hours in which I talked to my companion without stopping. A deep love always seems to be an eternal commitment, but there is an implied contract in such a relationship which requires the loved object to maintain an identity worth loving. Ed had been the vehicle for a tremendous increase in my life of independent experience, and the fact that the relationship could now be classified in conventional terms as a failure in no way detracted from its real significance. This was the beginning of a series of romantic experiences the world could call failures, but it was becoming clear to me that human events which lead to genuine psychological growth are outside and beyond the judgmental world of labeled success and failure.

Ed departed and took most of our financial assets with him. No doubt he felt little guilt in leaving two people stranded in Paris in this fashion, knowing that my mother had money and believing I would appeal to her for aid. Instead I cabled ex-patients who owed me money, indicating I was stranded, and was gratified to see the money pour in to a designated Paris bank. There was enough for passage for two people, and expenses from New York to Los Angeles. My instinct was to go West to start my new life. I had visited California a number of times with my family in my earlier years, and I saw this environment as more wide open and flexible for me than the Midwest.

It was my intention to enter the general job market. I wanted to lay aside my socially supported professional identity because I felt that I did not sufficiently understand human nature to take responsibility for the psychological welfare of other people. This insight did not come with any feeling of inadequacy about myself. On the contrary, my confidence in what I was doing was very high, and I saw my ability to cast off participation in the pretentious confidence game of conventional therapy as an asset of my personality. I had had more than

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enough of earning a living by handing out intuitive interpretations to the captive audience which troubled patients provide. Such offerings lacked the permanent quality of genuine insight and had a way of changing from time to time in a way that belied their objectivity. From now on I would devote myself to the building of a science of human nature without any necessary expectation of returning to professional life.

As my financial resources dwindled, I found entering the general job market no simple problem. I resolved this difficulty by taking a job as chief Psychiatrist at the newly opened Reception Guidance Center at Chino, thus deferring the shedding of my professional work identity. This new center was an idealistic undertaking of the California state government. It received all of the convicted felons from the southern half of the state for the purpose of evaluating their problems and planning the way they would be handled while in prison. The year I spent running the professional aspect of this prison had a profound effect on my dawning understanding of dominant personalities. I saw the hate that existed within the personalities of many of the prisoners toward the society that had promised so much in the way of opportunity and had provided so little. I was determined to put myself outside the scope of their hatred insofar as it was directed toward the prison and its personnel. An obsessive hatred of this kind would always be disabling because it would ultimately be turned against themselves. It was clear that there was an underlying conventionality in these otherwise independently strong men. They had naively accepted society's version of the American dream, and they lived as if there were still a frontier moving west. Fundamentally, they believed it was their fault that the miracle of a shining life of accomplishment, replete with all the conventional rewards, had not come their way.

I undertook to make it clear that they were strong and beautiful people, trapped in the rigidities of an ignorant and immoral society. This approach was based on love for what was constructive within their personalities. It gave me great influence over them which I used to keep peace within the prison. I helped them resolve their false idealization of the prison and its personnel. If they expected less in a realistic way from the rehabilitating influence of prison life, they would not suffer extremes of moral indignation when the superficiality of the help being offered became apparent to them. My job was to build their warmth level for themselves. The bringing of the influence of love into the life of the prison was seen as a revolutionary step by personnel and prisoners alike. Many prisoners were excited by it in a constructive way. Personnel saw it as a homosexual threat. There is a great deal of latent homosexuality in prison personnel, both in security officers and professional workers. They neutralize this threat by dehumanizing convicts, dealing with the crime rather than with the criminal.

I welcomed the fact that I was at home with my own homosexual feelings in this situation. The recognition of the attractiveness of the men around me increased the depth of my relation to them. There was no threat of sexualization, but rather a growing determination to understand the nature of criminal patterns so that I could better contribute to the mental health of those who might be open to communication. I saw that if I was to be a good teacher I would have to see the criminal mechanism as a special case of the problems of dominant personalities in general. Of course there were submissive personalities in trouble with the law also, but this was a problem of a different sort. They tended to be check passers, con men, embezzlers, or violators of sexual conduct laws. The wall between myself and the prisoners could only be broken down by communication, and this required that they realize that I was accepting equality with them. Equality between a teacher and a student rests on shared growth. If each can learn from the other the equality is there, regardless of other inequalities and differences. They did not require that I be another criminal in order to be admitted into their world, but only that I bring an awareness of the legitimacy of their problems, without hiding my own human struggles in the process. They were suffering from an overdose of courage. Their honesty was not flexible enough to supply them with the understanding they needed to live an independent life. Their view of psychological things was contaminated by false certitudes, arising from their automatic acceptance of conventional ideas. Rigid beliefs do not mix with the exploratory zeal which courage brings. In their world, any kind of understanding could seem to be a threat to freedom, operating as a trap to seal them in a prison of self-hatred. My approach, which said in effect that understanding guided by love need not be such a trap, came as a breath of fresh air in a situation where they had expected only suffocation.

My relationship with the prisoners led me to see that everything in life, no matter how good or beautiful its origins might be, tended to take a cynical course in which it became overstimulating on the one hand, or empty of emotional content on the other. External social forces enter the picture by reinforcing or prohibiting those internal tendencies which society wants to protect and control. Without being able to listen to signals from within the self,

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these cycles cannot properly be kept within healthy bounds. It takes both self-knowledge and self-control to do this monitoring. The criminal is a reckless person who has lost access to common sense in his behavior patterns. He cannot know himself because his vision is not his own, but instead is imposed on him by dogmatic forces in society.

When individuals open themselves to their homosexual tendencies they are in a position to gain a new and independent grip on the excesses within themselves. This comes about because the polarity that exists between dominant and submissive personalities can be better recognized and developed when conventional man-woman roles are removed from the picture. Growth brings change, and change is seen to be inimical to the stability of heterosexual life. Growth becomes real when the individual is willing and able to work on new access to what is underdeveloped in his personality. The great need for an expanded warmth capacity in dominant individuals must find roots in the individual's warmth for himself, and this is impossible without self-knowledge. Excessive efforts at self-control without the necessary awareness of his own nature leads to a frustrating self-hatred.

6. A Prisoner Named Bobby

I developed a strong personal attachment to a prisoner named Bobby because he showed an unusual openness to the influence of the understanding I had to offer. His history was devoid of any recognition of homosexual tendencies. He was an individual who was thoroughly seduced by conventional social beliefs, but at the same time had a tremendously vigorous power drive. He felt that his life was messed up and longed for the kind of personal response from a teacher that would show him a better way. It was his loyalty to an older brother that had brought him into prison. He had a history of precocious behavior, and as a younger brother he had felt great pride in being trusted as a crime partner in a burglary enterprise. This was his first criminal act. His false idealization of his brother led him to believe that nothing could go wrong. Actually, the undertaking was badly bungled. They attempted to cut a safe with an ordinary acetylene torch, but this method only scorched the paint. They were discovered in the act and the brother chose to shoot it out with the police, losing his life in the process. Under ordinary conditions Bobby would have been put on probation, but instead he received double the usual sentence because of a provision in California law that burglary with explosives or welding apparatus was to carry this extra penalty. This provision was put in the law through the influence of the Los Angeles Times whose premises had been bombed some years earlier in a labor dispute.

Another example of Bobby's seducibility lay in his sexual history. When he was barely into puberty his neighbor's wife lured him into a sexual relationship. The husband became aware that something was going on and accused Bobby's older brother of being the individual involved. When Bobby's precocity became known to the brother, it became a matter of tremendous prestige for Bobby. This kind of performance sexuality made no room for the warmth development which falling in love provides.

When Bobby arrived at state prison it was becoming clear to him that the pride he felt in his various performances was a blind alley. At the same time he felt close to a claustrophobic crisis, and saw violent impulses rising to the surface against the prison environment. He reached out to me to open a door into a better state of mental health. He had that sense of being defeated in life, without feeling that he himself was a defeated person, which lays the groundwork for a genuine growth process. He faced the deficiencies of his self-knowledge, and found in me an unexpected resource for human wisdom which suddenly had become very valuable. To keep my submissive nature healthy, I needed a relationship which had no arbitrary limits. Internal messages which tell a person whether he is on a constructive track cannot speak out loud and clear unless the effect on another person can be seen and experienced without question. Growth is not real unless it can form attachments in which small steps are possible.

Since the need and desire to embrace the life of another human being existed in both Bobby and me, it was easy to fall in love. At last he had a relationship free of monolithic social pressures which called on him to find out what was good for him in the human scene. I had the sense of experiencing the kind of devotion my nature required, without the need to impose any arbitrary order on the flow of events. We promised each other to get together when he was paroled which could not be in less than three years, and probably would be longer. The only physical expression of our relationship was an occasional kiss behind a door. It was the first time he had ever kissed a man and he found it very much to his liking. Pursuant to my regular professional duties, I had him assigned to a medical facility within the prison system. It was a place where he would get better than average management. Later I petitioned the Governor of California to have his sentence reduced, but I never heard how this came out. I saw him twice more, once when I made a professional visit to his prison, and again when he was temporarily transferred to a county jail in Los Angeles to testify for the state in a trial. I do not know when he was paroled, and neither of us made any effort to see each other. We had both gone on to other things. For the next two years, however, my love for Bobby sustained me in a time when I was more alone than ever before or since in my life.

After a year at the Reception-Guidance Center, I faced the fact that forces were mobilizing against my unorthodoxy. I would soon have had to leave anyway, because I did not have a California medical license, and the law provided that I could only work a year as a physician without it. The turning point came when higher authorities objected to my having men brought to my office from their cells throughout the day. I made it clear I

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could not see enough inmates in the short morning hours assigned to this activity. The viewpoint of the security officers carried more weight than mine, although the prison had been established by the legislature for just this purpose of expanding diagnosis and treatment. I was ordered to restrict my interviewing and I resigned. Sometimes prior to leaving the prison, I had sent my woman companion back to the Midwest. The relationship had simply become too oppressive to sustain.

7. Angel's Flight

Away from the prison I now felt completely cut off from day to day human attachments. I moved to downtown Los Angeles and found a small apartment with an in-a-door bed for \$37.50 a month. It was on top of a high hill called Angel's flight, and if I did not choose to climb an almost interminable flight of stairs, there was a cable car available for transportation. The fare was five cents a ride. At the foot of the hill there was a commission market, where farmers brought surplus products that had not been sold through the usual channels. I could get four pounds of tomatoes for fifteen cents and a wide variety of other bargains, including day old bread at half price. I had enough savings for about six months, and I decided to use this time to bring as much order as possible into my dawning insights into human natures. My style of daily living changed in conformity with the needs of my monastic retreat. There was no difference between night and day. I slept when I was tired. I made notes until I saw compulsive pressures developing. I walked the streets of downtown Los Angeles and when ideas came to me I wrote in a small notebook, often leaning against the side of a building. I gave myself over to my love affair with human nature and welcomed the way it consumed my life.

I saw that civilized human beings had an inner identity that was either submissive or dominant. I called it yielding and assertive in those days. This insight took its beginnings in the Chicago years. I first called submission the Kurzian mechanism, from the character Kurz in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Dominance was the Heistian mechanism, from the character of that name in Conrad's *Victory*. Both these characters hid their identity behind strong defenses. Kurz was the angry aggressor, and Heist the hateful victim of passivity. I saw that inner identity was shaped by family influences, and that the submission or dominance thus brought into being easily replaced the biological tendency for males to be dominant and females to be submissive. It was clear that finding oneself was tremendously rewarding for people who could make it work, but there were grave dangers of overstimulation for those who took an independent stance in their personal development. Along the path of submission lay the hazards of intimidation, and dominance was vulnerable to seduction. If submissive people protected themselves by allowing society to dictate their patterns of action, they were insulated from excessive feeling intensity and anxiety. When dominant persons allowed society to govern their comprehension of the human, they were protected from pressured activity patterns and restlessness. In giving up their independent capacities to monitor their own mental health, individuals lost their ability to remain open to the unknown and the chaotic in human affairs. The emphasis shifted from psychological growth to the adaptation to what they were supposed to think and do. I was able to elaborate my insights into the compulsive and obsessive defenses, and saw that these socially supported mechanisms raised havoc with man's access to human understanding and responsibility.

The great advantage of a well established inner identity is that it confers continuity on the self. It won't disappear in the face of stressful frustration and conflict. If things are not working out well, the individual does not turn helpless or reckless, but instead seals off the overstimulation, and continues to build his self-knowledge and self-control within a world he defines for himself. The assumption made by conventional people that society provides reliable models, and if the individual does not find the human rewards he expects it must be his own fault, is rebutted by the clear evidence of the corruption and violence, the dishonesty and cowardice, and the ignorance and immorality of civilization at its best.

The greatest of human undertakings will never be putting a man on the moon or exploring the depths of the oceans, but rather lies in man's ability to develop his internal capacities through the expansion of self-knowledge and self-control. When men share such a world together, they reach the highest levels of warmth and pride, both for themselves and toward other people. It is the cultivation of warmth and pride which provides a solid basis for the esthetics of living. As I developed the concept of psychological growth, I saw that inner identity could not be allowed to depend on career development, or on ethnic characteristics, or on the embellishments which society encourages in the pursuit of pleasure and enjoyment. I saw that genuine growth always changes the way the personality deals with others, whereas most of what conventional people think is important, no matter how much of the self is invested in it in the moment of its happening, fades into memory without changing the inner self at all.

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Later I was able to define more clearly the polarity that exists within family life. When marriage is performing its necessary function, the parents have a polarized relationship. A son reaches his identity through identification with the inner character of his mother and develops a polarized relationship with his father's character. Daughters similarly identify with their fathers and develop a polarized relationship with their mothers. This of course does not refer to surface characteristics, nor to traits which establish gender differentiation, nor should inner identity be confused with the compulsive and aggressive defenses against anxiety, or the obsessiveness and passivity with which dominant personalities ward off manipulative excesses. The polarization of father–son and mother–daughter relationships has great advantages. It reduces competition in these interactions and brings strong growth potentials into focus, putting a special aura of importance around these attachments. Such relationships ask for the best on both sides. They also create a latent homosexual pressure which society has not yet learned to value.

I saw that society's insistence on tying polarity to gender is not the only biological tendency blocking human development. The domain mechanism has proved a heavy burden to civilized man. The territorial need of many animals, which leads to the formation of a domain, has great adaptive advantage for them, especially when it comes to the rearing of the young. Domain centered behavior has instinctual roots of a powerful nature, and man has inherited these instincts, although it is no longer in his interest to be guided by them. The only force which is sufficient to overcome his desire for a domain is his capacity to seek truth and right on his own.

The domain divides the world into two parts, that which lies within and the which lies without. All mammals start life in a state of relative helplessness, and it is of great survival value to make a clear distinction between circumstances which favor survival and those which are threatening to it. Whatever is accepted by the hostile is avoided. Young animals who explore the environment on their own without regard for domain restrictions are in grave danger. The setting up of domain patterns is a tool which neutralizes the threat contained within the unknown and the chaotic. Only the knowable and the controllable are accepted. This means approaching life with an inherent suspiciousness and distrust.

Dividing the world into the benevolent and the hostile is anti–scientific in its effect. Man needs to understand and deal with the whole scope of human phenomena. He cannot afford to allow anything human to be foreign to the work of his mind and heart. The thinker must love his subject matter if he is to do it justice, because then he can face and accept the incompleteness of truth without abandoning the search. The manipulation which comes from assigning part of his subject matter to non–existence damages the search for truth. If an astronomer approached his data like most men approach the subject of human nature, he would be unable to accept unfamiliar and challenging findings which did not fit some previously defined order. Instead he would declare that there were evil forces at work, and since he could not punish the heavenly body that sent the data, he would condemn those who reported the unwelcome information.

The domain rests on magical thinking and miraculous posturing. There is a place for magic and miracles in the human psyche, provided that they are not allowed to cut off access to human truth and right. Beliefs and customs which feed man's life of pleasure and enjoyment have an all or none quality. In this way the individual excludes stress in places where stress has no constructive work to do. He finds contentment and happiness in little and ordinary things by conferring a sense of perfection upon them. Religion and patriotism exploit this mechanism to the full. Man has struggled throughout the centuries to distinguish between truth and magic in the non–human fields, converting astrology into astronomy, alchemy into chemistry, and the story of Genesis into evolution. Similar efforts in the human field have not fared as well, because for most people the making of a clear distinction between pleasantly reassuring beliefs and the truth about human nature becomes a threat to their acceptance of a monolithic social system. In the evolution of non–human science, the thinker has had to fight the academic establishment. The struggle for a human science requires in addition that he offer his own personal adjustment on the altar of his cause. It is much easier to be independent in thinking about chemical interactions than to accept the exposure of the self which independence in human matters brings. An individual who has discarded conventional social supports may find himself the only one wearing casual clothes at a white tie affair.

It is difficult for most people to give up their convictions that the human world contains debased fiends requiring punishment and supermen of extraordinary powers who are worthy of worship. They hang their personal identity on these convictions. The truth is that insofar as we share the social system that produces these distortions, we are all responsible for every human event, and this includes both Hitler and the most benevolent of

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democratic leaders, as well as the mafia and the most saint-like of born again Christians.

During the months on Angel's Flight I came to accept the ultimate implications of being a submissive person. Submission meant making love the first business of life, and loving meant devoting oneself to the storage of insights into human nature. Without these insights love would lack the ability to influence the human scene on a scale worthy of its nature. Without these insights love would lack the ability to influence the human scene on a scale worthy of its nature. Although at that time I did not have any clear definition of a domain mechanism, I saw that dividing the world into the good guys and the bad guys just wouldn't work. A genuine science of human nature makes all human events understandable. As long as understanding is present, there is a residue of warmth which cannot entirely disappear, and this empathy makes it impossible to rule the offending persons or situations off the earth. No human being prefers to be a destructive force. If individuals end up in a helpless or reckless position it is because they are overwhelmed by a system which treats them as expendable nobodies. They idolatry which civilization visits on its chosen models of success is equally undermining to human values. Heroes created by society's need for absolutes lead an insecure existence, and given sufficient time may even change places with the villains.

A life based on internally generated contentment and happiness brings the greatest human rewards. If the independent individual is to maintain his access to these human values, he must know how to exercise his capacity for selective withdrawal and indifference. It is only safe to pursue truth and right when the individual can choose where to get involved. To sacrifice mental health in the name of self-development contributes nothing. According to conventional society, the natural destiny of all inner depth and intensity in the human scene is phobic anxiety, just as all vigor and heightened self-confidence is expected to end in depersonalized restlessness. The end of the road for these people, according to the defenders of the status-quo, is the mental hospital and the penitentiary. I was determined not only to search for human truth but to remain psychologically healthy in the process. I intended to use truth as a tool for developing the art of living. Since life is a phasic process, the sense of fulfillment was not always there. I would touch the edge of phobic anxiety a number of times in the years to come. I also went through phases of superficiality, in which adaptation became the name of the game.

8. I Meet Ronnie

After six months on Angel's Flight, my savings were running low. I took a job in a small sanitarium for old people. I was the only employee in the kitchen, preparing food and washing dishes for twelve people. The hours were long, the pay was low, and my boss was a thoroughly disagreeable person. Nevertheless I was pleased to be meeting the adaptive requirements of my first entrance into what I called the general job market. I was to see again and again that I could only find high level specialized medical jobs or low income unskilled work. The in between work opportunities continued to evade me. I quit the sanitarium job after three months. There was a short interlude of buying and selling cantaloupes and watermelons with a young man I had met at the sanitarium. We managed to break even in this enterprise. My financial reserves had shrunk to five dollars when I found my next job. I had sold everything of marketable value I had, including my typewriter, but there was no anxiety about the situation.

My next job was first aid man at a small industrial medical center in downtown Los Angeles. We took care of injuries and illnesses covered by the state disability insurance. Here I learned to put on bandages, sew up lacerations, take X-Rays, and use physical therapy equipment. The pay was low, but I offered to cover all the night emergency work. This arrangement gave me exclusive use of a rear room with a bed, and I moved into this space, thus eliminating rent from my budget. I cooked on a hot plate without benefit of refrigeration, and took daily sponge baths in the absence of a shower. I was quite content with this simple style of living and saved most of my salary. This was a year in which the emphasis was primarily on adaptive things. Without a physician's pay or social status, I was functioning for the first time as the kind of emergency doctor the world conceives medical men to be, handling the day to day crises that require minor surgical skills. There were no problems about patient-therapist relationships. A lacerated arm speaks for itself, and the skills of the therapist rise to the occasion. For a highly specialized physician like me, it was a return to a simpler work activity, as when an individual leaves a competitive business career to live on a farm and raise chickens.

The parents of a former patient of mine in the prison at Chino got in touch with me and invited me to dinner. They lived in a suburb of Los Angeles and had a small printing business in their garage. On my urging they accepted me as an employee in the print shop. I slept in an alcove in the garage and had my meals with the family. Board and room constituted the entire income. I had become bored with the first aid work and looked forward to developing my printing skills, which had been an interest since childhood. I learned to operate a Heidelberg printing press and independently turned out a variety of small jobs. After about six months, the owner of the business died and I saw I was no longer welcome there. Meanwhile I had received a letter from a former inmate of the prison. We got together and he invited me to stay with him in his family home in the San Fernando Valley. It was through him that I met Ronnie, and this relationship was to guide the next six years of my life.

Ronnie was living with his second wife. The first marriage had been a short-lived attachment which Ronnie had entered with a romantic rush. The two had lived in a mobile home, and the wife wandered off with the first attractive youth who came along. His second wife had been married before to a man who consistently abused her. Ronnie entered her life as a kind of savior who was ready to provide her with a stable home in which to raise her two young children. When Ronnie and I met his current marriage was in crisis. The young man who was providing me with a place to stay and Ronnie's wife were having an affair. It was a thoroughly empty and irresponsible relationship, and consistent with its reckless tone, Ronnie's wife decided to leave her husband. Her new relationship was over in a week, but in the meantime Ronnie and I had decided to live together. I was forty five years old and he was twenty four. Nothing was said about the homosexual tone of our relationship, but Ronnie showed a great need for the kind of attention and affection from a man which I was capable of offering. He sent me many signals that he wanted a closer relationship. He had had very little formal education, and his intelligence level was only average. His manipulative skills were highly developed, and he held a well paid job as repairman for a stone and gravel company. He was fairly small in stature with the body development of a gymnast. Living within the influence of his dominant personality for the next six years, I entered a world of experiences I had never touched before. I became a professional cook during this time, and at home we rebuilt and repaired cars and undertook all sorts of home construction projects. We had a machine shop in the garage with

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both acetylene and arc welding equipment.

After only a few days of living together, I complained that I did not have enough blankets for the cool nights and Ronnie invited me to share his double bed. While sleeping he encouraged a great deal of physical contact. This led to evidence of sexual excitement on his part, and I responded by bringing him to orgasm. He insisted he had never had a homosexual experience before, but he clearly welcomed it. We had entered on a prolonged period of encouraging growth in each other. It was a psychologically mated relationship in which I undertook to bring a greater self-awareness into his life. I made it clear that I wanted to set him free from the conventional social goals which were entrapping him. He wanted to create an environment where I could develop my ideas and write the book I needed to write, without losing access to personal happiness in the process. We guided each other away from oppressive stress, and brought a new standard of pleasure and enjoyment into each other's lives.

We were living in a rented house and Ronnie decided he would like to buy one. We pooled our savings and made a small down payment on a bungalow with three bedrooms, a garage, and a sizeable back yard. This new home sold for \$11,500. The increasing closeness of our lives was putting Ronnie under pressure. He valued our relationship but felt it was necessary to keep its nature secret. He needed to maintain his heterosexual image with the men at work and with his wife, who now visited us regularly. She pleaded to be allowed to return with her two small children. When Ronnie put the matter up to me, I saw that he could not break with her without serious damage to his sense of belonging in society. By today's standards, that need for social support constitutes an impassable blockade on the path of growth, but I was not ready to face this fact then. My own view was that bisexuality is a natural outcome of socially supported promiscuity. But although I did not believe in bisexuality, I did believe in Ronnie. I felt this situation was the first serious test of my love for him. I agreed to accept his wife's return as a further development of our relationship. I wanted above all things to maintain my influence in his life. I knew that I could not use my insights to manipulate him in a direction that would cause him oppressive stress. This restraint called for the development of self-control, and I would be working on my self-control for the rest of my life.

With his wife and step children back in our world, Ronnie and I no longer slept together. The homosexual nature of our attachment was kept concealed from his wife. Pressure was put on me to have a woman in my life also. I agreed in the same spirit that I had accepted his wife's return. I felt I wanted to give the new arrangement every chance of success. I got in touch with the woman who went to Paris with me, and she agreed to visit. She liked what she saw and moved in. She stayed over a year, and moved out when the emptiness of her position finally became unacceptable to her.

Ronnie and I found the fullest statement of our relationship on weekends. We went regularly to a straight bar called the Sun Valley Rancho. I was surprised to find how wholeheartedly we were accepted at this place. I had thought that an older and younger man constantly in each other's company without women would be regarded with suspicion. Instead our closeness and lack of conflict with each other charmed them, and they idealized our relationship. They were impressed with how well we handled drinking without any loss of social adequacy, no matter how much we drank. The new freedom which our relationship brought into Ronnie's life accentuated a tendency in him to use alcohol to excess. This tendency for the personality to go overboard when social prohibitions are no longer operating was becoming increasingly familiar to me. I knew it was a time to draw closer to him, not a time to institute new prohibitions. We made an agreement to drink together, and he would not order a drink unless I was having one too. The result was that I took in more alcohol than ever before in my life. I drank until my face got numb, but because we were together, we were able to keep helpless and reckless reactions out of the picture. We stayed on our feet and maintained friendly relationships with others. Ronnie drove the car with meticulous care, and we never came near having an accident. When he was drunk he never wanted to eat, but I usually managed to insist we stop for something. At times we drank from a bottle in the car, and there were other times when we had sex in the car. Periodically Ronnie decided he did not want to be homosexual. I was always willing to take the position that sexual activity was not a necessity in our relationship. But this phase repeatedly came to an end when Ronnie approached me sexually. As much as I enjoyed the sex and the alcoholic highs we shared, I realized that such a honeymoon-holiday spirit could not be counted on to hold a relationship together.

Periodically I attempted to get started writing the book that I knew I had in me to write. I saw my love affair with Ronnie as a model for my larger love affair with the subject of human nature itself. Just as I was learning to

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cleanse myself of willful impulses to alter him for my own comfort, so was I developing the ability to see human nature as it was, without giving way to a compulsive need to put it in an arbitrary order. Each time I began the writing I saw I was not yet ready for the task. Ronnie had his own version of what it would be to live a life of greater freedom. He hoped my book would make money so that he could leave his job and buy a junk yard, where he could help young people work on their cars.

As the years went by there was a gradual shrinkage in the world Ronnie and I shared. We no longer made our weekend trips to the Sun Valley Rancho. After six years of being together the turning point came when an expatriate of mine from the Chicago days showed up, demanding that I recognize that I should be in love with her. She had driven from New York to Los Angeles with her compliant husband and a carful of children. They parked outside our home and laid in wait for me. I decided to escape this situation by moving out. Ronnie and I found a suitable motel for me about a mile away. The woman left in a few days, but I never returned to our home. Ronnie made it his custom to visit me once a week, and we invariably had sex on these occasions. He had converted the relationship into a primarily sexual one.

It was apparent my world was changing, and I gathered my resources to write the book that I had started so many times. At this time my boss at the restaurant left, and the new management replaced me. I had been with the organization four years. In addition to some savings I was fortunate enough to get some financial help from a cousin who had recently inherited money. I put myself on a very low budget. It included ten dollars a week to give Ronnie for pocket money. My food allowance was a dollar a day. I did not work for about nine months. I lived an extremely simple life, and the primary emphasis was on writing the book.

9. A Monastic Retreat

I now was in a position to make an all out effort to see the subject matter of human nature as a whole. I saw myself in a monastic retreat from which the influence of society was excluded. It was as if my monk's cell had a window in it from which I could see the whole world as it really is. My insulation from life was only apparent, because through the miraculous quality of recall, a whole parade of human phenomena passed before my eyes. Because I had not forced any arbitrary order on my experiences, I had enriched the human data stored in my head, and I was able to undertake the finding of a new conceptual order for my subject matter. I knew that previous attempts by others to construct a scientific system which would explain the irrationality and destructiveness of human institutions had failed because the grasp of human data had not been broad enough. They had given in to a sense of the mysterious too easily.

The heart of my undertaking was my understanding of polarity. As I have said in describing the Angel's Flight period, this could not be the common recognition of introvert and extrovert tendencies, but instead a larger comprehension of the fact that each personality had a core of submissive or dominant identity with overlying defenses. Because of these defenses, surface characteristics could not be relied upon to gain insight into psychological identity. The leading edge of my analytic work was my knowledge of myself, which gave me clear insights into submissive psychology. In the process of writing I soon discovered that my grip on dominant psychology was hard to maintain. I saw the difference between scientific writing about human nature and the kind of writing which flowed easily and was readily communicable. I knew I was entering virgin territory, and this could only be done if I accepted the challenge of devising my own patterns of communication. I was prepared to throw conventional readability to the winds, realizing that individuals who wrote in a popular style in the human field were choosing their subject matter in a fashion that protected its rhetorical flow. I was determined that my work would be science, not esthetics. I remember thinking that when I had reached an advanced age and my scientific labors were over that I would write something autobiographical. I knew that polemics and autobiography were sure paths to readability.

My main goal was to reach an understanding of dominant psychology. Without a firm hold on the world of action and mastery, there would really be nothing to submit to. Submissiveness would dissipate itself in self-indulgent ways, and the individual would find himself constructing a picture of the human world which rested on self-examination, made falsely objective by studying a mirror image. The compulsive power drives of submissive individuals cannot be mixed with the search for truth. On the contrary, such individuals can only find the truth an unwelcome threat to their defensive system. To write the book I had to escape from the subjectivism inherent in the autobiographical approach, and for this purpose I used a kind of conceptual order which followed a prescribed pattern. Whenever I discussed phenomena of which I was directly aware, such as feeling, love, anxiety, compulsiveness, and conceptual thinking, I always followed it with an analogous discussion of the structure of the world of action, such as manipulative attitudes, power, restlessness, obsessiveness, and inventiveness. (To write the previous sentence, I used the analogue method). It is the custom in psychiatry to use compulsion and obsession as a hyphenated pair, both words describing essentially the same thing. I decided to give them separate meanings, feeling they were too valuable as concepts to waste in this way.

It was through this consistent construction of analogues that I was able to hold on to my awareness of the dominant side of human psychology. This resulted in a disconnected presentation, in which each paragraph tended to become a separate unit. The potential reader would have to do a great deal of work to follow what was being said. This highly conceptual and condensed material with the structure of a mathematical array utilized no clinical examples. In spite of the formal pattern of my writing, I did not give way to the use of neologisms or highly specialized language. I used the ordinary terms of human communication, such as love and power, wisdom and strength, and honesty and courage.

It did not shock me when I saw what form the writing was taking. I knew that many philosophers and social scientists had won substantial readerships with a style that was even harder to understand. What I was to learn later was that my writing was directed somewhere between two potential audiences, not being well suited to either. University trained scientific and philosophical people could handle my style but not my content. Radical

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new insights into psychological matters are not at home on university campuses. On the other hand, the gay community could handle much of my content, whether they agreed with it or not, but they found my style heavy and forbidding.

I sent the manuscript of *Psychoanalysis and Civilization* to several publishers without a flicker of interest in response. I saw that Ronnie's dream that the book would make money, a dream which I did nothing to discourage, was something to put aside. I put the manuscript away and took a job in a French pastry bakery. The California period was drawing to a close. There were no doors open to further growth. It had lasted six years, and I had used it successfully to dissolve the intimidation inherent in submitting to society's image of what a psychiatrist should be. I decided to return to Illinois where I was licensed to practice medicine so that I could get a well paid job. I wanted to send money to Ronnie to help him get the junk yard he desired. We planned to meet a few times a year, but this never happened.

This willingness to dwell among my enemies for the purpose of serving Ronnie's need for money showed that I had not yet learned to protect my mental health. The passage of time would reveal that my personal life could only shrink to next to nothing under such circumstances. As I look back on these events, I see what an ever present threat intimidation has been in my life. Only an ongoing growth process can keep its encroachment at bay. In later years I was able to find my own human community, choosing people who could share a growth process with me.

In the psychological world I was later able to find, old patterns of psychic difficulties are not hidden from sight, as they are in conventional social situations such as I now entered. Instead the individual develops the tools to fight back at their influence. He needs to keep open the expansion of self-knowledge and self-control, so that he can take increasing responsibility for his own mental health. The individual inherits problems from a corrupt and violent society, and when he sees these defects in himself, he must learn not to give way to self-condemnation. When he can face the fact that his problems are legitimate and real, renouncing the deceptively easy coverups encouraged by society, he can undertake to guide himself toward a better life. At this point he has reached the highest development of his human capacities. It is this process of being psychotherapist to oneself which brings the personality fully alive and permits the individual to experience his own importance. When men ignore personal importance in favor of socially validated images of success, a paradox develops. The more they seem to accomplish, the more their participation in the fullness of life shrinks.

Without free access to a flexible growth process, there is no such things as being a genuine psychotherapist to other people. The Hippocratic injunction is the first rule, "Physician, heal thyself." All the formal training in the world in psychiatric hospitals and psychoanalytic institutes, no matter how much they are certified by academic degrees and state licenses, cannot perform the miracle of transforming conventional beliefs into living human wisdom. But then most professionals find truth irrelevant to their purposes. Their goals are the conventional ones of social acceptance and the earning of an income worthy of their place in the career hierarchy. They face a world well populated with disturbed and suffering people, and develop various levels of ingenuity in helping them to coverup symptoms for the time being. This kind of bandaging of wounds is a function of value to desperate people, but it in no way gives the professionals access to the science of human nature. It is science alone that has that generality which puts truth in the hands of anyone who wants to use it. Truth can be relied upon to stand on its own feet and will always conquer error, given enough time. Social dogma lives an uncertain existence and must be defended, regardless of the human cost, by the social institutions which depend upon it.

10. Staff Psychiatrist

I returned to Chicago and stayed in my mother's house while job hunting. I was hired on my first interview as staff psychiatrist in a small private mental hospital in a suburb of Chicago. I found an apartment near the hospital and settled down to a career centered life, showing others only those facets of my personality that they wanted to see. I tried to apply my grasp of the structure of human nature to the psychotherapy of psychotic patients. The only think I can say on my behalf is that I was the only one on the staff attempting serious psychotherapy, but nevertheless the effort proved futile. The hospital depended on enlightened custodial care, tranquilizers, and electric shock treatment. These overwhelmed individuals were in need of exactly the kind of treatment they were getting from the hospital, which had as its goal the effacing, not the intensification, of inner identity. They were in the hospital because they were failures in accepting the brainwashing of a monolithic society, without finding any other road to travel. If they could now learn to give in to that society without excessive emotional reactions, they could use their new numbness as a pathway to reduced symptoms. Insensitivity and lack of enterprise was to be the answer to everything. Hopefully, this new calm would bring psychic rest. It is better for a man to have a crust of bread he can digest than a rich seven course dinner that makes him sick, provided he does not declare the crust of bread to be the model diet for all men to follow.

The goal of sending money to Ronnie, which I did every month, gave an apparent validity to what I was doing. I had an unrealistic self-confidence that I could stay above and beyond the rigidities of the professional world that surrounded me. The mere fact that my life was almost exclusively devoted to career preoccupations showed that I had not escaped intimidation by the system. I told myself that I had now accomplished my purposes in life, and that all I asked of the time to come was to live out the rest of my life in peace of mind. In this kind of sanctimonious state, the withdrawal increased, but the gradual encroachment of psychic numbness was not clearly perceived by me, and therefore there was no effort to control it.

I was in another kind of monastic cell, but this time there was no window in it. It was a perfect setup for a phobic reaction, and as if from nowhere the panic came. I pushed it back a few times but exhaustion was building up, and helplessness took over. When I saw I could not find a road out of where I was, I phoned my twin brother to come and get me. I was so sure I had tested the ground every inch of the way with my foot before advancing, but I was wrong. My soul was flat, and there was no more room between me and the sky. I had given the system a chance to take over my personality, and it reacted according to its nature.

My brother dropped everything and came to my aid. He arranged with my sister in Washington D.C. to provide me with a place to live for a while. A depression settled over me which would take another year to lift. My brother Walter and I have proved to be a team in dealing with the larger issues of life. His support of me is no ordinary family loyalty. My mother used to say that in time of need your family is the only thing you can count on. Since I lived in a world different from hers, my sense of family was directed toward those people who could share my psychological needs, and this had nothing to do with genetic ties. But in the Washington situation my mother's beliefs temporarily won the day. I was grateful to my sister and her husband for offering me refuge.

Walter's backing of me was motivated by larger human considerations. He shared with me a world point of view. He also believed that a science of human nature could be brought into being, and he had a keen sense that society always resisted what was new and original, and he knew that it would fight against its own salvation. Although his vision was of the same quality as mine, he was not equally flexible in entering new experience. This he left to me, and as we had shared the same womb and the same cradle, we now entered on a path of partnership where he stood always ready to lend an effective hand in dealing with an intransigent practical world. His was the steady hand of the capable obstetrician in my struggles to bring an orderly system of ideas to birth. We were the sons of a mother whose bookplate carried the quotation: "Great is truth, and strong above all things." She lost rack of her early idealism as the pressures of marriage took possession of her life, but she passed her spirit on to us and we kept the flame alive.

Walter saw the importance of getting my book into print. Scientific writing has little chance of paying for itself in the competitive book market. Individuals who have given themselves to the academic superstructure have their writings financially supported by university budgets and foundations. Walter made an arrangement with a small

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publishing house which protected it from financial loss, and the manuscript was printed. He further invested considerable time and financial resources in its distribution and promotion. This partnership has continued through the years, bringing three books and a paperback edition of the third into being.

After several months in my sister's apartment in which I mostly walked the dog and prepared meals, my brother-in-law got me a job with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation in Washington, and I was introduced to the nature of Washington bureaucracy. The paternalism of the civil service was well suited to giving me a helping hand. I spent most of my nine months there rewriting a manuscript on rehabilitation facilities in Europe. I had moved into my own apartment in a suburb of Washington. I decided to seek a job as a vocational rehabilitation counselor. I went to New York on a job interview, and although my future employer had doubts above me as overqualified, I was accepted in the position. I came to New York in February 1963.

11. New York

The three year period of my employment as a vocational counselor for the handicapped was in some ways a time of rest. Nothing really different happened to me in this time. I protected myself from overstimulation, recognizing the convalescent status of my personality. One romantic attachment followed another, keeping close to the surface of the human scene. These individuals were chosen from the clients I saw in my professional work. It was impossible for me to reach a homosexual world directly. In order to relate to another person, I had to be aware of a need in him for my capacity to offer help. Even though I did not invite psychic stress, I was unable to behave like someone on a cruise ship, relieved of serious human purposes, ready to respond to the charismatic surface of another. I used myself as an example of someone who was not committed to occupying the pace society assigned to him. I dealt with overwhelmed people who felt that there was no place for them in an impossible world. My position was that each man is the center of his own universe, and with the right psychological tools he can find a human world suited to his needs.

Having people to love pushed back the menace of emptiness within myself. Discovering the beauty in someone considered defective by society was a psychological task well suited to my nature. It was almost miraculous to see how the burden of greyness lifted with the first attachment I made, and it so happened that he was my first client on the new job. It was a good exercise in submission to let them show me how much of what I had to offer was useful to them. I gave them what they needed at the surface and in the moment, often mostly material things, such as paying for eating out, or a movie, or buying a new suit of clothes. The world in which I was reared would say I made a fool of myself, but at no time did I feel that anything unfortunate was happening. The contrast with what had happened during my recent effort to function as a conventional psychiatrist was too vivid for that. I did not allow my devotion to a lover to bring oppressive stress into my life. I was not fooled by the sense of permanence inherent in being in love, but was ready to end a relationship if my needs so dictated. I idealized others because it was good for me, and if they could not live up to the challenge that was no business of mine. I worked on sparing them and myself from futile irritability and sadistic responses.

My unwillingness to fit into the gay community rested on a well established distaste for conventional patterns of thinking and acting. Much as I sympathized with the predicaments my gay brothers were encountering, I felt that their life style did not take advantage of the opportunity for independence which was inherent in homosexuality. A great deal of what I saw in gay people was still under the influence of monolithic social pressures. It is not enough to turn away from heterosexual rigidities and pretensions by becoming gay. The act of coming out invites liberation of the personality, but no single moment of honesty and courage can accomplish the purposes which belong to a lifetime. To accept gayness is not simply to open a door, but rather to enter on the beginnings of a long journey. I knew that without a map this journey could not be expected to bring the rewards it deserves. The advantage of starting out with people who come to a professional for help is that they know they have problems. I was really looking for students, not patients in the conventional sense. It would be another five years before this search was to be rewarded.

After three years of placing the handicapped in jobs, the death of my mother brought me an inheritance. With this financial backing, I decided to start my own counseling service. I left my job and took my male secretary with me, a young man whom I had hired a year before. He was a bisexual individual with a secret promiscuous homosexual life. He was also on the very of a heroin addiction. We set out to find a suitable location for a counseling service, and ended up buying a house in Greenwich Village which had a large and rather luxurious duplex plus six small apartments. We became lovers and I bought him a car, lots of clothes, and some expensive furniture. He put aside his use of heroin. He did not have to work during the year and a half we were together. I discovered I would have to pay heavier capital gains taxes than I had anticipated, and I also saw that being a landlord was an unnecessary drain on my adaptive resources. After a year and a few months I decided it was necessary to sell the house to meet my income tax obligations, which I did, accepting a substantial financial loss.

I felt no regret at seeing the inheritance almost completely evaporate. Treating the money as a surplus to be spent, in much the same way as if I had won a lottery, was an important affirmation to me of the difference between my standards and those of my parents. My lover and I did have a lot of pleasure and enjoyment out of

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this period of worldly affluence. It was something that was meant to be transient, and I did not miss it when it was gone. I have no objection to saving money that I have earned, but I did not want to feel part of my father's enslavement to building financial security. Taking care of the material needs of his family had dominated his life. Because his father was a ne'er do well gambler on the stock market, he had gone to work without a high school education to support his mother and sisters. His career success (he was one of the men who founded Sears, Roebuck, and Co.) became a merciless tyrant whose presence he accepted as inevitable, but he never agreed to like it. I respected the fact that he lived his life close to a reckless rage at being dwarfed by social pressures, even though I had to endure considerable intimidation because of it.

12. My Counseling Service

The upstairs of the fancy duplex became my office, and I began to advertise the presence of my counseling service. I was very uncertain about its reception in the community, and expected to need a part time job until it became established. I ran one display ad in the Village Voice and was amazed at the number of responses. This was in 1966 before there were so many individuals and groups offering peer counseling. I did not function as a psychiatrist, not being licensed in New York. My satisfaction at having this excellent channel for reaching the public was short lived. My next ad was rejected by the Village Voice on the grounds that professional advertising was unethical. It seems that the owner of the newspaper had conventional professional connections. I turned next to an underground newspaper, the East Village Other, which had a fairly good circulation in those days of the hippie invasion. This outlet gave me the start I needed, and I continued this advertising for several years, although increasingly the counseling service was being built by referrals from patients.

My insights into human nature proved an efficient tool in giving supportive help to my patients. It was a kind of secret resource, permitting me to visualize their problems on a larger scale than they had thought possible. This capacity contributed an authoritative aura to my work, which I used to pour oil on their troubled waters. My real goal would have to wait, that of finding people who could share a genuine growth process. My new counseling service proved itself a quick success as a money earning venture. I had very few homosexuals at first, and those who did come were overwhelmed people who did not manage to stay with me very long. Aside from some attractive hippie types, the bulk of my practice consisted of conventionally adjusted people with marital or career problems, with women patients in the majority. This practice did not differ notably from the one I had in the early postwar days in Chicago, except that I no longer had to be critical of the insights I was bringing to bear in my psychotherapeutic work. I looked forward to seeing what my insights could mean in the day to day lives of conventional people. I had no interest at all in getting referrals from the professional world. I developed enclaves of individuals, mostly artists, writers, school teachers, and actors, who referred their acquaintances. These groups reached a fairly large size as time went by. Ultimately I began to reach the kind of homosexuals I could communicate with, and their referrals crowded out the rest. After the sale of the house I moved to the East Village. It was time to put aside the aura of affluence associated with the duplex. In addition, the brittle artificialities of the Greenwich Village scene was something I could do without. In the East Village I felt part of New York as an unstructured social milieu where any kind of human environment could be encountered.

13. Dean

Dean is the only person in my life today whom I first met in the Greenwich Village days. He was attending college at the time and had a summer job working in an office. He was referred by a patient who was a fellow employee. It was quite apparent from the beginning that he was a different kind of human being from all the rest. Although he was verbally articulate, the most striking communication initially came through body language. When he shook hands there was an electric kind of lingering in it, and the openness and intensity of his gaze conveyed a sense of equality with me that gave indication of a potentially important relationship. It soon became evident that he did not come for help in the ordinary sense, being too independent for that, but instead was engaged in an eager, and perhaps desperate, search for human wisdom. It was becoming very clear to him that any expectation of finding such a resource at college was futile. His school based its curriculum on the reading of the great books. The initial contact with Dean had a remote resemblance to a few of the relationships I made with university students in the postwar Chicago days. Undergraduates had been attracted by radical innovations which were similarly based on the study of the great books, and also on the willingness to allow students to find their own rate of advancement. This flexibility in the curriculum tended to establish an equality between teacher and student, creating an appearance of the search for human truth which was not real under the circumstances. Those who ended up in my office told me they found in our relationship the education they had sought in coming to the university. At that time my insights did not go far enough to meet my standards as a teacher, nor were they in a position to accept radical innovations in their lives.

Dean was the first individual in my personal life who read my books and worked at a wholehearted acceptance of the scientific system he found there. I saw that the real issue would be the application of these insights in such a way as to improve the quality of his life. The therapeutic problem came rapidly to crisis, and our formal relationship was short lived. He could remain open and communicative for only a few weeks, before an old brooding sense of doom settled over him, and he was confined to reciting evidence of past psychic injustices, especially at the hands of his sadistic father. When he was in this kind of a rut, all he could see was his disappointment with the human race. I had a choice to make. I could either dissolve a relationship which appeared to be going nowhere, and this would be my usual pattern of self-protection, or I could respond to my sense that there was a constructive human purpose for both of us to be served in maintaining our relationship. I saw it was not safe for him to case aside his old unwillingness to believe in the constructive influence of another person. He had gained his strength by developing an automatic numbness toward the effort of others to reach him with warmth and understanding, because such overtures had always proved to be unreliable, superficial, and entrapping. He idealized truth as an abstraction, but until he had experienced its value for himself, the perception of it would remain walled off in his personality. In the past, his heretical refusal to believe in society's dogmatic dictates had saved his sanity. He now stood alone with a high sense of integrity but little warmth for himself. I was later to tell him he was like a child raised in the forest by wolves, who had yet to accept the surface nature of the civilized world. His hunger for warmth was real, but his responses oscillated between overstimulation and an impersonal indifference. He was compelled to impose a sense of order on many things, whether order had anything to offer or not. This need to arrange the surface of things so that perfect understanding resulted helped overcome both the excessive emotional responses and the sense of alienation. His talent for unchallenged order led to a high level of self-development in mathematics and music, and later was to equip him with unusual assets as a computer programmer. He found order in dwelling in the past, albeit this kind of awareness was hateful and masochistic in tone. Lacking something else to feel about, an individual can always remember emotionally colored experiences. History is over and one with, and order, once found there, has a perfect quality not troubled by the changes inherent in growth.

Dean's ability to cut off feeling for his immediate environment and to dwell in a world of memories was a defense against a sense of being unrecognized as a person. There was a time when it was better to hate than to conform, and better to ruminate over injustices than to face the emptiness of having no world to live in. The defenses are born of necessity, but have a way of outliving their emergency status. As the individual reaches biological adulthood, he is ostensibly able to choose his own human environment, only to find that the defenses

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which once protected his mental health have now become useless baggage. It is as if he has survived an exposure to poisonous gas through the use of a gas mask, and now must carry it with him wherever he goes, a special and important part of himself, no matter how clumsy the burden or how pure the air. If he must invest so much of himself in fending off dangers which no longer exist, he cannot embrace life with the fullness it deserves.

Dean's interest in psychological truth gave me a hold on him I did not want to relinquish. He had come into my life at a time when the mated quality of my relationship with my ex-secretary was fading out of existence. I saw it was completely futile to try to reach Dean in once a week conversations. His ability to isolate conceptual truth from the give and take of daily life created an impass I was prepared to challenge. The split between ideas and life itself has powerful social supports, of which religion is an outstanding example. It provides people with the opportunity to idealize love and its works on Sunday without any commitment to the rest of the week. Nowhere is this split more evident than in mankind's dealing with its sexual life.

I suggested to Dean that we join forces as a pair of lovers to face his problems together. This was a bold act, motivated by a strong sense of a worthy human purpose. I realized it would call on me to reach into new levels of my own human capacities. It had hardly crossed Dean's mind that he could live homosexually. He reacted to my offer of personal involvement with shock and fascination. He consented to consider the possibility. He felt he should return to college for the fall semester, mostly out of a sense of obligation to his father who was providing financial support. Later he wrote me a letter praising the Socratic view of homosexuality, and affirming that he was not afraid of anything human. He visited me during his Christmas vacation, but we could not find a basis for a continuing relationship at that time. For the next two years I became involved in other relationships which did not last very long, and he left school and moved to the East Village.

One day he appeared at my door and announced that he was ready to explore our relationship. I perceived the tenacity of his will to develop himself, even though his sense of unreality about our coming together was great. He was operating on pure energy, knowing that he needed a new level of comprehension if he was to overcome his insulation from the human scene. His decision to trust me was real. I welcomed the chance to do my best. Love does not ask for easy jobs. We would now both be tested as to whether we could live up to the promise inherent in a polarized relationship. His dominance was real, as was my submission, but it was yet to be demonstrated that these rich psychological resources could be put to work in a way that would improve the quality of life for both. Our undertaking could only succeed if we were equals. No matter how much I entered the relationship as the teacher, the growth process was to be shared by each. Shared growth is the only reliable basis for enduring mated attachments.

This relationship was the greatest exposure I have known to my own compulsive anger reactions. Submission which is only pure when the sun is shining cannot do the work which growth requires. Sadistic manipulation of another can only seem to have a smooth path when it produces a masochistic response. This kind of destructiveness is a false passage into a world of pseudo-communication. Taking the small steps which growth requires, we set out to heal ourselves of my anger responses and his hate reactions. Our relationship was always subject to a strong pressure toward growth. It was difficult to stay at the surface with each other. Shared acceptance of the ordinary and the commonplace, which is so necessary to psychological rest, often seemed to be a threat to the basic seriousness of our relationship. We tended to become programmed machines, ready to search for truth and right in every nook and cranny of human experience, whether truth and right had anything to do with what was happening or not. We had to learn to be at home with our problems, avoiding a sense of crisis when my recklessness or his helplessness emerged. Psychic violence against masochistic symptoms, no matter how much it seems appropriate according to the standards of conventional society, and no matter how clever the rhetoric it uses, remains the babblings of ignorance. In a similar way, the employment of ostracism against sadistic difficulties, no matter how ingeniously it pretends to serve the right, can only end in abdication of responsibility. We had to learn that when the other person was being impossible for the moment that we could employ withdrawal or indifference to the immediate situation without including the whole personality in the reaction.

Gradually we found the resources to avoid blaming the partner for the oppressive moments that came. We increasingly took independent responsibility for our own mental health. We had to discover the tools we needed for this task. I had no intention of abandoning submission, nor did he accept giving up dominance. This would have been the conventional way of taking off the pressure. Instead I recognized the underdeveloped nature of my pride in myself, and he saw that his warmth for himself was similarly lacking. What I needed most in order to

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keep my submission healthy was an expanding self-control, and he needed a deepening self-knowledge to make his dominance work.

Through the thirteen years we have been together we have discovered the tenacity of a shared growth process. It has an inexorable march of its own, and once brought into existence proceeds without a sense of choice. This is the kind of bond which society assigns to the institution of marriage, but no amount of social rules and regulations can substitute for the impact of a shared growth process. It creates the kind of dependence which leaves the personality more independent than before. Many people can find the best in themselves in dealing with adaptive crises such as natural disasters or physical illness, but when it comes to the search for continuity in growth their sense of direction fails. In the end all that is required to make growth work is the capacity to avoid quitting, and this can come to people when psychological matters become the first business of living.

After a few years the sexual side of our relationship faded out of existence in favor of a more focused development of our warmth and pride capacities. This situation did not come about through prohibition, but rather through a sense of choosing a superior way of accomplishing the psychological purposes we shared together. The sexual and celebrative outlets of the honeymoon-holiday phase of a mated relationship operate like a safety valve. Under its protecting umbrella there is no need to face anger and hate reactions, because the underdeveloped side of the partner's personality does not come into focus. He is automatically found to be complete without having to do any psychic work in developing the acceptance of the simple and ordinary. When sex and celebration are depended on to carry a relationship, the pressure toward getting to know the developmental problems of the partner disappears. Problems eventually force their way to the surface, but in an unwelcome fashion, producing the typical lover's quarrel situation with helplessness and recklessness to the fore. This is why so many love stories are tragedies. It is a typical abuse of the domain mechanism, where the partner is either wonderful or impossible, the embodiment of all that is beautiful and good or all that is abhorrent and evil. The garden of lovers too often produces a paradoxical crop of attractive plants that turn out to be inedible or even poisonous.

Dean took the initiative in bringing the Ninth Street Center into existence. I had spoken to various students about the need for our own gay center for some time, but nothing happened till Dean independently went out and rented a suitable space. The turning point had come when Dean and I gave a Christmas party in 1972. All of the men who were coming to me for psychotherapy were invited, and this was the first time all of them had met each other. They embraced this expansion of their human world with enthusiasm, and it was clear that we should find some way to continue this interaction.

After the Center was well established, and a couple of years had passed, Dean decided he wanted his own apartment. This move was a constructive contribution to his development of warmth for his personal environment. It took a great deal of pressure off our tendency to be overstimulated by our stoical interaction, helping to slow down the growth efforts between us to a more realistic and healthy pace. This need for spaces in a relationship exists whenever individuals share growth together, and although it can be engineered in entirely psychological ways where necessary, the presence of separate living quarters sometimes makes spaces easier to find.

14. The Ninth Street Center

The first steps in establishing the Center were of the adaptive kind, but we soon turned our attention to discovering what its psychological form would be. We wanted to make the new center attractive to the gay community, but at the same time we recognized there would be no point in having it if we did not maintain its psychological identity. The talk groups were advertised as presenting an alternative direction for gay life, different from the bars and the baths, and this appeal was meant to attract people who were genuinely dissatisfied with their life style. From the beginning the open talk groups proved to be the heart of our undertaking, but we had to learn how to conduct them. There were plenty of individuals who wanted to regard us as a captive audience. They brought with them their culturally supported need to use a talent for facile rhetoric as a substitute for the truth seeking process. They received with shock the realization that we had something unexpected to say, and that we intended to defend our right to say it.

The element of control was something new in talk groups. It proved to be a highly effective tool in separating those who were seriously dissatisfied with the direction their homosexual life was taking from the much larger group who were content to muddle through with the psychological resources that society had permitted them to have. To the latter group being gay was only unorthodox in the sense that they admitted their sexual preference. Deviation from conventional social patterns on a much larger scale was an undertaking they found alien and disturbing. We granted them the right to their conformity, but we did not accept their efforts to efface us in the process. Our insistence on exposing groups to our insights was taken by some individuals to be a dogmatic and arbitrary act. When we made it clear that we did not propose to enter into controversy with them, but instead asked them to be quiet and listen, they perceived this kind of firmness as intimidating and lacking in the spirit of permissive warmth they expected to find in a gay group. They did not know that love which is motivated by serious purposes uses truth as its primary weapon. Truth is an offering which invites use by those who will and can, and by this means undertakes to influence the lives of others, but does not otherwise aspire to control their thoughts and behavior. Love has no work to do when permissiveness dictates the suspension of truth. Some individuals wanted to deny the existence of objective truth, saying in effect that you have your version of truth and I have mine. They invited a competition between rival rhetorical displays, and whichever outlasted the other would be taken to have the status of truth. Occasionally someone refused to accept our right to control the direction of the discussions, and by sheer determination to pour out words blocked the flow of communication. We adopted the very simple recourse of closing the group at that point, knowing that we would be there tomorrow and he would not.

Although we refused to allow the sharpness of our insights to be blunted by entering a field of battle in the talk groups, we still hoped to hold on to as many of these attractive people as possible. We attempted to provide activities outside the talk groups where a spirit of uncomplicated warmth could flourish. We set up a number of non-psychological events which tended to reassure others that we were just nice people after all. We gave Saturday night buffet suppers every week without charge, and as many as 125 attended, crowding our basement space to the overflow point. We held various classes of which the drawing class was the most popular, no doubt related to the fact that it supplied nude male models.

This method of seeking rapid expansion through social activities which challenged no one did not go anywhere. It failed to select people who perceived serious problems in their own personal development. They ate our buffet suppers and enjoyed our classes without any recognition of our reasons for having the Center in the first place. It became evident that the right way for the Center to grow was by slow accretion, and the talk groups were the proper place for this to happen. Out of every hundred individuals whose curiosity brought them to talk groups, it would be quite enough if two or three lingered to explore the meaning of psychological growth in our terms. This slow movement was appropriate to the unorthodox nature of our position. We blamed no one for being shocked and dismayed by what they found there.

In time about half of the students who came to me for weekly appointments in my office had come through the Center, and a number of my students were doing psychotherapeutic work with Center people. As the Center gradually took form it proved to be something new in the world. It became a collection or aggregate of people

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united only by a shared affirmation that objective human truth and right do exist. The ability to grow in company with others without loss of independence meant that each could grow at his own pace. No one was expected to abandon his defenses as long as they were needed. It was unacceptable to plunge headlong into psychological changes in such a way as to bring exhaustion. Those who lacked sufficient independence to maintain mental health while growing soon departed.

In some ways the form the Center took can be best described by noting what it was not. It was not the kind of social group which depends on a shared effort to reform society. It had no intention of making the monolithic system more acceptable by tinkering with peripheral aspects of its structure. A common way for groups to come together involves the recognition of a common enemy. Reformers who enter into conflict with anti-human forces do not find a better human basis for living by this means, worthy as reform might be in its own terms. The Center had no cause. Its members were not held together by the need to end the pollution of the environment, or by opposition to nuclear energy, or to get their candidate elected, or to save the humpbacked whale.

Neither was the Center interested in establishing an institutionalized cult. The brainwashing which gives cults their power over people reduces the individual to the status of a cog in a machine. The group created by the cult is always bigger than the individual, and membership confers on him a false sense of personal identity. It utilizes the domain mechanism to the fullest extent. Within it he is nothing. The group is institutionalized into an unchanging structure which is perfect and complete. It is the individual who changes, and this occurs at the point where he embraces membership. This process grants him a personal miracle in that he can be reborn into a supportive world where growth is no longer necessary. The appeal of a cult rests on the fact that conventional society itself depends on the use of brainwashing techniques. It systematically undermines the independence of the individual in many areas of thought and action, and then in a contradictory kind of way, throws him into a sink or swim competitive struggle to prove his right to social acceptance and rewards. The cult offers a superior kind of cradle to grave dependence for those who need such rigidity.

The Center rejects dependence on revealed pseudo-insights which usurp the place of truth. It equally rejects self-righteous prohibitions which take over the functions belonging to the exercise of the right. Truth is not a completed entity but a living and growing thing which is offered to others to use as they will and can. The degree to which an individual accepts truth should have nothing to do with his acceptance as a person within the group. He will utilize truth only insofar as he is not oppressed and overwhelmed by its influence. He decides on the pace and scope of his growth. Neither is the right a set of immutable rules, but is conveyed to others by personal example, to be followed as they will and can. The only membership requirement at the Center is participation in a shared growth process, no matter how small the steps have to be. The size of the steps depends on the degree of intimidation and seduction the individual has been exposed to in the years of his biological immaturity, and it cannot be regulated by an artificially imposed schedule. The value of a human being is not measured by so many units of wisdom and strength, or by weighing his self-knowledge or self-control. All that is required for membership of what is an aggregate of growing people is an awareness of what is underdeveloped in the self and the capacity to work on filling out the empty spaces.

There is no way to grant another growing person the status he deserves without recognizing the progress he has made over the helplessness and recklessness of yesterday, and the willingness he has to keep the path open to progress for tomorrow. Those who can teach and lead live in the same world of self-development as those they undertake to help. The equality keeps the corrupting influence of controversy and competition out of their relationships, and makes the psychotherapeutic function the primary business of living. If a man can help himself he can help others, provided they share the capacity to let truth and right influence their interaction.

Conventional professional therapists do not offer equality to their patients. They function as cults do, helping others to become better victims of the brainwashing process. Some set up their own cults, but most help in sealing off the patient's rebellion against conventional standards. A therapy is taken to be a success if it equips the individual to abandon his independent strivings in favor of such goals as career success, marital stability, and adherence to heterosexual patterns.

An aggregate of people which is responsive to the needs of its members both for serious communication and for the sharing of pleasure and enjoyment, without setting up arbitrary requirements for the level of participation of each, is able to remove the oppressive burden of controversy and competition from the human scene. It is the ideal way to make contact with others accessible without the sacrifice of the individual's responsibility for the

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quality of his own life. A human community purged of ostracism and prohibitions through the sharing of each individual's need for psychological growth contains the best elements of family life.

Independence must not be allowed to mean an impenetrable isolation from others. All men have within themselves, whether deeply buried or not, a longing for a sense of belonging which can provide them with the opportunity for expanding attachments to others, if and when they choose to make the effort. The conventional family programs these attachments, and forces individuals to cling to each other as an antidote to the poison of loneliness. There is no real reason why the sense of family should be arbitrarily formed around biological ties or fixed ethnic traditions. When men have the psychological resources to form the kind of family attachments which they choose for themselves, the influence of the family spirit can come into its own, establishing a sure place for goodness and beauty in the human world. Impulses in this direction have in the past led to the formation of various kinds of communes, but they have lacked sufficient access to psychological growth. Children want this kind of uncluttered human environment where they can count on the right to be themselves, free of meaningless invasions of anxiety and restlessness, but most adults think growing up means to put such images of a promised land aside. They make it a rule to accept the human reality that was here when they were born, because they deem such a position necessary for survival. This shrunken view of human capacities puts a cast of depression over the human scene and paralyzes the search for self-knowledge and self-control.

Without the sharing of growth with others, there is no way for independent people to feel at home in the world. Such individuals are expert at insulating themselves from conventional social pressures, but life is about something more than building walls against corrupting influences. Living in a world of expanding human capacities is a necessity if men are to find the inexhaustible participation in the life process which is their birthright. Those who have never experienced this kind of independent growth regard a place like the Center as a little world. They see the world of conventional social relationships as the big world, bringing them into orbit with large numbers of people of varying surface characteristics. Yet it can be said that the more experiences they have of this quality, the more they remain the same. It is a delusion that this kind of bigness brings big human rewards. When the homosexual depends on sexual promiscuity and the sharing of drug experiences to populate his life with other people, he is running loose in a human desert, free of old prohibitions to be sure, but unable to move outside a world of surface events which leaves no residue within the self. No matter how great the excitements and thrills of yesterday, today the search must begin again, and if it does not succeed, the sense of self collapses. On the other hand, with the backing of the family spirit at its best, no matter what frustrations must be endured, the sense of self is safe.

15. Open Groups, Closed Groups

In addition to open groups, closed groups began to form in which individuals already aware of the value of our kind of human insights could undertake to apply ideas to the day to day psychological struggles of their own lives. The sense of order which a scientific system provides was there, but how was it to be made into a living asset? When theory is isolated from experience it ceases to grow and deteriorates into dogma. The work of many philosophers, of which Aristotle is an outstanding example, demonstrates this problem very well. If men love order more than truth, their impressive intellectual edifices become a prison for the minds of men which sometimes have endured for hundreds of years. On the other hand, abstractions are essential to the building of a science. A distinction is often made between pure and applied science, but the more one looks for the dividing line the less apparent it becomes. I said in the preface to *Psychoanalysis and Civilization*: "Men do not have to fear being abstract in viewing human nature; what they have to fear is the production of abstractions which have no relationship to the concrete world of the life of action."

I began my closed group as an effort to reach individuals at the Center who did not have weekly appointments with me. It soon became apparent that a group set free of controversy and competition was a rich resource in the application of theory, and since those who had a personal relationship with me were the most advanced in psychological development, their desire to enter the group made sense both to them and to me. As the weeks passed it became evident that we were breaking new ground. The whole experience was quite different from the usual group therapy program. Basic insights were being applied in new ways, and in an atmosphere of unrestricted communication, we developed a language for describing the architecture of the growth process itself.

We believed in growth and now we set out to describe what was really happening to growing individuals. The old insights established goals, but the new emphasis was on the journey itself. The ominous threat of exhaustion which comes from an excessive preoccupation with goals was named, dealt with, and pushed back. Man's esthetic life and the rest and relaxation which it brings was given its rightful place. Insights into the actual workings of the defenses were clarified in a way that protected individuals from self-hatred and self-anger. A theoretical system which might have become a shadow land was brought into the market place of daily living. We had the tools, now we gave them work to do. It might be said that we were constructing a manual of operations, demonstrating how to use insights to improve the quality of life. We came down from the sky to inhabit the streets, accepting the beautiful and the ugly, the good and the bad, all having a place in the unfolding of life as it really is. We saw that idealism and reality can share the same home, and thus affirmed that truth and right need not be isolated from the mainstream of life. I wrote a series of monographs to record the progress we had made.

I now had arrived at the place I had left room for throughout the last twenty five years, namely a homosexual world I could inhabit. The long wait was over and it had proved its value. My ship had come to port, in a land more rich in human assets than I had ever asked. It had been an uncharted voyage with its share of storms and empty calms, sometimes without enough wind to fill the sails. Although I scorned mere survival as the goal of life, there were times when survival was all there was, but I knew that without it there would be no tomorrow. My ambition to find human truth could not be killed because I needed it to preserve the goodness and beauty of life for myself. For me, without truth there was no sanity, and this awareness that psychic disaster lurked in the wings proved to be an absolute necessity for adherence to the growth process, both for me and for those I was to find and teach. Surrounded as I was now at the Center by the best in human nature, the long standing threat of failure to reach enough experience to keep insights growing was being met and overcome. At the Center we took the impact of the growth process full in the face, and did not shrink from the evidence of our psychological difficulties. All we asked was to inhabit a world together where we could work toward the development of each in his own way and at his own pace, and this meant the elimination of controversy and competition, and of ostracism and punishment. We prized the search for mental health above all things, both for ourselves and for those who would take the journey with us. The motto of the Center might well be: "Just don't quit, you'll get there." We learned that the conventional world had planted problems in us that would continue to operate throughout a lifetime, but that our assets in dealing with such difficulties would grow and prosper.

After three productive years at the Center, the bombardment of the psychosomatic stresses to which I had long

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been vulnerable was taking its toll, and under the pressure of various symptoms, including angina pectoris, I withdrew from my active functions at the Center. After another three years in which I continued to see my students in my office once a week, I accepted the inevitable and bowed to a full scale retirement at the age of seventy. The need for this action caught me by surprise because I had never envisioned retirement. I am fortunate to be able to share this phase of my life with a young man named Nick who has lived with me the past three years. The breadth of my world of experience has shrunk since this is the price I have had to pay for relative freedom from disabling symptoms, but the psychological content of my life remains high. My continuing full scale relationship with Dean and Nick, who constitute my personal family, presents rich challenges in living up to the best in myself.

16. A Young Man Named Nick

Nick's previous life was characterized by extreme overstimulation. Because of the continual pressure of manipulative energy, it had been difficult for him to find any substantial inner security. His warmth for himself depended too much on the responses of others, and he was constantly on the edge of helpless reactions. It had proved very difficult for him to learn any of the things that conventional society expected him to know. School had been close to a nightmare much of the time. Spelling, arithmetic, history, geography, or any subject matter except art became a depersonalizing trap which threatened to undermine his freedom to enjoy life itself. No matter how simple the activity, he ran rather than walked, and this left no room for the development of his powers of observation. When he needed an insight he invented it in a magical fashion.

He had grown up in a household of tight family ties, including grandparents. He was treated as a cute toy by the adults, and when this atmosphere was friendly it helped him find great self-confidence. When it became necessary to face problems in the outside world, his fragile security system collapsed like a house of cards, and recklessness took over. The task assigned him in life was to keep his family entertained, and when they saw that his difficulties were not amusing, sadistic attacks were heaped on him in an overwhelming fashion, especially by his school teacher father. The only path to sanity was his refusal to take them seriously. As he became adolescent he needed an escape route which could provide him with an antidote to self-hatred, and the gay world beckoned as a life saving alternative. His capacity for sexuality temporarily banished emptiness of feeling, but this did nothing to increase his awareness of the human world around him. Once again he found himself being cheated of his need to take himself and others seriously, and the promise of gay life threatened to become a dead end. When he found the Center he saw that it offered the possibility of a genuine learning process, and he set out to find a path that was something more than a rerun of his family situation.

The menace of an excess of manipulative energy entered his relationships in the new environment. To build attachments, communication is necessary, and Nick's rejection of conventional learning made it difficult for him to formulate understandable sentences of any complexity, and it was also difficult for him to understand what others were saying. His magical mechanisms led him to believe he had established empathy and cooperation with others, but at the first sign of frustration, the bridges he was trying to build faded into invisibility. He attempted to remedy the situation with a mounting energy investment, and found himself shopping around for more and more reassuring help from others. As each effort failed, his isolation grew, and he increasingly dwelt in a world of delusional ideas. When he came to me he felt he was doomed to be an outcast on the face of the earth, unable to find the kind of understanding which could liberate him from the sick obsessive thoughts which came and went like disembodied ghosts.

Without his homosexuality, Nick would have been a candidate for the destruction society visits on those who cannot play its survival games. I was determined to demonstrate to him the vast influence that love and its workmanship can have in the promotion of self-development. We joined forces as a mated pair to resist the gathering tyranny of hopelessness. As I faced his willfulness and the inner mental fog that went with it, I was to find another great challenge in developing my self-control, and I had plenty of exercise in divesting myself of the sadistic tendencies which society regards as a normal part of being an intellectually endowed adult. I knew all I had to do was to live up to the best in myself and he would do the rest. Step by step we shaped his exposure to self-knowledge, avoiding both magical side excursions and the manipulative frenzy which formerly had depersonalized his efforts to learn. As he gradually became aware of the extent of his ignorance and the self-hatred that went with it, he was able to realize that at last he had found a subject matter worthy of his acceptance of the status of a student. No longer was learning structured by a dictatorial monolithic force, but was becoming something he could choose for himself because it brought him human rewards.

Our personal relationship built a Chinese wall around him, protecting him from the invasive intensities and excitements which had seduced him into excessive efforts to relate to others. He would learn to bring these potentially exhausting forces under control as his self-awareness grew. We built a world together rich in simple and ordinary things, and learned to value the psychic rest it brought. We established the value of taking small steps, so that an overreaction to the commonplace did not rob us of our access to contentment and happiness. As

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we turned down the dial on the need for the embellishments which society says is the proper way to have a good time in life, we faced together the greyness which is part of entering an independent search for the esthetics of living. This kind of emptiness is inevitable when people leave room for warmth or pride capacities which they know are underdeveloped. When Nick could feel very little, he learned to find simple pleasure in the surface quality of things, and when I felt nothing was happening, I was able to find enjoyment in just being there. In this peaceful atmosphere, Nick's longing for instant self-development gave way to a recognition of the high quality of his human resources and the acceptance of being psychologically in transition. This can only be accomplished when individuals live on higher ground than controversy and competition can provide, and when the tyranny of the domain mechanism is banished with its labels of success and failure. We had found a way to establish the best in family sharing.

17. A Science of Human Nature

In the twentieth century the place for a science of human nature remains unreal and foggy to most people. The academicians think science means exclusively physics, chemistry, or some other non-human subject. One cannot blame them for not taking the work of academic psychologists and psychiatrists seriously, but to fail to comprehend the importance to mankind of leaving a place for a science of human nature to develop is a tremendous failure on their part.

The individual who takes responsibility for his own mental health must be bigger than the society in which he lives. For the sake of adaptive adequacy he allows social institutions to dictate to him in matters where his inner identity is not involved. He conforms easily in many areas because non-conformity would create disharmonious stress. But when man pursues his search for truth and right, automatic conformity has no place. When standing on his own feet, free of all preconceptions and commitments, he can use his conceptual abilities and his inventive ingenuity to increase mankind's access to human knowledge and ability. When such advances occur they force changes in the otherwise stable social structure. Social institutions themselves cannot do the job of finding new truth and right, because social institutions exist to maintain stability. It is left to the individual to make headway against ignorance and immorality in the human scene. As these advances are made, they demonstrate their value by improving the quality of life for people, and this is the mechanism by which social institutions accept change without the disruption inherent in political revolution.

This process of finding new human knowledge and skill does not come about because some master plan exists for promoting social progress. Actually any kind of advance of this nature is resisted at first, and especially so in the human field. These advances come because the potential for them is inherent in man's superior cerebral equipment, and this potential is released to new heights of accomplishment by the existence of character polarity. Man's need to face the unknown and the chaotic has a life of its own, and requires no invitation from established social forces. The finding of truth and right has the highest claim on civilized man's sense of his own personal importance.

Progress in human relationships has never found a smooth path. In the history of civilization, when some individuals have become more knowledgeable and capable in human matters, abuses have immediately developed. As Pope has said, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. He could have added that a little ability creates an appearance of effectiveness which is thoroughly misleading. These abuses increase adaptive stress for the whole population by weakening social institutions unproductively. As a result there is a strong drive to return to simpler times, the so-called good old days, when man was better protected from his inner urge to recognize and challenge human problems. When this happens men idealize simple cultures where individuals do not try to take advantage of their full psychological potential. They also move toward simplification of their own culture by the acceptance of cults and dictatorial political systems. It is true that automatically ordered communities may confer a better state of mental health for the time being, but they are unable to destroy man's inner urge to expand psychologically. It is only the quiet before the storm. No community which is indifferent to the independence of the individual can ever meet the human needs of a whole planet full of people.

There is no turning back. Corrupt and violent as man's excursions into social progress have often become, the penalty for regression into a blind and deaf psychological work is unacceptable. All man needs to do to find his way is to learn to take small steps. The ultimate sin is quitting, because then the coming generations must deal with the catastrophic crises which have been generated by this dwelling in a fool's paradise.

There are only a few oases of human truth and right in the world. Most of mankind lives in an underdeveloped and childish world of magical thinking and miraculous pretense. Just as progress in non-psychological areas such as agriculture, medicine, and industrial productivity is gradually spreading its influence over the globe, so will the value of human truth and right come to be accepted as an irreducible necessity in the lives of all human beings. When this time comes, men will no longer need to dwell in the shadow of mental illness in order to have the motivation to grow. They will live on a firm basis of commitment to psychological insight and skill, learned just as surely in their years of growing up as they learn arithmetic and spelling now. This progress will not come from political, religious, or academic initiatives but from the grass roots level of the human condition. To be expert in

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human matters requires no access to the specialized equipment and privileges so essential to the prestige of big budget universities. The science of human nature belongs to people who are not afraid to live independent lives. They alone have the flexible access to experience which can bring human wisdom and strength into being, and once these assets exist, they will send forth their influence with an authority that cannot be resisted, unmindful of artificial man made boundaries, reaching anywhere in the world.