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TOWARD BETTER PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT

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TOWARD BETTER PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT

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PREFACE

This book is addressed to those college students who have made fairly satisfactory adjustments to the problems they have faced but who realize that they can accomplish still better adjustments. It is intended for those who would like to avoid a few of the common errors which often take some of the enjoyment out of life. For instance, most college students have good physical health, but it is possible for them to have still better health. The average student knows something about how to study and how to think, having gained a degree of mental efficiency, but it is possible for him to become more effective and less biased. College men and women are generally able to make acquaintances, but there are ways of improving their social relationships. For those who wish to make such improvements this book has been written.

The treatment is based upon the assumptions (1) that the habits a person forms condition, to a very large extent, his mental health and (2) that these habits are subject to control by the individual. Many of the suggestions may seem to call for "lifting yourself by the bootstraps." Indeed, it is assumed that, by making choices of activities now, a normal person can do just what is implied in that homely phrase. Better mental health is an achievable objective for anyone who knows and will apply the principles of mental hygiene.

Emphasis is placed upon the application of the principles of psychology which have particular bearing on mental health. This stress on application may be summarized as follows: *When a person realizes and puts into action the knowledge that personality development is the result of constant attention and continuous habit formation, he is applying a fundamental principle of mental hygiene and is progressing toward his goal of better mental health.*

There has been no attempt, however, to make the recommendations which are stressed rest exclusively upon experimentally verified grounds. Much of the material is of an empirical nature for the author feels that ordinary experiences may go as far in revealing truths about conduct as do many laboratory experiments. Much of the accumulated wisdom of our civilization is of this nature, and the mentally healthy person should capitalize upon it.

The writer, while he makes no claim to originality, feels that the emphasis is unique. Most books on mental hygiene are written, not to meet the personal needs of college students, but to serve them in their roles of prospective teachers, clinicians, social workers, nurses, and the like; that is, persons who will apply the principles of mental health not so much to their own problems as to those of others with whom they will be working. Most of the material in this book deals with the normal rather than the abnormal; but the danger of developing questionable personality deviations in a healthy individual is frequently indicated. A chapter on Mental Health Factors beyond Individual Control gives a more complete view of mental hygiene.

Obviously, considering the wide ramifications of mental hygiene, it is necessary to select some and to discard much of the material which is available. Selection depends upon the particular aims which have been established. In keeping with the purposes of this book, the scope of the treatment is correspondingly limited. Since this volume is intended to aid the college student in the direction of his own life, discussions of the hereditary and eugenic aspects of mental hygiene are omitted. One cannot do much to change the hereditary equipment he possesses, but most college students are fortunate in their endowments of this kind. They should, however, have the power of directing the use of their heritage. That is, they have at least some choice as to the kind of environment in which they will live, and this matter receives consideration. The principal concern here is with the individual's reactions to particular situations or aspects of the environment, rather than with the influence of environment on personality.

In general, the book is concerned with an explanation of the factors involved in preservative and preventive mental health. The psychological bases of mental hygiene principles are explained and suggestions as to their applications are made. It is to be hoped that an application of the principles set forth will play a small part in the reduction of the extent and seriousness of mental ill-health. The book is particularly designed so to influence and direct the conduct of the individual's life that it can be described in terms of a definition of mental hygiene—"a way of life that shall enable every person to live a happier, fuller, more harmonious, and more effective existence."

HAROLD W. BERNARD

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Chapter 1

THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HYGIENE

Each student has his own purpose for going to college. Many are attending in order to prepare themselves for professional activity. Others wish to broaden their knowledge and competence in order to be more effective in any field of endeavor which they may later select. A few go to make their parents happy; some may wish only to "keep in the swim" with their friends. An occasional person may admit that his chief reason is to find a good marriage mate. Regardless of which of these or other reasons may be the dominant purpose, all are concerned with this: how to make life happier and more effective. This, very briefly, is the main objective of the study of mental hygiene—a study which is of real significance to everyone, whether at college or elsewhere.

Our whole cultural history throws light on this inclusive purpose. Modern civilization is the result of a vast accumulation of knowledge. Each generation profits from the successes and failures of its predecessors. We and our contemporaries have many conveniences that add materially to our physical comfort. Knowledge, scientific success, and material goods are the product of the intellectual activity of countless human beings who have lived before us.

Yet in the midst of priceless assets there are foreboding liabilities. Nations suffer from hate, suspicion, strife, and cruelty. Individuals have their happiness and effectiveness threatened by worry, uncertainty, depression, and feelings of futility. Such threats have been present in many generations of mankind. Apparently, intellect alone has not been able to solve many of the perplexing problems of groups and individuals. While intelligence has contributed much to the fullness of life it has not freed us of all our problems.

Up to the present time, the improvement of man's lot has been largely a matter of applied intelligence. But since there are many vital

questions still to be answered, it would seem profitable to consider some other areas of possible progress. One such area concerns the emotions—for example, those listed above as liabilities of men and nations. It seems highly probable that the future evolution of man may be in terms of emotional development, rather than solely in terms of intellectual progress.

Mental hygiene is a movement which is designed to foster such emotional evolution. It is an attempt to help man so to utilize his knowledge that the severity of the liabilities of civilization will be reduced. Conversely, it is an attempt to help him make better use of the assets of civilization. The modern mental hygiene movement was started in order to help people derive the greatest possible satisfaction from the almost boundless knowledge that man has accumulated.

Origins of modern mental hygiene. The idea of mental hygiene is not entirely new. Many of the teachings of great religions are similar to the lessons of mental hygiene. Certainly the conclusions of great and small philosophers have frequently emphasized the same values which mental hygienists stress. The generalizations which we call "common sense" are frequently corroborated by the principles of mental hygiene. The subject is not new, but the name is of recent origin.

Modern mental hygiene can, to a large extent, be traced back to the work of a man who was at one time insane. This man, Clifford W. Beers, spent several very uncomfortable years of his life in institutions devoted to the supervision of the lives of those who could not be trusted to take care of themselves. Mr. Beers's life in such places was so extremely unpleasant that when he was finally released, after being cured, he devoted his energies to reformation of the institutions and the techniques used in treating mental patients. His work, starting about 1909, was primarily concerned with the curing of mental patients after they had broken down. Up to the time of Beers—as it is to some extent even today—mental hygiene was regarded as synonymous with psychiatry—the science which deals with the causes, conditions, and treatment of mental abnormality. However, his enthusiasm affected other people of diverse interests, with the result that concern about curing those already afflicted became only one aspect of the total mental hygiene movement.

More recently, mental hygiene has come to be concerned with the

so-called "normal" person, as well as with the one who is abnormal. The mental hygiene emphasis is now probably more attentive to the problems of the prevention of mental illness than it is to the matter of treatment. Instead of dealing solely with the insane and the feeble-minded, it is also concerned with the behavior twists and peculiarities which characterize the man on the street—the hypothetical "average" man. These minor quirks and peculiarities are not enough in themselves to cause concern. Almost everyone has personality characteristics that cause some others to think he is queer; yet most people are, by definition, normal. What does cause mental hygienists concern is that a good many behavior deviations are unnecessary and that they are very likely to lead to more serious difficulties. Furthermore, just because a characteristic is typical (or normal) is no sure indication that it is desirable from the standpoint of effective living. These minor, typical, and unnecessary deviations often lead to serious difficulties which are all too prevalent, if we can believe the statistics.

Extent and cost of mental illness. The first time we see the statement that "one out of every twenty of us is, has been, or will be in

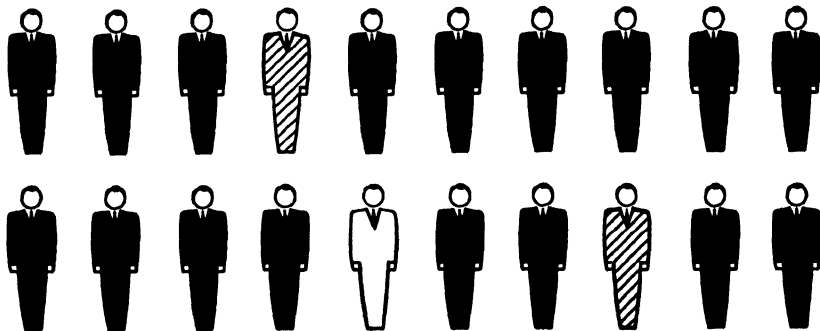


FIG. 1. One out of twenty will be admitted to a mental hospital. One out of ten will be incapacitated but not sent to a hospital. The remainder will have difficulties in adjustment. Many of the difficulties could be avoided.

an institution for mental illness" we are inclined to smile. When we see practically the same assertion from several different sources, backed up by actual statistical studies, we begin to see how uncomfortably close the problem is to our own daily lives. In fact, some investigators make the picture even darker when they say ". . . while one out of every 20 born alive will eventually be admitted and spend some part of his life in a mental hospital, in all probability one out of ten will be inca-

pacitated, though not sent to a mental hospital, by mental disease at some time during his life" ¹ (see Fig. 1).

In 1946 there were about 700,000 people in institutions for mental illness and more are being committed at the rate of 125,000 annually. To show the meaning of 700,000, let it be said that in this same year there were about 750,000 teachers in the elementary and secondary schools of the nation. Other data indicate that half the persons in hospitals are in mental hospitals.

Karl Menninger has given such a forceful statement of the prevalence of mental disease and of the importance of the problem of mental health that an extended quotation seems justifiable.

When a trout rising to a fly gets hooked on a line and finds itself unable to swim about freely, it begins a fight which results in struggles and splashes and sometimes an escape. Often, of course, the situation is too tough for him.

In the same way the human being struggles with his environment and with the hooks that catch him. Sometimes he masters his difficulties; sometimes they are too much for him. His struggles are all that the world sees and it usually misunderstands them. It is hard for a free fish to understand what is happening to a hooked one.

Sooner or later, however, most of us get hooked. How much of a fight we have on our hands then depends on the hook, and, of course, on us. If the struggle gets too violent, if it throws us out of the water, if we run afoul of other strugglers, we become "cases" in need of help and understanding.

There are plenty of cases, God knows. Statistics say that one out of every twenty of us is, or has been, or will be, in a hospital for mental illness; and the other nineteen of us don't feel any too comfortable all of the time, even if we have no fears of such an extremity. The minor symptoms of the struggle are legion; mental ill health is certainly as common as physical ill health and probably much more so. Cicero said: "The diseases of the mind are more numerous and more destructive than those of the body." He was right. But they are not always recognized as such.

When a man is promoted to a new job and it worries him so much that he has to quit it; when a woman gets married, finds herself unfitted for married life, and becomes depressed; when a student goes to college with high hopes, but fails in half his subjects; when a soldier goes to war and develops

¹ C. Landis and J. D. Page, *Modern Society and Mental Disease*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1938, p. 25. By permission of the publisher.

shell-shock at the sound of the first gun; when a lad of promise spurns opportunities of achievement in favour of cheque-forging or automobile-stealing—then these people are mentally unhealthy; they are unable to adjust themselves to their environment. They are inept and they are unhappy; some of them will end their lives in tragedy.²

Here, it is evident, Menninger is concerned with not only the institutional cases of mental illness but also the minor symptoms of mental sickness. Almost everyone has had colds, headaches, muscular pains, and feelings of tiredness and has recognized them as symptoms of physical ill-health. Those who are wise take steps toward the alleviation of the conditions which create these symptoms. It is not considered peculiar to consult a physician for such ailments; but many fail to recognize that periods of the blues, depressions, inefficiency, sadness, worry, stealing, lying, and other behavior patterns are symptoms of mental illness (see Fig. 2). Too often no steps are taken to relieve the difficulties. In fact, the general attitude is so erroneous that it is considered strange to consult a mental hygienist or a psychiatrist. There seems to be a feeling that if the individual does not admit his condition the illness does not exist or will not be noticed.

Mental ill-health is not only widespread but it is expensive both in terms of dollars and in terms of adjustment, even when only serious cases are considered. It would be difficult to estimate the monetary cost of mental illness of all sorts. One investigator says, "If one case of mental disease can be prevented, and from thirty to fifty per cent can, there would be sufficient funds to educate seven normal children each year."³ A particular purpose of mental hygiene is to prevent some of this wastage of human life and financial resources (see Fig. 3).

Not only is mental illness extensive and expensive but it seems to be increasing in prevalence; consequently, the costs are rising, quite apart from fluctuations in the value of the dollar. At the present rate, of the children now in school approximately one to one and a half million will at some time be inmates of institutions for the care of the mentally

² Karl A. Menninger, *The Human Mind*, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1930, p. 3. By permission of present publishers, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

³ O. R. Yoder, "Mental Moratoriums," *Journal of Health and Physical Education*, Vol. 5 (December, 1934), p. 18. By permission of the American Association of Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Tantrums Prove Point

This is well illustrated, F. Strecker said, by the wild temper tantrums of Hitler, his inordinate concern over health and the like. He still needs somebody to tell him not to let his feet wet. Probably a tantrum had once gained him a reward with his weak mother, and the pattern had become fixed in his personality.

The general pattern is 1

Rifle Given Away
The boy also admitted, officers said, stealing a rifle from the home of Ford R. Ler, 3818 N. E. 57th avenue, day night.

One rifle he had given friends, he said. The rifle had been hidden in private garages, and had already been found by one of the owners.

Still another prowler in 57th street, 3818 N. E. street, he had

LOS ANGELES—A 15-month-old girl was stomped to death Saturday when a sheriff's deputy shot at the child's four other siblings, one of whom was a 7-week-old sister, wounded by the stabber.

Dead was Paul Raymond Hoover, 15, Harbor General Hospital, killed by an apparently drunk stabber, James Joseph "Helen" Hoover, 34, who was the mother of the 6-week-old daughter, Mrs. John Bodner.

Extent of their injuries was not immediately disclosed.

Officer Bill Yauschko said the sheriff's radio said an bulletin was broadcast of the slaying and arrest of a father of the dead child.

Films Called Sexy
In today's mail is a letter from Phi Mu fraternity, a national Greek letter society with chapters on many college campuses. The letter reports the results of a poll which poses the question "What is wrong with American movies?" It is interesting to note that the objection most often advanced by a representative group of college girls was "vulgar criticism which Hollywood likes to dismiss as 'wags' doddering long-hairs who think American mov-

dictments Listed
Indictments
Morrison Clark, 48,
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tence M Wolfe, 29,
I Innell 36 Wil-
ham, 28 and Donald
27, all on
on support, Wayne
21, and Melba J
all, Anderson.

[illegible]

...boasted earlier that "all
allows who had anything
with this case are going
me" Five Tacoma detec-
and jurists, including
own defense counsel,
led of heart attacks since

• SPOKANE, Dec. 4 (AP)—Frank K. De Haney, former Western International league umpire, is being held in San Diego, Cal., on a warrant from Spokane charging grand larceny by check. Detective E. B. Meader said Saturday.

FIG. 2. Typical and daily evidence of the extent and nature of mental ill health. These were clipped from one issue of a daily newspaper.

ill or defective. Another way of stating this trend is to say that, of the pupils now attending high school, those who will enter hospitals for mental illness *at some time in their life* will outnumber those who will go to college. (It must be remembered that the trip to college will be much more direct than the journey to the mental institution.) Furthermore, the number of patients in mental hospitals could probably be

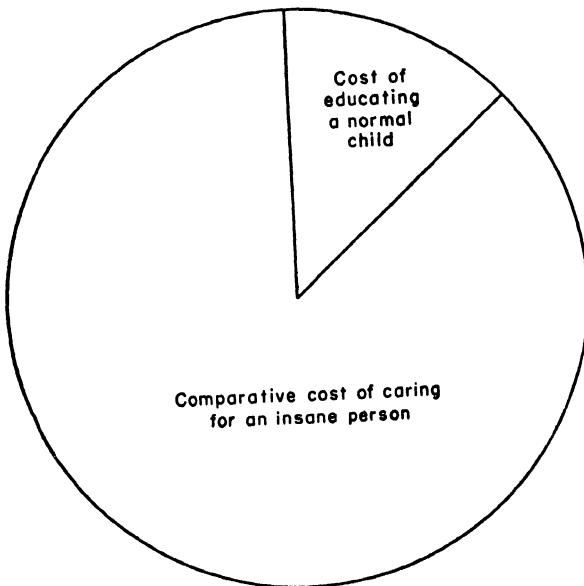


FIG. 3. The comparative cost of caring for a mentally ill person and educating a normal child. If one person could be saved from insanity, the equivalent cost of educating seven normal children would be saved.

matched by the number of those who are psychotic but who have not been hospitalized.

Harold F. Dorn, statistician for the United States Public Health Service, asserts that the increasing prevalence of mental illness is open to question. He gives several reasons for doubt: (1) The concept of mental illness has expanded until today it includes many manifestations that were at one time considered to be normal. (2) The increasing urbanization of the population has made hospital facilities more available. (3) Statistics for previous years are not comparable to statistics computed from contemporary data. (4) An increase in the expectancy of life has placed more people in the higher age brackets,

where the rates of mental breakdown are higher. Nevertheless, he believes that the problem is one of prime import.

Even though the incidence of mental disease has not been increasing as rapidly as commonly supposed, nevertheless mental diseases constitute an important health problem. Unless there is a decrease in the first admission rates to mental hospitals, from 110,000 to 120,000 of the 2,144,800 infants born during 1936 will eventually be committed to a hospital for mental disease. This number includes only the most severe cases of mental illness and excludes the large number of emotionally unstable and unbalanced persons who should be included in a comprehensive mental hygiene program.⁴

Statistics can be read without their causing much trepidation on the part of the individual, for we are prone to believe that the figures apply only to the other fellow. Tourists in the eastern states report a highway sign bearing the inscription, "Slow up before you become a statistic." The admonition has a bearing in the field of mental hygiene.

Current developments in mental hygiene. Data on the Second World War throw additional light on the extent of mental illness. Of 16,000,000 men examined for military service, about 12 per cent were rejected as "psychologically unfit"—more than a third of those who were pronounced unfit for service for any reason. This is all the more startling when one considers that the draft age represented the time in life when men are supposedly in their prime. The rate for rejection for psychological reasons in the First World War was only 5 per cent, as contrasted with the 12 per cent just cited.⁵ This does not necessarily indicate an increase in mental ill-health; more probably it is an indication of improved recognition of the problem.

The men rejected for duty in the armed forces were not all hopeless cases. They were rejected because it seemed unlikely that they could stand the extra strain imposed by military service. Many would, and did, adjust satisfactorily to civilian life. With additional help, many

⁴ Harold F. Dorn, "The Incidence and Future Expectancy of Mental Disease," *Public Health Reports* (U.S. Public Health Service), Vol. 53 (Nov. 11, 1938), p. 2004. By permission of the Federal Security Agency. (A letter from the Federal Security Agency, dated January, 1950, states that the conclusions are "still valid.")

⁵ Thomas A. C. Rennie and Luther E. Woodward, *Mental Health in Modern Society*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1948, p. 4.

could have adjusted to military life, but psychiatric treatment normally requires a long time and the military aim was to win a war rather than to improve the health of a single person. Later in the war, when effort was devoted to rehabilitation, the results were encouraging. Some examples which serve to show that mental health can be improved are the following:

1. Replacement companies were selected for comparison. Some were given talks on mental hygiene and the others were treated in the same way except that the talks were omitted. The data for five companies which were given the talks showed that in their case 995 man-hours were saved over that of the others. There was a decidedly smaller number of sick calls and hospital days for the instructed companies.

2. Soldiers who had broken down were given treatment in retraining battalions for a period of three months. Seventy per cent were returned to duty, and 75 per cent were still on duty six months later.

3. The period of convalescence for physical illnesses was reduced, in varying types of disorder, from 30 to 70 per cent. In addition, the recurrence rate was substantially lessened. These accomplishments were the result of combining medical treatment with psychotherapy, recreation, education, and military discipline.^a

These data have important implications for the student of mental hygiene, for they show not only that mental health is susceptible of improvement but that some maladjustment is avoidable when proper precautions are observed. It is the purpose of this study to point out some of the ways in which improvement and prevention can be accomplished.

THE COLLEGE STUDENT AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Concern about the problems involved in mental health, together with the application of mental hygiene in daily life, would result in an increase of happiness and efficiency for mankind. This broad generalization does not make exception of the group of those privileged to be college students. In institutions of higher learning there are many students who are irritable, who chafe over classroom procedures, resent authority, balk at suggestions, shirk their scholastic and extra-

^a *Ibid.*, pp. 17-38.

class duties, have nervous mannerisms, and worry excessively. Such behavior is symptomatic of the fact that these students are not in an optimum state of mental health. Thus, in spite of the fact that sound intelligence is needed in college, in spite of the fact that a process of selection has been carried out, the college student needs to be concerned with mental health.

Persons of high intelligence have mental breakdowns when they ignore the principles of mental hygiene, just as surely as do those who have a lesser intellectual endowment. In fact, without the exercise of intellectual and emotional control over one's life, high intelligence may actually increase the probability of mental illness, because it increases awareness to pressing problems and conflicting situations. This does not mean that breakdowns are more frequent among those who have high intelligence. Statistics show that, on the whole, above-average intelligence tends to facilitate adjustment. However, intelligence alone does not supply the complete explanation. It does indicate that those who have made satisfactory adjustments have used their intelligence to gain knowledge that improves their emotional control.

The study of mental hygiene is important to college students because, along with their intellectual development, they should develop emotional control. It is important to note that, just as intellectual development results from conscious strivings toward objectives, so too mental health may result from such conscious pursuit. "Good mental health is not some mysterious hereditary quality. It is just as much the result of good mental hygiene as good physical health is the result of suitable diet, proper rest, and proper exercise."⁷

College students need to study mental hygiene because of certain unique and difficult problems that are presented to them by the college environment. Ernest R. Groves lists five reasons why the college student needs to be concerned with mental health: (1) the necessity arises for breaking home ties rather suddenly and rudely; (2) an increased demand for intelligent self-direction faces the college student; (3) the necessity for self-esteem and the prevalence of strong competition are a part of college experience; (4) the college environment forces rapid

⁷ Norma E. Cutts and Nicholas Moseley, "Mental Health Is No Mystery," *National Education Association Journal*, Vol. 37 (November, 1948), p. 525. By permission of the publisher.

growth, which if more gradual would cause less trouble; (5) the problems related to sex, while not confined to college students, are a source of difficulty.⁸

Breaking home ties. Many college students fail to achieve the maximum of happiness and efficiency in college because they are homesick. Perhaps they have never before been away from home for a prolonged period. Ideally they should have been prepared for attendance at college by having been weaned away from home by previous shorter periods of separation. If they have not had such preparation, nothing can be done about that phase of the problem after they have entered college.

A study of mental hygiene will help students to see that their *attitude toward* the difficulty of breaking home ties is as important as their actual separation from loved ones. It will indicate that the new experience holds an opportunity for growth to more complete emotional maturity. Their study will help them to welcome the problem as a challenge to their personality development. The mental hygiene principle of facing reality will lead them to see the futility of excessive daydreaming about home and the futility of wishing for what had been or what might be. This same principle will cause them to attack the problem of increasing their social adaptability by contact with their classmates, instead of wishing for the feeling of security furnished by parents. Their study of mental hygiene will show them that greater satisfaction will result from successful participation in college than from acceptance of defeat and premature return to home.

You say, "Well, common sense will tell you all this." You are right — if you will let common sense talk to you. But there are many who ignore its voice and let their emotions rule. It is at this point that mental hygiene becomes effective. Mental hygiene points out the necessity for applying our knowledge, instead of just being aware of certain truths. Mental hygiene is a way of acting as well as a way of thinking.

Self-direction. The increased demand for self-direction is similar to the problem of breaking home ties. Before entering college, the student may have been protected by parents and relatives from the difficult experience of making choices. In certain dilemmas he may previously have depended on father or mother to make decisions. It would have

⁸ Ernest R. Groves, "Mental Hygiene in College and University," *Social Forces*, Vol. 8 (September, 1929), pp. 37-50.

been better for him if he had been given opportunities, even forced, to make his own decisions. But that stage has passed. The present conflict must be resolved, which means that this person, however reluctant, must now make his own decisions. He may have to decide where he will board and room. Perhaps he will have to select his own clothes for the first time. What classes should he take? How much money should he spend? And above all, how should his time be spent? How much time should be allotted for study? How much for play? How much for organized student activities?

Mental hygiene offers assistance to you when you are faced by these and similar problems. You have often wished, while at home, that you were not always being "bossed." Here is the fulfillment of your wish. Present problems afford an opportunity for the type of personal growth which mental hygiene stresses. Here is a challenge to your development. Here is a bit of reality that must be faced.

Clues to the achievement of self-direction are offered by a study of mental hygiene. It will teach you that decisions are tentative. If your course of action does not work out as you planned, you can change it. If you make a mistake, it should mean that you have learned something. Mental hygiene shows that while it is no sin to make an error, it is not commendable to make the same mistake repeatedly. You will realize that you can learn by mistakes just as surely as you can learn by your successes—perhaps even more surely. Intelligent self-direction is the very essence of mental hygiene. The real gains you make in mental health and personality are the result of your own self-direction and self-improvement. Realizing these facts and acting upon them will lead to living in a mentally healthful manner.

Self-esteem and competition. One of the serious problems of self-direction will be related to the matter of self-esteem. You are no longer in a familiar community or high school where you were once rather important. You have contact with other students, who were themselves persons of prestige. You are likely to feel that your talents are not so marked as you once considered them. Under such circumstances it is necessary to maintain your sense of proportion.

A study of mental hygiene will help you. You will come to realize that your abilities can stand improvement, and here is a challenge to your growth. The technique of honest self-evaluation will help you to realize that you have many valuable characteristics but that you must

also recognize the assets of others. Do not underrate either your own qualifications or those of your classmates. Develop both your self-respect and a respect for others. Mental hygiene should teach you the value and the means of honest self-evaluation, and this will bolster your self-esteem by making you take account of the assets in your personality.

As to competition, an important consideration is the development of the spirit of competition with your own self. In the college community, where individuals with rather marked abilities have gathered from many parts of the country, the competition that one meets is often quite keen. As a person compares himself with those about him, he is likely to be somewhat discouraged. Where he once stood high in his class, he is now only one of many students. Large classes increase the probability that they will include many good students.

Recently the writer encountered a student who could not stand competition. The young man had done very well in his high-school work; in fact, he was an honor student. Tests of vocabulary, reading, and general intelligence indicated that he should be able to do superior college work. Yet, after he had made an encouraging start, his academic record was such that there was danger of his being placed on probation. An interview revealed that he had a well-balanced program of study and recreation. There was no health problem. A personality inventory, followed by an interview, yielded no clues to the problem. Finally, it was discovered that he was bothered by not being able to keep at the very head of the class. As he discovered the strength of the competition, he drove harder and harder to succeed, keeping his mind on beating others rather than on acquiring the knowledges and skills that were required in the courses. His tension prevented his capitalizing on his good native ability and sound background. Fortunately, he was able to face and accept the fact that he did not need to be the best. When he relaxed and took daily lessons in stride, he did better than average work, even though it was not the best record in every class.

An objective attitude, which a study of mental hygiene will help you achieve, will assist you to maintain a balanced perspective with regard to competition. You will realize that there are different kinds of competition—with self, with others, and with past performance. Certainly there will be a desire to stand well in your work; but there should also be a strong desire, not just to surpass others, but also to

better your own record. Evaluate yourself in terms of your own growth—competition with yourself—just as frequently as you evaluate yourself in terms of your present status. In other words, derive confidence from the fact that you are improving and learning. As a person sees himself improving his own record, he will also see himself bettering his status in class. A prime objective of the study of mental hygiene is to assist people in developing the ability to view themselves thus objectively.

Rapid growth presents problems. The objectives of a college education have been stated in many different ways. One point of view is that the college seeks to bring about a more rapid development of the individual than would be the case if he were to gain all his knowledge from direct experience. The rate of change causes many difficulties for the person affected by the change. These very changes, if they took place more slowly, would present little difficulty because they would be barely noticeable. When anyone suddenly has to change his mode of living, he feels varying degrees of discomfort, because his fundamental desire for a sense of security is violated. Habits of dependence upon others, of customary ways of doing things, and of previously accepted ways of thinking frequently are challenged and sometimes are rudely disrupted in college, because they are no longer so effective as they once were. Often the habits that proved effective in an earlier environment actually become causes of conflict. The sudden change from parental dependency to the need for making one's own decisions is likely to be a source of such conflict.

A study of mental hygiene can suggest many things that will help to reduce the complexity of the problems arising from the fact that college forces rapid growth. As has already been said, the stimulating conditions of college life must be accepted as a valuable opportunity for personality development. The student must realize that achievement does not come if he is not challenged. We enjoy competitive sports because our opponent challenges us to show skill superior to his own. Ordinarily we do not greatly enjoy playing tennis with someone whom we can outscore with ease. Furthermore, our game would not improve without our being stimulated by a worthy opponent. The invigorating circumstances of college life should be accepted and welcomed as gladly as a worthy competitor in a game is accepted. The challenge to improve our knowledge, to solve our problems, to

meet new people, to develop additional skills can be discouraging if we are afraid of being unable to grow rapidly. These same factors can, however, be strong motivators if we welcome the opportunity for rapid growth.

Those who are familiar with mental hygiene know that security is not actually achieved through static, immobile conditions. Rather, the person who is secure is one who is capable of making changes as the conditions around him change. The very process of living implies change. Why not accept the rapid change that college forces as a means of more complete living? "The discerning person subscribes to the belief that the changing world can be understood most practically through a changing organism."⁹ This is merely another way of saying that the mentally healthy person realizes that true security exists, not when one is standing on "the solid rock" but when he is capable of keeping his footing in "the shifting sands."

As for changes in ways of thinking, it should be recognized that a person who has achieved a final, crystallized philosophy is one who has stopped growing. Of such a person it may be said, "He has let himself get into a rut." The impact of this statement can be strengthened by adding the aphorism, "The only difference between a rut and a grave is that a rut is longer—the persons in them are equally dead." One who is in good mental health, then, will look upon college as a priceless opportunity to foster more complete living and encourage rapid growth. Again, it may well be emphasized that our problems are of less importance than is the attitude we take toward them.

Problems of sex concern the college student. Although the problems pertaining to sex are not restricted to college students, such problems are a frequent source of difficulty for these students. In common with adolescents and postadolescents, college students are perplexed as to the line of action they should pursue in dealing with their impelling sex drives. They are concerned about the propriety and results of their contacts with members of the opposite sex. Dating and petting give rise to difficulties. Girls in women's colleges and boys in men's colleges have unique problems, while students attending coeducational institutions have both advantages and disadvantages in their dealings with the problem of sex.

⁹ John M. Dorsey, *The Foundations of Human Nature*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1935, p. 57. By permission of the publisher.

A study of mental hygiene will afford clues to the solution of the particular problem being encountered by any individual student. Those who apply the suggestions afforded by mental hygiene will realize that their own problems are not unique. A study of individual differences will reveal that the physical make-up of different people is quite varied and that the sex drives are stronger in some than in others. Some will be disturbed by problems which seem impossible of solution, while others will feel no problem at all. Realization of these facts will make it apparent that the solution of a given person's problem is an individual matter; no blanket prescription can be given as to what should be done to ensure solving such problems for everyone. Furthermore, it will be realized that the individual must solve the problem himself. No one can give a ready-made answer that will perfectly fit all situations. Nevertheless, although the solution of the problem is a personal matter, it is necessary for the dictates, demands, and ideals of society to be observed.

In spite of the fact that the problem of sex is in some respects an individual matter, certain suggestions have been found useful in many situations. It must be realized that sex drives are perfectly normal and that they should be treated as though they were normal. Open consideration and objectivity are beneficial approaches. Participation in social gatherings with the opposite sex affords definite satisfactions. Utilization of the college resources for physical activity is often helpful in diminishing the force of the sex drives. The establishment of confidential relationship with some older, dependable person will frequently be of immense value. Cultivation of emotional expressions through dancing, dramatics, painting, and music is frequently recommended as a means of reducing the overemphasis that is sometimes assigned to sex.

Some general considerations. In this section, certain of the problems of college students have been outlined, and brief indications of how mental hygiene might be of assistance have been given. It is not assumed that the reading of a few pages will give all the answers to these complex problems. Rather, the aim has been to suggest, not to teach, how mental hygiene can be employed in the living of a fuller, more effective, more harmonious life. In the chapters which follow, the points already touched upon will be elaborated and discussed in different situations. Thus, the problem of college adjustment is but one of the many situations in which the principles of mental hygiene

can be effective. Needs such as those for objectivity, self-direction, confidential relationships with other people, achievement, security, facing reality, and the employment of common sense are just as urgent in meeting life problems in general as they are in making college adjustment.

MEANING OF MENTAL HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Analysis of the various ways in which mental health has been defined yields, on the whole, a unique combination of words rather than a distinctive thought. The definitions, when analyzed, generally carry implications corresponding to the following: "Mental health may be defined as the adjustment of individuals to themselves and the world at large with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfactions, cheerfulness, and socially considerate behavior, and the ability to face and accept the realities of life."¹⁰

Mental health is not efficiency alone, or contentment or cheerfulness alone. It is the product of all these factors as they are expressed in the life of the human organism. Mental health characterizes the person who is capable of effective work that is at the same time both personally and socially satisfying. It involves the maximum development of the capabilities of a person, which leads to success commensurate with capacities. It involves the ability to keep one's temper under control and to express cheerfulness and consideration for fellow beings. It means being able to face reality in both defeat and victory, in both good times and bad, and to do this with intellectual and emotional stability. It includes all these things as they are expressed in the living personality. Mental health is not some simple aspect of life. It is intimately related to the whole of existence.

Mental hygiene, on the other hand, is the program that one adopts to achieve mental health. It involves the prevention of maladjustment for normal people, as well as the curing of persons who already have become psychologically disorganized. It is the practical art of living according to the principles of sound psychology and philosophy. Generally speaking, we can say that the purpose of mental hygiene is to assist people in the realization of a fuller, happier, more harmonious,

¹⁰ National Committee for Mental Hygiene, *Mental Hygiene Bulletin*, Vol. 9 (January-February, 1931), p. 1. By permission of the publisher.

and more effective life. Each of these factors will bear some elaboration.

A fuller life means that there are so many interesting things to be done that one can never be bored. It involves the exercise (even if not the complete development) of as many of our capacities as possible—our mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual facets of personality.

A happier life is not something that can be defined for one person by another. But if you can say that you are happy—mean what you will by it—an outsider has no right to challenge you. In short, a happy life is one which you believe is affording you the satisfactions, challenges, opportunities, love, and other experiences that you desire.

A harmonious life is one in which you get along with yourself and others. Getting along with yourself means that you select goals and pursue activities which are commensurate with your abilities. It means that you are able to make decisions without regret and to admit mistakes and deficiencies with a degree of objectivity. Harmoniousness with others requires such attitudes as to make you worthy of friendship and love. A working acceptance of the restrictions placed on you by law and custom is another aspect of such harmony.

An effective life simply means that purposes and activities have been planned and executed so that the maximum is accomplished with a minimum expenditure of time and effort. Work is applied where and when it will do the most good. There is a minimum of distraction and waste. The efficient life is economical in more than the monetary sense.

In a sense, mental hygiene is a new term for some old ideas. As such we might say that mental hygiene is a *practical and applied* philosophy of life. It is a code of conduct and a system of rules and principles for healthy living. Mental hygiene is the vehicle by which the cargo of mental health is carried, since mental health is the result of the successful application of the precepts involved in a mental hygiene program.

The concept of normality. It must be borne in mind that, although mental hygiene is frequently thought to be concerned only with abnormality, such is not the case. This narrow conception can be held, at present, only by those who recognize that actually there is some degree of abnormality in everyone. In some particular response or characteristic one person may deviate from the so-called “normal” or

"average" individual. Is such a person abnormal? In both popular and scientific thought we merely say that the person deviates in a particular respect. We do not consider him to be abnormal. Except in certain types of organic diseases (which many people lack entirely) that contribute to mental ill-health, the difference is one of degree rather than kind, and it is indeed difficult to know where to draw the distinction between normality and abnormality. That is, the person who is abnormal by virtue of possessing the symptom known as a phobia (a morbid fear or dread which dominates the person's existence) differs from the normal person only in the kind of fear he has and the extent to which it has developed. The manic-depressive (a person characterized by the habit of going to emotional extremes—from periods of elation to those of depression) is different from the normal person who has "fits of blues" or "dog days" only in the degree to which the emotional states characteristically progress. The psychoneurotic (a person who has developed any of a number of escape mechanisms which are indicated by certain types of ailments) is merely an individual who has carried on a process of rationalization, something we all do, to an extreme degree.

On the other hand, it must be admitted that there are certain types of mental illness which are not due simply to differences in degree. Thus, paresis (syphilitic infection of the brain) is not something that a normal person possesses to a small extent. There are, of course, varying degrees of paresis, but most normal people are entirely free of the germ which causes the disease. Encephalitis, or sleeping sickness, also is a distinct abnormality. Nevertheless, it is generally valid to state that abnormality is a matter of degree and that the man who said, "There is enough good in the worst of us, and enough bad in the best of us, that it ill behooves the most of us to make fun of the rest of us," was stating a view that is, at least partially, applicable in defining abnormality.

Another aspect of normality might well be considered in the study of mental hygiene. This has to do with standards of ideals of conduct. Normality in this sense involves a desired or desirable condition. Parents who hope that their children will be "normal" are, in reality, hoping that their children will have no difficult problems of health, food, housing, friendship, or scholastic accomplishment. Actually, of

course, such problems as these are normal in that they are experienced by the average person. At any rate, this concept of normality can be used by the student of mental hygiene. He can strive toward normality—normality in the sense of reaching the “desirable” condition of having better mental health than is characteristic of the average person.

The scope of mental hygiene. To assert that the scope of mental hygiene is as wide as life itself would probably be to make an unwise generalization; but it is true that mental hygiene touches our lives at numerous and vital points. The frustrations we encounter in and out of school life have their relations to mental hygiene. The pleasure we get from a job, the efficiency with which we perform it, its significance for other people—these are often discussed in texts on the subject. The social relationships of civic responsibility, marriage, and friendship are most effective when based on sound mental hygiene principles. The use we make of leisure time, the type of avocational interest we develop, the planning of our off-work hours can be improved by using the teachings of mental hygiene that are pertinent to the problem at hand. The use we make of and the value we derive from religion can well be influenced by the study of this branch of applied psychology. Anyone who stops to realize the wide scope of mental hygiene will recognize the difficulty of making a truly intensive study of it within the bounds of a semester’s work. He will also recognize the limitations of the treatment which can be made in any one book. Continuous study of mental hygiene is justified by the inclusiveness of its scope.

Many books on mental hygiene will be found to contain discussions of heredity and eugenics and thus to involve the biological sciences. Physical environment is a potent factor in the shaping of human personality, therefore, the physical sciences are involved. Sociology, political science, and history are needed for describing the effects of the social environment on the personality and mental health of individuals, particularly in groups; therefore, the social sciences are involved. Because mental hygiene is concerned with enjoyments and satisfactions, literature, music, painting, and other fine arts must also be considered. Since the problems of selecting an occupation and the pursuing of hobbies are aspects of mental hygiene, the practical arts must

have their share of consideration. Hence it becomes evident that many of the aims of education and formal instruction are synonymous with the aims of mental hygiene.

THE OUTLOOK FOR MENTAL HYGIENE

More and more attention is being paid to the problems involved in mental hygiene. It is a matter of rather widespread concern. In recent years, many books dealing with various aspects of mental hygiene have appeared. Many magazines contain articles pertaining to the subject. Lectures dealing with various aspects of its problems are increasing in number and popularity. The word "psychiatry" and the term "mental hygiene" are heard more and more frequently. These are all indications of a widening interest in the subject.

Mental hygiene courses in college. At the end of the decade from the school year 1929-1930 to 1939-1940, the number of mental hygiene courses offered in colleges in the United States had become about threefold what it had been at the start. Since the end of the Second World War the increase has been even more rapid. This is revealed by the number of classes, the size of classes, and the amount of literature that deals directly with the subject. Nearly half of our colleges offer some course of instruction which has as its primary aim the study of mental hygiene. Moreover, this study is being directed to consideration of normal persons rather than of the deviate. Increasingly there is a distinction being made between courses in abnormal psychology and courses in mental hygiene.

Such facts are encouraging, but much remains to be accomplished. Reflection upon the statistics quoted previously from Harold F. Dorn and upon assertions made by Karl Menninger would indicate that mental hygiene is important enough to be taught in more than half of the colleges in the United States. Furthermore, not all the courses offered by a given college are taken by all the students. This means that relatively few of the total number of college students have an opportunity to make a study of mental hygiene under the guidance of an instructor.

Another cause for concern regarding the effectiveness of mental hygiene is the fact that the study seems to be conceived as being something for someone else. Most of the courses offered in college are for

teachers, psychologists, nurses, and social workers. Less than 10 per cent of the courses are designed to meet the personal needs of the students themselves, while they are in college and while they are getting ready to engage in their future work. Yet this period is one of particular importance in the establishment of mental and emotional habits that will, in all probability, persist throughout adulthood. The need for mental hygiene for teachers is indeed great, but mental hygiene for students is also important. It is apparent that one of the desirable developments of mental hygiene would be an increase in the number of service courses in mental hygiene for students in lower divisions while they are facing the problems involved in making adjustments to college life.

Handicaps to the study of mental hygiene. It can be seen from the foregoing that there are some drawbacks under which the drive toward mental health struggles. Another handicap to this study is that, since there is no magical formula for happiness and efficiency, people are sometimes disappointed with the program which is outlined. However, it must be admitted that mental hygiene has some contribution to make to the life of the individual, even though the benefits accrue slowly.

Although William H. Burnham wrote his book *The Normal Mind* some years ago, his statement of the handicaps under which the study of mental hygiene must operate is still valid. The limitations are four-fold:

1. Because its teaching concerns very simple matters—good food, pure water, clean air, and the like; and in mental hygiene, attention, orderly association, wholesome interests, self-control—mere common sense.
2. Because, since the aim of hygiene is prevention, if it is successful nothing happens, and the comment is easy that it would have been so anyway.
3. Because we know relatively little yet of the detailed facts about health conditions. It is still the “science of the future.”
4. Because in the present undeveloped condition of hygiene, especially of mental hygiene, it is easy to criticize any attempt to state principles or rules or even the conditions of health. It is easy for the cynic to point to the complexity of the mental life and to maintain there is no such thing as principles of mental hygiene.¹¹

¹¹ William H. Burnham, *The Normal Mind*, New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1924, p. xi. By permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

It must be admitted that not all the data on mental health are in. This, however, should not mean that nothing is known of the facts and principles governing mental and emotional life. The field of medicine is growing each year, with new discoveries coming rapidly; but the fact that not everything is known does not prevent people from consulting the physician. Likewise, because the mental hygienist has not achieved a perfect science, it should not be assumed that he has no contribution to make to human happiness. The truth is that continued study by psychologists, physicians, and mental hygienists has resulted in several general principles of mental hygiene that are widely accepted as being valid. The great danger lies in Burnham's first point—the tendency for people to say, "Well, I knew that already." They are probably stating the truth; but, the important thing is not the knowledge itself but the emphatic realization that these *knowledges should be put into active operation in the life of the individual.*

The individual's prospects for mental health. Varying degrees of mental health are experienced by different persons. We might say of mental health what Shakespeare said of greatness: "Some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon 'em." Some people seem to be "just naturally" happy, efficient, and socially effective. Others seem to be so fortunately situated that no conflict ever occurs that is of enough gravity to disrupt their lives seriously. Many more, by far, have to achieve mental health through the slow process of growth, trial and error, and experience. To the last of these groups the contents of this book are directed.

The assumption here is that conditions will be sure to change and that it is possible for the individual to have a voice in the direction of this change. Furthermore, the optimistic view is taken that if the state of affairs is a sad one, the situation can become better; if it is good, it can be made better still or, at least, be maintained.

Some examples will serve to show that mental health is within the realm of possibility. Ignorance, fear, superstition are all threats to emotional stability and mental equilibrium. Their existence in the make-up of the individual is inimical to mental health. It is well known, however, that ignorance can be dispelled by knowledge and intelligence, fear can be and has been replaced by confidence acquired

through the development of skills, and superstitions can be allayed by adequate information and experience.

Just as the elements of mental ill-health can be analyzed and corrected, the elements of good mental health can be determined and fostered. Mental health is, then, perfectly capable of cultivation, but there is no royal road to accomplishing that end. There are no panaceas for mental adjustment. The achievement of mental health should be considered confidently and optimistically, but with the realization that it is the result of continual habit formation, of mental and physical growth, and that it can be attained only by constant vigilance on the part of the person concerned. A first essential is *trust in the slow process of growth*.

SUMMARY

Much of the evolution of civilization can be traced to the fact that man has gained mastery over his environment through the exercise of his intellect. One phase of future evolution might well be for man to gain greater mastery over himself through an understanding and control of his emotions. Mental hygiene is a study designed to foster such emotional control. Although it was originated as a movement to help abnormal persons, mental hygiene, or control of emotions, is now acknowledged to be important for those who are normal, as well.

Mental illness is extensive. One out of twenty persons experiences serious mental breakdown, and the rest have minor symptoms of mental ill-health which prevent a full attainment of happiness, harmony, and efficiency. Mental illness is expensive. It costs a great deal in the care of patients in asylums and it interferes with the work and accomplishment of people in the common walks of life.

The college student has to face the problem of mental health because he must encounter unique problems and because he is forming habits and attitudes that will condition his success in college as well as in later life. But mental health is not a problem that concerns the college student alone, because it touches the lives of all at every point and therefore has importance for everyone.

Although a commendable gain has been made in the number of mental hygiene courses in college, there is still much to be desired. More persons should be allowed an opportunity to study mental hygiene; because, in spite of certain handicaps, mental health is attain-

able for those who trust in growth and who apply the principles of growth to the various aspects of their lives.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. Mental efficiency and the acquisition of knowledge are more important to modern man than is the matter of emotional control.
2. Modern mental hygiene is primarily concerned with the curing of those people who have been committed to institutions for their care.
3. The present status of medical sciences indicates that physical ill-health is more prevalent than is mental ill-health.
4. It costs about twice as much annually to take care of a person in a mental hospital than it does to keep a normal child in school.
5. In recent years the incidence of mental illness is markedly greater than it was a decade or two ago. .
6. There is no reason why a college student should become homesick if he just takes the right attitude toward his problem.
7. Since competition with others frequently leads to disappointment, we should compete only with our own former accomplishments.
8. One of the paradoxes of mental hygiene is that people seem to have a desire for new experiences and yet at the same time resist change.
9. The most important problem of mental hygiene is the attainment of mental efficiency.
10. One of the handicaps to the study of mental hygiene is that the problems are so complex that an ordinary person can hardly comprehend them.

11. Mental health can be attained by most people, in spite of certain handicaps, if they will but incorporate the principles of mental hygiene into their lives.

Suggested Readings

BEERS, CLIFFORD, *A Mind That Found Itself*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1917. 363 pp.

An autobiography of the struggle one man had to gain control over his thoughts, emotions, and actions so that he could live a happy and effective life. The latter part of the book describes his efforts to make mental hygiene more effective for all.

BERG, CHARLES, *War in the Mind*, London: The Macaulay Press, 1946. 260 pp.

This is an interpretation of mental hygiene from the Freudian viewpoint. A number of extensive case studies are presented and interpreted. The subtitle, "The Case Book of a Medical Psychologist," promises—and provides—some interesting reading. Words directly from the mouths of patients tell what they experience in mental illness.

PRESTON, GEORGE H., *Psychiatry for the Curious*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1940. 148 pp.

An illustration of the fact that popular presentations can be of real value. The word "psychiatry" does not mean that it deals only with the strictly abnormal. The concrete suggestions are further clarified by pen sketches. Look at it and you will want to read it and will profit from the ideas.

RENNIE, THOMAS A. C., and LUTHER E. WOODWARD, *Mental Health in Modern Society*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1948. 424 pp.

For the student who is studying psychology or medicine. This is a description of mental hygiene in practice, not a theoretical discussion. A background of theory will, however, help toward an understanding of the discussions.

Chapter 2

GROWTH PROCESSES AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Mental health can be improved. The need for improvement was outlined in the foregoing chapter. This and subsequent chapters will point out some of the means by which progress can be accomplished.

There is no short cut to mental health. It is an outcome of slow and continuous growth. Nevertheless, people are constantly seeking to reach it by a quick route. Some hope that an analysis of their characters through astrology, palmistry, or handwriting will solve their problems. Others, in the search for a panacea for their disappointments, send for short courses in psychology, courses telling "how to win friends," "how to play the piano in five lessons," and "how to attain the body beautiful." There are those who try to win popularity and realize the romance of their dreams by using the proper soap, the lasting mouthwash, the tooth paste that gives the permanent polish, or the pleasant deodorant. The laugh that a college student suppresses may well indicate that he or she has at some time sought the royal road to success by using a scientific fat reducer, the "dancing-by-mail" course, or even the "medically prescribed" gland substances that make one feel years younger. "The Fountain of Youth" is still being sought daily in some form or other.

The facts become more and more obvious. Emphasis must be placed on the importance of recognizing the role of growth in the process of achieving (not achievement of) mental health. It will be well to study just how these principles can be capitalized upon in one's planning for more happiness and improved efficiency.

Preview of the principles of growth. The following statements relate to the phenomena of growth which have important bearing on the problems of mental health:

1. Growth is the product of the interaction of the organism with its environment.

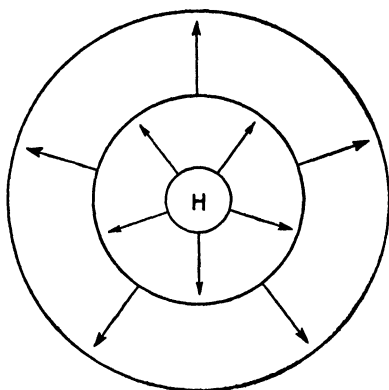
2. Growth takes place most rapidly during the early life of the individual.
3. The rate of growth varies from individual to individual.
4. The pattern of growth within a species tends to follow an orderly genetic sequence.
5. Growth is continuous and gradual rather than saltatory (proceeding by leaps and bounds).
6. The effect of training varies with the degree of maturation.
7. Growth is a process involving both individuation and integration.
8. Correlation, rather than compensation, of traits is the general rule.
9. The relative rate of growth for an individual tends to remain constant.

These principles will be explained in the light of their implication for individual mental health.

Growth is the product of the interaction of the organism with its environment. If a person were to view the organism (hereditary factors) as the determiner of mental health, he would not have to assume responsibility for the direction of growth. He could blame his shortcomings and inadequacies on poor heredity, claiming that his condition was due merely to the unfolding of inherited potentialities. Similarly, it would be easy to assert that one's condition had been produced by environmental factors. Here environment is considered to be some imponderable force which operates in the more or less mechanical nature that "fate" has determined for the individual. Neither of these explanations is in accord with the psychological facts, nor will either of them bring about the best of mental health.

When we recognize that the interaction of the organism and the environment is influenced by the habits, attitudes, and motivations of the individual, we can take a more constructive part in the growth process. Although our potentialities have been determined, the way in which we care for our bodies and our intellects will influence the extent to which we develop these potentialities. The aspects of our environment which we select to respond to will determine the process of interaction. To avoid taking responsibility for deciding what we should do with our human equipment rests upon a fatalistic assumption that cannot lead to growth (see Fig. 4).

Graphic representation of growth as an unfolding process. The absurdity of the view is seen when we realize that any seed (including the human) must have an environment from which to take nourishment in order to develop. Here growth is merely the unfolding of the hereditary (*H*) potential.



Formula for expressing environment as the determiner of individual growth. Here the situation (*S*) or stimulus forces the individual into making responses (*R*) of a purely mechanical nature.



Symbols representing the process of interaction between the organism and the environment. Action starts with the organism's selection, from its total environment, of the stimuli to which it reacts (the lower left arrow). These stimuli then act upon the individual, who responds to them. Having reacted in a certain way, the organism is changed so that subsequent responses and selection will be different from those which would have occurred if there had been no interplay of the organism with its environment.

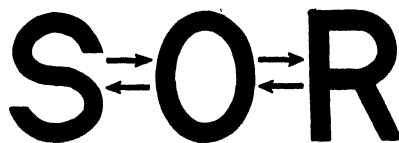


FIG. 4. Symbolic interpretations of the role of organism and environment in the growth process.

The way an individual can influence the process of interaction between the organism and its environment is illustrated by the case of one of the writer's students.

Elizabeth C. was a freshman with scholastic aptitude scores which seemed to indicate that she would not be able to do successful college work. Low scores on general intelligence, vocabulary, reading, and English aptitude tests made it appear that college was not the place for her. Elizabeth came to the office several times with a tearful face. Her story was a pathetic one. A father who

frequently got into difficulty with police and a mother who did not speak English and who was not interested in her own or her daughter's learning were handicaps that few could overcome. In fact, Elizabeth's two older sisters were living the aimless lives one would expect under such circumstances. Yet out of this environment, and certainly with hereditary potentialities below those of the average college student (if not of the average person), Elizabeth came with a determination to be a teacher. She was on probation for several terms but was making sufficient progress over her own past records so that she was not dismissed. Gradually she began to make the lowest acceptable grades. By the time she was a senior, she had sufficient honor points to be graduated. At the time of writing she has been a teacher for several years and has been recently elected to fill what many people considered to be one of the most desirable teaching jobs in her field that the state had to offer.

Growth takes place most rapidly in the early life of the individual. The fundamental personality patterns of a child are formed by six years of age. A child at the age of two years is half as tall as he ever will be. A baby's brain at one year is about half of its adult size and by three years is a little more than two-thirds of adult size. Another way of expressing this rapid growth is to say that by the first birthday the baby's brain has grown as much as it will in the next seventeen or eighteen years.

The importance of the early years in growth toward mental health is revealed in the observation, "If the correct emphasis were placed on the high chair, we could let cobwebs grow on the electric chair." Writers on the subject of juvenile delinquency repeatedly stress the fact that delinquency does not occur suddenly. The ultimate break is foreshadowed by school truancy, inability to conform to disciplinary codes, lack of skills in getting along with classmates, dissension with parents, and the like. In short, "predelinquent" behavior is established before the adolescent with problems actually earns the name of "delinquent."

Such data as these are not presented for purposes of discouragement but rather for the sake of realism. It should be recognized that although in the later years growth takes place more slowly, yet the growth

process does still go on. Rapid development in knowledge, personality, health, vigor, and competence should not be expected after the first few years of life.

Broad patterns of personality may be established in the first six years. Friendliness, optimism, confidence, and the like are examples of such basic patterns. *Manifestations* of these patterns can be modified throughout life. Perhaps you do have difficulty in gaining new friends; but you can, if you wish, do the things that are an aid in forming friendships, even though it may not be easy. You may lack confidence, but you can develop habits which will keep that fact from showing readily; and by so doing you will somewhat modify the pattern.

Knowledge can keep growing throughout one's lifetime. Although the brain stops increasing in size, it is sheer fallacy to believe that "You can't teach an old dog new tricks"—especially if the "old dog" refers to a human being. In fact, the more one learns, the more he can learn; because the greater the body of information with which he starts, the more meaningful are the new experiences that he has. For example, if one knows a great deal about automobile repairing, he will be able to learn more rapidly the intricacies of repairing a current model car than can a person who starts with no knowledge of cars. The new acquisitions of knowledge are added to the already existing store. Similarly, the knowledge you gain from a beginning course in mental hygiene will make more understandable the related bodies of knowledge that you encounter in more advanced courses in the same field.

The rate of growth varies from individual to individual. It would be very helpful to people who wish to continue growing if they would but recognize that rates of growth vary in different persons. Much discouragement may result from comparing one's *absolute* growth with that of another. Such comparison is detrimental from two viewpoints. One is that recognizing the superior status of another may make one's own status seem less gratifying. The second is that gloating over one's own superiority will make next steps appear to be less important. If comparison is to be made, it might be more helpful to consider *relative* rates of growth (see Fig. 5).

The healthy viewpoint is to recognize that our own growth rates vary. If not much progress has been made in the past three months or the last year, then we would do well to challenge ourselves to make a

more carefully organized effort in the next period. This implies that we should evaluate our rate of growth in terms of where we were, where we are, and where we could or should be.

You can undoubtedly find among your acquaintances some who, having the same chronological age as your own, have achieved a greater degree of emotional maturity. This need not be taken as evidence of your own eventual defeat. It means that their growth rate has been different. It may very well be that the person referred to is

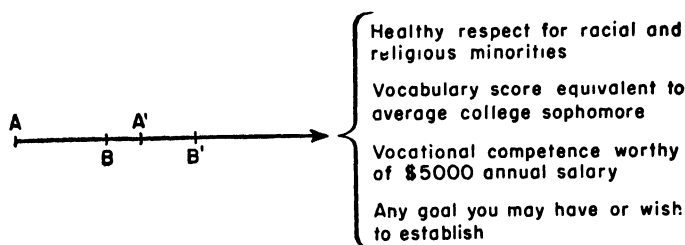


FIG. 5. Comparison of absolute and relative growth. On January 1, *A* and *B* were at the points indicated with respect to the goal. On August 1 they were at points *A'* and *B'*. *B* is ahead of *A* on both dates, which could be discouraging to *A*. If, however, comparison is made to self or to relative growth, *A* can see that he has made marked progress. His relative growth is greater than that of *B*, even though on an absolute scale *B* is still ahead.

a more rapid grower. It does not necessarily indicate that you will fail to grow to the same stature of emotional maturity. In fact, it is entirely possible that, although you are a slow grower in this respect, you will grow for a longer period of time and ultimately attain a higher level than that of your acquaintance. It would be much safer not to begin by making comparisons with others at all. The stimulating comparison is that of present status with former status.

Here are several possibilities in rates of growth. There are some who grow rapidly and for short periods; some who grow rapidly and for long periods; others who grow slowly for short periods; and still others who grow slowly for a long time (see Fig. 6).

The pattern of growth within a species tends to follow an orderly genetic sequence. This principle is a corollary of the one just discussed. Although rates of growth vary, any given growth characteristic will appear in a regular, patterned sequence. For example, babies vary widely as to the age when they first walk. However, before the child

walked, he crawled and he crept. Talking will begin after walking, and reading will follow talking. The ages, from child to child, will not be the same; nevertheless, the pattern (sequence) of starting will be much the same.

Because of this sequence, the science of psychology can more safely make predictions. We can be sure that—other things being equal—certain kinds of conduct will appear in certain age groups, if not at

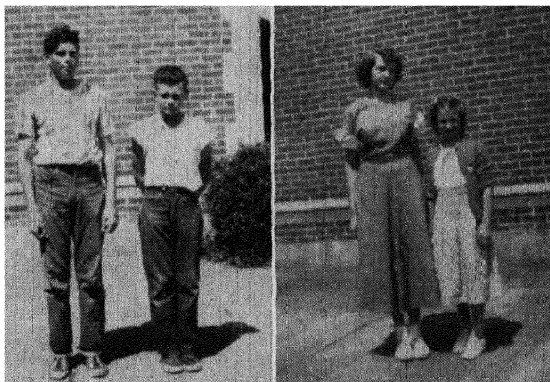


FIG. 6. The pictures above give a pictorial view of different rates of growth. Both the above pairs of students were taken from one class. The girl at the left is two months younger than the smaller girl. The larger boy is six months older than the other. There is a two-year difference in mental age in one of the pairs.

specified ages. Hence we have studies of childhood, adolescence, maturity, and senescence in which helpful generalizations are possible.

The sequence of development is less demonstrable in the areas of emotional and intellectual development than it is in physical development. However, there is evidence that the concept is equally valid.¹ Certain kinds of conduct (growth patterns) are indicative of the types which follow. An example is the concept of predelinquent behavior. Children who manifest such traits of behavior as truancy, lying, fears, antisocial behavior, and disobedience are likely later to resort to the

¹ Arnold Gesell, of Yale University, has listed the kinds of mental as well as physical behavior which appear in sequence in children. Katharine Bridges' theory of emotions indicates that certain emotions appear before others can develop out of them by expansion. Descriptions of the work of Gesell and Bridges may be found in several general and child psychology textbooks.

kind of conduct which is termed "delinquency." Some studies indicate that, if the individual has lived a happy childhood, the usual sequence is that he will establish a happy marriage.

If you wish to be a writer, you must be able to express yourself and must know something of grammar and word meanings. You must have gained direct and vicarious experience. Unless you are unusually gifted, you will have to spend time rewriting, rephrasing, and reorganizing. There are certain sequences of learning that must be followed if you are to become a doctor. High-school graduation, college attendance, university study, medical-school experience, and internship are all steps in the process of becoming a physician.

The important thing for the student of mental hygiene is to realize that, since growth follows an orderly sequence, steps along the way cannot be omitted. This is true in spite of romantic notions to the contrary. Mental health cannot be discovered or achieved as the result of ten correspondence lessons, listening to Doctor Quack's ten dynamic lectures, or taking "gland stimulants" or "lively-liver" products. Rather, mental health is built upon the bases of a wise philosophy, clearly defined goals, good working habits, sound teaching, and diligent application. Each step, all steps, must be taken.

Growth is continuous and gradual rather than saltatory. This is probably one of the more discouraging of the growth principles. Progress is so gradual that at times it seems we are standing still. It is, however, encouraging to remember that growth is also continuous. Young people should count on the continuous growth that is taking place rather than lament the gradual aspect. It is not altogether unfortunate that youth are impatient, because such impatience can lead to vigorous application; if, however, they become so impatient for results that they give up whatever they have been striving for, the negative attitude loses the day.

It is important, in order to capitalize on this growth principle, to look back to where we were a year or two ago. Then it will be realized that change is taking place continuously, even if gradually. Such a view will help provide the stimulus for further directed effort. Another way in which the continuity of growth can be perceived is to study the changes which have taken place in acquaintances whom we have not seen for a year or so. Changes are not so apparent to those who are with us much of the time and therefore we are likely to over-

look slight differences that come about gradually. This has been noted on numerous occasions by the writer when he has seen some of his former students after a considerable lapse of time. Even as relatively mature persons, many change physically in various ways in the years immediately after they have left college; and more marked still are the changes in their attitude toward responsibility, in the equanimity with which they face problems, and in the confidence with which they view their work.

The faith which mental hygienists place in the continuity of growth is illustrated in the following statement.

A generation of children who have been well loved, who are wholesomely self-confident, who have disciplined their instinctive drives and harmonized self-interest with enjoyable give-and-take with others, who can think critically and objectively, who have become accustomed to making decisions while adapting to change, and whose personalities are well integrated and mature, are the best guarantee that problems of human relationship can and will be worked out. When the dynamic processes of growing up are made to serve positive and constructive ends, conflict, fear, and hostility can be kept within bounds and the danger² of disabling psychoneuroses diminished.²

It is well to remember that this is a representative rather than a unique view. Self-confidence, self-control, improved human relationships, maturity of conduct are all susceptible to improvement. We must, however, have faith in the capacity of people to grow continuously when they are intelligently guided. Results will not be apparent immediately, but each generation can be better than the one before.

Finally, it must be remembered that, since growth is continuous and gradual, it is never too late to change. True, the capacity for directing change may diminish as we grow older, but it is also true that some kind of change is inevitable. From the mental hygiene viewpoint it is incumbent upon the individual to capitalize on the continuity of growth by guiding the direction of change.

The effect of training varies with the degree of maturation. This principle is a contradiction of the widespread fallacy that older persons learn less rapidly than do the young. It all depends. The principle

² Thomas A. C. Rennie and Luther E. Woodward, *Mental Health in Modern Society*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1948, p. 388. By permission of the publisher.

arises from the observed fact that a person must have reached a certain degree of maturity before the result of directed learning will be most profitable. In fact, it is often useless to try to "train" until the desired maturity is reached. For example, it does little good to try to teach a baby to walk until he is "ready." When that time comes, he seems to learn largely without training.

Another example is the generalization that a child must have reached the mental age of six and one-half years before he can most profitably engage in beginning reading experiences. In the modern school, number work is quite frequently delayed until the third or the fourth grade. The maturity a child has then attained allows him to profit from number experiences so well that he soon equals the progress of classmates whose number work began much earlier. In high school it has been found that students of a given I.Q. will often fail in algebra when it is taken in the freshman year. However, students with the same I.Q. who take it in the junior year make markedly better progress than those who had the course in their first high-school term. All this points to the fact that learning is more facile when there is a stronger or wider base on which to build. New and varied experiences provide the stuff of which this base is composed.

Any aspect of mental health—building better study habits, becoming more friendly, widening one's interests—will serve as an example to show that the relatively mature person will make faster headway than one who is immature. It has been observed that under specific instruction in reading, the better college readers made greater gain than those who were poorer initially. The following cases illustrate the principle involved.

In 1933 the writer carried on an experimental class in reading improvement. About twenty students were involved. Most of them made some gain in speed and comprehension and a few came close to doubling their reading rates. Two students who stood very high on the initial tests were the ones who made the greatest gain.

Sam G. on the first tests for speed averaged about 400 words per minute; but after the instruction and drill periods, his rate on several tests was close to 850 words per minute. Sam had flunked out of two colleges before coming to the one in which he was at

that time enrolled. He has since established a record of having been graduated at the head of his junior college class and received high enough grades in the university he attended to be awarded a graduate fellowship. By 1948 he was holding a lucrative position with a leading book company on the west coast. His success cannot be attributed entirely to reading skill, but quite possibly that has been a factor worthy of note.

Alice M. also was a very good reader at the beginning of the experiment. Her rate was about 350 words per minute (her scholarship records were superior in both high school and college). After the experiment, the tests showed an average speed of 700 words per minute. In 1948, as a housewife and the mother of two children, she was able to find time to read from one to two books per week. It does not take much time for her to do this.

The point is this: We could not possibly get the same kind of results from second-, fourth-, or eighth-grade pupils. They would not have the experiences necessary to make the instruction meaningful and of importance to them. Further, although most students in the experiment cited above made some gain, the greatest gain was by the two who, as far as reading speed was concerned, were most mature. Far from being a handicap, the degree of maturity was a decided advantage, as it provided the base for further growth. The more skilled (mature) students had more to build upon.

Growth is a process involving both individuation and integration. This principle is significant for its stress upon the fact that growth is far more than sheer gain in height and weight.

Individuation means that the parts of the body function independently as growth proceeds. That is, an infant kicks and squirms all over as he reaches ineffectually for an object. Later, he grasps the object easily with arm movements alone. This individuation continues to develop throughout life. The skilled athlete performs a difficult catch and makes a long accurate throw as though it were one easy, continuous motion. The novice, attempting the same thing, would perform many unnecessary movements and accomplish less. By a similar experience a skilled speaker has achieved such individuated conduct that the right words, the exact timing, and significant emphases are combined to make a strong impression. You, as a student,

in applying the principles of mental health will learn to select responses, time them with exactness, and emphasize them appropriately as you gain knowledge and experience. Time will be needed for attaining individuation, just as time is required in the development of skill in athletics and speaking.

Individuation means also that as growth takes place the person becomes more unusual, more distinctive. He becomes more of an individual and less of a type or pattern. Again think of infants, who are very much alike—in spite of the notions of doting mothers. Children look different; but the range of differences in their reaction patterns in the school, on the playground, and in the home is much narrower than that of the differences between middle-aged people. There are many contrasts among college students. Still there is more community of action and interest on the campus than there is in the working world, with its 30,000 or more recorded job classifications.

In the mentally healthy life this “becoming-more-distinctive” phase does not rule out the adoption of tried and proved kinds of conduct. Actually there are so few who know very much about mental health and fewer still who apply their knowledge that following approved principles of action will serve to create further distinction. Moreover, such distinction will not be just odd behavior but, rather, superior behavior.

Integration is part and parcel of the process of individuation. It refers, in part, to the harmonious working together of parts of the body. All the movements of hands, arms, feet, legs, and body in smoothly executing a running one-handed shot in basketball constitute an integrated action. It refers also to the achievement of harmony in a person's plans, objectives, abilities, and action. Many writers in the field of mental hygiene refer to integration as the ultimate and final goal of programs devoted to mental health. That is, the well-adjusted person is an integrated person. He has dominant motives which allow him to control less important desires. He need not fret and worry about making decisions; nor does he spend time regretting them, once they are made. His philosophy of life, his knowledge of his own strengths and weaknesses give him guidance in the making of choices and the direction of his actions.

It can be seen from the above that one slowly achieves integration

as he studies alternative goals, chooses a course, and acts accordingly. That is, the development of a philosophy of life fosters the condition known as integration. A person becomes integrated as he adjusts his desires to the demands of his intimate associates and to society at large. Thus, a person who has achieved the growth which makes his conduct less egocentric and more sociocentric is on the road to integration.

These steps to mental health are not taken "instinctively" or spontaneously. They are prompted by favorable environmental conditions. For the college student one of these environmental conditions is the opportunity he has for the study of principles of psychology, sociology, and philosophy. His books, his teachers, his classmates are factors in his environment that can lead him to make wise choices and determine courses of action. (It may be that some of the choices are made by repudiating what he reads, what he hears his professors say and sees his classmates do.)

Correlation, rather than compensation, of traits is the general rule. In this principle, as in others, it must be remembered that we are talking about a principle—something which is generally true—rather than about an invariable law. Correlation implies that *usually* a person who is strong in one characteristic will have greater likelihood of being strong in a second trait. The person who is weak in one trait will have less likelihood of being strong in a second area. (*But to predict in individual cases would be very foolish.*) The proposition can also be stated as indicating that it is not true that a person with a strong back will have a weak mind or that a girl who is beautiful will therefore be dumb.

The practical import of this principle is, for the most part, that it helps toward clarifying some widespread misconceptions. One result will be a little less haste in making unwise generalizations, such as "poor students should devote themselves to shop work," "good musicians are temperamental," and others which you will call to mind after a little reflection.

A notion to which some subscribe and which is particularly pertinent for the college person is that high intelligence predisposes one to more than an average amount of instability. Actually there is a slight tendency in the other direction. Again, prediction in individual

cases is fallacious, but the fact is that higher intelligence tends to make adjustment somewhat easier. For instance, there are many studies which indicate that both delinquents and adult criminals test slightly lower than average in intelligence.

It has been demonstrated that the best intelligence-test score from the standpoint of adjustment is around 120. This is the point about which the intelligence-test scores of college students tend to cluster. Above I.Q. 120 there is a slight increase in the predisposition toward maladjustment. This might be explained by the fact that intelligence which is exceptionally high tends to isolate the person from the great mass of people, and that, for this reason, he is more likely to be misunderstood. In short, the tendency toward instability above I.Q. 120 is due not to lack of ability to solve problems in general but to social ineptness, contributed to by a lack of understanding on the part of people having average intelligence.

This principle of growth, therefore, indicates that the person of college caliber actually has a better than average chance for achieving mental health. The hazard of social adjustment must be anticipated, and continuous preparation for establishing harmonious human relations should be a serious aspect of collegiate study. Specifically, the academic study of social sciences and the pursuit of developmental student activities deserve a place in a well-rounded schedule of activities. Finally, the principle may serve to foster an optimistic view of the potentialities for mental health in the case of the college person.

The relative rate of growth for an individual tends to remain constant. This principle might well be considered a corollary of the third, that "the rate of growth varies from individual to individual." The principle now under consideration, however, refers to growth in one person rather than to a comparison with the growth of others. The rate of growth is a characteristic of a person. Some grow relatively rapidly while others grow relatively slowly. Two babies both having the same height at birth may be of different heights at two years. Since rates of growth *tend* to remain constant, the one who is shorter at two years will probably still be shorter than the other when both achieve maturity. That is, the amount of growth in the first two years is an indication of (1) the rate of growth and (2) the amount of growth that will take place after the second birthday.

It is upon this principle that belief in the constancy of the I.Q. is based. That is, an individual of five, ten, or fifteen years will tend to have the same I.Q. at all ages. Yet it is important to remember that his mental age is different at each chronological age. Some problems will clarify this. (Note: The I.Q. is the mental age in months divided by the chronological age in months, times 100.)

Person *A* has, on his fifth birthday, a mental age of six years. His I.Q. is 72 divided by 60, or 1.2, times 100, or 120 I.Q. The same rate of growth will mean that by his tenth birthday he will be twelve years old mentally. Again, $144 \div 120$ is 1.2×100 or I.Q. 120. By fifteen years, the computation is $216 \div 180$ or 1.2×100 . The I.Q. is still 120.

Person *B* at five years of age has a mental age of four. $48 \div 60$ is 80 I.Q. In five years more his mental age would tend to increase at the same rate, or four years. $96 \div 120$ is 80 I.Q., and at fifteen years it would still be the same.³

The practical lesson to be learned from this principle, as far as the individual is concerned, has to do with evaluating his own abilities. If you have been only an average student in high school, you should not be disappointed in the same sort of results in college. One cannot reasonably expect to write the best seller of the current year if he has not done any writing before. It is characteristic Hollywood fiction that the director sees a beautiful girl as she boards a bus and then and there decides that she is a star. Most actors and actresses have gone through preparatory experiences and most of them have given evidence of their talent at an early age. Indications of superior accomplishment are manifest in the years preceding the actual achievement.

³ A variation of five to ten points in one person's I.Q. is not indicative of a changed rate of intellectual growth but is probably due to the fact that intelligence tests are "indicators" rather than exact measures.

It should be further noted that there is an increasing amount of psychological and educational research data which show that under markedly changed environments the I.Q. also shifts markedly. The conclusion is that the rate of growth is influenced by both heredity and environment and that the constancy of the I.Q. is due to the fact that a person is very likely to stay in much the same environment.

All this is but another way of stating that the habits of intellectual and emotional growth which one has formed tend to persist. It does not necessarily mean that potentialities for development are for all time decided by the make-up of one's heredity. It should be remembered that growth is the product of the interaction of heredity and environment. This principle does mean that the habits of growth (interaction) that are being formed today will shape later development and influence the achievement we shall have made by the next five, ten, or twenty-five years. However, the rate of growth may be changed by changing the factors that influence the process. The selection of the environment in which we live, the motivation we have *and* develop for improvement, the application of effort (part of the motivation) and the goals we choose to pursue are conditions which could serve to change the rate of growth, whether mental, social, emotional, or professional.

SUMMARY

The person who is serious about learning to live in a mentally healthful manner must abandon the idea of sudden, magical changes. He must learn to capitalize on and direct the changes which are slowly taking place within him. These changes operate in a systematic manner according to certain principles, or general tendencies, of growth. Growing toward mental health means giving attention to these principles.

It is necessary to acknowledge that both heredity and environment are factors which influence behavior and adjustment. Heredity provides the raw material with which to work and environment provides the tools for working the material. The interaction between these two factors is influenced by the individual, who chooses the goals and applies the energy. To some extent the individual further shapes the interaction by selecting those parts of the environment which are most conducive to harmonious and socially acceptable growth.

Although development takes place rapidly in the early years it is important to recognize that it also takes place, though less rapidly, in the later years. It is well to be advised of the handicaps imposed by and also provided by the early years and to learn to control them, even though broad patterns may persist throughout life.

Because rates of growth vary in different individuals, it is not advisable to make direct comparisons of their absolute growth. The significant factor to note is one's own rate of growth. Take what encouragement is possible by estimating the growth accomplished as measured from a given point in the past.

The genetic sequence of growth clearly indicates that first steps must be taken first and that all the steps must be taken. This is true whether we are developing skill in baseball or attempting to develop a healthy personality. The saying "Step by step, we go a long way" indicates insight into the sequential nature of growth. This saying also has bearing on the fact that growth is continuous and gradual. The mentally healthy person will stress the continuity of growth and will live with its gradualness.

Certain levels of maturation are necessary before learning can proceed most economically. The maturation of physical prowess reaches a peak and begins to decline in the twenties. Mental powers reach a peak in the early twenties but, unlike physical traits, decline only with disuse. Mental powers may operate at a high level through the middle years of life and beyond if they are exercised. The college student can count on a high level of mental functioning for two or even three decades if practice of the powers is maintained.

The processes of individuation (specialization in functioning and personality) and integration (becoming a more smoothly functioning person as regards both self and society) seem to be less dependent on time than are other phases of growth. These two aspects of growth continue throughout life to some degree. However, since we "become more like ourselves" as time passes, it is important to give attention, in the formative years, to the directions that these processes take.

The correlation of traits is a hopeful principle for the college student. It is likely that besides his above-average intelligence he has other gifts as well. This principle is also significant from the standpoint of eliminating some fallacious conceptions regarding our fellow human beings.

The tendency for rates of growth to remain constant is of prime importance to those who still have a large degree of plasticity remaining. New rates of growth and new habits are still possible; but now is the best time for conscious and diligent effort to be devoted toward more favorable growth rates.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. The fact that psychiatrists often help the mentally ill proves that personality improvement is sometimes a rapid process.
2. There is little that one can do to improve his mental health because every person is the product of heredity and environment.
3. The bases for mental health or illness are established at the time of conception.
4. Every phase of growth illustrates the principle that growth takes place most rapidly before the age of six years.
5. Manifestations of basic personality trends are established before the fifth or sixth year in the life of the human being.
6. The tripling of the birth weight by the time of the baby's first birthday is an illustration of absolute growth.
7. The rate of growth in the first twelve years is a reliable index of the ultimate status of the individual with respect to the trait being measured.
8. The relatively slow rate of growth in human beings is an advantage from the standpoint of variability in behavior.
9. The slowness of growth is at least partially caused by the fact that growth has an orderly genetic sequence.
10. The gradualness of growth is a discouraging principle as far as mental health is concerned.
11. It would be well to delay school work until about eight years of age so we could be sure the individual has matured sufficiently.
12. The rate of reading in the first college year is not likely to change significantly.
13. The processes of individuation and integration are working in opposite directions.

14. The correlation of traits serves as a good basis for predicting that a person strong in one area will be correspondingly strong in another.
15. Since rates of growth tend to remain constant, we should select our professional field from among those in which we were interested as children.

Suggested Readings

HOHMAN, LESLIE, *As the Twig Is Bent*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. 286 pp.

This book, written for parents by a psychiatrist, can be both entertaining and instructive for any reader. The author shows that only successful actions are repeated and illustrates by case studies that "bad conduct" is often successful in some measure. One can understand himself better through a perusal of this easily read book.

MERRY, FRIEDA K., and RALPH V. MERRY, *From Infancy to Adolescence*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1940. 330 pp.

A description of growth processes at work in physical, mental, emotional, and social phases of life. Although not many problems of the college student are dealt with, the book gives an understanding of how people get to be what they are.

PRESTON, GEORGE H., *The Substance of Mental Health*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1943. 143 pp.

Respect for common sense in dealing with growth problems is called for by this author-psychiatrist. He emphasizes the need for avoiding overprotection on the part of parents and the need for both success and failure in the individual's experience if he is to grow up prepared for and inoculated against the inevitable disappointments in life.

WITTY, PAUL A., and CHARLES E. SKINNER (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1939. 539 pp.

Chapters five through ten are devoted to a discussion of the way personality and mental health grow, from infancy to adulthood. The book is primarily for teachers but one will find in the chapters indicated a discussion of growth problems that are of importance to infants, children, adolescents, and adults.

Chapter 3

PHYSICAL HEALTH FACTORS IN MENTAL HYGIENE

The words "a sound mind in a sound body" hold an idea that merits attention in a mental hygiene program. The maintenance of good physical health is a step in the direction of mental health. Physical health and vigor must be given attention in order for one to be a happy, efficient, harmonious person—a person who is living a full life. In this chapter some simple, but fundamental, factors concerning good health will be discussed, not with the promise of revealing a short cut to health but with the objective of stimulating the reader to apply what he probably already knows. Perhaps through this reminder the student will see to it that his knowledge becomes functional.

Mind-body relationship. Historians and anthropologists tell us that since the time of primitive peoples man has been concerned about the relationship of mind and body. The study of psychology, philosophy, religion, and other subjects indicates that sometimes mind and body were spoken of as though they were two separate and distinct aspects of life. This distinction probably arose from some such experience as a man's dreaming of going on adventurous journeys, only to be told on waking that he had been home all night. Such a phenomenon led people to believe that the mind acted independently of the body. Some philosophers state that no causal relationship exists between the functioning of the body and the operation of the mind. This view, as a result of the influence of recent studies in psychology and medicine, has been replaced by the conviction that body and mind are merely two aspects of the total individual. In actual living, mind and body are inseparable. Only in discussion is there a separation of the two, and then the distinction is entirely artificial. The current view is expressed in the term "psychophysical monism"—the oneness of mind and body.

The role of health in human behavior. It is now known that a very distinct causal relationship exists between physical tonus and mental

effectiveness. When a man awakens with a headache, due to various toxic conditions, he is less efficient at his desk and more irritable toward his associates. When a person arises with a tired feeling that results from insufficient sleep, he approaches his work with a feeling of lethargy, which renders him incapable of doing his task with enthusiasm and accuracy. These examples and many others that will probably come quickly to mind serve to illustrate the close correlation which exists between physical and mental health. Since the distinction between the physical and the mental is artificial, the things which are done to foster physical health also make positive contributions to mental health.

From the foregoing statements it should not be inferred that good health actually increases intelligence. Many investigators have sought to discover the relationship of health and intelligence, and the results have indicated quite uniformly that disease or sickness usually does not make one less intelligent. It must also be stated that not all physically healthy persons are necessarily in good mental health. However, the vigor with which one applies his intelligence, the drives which motivate conduct, and the resistance to fatigue that is caused by mental and physical work are conditioned by the state of a person's health. Since vigor, drive, and resistance are important in an individual's efficiency and happiness, the achievement of good physical health is a fundamental aspect of mental health. Moreover, the maintenance of physical fitness is a worth-while end in itself. Good health does not need to be justified in the additional terms of mental and emotional stability. The relationship of the two merely adds to the importance of applying the principles of sound physical health.

A cardinal principle of secondary education and of much of the instruction in elementary schools is directed toward the education of the individual so that he can reach and maintain bodily health. Many colleges have as a required course in the curriculum one which deals with the hygiene of the body. Books on happiness, personal efficiency, personality development, psychology, and mental hygiene almost without exception devote some space to the subject of bodily health.

Thus, it is apparent that physical health is one of the problems which concern educators and others whose objective is to advance human welfare. Educators cannot stand by each individual throughout

life to see that he applies what has been taught. Each individual must himself assume responsibility for intelligent living which gives attention to physical factors.

SLEEP AS A FACTOR IN PHYSICAL HEALTH

Theories regarding sleep. One theory of sleep is that it is a matter of habit. Since there was nothing much that primitive man could do during the dark hours of the night, it seemed reasonable to ignore the passage of time by lapsing into the unconsciousness of sleep. This theory lies back of the assertion that some people sleep more than others largely because of the habits they have formed. That people may sleep too much is indicated in a study recently made in England. It was found that children who slept too much cried, slept fitfully, banged their heads on their cribs, and sucked their thumbs more than children who had somewhat less sleep. The investigators issued the warning, "Little neurotics—awake." However, before categorically cutting down on sleep it will be well to examine some of the other theories.

Another theory of sleep is physiological—that sleep is due to a lack of blood in the brain, which causes "cerebral anemia." Lack of blood in the brain brings about loss of consciousness such as we are familiar with in the phenomenon of fainting. Too much blood in the brain causes insomnia, or sleeplessness.

The histological theory asserts that when connections between nerves are broken (when the nerve endings, dendrites, shorten and separate) and when nerve currents cannot be transmitted, then sleep results. This theory can be utilized to explain the lack of connectedness which characterizes most dreams.

The chemical theory of sleep is based on the belief that activity generates poisons which have the narcotic effect of causing drowsiness and sleep. During sleep, not only are the poisons not generated because of the relative inactivity of nerve and muscle, but toxic conditions are eliminated. When the elimination is complete, the subject awakens; that is, sleep is a vital factor in bodily metabolism. It plays a part in the building up (anabolism) of the body after our waking hours have occasioned the tearing down (catabolism) processes. It seems to be fairly well established that sleep has a chemical basis. In

certain experiments, the blood of a tired dog has been switched into the circulatory system of a fresh animal and soon afterward the signs of fatigue were observed in the fresh animal. This reaction is due to the toxins in the blood stream; and it is these toxins which are eliminated in the replenishing process of sleep.

According to the psychological theory, sleep is a resting state of consciousness. When there are no stimuli acting upon the person, the lessened degree of mental activity results in sleep. In seeking sleep, we reduce stimulation by closing our eyes and darkening the room, and by stopping physical and mental activity. This theory finds in monotony the central factor that induces sleep.

The biological interpretation of sleep is that it is a protective instinct. The function of sleep is to prevent or delay fatigue rather than to abolish its effects. We sleep not because we are tired but because it is a natural, normal activity of the organism. In some forms of lower animal life—microbes, for example, the phenomenon of sleep is lacking. But it seems that in higher forms of life sleep has developed because animals whose activity was counteracted by periods of rest and quiet have been favored in the evolutionary process. Sleep is a protoplasmic reaction of conserving energy, according to this theory.

No one of these theories explains all the phenomena of sleep. Each may contain an element of truth, and they do help to interpret some of the conditions and effects of sleep. However, all theories seem to indicate that sleep is essential for the restoration of energy and for the protection of the individual. The important consideration has to do with the requirements and conditions that must be observed if sleep is to make its maximum contribution to one's health.

A "sufficient amount" of sleep. That sleep is the most important element in a health program is an overstatement. There is no *most* important element. However, an adequate amount of sleep is certainly one of several important factors which should receive attention. As yet, scientists have found no substitute for the replenishing (anabolic) powers of sleep; it behooves the individual, then, to take the question of sleep seriously, rather than to assume that it is an incidental consideration or a necessary evil. Certainly, the stimulation of caffeine in coffee and tea and the use of "pep pills" are inadequate substitutes for sleep.

Just as there are individual differences in intelligence and physique, there are differences among persons with regard to the amount of sleep required. The old Puritan statement, "Six hours of sleep for a man, seven for a woman, and eight for a fool," does not offer a solution for everyone's problem. Some authorities make a blanket prescription of eight hours a day for young adults. Such advice is not sound, because there are many young people who need more than eight hours of sleep and others who can get along quite well with less.

Although it is a person's own responsibility to determine what his individual requirements are, a word of warning might well be issued. College people are prone to believe that they are especially hardy and can get along with less sleep than the average person. As is the case with many rationalizations, there are enough instances in which this is true to be misleading. It might be best for the college student to assume that he needs at least the minimum of eight hours until he can be definitely certain that his case is an exception.

Some criteria for determining individual needs for sleep are these:

1. Do you have drowsy feelings during the day?
2. Do you sleep soundly?
3. Do you go to sleep readily?
4. Do you wake easily?

If one feels *good* during the day, if he is not too irritable, if he does not get drowsy when he wants to work, he has an indication that he is getting sufficient sleep. If, on the other hand, he feels chronically tired, finds many things irritating him, and has to struggle to stay awake in class, more sleep may be needed. Although other causes may account for these conditions, the amount of sleep should be given consideration.

If sleep is sound, this may be an indication of either enough or not enough sleep. But if sleep is so sound that it is difficult to waken, the chances are that more sleep is needed. Sound sleep that allows one to wake refreshed and eager for the work of the day calls for no further attention, except to continue the same habit.

Going to sleep readily is a test which may indicate the need for further sleep—especially for anyone who has given an affirmative answer to the first question and a negative answer to the second and

the fourth. If one does not go to sleep readily, he might be able to do with less sleep than he is trying to get.

Waking easily betokens sufficient sleep. Dozing in fitful sleep for an hour or two before rising may be a similar token. Difficulty in waking may be symptomatic of too little sleep. The answers to all these questions should not be merely verbal but should be sought in actual trial and experimentation.

Many people who have less sleep than they might profitably use seem to get along satisfactorily; but if they try sleeping more, they find that they do still better, are more efficient, have greater energy, and are more resistant to disease. Do not, then, be too hasty about permitting the hours for sleep to be curtailed. The important things are (1) not to waste time sleeping when sleep is not really needed and (2) not to cut down on mental, physical, and emotional efficiency by trying to get along with too little sleep.

The need for regularity in sleeping. "The sleep you get before midnight is the most valuable." This is one of many widely accepted fallacies regarding sleep. Probably sleep in the first few hours is deeper than in those that follow; but if one sleeps long enough, the replenishment of the body can take place as effectively after midnight as before. The chief disadvantage of going to bed late is that others in the house may disturb the sleeper when they arise early, and so may prevent his having the requisite sleep. If everyone sleeps late and if bright light does not wake one up, he need not be concerned about the "sleep before midnight." What is important is that he establish regularity in his sleeping habits, so as to secure the maximum good from his sleeping time. Going to bed three hours early to make up for three hours of sleep lost the night before is only partially effective, since it is difficult to fall asleep ahead of an accustomed schedule.

Thomas Edison is reported to have done well enough with surprisingly few hours of sleep. Individual differences probably account for a part of this phenomenon. But, in addition, Edison had learned the importance of relaxation. During slack moments he was capable of relaxing so that anabolic (the building up) processes of the body could operate effectively. Thus, periods of anabolism took place before the more complete spending of energy and destruction of cells which probably characterizes too many of us during sixteen continuous wak-

ing hours. That is, catabolism did not proceed so far in Edison's case as it does in persons who do not, or cannot, relax during the day; thus, fewer hours of sleep were required for the rebuilding of his body. His energy was restored as regularly as though he had slept the same number of hours that the average man does (see Figs. 7 and 8).

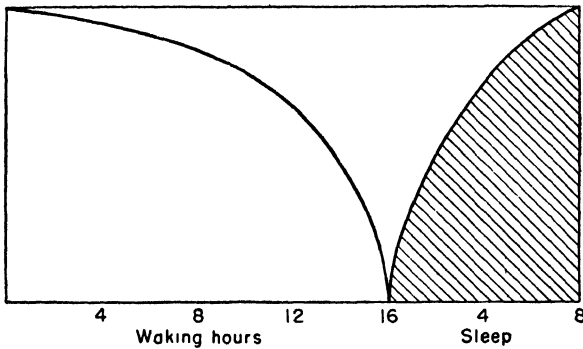


FIG. 7. Graphic representation of concentrated sleep. The process of tearing down occurs slowly at first, when the reserve of energy is high. As the energy reserve is depleted the tearing down process takes place more rapidly.

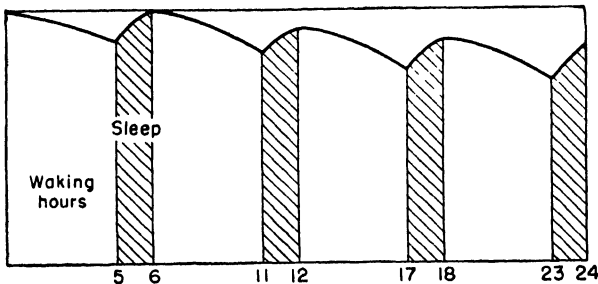


FIG. 8. Graphic representation of periodic sleep. Since energy does not reach a low ebb, a short sleep period will restore the energy level. Consequently, fewer total hours of sleep may serve to fill a person's needs.

George Herbert Palmer, late professor of philosophy at Harvard who died in 1933 at the age of ninety-one years, used to tell his students that he had never in his adult life slept a night through. His sleep rarely lasted more than an hour or two; then he would lie awake an hour or two. But he learned that by remaining quiescent in bed, relaxed, avoiding any serious thinking, he was able to pass the night without fretting, and, as he put it,

"In the morning I start on a new day as fresh as those whose night was of the standard sort."¹

This case not only illustrates the fact that there are individual differences in the amount of sleep required, but it also indicates the importance of relaxation. Palmer was able to rest even when he was not completely asleep.

Stories of people who are reported as never sleeping are probably greatly exaggerated. There are individual differences as to need. There are some who have learned the art of relaxation and who can therefore replenish their bodies in spare moments. But it would seem that for everyone there must be some required minimum amount of sleep in order that the vital function of the body, anabolism, can have a chance to operate. It is physically impossible for the body to expend energy continuously. There must be an opportunity for the accumulation of vitality at some time, even though this may be confined to moments of relaxation and to short sleeping periods. There must be an orderly and more or less regular restoration of vital energy.

How to sleep well. To say that sleep is necessary is one thing; to be able to sleep is something else. Some people are afflicted by an ailment called "insomnia," or sleeplessness. Even when they go to bed they are unable to sleep. In any effort to remedy this situation, two factors, the physical and the mental, should be recognized. Fresh air, the correct temperature in the sleeping room, and a not too full stomach will take care of the physical factors for many persons. Others find that coffee and heavy smoking before bedtime interfere with their sleep, because these are stimulants, even though mild ones. Warm baths, to induce physical relaxation, have been successfully used in many cases of insomnia. Some say that the warm bath tends to draw blood from the brain to the warmed parts of the body.

Individual study can help one to determine the physical factors which entice sleep for himself. Mental and emotional situations may be investigated in ways similar to those used in studying physical factors. The avoidance of violent emotional situations before bedtime and the control of worry are steps in the direction of governing these factors. That preparation for sleep must be begun before going to

¹ George W. Gray, "Sleep and Insomnia," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 177 (November, 1938), p. 625. By permission of the publisher.

bed is well illustrated by the words of a specialist in nervous diseases, "I find that if I am going to sleep at 10:30 or 11:00, I can't work very much in the evening. Nor can I spend an exciting three or four hours at bridge, and then expect to sleep at midnight."² Some have found that, when they avoid concern and do not care whether or not they sleep, surprisingly enough to them, sleep comes. The solution is found in an attitude of not caring or worrying. Such an attitude can be developed by anyone who can learn to relax both mentally and physically.

The idea of relaxation combines both physical and mental aspects of rest. This is readily seen in the theory of progressive relaxation. Beginning with the muscles in the lower extremities, one can relax each muscle and set of muscles throughout the body, ending with the relaxation of mouth, throat, and eye muscles. This method for inducing sleep works, but it takes time and practice.³ When the mind is active, concentrate on relaxing the muscles; you cannot then continue to meditate on your problems. The muscles of the tongue and throat must receive particular attention, because they seem to be active during thinking. (There is a theory, which seems valid to a degree, that thinking is subvocal speech.) Even if you find muscular tensions returning and have to relax a second or a third time, keep concentrating on relaxing the tensions you discover, and sleep will come. Moreover, the sleep you get while being well relaxed will be less fitful and more restful than that which comes from sheer exhaustion. When concentration is directed to the relaxation of muscles, the emotional tensions of the day cannot be given attention. Disturbing thoughts tend to be erased, because we cannot be thinking of two things simultaneously. An easy state of mind and a body with loosened muscles will provide a welcome solution for many cases of insomnia.

When people become worried about their insomnia, their concern about sleeplessness sets up such a state of anxiety that, even at times when they would normally become tired enough to sleep, their concern prevents it. They then resort to drugs—aldehydes, barbiturates, bromides, and the like—to induce sleep. This is a dangerous practice

² *Ibid.*, p. 636.

³ A detailed description of a method for learning relaxation is given in Edmund Jacobson, *You Must Relax*, 3d ed., New York: Whittlesey House, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1948.

for several reasons: it may result in formation of a drug habit; it interferes with the normal functioning of the body; and a dose that will induce sleep for some is a lethal dose for others. "A London practitioner reports a young woman who made an easy recovery after taking 90 grains of veronal and, by way of contrast, another adult who died after swallowing only fifteen grains."⁴ When the patient is studied by a doctor and the dosage is prescribed accordingly, the drugs have in some cases actually saved lives. However, no layman is wise enough or experienced enough to prescribe for himself. This is a field in which the variables are so many and exact knowledge is so limited that expert counsel is needed.

The writer recently heard a woman telling her marital troubles to a physician. She had been struck by her husband and was nursing a much swollen and blackened eye. The pain, she claimed, kept her from sleeping, so she wanted some sleeping pills. The doctor firmly, even brutally, told her that the pain was not keeping her awake, but that worry was, and he added, "You are in absolutely no shape to be trusted with sleeping pills and I cannot and will not prescribe them unless you come to the hospital." If a doctor shows such hesitancy in advising the use of pills, surely we, as laymen in the medical field, should respect, if not fear, the results of taking them.

The person who wishes to observe the principles of mental hygiene will find a better way of attacking the problem of sleeplessness than that sought by the woman mentioned above. Facing problems, gaining satisfaction from the knowledge that one has done his best, and observing the rules of physical health will do more to induce healthy sleep than can resorting to drugs.

DIET AS A FACTOR IN PHYSICAL HEALTH

Each year, it seems, scientists publish some new information regarding the food requirements of the body. These requirements are so numerous and varied, it is somewhat surprising that there is not more malnutrition than exists. Small deficiencies in vitamins, minerals, and organic chemicals produce many and marked illnesses. While it is probably not true that "we are what we eat," the topic of diet is

⁴ Gray, *op. cit.*, p. 628.

worth considering. This study is especially pertinent, in view of the relationship which exists between physical and mental health.

Diet and the individual. Literature on this subject is voluminous. It ranges from exhortations concerning moderation and the application of good sense to severe restrictions of diet. Medical research reveals that food factors may determine whether Miss T is to be more or less resistant to infectious diseases; whether she is to become prematurely blind or remain possessed of good vision. These factors influence skin ailments, heart disorders, and paralysis, and may even weight the scales in the balance between insanity and normal living. Each advance in our knowledge confirms the truth that diet has significance in both mental and physical health.

There are some who advise a diet consisting solely of vegetables, only of fruit, or mainly of meat. Universally applied, these dietetic restrictions lie close to the realm of many other fallacious teachings. There may be some value in dietetic restrictions, but the error in such restrictions comes in their wide application. For some individuals a vegetarian diet may be highly efficacious. It has worked admirably for one person. He, because of his enthusiasm, wants others who have entirely different constitutions to adopt the same rules. But, since the next individual is physiologically and emotionally different, the diet does not work out with the same results. Often our food fads would seem to arise from unwise generalizations which are based on insufficient experimentation and observation. Diet is, therefore, another individual problem which must be solved by each person according to the demands of his make-up. Sane practice would seem to consist in applying moderation in the dietary schedule adopted.

Reducing diets. Slenderness in a girl is a rather popular collegiate ideal. The coed, in an effort to approach the ideal, sometimes eats insufficient food and actually defeats the purpose of becoming popular by being tired and irritable. More important, her health is undermined and her mental efficiency may be lessened through a reduction of enthusiasm and interest in her work. Some misguided individuals may take doses of thyroid extract or cathartics to eliminate excess weight—a practice which is severely criticized by most reputable physicians. The coed who is faced by the problem of attaining the “perfect form” should bear in mind several factors relating to physical and mental health.

1. There are individual differences regarding predisposition to obesity. The old advice, "be yourself" has a definite implication. There are many young men who would prefer a girl with buoyant health over the one with the "perfect figure."

2. As far as one's ultimate goal in life is concerned—happiness and efficiency—it is probable that good health will make a more lasting contribution than will the attainment of a "collegiate ideal." Good health will also make a more direct contribution to popularity than will the achievement of the weight which is currently the fad.

3. Finally, barring glandular imbalance, the matter of obesity can in most cases be controlled intelligently. Medical research has indicated two rather interesting phenomena: (a) a full stomach does not prevent starvation; (b) a relatively empty stomach does not prevent the formation of fat. The important thing is vitamin content and caloric value of the foods that are eaten. Therefore, the tendency toward fatness can be thwarted by eating foods of low caloric value. Reducing is largely a matter of vigorously applying what we know. It requires a correct proportioning of the diet. The intake of food must be held to a minimum without skimping on adequate quantities of body-building substances and without neglecting energy requirements. This is the fundamental idea that underlies all reduction diets, and neither the idea nor its practice is new. The important thing is that there should be a reduction of caloric intake. Reducing diets are today computed to serve the ideal weight of the individual, as determined by a study of height and body build. Such diets should be and can be secured from a physician. While they cut down on neither bulk nor essential vitamins and food components, the fat-producing ingredients are scaled to the needs of the individual.

The phenomenon of allergy. Human beings, as a group, are capable of using a wide variety of foods. However, it appears to be true that "what is one man's meat is another man's poison." The aphorism "What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander" must be listed as a fallacy. Doctors in recent years have greatly advanced knowledge relating to allergy, which concerns a system or an organism that cannot tolerate certain substances. People have been greatly relieved, in cases of indigestion, rash, headache, and heartburn, after having discovered that they are not able to assimilate some kind of food they

have been eating with more or less regularity. Yet it may be eaten by other members of the family with no ill effect.

One man who was allergic to seafoods would, even when he ate a very small amount of fish, suffer from abnormal swelling in his fingers and about his ankles. Others get a rash from eating strawberries. Many people are allergic to milk.

There is the experience of a boy who was allergic to egg. His mother exercised a strict supervision over his diet, and when his family accepted an invitation to have Christmas dinner at the home of relatives, the latter, knowing the boy's idiosyncrasy, assured the mother that no egg had been used in the preparation of the bread, cake, turkey dressing, or any other food. They forgot, however, that a little egg white had been mixed with the mashed potatoes. Within a few minutes after eating the potato the boy's breathing became difficult; presently he collapsed, and remained unconscious for hours.⁵

Some people cannot tolerate pork, beef, or fresh fruit; but wheat, eggs, and milk are the most frequent offenders; while lamb, rice, butter, sugar, and canned pears are sometimes used as a starting point in a diet designed to detect allergy, because these foods seldom give difficulty. One person's allergy is in no wise indicated by that of another, since allergy is distinctly an individual matter. Allergy can be detected by skin tests, and the food which causes the difficulty can be avoided. Some sufferers have worked out their problem by themselves by starting on a diet consisting of a few simple foods and gradually adding others until the allergen (the substance causing the difficulty) has been found. That this is an important problem in physical health is indicated by the fact that approximately 10 per cent of the population of the United States is allergic, to a marked degree. If minor allergies are considered, the proportion includes about half the population. Clearly, this is a matter demanding consideration by those interested in physical health and efficiency.

Diet in college. The matter of diet is pretty well taken care of for students who live in dormitories and other living organizations. Trained dieticians see to it that their boarders get the proper number of calories and vitamins. But less control is exercised to see that students rise

⁵ George W. Gray, "The Strange Ways of Allergy," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 178 (January, 1939), p. 188. By permission of the publisher.

early enough to eat their breakfast and take time to eat their noon and evening meals in leisure. This matter is one of real concern to each individual. He must guard against bolting his food and rushing off to class or to a game of tennis. Good food, leisurely eaten in pleasant surroundings, is an effective contribution to good health. Good food hastily eaten may be little better than no food. Control must also be exercised in the matter of between-meal "snacks." Candy bars and ice-cream dishes may provide a midday lift that is beneficial; but improperly timed, these "snacks" may prevent the full enjoyment and benefit of a well-planned meal.

Students who "batch" and eat in restaurants have the responsibility of making sure that meals are well balanced, that variety is provided, that the meals are tasty, and that the proper amounts are supplied. An additional warning as to amount may be needed. Some students, in order to save money, do not eat enough. Such saving, practiced at the expense of personal health, is false economy. On the other hand, there is a high incidence of digestive disorders among college men because they eat too much. Before entering college they were used to much exercise and activity and needed to provide energy for a rapidly growing body. In college, when they are growing more slowly and probably have less physical exercise, they tend to overeat and consequently suffer from various digestive disorders.

The need for exercising control over diet should not lead to a morbid mental concern over it. If the question of diet causes too much anxiety, foods that might ordinarily be eaten with safety may become disturbing. In fact, physicians say that a majority of stomach troubles are of a functional nature; that is, while there is nothing organically wrong, a poor mental attitude causes difficulty. There is real distress, but the condition originates in the mind. This condition is caused by the digestive processes' being interrupted by emotional disturbances. Strong emotions may entirely check the flow of digestive juices; and worry and anxiety can cause a poor quality of enzymes to flow in small amounts. It is, then, the part of wisdom not to be too concerned about food, as long as allergens (substances which cause allergy) are recognized, proper amounts of food are taken, and meals are eaten when one is in a cheerful frame of mind. The meal hour is a poor time for talking over personal troubles. If a person makes pleasant contribution to the table conversation, eliminates the tension which accom-

panies hurry, and *silently* assumes that what he eats can be assimilated, he will get more benefit from the food he eats.

The role of art in mental health is demonstrated in the relation of the state of mind and the digestion. An artistic table that contributes to a pleasant state of mind is not a frill but a psychological necessity. Almost everyone has experienced a favorable anticipation of food suggested by an attractively set table—clean linens, a vase of flowers, bright silverware, and pretty dishes. The agreeable mental attitude that is conditioned by a tastefully arranged table is of great benefit to the digestion and assimilation of food.

An illustration of the relationship between emotional state and digestion is the case of a woman who visited her doctor in acute distress. She was examined for appendicitis but the results were negative. Further examination revealed that the foods of the previous evening's meal had remained in her stomach, totally undigested. No organic cause being found, the doctor led her to explain that during supper, the evening before, she had had a violent dispute with her husband and that they finally had finished eating in "stony silence." The tension of the situation had not been relieved and had brought about a complete cessation of the digestive processes. It would have been much better to refrain from eating altogether during the period of storm or, better yet, to have settled the problem calmly at some other time than the hour devoted to meals. Too often mealtime is considered a convenient time to get all the family together for settling controversial issues. The college student's problem in this connection is to arrange to eat with those whose company he can enjoy and to avoid conversations which will cause anyone to become emotionally upset.

PROVISION FOR EXERCISE AND PLAY

Individual needs and exercise. Exercise, like sleep and diet, cannot be uniformly prescribed for all persons. Physical examinations may reveal that more exercise is needed by particular individuals, while more rest is needed by others. In some colleges provision is now made for a "siesta period," as well as an activity period. Some students may need to spend their physical-education laboratory period resting in bed while their classmates are playing baseball or golf. However, there are probably many students who, because of thoughtless or careless budg-

eting of their time or because of excessive class or laboratory work, do not get enough physical exercise. If your doctor pronounces you physically fit, you would be wise to provide for regular exercise and recreation. If you have not developed an interest in outdoor sports or gymnastic games, it would be well for you to consider exercise to be just as essential a part of a good education as an additional three hours' credit in sociology, history, or English.

Some men point with pride to their physical health and vigor and indicate that they take no exercise. Many housewives get little exercise aside from their housework and still enjoy what we call perfect health. Here is concrete evidence of the existence of individual differences in bodily needs. Some writers make an example of the slow-moving elephant or the tortoise, indicating that, on account of their lack of exercise, they have century-long lives, whereas the squirrel, who moves rapidly and is always prepared for activity, lives for only a short span of years. These writers fail to recognize that these creatures are physiologically different from man and that the analogies are worthless.

In consideration of these facts, it would be profitable to take cognizance of the opinion of almost every physician, "If you are physically able, exercise will add greatly to your more hearty enjoyment of life." The exercise program should be individually determined according to each person's own reactions, with the aid of his physician, who will prescribe the proper type and amount of exercise for him. Through this procedure, moderation will assume a meaning that would be utterly useless as a blanket prescription. It must be recognized that attention to exercise is as essential a part of the total development, of which mind and body are related aspects, as is attention to academic considerations.

Play and health. Closely allied to the problem of exercise is that of play; in fact, play can frequently provide the exercise that has a constructive influence on physical and mental health. It is difficult to distinguish between work and play, because they shade imperceptibly one into the other. Roughly, however, we may describe play as those activities which are least necessary to maintain immediate existence, but which are highly useful in stimulating vitality, growth, and proper functioning of the organism. The latter part of the definition is of particular interest to the student of mental hygiene, because, after self-

preservation has been taken care of, play becomes an integral part of the complete living which is mental health.

Theories of play. There are several theories of play. One is that of recapitulation, according to which youths, in their various stages of play from infancy to adulthood, reconstruct the experiences of the race as it has advanced from savagery. Since this is an interpretation based on instinct, it is currently not a popular theory. Another is the surplus-energy, or biological, theory. According to this idea, the human organism has so many potentialities for action that routine work employs but a few of them. The unused organs store up energy, which is advantageously discharged in play, and this tends to relieve physical and emotional tensions. This theory may explain how the provision of recreation areas in large cities has been successful in reducing delinquency—and delinquency is in many cases a manifestation of mental ill-health. A third theory is that play provides advance practice for later adult life. According to this interpretation, play is a vital step in physical, social, mental, and emotional growth. Play provides excellent training for the varied activities of adult life. Mental hygienists are at present admonishing teachers and parents not to overlook the important educational values of play from this “preparation” viewpoint.

According to both the surplus-energy theory and the practice theory, play should constitute a regular part of a sound mental hygiene program. It can provide the variety that makes life interesting. It can exercise the muscles and capacities which may not be called into service in everyday work, thus reducing bodily tensions. For the young person it provides preparation for later activities, and for the adult it can serve as a preparation for emergency activities. For example, it is probable that fewer cases of heart failure resulting from a man's running to catch a streetcar would occur if the man had more regularly engaged in play.

It was stated above that play and exercise cannot be uniformly prescribed for everyone, that individual differences must be considered. Another reservation should be made; that is, play and exercise may be totally lacking and yet mental health may be enjoyed. A bedridden person may possess the happiness, efficiency in certain realms, and fullness of life that characterize mental health, without exercising. Some men and women are so devoted to their work that they not only

have no time for play but do not feel the need of it. These are the exceptions that prove the rule. Even in the case of these who do not play, we cannot be sure that they would not be still happier and more efficient if they were to engage in play. Certainly, they are not so "well-rounded" as those who derive satisfactions from both work and play. For the vast majority, play and exercise make such positive contributions to mental health that these activities should not be discarded until serious consideration has been devoted to the question.

The college student who has many recreational opportunities at his disposal should make good use of them with two purposes in mind: (1) the attainment and preservation of mental health at the present time, and (2) the forming of recreational interests and habits that will be useful in after-college life. Engaging in various student activities can serve both of these purposes. Not only do student activities provide an avenue for the expression of capacities not called upon in academic work, but in the pursuit of them the student is at the same time gaining experience in getting along with others. In both instances his mental health is being served.

THE EFFECT OF DRUGS ON PERSONALITY

The use of drugs. Every educated person should be aware of the dangers involved in the indiscriminate use of drugs; yet we must face the fact that such awareness seems to be lacking. A look at the drug-store shelves or a report of the amount of money annually spent on patent medicines gives startling evidence that Americans have a great faith in the efficacy of drugs and cure-alls. Meager benefits seem to accrue from announcements that people have died in great numbers as a result of trying radium cures and "elixirs." Too often our unfounded belief is not greatly shaken by our knowledge. Small wonder, then, that such a book should have been written as *One Hundred Million Guinea Pigs*, which asserts that people freely permit themselves to be subjects for experiments with patent medicines. Sometimes the danger lies not so much in the drug itself as in the postponement of calling for a physician's diagnosis. Luckily some drugs are neither effective nor harmful; but others are extremely potent and are capable of completely upsetting the sturdy, yet delicately balanced, structure of the human organism.

Drugs and mental health. Some people have been unfortunate enough to stumble upon the use of habit-forming drugs, such as cocaine, opium, and morphine. Others may have sought them as a means of escaping from the problems that beset their own lives. These drugs constitute a serious threat to both physical and mental health, since under their control the body deteriorates and the mind becomes unstable. Lethargy and a dreamy state, experienced while the immediate effects last, are followed by extreme nervousness, restlessness, and muscular incoordination. Not only is addiction to such a drug physically weakening, but it solves no problems. As an escape mechanism it occupies an extremely dubious position, because it does not remove the causes of personality maladjustment. Indulgence in drugs is usually an evidence of lack of other wholesome compensations and resources which leave the power of discrimination unimpaired. Narcotic intemperance is at the low end of the scale in the way of relaxation. Mental health is a beneficial factor in avoiding the conditions which lead to use of drugs; and mental hygiene is as essential to the cure of the habit as is physical treatment.

Marijuana. Cannabis, or marijuana, is one of the drugs that have a very marked effect upon personality and mental health. Since 1930 this drug has been increasingly used by ill-advised high-school and college students who, seeking a thrill, have been misled by vendors, who promise a cheap, exciting, and harmless experience. But the thrill is short-lived, to put it most mildly. "No one knows, when he places a marijuana cigarette to his lips, whether he will be a philosopher, a joyous reveler in a musical heaven, a mad insensate or a murderer."⁶ Individuals react differently to the same quantities of the drug. It interferes with the perception of space and time, so that a person "high" on the drug will play several extra notes in a musical bar; but to another, 80 miles an hour seems like 20, and his automobile becomes a thing of destruction. Marijuana gives its users a feeling of physical strength and mental power, and it stimulates the imagination; but its users often develop a delirious rage, during which they are temporarily insane. This ". . . insanity may take the form of a desire for self-destruction or a persecution complex to be satisfied only by the commission of some heinous crime," as was the case of the lad in Florida who ran

⁶ H. J. Anslinger, "Marijuana: Assassin of Youth," *American Magazine*, Vol. 124 (July, 1937), pp. 18-19, 150. By permission of the publisher.

amuck and with an ax killed his mother, father, two brothers, and a sister.⁷

Marijuana is a menace wherever it is purveyed, a recent issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* declares in an editorial in which it severely condemns a book recently published by the New York City Mayor's Committee on Marijuana as being based on a thoroughly unscientific foundation and containing sweeping and inadequate conclusions.⁸

Marijuana (hashish, reefers, muggles, mu, hot-sticks—whatever you want to call it) does not “. . . lead to any particular type of mental disease, rather its effect is to push certain users toward whatever unbalance of mind or emotions their own make-up is liable.”⁹ Again we come back to the assertion that resort to drugs is an ineffective and dangerous escape mechanism. There is a definite need for people to understand the principles of mental health so they can avoid even being tempted by this dangerous drug.

The Bureau of Narcotics is attempting to bring the distribution of marijuana under control. During the war the growing of hemp plants was encouraged because of the difficulty of importing good materials for ropemaking. Now “. . . so long as pushers can get \$50 a gunny-sack for leaves and flowers in illegitimate deals, peddling of marijuana will continue as one of the war's contributions to increased crime and juvenile delinquency.”¹⁰ We cannot wait for our government to remove temptation but must exercise our own intelligence in such matters. One protection is to be able to find fun and excitement in the exercise of our natural and normal capacities.

Alcohol. The use of alcohol belongs in much the same category as use of the above-mentioned drugs. Excessive use of alcohol produces various forms of temporary behavior disorders. Some people become elated or pugnacious and others are rendered depressed and submissive when under the influence of liquor. It frees inhibitions, causes loss of behavior control, and lowers one's ability to judge, discriminate, and

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁸ “Menace of Marijuana,” *Science Digest*, Vol. 18 (July, 1945), pp. 49–50, adapted from *Journal of the American Medical Association*. By permission of the publisher.

⁹ “Marijuana Gives Some a Jag,” *Science News Letter*, Vol. 35 (Jan. 14, 1939), p. 30. By permission of Science Service.

¹⁰ “Hemp Menace,” *Business Week*, Jan. 12, 1946, p. 50. By permission of the publisher.

act efficiently. The habitual overuse of alcohol contributes to the more permanent condition known as "alcoholism," which is characterized by general mental decline, loss of memory, and various forms of delusion and hallucination. Even if one admits that these conditions are inherent in individual weaknesses, the fact remains that the excessive use of alcohol is the precipitating factor. Such conditions, as can be readily perceived, have far-reaching effects upon the personality; and these, in turn, are a direct reflection of the state of one's mental and physical health.

A blanket condemnation of all use of alcohol (the above paragraph stresses excessive use) cannot safely be made in the face of current evidence. There seems to be little doubt that there are important individual differences in the degree of susceptibility to effects of alcohol. This is one of the major conclusions of the Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies.¹¹ It may be that some persons secure a degree of emotional release from the moderate use of alcohol. Alcohol causes most people to overrate the excellence of their own performances, and it might also incite them temporarily to apply themselves more vigorously; but the quality of their work will suffer. It would be better if their confidence could be established on the basis of sound mental hygiene principles.

The tendency to overrate one's ability is one of the most distinctly dangerous features of even a moderate use of alcohol. Anyone who is overconfident of his skill as a driver is a constant threat to the safety of others on the highway. Comparable data on drunken driving are not obtainable, but estimates ". . . of traffic accidents involving drinking by drivers and pedestrians vary from 10 to 50 per cent of the total. . . ." ¹² The large number of accidents in which alcohol is a factor are disregarded by the overconfident person. In view of the fact that the advantages of alcoholic indulgence are so tenuous, the driving factor alone would seem to place the arguments against liquor in a more favorable position.

There is much fancy, wishful thinking, and prejudice involved in various interpretations of the effect of alcohol. One of the more com-

¹¹ *Alcohol, Science and Society, Twenty-nine Lectures with Discussions as Given at the Yale Summer School of Alcohol Studies*, New Haven: Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol, 1945.

¹² Carlton Brown, "We Can Lick Alcoholism," *Science Illustrated*, Vol. 3 (June, 1948), p. 45. By permission of the publisher.

prehensive studies is presented in the book, *Alcohol, Science and Society*.¹³ A summary of this and other comparable studies is reported by Carlton Brown, who lists what alcohol does and what it does not do as follows:

Alcohol Does

Enter the blood stream at a rapid rate . . .

Act upon the brain and central nervous system, slowing down reaction time, perception, and reflexes, but without affecting tissues . . .

Provide relief, quickly but temporarily, from many painful physical and psychological conditions, by dulling perception . . .

Relieve anxiety and tension through its anesthetic action on the higher centers of the nervous system.

Stimulate appetite by increasing the flow of gastric juices, when taken in moderate quantities. In large quantities, alcohol interferes with or stops digestion.

Provide calories, but it delivers no vitamins, minerals, or proteins, and may impede their absorption. Therefore, it is a food, though an inadequate one . . .

Alcohol Does Not

Increase efficiency or ability to perform mental or physical work of any sort . . .

Act as a stimulant, although, by reducing consciousness of fatigue, it seems to stimulate.

Act as an aphrodisiac, except to the extent that it lessens inhibitions.

Cause insanity, epilepsy, neurosis, or glandular disturbance . . .

Cause alcoholism, any more than sugar causes diabetes . . .

Injure the heart or kidneys or contribute to hardening of the arteries.

Cause cirrhosis of the liver, which is a diet-deficiency disease attacking 8 per cent of alcoholics.

Cause ulcers, which are generally recognized as a psychosomatic ailment . . .

Cause polyneuropathy, a nervous disorder . . .

Make you fat, by itself . . .

Cure colds, although it will make the patient feel better, perhaps help him to get relaxation and sleep which will aid in recovery, if he stays in bed.

Heavy drinkers, whose resistance is lowered by generally poor habits, die of pneumonia ten times more often than others.

Differ in effect, according to the beverage consumed, except slightly.¹⁴

¹³ *Alcohol, Science and Society*, *op. cit.*

¹⁴ Brown, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

At the very best it can be said only that the effects of alcoholic indulgence are highly controversial and that its use must be approached with caution. Some sympathy might be extended toward users of alcohol who are victims of poor environments, but the acceptance of the quick release from reality afforded by it to those who have had greater advantages and should have developed other resources of personality release is not easily condoned.

Tobacco. The use of tobacco generally comes in for a share of criticism when speaking of toxic drugs. No doubt tobacco has deleterious effects upon those who use it and, in general, it should be avoided. However, many apparently suffer little damaging effect from it. When it is used in moderation, the body can offset the toxic conditions in most cases. Just what amount of smoking should be considered moderate or excessive depends to some degree upon the make-up of the individual smoker. The real danger lies in the strong tendency toward overdoing it.

Writers who wish to defend smoking or to seem nonpartisan with regard to tobacco smokers sometimes argue that, although smoking may have some detrimental effects, the elimination of smoking has a negative effect upon the person who is not accustomed to doing without it. Actually, this argument holds good for any drug. Many smokers admit that they feel better during periods of abstinence, yet they are unable to break the habit.

Experiments in which subjects did not know whether they were smoking or merely inhaling warm air indicate that the effects of tobacco are slight and variable. There is a slight increase in the rate of the heart beat, and additional tremor. The speed of adding is increased for habitual smokers, but decreased for nonsmokers.¹⁵ Tobacco “. . . causes a reduction in memory and accuracy, and interferes with all the fine motor skills by increasing tremor in the hands.”¹⁶ It appears, therefore, that whatever effect tobacco does have is on the negative side. College students who smoke make slightly lower grades than nonsmokers do, but the smoking itself is not recognized as the

¹⁵ Willard L. Valentine, *Experimental Foundations of General Psychology*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1941, pp. 148-156.

¹⁶ Arthur G. Bills, *The Psychology of Efficiency*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943, p. 228. By permission of the publisher.

cause. Some believe that the social activities which encourage smoking may interfere with study. Others feel that the difference can be accounted for by a greater initial stability on the part of the nonsmoker.

If there were valid arguments in favor of tobacco, one would expect cigarette advertisers to capitalize upon them. Actually, what they do is to stress the fact that there are fewer coughs in their particular brand of cigarettes, that their kind is easier on the throat, or that more people use "Such and Such" than any other kind. Unbiased experimental findings are not such as to convince the nonuser that he should change his ways. The user will not ordinarily be swayed by arguments or evidence, because the habit itself is the motivating factor, and he has learned to live with whatever slight negative factors there are. In conclusion, it is probably sound advice to warn nonsmokers that they will be better off through continued abstinence; while those who do not smoke to excess will likely find that breaking the habit is hardly worth the effort.

Benzedrine and mental efficiency. Benzedrine sulfate is especially interesting from the standpoint of mental health. This drug, in some cases, seems to have been responsible for raising scores on intelligence tests. In one study, the experimental group, on a second administration of an equivalent intelligence test, made a score of 8.7 per cent higher than a control group who worked under the same conditions except that they took placebo (harmless bread pills), rather than the benzedrine which was given to the first group. Increases were most marked in those subjects who had mild emotional disorders, as contrasted with those who had deeper emotional difficulties. While it is not likely that the drug increases actual intelligence, a person may at times be temperamentally or emotionally unfitted to do his best on a test. It is thought that the benzedrine might help such a one feel more confident, make it possible for him to lose less time in accommodating himself to the test, and quicken his responses so that he might get a higher score.¹⁷ Similar positive results were obtained in experiments involving scores on standardized subject-matter tests.¹⁸

¹⁷ "Benzedrine," *Newsweek*, Vol. 9 (Jan. 2, 1937), p. 18.

¹⁸ Matthew Molitch and John P. Sullivan, "The Effect of Benzedrine Sulfate on Children Taking the New Stanford Achievement Tests," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, Vol. 7 (October, 1937), pp. 519-522.

Other experimenters characterize the action of the drug as "variable, uncertain, unpredictable, and at times paradoxical."¹⁹ That is, one effect of the drug is to increase mental activity, improve perception, and decrease confusion; an opposite effect is to retard mental activity, decrease concentration, cause confusion, and give rise to hallucinations. In some cases it causes cheerfulness and a feeling of pleasantness; but in others it produces depression and surliness. Moreover, these results have varied in the same patient from one day to the next; at one time he would feel elated and at other times, depressed. The general physiological effect is to increase bodily activity. It is apparent, then, that the results are due not only to the nature of the drug itself but also to the physiological, and possibly the mental, state of the individual.

Some persons have become benzedrine addicts. In one study, they swallowed the contents of nasal inhalers, to obtain the drug. The addicts said that they used benzedrine because "(1) it made time go faster; (2) it made them feel happy; (3) it made them talkative. Large doses produced agitation, restlessness, insomnia, hallucinations, and delusions of persecution."²⁰ When they were deprived of the drug, they experienced fatigue, depression, shaky hands, and upset stomachs. Such studies provide an excellent illustration of the fact that drugs solve no problems; that they, rather, add a physical burden to the problems that the person is already bearing.

Benzedrine has been tried in the treatment of problem children, making them more alert, more interested, and better able to accomplish their work effectively. But the effects were not permanent and "it does not offer as much assurance for mental health and future happiness as other methods, such as psychotherapy or modifying the child's surroundings to remove sources of conflict."²¹ This generalization might be expanded to bear upon the use of "pep" pills by college students. It does not offer any permanent solution to problems. The

¹⁹ E. C. Reifstein, Jr., and Eugene Davidoff, "The Psychological Effects of Benzedrine Sulfate," *American Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 52 (January, 1939), p. 56. By permission of the publisher.

²⁰ "Jag from Inhalers," *Newsweek*, Vol. 30 (Dec. 16, 1947), p. 54, adapted from a report by Drs. Monroe and Drell in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. By permission of the publisher.

²¹ "Benzedrine Used Successfully in Treating Problem Children," *Science News Letter*, Vol. 37 (Mar. 2, 1940), p. 132. By permission of Science Service.

building of good habits, the direct attack of problems, and the application of sane living principles constitute the slow but more sure way of achieving healthy growth.

It might be expected that care would be taken in using a drug with such uncertain, yet marked, effects on personality. However, college students have taken these so-called "pep" pills to keep them awake during cramming sessions—sometimes with dangerous, as well as inconvenient, results. A night driver cannot depend on the pills, which may serve to keep him awake on some nights but may make him even more sleepy, the next time they are used. This "paradoxical effect" should constitute a sufficient warning to those who are tempted to use such a drug.

Although the science of human behavior is unlikely to be reduced to the test tube, it will be interesting to watch the development of the use of benzedrine as a means of controlling manifestations of intelligence and to see whether its effects on personality will become more predictable and useful.

The proper use of drugs. It should not be assumed from the foregoing discussion that all drugs are detrimental to physical and mental health. Quite the contrary is true. There are many drugs that make for health and happiness; but they should be taken under the supervision of trained physicians. Resort to drugs as an escape from personal problems is an undesirable practice.

Quite recently the beneficial effects of sulfanilamide in the treatment of pneumonia have received much attention. Various drugs have been successfully used in the treatment of certain kinds of glandular disorders. Thyroid extract has long helped in the treatment of some young cretins (those in whom feeble-mindedness is caused by thyroid deficiency) with such success that they have developed into normal individuals. Penicillin has been called the "wonder drug," because so many uses have been found for it during and since the Second World War. Some other drugs, while possessing no curative values, have effectively been applied for reducing the pain of injury and disease. To be surely successful, such drugs must be employed only under the direction of competent physicians; and they must not be adopted as a means of escape from reality or of getting a thrill. Self-medication is inadvisable.

FRESH AIR—A FETISH OR A NECESSITY

In view of our study of physiology in the grade school, it should be unnecessary here to discuss the value of fresh air; but the thought of life in crowded classrooms and smoky parlors makes some consideration of the subject seem appropriate. While it is not necessary for fresh air to be made into a fetish—as it is by some people—an intelligent recognition of its value should be established. Those who make a fetish of fresh air place it on a pedestal and worship it above other things. They are the ones who open wide the windows of a room on a chilly day and make others shiver with the cold. They open the windows in a bus or a streetcar and loosen their coats, then breathe in the icy blasts. They abhor the odor of a cigarette. Such an attitude may be commendable when it is tempered with moderation and when the feelings of others are being considered; but carried to an extreme, it merely serves to make the fresh-air worshipper seem queer and ungracious.

The effect of fresh air. Probably most people sleep in rooms in which windows are open. Most of us have experienced situations in which ventilation of the sleeping room was difficult and have soon learned that it is disagreeable and uncomfortable to try to sleep in a warm, stuffy room. On the other hand, in vacation time, when we have slept in the open air, our sleep has been surprisingly sound and we have waked in the morning feeling completely refreshed. By way of contrast, we have probably spent much leisure time in hot, close, motion-picture theaters or leaning over smoke-beclouded card tables. No one needs to read in a book about how refreshing is the effect of a walk in the open air after such an occasion. Experience has been the teacher.

When our daily routine necessitates close contact with many persons, the value of some time in the open air becomes quite marked. Such periods seem to clear the mind and stimulate enthusiasm. Fresh air instills vigor into our lagging muscles and we feel like going on with our work. Actual experiments do not reveal appreciable superiority of fresh air over stale air as far as physiological effects are concerned, but the psychological effects are notable.

Perhaps because air is free, we tend to underestimate its value. Not much effort is required in order to obtain it, so it is not cherished. It is, nevertheless, essential to good health. The feeling of vigor and

exhilaration which accompanies a brisk walk in the open country indicates that as much attention should be devoted to providing fresh air as should be given to securing proper amounts and kinds of exercise and adequate sleep.

Conditions which need attention. In making provision for obtaining fresh air, it is important to keep in mind some additional considerations. In the first place, the air should be of a certain temperature. It has been found that 70°F. is probably best for most people, although this may be varied to some extent according to the individual. When anyone is exposed to wide variations in temperature, so much time and attention must be given to adjusting to these changes that work is inefficient. Further, cold air is not necessarily good air. Recently, numerous articles have appeared discussing the lack of wisdom in throwing windows so wide open during the winter months that it is difficult to keep the rooms warm. Colds will be less severe if caution is exercised in the matter of open windows. A cold will be routed sooner if the body does not have the additional burden of fighting a chilling temperature.

Air should be circulated, so that each person can get an adequate supply of oxygen and so that the waste products of breathing will be carried away. Besides, an aesthetic consideration is involved in this connection; disagreeable odors can be dissipated if circulation is satisfactory. Finally, air should contain moisture. Dry air is detrimental to health, because it interferes with the functioning of the glands of the mouth and the nose. It is particularly important that provision be made to supply moisture during the winter months, when the cold makes the air less capable of retaining moisture. A container of water attached to the radiator or a filled water container on the furnace will do much to counteract the deficiency of moisture in cold air. Finally, the full use of the lungs through deep breathing exercises is to be recommended. If possible, this exercising should be done outdoors.

MENTAL CONFLICT AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

Earlier in the chapter, the statement was made that the mental and the physical are inseparably interrelated aspects of the total organism. Physical illness is frequently characterized by behavior abnormalities. On the other hand, mental conflict is often indicated by the existence of physical symptoms. There are many instances in which treatment

of physical symptoms has not been adequate for curing a particular ailment. Such instances illustrate in a striking manner the unity of the mental and the physical in human beings.

There is, for example, an account of a man suffering from a bothersome skin disease which did not respond to medical treatment. Investigation revealed that he had been engaged to be married for eight years and that each Sunday he urged his sweetheart to marry him immediately, but the answer was always negative. Almost every Monday, after his day of frustration, his skin protested and indicated his anxious state by breaking into a rash.

Another case concerns a man who was afflicted by a serious case of asthma. Medical treatment would bring temporary relief, but the attack would recur prior to his starting on a trip back to his home. The record showed that the man was a teacher in a community where his relationships were unsatisfactory, and the trip home was viewed with apprehension. The hospital provided refuge from undesirable contacts. His case was finally solved by his following the doctor's advice and securing a new position, where his personal relationships could be more satisfactory. This is an instance in which manifestations of physical illness were cleared away by getting rid of mental conflict.

In another instance, the condition of a woman laundry worker, who was affected by high blood pressure, was materially bettered merely by shifting her from one side of a washing machine to the other side and relieving her of supervisory duties. Her trouble seemed to arise principally from having charge of a group of young workers whose lack of seriousness bothered her. After the tension was relieved, her enlarged neck veins and a chronic hoarseness disappeared. These cases serve to show that emotional disturbances have their counterpart in physical upset.²²

Such conditions indicate that people become ill and remain so, at least partially, because they cannot or will not face and solve their problems. The individual who is physically healthy will, as a rule, be found to be one who is mentally healthy. Organic diseases seem to be distressing somewhat in proportion to the amount of mental conflict disturbing the patient. It is small wonder that commitments to college infirmaries are more frequent during examination week than at any

²² The examples in this section are condensed from an article by George W. Gray, "Anxiety and Illness," *Harper's Magazine*, Vol. 178 (May, 1939), pp. 605-616.

other time—unless it has previously been announced that examinations cannot be made up.

Progressive physicians are more and more adopting the view that the mental and physical aspects of disease should be treated simultaneously. While the science of medicine is firmly established, the art of medicine (considering the human, or personality, element) has long been neglected. The realization of this has given rise to the study known as "psychosomatic" medicine. The Second World War provided impetus to this study, which emphasizes the fact that medical treatment is greatly facilitated by investigating the personal life of the patients. Jealousy, insecurity, suspicion, fear, and lonesomeness are, without doubt, frequently the basis for seemingly simple physical disorders. Because of this belief, the simultaneous treatment of both mental and physical conditions of the patient is a growing trend. Present medical preparation is emphasizing a broader education for physicians, which will serve to impress upon the doctor's attention an understanding that patients are persons, not just bodies. The branch of medicine known as "psychiatry" is devoted to just such a realization. In short, the most effective doctor is one who realizes that mental and physical health are but different aspects of one problem; and it seems reasonable to conclude that the most healthy individual is one who recognizes the fact that mental and physical health are inseparably related.

SUMMARY

In considering the factors which condition physical health and the relationship of these factors to mental health, we have noted that it is necessary to bring these physical factors to a conscious level. What we know should be put into the action pattern of daily living; rather than that the body should control us through its demands for food, rest, and exercise, the desired goal is that we should make the body our servant, subject to our demands. By paying attention to the factors that condition physical health, we are giving ourselves the chance to enjoy better mental health, as well. Although there are instances of people in poor physical health who have good mental health, it is still true that, in general, the better one's physical health, the better will be his mental health.

While there are several theories regarding sleep, almost all of them state that sleep is essential to the optimum functioning of the mind and the body. Sleep should serve to give us more control over our body by making us more efficient during waking hours. Everyone should determine for himself what his requirements as regards sleep are and should see to it that the necessary number of hours are reserved for sleep. Do not be too hasty about deciding that your own requirements are much less than those of the average person. Regularity in sleep habits is conducive to sound rest and should, therefore, be given consideration. Physical relaxation will contribute to sound sleep.

A balanced diet should be provided for everyone. Food should be eaten leisurely and in pleasant surroundings. Since so many are subject to allergy, it is advantageous for everyone to try to discover what foods, if any, do not agree with him and then to avoid eating them. However, an allergy need not be looked for unless some chronic symptoms have been experienced, because there is some danger in a negative psychological set. A happy frame of mind should be sought at meal-time; it is probably better to miss a meal than to eat when one is in an upset emotional state.

Provision should be made for regular rest and recreation. Since enjoyment comes from the exercise of a person's capacities, it is advisable that recreation be of such a nature that activities in contrast to those of our regular day's work should be engaged in. Play calls forth surplus energies that tend to relieve various physical and mental tensions; consequently, it fits securely into a program for mental health. Play and exercise should leave us feeling an added zest for life and activity rather than tired and indifferent to further exertion.

There is no doubt that various drugs have done much to increase the welfare and happiness of mankind; but to make use of a drug as an escape mechanism and to resort to it without the direction of a physician cannot be recommended from the mental hygiene viewpoint. Instead of seeking the "magic" qualities of drugs to improve mental health, a sufferer would be wiser to depend upon a course of habit formation, which is a slow process, but one which is safer and more sure.

The need for fresh air is particularly urgent in a society in which there is close personal contact and where much time is spent indoors.

Well-ventilated rooms, especially sleeping rooms, should be regarded as essential to physical hygiene. In many cases it is possible to do much more than is done now to provide air of the correct temperature and humidity and to plan for the air's circulating.

Finally, it should be realized that, because there is such a close correlation between physical and mental health, a person suffering from mental depression might well examine the state of his physical health as a first step in the solution of his problem. Just as the competent physician must consider the mental state of his patient, in order to secure the best results, so too must the normal individual realize that both physical and mental conditions contribute to the happiness, efficiency, and fullness of life that is called "mental health."

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the contents of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. One theory of sleep is that it is a matter of habit and that if one applies the principles of habit breaking he can materially reduce his need for sleep.
2. Old people need more sleep than middle-aged people because their bodies are less efficient and require more time for rebuilding.
3. Probably those people who are reported never to sleep are so busy that things are never monotonous or boring to them and they feel no need for sleep.
4. As medical science progresses, it is probable that there will come a time when a universally effective diet will be discovered.
5. A good way to detect allergy is to start with a simple diet of four or five items and gradually add other items and note their effect.
6. It would be a good plan, when eating out, to do so in a clean, quiet place, even if servings are small, rather than in a noisy, dark room where the servings are large.

7. The fact that some men get along very well with little or no exercise does not prove that exercise is unnecessary.
8. A good form of recreation for an office worker is bridge—so that he can keep his mind in good working order.
9. Even though a patent medicine has no actual effect on a person—such as a bread pill—it may still be a poor plan to use it.
10. The moderate use of alcohol should not be condemned.
11. The effect of a drug is dependent upon the person who is using it.
12. An organic disorder is always caused by some disease germ or injury.
13. The mind and the body are one and the same thing.

Suggested Readings

JACOBSON, EDMUND, *You Must Relax*, 3d ed., New York: Whittlesey House (McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.), 1948. 304 pp.

Using the thesis that there is too much strain involved in modern living, the author explains in step-by-step detail how to achieve an antidote to strain—that of physical relaxation, so that mental relaxation can result. The mind-body relationship is dealt with in terms of applicable suggestions for the individual.

KRAINES, S. H., and E. S. THETFORD, *Managing Your Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. 374 pp.

Common problems that beset many people are described and suggestions for their solution are given. Brief case studies make even more readable an already interesting presentation. One of the authors is a medical doctor, who contributes some valuable views regarding the relationship of mind and body.

LEMKAU, PAUL V., *Mental Hygiene in Public Health*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949. 396 pp.

This book is written primarily for professional workers in mental hygiene, with an emphasis on preventive programs. The development of personality is traced and steps toward achieving better mental health are suggested. Mental health is considered as a public health problem.

SHELDON, WILLIAM H., *The Varieties of Temperament*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942. 520 pp.

A theory of personality which has not received universal acceptance is postulated. The author poses the question as to whether certain broad types of temperament or personality are not functions of overlapping body types. We may be asking too much to expect everyone to be outgoing personalities—in view of their body type. Perhaps integrated persons can be comparatively free of the need for companionship.

Chapter 4

HABIT FORMATION IN A MENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Mental hygiene has been defined as a way of life; and the manner of one's life is in no small way determined by the habits which have been formed. If man is to acquire the control over his life that is fundamental to mental health, he must guide the formation and reformation of the habits that constitute so large a part of his daily living. Since habits are the foundation of many common activities, the person who is interested in the achievement and maintenance of mental health must have an understanding of their nature and functioning.

Significance of habits. The importance of habits has been frequently emphasized in such statements as "Man should be the master of his habits rather than to permit the habits to master him" and "It is just as easy to form good habits as to form poor ones." As we are to so great a degree creatures of habit, it is of real importance that we understand habits so that we may adopt those that are most advantageous. The significance of William James's statement, even though it was made many years ago, has not diminished.

The hell to be endured hereafter, of which theology tells, is no worse than the hell we make for ourselves in this world by habitually fashioning our characters in the wrong way. Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke of virtue or vice leaves its never so little scar. The drunken Rip van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying, "I won't count this time!" Well! He may not count it, and a kind Heaven may not count it; but it is counted none the less. Down among his nerve cells and fibres the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do, in strict literalness, is ever wiped out. Of course this has its good side as well

as its bad one. As we become permanent drunkards by so many separate drinks, so we become saints in the moral, and authorities and experts in the practical and scientific spheres by so many separate acts and hours of work. Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning to find himself among the competent ones of his generation, in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently, between all the details of his business, the *power of judging* in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faint-heartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together.¹

This quotation contains a lesson so valuable that it is worthy of most careful attention. Probably few people begin to drink with the aim in mind of becoming drunkards; but each drink does leave some effect, in attitudes at least, so that time sees resistance becoming weaker and weaker. The fact that each action leaves its small, but none the less real, effect upon the organism accounts for the significance of habits. It is the cumulative effect of actions, which result in habits, that makes it necessary for men to control their daily activities and to stop saying, "I won't count this time."

It should *not* be inferred from the foregoing that *all* of man's life is dependent upon habit. While there is little doubt that habit is a significant aspect of personality, there is likewise little doubt that many problems of living cannot be solved by habitual patterns of conduct. Insight—the perception of relationships—and the performance of simple but unusual activities also deserve consideration as explanations of conduct.

Although habits tend to persist, new habits can be and are formed. "James may have exaggerated somewhat the permanency of habitual modes of behavior, for people often do change their prejudices, their ways of living. However, there is a strong resistance to change."² Any program designed to help people change their behavior must take into

¹ William James, *Talks to Teachers*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1899, pp. 77–78. By permission of the publisher.

² Norman L. Munn, *Psychology*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1946, pp. 234–235. By permission of the publisher.

account the factor of resistance in habits. Furthermore, although it is never too late to change habits, changing them may become increasingly difficult—hence, the importance of realizing that it would be much better to form good habits from the start. It should also be noted that James may have been too optimistic about great achievement as the result of continuous application. The factor of inherent capacities and limitations must also be considered. Still, the fact remains that, even given the ability, steady work will be required in the achievement of genuine competence.

KINDS OF HABITS

Many people when they speak of habits think of the performance of some muscular act which, through frequent repetition, has become more or less automatic. Men dress, shave, handle eating implements, take the same route to their places of work without much conscious thought, because these reactions have been routinized into habitual patterns. There are, however, other kinds of habits. Besides physical habits there are emotional and mental ones. A person who cries easily or who gives way to anger frequently has established certain emotional habits. Some are cautious in their choice of activities and associates and plan carefully; others are characteristically thoughtless of the consequences of their deeds and cannot be bothered with thinking ahead. All such people give evidence of having formed definite mental habits.

One's characteristic view of life is a habit which is formed, at least in its broad outlines, at an early age. Some individuals seem to be born happy. They are cheerful and buoyant children and adolescents; they are confident and optimistic as adults. Others are less happy, less confident, and less optimistic. It is these latter people who need especially to watch and control their emotional habits in the interest of mental health. Their habits can be changed by study and by constant vigilance. Whatever the habits, whether they be ways of looking at life or of performing daily activities, they become motives for conduct—ways of prompting and regulating behavior.

A word of caution must be given regarding these divisions—physical, emotional, and mental habits. The separation is mainly for clarification of discussion. Actually, a large number of habits have not only

their physical aspects but also mental and emotional features. It is the observable aspect of the habit that leads to its being classed in one of the three categories. This overlapping aspect of habits will become more apparent in the following paragraphs.

Physical habits. Habits, no doubt, greatly reduce the complexity of executing daily activities and do much to facilitate the ordinary problems of adjustment. They make it possible for people to accomplish with ease many simple acts which required a great deal of time and attention while they were in the process of being learned, before they had been reduced to habits. In this way habits make it possible for us to give our full effort to matters requiring out-of-the-ordinary attention.

On the other hand, there are many things done as the result of habit which complicate the problems of existence. Habits sometimes become so impelling that they make the individual their slave, instead of his being served by them. These acts are quite frequently in the realm of physical activity. One is the habit of reaching for a cigarette every time a person's hands are free for a moment. Some men have the habit of grunting or using some pet phrase when spoken to, giving other people the impression that they are being ignored, and this certainly is not a very effective help in problems of social adjustment. Many persons have an annoying habit of drumming with their fingers, jingling keys, making throat noises, or performing some characteristic movement with the hands—pulling at a button or rubbing the face. Any of these may be observed frequently in a college classroom or library. Such habits tend to interfere with the smooth performance of daily duties and make adjustments more difficult instead of easier. Some of them actually interfere with effective work, while others are merely socially annoying.

Physical habits like these (of course they have their emotional and mental aspects) have an influence upon mental health. Some of the physical habits that have a damaging effect upon mental health are poor posture, neglecting to exercise, and excessive smoking. Some that tend to promote mental health are deep breathing, getting sufficient sleep, and moderate eating. The overlap with emotion is apparent when we realize that any of the above habits may be caused by the possession of poor or good mental health, as the case may be.

Emotional habits. Probably emotional habits are even more important, as far as living is concerned, than are those that are chiefly physical. Not only do the habits which are sometimes thought to be purely physical have their intellectual and emotional aspects, but emotional reactions are in and of themselves nothing more than habits. For example, persons who have habitually lacked control of their tempers have found that by the exercise of their rational processes they were able to develop the constructive habit of control. A number of the writer's counselees have reported with surprise and satisfaction that when they did not give their anger expression they seemed to feel less anger.

Habits of emotional control, habits of facing reality, habits of attacking problems calmly are particularly important as conditioning factors in mental health. The person who is cheerful, friendly, and optimistic acts as he does because he feels that way and also because he has formed habits that help him to act that way, even in a less favorable mood. Perhaps some days he does not feel particularly cheerful and optimistic, but his habitual responses give the impression that he is. The feelings he elicits from others make it somewhat easier for him to recover his more characteristic behavior. Many students give up the pursuit of a particular goal because the way has become difficult. They have the emotional habit of refusing to accept the arduous path. Such students may avoid the study of science because the vocabulary is strange and seems hard to learn. They would not quit as soon as difficulty obstructs their way if they had not formed the habit of quitting at the appearance of smaller obstacles. Others have developed the habit of aggressiveness; they feel that they do their best when the going is rough. There are students who accept a new subject as a challenge to their ability and who work the harder because the study is difficult.

One of the major criticisms of American youth as they were seen in the armed services was that many of them did not have well-established attitudes toward, and good habits of, work. The writer has seen many bright, healthy, well-educated young men fail in radio operators' school because, when the pressure for more words per minute was put on, they could not respond by making harder, more continuous effort. Some less intelligent, less educated shipmates who knew how

to buckle down to long hours were able to surpass their otherwise superior competitors.

The story is told that Coach C. F. Bee, whose basketball teams at Long Island University have achieved national fame, has been offered positions at higher salary in other institutions where his only work would be coaching basketball; but he turned down the offers. He felt that he could do his best work only when he had many duties to perform and much responsibility. He preferred to work under handicaps. His attitude was shown recently in a sports article in which the writer said, "An ordinary coach would have given up when trailing by fifteen points with five minutes to go and given the substitutes a chance for experience. Not Bee, he kept trying to find the right combination and did. The players poured in just eighteen points in those five minutes while holding their opponents to two." Bee's emotional habit of fighting was firmly rooted. Such an attitude might well be imitated by young people who are interested in mental health, personal efficiency, and personality development.

The foregoing paragraphs illustrate the fact that it is not possible to establish habits for all activities. We need also to form general habits, which are called "attitudes." "At best we may expect situations to arise for which the individual has no ready made response of the habit type, and then, unless we have changed his outlook as a whole, the old tendencies may express themselves in unsatisfactory behavior."³ Specifically this means that, if a program of mental hygiene is to be successful, we can expect habits to help turn the trick. It will take an attitude of continuous striving, confidence, enthusiasm, and persistent vigilance. These habits or attitudes will foster the element of conscientious effort that cannot result from hoping to acquire specific habits in all the areas in which they are needed.

Mental habits. Many students who have good capacity have described their inability to apply themselves so as to do satisfactory college work. They have a desire to accomplish, but find that the inertia of former poor mental habits is holding them back. This is particularly significant because they realize that poor habits are the source of their difficulty. Here is a typical statement of one such person: "Several times in these first terms of my college life I have

³ H. L. Kingsley, *The Nature and Conditions of Learning*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1946, p. 429. By permission of the publisher.

tried to get hold of myself and do the work I know I am capable of doing. I have made resolves to work harder and have succeeded well for a time; but presently I find myself slipping back into my old habits of indolence and indifference. Why is it that I have such difficulty in turning over a new leaf?" The answer is simple. He had formed a mental habit of neglecting to apply himself consistently to his academic work when he was in the grades and in high school; and now his habits were interfering with the progress of his college work.

The clue to his dilemma and to similar ones is that present reactions are not the result of just the immediate situation. Rather, they are the result of a long line of previous circumstances whose effects have been consolidated into personal habit patterns. Other students have been faced with much the same problem as the one described above, but they have assumed that *outgrowing* the habit was the proper procedure, instead of hoping for a complete and sudden transformation. They have selected certain aspects of their conduct and have determined to change a little bit at a time. One young man, for instance, instead of setting out to improve his scholarship in general, set a mark to be attained in each subject, prepared a plan for the study of each subject and set aside definite hours for specific tasks. He studied at regular hours until he had the habit of regular study well established. His program was highly successful, though it must be admitted that grade increases were not so great as he had hoped for. He was gratified, however, knowing that some growth had taken place and said, "I know more about my weaknesses now and next term I'll make some more gains." A better insight into the specific steps for habit formation and reformation can be achieved through an examination of the technique that he employed—attacking only one small area of his behavior at a time and keeping at it.

THE NATURE OF HABITS

A brief outline of the psychological nature of habits will help toward a more complete understanding of their dynamic role in an effective mental hygiene program.

Automatic nature. The word "habit" refers to a type of learned behavior which has been repeated so often that the action becomes automatic, requiring no attention. Some psychologists refer to habits

as mechanized behavior. Habits partake of the nature of a series of conditioned responses; *i.e.*, a certain situation automatically calls forth a more or less uniform type of response. Specifically, habits are any response actions which may be initiated by a particular set of stimuli and terminated by a particular reaction.

Habits a part of the organism. Habits are not merely reactions which are carried on by the body; they are *built into* the organism as an integral part of its structure. The cortex, nerves, and cells of the body undergo changes of an electrical and a chemical nature. Just what these changes mean and what is the extent of them is unknown but the fact that such changes take place seems to be well established. The performance of a given response builds a type of neural organization that directs subsequent reactions, making them more and more alike and easier to perform. This neural structure first serves merely as a means of facilitating performance, but later it actually becomes a drive in itself. Reading may serve as an illustration of what takes place. The students who have learned to read well—ranking in the upper part of their class in this skill—have acquired beneficial habits; and the excellence and facility of their reading seems, of itself, to drive them to do extensive reading. On the other hand, those who cannot read well avoid reading because they are awkward and inefficient. The habit, then, in and of itself, becomes a motivating factor. This accounts for the fact that habits are very difficult to change. Determination to break a habit is only one step. The actual structure of the organism must be altered by repeated practice.

Permanence of habits. The fact that habits are a part of the organism offers a clue to their characteristic permanence. Habits that once have been established become a part of a functioning personality and make many of a man's actions conveniently easy. According to William James, a person's habits are rather permanently and definitely formed by the time he is in his early thirties. It is true that habits can be firmly fixed at such an early age; but there are many cases reported of persons' having established new sets of habits in their fifties, sixties, and seventies. Permanence is a characteristic of habit, but it need not have the fatalistic finality which James postulates. There is certainly very little reason to believe that a college student cannot change his habits extensively. The important thing is for him to realize that

change will take place slowly. He will not then be easily discouraged if he finds his old habits occasionally interfering with his efficiency. The new habits, once formed, will have a tendency to stay with him, too.

Habits and conditioning. A feature of habit that might well cause it to be viewed somewhat optimistically is that the acts performed in habit formation are in many instances conscious acts. The person is aware of the fact that the act is being done—especially in the early stages. Even after the habit is firmly established, one usually knows that he has the response. It was always at a conscious, or at least partly conscious, level. Since this is true, it follows that by the utilization of these conscious processes the habit can be modified or eliminated.

Conditioning, on the other hand, results in automatic reactions, but the cause of the action is frequently unknown to the subject. For example, a girl may be afraid of the dark, not because dark is fearsome, but because she had sensed that her mother was afraid of darkness. The original stimulus (darkness) meant nothing to her, but the response of her mother did. As time went on, the dark itself became the stimulus for fear, no thought having been given to the fact that the mother's response was being imitated. Thus, conditioning refers to the process whereby a response appears as a result of one stimulus's taking the place of another, the second stimulus thus arousing a reaction that is not actually a natural response to that stimulus. A child tends to take on the personality characteristics of his parents, yet is unaware of the fact that he is becoming like them. He is being conditioned.

Such behaviors as these are called "conditioned responses." In order to alter such action patterns, the individual must be made aware of responses that he has and, since conditioning involves feelings, must desire to change them; or he may be conditioned by another set of circumstances. For example, a child was conditioned to fear a rabbit by being startled by a loud sound whenever he reached for the animal, and he was later reconditioned by having the rabbit presented simultaneously with a pleasant situation (eating), so that he actually seemed to enjoy the presence of the animal. It can be seen that the element of consciousness of change has a smaller role in conditioning than it has in habit: so conditioned responses are less susceptible to conscious

control. However, the characteristics of habit and conditioning come very close together; often it is virtually impossible to separate them.

Many college students have the *habit* of sitting quietly in class and never participating in class discussions. They are acting as they acted in high school. Other students have tried, at one time, to participate but their fellow students laughed at them or a sarcastic instructor made fun of them. As a result, they are *conditioned* against participation. Their feelings have been hurt; yet they may not even know that the reason they do not participate now is because of unpleasant associations with their first attempts. It is difficult, if not impossible, to tell which students simply have the habit of not participating and which have been conditioned against it, but the result is the same. The remedy, too, can be much the same.

A girl who had the habit of not participating in class activities decided that she would try to change. She prepared her lessons well and, when she felt sure she knew the answer, she raised her hand and was called on. After a time the instructor told her that he would call on her on a certain day, so she was thoroughly prepared. Before the term was over, she was participating heartily even in extemporaneous discussions. She had formed a new habit.

Another girl traced back her lack of participation to conditioning. One of her former teachers had repeatedly rapped her knuckles when she made a mistake in reciting. In her case, the first step in remediation was to establish friendly feelings with the present instructor. Telling about her difficulty helped to relieve the girl's feelings. Finally, the instructor asked her to relate something which only she could know about. The class listened attentively and the instructor thanked her for the contribution. Gradually this student was called on more and more frequently until she, too, was taking an active part—an experience which she thoroughly enjoyed. Conditioning had been used to improve her mental health.

Dynamic nature of habits. The name of this chapter was given it because of the dynamic, ongoing nature of habits. Mechanized responses are not formed and permitted to remain unchanged from now on. In spite of beliefs to the contrary, habits are not static. For example, smoking may seem to be a fixed habit, but many smokers acknowledge that as time goes on they tend to smoke more and more. Habits, moreover, are relative to a particular situation; they are not

the same under different circumstances. Everyone knows that his habits of adjustment are different while he is at school or work from what they are while he is at home.

Habits are in a constant process of formation and are being formed in the adult as well as in the child. New ones may not appear so rapidly in the older people, but new combinations of old habits really result in new reaction patterns. Perhaps childhood and youth are the periods most productive of habits, but later years also bring many changes in habit patterns. The person seeking mental health must be able to capitalize on this flexible and dynamic character of habits.

When externality takes on new meaning, habit patterns become inadequate and must be revised. Some people do this readily, others have great difficulty in letting go what they have held. The capacity to become educated depends, it would seem, on the capacity of the individual to relinquish what he has held, and build new habit patterns in keeping with new environmental demands.⁴

This changing aspect of habit suggests that, if habits are not static, alteration is inevitable. The lesson to be derived is to let the individual exert conscious control over the habits that are being currently formed. There is still a good chance (no matter what your age) of your achieving habits that can be a valuable asset to your mental health. Some suggestions as to how this might be done are given in the section on Steps in Habit Formation.

Habits make conservation of time and energy possible. Numberless writers have pointed out that habits make it possible for us to disregard many important as well as unimportant details in our daily living. Habits—automatic responses—attend to these matters without our conscious attention. This leaves each of us more free to attend more carefully to those responsibilities which require thinking. The student who studies according to a fixed time schedule does not have to waste time wondering what to study next or whether he should relax or play for a while before starting to work. Things that were once done only with slow, inefficient, trial-and-error actions may through habit become more stable and dependable responses. In fact,

⁴ Earl C. Kelley, *Education for What Is Real*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1947, p. 52. By permission of the publisher.

habits, since they are a way of conserving learning, account for a great part of our civilization. If each thing a person did had to be done every time as though it were being done for the first time, he would be able to accomplish much less than he does in each day of his life—therefore, during his whole life span.

Motives and habits. As was suggested earlier, habits, once they have been established, themselves become motives or drives to action. An essential step in the evaluation of a habit is inquiry into the nature of the motive back of the particular action. Under what circumstances was the act first performed? What lies back of the habit? Does the habit still serve a purpose? If the habit is serving some purpose, then it might be well to ask whether that purpose could not be served more efficiently through another avenue. While the habit may have a real reason for being, it is possible that the intention could be satisfied in a manner that has more social approval or less detrimental personal effects. Should this be the case, it would seem desirable to alter the habitual response; because habits should be formed in a way that will satisfy the motive and yet be both personally and socially desirable.

Association and habits. Habits are always found operating in a particular situation. We may have one set of habits while at play and another set for school or business life. Thus, a cheerful, communicative set of responses may dominate our recreational activities, while curt, monosyllabic answers may characterize our class or business activities.

Because habits are thus associated with certain conditions, it may be that in the breaking of a habit it will often be helpful to alter attendant circumstances. Get out of a situation that calls forth the undesirable habit; then substitute new conditions. A step in reducing the number of swear words used in ordinary conversation may well be to make a change of companions or a change of work. Kirkendall reports that a number of boys asserted that, when they left home and went to a strange place where there were many interesting activities, they hardly thought about masturbation and indulged in the practice much less frequently. The force of their habit was lessened by a change in the surrounding conditions. Variation in activities, social groups, pastimes, and interests are all means by which the associations attending a habit may be altered.

Attitudes and habits. A person's mental attitude or mind-set toward a habit must be given consideration. This fact is exemplified by the truth that, "Our handicaps are not so important as the attitude which we take toward them." A prime question, then, is, "Should the habit be altered?" If the answer is "Yes," much has already been accomplished, but not all. In the final analysis, a habit is something that is done because it is easier than doing something else; it entails less energy.

That breaking a habit will be uncomfortable is to be expected. It will interfere with one's usual routine. It will involve the putting forth of additional effort. Realizing the undesirability of a habit, determining that it shall be broken, and knowing that the process of breaking will be difficult are parts of a wholesome attitude toward the control of habits.

STEPS IN HABIT FORMATION

With further reference to the treatment of habit formation which William James has contributed,⁵ it is doubtful whether his statement has been greatly improved upon in recent years. The fundamental aim of habit formation is to make the nervous system a helper, instead of a handicap. Useful thoughts and acts should be incorporated into one's organism rather than that which will impede its proper functioning. Steps toward facilitating such changes are summarized below.

State the goal clearly. After an analysis of his present condition, a person should have a good idea of just what immediate changes are desirable. Perhaps he wants to break an old habit or to form a new one. Whichever is the goal, he should state it clearly so that he will know some of the details to be achieved. Subsequent actions can then be purposeful and can be evaluated in terms of the goal which has been set. Whatever does not contribute to the goal can be discarded. Useless reactions will be eliminated. If the actions divert the flow of energy from the course of action leading to the new objective, they must be abandoned. If certain thoughts and acts take one closer to the desired change, they should be continued. Beneficial reactions, those which contribute to progress toward the main aim, can be

⁵ William James, *Principles of Psychology*, Vol. 1, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1899, pp. 122ff.

emphasized and repeated. The importance of stating one's goal clearly is further revealed by an examination of the other steps involved in habit formation.

Launch the new effort with vigor. If you wish to form a new habit or break an old one, it is essential to adopt the attitude that you can accomplish what you have set out to do. Then act with a confident conviction that success will result. That is, begin the new effort with the firm belief that you are going to achieve your goal. As has been previously stated, personality limitations often are not so important as the attitude which is taken toward them. The writer knows the dean of a graduate school who refused to permit a student to work at his school because of the student's lack of adequate ability as indicated by qualifying examinations. That student went to another school and obtained his degree with honors. The dean's comment was, "I know that I did not underestimate his ability; but I did not know how strong the drive was that was impelling him to do graduate work." The man not only had begun his effort with vigor but had followed up his good start. He had a goal and devoted his energies toward its attainment.

When your new effort has been launched with vigor, you can get help from certain incentives in addition to the internal drive back of the actions impelling you toward your goal. Your resolution should receive support from as many sources as possible. Tell your friends of your goal, sign a pledge, avoid situations which will weaken your resolve, impose penalties on yourself, and make engagements which are incompatible with what you wish to avoid. These efforts will help to supply your new resolution with vigor, regardless of what your goal may be.

Permit no exceptions. Especially when you first begin the breaking of an old habit, do not permit any exceptions to the program that you have outlined for yourself. Each failure lessens the likelihood of success. It is like the leak in the dike. It allows your confidence and enthusiasm to be drained away. Each lapse, each repetition of the old weakness has added to the strength of what you are trying to avoid. There is pertinence in the old saying, "Nothing succeeds like success." This is true in habit formation. Early failure will darken the outlook toward future success. Each day that the prospective habit is exercised

strengthens the behavior. If you are trying to break a habit, each day that a lapse into it is avoided has advanced the probability of ultimate mastery. Rip van Winkle, as has been seen, was not one of those who apply the rule, permit no exceptions.

Exercise the new resolution at once. A spontaneous enthusiasm usually accompanies the formation of a new plan. It is well to capitalize on this enthusiasm by acting on the plan at once. The emotion aroused will help carry one over the rough spots. The motto, "Do not put off until tomorrow that which you can do today," is more applicable to habit formation than to many other situations for which it is claimed. Beginning the new effort in the period of enthusiasm which accompanies a fresh resolution is likely to establish the attitude of success. Too many wait until New Year's Day or a birthday to begin the application of a novel plan. Perhaps the date may be significant in providing incentive for effort, but the passage of time, meanwhile, is storing up the effects of exercising the established reactions. Moreover, in the waiting period the original enthusiasm is being given a chance to cool off.

Give attention to the positive aspect of habit. It is essential that attention be directed to the new habit to be formed—not to the one which we wish to abandon. "A person who attempts to get rid of an undesirable habit without replacing it with an alternative habit is doomed to failure; there will be nothing to direct his habit toward, so that it can be directed away from the wrong act."⁶ For this reason, psychologists advise that if a child is to be helped to break a habit of thumb-sucking, attention should not be directed to the habit by anyone's making fun of the child, ordering him to stop, or forcibly removing his thumb from his mouth. Rather they advise that his attention be diverted to some toy, that he be played with, and above all, that the cause of the habit be found and the causal situation altered. An adolescent who is worried about masturbating will find it difficult to break the habit if he thinks about not doing the act. The more he thinks about it, the more impelling the drive will seem to be. But if he is so busy, so interested in other things, so engaged in varied activities that he has no time to indulge in the habit, the problem will be more likely to be solved.

⁶ Arthur G. Bills, *The Psychology of Efficiency*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943, p. 244. By permission of the publisher.

BREAKING A HABIT—AN EXAMPLE

Many people consider smoking a bad habit. Some physicians advise certain of their patients to give up smoking. Other doctors assert that they can find no pronounced ill effects from it. Still others believe that smoking is of actual value as a device for facilitating relaxation. Without condemning smoking as a bad habit there are still many people who wish they did not smoke because of expense or inconvenience. Since there are those who would like to quit smoking, this will be used as an illustration of how habits can be changed.

Although he makes no specific mention of William James, J. C. Furnas, in a book titled *So You're Going to Stop Smoking!*,⁷ illustrates several of the maxims postulated by James for controlling habits.

Furnas states that the best way to stop smoking is just suddenly to have the desire to smoke disappear—which he admits is highly unlikely to happen in most cases. The next best way is “. . . to have the doctor scare the lights out of you about smoking.” This too seems improbable in a large number of cases. However, this suggestion illustrates the desirability of vigorous effort and of having the resolve strengthened by some external forces.

His next suggestion is rationing—setting an arbitrary limit upon tobacco consumption. This idea, he admits, is not highly successful, probably because attention is called to the smoking habit by its being given more thought. He states that the method is poison and continues, “For myself, I prefer quitting cold.” Here two of James’s maxims are illustrated: Permit no exceptions and launch the new effort with vigor.

Furnas’s next suggestion he calls the “soul-searching method.” The person should ask himself if he really wants a cigarette. Although the answer is too likely to be “yes,” in a weak moment, the method does emphasize the vital necessity for stating the goal clearly and evaluating actions in the light of the ultimate aim.

“The handicap method”—hiding cigarettes or ceasing to buy them, so that one must “bum”—is suggested as a device for mastering the habit. This method is sometimes helpful, because it adds vigor to the resolve by getting help from outside sources; *i.e.*, the person must place himself in the inferior position of a parasite.

⁷ J. C. Furnas, *So You're Going to Stop Smoking!* New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1939, pp. 35ff. By permission of the publisher.

Finally Furnas comes to the method which is most successful (according to his own experience and the results he obtained on a questionnaire), "the clean break." The goal has been clearly stated. The effort must be launched with vigor—no half-hearted measures such as rationing and tapering off. No exceptions can be permitted in the "clean break." Here in one method are illustrated all but one of James's suggestions. The only advice which is not included is "beginning the new effort at once." Furnas suggests waiting until the "swearer-off" has a bad head cold, goes on a sea voyage, or takes a vacation in some remote place where tobacco cannot be obtained. However, these last suggestions do show the desirability of bolstering the vigor of the program by utilizing some outside source of motivation.

FORMING A HABIT—AN EXAMPLE

The suggestions for the control of habits have been illustrated in the breaking of a habit. It may be beneficial to show the suggestions for habit formation as they are applied in the forming of a highly desirable pattern of action. The budgeting of one's time will be used for an example, because the wise use of time is one of the greatest problems faced by the college student who is concerned with the mental efficiency fundamental to the best of mental health.

Time budgeting—the goal. There are only twenty-four hours in the day, and time is one thing that all people share equally. Yet some apparently get much more done than others—those who seem to have plenty of time to do the things they want and who can be depended on to do even more when called upon. There is much point in the advice, "If you want something done, go to the busy man with your request." The people who get things done are frequently those who have so planned their time as to get around to doing all those things which are most important in their pattern of life.

Many wish that they could have more time. They could, if by careful planning they would conserve the hours that are available. Unplanned time only leads to many wasted minutes. The student who plays, without planning, before he begins to study puts his study off until he no longer has time; whereas, the one who budgets his time, plays for a time and then goes to work without further delay. The

latter has no more time, quantitatively, than the first person; but qualitatively he has more, because he conserves his time through planning.

Conservation of time is, then, the goal of scheduling activities. It means doing the things that are planned, balancing activities, and distributing efforts into the required areas. The goal is one of fullness of life. More things can be done when time is purposefully distributed. Such conservation points toward the happiness which can be derived from successful accomplishment. It means a more harmonious existence, because planned time is so arranged that some activities will not consume a disproportionate number of hours. The goal represents a more effective existence, as the very word "effective" suggests the operation of a plan. Fullness of life, happiness, harmony, and efficiency are all outstanding features of mental health. The goal, then, is one very important aspect of a program of mental hygiene.

Use vigor in budgeting time. A full realization of what planning can do for a person and a conviction that it will accomplish good results must add vigor to one's efforts. The student should begin the distribution of his time with a determination that he is going to succeed. He might tell his friends of his new plan, so that he will be ashamed if it does not work out. This will add vigor to his project. He could sign a pledge; the written word seems to be more binding than an oral promise. He should avoid situations that will interfere with his plan, such as accepting a week-end invitation or starting his plan during Christmas vacation when unforeseen circumstances are bound to arise. He may impose a penalty upon himself—promise to some charitable institution more money than he can conveniently afford. He can make promises which will keep him from doing the things that would interfere with his plan, such as preparing for a debate or writing a paper by a given date. This should be easy for the college student, because his class schedule is incompatible with the wasting of time in unplanned leisure.

For the student who is planning his time to allow for a greater amount of constructive supplementary reading, a promise to read a certain amount or an engagement to tell some person or group about the book, by a certain date, will add vigor to his plan. He can promise an exhibition of the product of the work he is engaged on. These things will demonstrate that he has devoted himself to the activities

which are called for on the time schedule. They will indicate that "vigor" is not an abstraction but a reality.

No exceptions to the time schedule. It may as well be admitted that there are occasions when it is unreasonable to stick to a time schedule, to the nth degree. In fact, a successful planning of time must be characterized by some flexibility. However, in the early stages of the project, no exceptions should be permitted unless it would be highly unreasonable not to make them; and the planner must be sure that he is not rationalizing. It will be hard to drop into a new routine in one day; but the second day will be less difficult, and the days that follow will be still easier. When the distribution of time has become habitual, it will actually be somewhat uncomfortable to deviate from the schedule. The student is then using energy *for* work that was at one time used in getting *to* work. Therefore, it is plain that habits can be advantageous as well as inconvenient.

On the other hand, if exceptions are permitted early in the process, the next exception will come more readily and failure is more likely to occur. As time goes on, the student will realize the need for lengthening some periods and shortening others; but he should not do this within the first few days. He must make sure that the reason for making changes is a real one. Exceptions must be justified by circumstances rather than made according to hasty revisions, which may be just excuses for slipping into older habits.

Begin the time schedule at once. The longer one defers the establishment of this new habit, the stronger will the habits of aimless, unplanned time consumption become. If the idea is worth anything, it is worth adopting at once. It would be suitable to start the plan at the beginning of a new term or with a new job; but by waiting until then the planner is likely to forget that he was going to put such a scheme into operation. Besides, the detrimental habit is constantly becoming stronger. To begin now is best—getting the plunge over with and beginning to feel the satisfaction that is bound to come from the knowledge that one is the master of his habit, that the habit is not his dictator. By beginning at once, the planner can utilize to its fullest extent the spirit of enthusiasm that accompanies a stimulating thought.

It should be remembered that one of the hardest things about getting something done is starting it. Hardly anyone has failed to pass through the experience of dreading the approach of a certain engage-

ment or duty, only to find that, once it was started, the undertaking was not nearly so difficult as he had anticipated. Students frequently report that they have dreaded the writing of a paper in English or social science but that after it had been begun the task was not so bad after all. In fact, they enjoyed the satisfaction of accomplishment that resulted from their work. What is the most difficult part of almost any task? Getting started.

"GOOD" AND "BAD" HABITS CONTRASTED

Good habits and bad habits are often difficult to separate. One might decide after reading the two previous sections, that a sharp line of distinction can be drawn between good and bad habits. It would indeed be fortunate if such a clarification could unequivocally be made; actually, however, there is no clear line of demarcation. Here we encounter one of the many paradoxes that complicate the study of mental hygiene. Even habits that at one time were good, from the standpoint of facilitating man's adjustment to his environment, may become so rigid that they hinder rather than facilitate efficiency.

There are some habitual reactions that afford partial and temporary relief from tensions. These may be good if they are not permitted to continue too long, or if they are not used when conditions have changed so that a more complete satisfaction is possible. J. Stanley Gray includes among such habits the behaviors called "daydreaming," "identification," "overemphasis," and "rationalization." Some common habits that produce no relief and consequently are bad are worry, negativism, tantrums, obsessions, and compulsions.⁸ These will be dealt with in more detail in a later chapter.

Habits, after all, are a part of one's total personality, and most traits of personality differ not so much in kind as in degree. For example, people sometimes think of the traits of dominance and submission as being two entirely different types of reaction. Such is not the case. Dominance and submission are both ways of reacting to fellow beings. The vast majority of people cluster about an average; that is, they are neither excessively dominant nor excessively submissive (see Fig. 9). On each side of the average are some persons who differ in degree

⁸ J. Stanley Gray, *Psychology in Human Affairs*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1946, pp. 190-207.

from those in the center of the distribution, tending to be somewhat more submissive or more dominant than those who are considered normal. Still farther from the central group are those who are so submissive or so dominant that they are regarded as abnormal. Yet they differ only in degree. The same thing may be said of other habitual responses.

Good habits may become so rigid that they cause their possessor to deviate far from the condition of a normal, well-adjusted individual.

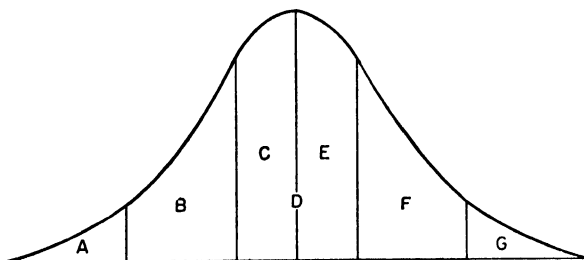


FIG. 9. Normal curve of distribution. A graphical representation of degrees of difference. People normal or average in the traits of dominance and submission would be represented as falling close to line *D* in areas *C* and *E*. A more dominant person would be represented in area *F*, a more submissive person in area *B*. An extremely submissive person (abnormal) would be in area *A*, and an extremely dominant person in area *G*.

A person can get into a rut with a good habit just as surely as he can with one that is less desirable. In collegiate life it is easy to observe that some scholars who have limited themselves strictly to some one area of study have become largely incapable of understanding other areas of knowledge and other viewpoints. They may have an actual desire to study other fields, but the working of their habits has established a rigidity that makes a shift or an expansion of interest difficult. It seems that expertness in special areas is sometimes obtained at the cost of flexibility of interest, which is a criterion of the mentally healthy person.

A man may apply his good habits of work so thoroughly that all he knows is his job. He does not pay attention to his social, family, and community responsibilities. He may be a conscientious workman, but he is not a social individual. His effectiveness as a person and as a citizen is lessened. An instance of the working of such factors is the case of a master mechanic, in the best sense of the term. He not only

worked long hours on the job but he devoted his leisure time to the study of technical texts at home. When he was not studying, he experimented and constructed in his garage workshop, often taking in odd jobs for neighbors. Of course, this diligent routine interfered with his spending time with his family and prevented his reading the news dealing with social, political, and economic problems. His good habits were interfering with his all-round adjustment.

Again, a person may apply his habits of work in the same manner, year after year, only to find that his production is falling off. Methods of procedure that at one time were successful are no longer so effective. Perhaps times have changed, so that his old habits are less effective. Perhaps his original enthusiasm for his methods of work is diminishing because the boredom of routine is affecting him. The time schedule, suggested above, may become a poor method of working if the person who uses it is incapable of introducing minor variations which will make its application enjoyable. This is simply a case of allowing what at one time was a good habit to develop into such a dictator over one's behavior that it becomes a bad habit, interfering with optimum efficiency.

It is this tendency for habits to dominate the individual that has led to the formulation of the statement that man should form only one habit—the habit of not forming them. This viewpoint is, no doubt, extreme, but it does contain a kernel of truth. If through the establishment of habits a person loses his flexibility, his ability to change, he is indeed to be pitied.

Preventing "good" habits from becoming "bad" ones. Sometimes what is regarded as a "good" habit may become, under changing environmental conditions, one which does not foster adjustment. For example, it might be considered a good habit to get up at six o'clock. After a person has been doing so regularly, a series of events may occur that prevent his going to bed at his accustomed time. Still he keeps on rising at six, and so has insufficient rest. This makes him cross and inefficient, but he cannot seem to change his habit of rising at six. His *good* habit now interferes with his physical and mental health; therefore it has become detrimental. Similarly, a person who has the habit of eating the same good and digestible foods for breakfast may find that he is upset when his regular diet is interfered with. Several

precautions might be taken in order to prevent good habits from shading into bad ones.

First, one might well examine those reactions which he considers to be good ones, to see whether they might not be changed to give still greater benefits. He should be willing to alter habits in the light of such analysis.

Second, it is desirable to keep conscious control of habits by deliberately breaking some that are of minor importance. A person may break the routine of his actions about the home, getting up at a different hour, alternating the order of doing his chores, varying the time and serving of his meals. Such changes may be slightly uncomfortable, but the acts in themselves are relatively unimportant and they help to maintain flexibility in routine activities by a conscious endeavor to find diversity.

Third, a person may have avocational pursuits. The writer knows a famous educator who advises the formation of a new hobby each year, just in order to keep young. Who has not known someone who adopted a hobby and got much fun out of it for a while, only to reach the point at which he felt that he had to go on playing the game, even though it had become monotonous through repetition? When anyone begins to feel indifferent about his hobby, it is time to consider looking for another—one that is completely different. For instance, a student may feel that golf is so essential to his physical health that he plays in even the most disagreeable weather. Apropos of this point, it might be well for the student to change the type of his recreational reading. It might do him good to change to a story magazine, even though he has been depending for years on a news magazine. He could advantageously read autobiography instead of novels for a while. Such variation will not only prevent the establishment of unnecessary habits but will extend the realm of his knowledge, so that he may become a better conversationalist.

Fourth, one may increase the number and variety of his friends. It may not be easy to form new friendships, but to do so will keep him growing in respect for his associates. Instead of associating exclusively with students, he might do well to seek the company of some working people. If he is a part-time clerk, he might find congenial associates among factory workers or mill hands. Joining a different club or social group, so that he will be forced to meet new points of view and

become acquainted with people who were previously strangers, will serve his purpose.

Fifth, the student should keep up with the times. The world is constantly changing, and he will be much more comfortable if he changes with it. There are many ways to do this: listening to the radio, reading the newspapers, talking with an enlarged circle of friends, taking a vacation trip to a different part of the country or the world. Finally, one should try to accept the view that to change and to have the ability to change will contribute toward security. Be ready, willing, and even anxious to alter the pattern of your life. Such a program will prevent your becoming a slave to either good or bad habits.

The Pilgrims talked of "Ye olde deleuder Satan." If you are concerned about mental health, beware of that "old deluder, habit." Let the most important habit you form be the one which has to do with that youthful characteristic, flexibility of action patterns.

SUMMARY

It has often been said that man is nothing but the sum of his habits. An efficient, integrated person is one who has so organized his habits that they serve him in making easy adjustments to his everyday environment. One who is in good mental health is one who has approached a high degree of efficiency. He has established a set of habits that enable him to do his work accurately and with a minimum of wasted energy. He has avoided the forming of inflexible patterns of conduct that are sometimes of major but often of minor importance.

Mental habits are just as important as those which are primarily physical. They should, therefore, be carefully studied and evaluated from the point of view of finding out whether they are interfering with or fostering adjustment. Emotional habits condition man's happiness and effectiveness. New desirable habits can be established through the exercise of certain basic principles, such as these: (1) clearly stating the purpose of the new habit and how it will be carried out; (2) beginning the new project vigorously; (3) not permitting any exceptions to the proposed program, especially at the first; (4) beginning at once on the performance of the new plan. Only by building the reaction into the organism are habits established. If the habits are undesirable, they can be eliminated by applying the same principles.

The making or breaking of a habit is no royal road to mental health. People are what they are because of habit formation—the way they have grown; and the mentally healthy person is going to direct and control the growth of future habits by gaining emotional control through exercise of his rational processes. College students, who still possess much flexibility, might do well to study the habits they are forming and try to form only those which will make for the best adjustment in the present time, as well as in after-college life.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. It is unfortunate that man's activities, mental, physical, and emotional, leave their traces in the form of habits.
2. An ideal life would be one which presents no obstacles to personality development or personal accomplishment.
3. "Turning over a new leaf" is simply a matter of determining that you will do things differently in the future.
4. Habits are as much an integral part of the human organism as is a leg or an arm.
5. Conditioned responses differ from habits mainly by virtue of the fact that conditioned responses are consciously planned.
6. Habits, once established, are virtually static, that is, they can be altered only by application of the steps involved in habit formation.
7. Habits are difficult to break because we perform the act so easily—even things that are unpleasant to us are so easy that we dislike changing the action.
8. The first step in habit formation is to launch the new effort with vigor and determination.
9. The habit of working by a time schedule, without permitting exceptions, is one that every college student should form.

10. The mentally healthy person is one who makes his "good" habits stronger and eliminates his "bad" ones.
11. Probably the best habit that can be formed is the one that usually characterizes youth; namely, that of flexibility.

Suggested Readings

JAMES, WILLIAM, *Habit*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1918. 68 pp.

A brief statement of factors involved in the formation of habits. Excellent illustrations, plus a conversational style of writing, make it very readable. The real value lies in the concreteness of the practical suggestions.

McKINNEY, FRED, *Psychology of Personal Adjustment*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1941. 636 pp.

A practical treatment of the many problem areas in mental health. Personality, study, vocational adjustment, social adaptation, marital adjustment, self-confidence, and emotional maturity are some of the subjects treated.

MIKESELL, WILLIAM H., *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939. 456 pp.

The first two chapters deal specifically with habit but the remainder of the book shows what mental and physical conditions do toward the shaping of habits of response. This book treats the topic of suggestion more thoroughly than do most books on mental hygiene.

Chapter 5

ACHIEVING EFFICIENCY IN COLLEGE

Efficiency in college work is dependent upon many factors. Good mental and physical equipment are assets. The academic background and habits you have may be advantages or handicaps. If your parents were scholarly and kept good magazines, books, and references around you, there is a better chance that you will have cultivated advantageous attitudes.¹ The habits you formed in high school might be either helpful or harmful. Special aptitudes may make the study of certain subjects easier and more profitable. Instruction which is challenging to you will make your work more interesting. The greater the clarity with which you have defined your own goals, the more purposeful will your study be. ¹

Suppose, however, that such considerations as are listed above are not on the asset side of your academic ledger; there is a great deal that can be done to increase your efficiency and make your college work interesting and worth while. This chapter deals with some of the major considerations in making college of greater value. An academic knowledge of these suggestions will not be particularly helpful; but a vigorous and steady application of the suggestions can be worth as much as all the study you put into the entire subject of mental hygiene. (It is hoped that your gain will not be so limited, however.) It is worth stressing again that the habits you form now toward your work and toward your responsibilities will condition the adjustments you will make after college.

THE COLLEGE TIME SCHEDULE

The establishment of routine. It is frequently asserted that one of the hardest things about accomplishing a job is to make a start, as we have noted previously. Many a student admits that once he "got going" on some assignment he had dreaded doing, it was not nearly so bad as

he had anticipated. It is true that the phenomenon of momentum keeps one going after he has started; it is also true that inertia tends to hold one back from beginning an activity. Getting started—overcoming inertia—can be facilitated by having a definite time schedule which helps one to distribute his time effectively. A student can get the habit of doing a certain assignment at a given time in the same way that he develops habits of continually putting off his work—by practicing the act. The establishment of a rather definite routine is of great value in forming this desirable habit.

'Not only should a routine for study be established, but other activities involved in college life should be made an integral part of a time schedule. This is essential. Variety, moderation, and balance must be given consideration in the time schedule, as well as in a program for mental health. A variety of activities will increase one's zest for his work, because this diversity will diminish the boredom and monotony of everyday tasks. "Boredom is a frequent danger signal of faulty habits of work. . . . Normal habits of work, play, rest, and sleep are among the essentials of wholesome personality development."¹ It is obvious that play, rest, and sleep should help to provide the variety that is fundamental to mental health. /

Moderation must have recognition in the workable time schedule. Some of the writer's students, neglecting this consideration, have treated play and rest as the prime factors in the establishment of their routine. Such an interpretation is ill-conceived, with the aspect of moderation omitted. Occasionally there is a student who stresses the academic side too heavily, spending all his time in class, in laboratory, and at his desk. This routine may work for a while; but frequently the pressures built up through lack of some of the phases of rounded activity cause a breakdown. This more frequently occurs at the graduate level, but it can happen to the undergraduate. Balance must be maintained. This means that sometimes a person, when he has many things to do, must decide which is most important at that particular time. Consideration of both immediate and ultimate goals will help to provide the answer.

¹ Adolph W. Aleck, "Teaching as Guidance," in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1936, p. 693. By permission of the publisher.

Walter Homan cites eight definite factors which should be included in every student's time schedule.²

1. Begin with the class and laboratory hours which are set by the school. Place these in the schedule first.

2. Hours for work at home, or other employment, are definite and should therefore be scheduled early.

3. Two hours of study should be allowed for each unit of credit. Results from your work will reveal alterations which might be made later.

4. Time must be allowed for personal care.

5. There must be sufficient time allowance for the leisurely eating of meals.

6. Allow time for recreation. This is a personal matter, dependent upon tastes and upon the vitality of the individual.

7. Allow for free time. Several hours a week should be listed for church, social events, friends, student activities, and the like.

8. Finally, all time schedules should provide for an ample amount of sleep.

It may not be amiss to refer again to the advisability of going to a busy man when immediate action is needed—the busy man who has a successful routine, so that he can undertake additional activities without neglecting the usual demands. Such organization of routine activities will give the college student opportunity for doing the many things which develop effective personality and which might otherwise be neglected.

A college time schedule. A first step in the establishment of a workable routine is to draw up a schedule of activities. A sample time schedule is shown in Fig. 10. In this schedule it will be noted that the student, Dick Fuller, has provided for a wide variety of activities. He has planned to spend two hours of study for each class hour. This is widely considered to be a desirable standard, although it is not so widely accomplished. However, since the time is planned, Dick will be able to have the time available, when* it is necessary because of periodic examinations or heavy assignments. It should also be noted that as frequently as possible he has placed his study periods adjacent

² Walter J. Homan, in Harry E. Tyler (ed.), *Learning to Live*, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1940, pp. 24–26. By permission of Rinehart and Company, Inc.

<i>Hours</i>	<i>Sun.</i>	<i>Mon.</i>	<i>Tues.</i>	<i>Wed.</i>	<i>Thurs.</i>	<i>Fri.</i>	<i>Sat.</i>
7-8	Sleep	Toilet Breakfast	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto
8-9	Sleep	Math. class	Math. class	English study	Math. class	Math. class	English study
9-10	Sleep	Math. study	Math. study	English study	Math. study	Math. study	English study
10-11	Toilet Breakfast Letters	English class	Biology study	English class	Biology study	English class	Recreation
11-12	Church	Sociology class	Biology lecture	Sociology class	Biology lecture	Sociology class	Recreation
12-1	Visit	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1-2	Dinner	Biology lab.	Study biology	Biology lab.	Free reading	Mental hygiene study	Wash clothes
2-3	Free study	Biology lab.	Mental hygiene class	Biology lab.	Mental hygiene class	Sociology study	Free study
3-4	Free study	Biology lab.	Mental hygiene study	Biology lab.	Mental hygiene study	Sociology study	Free reading
4-5	Free study	Phys. ed. class	Mental hygiene study	Phys. ed. class	Sociology study	Math. study	Visit
5-6	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free	Free
6-7	Supper	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
7-8	Church group	Free or visit	Free or free study	Date	Sociology study	Free	Free
8-9	Date	Math. study	Math. study	Date	Math. study	Date	Date
9-10	Date	Biology study	Sociology study	Date	English study	Date	Date
10-11	Free study	Sleep or study	Sociology study	Free reading	English study	Date	Date
11-12 12-7	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Sleep	Date Sleep	Date Sleep

FIG. 10. Schedule of activities of Dick Fuller.

to the class periods. This is an aid in reviewing close to the time of learning in class. Early review means less loss than would occur if the time elapsed were greater. This will also work when the study period is before class, except that when the study follows the class, the student has the double advantage of doing the assignment while it is clearly in mind and of having the opportunity to weigh the value of class discussion and lectures while they are still fresh.

The provision for "free reading" is commendable. The plan here is to make time, while in college, for some of the reading that Dick wants to do independently of assignments. The taste for reading novels, biography, travel, and the like is one which should be developed now. If it is left to be initiated later, the graduate is likely to find that somehow he still will not have the time for reading that is not obligatory. This item in the time schedule reveals the fact that Dick has set as an objective of college attendance the securing of a general education, along with professional preparation.

In the time schedule there is a distinction between the blocks of time labeled "free" and "free study." The "free" time can be used for anything the student desires—dates, letter writing, recreation, personal chores, or study. The "free study" makes acknowledgment of the fact that two hours will not always suffice to do an acceptable assignment and that there will be interruptions at hours scheduled for study. In either event, he plans to go on the next scheduled activity and use the free-study hours to complete the work or do the extra suggested readings which are frequently listed in syllabi and textbooks.

Students frequently come to the office and report that their schedules will not work. Analysis of their plan shows that they have made no provision for activities other than study—the basketball games, committee meetings, shopping, rallies, letter writing, "bull fests," and other engagements that cannot be left out. These items cannot always be fitted into a schedule but will take place at one's convenience. Still, it is important that allowance should be made by setting aside the "free-time" or "free-study" blocks, to accommodate occasional extras. In short, the workable time schedule must be flexible. Shifting the periods about does not indicate that a schedule is unworkable. It continues to serve as a guide in the choice of the relatively more important task of the time.

Students who do part-time work are the ones who most frequently say they cannot stick to a schedule. The truth is that they cannot afford not to stick to a schedule. They should probably label a number of their blocks with alternative pursuits: work or study biology, work or study mathematics, work or free time, and the like.

A further precaution—one not too frequently mentioned in methods-of-study books—is that the study blocks should be labeled for specific subjects. Merely to write in “study” does not furnish a definite enough guide to activity. Unless the subject is mentioned, undue attention may be devoted to the courses which are “interesting” or in which the work is more frequently checked by the professor. All courses can make some contribution to growth; but the student must plan to do sufficient work so that this contribution will be profitable to him.

A time schedule should be planned in detail immediately after registration for the term. In all probability, the first plan will not work. After a week or two of trial it should be redrawn and made to fit more closely into the existing situation. Even then the importance of flexibility must be kept in mind. While the schedule should be adhered to as closely as possible, it is a guide rather than a restrictive obligation.

CONDITIONS OF STUDY—FACTS AND FALLACIES

Conditions of effective study. There are some hardy individuals who can study effectively under almost any conditions, because they have developed their powers of concentration to a high degree. A far greater number, however, find it difficult to study under distracting conditions. All the competing stimuli which are acting upon them seem to demand a portion of their attention. Psychological experiments prove that some degree of mental energy is required to exclude interfering stimulation. It is, therefore, desirable to reduce to a minimum the competing stimuli.

Since intellectual work must often be carried on amid handicaps and distractions which cannot be controlled, it increases one's efficiency to eliminate or reduce those which can be regulated. Make it a habit to give the small amount of attention required to keep the room conditions good: temperature about 68° to 70° Fahrenheit, sufficient moisture or humidity,

good ventilation without drafts, and lighting without glare, so arranged that shadows are not thrown on the page one is reading.³

A room to oneself where others do not break in with conversation and where no radio is audible is also an advantage. Sometimes it is necessary to be blunt to companions who will not leave even after a tactful hint has been given. It is highly probable that they will respect you for your serious intent.

While it is advisable to eliminate distracting conditions whenever possible, the way the student views distractions is important and should be considered. Some students whose study conditions are not ideal do their work effectively because they can ignore distractions. They refuse to let whispering in the library bother them. They have work to be done, so they do it. The light may be poor, but there is an assignment to be prepared, so they focus their attention on the task, not on the distraction. A straight chair may be necessary for some students, but for others an easy chair is no hindrance. The way such conditions are met depends largely upon the frame of mind. In short, the psychology of suggestion is operating. Let anyone believe a straight chair is necessary, and he will need it. Let him think that any chair is good enough, and he can work well in any kind. There are many persons in school and in the business and professional world who accomplish effective work in spare moments—while waiting for a train or for an appointment, while riding on a bus, or even while eating lunch. The distractions around them become unimportant because these persons make the psychology of suggestion work for them.

Some harm has been done to serious students who, through reading methods-of-study textbooks, have been led to look for perfect conditions. Quietness, proper lighting, regularity, and the like have been stressed so heavily that many a student gets the idea that these things are "essentials" rather than "desirables." A better frame of mind could be induced by paying more attention to the content of the study and less to the conditions of study. Such a frame of mind is merely a symptom of another aspect of good mental health. The person who is disturbed by whispering in the library, by a cold or an overheated

³ Francis F. Powers and Others, *Psychology in Everyday Living*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1938, pp. 369-370. By permission of the publisher.

room (when the condition cannot be changed), or by the good time other students in the house are enjoying is manifesting symptoms of poor mental health. Stuff your ears with cotton; do your typing or write your compositions when conditions are too distracting for reading the technical presentation of atomic energy or biological fission; but do not place all the blame on external factors and give up doing the work. The "psychology of suggestion" can work for you as well as against you.

It is advantageous to have all the necessary materials at hand at the beginning of the study period. A rather common error of college students seems to be that they begin to read and then find that they need a pencil with which to underline, or paper on which to take notes, or a dictionary. They then have to interrupt their study while the desired materials are gathered. It is more efficient to get all the materials ready before sitting down by taking an inventory. The student should be sure that pencil, pen, paper, eraser, ink, dictionary, and books are within reach. This will help to prevent the disturbance of having to start the same task two or three times.

IMPROVING READING EFFICIENCY

Efficiency in reading. The major portion of scholastic work is based upon reading activities. Other things being equal, a student who can read well will do better college work than one who is an inefficient reader. It can be safely stated that, in general, the more rapid reader is a better reader than one who reads slowly. There are, of course, varying types of material to be read and different purposes in reading, which will demand different reading rates. Technical descriptions, mathematical analyses, excerpts in encyclopedias, and the like must be read more slowly than novels, familiar descriptions, and nontechnical materials.

Rapid reading is desirable for several reasons: (1) it enables one to read for ideas rather than for words, (2) it makes the association of related ideas easier, (3) it enables one to cover more material per unit of time, (4) it makes possible the reading of unassigned supplementary work, and (5) it demands a higher degree of concentration.

The student who can read 400 words a minute can devote just half the time to reading that one who reads 200 words per minute must use

and can be doing as good, if not better, work. This means that he can devote more time to carrying on other activities or to supplementing his assigned work with correlated or leisure-time reading. In four years of college work a student who has learned the art of good reading will save a substantial amount of time if efficient reading skills are learned in the freshman year.

Granted that the development of good reading habits is desirable, it is relatively easy to improve both rate and comprehension. However, it must be borne in mind that improvement in reading is not attained merely through devoting much time to reading. A *planned* program must be regularly practiced if improvement is to result; otherwise, the habits already established will become only the more firmly fixed. A person who reads at the rate of 300 words per minute and who simply does considerable reading in the next three months will, in all probability, still be reading 300 words per minute at the end of that time. On the other hand, if he reads with the intention of improving and if he practices reading rapidly, it is entirely probable that a substantial improvement in his reading rate will have taken place. Many studies have shown that in periods varying from four weeks to six months, when the student has given regular attention to the improvement of reading, gains have been made which amounted to a doubling of the number of words read per unit of time. Many students have made gains of from 50 to 75 per cent. But they gave regular, planned attention to the goal of improvement.

The general conclusion of many studies is that the average college freshman reads at the rate of about 225 to 250 words per minute. It must be emphasized that this rate is by no means a desired standard. Many of the readers included in this freshman average will not be successful enough to remain in college until graduation. The rate can be and should be substantially higher. If any change takes place in the upper terms of college, it is likely to be toward fewer words per minute. This regression occurs because there is a great deal of study and little recreational reading. A constant diet of the study type of reading tends to slow one down. This might well be a forceful argument for the inclusion of a "free-reading" period in the student's time schedule. If he does his free reading rapidly, it might save him time in the long run by improving his over-all reading rate.

Suggestions for improving reading. Certain suggestions can be given which have been found valuable in improving both rate of reading and comprehension. Students who have made a real trial of these suggestions report having found them of immense value in improving scholastic efficiency. Among the recommendations are the following: ⁴

1. Read for ideas rather than words. Try to anticipate meanings. Seek the key word of the sentence and the key sentence of the paragraph. Make associations between the sentences in a paragraph and between the paragraphs in a chapter.

2. Do not vocalize, *i.e.*, do not form the words silently with your lips or in your throat. To vocalize consistently means that you can read no faster than you can talk, which is not very fast. Furthermore, vocalizing probably indicates that you are reading words rather than ideas.

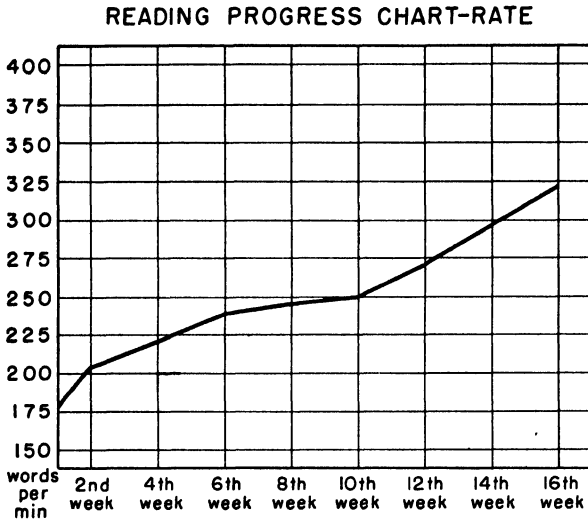
3. Eliminate regressive eye movements, *i.e.*, do not permit the eyes to go back to words that have already been seen. Regressive movements will destroy the rhythmic motion of the eyes (which characterizes good reading) and will slow the reading rate considerably. Many regressive eye movements are unnecessary because there is a lag between the seeing of a word and the mental perception of it. The idea will come, even though the words are not looked at again. You can prove this by shutting your eyes when you have an impulse to glance back; you will find that the message will arrive.

4. Practice under a handicap. A student who can read a page in one minute might mark off a page and five lines to be read in one minute, then a page and ten lines or a page and fifteen lines, to be read in the same unit of time. One may allow himself a certain time—say, five minutes—for reading a given number of pages, then increase the number of pages he must cover. He may time himself in reading a page and then see if he can cut ten seconds off that time when he reads another page of the same type of material.

5. Practice regularly. More can be gained by practicing ten minutes every day than by practicing two hours on Saturday or Sunday, alone. In addition to being faithful to a regular practice period, trying to

⁴ A more extensive presentation of the problems involved in reading, together with other considerations in effective study, can be found in Charles Bird and Dorothy M. Bird, *Learning More by Effective Study*, New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1945.

improve reading skills by practicing on recreational material and newspapers will prove advantageous (see Fig. 11).



READING PROGRESS CHART-HABITS

Items to be answered yes, questionable (?) or no.

Avoid regressive eye movements									
Look up new words.....									
Review words looked up.									
Practice speed 10 min. per day..									
Avoid vocalization...									
Read biography...									
Read books on travel.									
Read novels....									
Read popular articles...									
	Begin	2nd week	4th week	6th week	8th week	10th week	12th week	14th week	

Fig. 11. The above charts can be used for keeping a record of progress and as a source of motivation for improved reading skills. See how fast and how far you can make the graph line go upward. In the lower chart try to get more "yes" responses in the boxes as the weeks pass by.

6. Practice on easy materials. If a student begins on too difficult materials, he is likely to be discouraged at the outset. He will have the feeling that he is missing much of the meaning of the selection. If he

hurries while reading simple material, he will be able to catch the meaning from key words and thus will get practice in reading rapidly. Reading easy materials will also give him a chance to enjoy recreational reading, which a college student should not neglect if he is to get the maximum benefit from his reading skill.

7. Build vocabulary. Lack of a good vocabulary is a detriment to good reading. Encountering a strange word frequently causes a regressive eye movement, an interruption in the rhythm that characterizes good reading. A student whose vocabulary is poor is at a disadvantage competing with those who have good vocabularies. He might be compared to a runner in a race in which he alone had to jump hurdles while the others were running on a clear track. Poor vocabulary will cause the reader to lose the train of thought and will make concentration more difficult.

While following positive suggestions for improving reading, it is well to observe certain precautions. Charles and Dorothy Bird have issued a pertinent warning to the student who undertakes a program of reading improvement.

Without belittling the improvement shown, it cannot justly be claimed that a 50 per cent improvement as measured by reading tests is a guarantee that a person is able to read all material with the same increase in speed and comprehension. . . . The acceptance of figures on reading improvement, without understanding how they were obtained, often leads a student to set for himself an objective which later experience proves was impossible to attain. Dissatisfaction and loss of interest in improvement follow. It is better to accept the general trend of the evidence proving that improvement does occur, without becoming concerned over the amount one *should* gain; then whatever progress is made serves as an incentive to still further effort. Experimental studies indicate that most students can, by applying good techniques and by working under pressure, form habits of efficient reading.⁵

THE IMPROVEMENT OF VOCABULARY

Importance of vocabulary. It has already been indicated that a good vocabulary is (1) an asset to clear thinking and (2) an extremely important aspect of reading, enabling the reader to comprehend more fully the message of the writer. There are other values, besides.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 99. By permission of Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.

Vocabulary is highly important in the classroom. It enables the student to attain more complete understanding of the exact meaning of a lecture. If he is familiar with the words that the speaker uses, he will be able to pay attention to the total significance of the lesson, instead of having to give special attention to the meaning of individual words. Just as one tends to lose the trend of a passage when reading if he has to puzzle over a word, so he is likely to lose the thread of thought in a lecture when many of the words are meaningless to him. In the new-type examinations—true-false, completion, multiple-choice, matching—the student who has a good vocabulary will be at a distinct advantage. Many of the questions depend directly upon an understanding of certain of the words used. In fact, the study of a subject usually entails the learning of the particular vocabulary which is characteristic of that subject. When the exact meaning of all the words is known, the subject as a whole takes on greater significance.

The importance of vocabulary in learning has been succinctly stated by Dr. George W. Crane.

The vocabulary factor is quite important in learning. Other things being equal, the man who possesses a vocabulary of 10,000 words is superior in learning capacity to the man who has only 7,500 words. Words are not only individual habits of vocal enunciation, but they also represent fineness of mental distinctions that have already been made concerning elements in the environment, and which can be used for future thinking. They are like various kinds of mental chisels with which one carves out knowledge concerning his milieu. The more chisels he possesses, the more and finer discriminations he can make when confronted with a new situation.

In another sense, words may be likened to fishhooks. The more hooks on a line, the more likelihood of catching fish. So, too, the more intellectual hooks that one has when dipping into a new subject, the more likelihood of pulling the known out of the unknown, thereby leaving the strange for special concentration and study.⁶

Vocabulary and the college student. Obviously, vocabulary should be given adequate attention by a student or by anyone else who wishes to achieve maximum mental efficiency. Investigators have found that in many cases the student with the more extensive vocabulary makes

⁶ George W. Crane, *Psychology Applied*, Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1937, pp. 62-63. By permission of the author.

better grades in literature, science, and mathematics than does one who has a poorer equipment of words.

The writer has made a study in which the relationships between vocabulary, scores on mental tests, and grade averages were investigated. In spite of the fact that intelligence tests have been used and are being used to predict college aptitude, in this study the relationship between vocabulary and grade-point-average was higher than between intelligence-test score and grade-point-average. Other studies have indicated similar results, but there are some studies that show a closer relationship between grade-point-average and mental-test scores. Even though the results are not in perfect agreement, the importance of vocabulary is well established. It may be that intelligence and vocabulary are merely aspects of the same thing; it would seem that intelligence relates to ability, while vocabulary indicates the extent to which that ability has been utilized.

Although at the college level there is not much that can be done about one's amount of innate intelligence, there is still plenty of room for decisions about how that intelligence will be used. This section has indicated the importance of vocabulary in the thinking process, and it should serve as a plea for planned activity directed toward the acquiring of better use of the language our culture employs. There is ample evidence that

. . . increase in vocabulary helps a student in college and life (without increasing his test intelligence) in several ways. A more adequate vocabulary will: (1) Enable him to understand better what other people say. (2) Increase his comprehension of what is read. (3) Make possible a more refined and accurate expression of his ideas and knowledge. (4) In all these ways, broaden his concepts in such a way as to improve the quality of his thinking.⁷

Building vocabulary. The problem of building a better vocabulary is, therefore, of concern to the college student who is interested in attaining his maximum mental efficiency. There are several methods by which to undertake vocabulary building in a systematic manner. One that has been widely and successfully used is to keep a word list in a special section of a notebook. List the words in a column and after each word write its definition. Below the definition write a sentence con-

⁷ Harold W. Bernard, "Some Relationships of Vocabulary to Scholarship," *School and Society*, Vol. 51 (Apr. 13, 1940), p. 495.

taining the word; because the use of the word, not just its definition, is of special interest and value. It is sometimes advisable to copy the sentence in which the word had been originally encountered. The purpose of this project, however, it must be remembered, is not to collect words but to learn their uses. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that the words and their use be reviewed at frequent intervals. A piece of paper can be cut so as to cover the definition, leaving the word uncovered. The test is to see whether the meaning of the word can be recalled without reference to the definition. Finally, the word should be used in a sentence—preferably, in one that is not contained in the word book.

Another effective method is to use a set of 3- by 5-inch cards and to carry them with you. Place only one word on each card, together with its definition and a sentence using it. Some consider the cards more convenient than a notebook, because they fit easily into pocket or purse. Some students take out their cards at odd moments, while waiting for or riding in a bus, before class, or while waiting for an appointment, and make use of the time for the review that is essential to building vocabulary.

Besides these special techniques, there are certain general suggestions which will aid in the working out of this project. While no definite rule can be given, it is sometimes advantageous *not* to look up the word while one is engaged in reading, because this will interrupt the rhythm and speed of reading. Instead, the word can be marked lightly with a pencil and then looked up and studied after the reading has been completed. It should be emphasized that the most important words are often those which are commonly used but for which, nevertheless, the exact meaning is not known by the reader. It is wise not to pick out just the long or the strange words, but to include many that are encountered frequently. Of course, a student will not know, when beginning to study a new subject, just which words will recur most often; but after he is more familiar with the subject, he will be able to decide with a fair degree of accuracy which are most essential for his use.

The first of two fallacies regarding the matter of vocabulary building is the notion that the meaning of a word can be grasped from the context in which it occurs. Sometimes, of course, that is possible; but often a mistaken impression is made, so that the next time the word is

encountered its true meaning is not clear or it is entirely misunderstood. A dictionary or the glossary of the book will be the safest guide to the full understanding of the word. The second fallacy is that one can collect lists of words from various sources and learn the meanings of them all. This is commendable in a way, but it would probably involve studying many words for which one would have little use. Many of the writer's students have become interested in vocabulary after being given a test and have asked for the list used in the test, that they might study the words in it. Such a project would require using time that might more advantageously be spent on the methods of vocabulary building suggested above.

THE ROLE OF INTEREST IN COLLEGE EFFICIENCY

A mistaken notion regarding interest. Unfortunately there are widespread misconceptions regarding the nature of interest in schoolwork. Too many students seem to feel that interest is something with which they begin or which they lack. Others feel that the responsibility of interesting them hangs upon their instructors. Still others believe that interest is some rather mysterious inborn quality. Actually, it rests with the student to build his own interests. Those which he already has are products of his past experience. When a student can distinguish between the fallacies and the facts, he is ready to assume responsibility for shaping the interests which will make his college work more vital and efficient.

The nature of interest. The nature of interest may better be understood by examining the word itself. It comes from the Latin word *inter*, meaning "between," and the Latin *esse*, meaning "to be" or "to exist." Hence, it means that which exists between the individual and some object, person, idea, or situation. The thing which exists is a feeling of oneness or unity of the individual with another person or thing. It is a feeling of identification. Interest is, therefore, a feeling on the part of the person that the object or the situation has personal significance or importance. This feeling is the result of knowing or acquaintance. One cannot be interested in that which he does not know. Hence a necessary ingredient of interest is previous knowledge or information about a person, object, or situation which is related to the one who is interested. In short, the person or the situation affects

the life of the interested individual in some way. One of the mistakes people sometimes make is to assume that interest is something that "happens," which is not the case. Interests are the result of activity which creates the knowledge leading to interest.

Interest is somewhat similar to attention, which is the focusing of the sense organs on some object or situation. Interest also involves focusing the sense organs, but it is characterized by a longer period of focusing. Attention is transitory, while interest is relatively more enduring. The practical import of this comparison is that the attention one gives to his schoolwork—lectures, reading assignments, recitations, and discussions—is a first step toward the more lasting condition, interest.

The college student can make use of these facts concerning interest by seeking for the identity or significance to him of the courses he takes and by giving the attention which could and might lead to interest. In addition to these general considerations, there are a number of specific things which can be done to capitalize on the nature of interest.

Steps in building interests. Fortunately, there are some very workable suggestions for the development of interests. The use of a time schedule, the development of vocabulary, and the improvement of reading skill all play a part in such development. Among the steps that may be taken are the following:

1. *Be an Active Participant.* This is simply the time schedule in operation. Time passes more quickly when we are participants—that



FIG. 12. The effect on perception of filling space (or time).

is, when we are busy—than when we are spectators. When you are discussing a problem in a lively conference, the period goes more rapidly than it does when you are checking your watch to see how long the lecturer will be going through his notes. The principle is illustrated in Fig. 12. When the space about the horizontal line is filled by the slanting lines converging inward, the horizontal line appears to be shorter (figure at left) than when the slanting lines extend outward (figure at right). When a student spends a fifty-minute period

actively reciting, exchanging views, taking notes, or reacting (even silently) to a speaker, the period will seem shorter—be more interesting—than it would be if he spent it passively waiting for the end of the period. It is possible to say truthfully that interest is an outcome of active participation. Of course, participation often is the result of interest, but this is not necessarily a one-way relationship.

2. *See That Action Is Full and Vigorous.* This admonition is merely an expansion of the foregoing. The participation should be enthusiastic rather than apathetic and forced, if that is at all possible. The establishing of a frame of mind will make the psychology of suggestion work for you. That is, if you *act* interested, you may be able to “sell yourself” on the idea and become truly interested. Many young men and women have resented being required to take physical-education courses in their freshman year; but they have decided to make the best of the situation and participate in good humor, often with the result that an interest has been created in them, so that they have found themselves participating in physical-education activities on a voluntary basis in their upper division years. Being bored by academic duties is a handicap which is largely self-imposed.

3. *Arrange for the Experience of Success.* If you devote enough effort to your academic work and develop skills in reading and vocabulary, the resultant degree of success will foster interest. Rarely it happens that one is bored by the things he can do well. The more frequent experience is for a person to be interested in the things in which he is skilled. This is true of athletic skills, social skills, and academic skills. Instead of waiting for interest to come as the result of success, you can get the knowledge, write the papers, and gain the competence which will give a glow of satisfaction, and this will awaken interest. Additional work will then demand less effort. The success may be relatively complete rather than absolute. Bettering one's own past record will develop a feeling of success. Even the consciousness that one has done his best can sometimes produce the same feeling.

4. *Make Your Study as Personal as Possible.* A student has every right to ask what he will get out of a subject. But he should seek the answer himself. Each of his school subjects should make some contribution to his own personal purposes. However, it will frequently be necessary to figure out just what that contribution will be. The poorest

reason would be that it helps the accumulation of credits toward graduation. Better arguments in its favor would be the improvement of professional skills, the advancement of worth-while leisure pursuits, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and in some ways an enlarging of the enjoyment of life.

5. *Establish Definite Goals.* It is not enough to aim merely to get by so as to receive a diploma. A goal so vague will serve to make courses seem tedious. Sit down and write out a list of purposes that you wish to have served by college graduation. Use these to validate the courses you are currently taking and state your goals for each course. The goals can be professional, cultural, personal, or general; but your work will be more interesting if the purposes are clear. "A purpose can be the most definite of motives and the most powerful. The more definite the goal, the more determined you are to overcome obstacles and put in the necessary effort."⁸

One girl used this suggestion by keeping two notebooks in each class. One was to help her pass the course; the other contained ideas she intended to use later in her teaching. Some of the notes were on the teaching methods (some to be adopted and others to be avoided) and others gave bits of information that she thought would be of value in teaching. Her goals were clear, and she never complained of boredom.

6. *Acquire Information.* No one can take interest in something about which he has no information—he may be curious, but not interested. Who is much interested in ornithology and philately unless he knows something about them? Yet those who do know will risk their lives in pursuit of the former and invest their money in the latter. The writer met many young men during the war who were "interested" in mechanics; they at least knew the word. There were few who were "interested" in hospital work, aerographer, and rangefinder until they had acquired information. The college student can profit from this factor by doing as well as he can the work assigned; as he acquires information, his interest will grow and effort will be less necessary.

Many students say that they are not interested in a certain subject, even before they have found what it is about. Those who do not

⁸ Robert S. Woodworth and Donald G. Marquis, *Psychology*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1947, p. 325. By permission of the publishers.

work on the subject continue to be uninterested, while those who really study, in spite of lack of interest, frequently discover something that is of value to themselves and so become interested. It would be a great advantage to students to attempt to discover, through application to study, whatever there may be in each subject that is of concern to them—either at the time or for the future. No academic subject is without value to someone and it behooves the student to try to see what it is that others recognize as of personal value in the subject. Although this approach may fail in some cases, it will be sure to succeed in others. Lack of interest will certainly persist until acquaintance has been made.

7. *Expand Your Present Interests.* New interests evolve out of old ones. You can use the subjects in which you are now interested to help generate interests in others. Analyze the relationship of the new subject to the old ones. Figure out what contribution the new subject makes to knowledge of the subject in which you are interested. Expansion of interests can also be facilitated if the implications that your subjects have upon events which are taking place around you are sought for. Sociology has bearing on newspaper accounts of delinquency, housing, recreation, and the like. Psychology throws light on such daily topics as crime, mobs, and fashions. Economics is in operation in price indices, foreign trade, and stock fluctuations. Parallels to what is happening from day to day can be found in the study of history. Discovering these relationships will help you expand your interests, through the things which are currently around you and are influencing your life, to those topics which you study in your “uninteresting” academic courses.

8. *Make Use of What You Learn.* Everyone makes use to some extent of what he learns. Inevitably what we experience becomes a part of our action patterns. The particular point of emphasis here is that conscious effort directed toward the application of knowledge that is acquired from study will broaden the extent of the application. Learn a few foreign-language phrases and use them on your classmates. Discuss your subjects with your friends and your professors. In your letters home tell about what you have learned. Speculate as to how the application of the theories you learn would influence the trend of daily events. Using what you learn, as contrasted with learning merely

for the sake of a grade, can make the difference between the undertaking of an interesting project and the performance of a wearisome obligation.

SUMMARY

There are many factors which make for efficiency and ultimate success in college work. Some of these are beyond the student's power to control at this time. Among such factors are the amount of innate or potential intelligence that he possesses, the kind of study habits that he brings from elementary and secondary school, and the kind of academic tradition with which his family surrounded him. Even these factors which cannot be controlled need not be looked on as crippling handicaps. It is within our power to determine to make better use of what intelligence we have. If old habits of study are ineffective, it is time to formulate new ones. It will be well to recall the material in the chapter on growth which indicated that maturation was a necessary condition of learning and that frequently the more mature person changes faster than the less mature individual. The lack of an academic tradition need not be a lasting handicap. Wide reading and systematic study can, and frequently do, result in a commendable rate of growth among such students.

Four factors in college efficiency have been emphasized in this chapter. One of them has to do with forming and sticking to a planned schedule for the expenditure of time. This schedule should be subject to revision but should not be affected by the daily whims of the student. It should provide for recreational and leisure-time activities, as well as for class attendance and study. A second major consideration in effective college work is a planned program for improvement in reading skill. This improvement can be facilitated by reading under a handicap, consciously striving for progress, and keeping a chart which records the gains made in the many phases of reading. The third aspect of effective college work concerns systematic growth in vocabulary. Words contain the keys to ideas, so the exact meanings and shades of distinction between related words must be known in order to read and think analytically. The fourth factor has to do with the student's assuming an active role in the development of interest. He cannot wait for the instructor to *make* a course interesting; he must

seek out and create the conditions that will cause him to *take* an interest.

There are other phases of effective college work: using the library, taking notes, writing term papers and English compositions, getting acquainted with professors, and the like. The interested student can consult any of several good texts on methods of study for ideas concerning such matters. The presentation in this chapter has been limited to those aspects of college efficiency which will have a direct and substantial carry-over into life outside of and beyond the college years.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. It is easier to begin a task than it is to finish it.
2. Keeping a time schedule is impossible, because there are so many unforeseen interruptions in college.
3. It is difficult—if not impossible—to study where there is any noise or conversation.
4. Slow readers probably remember better than fast readers, because the printed word makes a deeper impression on them.
5. It is safe to advise college students not to read under a handicap.
6. One should practice reading regularly, day after day, on easy, interesting material.
7. Students with the highest intelligence quotients also make the highest scores on vocabulary tests.
8. A conscientious student will immediately look up the new words which he encounters in his study.
9. Word lists secured from instructors or from magazine quizzes afford excellent vocabulary building material.
10. A good way to build vocabulary and improve thinking is to figure out the meaning of words from the context in which they occur.

11. Vocabulary is important in the process of retention, as well as in the process of acquisition.
12. Increasing vocabulary actually brings about a change in operative or functional intelligence.
13. More attention should be given to recognized but not known words than is given to words which one is encountering for the first time.
14. Ideally one should study only those subjects in which he already has an interest.
15. No matter what the subject, a student should try to figure out what it can or does mean to him as an individual.
16. Usually a person can develop an interest in a course if he acquires enough information so that he can gain a feeling of success.
17. Conscientious college students will read just as many collateral reading assignments as they possibly can.

Suggested Readings

BENNETT, M. E., *College and Life*, 3d ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1946. 530 pp.

An easily read and comprehensive book, dealing with the problem of getting the most out of college. Suggestions for getting along with people, improving study habits, and personality improvement are given. Attitudes toward work, life in general, and marriage are treated as problems of education which persist after college graduation.

BIRD, CHARLES, and DOROTHY M. BIRD, *Learning More by Effective Study*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1945. 275 pp.

Various problems of college adjustment are dealt with in this book. Adjustment to family and colleagues, planning one's time, efficient reading, taking notes, preparing for examinations, and writing papers are topics which are discussed in detail.

TUNIS, JOHN R., *Was College Worth While?*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936. 234 pp.

Instructive and entertaining reading is provided in this book. The material is not written by a college professor. The author's summary of

what happens to college graduates twenty-five years later should provide some clues for an evaluation of the areas of activity which are available to the college student today.

WERNER, OSCAR H., *Every College Student's Problems*, New York: Silver Burdett Company, 1929. 370 pp.

Time invested in the reading of this book will return a profit to every student. Practical suggestions are given on the budgeting of time and money, improving reading skills, studying for specific purposes, taking notes, writing papers, and other aspects of getting the most out of college.

Chapter 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

People, young and old, are interested in the development of personality. A good deal of the interest in psychology stems from the desire to learn more about and improve personality. Advertisers capitalize on this ambition by offering short courses in personality development, by trying to provoke readers into using a particular product, or by offering some secret to immediate popularity. Unfortunately for those who respond to such lures, personality development is a slow, continuous process of individual growth for which there is no short-cut substitute.

This whole book is actually devoted to various aspects of the engrossing problem of developing personality; but to read the book is merely to take a short step on the way. One who gradually advances in the ability to apply the principles set forth is developing personality. Similarly, the application and incorporation into habit of *some* of the ideas suggested by advertisers can serve as steps in the right course. Encouragement to perseverance is suggested in a proverb, "Step by step we go a long way."

There are two major reasons why college people are and should be interested in the problem of personality growth. First, personality concerns each one as an individual—realization of his capacities, the achievement of his goals, and the growth toward happiness and efficiency are intimately personal. Since men and women are naturally egoistic, these factors deserve attention. Second, personality is related to one's social effectiveness. Those action patterns, those habits which make us acceptable to others, are aspects of desirable personality growth. Thus, from the viewpoint of our association with our fellow men our personal interest in this problem is significant. These two reasons fold back into each other. Anyone who has achieved the first, the selfish, aims of personality is more likely to secure the love, respect, or admiration of his fellows. And because we desire to have significance and to be approved by others, the extent to which we realize

the second phase reacts proportionately upon our own inner feelings about ourselves.

SOME MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING PERSONALITY

Before the discussion of personality development has gone any farther, it may be well to clear up some common misconceptions regarding personality. The elimination of some of these false notions is important, because otherwise someone may fear that his chances for improvement are more limited than is actually the case. If, for instance, a person has red hair, he may think he is doomed to be hot-tempered; if he has a low forehead, he might believe he is unintelligent. Such beliefs have led some, and might lead others, into feelings of inferiority which are likely to limit personality development.

Hair color indicates temperament. An illustrative misconception is the assumption that red-haired people have quickly aroused and hard-to-govern tempers. Psychologists have pointed out, in vain it seems, that, according to the indications of research, control over one's temper is largely a matter of habit, and a dark-haired person is just as likely to have a poorly controlled temper as is one with red hair. When ill-temper is caused by harsh external circumstances or by glandular imbalance, as is often the case, it is obvious that unfortunate things can happen just as readily to a blonde or a brunette as to a red-haired individual. A brunette is no less likely to suffer from improper calcium assimilation (a function of the parathyroid glands) than is anyone else. If there is any connection at all between color of hair and a hot temper, it is more likely to be the result of unwholesome experience than it is to be due to an inherited tendency related to hair pigmentation. That is, if a child is teased about his red hair and is told that he will have a hot temper, he may try to live up to expectations and carry the response over into adult life. Then, too, because his temper is alleged to be due to inherent causes, his conduct is excused to a greater extent than it would be in other cases. Thus, his experiences contribute to his lack of self-control, which definitely is not caused directly by the color of his hair.

A similar belief is that blondes are more fickle than brunettes or, vice versa, that blondes make better wives than brunettes because they will be more steadfast. A newspaper article argues that blondes, being

more "cuddly," make good wives because they are willing to spend quiet evenings at home, whereas brunettes, being ambitious, drive their reluctant husbands to study and social functions in an effort to be recognized in society. Such statements are likely to cause people to make unwise decisions, both in regard to themselves and in their relationships with others. It would be much better to judge people by their actions than by their possession of light, dark, or red hair—a circumstance which has absolutely no basic causal relationship to personality traits. Certainly explaining away our undesirable traits on the basis of hair color is an unwholesome use of rationalization.

Physical characteristics are indicative of personality. Another misconception which relates personality to physical characteristics is the idea that small people are more intelligent than large ones. This notion would imply that growth in physical stature must be compensated for by a limitation in mental growth. Evidence seems to show that if there is any relation between size and mentality, the larger individual has the advantage; *i.e.*, in general, a *very slight* positive relationship between size and intelligence reveals that the larger the individual, the better is the mentality. However, on a relationship so slight, it is utterly foolish to found a theory of correspondence between size and intelligence to apply to any individual. The question is, therefore, one of academic rather than practical or personal interest. The misconception probably arises from the fact that large children are compared with children of the same age in the same classes and, because *they appear to be older*, more is expected of them. Actually, it is not the size but the age—that is, the number of years of living experience—that should be counted. As in the case of hair color, judgments of personality should be based upon performance rather than upon physical characteristics.

The relationship of physical characteristics to personality traits has been a matter of speculation for many ages. For example, Hippocrates, born 460 B.C., claimed that personality was dependent upon the *humors* of the body. In modern times, Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909), an Italian criminologist, advanced the theory that criminal tendencies in a man could be identified by certain organic and physical characteristics. Overdevelopment of the lower jaw, projecting ears, ferocious facial characteristics, and defective teeth were supposed to characterize the criminal type. Although a number of investigators have made careful

studies which disproved Lombroso's theory, many persons permit their first impressions of others to be influenced by facial features. Their bias is expressed in such statements as "My, he certainly looks like a crook" or "That boy will grow up to be a thug—with that low brow and those big ears." How much better and safer it would be to reserve judgments until they are based on observations, instead of being influenced by popular misconceptions which have been reduced to meaningless or even harmful platitudes.

It has been demonstrated many times that judgment of personality and character from facial features is unreliable. Groups of students—for instance, members of a class in psychology—have been presented with photographs of men and have been asked to indicate which were criminals. The students selected pictures of college professors just as frequently as they did those of actual lawbreakers. According to a story about one such experiment, the picture of J. Edgar Hoover—prominent law enforcer—was believed by a majority of the students to be that of a man of the "criminal type." Numerous studies dealing with this problem have led to a result in which students of psychology and mental hygiene might well place their faith: that all adequately trained psychologists are emphatic in denouncing the fallacy and superstition of analyzing character from facial features. The important thing, from the standpoint of personality, is not how a person looks but how he acts. That is, the significant consideration to apply in any case is not the individual's physical characteristics but the kinds of conduct he characteristically displays.

Handwriting reveals basic personality. Interest in the analysis of personality has led many people to waste their money in consulting quacks who profess to diagnose personality through an analysis of handwriting. Letters "a" and "o" if left open are supposed to indicate looseness of character, while firmly crossed "t's" and accurately dotted "i's" reveal firmness and steadiness of character. No thinking men would look for improvement in anyone's personality merely because he had suddenly taken pains to cross his "t's" and dot his "i's." The writer recalls that while he was in high school he read such a misconceived interpretation of handwriting and that thereafter he carefully formed his letters when writing. Probably legibility was gained, but it is certain that no improvement in the personality itself resulted.

Some of the founders of our nation wrote so poorly that only with difficulty can their words be interpreted; yet history credits most of these men with having had sound characters. Students who are deficient in scholarship often write precisely and symmetrically, while many a good student can barely read his own writing. Of course, it is true also that many good students write very well. It would seem that the degree of relationship between intelligence and handwriting is not high. The same generalization can be made concerning the correlation of personality and handwriting. It is probably more reasonable to ascribe the quality of one's handwriting to the type of instruction he has had, the structure of the bones of his hand and wrist, the degree of bodily coordination he possesses, and the interest he takes in writing than it is to regard his handwriting as a reflection of innate behavior tendencies.

Members of a given race possess unique personality traits. A whole series of misconceptions is based upon the idea that certain races of mankind have similar innate patterns of behavior. A great deal of misunderstanding and human misery have resulted from the belief that Jews are more adept at making money than are other people. Objective studies indicate that in reality the Jews, as a race, possess no more money than do members of other races. Such facts are accepted very reluctantly, if at all, by persons who permit their thinking to be done on an emotional rather than an intellectual basis. The lack of intelligence ascribed to Negroes, in comparison with whites, is just as likely to be due to cultural and educational opportunities' having been denied them as it is to inherent lack of learning ability. Most anthropologists and psychologists agree that data concerning racial differences in intelligence are probably affected by the devices used in measurement and by the cultural environment of the persons measured.

It is probable that many Englishmen have unwarrantably experienced embarrassment because of their reputation for being slow to see the point of a joke. Other common fallacies are that Irishmen are pugnacious, Scotsmen are frugal, Germans are stubborn, and Swedes are slow and stolid. Of course, since men of a particular nation live together and are faced by similar conditions, they tend to develop somewhat similar personality characteristics. But the supposition that a person is inevitably what he is because of his being an Irishman, a German, or a Jew (that is, dependent on inborn factors) is far from

being supported by the facts. An Irishman brought up with only Germans around him would take on the characteristics generally attributed to Germans. Assertions regarding inborn racial characteristics have no more foundation in fact than have the beliefs that handwriting and hair color are indicative of personality traits.

Other misconceptions. Some other misconceptions regarding personality include the following: Eyes set wide apart indicate that a person has histrionic ability (ability in music and dramatics). Thin lips indicate a cruel nature, while thick lips show lustful, sensuous tendencies. Fat people are, as a general rule, good-humored. Thin people are cunning and sly. If a person is not in the habit of looking directly into another's eyes, he is dishonest and must be watched for underhanded tricks. Lack of mental ability is compensated for by the possession of extraordinary mechanical ability. People who are great artists have what is known as artistic temperaments; therefore, they "blow up" with little or no provocation. All such beliefs as these must be discarded if evaluation of personality is to become more accurate.

SOME FACTS ABOUT PERSONALITY

A partial understanding of the problems involved in the development of personality can be achieved through a listing and analysis of some of the misconceptions which are prevalent. This has been done in the previous section. Understanding will also be fostered by a study of truths which have been discovered through experimentation and study. In this section some of the facts, together with their implications for mental health, will be considered—in the hope that the student's own program for personality development can be based upon factual information.

Meaning of personality. The term "personality," one that is widely used, has different meanings for different persons. Many seem to think that an individual either has personality or does not have it. The fact is that everyone has a personality. Be it good or bad—whether it affects others positively or negatively—the personality is there. The meaning that is usually intended when anyone says, "He has personality," is that he has a good personality, in that it has a positive, pleasant effect on others—that he is socially effective. A few years ago it was popular to refer to personality characteristics as "It" and to think of "It" as

being synonymous with "sex appeal." Personality is a composite of all the qualities, features, and traits that an individual possesses. According to Karl Menninger,

. . . personality is used to describe almost anything from the attributes of the soul to those of a new talcum powder. As we shall use it, it means the individual as a whole, his height and weight and loves and hates and blood-reflexes; his smiles and hopes and bowed legs and enlarged tonsils. It means all that anyone is and all that he is trying to become.¹

Menninger's statement however omits one consideration which is extremely important and that is the effect of this composite of traits upon others. The following statement supplies that feature: "A man's personality is his system of reaction and reaction possibilities in toto as viewed by fellow-members of society. It is the sum total of behavior trends manifested in his social adjustments."² In other words, human personality does not exist in isolation from other personalities.

The reciprocal relationship makes it rather essential that everyone should be careful in describing another's personality, because what he is really doing is to express his own reaction to that individual—which is not a purely objective description—and he is thus revealing himself. Perhaps the term personality would be less freely used and less widely misused if people gave consideration to the fact that "In ordinary situations, whenever an individual describes the personality of another in whose presence he has been, the individual is describing his own reactions almost as much as those of the other party."³

It may be concluded that personality includes one's inherited characteristics, his peculiarities and his normalities, as well as his learned reaction patterns as they affect and are reacted to by fellow beings.

Personality—the result of a long process of growth. In the section, Some Misconceptions Regarding Personality, another fallacy that is widely exploited by quacks might well have been mentioned. It is that personality can be remade almost overnight by means of five or ten

¹ Karl Menninger, *The Human Mind*, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1930, p. 21. By permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

² John F. Dashiell, *Fundamentals of Objective Psychology*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1928, p. 551. By permission of the publisher.

³ Paul L. Boynton, "Personality: Its Nature and Development" in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 495. By permission of the publisher.

lessons. Before anyone can do much to improve his personality, he must fully realize that no outsider will be able to turn him into a new man. *There is only one kind of improvement in personality and character, and that is self-improvement.* This self-improvement must be achieved through a long, slow process of growth. It involves all that was said in the chapter relating to the breaking and formation of habits. Since the personality of the present time is the result of all the experiences that the person has had since birth, his personality in the future must be the product of those past happenings, plus present events, plus his future experiences. When the concept of personality as stated by Menninger is considered, it becomes obvious that personality, since it includes so many factors and qualities, must be the result of a slow process of growth. What one does now—today—is important in shaping his personality.

The role of heredity in personality development. One's physique and facial characteristics cannot be greatly modified by environmental factors. A Chinese born in the United States may grow an inch or two taller, as the result of a better diet and less crowded living conditions, than he would have in China; but he still retains the characteristic Chinese features. These are the result of his heredity. As has already been pointed out in the section on misconceptions, it can be predicted only with great uncertainty that behavior tendencies are the result of race or heredity—even though physical features are due largely to inheritance.

One's native intelligence may be limited by heredity, but it is much less certain that there is a fixed extent to which a given amount of intelligence may be utilized and developed. In fact, many psychologists report that few, if any, persons work up to their inherent potentialities. This situation gives rise to the assertion, "Mankind is well-nigh universally satisfied with mediocrity." Under vastly improved environments, children have been known to make what are surprisingly large improvements in their tested intelligence quotients. This development is schematically represented in Fig. 13.

In one community where the ancestral stock was not very strong, social workers predicted that a very large percent of the child population would, in a few years, be contributing to delinquency, prostitution, crime, and dependence. However, a group of teachers went into the community determined to see if this gloomy forecast could not

be prevented. They did so thorough a job, in their social, educational, and recreational work, that the dire prediction of the social workers was far from being realized. The heredity of these children had not been changed, but the development of that heredity had been materially affected.⁴ The implication for every person—college students included—is that heredity limitations to personal growth are vaguely

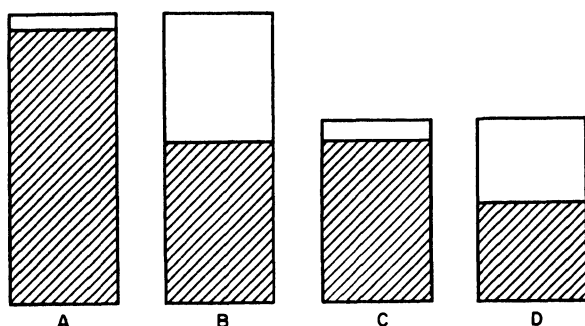


FIG. 13. Schematic representation of the interdependent role played by heredity and environment. The outer rectangle represents hereditary potential. The cross-hatched area represents developed personality.

A represents an individual with large native potential who has developed close to his maximum. *B* represents one who has large capacity but who has failed to realize the potential. *C* represents a person with small capacity who has utilized that capacity effectively. *D* represents small potential and small realization.

The extent to which potential is realized is dependent upon (1) the environment and (2) the way the individual reacts to that environment.

determined. A safe assumption is that we could each develop more than we already have developed.

With these illustrations in mind, it will be less convenient for an individual to escape responsibility for his own improvement by saying that he is what he is solely because of his heredity. It will be much more in keeping with the mental hygiene viewpoint to realize that heredity only provides a basis upon which to work, instead of determining the end product. Heredity is important in determining personality, but it is not the sole factor. It may not be possible to "make a silk purse out of a sow's ear," but it might be possible, by the exercise of care, to make a very presentable pigskin bag. In short, it is im-

⁴ W. Carson Ryan, *Mental Health through Education*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1938, pp. 16-21.

portant to have good materials with which to work, but the ability of the workman is also important. Similarly, it may not be possible for everyone to become a genius, but it might be possible for many to realize more fully their potentialities.

The role of environment in personality development. The definition of personality that was cited makes it clear that learning influences the growth of personality. Learning should not be conceived of as something that goes on only within the school. In fact, probably only a small part of knowledge is obtained through formal schooling. The majority of learned reactions are acquired from all the experiences which are provided by environment—home, family, play group, community, school, work contacts, newspaper, radio, motion pictures, and the like.

Some people who are amateur students of personality have considered all the influencing factors and have come to the conclusion that, since men are the products of their environment, individuals have no responsibility for the direction taken by their personality growth. They believe that they are what they are because of the environment in which they have lived. This is a partial truth, which loses its validity when considered in connection with a broader understanding of the facts about personality; *i.e.*, that environmental circumstances are frequently not so important as the way a person looks at them, and that one does—to a degree, at least—select his own environment. Here again is the factor of response at work.

There are, then, two reasons why environment alone cannot be blamed for an existing state of affairs. In the first place, a person can choose and select at least some factors in, or aspects of, his environment. Companions, recreations, reading materials, radio programs, occupations, fields of study, and the like, can and should be a matter of wise personal choice. Activities which have been found by others to have a constructive effect upon personality may provide guides for the selection of certain factors in the environment which one wishes to have acting upon himself. In the second place, experience is dependent upon an experiencing person. Many modern psychologists view with incredulity the extreme belief that there is a one-to-one relationship between stimulation and response. The individual selects phases of his environment to which he responds. Theoretically, a country lad raised in the woods will perhaps not react so quickly to

a coin dropped on the street as a city-bred boy would; while, on the other hand, the country boy will more quickly respond to the snap of a breaking twig, when the city lad would not even hear the sound. Two students listening to the same lecture get quite different ideas from what they hear. In short, present experiences are dependent upon previous experiences and reactions. And previous reactions were dependent, at least partially, upon the choices which were made. *The individual actually is a part of his own environment.*

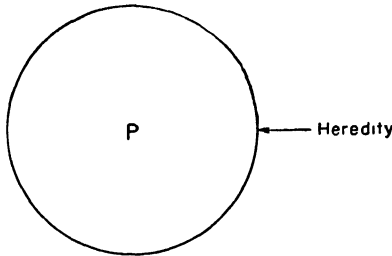
In conclusion, then, environment does provide formative influences for personality development. However, individual responsibility cannot be avoided by permitting this statement to stand alone. Environmental factors can personally be selected and they are interpreted by the reacting organism. As was stated in the previous section, heredity provides only a basis for personality development; it does not contribute a formed individual. This statement can now be extended: Environment contributes to the shaping of the raw material of personality that is given by heredity but that contribution is dependent upon the response of the person (see Fig. 14).

The role of the individual in personality development. The foregoing discussions of heredity and environment indicate that the individual is, to a great extent, accountable for the direction of his personality growth. "A well-balanced and integrated personality can result only from a gradual process of habit formation. A happy and efficient self is the result of eternal vigilance on the part of the pupil."⁵ Which is to say, there are many factors bearing on personality that are within the control of the individual.

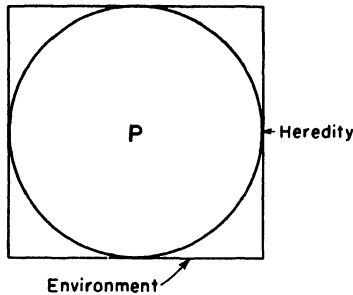
While heredity provides one's physique and facial characteristics, it certainly does not wholly determine his personal appearance. Good grooming—neatness and cleanliness—can do much to compensate for lack of natural beauty. Erect carriage creates the impression of confidence and emotional poise. These factors not only have an influence on others but also reflect upon the individual himself. Almost everyone has some time or other enjoyed a feeling of confidence when on some unanticipated occasion he has known that he was immaculate and appropriately dressed. Besides, since personality is interpreted by others, personal appearance is of no little importance.

⁵ A. I. Gates, *Psychology for Students of Education*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933, p. 598. By permission of the publisher.

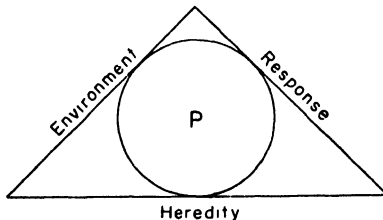
Physical attributes and appearance, of course, must yield first place to inner personality characteristics. While Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt is



Limited theory: Personality is determined by one (circumference) factor—heredity.



Limited theory: Personality is determined by two (height and breadth) factors—heredity and environment.



An acceptable theory: Personality is shaped by the interworkings of three factors—heredity, environment, and response. The factor of response refers to what is done with the heredity in terms of the aspects of the environment to which the person selects to respond.

FIG. 14. Theories of personality.

not considered beautiful in features, her attractiveness and beauty of character are acknowledged widely. She has made the most of what nature gave her. Then, too, as was indicated in the section on misconceptions, emotional control is something that is to some extent acquired

rather than being entirely dependent on natural tendencies. Mrs. Roosevelt acquired poise through working to overcome the handicaps she felt and through forgetting herself in her interest in others. It may be that some people are naturally more irascible than others, but this does not prevent their exercising control or excuse them from doing so. Explaining conduct on the basis of native tendencies is resorting to a rationalization that can do little to improve conditions. The mature individual must himself assume responsibility for his actions.

Speech is a factor that can be subject to considerable control, and it is one that continually makes some kind of impression upon other persons. It is a familiar idea that speech reveals the man. How important it is, then, that every person should create the best impression possible through a precise, accurate, and easy use of language! The significance of correct speech when one is applying for a job has been greatly, and justifiably, stressed. Less stress is placed on speech habits in one's daily contacts with family and companions, but such habits have real significance. Speech cannot be put on and off like clothes. It is controlled by habit and is always exercising some influence. "Good speech is a matter of habit." So, too, an effective personality is a matter of carefully regulated habit.

Control can be extended to include patterns of etiquette, also. People are likely to be considered bores when they are unaware of, or unobservant of, approved social forms. Preparation for socially effective behavior demands that the requirements of society should be learned and adhered to. Similarly, morals are susceptible to control. The customs and mores of society should be observed if harmonious relationships are to be entered into and maintained. It is true that certain rules of etiquette and some moral codes seem crude and out of place, but the fact remains that ease of adjustment is frequently dependent upon conformity, even in such a case.

The limits of personality modification. The above discussion of the phases of personality—heredity, growth, environment, and the person's own reaction and effort—leads to the question, What can I believe in regard to the extent to which personality can be remade?

It would be foolish to take the view (which some profess to believe in) that a person can become anything that he wants to be. The undeniable fact is that every person has limitations, though they may be hard to measure, beyond which he cannot develop. The desire to

be the world's heavyweight boxing champion, backed up by constant training under experts, does not assure—or even promise—attainment of the goal. The presence of many “punch-drunk” ex-fighters attests to this truth. Some truly ambitious person may practice long hours, under the best of teachers, and still not even come close to becoming a notable concert pianist. The natural gifts or capacities are a first consideration in determining the extent of personality modification.

It is likewise foolish to take the view that “fate” determines what a person will be. Those who take the extreme-environmental attitude assert that there is nothing they can do about the ultimate outcome of events. They can argue the point very well—in fact, too well. However, numerous instances of people's having worked successfully in overcoming handicaps can be cited. Perhaps “fate” had decreed that they would be successful, but the fact remains that they themselves worked for their accomplishment and did not just wait for “fate” to take its course. The college boy who sets out on a program of remedial reading is not blaming environment for his deficiency and letting it go at that. He is shaping his own environment. The ability of a person to change his environment or to adapt himself to it is another factor determining the extent to which personality is modifiable.

The extent of personality modification is limited because personality is the result of a long, continuous process of growth. The residue of past growth creates an inertia which must be overcome if further change is to take place. The person who has been cheerful all his life does not, barring sickness or accident, become a chronic grouch overnight. The boy beginning college who has not been used to study or continuous work will find it hard to apply himself to his books for long hours just as soon as freshman week is over. The writer has met many students who have asserted, after a dismal term, that they were going to settle down and work. They made a good start, kept it up for a period of time, then found their old habits creeping back to make them negligent and lazy. Some who had been forewarned that those old habits would handicap them were on the lookout and successfully prevented the return of previous responses. They realized that, since growth is a continuous process, the results of yesterday's growth can gradually be replaced by the growth of today and tomorrow.

Theoretically, the only limits to change in personality traits (as responses) are those imposed by structure, intelligence, and special

capacities. It should be possible for everyone whose intelligence is average or better than average to be polite, honest, cooperative, respectful of authority and the rights of others, tolerant, loyal, thrifty, altruistic, forgiving, modest, orderly, and able to face reality. Faulty structure or sickness may make it difficult to attain such qualifications as the following: precise speech, industriousness, evenness of temper, poise, self-confidence in certain realms, and ability to concentrate. The lack of certain capacities may prevent attainment of excellence in some of these fields: athletics, music, the graphic and plastic arts, and mechanics. It is apparent, therefore, that part of the answer to the extent of personality modification is dependent upon the trait concerned.

Intelligent and perspicacious *planning* for the future is always a significant feature of any mature life. The individual imagines things as they might be, even picturing his own personality as he would like it. This planning for the future determines the subsequent development of personality quite as effectively as do the forces of the past.⁶

Again it must be asserted that a limitation to personality modification is dependent on the person himself. The student “. . . should not ignore the possibility of treating a condition because it is supposedly hereditary. Such an attitude is only a confession of ignorance or a rationalization of incompetence. Even relatively fixed traits may be modified in a worth-while degree if the proper environmental influences are brought to bear.”⁷ The study of mental hygiene should do much toward revealing that somewhere between extreme views of heredity and environment lies the answer to the question, To what extent can personality be modified?

A LIFE PHILOSOPHY AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

It has previously been pointed out that, although heredity and environment play a considerable part in personality development, the person's own reaction is also important. The way anyone responds—the choices he makes—is to some extent dependent upon his philosophy

⁶ G. W. Allport, *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1937, pp. 218–219. By permission of the publisher.

⁷ L. F. Shaffer, *The Psychology of Adjustment*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936, p. 360. By permission of the publisher.

of life. A person's philosophy of life is the system of values by which he lives. It includes, among other things, his aims, ideals, modes of response, and manner of thinking. A mature philosophy of life would be the result of a lifelong study. It would include many manifestations; but it is something which grows and changes, so an early effort to systematize such a tentative philosophy would be highly desirable in terms of providing a solid foundation for the later construction of one's individual philosophy. There is perhaps no more important problem for the college student.

"Philosophy" may be considered just a word to designate a limited part of the sum total of our knowledge about man and the universe in which he lives. There are systems and viewpoints in philosophy which are named after the men who formulated them—Aristotelianism, Platonism, Christianity—and there are some named for basic concepts—pragmatism, idealism, realism. These philosophies can serve as the basis for a term's work, a college major, or a lifetime of study. Such study is designed to help people be better citizens and more effective in their home life, and to assist them in the appreciation of the good, the true, and the beautiful—in short, to assist in the maintenance of mental health.

Our concern in this chapter will be superficial as far as the total realm of philosophy is concerned. It is hoped that the ideas presented can be of immediate and practical value in getting the reader to think about a basic philosophy, which can be more fully developed as time passes. The present consideration is to deal with some of the problems of values that are of interest to the college-age youth. The values will be presented in the form of questions.

What kind of personality should be created with which to live?

Consideration of the development of a life philosophy, together with its implications for personality development, is another of the basic aspects of mental health. It must be admitted at the outset that philosophy and personality are continuous problems. To read about them is not enough. The ideas you gain must be put into practice; and it is necessary to act on tentative conclusions, since you will change your ideals and goals as you learn and experience.

Personality is not something with which you are endowed at birth. It is something you are continually building as you engage in the daily activities of living. The personality you create depends upon the in-

terests you develop, the goals you strive for, the responses you make to problems and challenges, the way you meet success and failure, the kind of thinking you do, and the habits you form. The personality can be strong if you develop healthy interests, pick goals that are attainable yet not too easy (thus providing an impetus to growth), take success without gloating and view failure as a mistake rather than a defeat, and form habits that analytic thinking has shown to be constructive. The personality will be limiting and destructive if you choose base interests, if you pick low goals or just drift, if you gloat over success and quit trying when you fail, and if you form habits which tend to undermine physical and mental health.

The very essence of life lies in the steady remaking of yourself. Personal resentments, cherished grudges, selfish conceit, and prolonged discouragement tend to block the achieving of a respected and personally enjoyable self. The facing of truth, the continuance of the battle, the denial of transitory pleasures, and identification with worthwhile causes are factors which build stability of personality. These are not mere words; they represent (admittedly) wide generalizations. It would be impossible to define all situations which each of you must encounter; therefore, the translation into specific situations must be left to you. The generalizations will hold.

The most common response to this may be a mood of "Oh, the futility of it all!" It may be helpful to reflect that many others have handicaps greater than yours. Think of the blind, the deaf, the paralyzed, the malformed, the chronically ill, who have achieved in spite of their burdens. Edison, Steinmetz, Helen Keller, Mozart, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Samuel Clemens are only a few of those who fought off the feeling of futility. There are unrecognized heroes among our ordinary neighbors. The mother of a cretin child, the wife of an alcoholic, the sister of a paranoiac—these struggle on in spite of futility. By their efforts against odds, all these individuals achieve a strength of personality that must be a gratification to them and a cause for admiration by the members of society.

Very frequently our problems are not so serious as is our attitude toward them. The habit of taking positive, persistent action in spite of obstacles and the habit of constructive thought are more important for successful living than is physical health and ebullient energy. "Heaven is not reached by a single bound" nor is achievement to be

had for the mere asking. It is up to the individual to decide whether to take the course of slow progress or to ease off with transitory enjoyments. "Step by step we go a long way" suggests that persistence and endurance can in the long run build a hardy personality.

The laggard and the drifter permit themselves to be sidetracked easily. They yield to the temptations of the moment. Their achievements are negligible and their reaction habits become progressively unreliable. The person with an achievable and definite goal organizes his resources and assets into a dependable system of reactions. It is exactly at this point that the pervasive importance of goal selection becomes apparent. The goals can be minor—such as the changing of habits or daily objectives of doing routine work well—or they can be major—such as the achievement of a college degree, the acquisition of a home, the rearing of happy children, or the attainment of prominence in an occupation or profession. As one works toward the goal and nears his objective, he is simultaneously building the stability of personality that will make the selection and realization of the next goals more probable. It is a psychological fact that "to him who hath, it shall be given." In order to accomplish these things, one cannot depend on one dose of inspiration. He must remind himself of what his purposes mean in terms of daily living by reading good books, talking with serious people, identifying himself with prolonged obligations, and restudying the sources of his stimulation. Again let it be emphasized that growth is a slow process that requires time. The personality you have to live with is worthy of continuous cultivation.

What kind of work shall I do? Perhaps this is not really the first question in this area that should be asked. Some may need to start as far back as, Shall I work or does the world owe me a living? The answer to this question is so obvious that it hardly deserves consideration. However, there are many who act as though they were trying to avoid working.

One young woman who had somehow acquired a questionable point of view expressed her attitude in the words, "I did not ask to be brought into this world and I don't see why I should have any less than others about me. The world owes me a living just as much as it does them." She was more intelligent than average and had gone to college and qualified for a teaching position without an excessive expenditure of energy. She secured a teaching position in a small mountain community

but was not satisfied with the salary received. Her income was not sufficient to buy the clothes she wished to wear, so she went to a neighboring city and wrote several bad checks. She was easily identified and, when traced by the county sheriff, she finally admitted her error. Kind friends and relatives paid her bills and she was freed of the charges. In this case, it is possible to report a happy ending. That teacher is today a wife and the mother of two fine children. She works hard and has apparently abandoned the idea that work is something for others, but not for her, to do.

There are very few who can get by without doing some kind of work. Some people may have inherited such wealth as to make work unnecessary. A few try to steal or embezzle their livelihood; some get by, while others reside in such places as Sing Sing or San Quentin. For most of us, however, the security we achieve, the respect we gain, the worldly goods we acquire come as the result of work and work alone.

College people are, by and large, aiming at professional activity. Unfortunately the professions, already overcrowded, are becoming still more so. The temporary shortage of teachers after the Second World War is already being felt only at certain levels, and teaching is one of the easiest professions to enter.⁸ College graduates in larger and larger numbers are having to accept the fact that white-collar jobs will be harder and harder to find. Conversely, they will have to engage in work which is called "common labor." Even in this latter category it may not be possible to select just the kind of work which has an immediate appeal to the seeker. Many have *no* choice. "They have to take the only job that is available."⁹

In view of the positions available and the importance of finding work, it would seem to be wise for a young person to give any job he can secure a fair trial. This trial should mean that he studies it—trying to see its importance, its social and economic implications. He should try to determine how it can be done more efficiently. In short, the question, What kind of work shall I do? should be answered in terms

⁸ Those who are interested in teaching as an occupation might study the implications for them of the fact that it seems unlikely the shortage of elementary teachers will be made up within the next seven or eight years.

⁹ Paul H. Landis, *Adolescence and Youth*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1947, p. 339. By permission of the author and the publisher.

of the sincerity with which he undertakes whatever job he can find—not in terms of specifically named occupations.

How shall I view the problems which beset me? Everyone has problems. Some permit their problems to weigh them down. They give up the battle because of the persistence of their difficulties. Study of psychology, sociology, history, economics, and philosophy should help one to see that problems are a familiar phenomenon of life. Study of the psychology of adolescence has realization of this condition as one of its major objectives. Students have the opportunity to see that such things as popularity, academic success, getting along with parents, choosing a vocation, physical and emotional health are widespread problems among those of college age. This knowledge can help them face their own problems somewhat more objectively.

Mental health requires that problems shall be welcomed as challenges to continued growth. The problem provides a stimulus without which the individual might be tempted to rest on his oars. The presence of a problem helps us not only to develop physical and mental skills but also to generate a confident attitude toward the next problems which present themselves. The attitude of confidence and aggression is probably even more important than the skills, because the attitude has a dynamic part to play in the future development of additional skills.

Apparently men seek to escape problems. However, this tendency is only apparent, not actual. Even when men escape the routine of facing the daily problems involved in work, they turn to such alternative problems as trying to lower their golf scores, trying to outwit fish, seeking to cover a certain number of miles in the time available for an automobile trip, and planning to fit their fun to their purses. Actually, then, it would appear that freedom from problems is something which is only temporarily sought. The healthy individual looks for new challenges in the form of more responsibility, greater achievements, and more efficient work. The mentally unhealthy person is the one who really desires to avoid problems and who resorts to extreme rationalization, projection, hypochondria, reverie, paranoia, and other defense mechanisms. It is an axiom of mental hygienists that these escape mechanisms do not solve problems. Rather they create further problems, which make living only more difficult. Conversely, the healthy person avoids the accumulation of personal problems by di-

rectly attacking those presented by his environment. This fact has been emphasized in previous chapters and will continue to be a focus of emphasis throughout the book.

What ideals shall I strive for? The question as to what ideals should be striven for cannot be answered in a paragraph or two. Many volumes have been devoted to exhortations regarding worth-while ideals. The question is made more difficult by virtue of the fact that, among so many different persons who have such varying backgrounds and responses, some will find certain ideals more pertinent to themselves than other ideals, which seem desirable to other persons. In spite of these complications, the writer will hazard some choice of ideals that have been fruitful for men in the past.

Altruism. Concern about the welfare of all mankind is an ideal worth cultivating. Even if we were to omit the assurance that widespread application of this ideal might eliminate war and the threat of war, it would still be true that personal mental health would be enhanced by adopting this ideal. Psychologists and psychiatrists try to help their patients by encouraging them to develop an interest in other people, which would reduce selfish concern and unhealthy introspection.

Industry. Our society, by encouraging a prolonged childhood or period of dependence, makes it difficult for a person to develop habits of persistent application. The individual, therefore, must seek to acquire as early as possible the habits of industry, which are truly necessary to any worth-while accomplishment. Many defense mechanisms have their roots in the difficulty that people find in applying themselves assiduously to the work which is placed before them. The truth is that many of life's greatest satisfactions come as the result of achievements which have been gained through application of the ideal of industry.

Temperance. The word "temperance" is likely to suggest immediately its application to the use of alcoholic beverages; but there is need also for temperance in the pursuit of leisure-time activities, in the diet which one may adopt, in such physical-health habits as sleep and exercise, and even in the application of the ideal of industry. In life experience, temperance is needed in food, sex, play, drink, work, and rest. There can be no universal prescription as to what constitutes temperance; but anyone with intelligence enough to read this book should be able to figure out with some degree of accuracy what temperance

should mean to him. The important aim is to apply the conclusions at which one arrives to the problems of one's own daily living.

Perhaps none of these ideals may appeal to you personally as being of major status. You may feel more inclined to accept honesty, love, reverence for the divine, loyalty, or patriotism as significant ideals. The thoughts in the preceding paragraphs are not offered as prescriptions. They should desirably be considered simply as suggestions, from which the individual can depart to formulate the statement of his own "ideals worth striving for."

SUMMARY

The discussions in this chapter indicate that personality development is possible. In fact, people cannot prevent changes in personality, so it is necessary that each individual should give conscious direction to the changes that take place in himself. Heredity and environment are important factors, but the keynote for improvement is the necessity of assuming personal responsibility.

The large number of factors involved in personality and the individual characteristics and differences of various persons make set rules for the development of personality more or less useless. The role of growth and habit in personality makes it apparent that a long, slow process is involved. Constant application to many features of desirable development is necessary. Mistakes will be made, but they can provide lessons for further improvement; and the number of later errors can be reduced. With these limitations in mind, certain general principles can be suggested to the student of mental hygiene that may prove to be of value in the formation of a program for personality improvement:

Observe the influences involved in habit formation, but be confident that improvement in behavior can take place.

Take cognizance of the factors involved in good physical health. Since mind and body are one, good physical health makes positive contributions to mental health.

Exercise control over personal appearance, emotional reactions, speech, and manners, and observe moral codes.

Base social relationships upon such qualities as sympathy, understanding, kindness, sincerity, cooperation, and genuine regard for others.

Select companions, recreations, and formal learning agencies with a view to their effects upon personality development.

Try to see the other fellow's point of view by curbing tendencies toward excessive egocentricity.

Try to cultivate a sense of humor which will enable you to avoid taking yourself and your own desires too seriously.

Be objective in self-observation. Try to see yourself as others see you, but be careful to avoid a hypercritical attitude.

Become more knowing by constant study and by the development of a habit of open-mindedness.

Get rid of rationalizations which relieve you of responsibility for your own conduct.

Develop special capacities, such as musical, artistic, literary, mechanical, and social aptitudes.

Select your interests and align your ambitions in accordance with your capacities and the opportunities which are available.

Substitute intellectual reactions for some of your emotionalized behavior. Plan your activities.

Remember that an effective personality is one which enables you to meet a number of varied circumstances with equanimity. Think of yourself in the dynamic sense of an adjusting personality rather than in the static sense of an "adjusted personality."

Get rid of misconceptions and fallacious beliefs which hamper the true evaluation of yourself and those people who live around you.

Develop a philosophy of life which incorporates the above principles into its context; but by directing its change and growth, keep that philosophy from becoming stagnant.

TEST YOUR COMPREHENSION OF THE CHAPTER

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. Simply stated, "personality" is a word which indicates the kind of person each of us is.
2. Blondes usually make better wives than brunettes, because they are the home-loving type, while brunettes are ambitious and are prone to drive their husbands to continued activity.

3. Numerous studies indicate that lack of intellectual growth is generally compensated for by good looks and superior physique.
4. Lombroso's theory is of marked value in the detection and treatment of criminals, especially in detective bureaus.
5. Employers who think they can tell from photographs what kind of workmen they are likely to get, are probably only fooling themselves.
6. Long, slender fingers indicate that a person is likely to have musical ability, and he should probably be advised to learn to play the piano.
7. Personality development is the result of a long process of growth and is probably never complete.
8. Parents should assume responsibility (praise or blame) for the personalities of their offspring, since children are the product of their heredity and of the environment which the parents provide.
9. Emotions may either be an incentive to action and accomplishment or serve merely as factors making for disintegration of personality.
10. The completely integrated man is one who has reached the stage where all his activities are intellectual—emotional responses having been completely eliminated.
11. One should formulate a fixed philosophy as early in life as he possibly can.
12. There are some ideals which have universal value; *i.e.*, they are valid for all times, all places, and all men.

Suggested Readings

FRANK, LAWRENCE K., *Personality and Culture*, New York: Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, Inc., 1948. 21 pp.

In this booklet a famous psychiatrist stresses the fact that personality is more than the growth of the individual; it is also the result of cultural processes. He shows how culture affects the personality from the moment of birth. He indicates the need for evaluating our culture with a view to remedying some of its hampering influences.

FROMM, ERICH, *Man for Himself*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947. 254 pp.

The author presents the thesis that the highest self-realization comes from a thorough application of the principle of recognizing the worth of others. The need for recognizing the moral and ethical codes of the society in which we live is a requisite for emotional control and mental health.

THORPE, LOUIS P., *Personality and Life*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1941. 266 pp.

The subtitle, "A Practical Guide to Personality Development," suggests the approach. The role of a socially oriented character and the place of a personal philosophy of life is treated in nontechnical language. The book is directed specifically to the college undergraduate.

THORPE, LOUIS P., *Psychological Foundations of Personality*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938. 602 pp.

A scholarly book dealing minutely, but pertinently, with the theories of personality and an evaluation of their worth. The book is organized around the concept of growth. A "must" for students who are thinking of psychology as a professional goal.

Chapter 7

EMOTIONAL CONTROL AND MENTAL HEALTH

One of the main reasons why students study mental hygiene is that they may acquire greater conscious control over the course of their lives. Mental illness is, to a very great extent, caused by the dominance of strong, negative emotions over what would otherwise be an intelligently directed life. Another source of unsound mental health may lie in unpleasant emotions which are not particularly strong, but which persist over long periods of time; the tensions gradually accumulate to produce an illness. Happiness, on the other hand, is the result of having opportunities to experience pleasant emotions. The zest for living is created by a prevalence of pleasant, but stimulating, feelings over the unpleasant feelings. Physical well-being, intellectual vigor, and growth are influenced by the emotions which dominate a person's life. Such reasons as these make the topic of emotional control a major concern in the study of mental hygiene.

The role of emotions in contemporary life. Well-directed and controlled emotions add pleasure to living that makes life worth while. It is, therefore, by no means the aim of mental hygiene to get rid of emotions. In fact, such a thing would be impossible, because everything people do is to some degree emotionally tinged. But poorly directed and uncontrolled emotions lead to waste and inefficiency, which in turn make life burdensome and sometimes even useless or dangerous. It is necessary for the mentally healthy person to make an attempt to control his emotions rather than to let his emotions control him.

Some psychologists are of the opinion that the strain of modern civilization places too heavy a load upon the emotions. According to these authorities, speed of transportation, the living together in close quarters, numerous amusements and diversions, uncertainty in national and world affairs, and the like, place strains on the modern man that were unknown to our forefathers. These strains cause emotional disturbances and tensions. Even if one takes the view that living is no

more difficult today than it was fifty or a hundred years ago, because of improved technological advantages, one must still admit that there are many stresses in modern living. In order to withstand the pressure of these tensions, it is advisable that the role and working of the emotions be understood, so that they can function for—not against—efficient living. These considerations serve to give the study of emotional control an important place in mental hygiene.

The fact that some conscious control can be exercised over emotional responses should not be interpreted as meaning that emotions are merely a way of thinking about or looking at objects and events. Emotions have a very definite physical basis; for example, some people may give manifestations of violent emotional response because of glandular imbalance. Overactivity of the thyroid gland may cause an excessive display of activity, excitability, insomnia, and overresponse to thwarting. Inadequate calcium metabolism (a function of the parathyroid bodies) also may result in emotional instability and even in convulsive seizures. Strong sexual desires, extreme hunger, and extreme thirst are the result of biological conditions, which, when appropriate behavior is frustrated, cause bodily conditions giving rise to unpleasant emotions. Obviously, just thinking about these things does not stop the emotional drive. Emotion is not totally susceptible to conscious control, but there is still much that can be done by the person who is physically normal.

NATURE AND CAUSES OF EMOTION

The concept of emotion. The wide range of emotions makes it difficult to include them in an acceptable definition. Emotions vary in quality; that is, there are both pleasurable and nonpleasurable emotions—love and contentment, for instance, are pleasurable; anger, fear, and hate are nonpleasurable. The pleasant emotions tend to build up the organism, while the unpleasant ones tend to tear it down. That is, some emotions foster health, efficiency, and compatibility; others, on the contrary, make for sickness, inefficiency, and discord.

Emotions vary in quantity also. The mild enjoyments found in agreeable companionship or in pursuing a favorite hobby may hardly be identifiable as emotions when they are compared with the violent emotions occasioned by fear and anger. Moreover, the feelings aroused

during emotions are not localized; they are felt over large portions of the organism.

These factors—quality, quantity, and lack of localization—have led psychologists to define emotions broadly as a stirred-up state of the organism involving, in some cases, certain typical, externally observable, responses and certain experiences dependent upon bodily stimulation. Even this broad statement may not suffice, because the externally observable responses may be very slight. Almost everyone has seen angry individuals who gave no marked outward expression to their emotions; and there are many people who smile brightly when they would much prefer to strike out or make a cutting remark, if they followed the dictates of the emotions instead of acting intelligently. In some of the milder emotions it is conceivable that not enough immediate bodily change would take place to be measured even by laboratory instruments. It will be well, therefore, to gain a broad understanding of the nature and operation of emotions rather than to depend too heavily upon an oversimplified definition.

Physiological changes accompanying emotion. Just as the quality and quantity of emotions vary, the physiological changes accompanying emotion differ from one another. The mild emotions may be characterized by no more than a general feeling of well-being, termed “euphoria”; while trembling and lack of bodily coordination may be manifested in the stronger emotions. Authorities agree that there is some degree of physiological change, such as an increased rate of respiration, more rapid beating of the heart, flow of blood to the extremities of the body, various changes in the amount of salivation, and a whole series of endocrine disturbances, especially increased activity of the adrenal glands. These changes often have directly opposite effects in different emotions, yet all are known by the same general term. For example, anger or fear may cause digestion to cease, while the contentment and satisfaction of being in good company serve to facilitate the digestive processes. Likewise, rage may cause muscular incoordination and poorly integrated actions, while certain degrees of excitement will help athletes perform better than they would under a routine involving no excitement. In spite of their diversity, all these conditions are called “emotions.”

In a study by the American Council on Education in which the data on emotions were summarized, one conclusion reached was that, in

general, there are three broad classifications of emotions: (1) mild emotions, which have a tonic effect on the physiological processes in general; (2) strong emotions, which cause digestive disorder, upset glandular balance, and disturbance of heart action and circulatory processes; and (3) disintegrative emotions, which result in loss of coordination, uncontrollable trembling, serious glandular disorder, and mental upset.¹ These various degrees of emotion merge imperceptibly one into the other. Excitement may have a tonic effect; but if the excitement is too great, it may disturb the heart and the circulation.

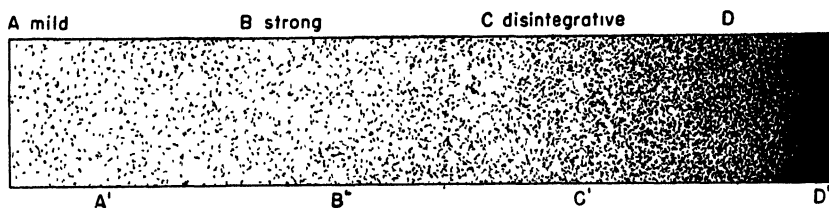


FIG. 15. The schematic representation shows how emotions gradually shade into one another. There is no clear line of distinction between the mild and strong or strong and disintegrative emotions. The letters indicate that the area of transition is variable from day to day, from person to person, or from situation to situation.

If strong excitement is continued for a long time, it may become disintegrative and thus merge into the third classification of emotions, because of the cumulative effect. It was this which, in many cases, caused what was known in the last war as flight fatigue and battle fatigue. Moreover, the point at which change from one emotional state to another takes place may vary within the same person from time to time. That is, yesterday, point *B* in Fig. 15 may have marked the transition from a mild to a strong emotion; but today the person can stand more and point *B'* indicates the changing point. This difference may be noted, too, between persons—under the same external circumstances, one individual may react as if to a mild emotion and another will give evidence of experiencing a strong emotion.

Characteristic physical changes vary somewhat both in degree and in the nature of the results with the kind and extent of the emotion. For example, as was mentioned above, a period of excitement or anticipation may actually increase bodily coordination and vigor. Hence

¹ D. A. Prescott, *Emotion and the Educative Process*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1938, pp. 18–30.

the well-known "pep talk" is delivered by some athletic coaches before the opening of the big game. On the other hand, if players become angry or afraid, their actions lack the fine coordination and rhythm that makes for maximum efficiency. Instead of keeping in mind the object of the game, the players concentrate upon harming an opponent or think about the danger of getting hurt. The big-stadium jitters is another manifestation of the same phenomenon. The team that has played only before smaller crowds does not always give a good account of itself when playing in an important bowl game. Excess of emotional tensions renders the athletes incapable of giving their usual effective performance.

Anger or rage causes a more or less complete cessation of digestion for a period of time. Laboratory experiments have shown that even mild anger may stop digestion for three or four hours. Strong emotions may cause digestion to cease for a longer period still. An illustration is the case of a man who vomited his meal several hours after being told that he would no longer have his position. The food he lost showed that during those hours the process of digestion had not even started, whereas, under normal circumstances his stomach would have been wholly emptied in the same length of time. Strong emotion had completely blocked the digestive processes.

Conversely, love, contentment, and happiness, instead of interfering with digestion, actually improve the process. For this reason, in an earlier chapter, in the section on diet, a suggestion was made that food be eaten at a leisurely rate, in pleasant surroundings, and with congenial companions. Pleasant emotions make the assimilation of food more rapid and complete.

Theories of emotion. A popular conception of emotion is that it is a physiological and mental state which gives rise to certain kinds of reactions, especially rather foolish ones. That is, a certain situation gives rise to an emotion which incites to action. You see a bear, you become afraid, and you run. This is known as the "common-sense" theory. It is, however, not all there is to emotion.

William James and Carl Lange simultaneously, but independently, advanced a theory of emotion that is now called the "James-Lange" theory. Their belief was that emotions are the result, not the cause, of sensations arising from organic changes. That is, stimulation itself does not cause the emotion, but it does result in bodily changes, which

in turn give rise to the emotion. In greatly simplified form, the formula is this: You see a bear, you run, you are afraid. The idea embodied is that the *response* to the stimulation is what results in the emotion, but common sense would seem to tell us that we run not because we see the bear but because we are afraid. However, there appears to be enough truth in the James-Lange theory to claim some consideration of it. Evidence for belief in the theory lies in the fact that giving way to an emotion, in many cases, seems to build it up and make it more intense. If much sympathy is expressed for a child who has been slightly bruised in a fall, he will be likely to give vent to an outburst of crying that would convince a hardened skeptic that the services of a doctor were urgently needed. When anyone feels sorry for himself and lets his friends sympathize with him, soon he will probably be deep in the "slough of despond." If a person permits himself to strike out or shout at someone who has crossed him, he will feel his anger becoming more intense. In all these instances the formula is, at least to a degree, stimulus—response—emotion.

The James-Lange theory, although it does not explain all there is to know about emotion, embodies enough truth to supply an important lesson to the student of mental hygiene: Curb violent emotions, or redirect them, instead of building them up by giving them direct expression. Do not give vent to the negative emotion, because indulgence in it will very likely make it stronger. This would be futile advice to offer to a child, but an adult will be able to check the development of emotions by checking the expression of them. In fact, William James himself said that merely trying to examine the nature of one's emotions tends to make them disappear.

W. B. Cannon's researches into the physiological changes accompanying emotion led him to formulate what is known as the *emergency theory* of the emotions. According to his hypothesis, the bodily changes occurring in the stronger emotions are clearly those which prepare for physical combat or emergencies. The bodily changes are (1) the release of blood sugar, which is a source of physical energy; (2) increase in activity of the heart and more rapid breathing, facilitating intense exertion; (3) the flowing of the blood from the inner organs of the body to the limbs and extremities; (4) the carrying away of the products of fatigue more rapidly by that means; and (5) increased

activity of the adrenals, resulting in more rapid coagulation of the blood in case there is a wound.

The Cannon theory, as well as the James-Lange theory, has a direct and practical application to the problem of mental health. A person may be able to perform some difficult feat when under emotion that he would be powerless to accomplish otherwise. Stories of superhuman strength and endurance could probably be explained through this theory of emotion. Perhaps you yourself may recall some situation similar to one that is often reported in an automobile accident, when a man has lifted a wheel or some other part of the car off someone who was pinned beneath. To perform the same act in the absence of excitement or shock would be an impossibility. However, Cannon's theory also indicates certain danger zones for mental health. If a person experiencing a violent emotion is unable to give it direct expression, the blood sugar and adrenalin which have been released into the blood stream remain there as a source of bodily stimulation or even poison. It, therefore, creates tensions which are physically and mentally uncomfortable. The expression, "He is on pins and needles" illustrates the existence of tensions accompanying an emotion which cannot be overtly expressed.

While the emotion should be controlled and directed, a safety valve can be found by *providing for some physical activity* to utilize the adrenalin and blood sugar, if and when violent emotions have been aroused. Many people, when they become angry, find relief in taking a vigorous walk, splitting wood, taking some other physical exercise, or otherwise engaging in energetic activity. Business and professional men frequently play handball, tennis, or squash to get rid of nervous and emotional tensions which have accumulated during their working day. One housewife reported that upon becoming angry she worked vigorously at cleaning her attic and that, by the time the cleaning was done, she had become physically tired and achieved a sense of accomplishment; the emotion, meantime, had completely disappeared. In such instances the increased energy made available by the emotion is consumed and the products of the emotion do not remain in the system as a source of possible upset. College students can capitalize on this same theory by taking a workout in the gymnasium to relieve the worries accompanying the strain of preparing for a difficult and important test.

Bodily activity will reduce the tensions generated by working hard and continuously on a paper that is due on a certain date.

Another theory that can be directly applied to mental hygiene is the behavioristic, or Watsonian, interpretation. Watson asserted that there are three fundamental and innate emotions in the infant: fear, rage, and love. Fear emotions are aroused by loss of support or loud noises; rage is the result of a restricting of the child's movement; and love responses are aroused by petting, rocking, or stroking sensitive regions of the body. As the result of conditioning and learning, these emotions are broadened while the child is growing older, so that as an adult he experiences a wide range of emotions. The theory is particularly interesting from the mental hygiene viewpoint because, if emotions are conditioned and learned, it follows that they are susceptible to change. If one's emotional control at a given time is not adequate, it can be improved. If this redirecting—this conditioning and redirection—of emotions were not possible, there would be little value in their being studied in mental hygiene. In fact, if it were not possible, there would be little value in the study of any phase of mental hygiene.

The endocrine glands and the emotions. The ductless glands, or endocrine glands (glands of internal secretion), have an important part to play in the functioning of the emotions. These glands (adrenals, thyroids, parathyroids, pineal, pituitary, thymus, gonads, and pancreas) have various other functions to perform, as well. They regulate bodily metabolism, growth processes, and digestion, at the same time that they are participating in emotional experiences. Their activities are complexly interrelated, so that it is impossible to say that a particular gland has but one function. It has already been shown, for example, that action of the adrenals simultaneously affects digestion, heart action, breathing, and metabolism. Moreover, investigations reveal that several glands function in a particular activity—for example, the pancreas, adrenals, and thyroid all take part in the process of digestion.

The striking effects which have resulted from the stimulation and regulation of the endocrine glands through the use of drugs has led some enthusiasts to say that the study of conduct will some day be reduced to a study of test tubes. At the present time, such an outcome seems highly improbable, because of the complexity of human conduct. The use of thyroid extract, calcium, and interference with the gonads has led to surprisingly different results in cases which at the

outset seemed to be quite alike. However, some progress has been made in the realm of personality adjustment through regulation of the activity of the endocrines.

The gland which currently seems to be most responsive to control is the thyroid. When this gland is defective from the time of birth, the result is a condition known as "cretinism," which is characterized by stunted bodily growth, susceptibility to disease, apathy, and mental deficiency. If the cretin, while he is still young, is fed an extract from the thyroid gland of an animal, he begins to grow both physically and mentally and may ultimately reach the status of a normal person. When the thyroid gland becomes deficient in later life and the difficulty is not corrected by operation or medication, the resulting condition is known as "myxedema." Physical characteristics of this disorder are obesity, dry and bloated skin, and low temperature; the personality characteristics are sluggishness, apathy, irritability, and a slowing down of the mental processes. Overactivity of the thyroid results in restlessness and excessive activity; hence, the statement that a pinch too much of thyroid excretion may give rise to delirium or hallucinations and a pinch too little will produce an idiot would seem to be warranted.

The delicate balance of the endocrine glands is quite apparent. "One eminent medical authority has made the unsubstantiated statement that hyperthyroid persons readily attain Phi Beta Kappa rank in college! If this were true, thyroid feeding would be a part of freshman curriculum."² It is true that gratifying results have been achieved through the use of drugs, but such broad statements demonstrate the need for caution in suggesting blanket remedies for man's problems. If too much thyroid were administered in the "freshman curriculum," the results on the prospective "Phi Beta Kappa" would be just as unwelcome as would those arising from too little secretion. Yet in spite of this delicate balance, college students have been known to take thyroid extract in order to provide more energy.

The parathyroid gland also produces emotional manifestations. The person suffering from parathyroid deficiency is nervous, irritable, sullen, and antisocial. In extreme cases he may have violent convulsive seizures. Examination shows that such individuals have a deficiency of

² L. F. Shaffer, *The Psychology of Adjustment*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936, p. 337. By permission of the publisher.

blood calcium that can, in some instances, be successfully treated by the use of parathyroid extract of calcium.

Some emotional manifestations can be traced to an interference with the functioning of the gonads. Castrated males are reputed to be weak sluggish, and lacking in aggressiveness and purposefulness, just as the young bull becomes a patient and docile steer when his sex glands are removed. The sex glands secrete hormones which influence bodily form, voice quality, and hair growth. Thus far, the sex-hormone preparations have not led to such gratifying results as have the investigations in the realm of the thyroids and parathyroids. Yet, in spite of negative results from experiments of this kind, some of the American public show little hesitancy about subscribing to such absurd things as goat glands "to restore lost vitality."

The role of the endocrines in emotion clearly has its mental hygiene implications. The delicate balance of the endocrines indicates the need for extreme caution in dealing with them. It would be foolish for anyone to try his own medications independently of the expert supervision of a doctor. Any emotional and physical disturbances should be referred to a trained physician. Some women have, however, tried to get rid of excess fat by the use of thyroid medication, with disastrous results. They lost weight, to be sure, but they also lost their hair and their health. They had not learned the mental hygiene lesson that there is no "royal road to romance," that personality improvement is accomplished through a slow process of change. It would be well for such persons to analyze the habits they have formed before they resort to endocrine medications. Certainly, tampering with the endocrines by the lay person is no part of an intelligent mental hygiene program.

CONTROL OF THE EMOTIONS

It is assumed in this discussion that emotions do not have to be expressed in just the way the emotion, by itself, would seem to dictate. A given emotion can be expressed in many different ways, depending upon the time, the person, and the situation. Emotional expressions are, in short, habitual reactions and can be modified because they are habits. Emotions can be directed by intelligence.

Emotional repression. When an emotion is repressed, no external manifestation, either direct or indirect, is in evidence to a marked

degree. If someone makes a slighting remark to another at a dinner party, the person addressed may repress his natural emotional response by ignoring the remark. He may give no expression to his resentment, but the emotional stirrings are present, nevertheless. His endocrine glands go into action; adrenalin is released, digestion is slowed, and there may be a slight flushing of the face. Although externally he may deny the existence of emotion, the internal effects are taking place. The permanence of the emotion is proved by the fact that, even after the unpleasant incident has been passed over, he continues to feel uncomfortable during the remainder of the dinner party. It is difficult for him to be his usual sociable, cheerful self.

Whether the emotions should be expressed or repressed is a question which causes the student of mental hygiene some degree of perplexity. According to the Freudian school of psychology, many of man's difficulties can be traced to the fact that the emotions, especially those relating to sex, have been repressed. Expression can be regarded as the safety valve of emotion. Emotional expression is basic to the functioning of mental and physical aspects of personality. It is not possible to eliminate emotions entirely; and Freud has long contended that the struggle to suppress them often brings about nervous tensions and neurotic tendencies. He has not, however, advised the unbridled expression of emotions. Therefore, a rational training of the emotions should consist of modifying their expression and directing their manifestations into useful and approved channels. Life in a civilized society demands that consideration be given to the feelings of our fellow beings, and this certainly involves the repression of many of our emotions. Free expression of all the emotions men experience would make them unpopular and inefficient. Consequently, there arises the paradoxical situation in which it is necessary to repress emotions yet also dangerous to express them.

To some extent, psychoanalysis affords a way out of this expression-repression paradox. A person need not repress his emotion simply because it is one that might have undesirable social consequences. Neither does he need to give it *direct* expression. He may avail himself of an indirect expression of his emotion by talking about his difficulty with another person.

Psychoanalysis is a way of analyzing the emotions so that the individual is brought face to face with the true origin of his conduct. This

is accomplished by such various means as dream analysis, mental catharsis (the talking-out method), free association (discussing, while assuming a relaxed posture, things which seem to be related to the difficulty), and hypnosis. Through these techniques, the patient is led to perceive the inadequate basis for his conduct and is able to reconstruct the conduct. Solution of the problem is not found in giving direct expression to the emotion but in understanding its nature. Psychoanalysts do not advise the free expression of emotions, as is sometimes believed, but rather suggest that release from tensions be achieved through examination and analysis of the conflict situation.

In this connection it might be well to say that one of the developments sought by professional mental hygienists is a saner view of the role of psychiatrists. There are many people today who would not think of consulting a psychiatrist because they feel that to do so would be equivalent to admitting that they were "crazy." Actually, a great deal of suffering and serious breakdown might be prevented if more people were to look upon the psychiatrist with the objectivity they adopt when they seek the services of medical specialists. The psychiatrist is one who is skilled in uncovering deep-seated tensions and conflicts. If, as the result of reading this book and seeing the extent, complexity, and seriousness of mental ill-health, you were to adopt the view that a psychiatrist could be consulted without stigma, you would have arrived at a valuable outcome.

Substitution and sublimation. In the case of fear, anger, and rage, the solution of the difficulty is not found in direct expression. While the physiological changes that have taken place make physical activity desirable, it is not necessary to follow the exact paths toward which the emotion points. It is well to redirect the emotional energy into constructive channels, instead of indulging in fighting and fleeing. When a man becomes angry, it is desirable for him to engage in some substitute physical activity rather than to attack. He might walk home at a rapid pace, punch a punching bag, or do some vigorous physical work. He should, however, realize that he is trying to work off emotional tensions rather than to build up his emotion by imagining that some inanimate object is the person with whom he is angry. To imagine the punching bag to be the face of someone who had blocked him would merely increase his anger, in accordance with the James-Lange theory.

The problem of fear of immediate situations is a little more complex. In some instances the wise thing to do is to flee or to act immediately; sometimes, however, flight does not offer the best solution. But, just as surely as in the case of anger, the necessity exists for working off the endocrine products that have prepared for flight. When the emotional tension is worked off in some such indirect manner, the means used is known as "substitution"—something else takes the place of the activity that would have been engaged in if the dictates of the emotion were followed. A person who has become depressed because of failure in business will tackle his problems in a new way instead of running away from further anticipated failure. If the first plan did not work, he feels that the second one might. Instead of taking on an attitude of resignation, he assumes one of aggressiveness. On the other hand, substitution can also be of an undesirable sort. A man who becomes enraged at his business associates may not immediately give vent to his emotions but may later seek escape from his upset condition by berating his wife and children. In this instance, his substitute activities are doing neither himself nor his family any good.

Another method of dealing with the problem occasioned by the need for repressing the emotions is known as *sublimation*, which is merely a particular kind of substitution. This involves the rational training of the emotions by directing their expression into constructive channels. It signifies the direction of disapproved or selfish desires into higher, socially approved forms of activity. The following is an example:

The individual with a love of art need not fold his hands in abject worry when he sees that lack of means might not enable him to educate himself in the skill of an artist. He should plan to sublimate in case of actual disappointment in art training by forming study clubs of art, becoming an art critic, or having a splendid library of art books. With an insight into sublimation a man who sees that his wishes for a college education might not be realized could eventually plan to give vent to his ambition by becoming an expert in some particular line of thought.³

The difference between sublimation and substitution is that in sublimation the emotional desire is satisfied by being directed into a completely different channel of expression and toward an apparently dif-

³ W. H. Mikesell, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939, p. 328. By permission of the publisher.

ferent goal, while in substitution another activity is employed in an approach to the same problem or for accomplishment of the same goal. Sex desires may be sublimated by engaging in social or religious activities. The emotion subsides when other worth-while concerns become the center of interest. Substitution of an undesirable sort occurs when the person who cannot express his sexual emotion in a normal manner resorts to excessive masturbation or the reading of obscene literature.

Sex and emotion. Sublimation is particularly effective for young people in the control of sex drives. Unbridled sexual tendencies work in opposition to the social expectations established by society. Lack of adequate control leads to social ostracism or even to imprisonment. Moreover, uncurbed activity of the sex motives coarsens and blunts an endowment that should be endued with beauty and deep satisfaction. Many avenues for the sublimation of sex tendencies are open to the young people of today. Inasmuch as sex has its physical attributes, a considerable amount of physical activity and exercise in the open air is desirable. Participation in athletic games and sports will do much to consume some of the physical and emotional energy that might otherwise be misdirected. Wholesome contacts with members of the opposite sex are available to an extent unheard of a few decades back. Parties, dances, and social and intellectual gatherings in which the sexes participate on an equal basis provide means of redirection and expression and wholesome gratification. Enjoyment of the fine arts by one in need of new interests, both as an observer and as an active contributor, is recommended by many, since such activity engages the esthetic tendencies. Music, dancing, and literature provide release from many emotional tensions, and certainly have their value in the realm of sex. Moderate attendance at carefully selected motion-picture shows is another resource, but many of the screen plays are so obviously of a sex-arousing nature that the effect is usually to stimulate rather than to sublimate. Religion is a valuable source of guidance and inspiration in the redirection of the sexual drives.

The suggestions offered are not intended to indicate that sex should be ignored. Young people should be aware that sublimation is taking place. Fundamental to a successful dealing with sex is the building up of wholesome attitudes through knowledge and intelligence. The need for knowledge about sex is well argued in Carroll's statement:

Excepting where there are physical abnormalities, heterosexual difficulties spring largely from fear. . . . Our society is firm in its insistence on sex restraint. Intercourse outside of marriage is frowned upon. Many individuals, seeking to satisfy their sex needs but fearful of pregnancy or disease, resort to varied substitutions. Occasionally sex satisfactions are achieved through sadism or masochism. . . . A feeling of personal inadequacy underlies many sexual maladjustments. It is one of the most important causes of frigidity in woman and impotence in men. . . . If sexual maladjustments are to be reduced in number and intensity, a healthier social attitude toward sex must be developed.⁴

Substitution and sublimation of the emotions, as a general rule, constitute desirable methods of dealing with the question of emotional repression. This is especially true if the substitution or redirection can be of a temporary nature. It is to be hoped that ultimately the individual can so organize his life that normal, socially approved expression can be given to sex drives through marriage.

As a person gains emotional control, he will be less susceptible to the strong emotions, such as fear and anger. There can be little doubt that emotions like fear and anger are strengthened by frequent exercise. Expression is desirable, and through the method of substitution socially approved modes of expression can be attained. Suppression, too, is at times desirable, and through sublimation the dangerous results of unintelligent repression can be avoided. It is in such ways as these that help can be found in methods whereby unwholesome emotional expressions can be replaced by intelligent control of the emotions and, at the same time, the enjoyment of living can be greatly enhanced.

TRAINING THE EMOTIONS

The role of habits in emotion. Education, as is well known, is the result of informal as well as formal experiences. Emotional expression is the result of planned as well as unplanned experiences. "The special forms of emotion develop as a consequence of training and the development of such perceptions as have an effect upon emotional behavior. Perhaps there is an intrinsic tendency toward the development of certain emotional patterns but even that is quickly influenced by

⁴ Herbert A. Carroll, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947, pp. 114-115. By permission of the publisher.

experiences.”⁵ In this section some suggestions for planning the development of emotional patterns will be outlined. It is here assumed that, while emotion has its basis in the natural physiological constitution of an individual, the emotional expression is subject to a large degree of personal control. That is, emotional expression is the result of habit formation, just as surely as it is the result of physiological processes. The rebuilding of old habits and the acquisition of new ones can result in the intelligent direction of the emotions.

As has already been indicated, one source of unpleasant emotions is found in some condition which produces conflict or frustration because there is not already in existence some skill or knowledge adequate for meeting the situation. A child's anger is caused by restraint or by sudden and violent stimulation. Emotion is aroused by his not being able to cope with the circumstances. For example, a three-year-old becomes violently angry because he lacks the skill to place his toys in the toy box so that the lid can be closed.

Training to control anger. The fact that anger is caused by frustration suggests some methods of control. (1) The individual should attempt to avoid situations with which he cannot cope by any other means than resort to anger. This need not be considered retreat. It is merely an aspect of realizing one's own immediate limitation. Avoidance, however, is not always possible, so the next suggestion follows logically. (2) The individual should develop skills which make possible an efficient solution of the problem. This may mean the development of manual skills or the improvement of social abilities. When this seems to be impractical, the third suggestion may be applied. (3) When satisfaction cannot be derived from one source, its importance may be diminished by securing satisfaction from another source. When anger is caused by incompetency in golf or tennis, another avenue of satisfaction should be sought. When one is dealing with someone else—for example, a younger brother who is unskillful in baseball—it may be helpful to give him a compliment for some other skill than the one immediately concerned. (4) This suggestion will help in the control of emotion in others as well as in oneself: “The farther one can go in yielding to another without sacrificing a crucial issue, the more likeli-

⁵ Edmund S. Conklin and Frank S. Freeman, *Introductory Psychology for Students of Education*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1939, p. 116. By permission of the publisher.

hood there is that a dispute will be settled.”^a All these points suggest the development of habitual patterns of reaction which may diminish anger.

Training to dispel fears. Control of the emotion of fear is somewhat similar to the control of anger. Fear is a general name given to emotional experiences which are characterized by avoidance, unpleasantness, and a desire to run away from or avoid the problem. Fear indicates the existence of a conflict with which a person is unable to cope and therefore tends to run away from the situation. This inability is quite frequently occasioned by ignorance and superstition. It follows that to overcome fear it is necessary to develop certain knowledges so that the fearsome object will be understood. Often this is all that is necessary for overcoming the objectionable emotion. One step in getting rid of superstition is to substitute intelligent thought for the habit of “thinking with other people’s brains,” *i.e.*, accepting their irrational thought without analysis. A good many fears are learned through association with others. What one person is afraid of, others are afraid of, because they do not understand the source of the fear. Again, the necessity for knowledge is illustrated. Fears cannot be put down by ignoring their existence; they must be studied so that the situation can be fully understood. Thus, knowledge is a logical first step.

Many students profess to have a fear of examinations. Most of those who are well prepared do not have such a feeling, but there are exceptions. In one case, a serious student had made so low a score on an examination that she was quizzed orally immediately after the examination. The quiz revealed that she knew the subject well. Her low scholastic record attested to the truth of her statement that she became so fearful that she “blanked out.” Her fear could be traced back to a domineering father, who sternly emphasized the importance of high marks. Pressure over the years had built up in her a strong fear. After the source of the fear had been discovered, she was advised to take all the quizzes she could in magazines, to find old tests for which a grade was not forthcoming, and to hold the attitude that she would just do her best. After a few months’ trial, she was doing substantially better, but the fear had not completely disappeared. In her case two

^a Arthur T. Jersild, “Emotional Development,” in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 68. By permission of the publisher.

things were done. First, she became acquainted with the nature of her fear, and second, she gained a better, more objective, acquaintance with the situation that she feared.

Closely allied to the acquisition of knowledge in overcoming fears is the suggestion concerning the development of skills. The wider the range of skills, the less occasion there is for fear. Some individuals have the habit of fearing very few things, while others seem to fear many things. The former probably have a greater repertoire of skills. The acquisition of skills is important because, it must be remembered, the best way of overcoming fear is through the growth that one makes for himself. The help of other people—having their confidence, seeing their good example, or attempting to secure their approval—may be an aid; but anyone who continues to be afraid when others are not near has not learned the lesson of self-dependence.

Many childish fears are naturally outgrown as knowledge is extended; but in dealing with other fears, immediate and direct attack on the emotion is desirable. This is so because fears seem to come in associated groups, and the elimination of one will help in the elimination of others. Finally, it can be said that two different people in similar fear-producing situations may have quite different reactions. One may give vent to his fear and let it control him, while the other may control his fear by directing it through repression, substitution, or sublimation.

The development of skills and habits which enable a person to control the expression of his emotions is a time-consuming process. The very nature of habit, as has been already noted, should lead one to recognize that change will not occur overnight or take place merely because the person wants to make desirable growth. A guidance worker reports the case of a boy who was referred to him for help in a personality problem. The worker spent twenty minutes with the boy, trying to discover the source of his problem. A week later, he asked the teacher whether the boy was present. The teacher answered, "Yes, he's here. He is just the same as he used to be." Evidently she did not recognize that new behavior patterns are habits which require the passage of time before they can become established.

An illustration of the role that habits and experience play in reducing unwelcome emotions is afforded in the development of social skills. One boy at a state university said that when he began his college work

he lacked confidence in dealing with people, did not take part in social activities, and would not participate in class discussions. To overcome his difficulties, he first analyzed his problem and decided that his habits could be reconstructed. As his fear of people was caused by a feeling of inadequacy, he studied a number of common hobbies and learned enough about them to be able to discuss them with various people. When he was with other people he would ask them about their hobbies and he was able to make interesting comments and to ask intelligent questions. As time went on, he began to like the discussion so well that he sought contacts with people and engaged in social activities. To overcome his reticence in class, he tried to anticipate the instructor's questions and studied the topics thoroughly. When a subject he had prepared came up for discussion, he would volunteer, because he was sure he could make a valid contribution. Presently he began to look forward to class meetings with pleasurable anticipation rather than dread. Of course, these developments took time, because he had to change his habits; but through practice he acquired skills which did much to overcome the unpleasant emotions that were restricting his progress.

Training the positive, upbuilding emotions. Education of the finer and constructive emotions, or feelings, can also take place on a conscious level. The expression of sympathy, for example, can be influenced by the habits that are formed. "Sympathy" is a general term indicating behavior directed in behalf of another. A first step in the development of sympathy is to get rid of extreme manifestations of egocentric behavior. The ability to share and appreciate the good or ill fortune of another is involved. Just as anger has its natural, as well as its learned, components, so too does sympathy. One of the first principles in the cultivation of sympathy is to develop the ability to put oneself in the place of others by making an effort to see their viewpoint. It is necessary to place a true evaluation on the forces which have shaped his life's course. Lack of sympathy may indicate lack of knowledge about the other person, rather than lack of a potentiality for that emotion. A second principle is, therefore, the acquiring of experiences that extend the understanding of one's fellow men. It is upon this principle that formal study of other nations and peoples, with a view to extending sympathetic relationships, is based. In this manner

people are enabled to see through the propaganda that would thwart the development of human understanding.

On a smaller and more intimate scale, this principle of understanding should include the cultivation of associations with persons in one's immediate environment, which will be facilitated by a kindly and courteous manner. The techniques and skill of courtesy and good manners should be learned by anyone who does not already possess them, because these are essential to a genuine attitude of sympathy. Indeed, an important step that the college student might well take in developing sympathy is to study rules of etiquette and to apply the knowledge of them. It will be easier to grow into a feeling of true sympathy for people in all kinds of circumstances if one will treat them with the deference which is inherent in good manners. A review of your own personal reactions toward those who have extended you courteous treatment is sufficient proof of the social and personal value of such conduct.

In education for pleasure, satisfaction, and appreciation, principles similar to those mentioned in connection with the other emotions are applicable. Pleasure can arise through the exercise of any skill or capacity that the individual possesses. Two things are inherent in this statement: exercise and capacity. It is necessary to express the emotion of pleasure before it becomes a functional thing; and it is essential that pleasures be derived from the exercise of some existing capacity. Satisfaction comes from activities in which a person has some degree of skill and understanding. People often say that they intend to develop an appreciation of literature and music when they have more time at their disposal. The accomplishment of this intention is unlikely, because appreciations do not suddenly arrive in full bloom. The person who has an appreciation for good music and literature is one who has made a habit of exercising his capacities for appreciation in these lines. The capacity dies out when it is not exercised. Skill, knowledge, understanding, participation, experience, and emotional maturity are just as necessary for pleasure and appreciation as for the other emotions which have been discussed. This is one of the significant reasons why college students should, while still in school, seek to develop (by exercise) those activities which contribute to what we know as a well-rounded personality. There are all too many adults who have permitted the

stress of their daily routines to interfere with opportunities for exercising their appreciation of art, music, and literature.

The role of relaxation in training the emotions. Analysis of the experience of an emotion reveals that it is usually accompanied by some degree of bodily tension. In anger and fear this tension reaches such a state that bodily incoordinations result. Often the tension amounts almost to a state of paralysis. One of the necessary steps in controlling emotion is to learn the meaning and use of relaxation. Emotional control, manifested by a condition of poise, is characterized by relaxation. Physiologists, doctors, and psychologists point out the need for relaxation in living competently in a civilization characterized by compact social organization, financial complexity, technological improvement, and national interdependence.

William James pointed out the need for relaxation years ago, but far too many people have not yet learned the lesson.

We say that so many of our fellow-countrymen collapse, and have to be sent abroad to rest their nerves, because they work so hard. I suspect that this is an immense mistake. I suspect that neither the nature nor the amount of our work is accountable for the frequency and severity of our breakdowns, but that their cause lies rather in these absurd feelings of hurry and having no time, in that breathlessness and tension, that anxiety of feature and that solicitude for results, that lack of inner harmony and ease, in short, by which with us the work is so apt to be accompanied, and from which a European who should do the same work would nine times out of ten be free. These perfectly wanton and unnecessary tricks of inner attitude and outer manner in us, caught from the social atmosphere, kept up by tradition, and idealized by many as the admirable way of life, are the last straws that break the American camel's back, the final overflows of our measure of wear and tear and fatigue. . . . It is your relaxed and easy worker, who is in no hurry, and quite thoughtless most of the while of consequences, who is your efficient worker; and tension and anxiety, and present and future, all mixed up together in our mind at once, are the surest drags upon steady progress and hindrances to our success.⁷

What is the way out of this state of emotional tension which interferes with our efficiency and complete enjoyment of life? William James says, "The way to do it, paradoxical as it may seem, is genuinely

⁷ William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., new ed., 1939, pp. 214-215. By permission of the publisher.

not to care whether you are doing it or not.”⁸ That is, a person must have the attitude of relaxation before he can achieve the physical condition of relaxation. In order to achieve this attitude, the individual must get rid of egotistical ideas about his own importance in the functioning of world affairs. In all probability, the world will go right on, even though your job has to be done by someone else. This means that, once a decision has been made and acted upon in good faith, the

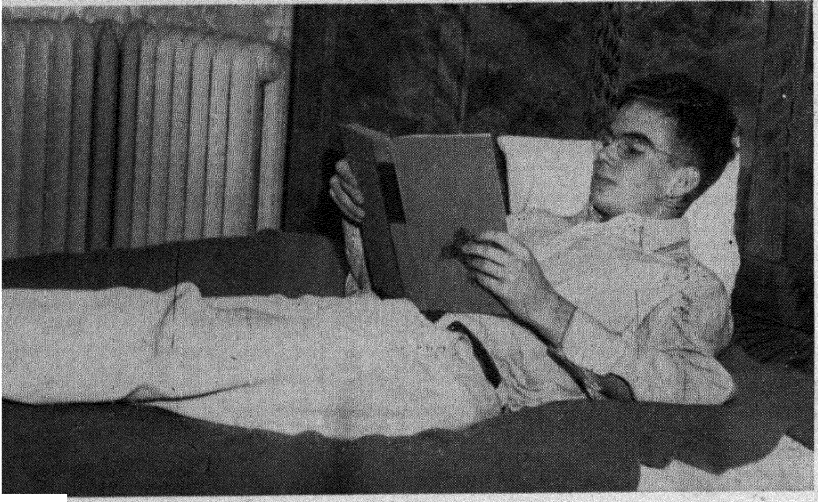


FIG. 16. Taking time for brief periods of relaxation during the day can help prevent the accumulation of tensions which complicate the problem of healthy emotional control.

one who has made the decision should forget about the possible outcomes which might have resulted from a different course of action. Pondering over the probable success of a different choice is closely akin to “crying over spilled milk.” The resulting emotional tension is not only useless; it is detrimental to the attainment of mental health. This argument does not imply that a person should neglect his work, but aims to make clear that a systematic organization for work should be developed, including a time for relaxation.

A practical suggestion for the reduction of emotional tension is that a definite plan for a period of relaxation at some convenient time during the day should be made. Many people in positions of responsibility

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 228. By permission of the publisher.

and authority have found that they are more stable and efficient if they take a short rest immediately after a meal or during the late afternoon hours. Their work is definitely organized. Employers have concluded that it is to their own benefit, in the way of increased production, to provide periods of rest for their employees. Some believe it effective to relax during odd moments between duties, in time that is frequently given to feverish newspaper reading or to hurried planning for other activities. Time required for commuting can be put to a constructive use in the replenishing of physical and mental energy by relaxing. The secret of those who can get along adequately with fewer than eight hours of sleep out of the twenty-four is, to a great extent, their ability to use odd moments for relaxing.

While the value of relaxing is generally recognized, the answer to the question of how to relax is not so widely known. Edmund Jacobson in his book, *You Must Relax*, gives some practical suggestions. He believes that the ability to relax is acquired through conscious habit formation. Even when an individual thinks that he is relaxed, scientific analysis may show that tension is present. Jacobson advocates the detection of tension by giving conscious attention to a particular muscle. This can be done by flexing the muscle and then studying the feeling that results as relaxation progresses. After one muscle has been relaxed, attention should be given in the same way to another muscle. Since habits are involved in this process, no one should be discouraged by not making speedy progress. Jacobson recommends that periods of one hour at a time be devoted to this training during the early learning period. His method will be found to be effective for overcoming insomnia. As a person lies in bed, he can start with the muscles in his toes, giving conscious attention to their relaxation, then proceed upward throughout the entire body, ending with the relaxation of the muscles in the jaws and throat. In this way the entire body can be relieved of muscular tension. If one is attending to the problem of progressive relaxation, he cannot at the same time be concerned with the worries which are keeping him awake.

If workers and socialites alike learned to relax muscles not needed for the moment—differential relaxation—and followed the principle of relaxation, they would be well repaid for the effort. The method would provide the best working condition for the body and thus prepare them for highest efficiency, for Jacobson and others have learned that vigorous and efficient

activity is the result of an *economy* of energy expenditure. It is probably true that the greatest amount of work, and also the best quality of work, is done with a smooth expenditure of energy. We have seen this excellent principle exemplified in dancing, singing, acrobatics, and other forms of artistic motion. Yet we constantly think that the best work of the human body is done with an *orgy* of energy output.⁹

Worry as a threat to emotional training. Worry is a state of anxiety or vexation in which the individual frets over conditions rather than taking active steps toward overcoming the particular difficulty. It involves a state of tension that causes a drain on physical energy and is a sort of thought process that leads to no conclusion. As this brings the "thinker" back to his original problem, it is called "circular thinking" as contrasted to "straight-line" thinking, by means of which one gets somewhere, *i.e.*, reaches a conclusion (see Figs. 17 and 18).

Worry actually inhibits mental associations and thus causes loss of effective power. This is a strong statement, but there is justification for it. The physical effects of worry are decidedly undesirable, as is evidenced by experiments on animals, as well as those on man, which have shown that strong emotions, anxiety, and prolonged tension may produce such an abnormal secretion of glycogen as to cause it to seep through the kidneys and produce a sort of temporary diabetes, known as "glycosuria." The control of worry is, therefore, a very practical concern in the interests of both mental and physical health.

Nevertheless, everyone probably worries to some extent, and warnings about the dangers and uselessness of worry do not solve the problem. There are, indeed, those who claim that worry is beneficial. Morgan says that the smooth forehead of the "never-worrier" is an indication of the desirability of worry and that such unconcerned people are bores and failures.¹⁰ Such an assertion is, of course, based upon a certain definition of worry which presents it as synonymous with genuine concern—thus making a habit of worrying seem desirable—rather than as akin to circular thinking, which leads one back to his starting point. Morgan's statement is tempered by the advice that "worry," to be genuinely effective, should be systematic and not slip-

⁹ William H. Mikesell, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939, p. 357. By permission of the publisher.

¹⁰ Adapted from a passage in John B. Morgan, *Keeping a Sound Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934, pp. 95-96.

shod. If worry, thus defined, is used as a starting point in the solution of problems, it undoubtedly is justifiable. Concern and planning for the future are essential to human efficiency. However, in this discussion, the concept used by a majority of psychologists, *i.e.*, that worry is a detriment to mental health, will be employed.

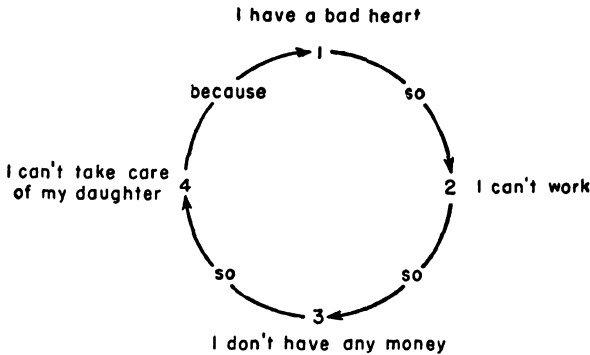


FIG. 17. Schematic representation of an actual case of worry. After a great deal of discussion with the writer, the man decided that worry was not getting him anywhere and, in fact, might even be aggravating his heart condition. He decided to do some straight-line thinking.

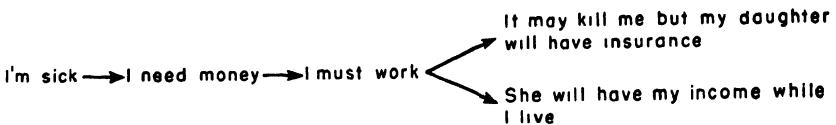


FIG. 18. Schematic representation of directed thinking. He did go to work, and in spite of a negative prognosis by his doctor he is today, fifteen years later, still alive. He has put his daughter through college, seen her serve a successful enlistment in the WAVES, and seen her established in the teaching profession. His thinking ceased to be the circular type called worry and became straight-line thinking that led to conclusions other than the original starting point.

Since worry usually accompanies a feeling of inadequacy or inferiority, one of the first steps toward eliminating it must be the development of confidence through the acquisition of skill and knowledge. The person who has confidence in himself can attack his problems directly and does not need to resort to worry. Instead of anyone's worrying about some future choice or activity, it would be much more advisable for him to carry on some constructive activity that would prepare him for the future. Mere worry does not improve one's

ability. Worry is a form of vague fear, so another step in overcoming it is to get a clear understanding of the problem. Rational analysis of the problem is likely to indicate that a true evaluation of the situation has not been made or that the effects of its probable outcome have been overestimated. Analysis and understanding will help to dispel the ignorance that causes the fear and worry. A good method of convincing oneself of the uselessness of worry is to recall some event that has previously occasioned worry, so as to see whether the actual event, when it did occur, proved to be as bad as had been anticipated during the period of worry.

Steps toward reducing worry. There are a number of things that can be done to reduce or even eliminate worry. (1) Sit down with the problem; give some time to a consideration of the bothersome situation. A significant factor in worry is the inclination to procrastinate over making a decision. During this "putting-off" period, the tensions have a cumulative effect, which makes the problem seem increasingly difficult. (2) Enlist the aid of an expert. College students have deans and advisers available to help them. There are bankers, lawyers, ministers, doctors, and others who are trained to give wise assistance. Many worries are caused by a lack of adequate information; so the obvious course is to find someone who can help you recognize the facts. (3) Talk with someone—anyone—not necessarily an expert. Just getting the trouble off your chest will bring relief. Often describing the problem to another person helps you to straighten out in your mind the elements of the difficulty. But most of all, this talking serves as mental catharsis. Sharing the problem with another seems to reduce the burden that has been pressing heavily. (4) Get at the cause. This is a factor in the solution of any mental hygiene problem. If the worry seems to be out of proportion to the immediate problem, it may be necessary to reflect back upon previous experiences of a similar nature. The services of a psychiatrist or a psychologist can be very helpful in finding out causes; but sometimes the worried person can himself get at the source by taking the three steps just described. (5) When you find the cause, face the facts and do something about them. If you are worried about grades, seek for an answer in an applied time schedule, a reduced number of credit hours, less outside work undertaken, or improved techniques of study. If the worry is about finances, consider possible reductions in expenditures, available sources of extra revenue,

doing something active reduce the problem, but filling your time with action will leave less opportunity for nonadjustive worry. (6) Even if none of the above attempts will work successfully, it is certain that more worry will not help the situation. You may as well let events move on as they will without fearing them. Many experiences have proved that it is perfectly possible to put useless thoughts resolutely out of one's mind. Tension can further be reduced by engaging in activities which are not related to the worry—sports, social pastimes, movies, concerts, reading, travel, and other resources. Many times, after having turned away from the problem by resort to these substitute activities, you can return to attack it with fresh vigor and can do some “straight-line” thinking that will be adjustive.

SUMMARY

Emotions are an inseparable part of life. Uncontrolled, they contribute to waste and unhappiness; controlled, they add zest and value to living. This is understandable when we stop to realize that emotions involve physiological changes that affect both physical and mental functions. Study of the theories of emotion leads to the belief that emotions can be controlled and directed. The James-Lange theory indicates that giving response to the emotion will tend to make it stronger. The Cannon theory teaches that emotions may be of value in meeting an emergency and that, when direct expression is socially undesirable, acceptable physical substitutes should be provided. Behavioristic interpretations claim that certain basic emotions, through training and experience, expand into many and varied forms of expression and that the experiences can be so directed that emotional control is entirely possible.

Research into the role of the endocrine glands in emotion shows that, while emotion is influenced by glands, a particular glandular disturbance does not necessarily indicate that identical kinds of conduct will be aroused in different people. At the present time, the study of habit formation in the control of emotions leads to a more optimistic outlook than does a belief in the statement that the study of human conduct should be reduced to the test tube.

For control of the emotions, two general and valuable suggestions are found in the theories of substitution and sublimation. Sublimation of sex drives during youth can be accomplished through engaging in

various types of physical, social, mental, and esthetic activities. Employment of these suggestions involves the formation of new sets of habits, which is the key to emotional control. Among the suggestions for achieving such emotional control are the following: the development of skills which enable a person to cope successfully with his environment; the acquisition of knowledge which will overcome fears; participation in social activities, so that self-confidence can be achieved; exercise of the finer emotions, beginning at an early age and continuing the practice throughout life; development of the ability to place a true evaluation upon events through being able to put yourself in another's position; and the establishment of friendly relationships with others, so that they can be confided in, which will help by bringing the causes of emotion into the open where they can be analyzed.

Finally, much can be done toward controlling the emotions by employing what William James calls "the gospel of relaxation." Emotional tension can be partially reduced through the assuming of the position of physical relaxation. Progressive relaxation, periods of rest during the day, and actual practice in the habit of relaxation are specific suggestions for the control of emotional tension. Worry is a threat to emotional poise; and since it is usually concerned with what has already happened or what has not yet happened, our active concern with the present will help to eliminate its dangerous effects. Back of worry lies a feeling of inferiority and inadequacy. It follows that our actual inferiorities should be recognized and our imagined ones be accurately evaluated. This can be accomplished by substituting intelligent conduct for emotionalized thinking. There is no magic formula for achieving mental health through emotional control. The long process of growth and habit formation, development of the ability to face reality, concern with the present, and the use of intelligence are keys to emotional control.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. Since emotions cause deep-seated physiological changes, it is highly desirable that we get rid of them.

2. The degree of an emotion is its most important aspect, *i.e.*, even what might ordinarily be a pleasant emotion may be so strong that its effect is to tear down the organism.
3. The James-Lange theory is almost directly in opposition to the idea of mental catharsis, proposed by the psychoanalysts.
4. According to the behavioristic theory, emotions are a primitive sort of response which prepares a person for combat.
5. Nervousness, instability, and excessive activity may indicate that a person has an endocrine disturbance, but more likely his condition is due to poorly formed habits.
6. Emotional repression is advisable only when such a program is temporary—ultimately all emotions should be expressed.
7. The idea of substitution and sublimation finds justification in both the James-Lange and the Cannon theory of emotion.
8. A good method for reducing the tension of ungratified sex drives is to ignore them and participate in substitute activities.
9. Some people are just naturally more prone to anger than others.
10. As a general rule we do not fear things which we know well.
11. A good way to develop sympathy is to learn the technique of courtesy and good manners.
12. A person may get pleasure from anything that he does well, even if it is not socially approved.
13. Americans are less capable of relaxation than foreigners.
14. It is impossible to relax physically and at the same time be tense emotionally.

Suggested Readings

ENGLISH, O. SPURGEON, and GERALD H. J. PEARSON, *Emotional Problems of Living*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1945. 429 pp.

The psychoanalytic theory of emotional development is studied to show the source of emotional disturbances. Various developmental stages are outlined and problems of emotional behavior characteristic

of those stages are discussed. The book will be of most interest to psychology majors.

MENNINGER, WILLIAM C., *Understanding Yourself*, Chicago: Science Research Associates, 1948. 52 pp.

This pamphlet introduces the young person to the ways in which conflicts are met. Conflict may result in fight or flight. If the fight or flight is unsuccessful in resolving conflict the result is emotional upset. But either of these proposed solutions may be successful when it is the result of what is called emotional maturity.

OVERSTREET, H. A., *The Mature Mind*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1949. 295 pp.

The author contends that men have not grown up just because they reach a chronological age which is usually called "maturity." Growth is often arrested and old men and women may be childish in thinking and action. Some suggestions for achieving psychological maturity are outlined. One student said of this book, "The best book I have ever read."

TUTTLE, HAROLD S., *Dynamic Psychology and Conduct*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. 448 pp.

The author is concerned with the problem of directing human motives into socially approved and personally satisfying channels. When this is accomplished, the result is a happy, healthy personality; when the direction is wrong, the result is "bad behavior." The continuing thread of the discussion is character development

Chapter 8

PSYCHOLOGICAL SATISFACTIONS

Observation discloses that people who are mentally healthy achieve satisfactions in the conduct of their lives and that, conversely, those who are in ill-health mentally lack many of those satisfactions. On the basis of these observations, philosophers and psychologists have drawn up extended lists of fundamental psychological and physiological needs that must be satisfied if man is to achieve a happy and efficient life. These fundamental needs are assumed to be motivating forces in the activity of the organism. Needs, when satisfied, become sources of satisfactions. Needs, when unsatisfied, become sources of tension, conflict, and frustration. Satisfactions, then, are rooted in the fundamental needs which motivate conduct.

Those who understand the nature of needs can more intelligently engage in activities which will tend to fulfill those needs. They can avoid activities which do not harmonize with the successful pursuit of satisfactions. The chances of living a more harmonious and efficient life are, therefore, increased by an understanding of fundamental needs and the means whereby they can be satisfied.

SATISFACTIONS ARE ROOTED IN MOTIVES

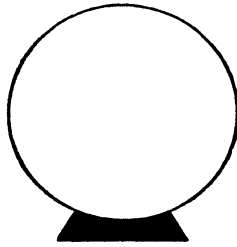
Motives. Motives are drives to action. They indicate an upset condition of the organism—a state of tension. When the tension is reduced, when the organism has regained balance, satisfaction results. It is apparent, then, that satisfaction is the result of successful (tension-reducing) activity that is rooted in motives.

What causes man to act when and as he does? The answers are many and varied, perhaps because man is himself so complex an organism. Because some people ascribe activity to one thing and some ascribe it to another, conduct has been explained on the basis of instinct, tensions, needs, desires, wishes, or wants—all of which are drives to or sources of activity.

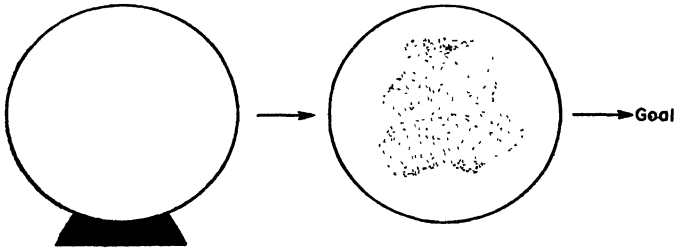
Fundamentally these drives have certain similarities. There are sev-

eral definitions of *instinct*. The word may refer to an inherited behavior pattern or it may be considered as only a drive to such behavior, without the exact behavior's being predetermined. The concept of instinct is not widely accepted today by most psychologists because of its indefinite meaning and because other, more exact, explanations can be used. One concept replacing the old-fashioned "instinct" is *tension*. Thus, instead of being spoken of as a "sex instinct," the conduct which arises from this motive is said to be generated by tension occasioned by activity of the gonad glands—a more definite and less mysterious explanation. Tension indicates that an inner state of disequilibrium exists, that glands have become active and that muscles are ready to act. *Needs* result from tensions. A person may need rest because his muscles are tense from the accumulation of the products of fatigue. He may need food when his organs give rise to the sensation of hunger. He may need companionship because he is tired of being alone. The word *desire* implies an awareness of the existence of needs. It may be that needs are more essential than desires, but desires arise from the individual's feeling that he has a need—which may at times become a strong drive to conduct. A person may not *need* a college education, but he desires it and works hard to obtain it. *Wishes* and *wants* are other words conveying the idea that a person is not completely satisfied with existing conditions. A wish is a desire for something which is more or less remote; the thing wished for is not within immediate grasp.

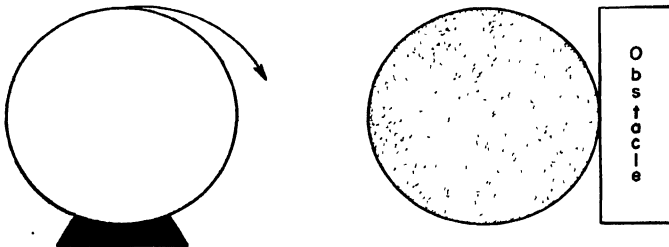
Regardless of the particular description of motives that may be used, satisfaction comes as the result of the attainment of the goal toward which the motive is directed. Thus, motherhood may be said to satisfy the drive existing in the so-called "mother instinct." Satisfaction results from the reduction of tension. This is illustrated when people release their breath after being assured that the hero of a story has been able to swim to the bank of a rushing river. Athletes relate that they feel a reduction of tension when the whistle blows that starts a game. The fulfillment of a need—food, rest, companionship—results in satisfaction to the individual. Desires, while not so powerful as needs, are just as truly sources of satisfaction when they have been accomplished. Wishes, too, are motivating factors that produce a greater or lesser degree of disequilibrium, so that when the wish has been fulfilled balance is restored and a pleasant feeling results (see Fig. 19).



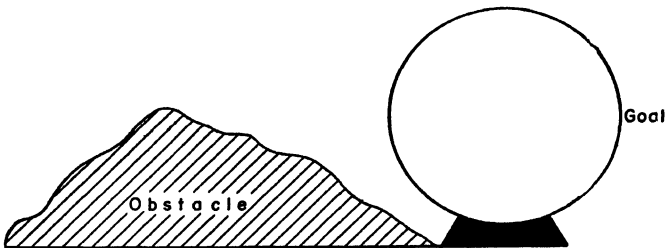
A. State of equilibrium, balance, repose, or satisfaction.



B. State of disequilibrium created by the pull of a goal—a wish, need, want, desire, etc. Tension exists while the individual is progressing toward the goal (shaded area).



C. State of disequilibrium created by the pull of a goal; but the path toward the goal is blocked by some obstacle (lack of money, food, companions, skill). Tensions and frustration result (shaded area). See Chap. 7 on emotions for a description of what happens when tensions continue over prolonged periods.



D. Equilibrium has been regained by the individual's having overcome the obstacle and achieved the goal. Satisfaction has resulted, and the individual is in a state of repose until another goal is introduced.

FIG. 19. Schematic representation of tensions.

As far as the college student of mental hygiene is concerned, a listing of various drives will serve to illustrate the great variety of explanations for motivation. Certain of these, which seem to be of more immediate interest, will be selected for more extended discussion.

Tabulation of Drives or Needs as Listed by Various Writers

<i>Symonds</i> ^a	<i>Trow</i> ^b	<i>Thorpe</i> ^c	<i>Thomas</i> ^d	<i>Carroll</i> ^e
Be with others Gain attention For approval Be a cause Mastery Maintain self Security Affection Curiosity	Bodily activity Effective effort Order Social recognition Social service	Bodily activity Purposeful effort Reasonable amount of independence of action	New experiences Security Response Recognition	Emotional security Achievement or mastery Recognition or status Physical satisfactions

^a P. M. Symonds, "Human Drives," *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Vol. 25 (1934), p. 694.

^b W. C. Trow, *Educational Psychology*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931, pp. 32-40.

^c L. P. Thorpe, *Psychological Foundations of Personality*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938, pp. 216-220.

^d W. I. Thomas, *The Unadjusted Girl*, Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1923, *passim*.

^e Herbert A. Carroll, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947, p. 28.

It is apparent that there is considerable duplication in these lists. The longer lists break down some of the items in the shorter lists into two or three parts. Differences, if any, are probably due to the varying purposes of the writers and the particular terminology they use. V. T. Thayer, for example, treats these drives to conduct on a somewhat different basis by restricting them to the adolescent level, indicating that young people have four large areas of needs: immediate social relationships, wider social relationships, economic relationships, and needs involved in personal living.¹ Although these are somewhat different from the drives listed in the tabulation, the underlying problems, as far as mental health is concerned, are quite similar. They deserve recognition in a mental hygiene program.

¹ V. T. Thayer and Others, *Reorganizing Secondary Education*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1939, p. 44.

FUNDAMENTAL DRIVES AND MENTAL HEALTH

The need for balance. Obviously, it is not feasible to deal in detail with each of these fundamental drives and with others which might be added if still more writers were cited. In this treatment, discussion will be limited to those which seem to have the most direct bearing upon the mental health of college students. Such an approach is open to criticism, because it is evident that all the drives play an important part in the course of each life. Nevertheless, the present discussion will be limited to the following drives, as they relate to the attainment of the psychological satisfactions that contribute to mental health: the desire for activity, the desire for reasonable independence of action (freedom), the desire for security, the desire for companionship, the desire for accomplishment, the desire for new experiences, the desire for significance (to be recognized as worthy, to be respected and admired), and the desire for affection. These, however, should be considered examples, rather than a complete cataloguing of desires.

It should be borne in mind throughout the discussion that satisfaction is a relative thing. For instance, satisfaction from activity is experienced after a period of rest or inactivity, whereas, continuous activity would soon bring dissatisfaction; companionship brings satisfaction after a period of being alone, whereas, after some contact with people, a major desire may be to be alone. Thus, satisfaction, as far as mental health is concerned, is the result of a balance between extremes. The need for a variety of activities in the mentally healthy life is thus seen to have a fundamental psychological basis.

The desire for activity. Old, young, rich, poor, man, and woman—all have the desire to be active. The baby frets when confined in tight clothes or in a small play space. Children run and jump, with no apparent objective except movement. The old often regret that they cannot be more active. Most men dislike having nothing at all to do. These observations lead to the belief that activity is desirable and that action, frequently for its own sake alone, brings satisfaction.

On the other hand, it is true that babies sometimes lie peacefully for a short time without moving. Children will sit quietly gazing off into space, apparently without any desire for movement. An old person will sit at ease in a favorite rocker hour after hour and apparently enjoy it.

The businessman is eager to take a vacation during which he can sit as long as he wishes in his remote camp and merely vegetate. Such observations seem to indicate that human beings revel in inactivity.

This apparent contradiction in desires is somewhat characteristic of the other human drives which are being considered. There is a two-sided aspect of behavior, which seems to make moderation the goal. Man wants neither too much activity nor too much rest. Washburne divides this activity aspect of man's conduct into two parts: the desire for arousal and the desire for repose.² Arousal involves an opening up or increase of organic activity. Repose indicates a completion or termination of activity. Responses occur in cycles, in which activity is predominant at one time and repose is the major feature at another time. The totality and balance of action and rest—arousal and repose—bring psychological satisfaction. This balancing feature, this dual aspect, of behavior is what makes the problem of integration a central one in the pursuit of mental health. This is as true for security, companionship, or accomplishment as it is for activity.

Another aspect of satisfaction illustrated by the desire for activity is that the existence of an organ, a capacity, or an ability seems to create a need for the exercise of that organ, capacity, or ability. The fact that we have muscles leads to a desire to use them, just as the possession of a toy leads a child to play, or as a book leads its owner to read. If one can sing well, he probably likes to sing; if he can play a game well, he likes to play it. In short, organs, capacities, and abilities are not only a means for accomplishing but they are, besides, drives to accomplishment. Likewise, one's ability to make friends, to direct his own actions, or to experience new events inclines him to do those things. It might even be said that ultimately the achieving of complete satisfaction (if such a thing were possible) would mean the exercising of every organ, capacity, and ability possessed by man.

Two implications for mental health are connected with activity. There must be a balance between activity and rest; moderation is necessary. Activity is organically based upon the existence of organs and capacities. It is therefore desirable that these be given exercise, since continuous adaptation contributes toward a sense of security. On the other hand, periods of rest are necessary. The college student who is

² John N. Washburne in P. A. Witty and Others (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1939, pp. 197-200.

trying to achieve better mental health must so arrange his schedule as to include both mental and physical activity; but while he should engage in such sports and activities as he is able, he should also provide for ample periods of rest and relaxation. This will satisfy one of the fundamental desires common to all men.

The desire for security. Often security is thought to imply firmness and unchangeableness of surrounding conditions. According to popular belief, a thing is secure when it is fixed and bound. This is not the case in mental hygiene. People do not actually have security just because they have firm beliefs and unchangeable attitudes.

The college student who believes in fundamentalism is likely to have his sense of security threatened when he hears lectures on evolution. The boy from a home where the use of liquor is sternly criticized may feel insecure in certain groups until he learns to be tolerant of what others do. The athlete conditioned against colored people may feel that his personal worth is diminished by his being a guard next to a Negro tackle, unless his attitudes become changed. In each of these cases, a sense of security can be established only through ability to adjust to new conditions.

Security is not attained through the acquisition of material goods. This is indicated by the accounts of millionaires' feeling a lack of security in somewhat the same way that paupers do. The well-to-do boy may have his security threatened when the girl he thought was his waltzes off with a boy who waits on tables. His feeling of personal worth undergoes a revaluation, so that he sees himself as not so important a social figure as he had previously supposed that he was. He feels less secure in the group where such things occur. That security is not invariably assured by the protection of friends and loved ones is evidenced by the fact that an overindulgent parent actually decreases his son's feeling of security by encouraging in him a sense of dependence on his elders (see Fig. 20).

The meaning of security may be made clearer by consideration of examples of people who feel insecure. Case workers cite numerous instances of children of foreign parents who are insecure because at home they are continually in touch with customs which are essentially foreign, while in their outside contacts they have to adapt themselves to American culture. The college student who cannot adjust to academic requirements feels insecure. The young woman who is not a good

dancer feels insecure among classmates who dance with skill and confidence. Finally, there are many who feel insecure because their parents suddenly place responsibility on their shoulders. If the young man who is unexpectedly required to earn his own money feels that his parents no longer care for him, he will probably experience insecurity. It is evident, therefore, that insecurity results from inability to adapt to new situations and also from unwillingness to face problems in an aggressive manner.

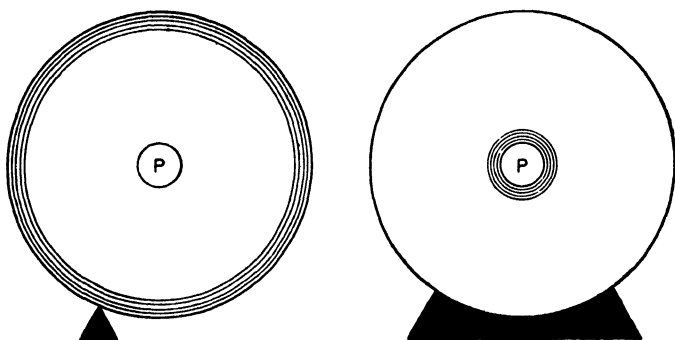


FIG. 20. Schematic representation of varying degrees of security. A tenuous security is illustrated on the left. The person (*P*) has a strong protecting wall around him—he is “safe” in love, material possessions, and familiarity with his environment, but he is incapable of independence. The figure on the right illustrates a more fundamental security because the person has a strength within himself—skill, confidence, intelligence, and knowledge—which will enable him to make adjustments.

How, then, is security to be achieved? Paradoxical as it may seem, security is to be found when one's feet are resting on the “shifting sands of time.” Security in mental life is gained only when a person faces the truth that situations are constantly changing and that this change demands changes in the individual and in his ways of reacting. That is, when men's minds are flexible, open to new ways of thinking and doing, they have a chance to adapt themselves to fluctuating conditions. They are then secure. Fixed beliefs are a threat to security because they limit the potentialities for successful adjustment. Perhaps the person who has a fixed belief that he is the emperor of the world enjoys a feeling of security but this, obviously, is not the kind of security that concerns the normal person. The youth who resorts to fixed means for gaining his wishes and the manufacturer who sticks by pre-

viously successful policies of production often find themselves at a loss in competition with those who are more flexible. 'Security is largely a mental condition. *The person is the center of the problem.* The existence of certain material conditions does not constitute or remove the problem.

The fact that security is a way of feeling about oneself and a question of ability to adjust is well illustrated in the following case. A young man who had given substantial evidence that he would succeed in college was nevertheless failing. He had done admirable work in high school. Analysis showed that he had good reading ability and a superior vocabulary, and that he apparently had good work habits. In an interview it developed that he was not doing well enough, in comparison with his classmates, to suit himself. The early tests in his course did not place him at the top. Competition was stronger than what he had met in high school. His feeling of insecurity was generated by his not being first. He worked harder, but under tension no great gain was made. He studied more and more until he was almost groggy with "all work and no play." He finally was able to make a slow adjustment after having been brought to consider the kind of competition he was currently meeting. His feeling of security was somewhat restored when he considered his absolute accomplishment instead of his viewing only his relative standing.

It has been shown that security is a relative concept having as its basis the existence of attitudes which are in a state of flux. It is a way of looking at inevitable problems rather than an absence of conflicts and frustrations. One's own sense of security will be enhanced when he accepts his life problems as challenges to be met, not as disasters which must be avoided with as little contact as possible. Friends and financial resources may constitute a very positive contribution to a feeling of security; but in and of themselves, they are not synonymous with security. Security is inherent in the individual rather than in optimal external advantages. If security as a psychological satisfaction has any synonym, it is to be found among such terms as hopefulness, confidence, plasticity, the ability to act on tentative conclusions, and an eagerness to change as the world moves on. These latter attributes are those which yield the satisfactions that foster mental health. The college student in a new and dynamic society has a good chance to

develop the flexibility which will contribute to a growing sense of personal security.

The desire for companionship. Some animals—such as buffaloes, prairie dogs, and domesticated sheep—which tend to live in herds, are said to be gregarious. Other animals—such as cats, lions, and bears—seem to prefer living in solitude or in pairs to associating with others of their kind; they are nongregarious. Without any discussion as to whether these phenomena are the result of instinctive urges or of the conditions of life, it can be said that man is essentially gregarious. The gregarious urge is certainly strong and widely evidenced by man, but whether it is basic or innate cannot be stated with certainty. The person who lives with others is said to be normal in this respect, whereas the person who prefers unbroken solitude (the hermit, as an extreme example) is considered to be abnormal. Most people feel more comfortable when they are in the company of others and less comfortable when they are alone. That the most severe punishment resorted to in penal institutions is solitary confinement—offers sufficient proof of these facts.

We can see how necessary it is for mental health that one should discover, early in life, effective means for getting along with his fellow men, so that negative attitudes will not be aroused in others. In fact, one's very survival is dependent upon his successful adaptation to others. As most of the ways of getting a living are in some manner conditioned by the presence of other persons, it follows that individuals are more likely to be frustrated by inability to get along with people than by material obstacles. Perhaps this is one reason why Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People* has for so long had such extensive circulation. From the mental hygiene viewpoint, special cognizance should be taken of the need to develop the capacity for friendship. Writers on such topics as the decline of conversation assert that the capacity for companionship is declining rather than increasing. If this is true, special measures should be taken to reverse the trend. The value of companionship in making life pleasant, efficient, and interesting should not be overlooked.

When suggestions for the cultivation of companionship are made, it must be remembered that the application of a set of rules or procedures cannot be guaranteed to bring success. The capacity for companion-

ship is an outcome of growth, the result of social experience. This experience must be derived from social contacts, not out of books. Specifically, men need to make friends; and when friendships are formed, they must be preserved. "He who has a thousand friends has not a friend to spare" is an opinion that may be given credence.

In school, students should take part in the available social gatherings and associations. So-called "extracurricular" activities, which are numerous in most collegiate institutions, should have a regular place even in a crowded schedule. Advantage should be taken of social fraternities and dormitory organizations as supplying an opportunity for satisfying the desire for companionship and for developing the social skills which will make the eventual satisfaction of this need more probable. This does not imply that seeking companionship should be the sole aim in college. Keep in mind the need for balance.

In seeking satisfaction from companionship do not overlook the value of cultivating a deep friendship with some special one or two persons in whom you have confidence. Share your triumphs and disappointments with them. It is a psychological fact that the telling of your troubles to another person affords release from emotional tension. Relating your difficulties to someone else gives a different, and probably truer, perspective of problems and that makes the troubles seem easier to bear. Your special friend will be one who can overlook your shortcomings and at the same time assist you in evaluating and overcoming them. But the benefits of such companionship are not all on one side of the ledger. Your friend can receive these same satisfactions from you, and so you will be contributing to his mental health. Thus, from this close companionship you get the double benefit of feeling that you are worthy and have personal significance and of knowing that your altruistic needs are being met.

Contacts with people outside one's immediate social sphere should not be neglected. Since socialization is an outgrowth of experience, the wider a person's social contacts, the better will be his chances of achieving the understanding that is essential to companionship. The fact that understanding plays an effective part in social competence is expressed in the words, "To understand is to forgive." This statement has been extended by some into the larger view that if you understand it will not be necessary to forgive. Essential to the development of an

understanding of our fellow men is the determination to acquire an attitude of sympathy, respect, good will, and trust in others. One would do well to have these areas of development in mind in considering opportunities for the study of the social sciences.

The desire for companionship and for its satisfaction is closely related to mental health in several ways. We have a drive toward companionship—a capacity—which affords satisfaction when fulfilled. Social competence fosters economic and occupational efficiency because our work is surrounded and conditioned by the existence of others. Companionship can provide rewards, too, in social and political security and improvement, through the achievement of better understanding. Friendships can be rich in personal satisfactions by affording emotional release, by providing an opportunity to love, and by creating a feeling of true significance. Altogether, companionship has much to contribute toward fostering the happier, fuller, more harmonious, and more effective existence which is descriptive of mental health.

But companionship has its limitations. Emphasis has been placed on the need for balance. Arousal is a fundamental drive, but so, too, is repose. To balance companionship there is solitude. Instead of being surrounded by people all the time, a person occasionally needs an opportunity to be by himself. He wants a chance to give his problems calm, unbiased consideration. College students, even those who get much real satisfaction from association with their classmates, value having some time to walk all alone or to study in the absence of roommates. Being alone may be used, too, as an opportunity for developing oneself.

. . . if we really want to recapture the essence of experiences, if we want to restore color to our faded personalities and vitality to our languid minds, then we must learn to do things, to think things, to *become* someone, alone. For in order to gain from the world of experience and of people what that world has to offer us, we must frequently withdraw from it to find new experiences within ourselves . . . we need . . . that confidence in ourselves and strength from some Power greater than ourselves which can come to us only from our being at times alone.³

³ Mary Ellen Chase, "Time to Oneself," from *The Yale Review* (Copyright Yale University Press), Vol. 30 (Autumn, 1940), p. 132. By permission of the publisher.

Erich Fromm has also emphasized this activity-repose opposition in saying

Productive work, love and thought are possible only if a person can be, when necessary, quiet and alone with himself. To be able to listen to oneself is a prerequisite for the ability to listen to others; to be at home with oneself is the necessary condition for relating oneself to others.⁴

The desire for independence of action—freedom. There is much talk in every generation about the definition and the meaning of freedom. Individuals so universally desire to act in an unrestricted manner that some psychologists list this as a fundamental need. People, as a rule, resent any resistance offered to the free exercise of their urges and forcibly try to break through the resistance. Outward expression of resentment to thwarting or resistance, however, is not always socially approved; therefore, if freedom is to be realized, it must be defined in social, rather than purely egocentric, terms. "Freedom," therefore, is distinctly a relative term, and the expression of freedom is determined largely by the conditions which limit that freedom.

In the society in which we live, freedom is pledged to each individual only to the extent that his free actions do not interfere with the free actions and welfare of other citizens. Freedom must of necessity be restricted so far, and only so far, as it makes for the greatest happiness and general welfare. There are actually no such things as "natural rights" except in so far as people are capable of directing themselves in such a way as not to interfere with the welfare of their fellow beings. Consequently, freedom is something that must be won by the exercise of intelligence. It is entirely possible that too much restriction will hamper wholesome personality development.

But currently some psychiatrists, mental hygienists, and experienced school people are saying that the fruits of complete freedom, full self-expression and continuous success may be attitudes and concepts which are dangerous both to personal unity and to effective social adjustment because they do not represent adequate evaluations of reality.⁵

⁴ Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, New York: Rinehart and Company, Inc., 1947, p. 107. By permission of the publisher.

⁵ Daniel A. Prescott, *Emotion and the Educative Process*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1938, p. 8. By permission of the publisher.

Intelligently directed actions are an indication that a person is facing reality; he does recognize the rights of others. The dormitory resident may feel that his freedom is restricted by "lights-out" rules and by prescribed hours for quiet and study; but rules have been established because there are persons who cannot intelligently govern their freedom. Ideally, the desirable thing would be to have each resident free to come and go as he pleased, but with due recognition of the rights of his fellows to have quiet for study and sleep. This is what is meant by a "reasonable amount of independence of action." If there is any term that might be used as a substitute for freedom, it may well be intelligent and considerate behavior.

For the mentally healthy person, then, a distinction must be drawn between freedom and license. Many people when they talk about freedom seem to be thinking of license. License means unrestrained liberty of action, abuse of privilege, and disregard of propriety. This concept implies something that goes beyond what we mean by freedom. In short, freedom in one direction should be recognized as implying repression in another; *i.e.*, freedom to enjoy an opera involves the repression of an urge to shout and sing with the performers; we forego the satisfaction of certain wants, out of respect for the price paid for the ticket. The mentally balanced person will recognize that he is free to act as he wills only within limits. He recognizes that his fellow men also should be privileged to enjoy a similar relative degree of freedom. When this recognition has been accomplished, the person who has achieved it is living in accordance with the realities which characterize a normal life.

Freedom implies that a person is intelligent enough and wise enough to control his actions and to assume responsibility for the consequences of his act. It is, like security and companionship, an outcome of a wholesomely growing personality. It develops gradually through the accumulation of social sanctions and restrictions and through the intelligence and knowledge—socialization—of the individual.

As an element in mental hygiene, freedom implies that the free person is able to foresee the consequences of his actions, that he considers the welfare of others, and that he observes the restrictions of law and custom. Freedom is only a relative term describing a condition by which a mentally healthy person faces reality. It implies a balance between personal liberty and socially approved actions—just as activity

demands a balance between rest and activity—for the mentally healthy person. When anyone has realized and acted upon this truth, he will be well on the road to achieving such satisfactions from freedom as are possible in human society.

The desire for new experiences. The person who shuts his eyes to the progress of science, who refuses to change his belief, who resents those things which disturb the repetitious pattern of his life is mentally unhealthy. Men for the most part resent having to work at a monotonous job; and some mental hygienists give as a cause for the increase of mental breakdown the tediousness of tasks which are inherent in mass production. There are those who complain that “nothing ever happens here” and some who go so far as to wish that a catastrophe would afford a change in the even tenor of events. That “variety is the spice of life” is attested to by the proved value of change in methods of presentation by teachers, by diversified elements in a program of entertainment, and by the increased productivity of laborers who are allowed to do diverse tasks, because new experiences give them more enjoyment and more zest for their work. People who have had nervous breakdowns are advised to travel, to go on vacation to new places, so that they may enjoy new experiences which will expand their interests and afford different avenues for the expression of their personalities.

Recent emphases in higher education are based upon the fact that mentally healthy persons should have a variety of experiences. For example, instead of training the prospective engineer only in technical courses, schools are seeking a more adequate balance between cultural and technical studies. Architects are trained in such a way that they may have the knowledge of their special subjects that will be sufficient for competent work, but also that they may be prepared to become good citizens. Experiences in courses outside one's field of specialization is the technique for accomplishing this broader aim.⁶ The college student of mathematics or medicine, especially if he has the mental hygiene view in mind, will seek for fuller experiences in the realms of music, art, and literature. The liberal-arts student should pursue new experiences in the domain of science and of so-called “prac-

⁶ Alvin C. Eurich (chairman), “General Education in the American College,” *Thirty-eighth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, Bloomington, Ill.: Public School Publishing Company, 1939, pp. 230-256.

tical" affairs, such as sociology and political science.⁷ While these emphases of college curriculum makers stress wholesome personality development, the basis for the trend lies partially in the satisfaction of natural desires for new experiences.

The place of new experiences in enriching life may be illustrated by the apparent length of a mile. As one walks the dusty road beside a field of wheat stubble, the mile seems to be very long indeed; but the same distance in a strange city, where one continually glances into attractive shop windows, seems to be relatively short. The mile on a stretch of a desert seems longer than the mile along a beautiful mountain stream (the pathway being equally well defined in each place), because of the greater variety accompanying the latter. The richness and beauty of life, and the eagerness and pleasure with which one regards it, is added to by a variety of experiences filling in the minutes as they build up the hours of the day. New experiences lend luster to spaces in life that would be colorless if time were "dragging" along with the repetition of similar experiences day after day.

Anyone who is mentally healthy anticipates and welcomes the new experiences which have come to him or which he has sought. They afford him an increased number of contacts with daily life and provide additional opportunities for him to continue growing and developing. Varied experience increases one's knowledge, so that he is better able to cope successfully with the problems to be solved each day.

In a drab, monotonous life, where can one find new experiences? As is so frequently true in the field of mental hygiene, the answer is found in one's own self. An external change of circumstances would no doubt reduce the difficulty of finding fresh adventure, but such a change is not always easily accomplished. College affords new experiences, but not everyone can go to college, and few can attend year after year. However, merely opening your eyes can reveal amazing pursuits. Take notice, for example, of such ordinary things as your everyday associates and the reactions of your practically unnoticed pets; study the intent look on the faces of shoppers who hustle past; or concentrate upon the noises that are to be perceived, even on a very

⁷ This does not imply that art is not practical. "Practical" is used in the sense that it relates to those things which are used to earn a livelihood. Actually, art is highly practical from the standpoint of mental health and for some from the standpoint of making a living, as well.

quiet day, in the woods. Anyone can hunt for new elements in his job, study its relationship to broader lines of activity, and make a game of the tedious phases of his work, if he would enjoy mental health. While this may not be considered strictly new experience, it is a new way of looking at the familiar which endows it with fresh characteristics. If a change of scene or activity is possible, the chance for new experience is greatly enhanced. Travel is generally regarded as a particularly good means of providing for a variety of events. Taking up new hobbies and recreations is recommended as making for increasing happiness and enlarging satisfactions.

It may seem that the desire for new experiences is in conflict with the desire for security. Actually, this is not the case. It is entirely possible to have both new experiences and a feeling of security. In fact, new experiences may afford an avenue for the achieving of security. Security, it has been shown, is the result of having the ability to interpret and master environmental conditions. It implies the ability to meet new situations. Novel experiences present an opportunity for developing this ability. The person in mental health is, therefore, one who secures the satisfaction of security by meeting and mastering new experiences.

The desire for significance and recognition. Important among the satisfactions which depend primarily upon other people for their fulfillment is the desire for social recognition. Certainly in our society, normal individuals, both young and old, have an intense craving to be recognized as worthy, to be respected and admired, and—perhaps, most of all—to be regarded as successful. Universally, the healthy person rebels against being avoided, looked down upon, or ignored. The collegiate “snob” stirs up deep resentment. Everyone, in order to be completely happy, wants to feel that there is something he knows or does better than almost anyone else. Even the very young child shows in numerous ways that he likes to be considered an important personage in the household. College boys—and girls, too—are likely to resort to exhibitionism and loud talk in an effort to gain attention. They do draw attention to themselves, but not of the kind that they fundamentally desire. The mature man seeks to attract the admiration and approbation of his colleagues and competitors. Often this factor is considered more potent as a form of motivation than are material possessions.

The desire for significance needs to be satisfied, since the compensating behavior which is aroused is very frequently antisocial or, at least, socially distasteful. Spoiled children reveal to a marked degree their desire to appear more important than they really feel themselves to be. The desire for recognition sometimes leads to bullying and fighting or to loud argument. Even crime may have at its roots a misdirected effort to secure recognition. It is likely that you, within a few days, have read an account in a newspaper or a magazine of some gunman or holdup man who has smirked before the camera and boasted of being a "big shot." A recent paper carried this quotation from the lips of a sixteen-year-old murderer, "I guess I'm done for. Now I guess I'll go to the electric chair. . . . See that my picture gets on the front page." There were probably many other aspects of mental ill-health in this young man's life, but the misdirected desire for recognition was prominent to the last.

Dishonesty in business may be caused by a man's desire to be successful when he knows that he really is not. Symptoms of this same desire can be noted daily in people who berate and disparage their acquaintances, so that they themselves can appear important and superior, by contrast with the lowly individuals depicted in their descriptions.

If properly directed, the desire for significance can be a valuable motivating factor. If it causes one to take his daily tasks seriously so that he will do his best work, it is a commendable source of stimulation. If it leads one to evaluate honestly the wishes and desires of his associates, it becomes a positive factor in mental health. Servile flattery is not a socially acceptable manifestation of the desire for recognition. Simple recognition by his fellows of his real worth is what is desired by the mentally healthy person.

The desire for accomplishment. Perhaps this desire is just a corollary of the desire for new experiences and for recognition. However, an individual has a feeling, vague though it may be, that he is in this world for some good reason. Psychologists have called this on-going tendency by such various names as "teleological drives" and "hormic urges," which mean that something within the organism (as contrasted to external stimulation) motivates conduct. Such action is called *purposive*

when it is pursued to resolve organic cravings or to maintain physical equilibrium. When there is a conscious formulation of objectives, the behavior is *purposeful*. Either may serve as the basis of the desire for accomplishment. Tensions generated by the urge to activity and accomplishment are reduced by engaging in appropriate behavior which leads to genuine achievement.

New experiences are of value in satisfying the desire for accomplishment, but still more satisfying is the adequate performance of work. A mature individual, to be well-balanced mentally, must have some work or purpose to achieve; and the culmination of this work affords the satisfaction of the desire for accomplishment. So important is work in the maintenance of a mental hygiene program that the serious student will give it a prominent place in his own program.

It should be incumbent upon the individual to see that the things which he is attempting to accomplish constitute a progressive series of goals. That is, as one goal is reached, or even before, others should be coming into view. The man who is completely satisfied will have no incentive for any further growth, and stagnation will ensue. Testimony to the truth of this is found in the experience of men who have reached the age of retirement but have not retired and who have continued to be "hale and hearty" as they went on with their daily round of duties; whereas, many others have died very shortly after having retired at an even earlier age. Of course, there is no way of knowing that this was due to a lack of desire or a lack of necessity for accomplishment; but at least the theory has been advanced that the cause of the hastening of death was a lack of purpose for living. Consequently, the idea has been advanced that a man should prepare for retirement, just as he had prepared for his work, by setting up new goals in the form of absorbing hobbies and avocations which he can pursue with interest after he drops his regular occupation. Similarly, young people should keep setting up new goals for accomplishment, so that they may keep alive an eager anticipation of the future.

When the nature of the drive to accomplishment is considered, it is small wonder that in institutions for the mentally ill the work cure has been increasingly used in place of the rest cure (in which accomplishment is less apparent). The person who knows that the desire for accomplishment can be gratified only by the persistent application of

energy has discovered a truth that will do much to enhance his mental health. Finally, accomplishment in a particular area should be emphasized to at least the partial exclusion of accomplishment in other areas. The golden mean is again called into play.

The desire for affection. An analysis of the literature dealing with the psychoanalytic schools of psychology indicates that human beings need to satisfy the desire to love in order to achieve rich personalities. This view is widely accepted now, regardless of what one's basic psychological viewpoint may be. Psychologists and mental hygienists point out that for a person to have emotional maturity—which is one of the characteristics of mental health—he must be altruistic; that is, he must outgrow the childish characteristic of egocentricity. The need to love provides a basis for this growth.

Love is one of the bases of social organization. Without love, a fundamental institution of society—the home—would be practically impossible. Love fosters tenderness and concern for other persons, without which civilization would be hopeless indeed. Love makes for vigor and enthusiasm in daily living. Very young children who are deprived of love do not grow mentally, physically, or emotionally as steadily as do children who are loved. Many college students have been found incapable of good work because of emotional blocks stemming from a lack of love. Hence, love is necessary not only from the social standpoint, but also from that of the security and welfare of the individual. Thus, a successful marriage contributes not only to society as a whole but to the mental health of the parties involved, as well. Perhaps it is because of this fact that insurance companies consider a married man a better risk than an unmarried man. His family gives a man more reason for living, and he is presumably more concerned about his own safety and health because he is needed by someone. A home in which love is manifest is making a valuable contribution to the stability of the community and to all the members of the family, too.

As has been implied or stated in earlier discussions, control of the emotions is a condition of mental health. Man needs to identify himself with purposes which lie outside his own self. The person whose need for love is satisfied by concentration upon himself is either actually or potentially maladjusted. Altruism, on the other hand, is a goal of the mentally sound person.

SATISFACTIONS ARE TRANSITORY

Satisfactions are based on moderation. This discussion of drives should not lead the reader to the belief that satisfactions are permanent. A satisfaction, once achieved, ordinarily remains a satisfaction for a comparatively short time and under only certain conditions. This can be illustrated in several ways. A person may enjoy traveling for a while; but if his work requires his traveling all the time, he is likely to become bored by it. Seeing new things, instead of being a novelty, then becomes tiresome. A person may enjoy a walk in the woods; but if he has to walk a great many miles, the pleasure is likely to give place to drudgery. Reading can give great enjoyment, but when it is the only thing that can be done, as in the case of a hospital patient, eventually even the best novel may fail to interest. A pleasant activity becomes less enjoyable if it is pursued too long. Satiation is a threat to genuine psychological satisfaction. These considerations are pertinent because they demonstrate the need for moderation and variety in behavior if satisfaction is to be secured.

Satisfactions are derived from contrast. The need for contrast may be illustrated by several situations. As a rule, a man likes to have people around him and enjoys their companionship, but occasionally solitude seems to be equally important for him. In fact, some mental hygienists recommend as a desirable provision for mental health that a person should have a room of his own where he can be completely alone. Again, people want freedom. Yes, but there is comfort at times in having someone else make decisions and give directions. Freedom is apparently most desirable when one does not have it. The story of the young boy in the ultraprogressive school is probably not without basis. He asked the teacher, "Miss X, do we have to do just what we want to do today?" Evidently his desire for freedom was satiated; he wanted some direction. At the same time that people are wanting new experiences, they wish to find something of the old and familiar about them. Such are the paradoxes of human conduct that must be solved by an application of moderation—the golden mean. Satisfactions are at least partially the result of contrast: companionship—solitude, freedom—direction, and activity—rest.

Satisfactions and progressive goals. Man is perverse in another respect, and for this he can be thankful. When something has been

achieved, it seems to become less desirable. When a student graduates, when he gets a job, when he produces something, he finds less and less satisfaction in what has been achieved as time goes on. In other words, it becomes necessary for him to set up new goals. This is fortunate, because it keeps him from stopping after he has accomplished some one goal. It keeps him progressing so as to be in tune with the changing times. Satisfaction is not final; it cannot be when life itself is going forward. Perhaps it would be more accurate if instead of speaking of satisfaction—which seems to imply a degree of finality—we were to use the word “satisfying,” holding the suggestion that the enjoyment of satisfaction is a dynamic, ongoing process. If the college student were to think that a college degree was his final goal, he would not be considered mentally healthy. His goals, and the satisfactions from them, must be progressive.

“Achieving” rather than achievement of satisfactions. The statement that satisfactions are transitory does not in any sense mean that they are not real. The satisfaction of the needs, desires, and wishes that have been mentioned in this chapter are all worthy of attention; but they should be thought of in terms of achieving rather than achievement. It is necessary to exert a continuing effort to be loved, to achieve, to be significant, to have friends, or to secure bodily activity.

The transitoriness of satisfaction is well illustrated in matrimonial experience. Couples who do not actively seek to preserve romance by doing little acts of kindness and by giving evidences of love are likely to find the glamour of love disappearing. Others have learned to think of their satisfaction from marriage in terms of active companionship. They look for new aspects of enjoyment with their mates. Some think it advantageous to relieve the pressure of being together by having separate vacations, realizing that the joy of being together will be greater when contrasted with their having been separated for a time. More frequently, however, successful marriage partners find that a vacation provides an opportunity for experiencing together some out-of-the-ordinary pursuits which will enrich their common interests and memories. Here, again, as in all other realms of satisfaction, the need for alternation and balance is illustrated.

The dynamic (rather than static) nature of satisfactions and the relation to mental health of many of the needs discussed above are well summarized in the following words:

The pupil with a healthy mind is able to solve a problem within his range of capacity by forming an intelligent plan of action and persisting until he has overcome the difficulty. He has a well deserved feeling of confidence that he can overcome obstacles with a minimum of assistance from others. When he is increasingly challenged by a widening range of possibilities in life, he welcomes the chance to test his growing powers by accepting harder and harder assignments. The mentally healthy pupil slowly develops a realistic awareness of his limitation as well . . . he learns to make the most of what he is limited to, and not to spend his life grieving over what he cannot have. Essentially, then, mental health is a wholesome philosophy of life which embraces the considerations here mentioned. Fully as important as these considerations, however, is the ability to get along happily with other people. A definition of mental health must be wide enough to include recognition of the importance of adapting one's self efficiently and agreeably to the social group.⁸

In the quotation one can recognize the need for accomplishment, the need for security, the need for activity, and the need for social competence. All these were proposed, at the beginning of the chapter, as needs which are particularly pertinent to the mental health of college students.

SUMMARY

Human beings, by virtue of the existence of certain basic drives, are motivated to conduct themselves in such a way as to achieve certain goals. These goals, when reached, result in the reduction of the tension accompanying the drives and bring the individual varying degrees of satisfaction. These satisfactions, in turn, contribute to the mental health of that person.

Some of the drives which must be considered, if psychological satisfactions are to be attained, include the desire for activity, the desire for security, the desire for companionship, the desire for new experiences, the desire for accomplishment, and the desire to love and to be loved. Each of these bears a relationship to the others, and any conflicts between them must be resolved. Each one is also relative, in the sense that too much or too little of the thing desired would probably be unpalatable. Too much activity, too much companionship, or too

⁸ Frank G. Davis (ed.), *Pupil Personnel Services*, Scranton, Pa.: The International Textbook Company, 1948, p. 113. By permission of the publisher.

much work may make a person dissatisfied. Rest, solitude, play, and responsibility are essential factors in a wholesomely balanced life.

In conclusion, it should be realized that satisfactions are transitory. There is an ongoing aspect of life that must be given recognition. Satisfactions are dynamic rather than static in nature, *i.e.*, there is a need for continuous adjustment, which is as essential to the achievement of psychological satisfactions as it is to the total program of mental hygiene.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. "Instinct" and "tension" are considered to be merely different words used to describe the same phenomenon of motivation.
2. While different authorities list different fundamental drives, the main outlines show a considerable amount of duplication.
3. A person who manifests no desire for activity, at a given time, would be considered abnormal by mental hygienists.
4. One meaning of integration is that the individual must resolve the variable factors in a given drive; *i.e.*, the apparent conflict between the desire for repose and activity, or the desire for companionship and the desire to be alone.
5. Probably most of our fundamental drives are explicable on the basis of inherited organic structure.
6. The desire for security can be satisfied by the provision of certain material conditions—money, health, and friends.
7. Parents who love their children, give them what they want, protect them from harm, and solve their problems are doing much to satisfy their children's desire for security.
8. One thing that can, without reservation, be called an instinct is the human being's desire for companionship.
9. One good way to develop the capacity for companionship would be to learn how to carry on an interesting conversation.

10. The concept of freedom must necessarily involve the idea that restrictions upon activity must be accepted by the individual.
11. There is no basic conflict between the desire for security and the desire for new experiences.
12. The desire for security and the desire for significance may in reality be aspects of but one fundamental drive.
13. A valid criterion for mental health is the degree of satisfaction a person has attained—the better satisfied he is, the better his mental health.

Suggested Readings

CARROLL, HERBERT A., *Mental Hygiene; The Dynamics of Adjustment*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947. 329 pp.

Several chapters deal directly with personal mental health, a few with the role of mental hygiene in the schools, and some with the relation between normal and abnormal behavior. The author presents an overview of the broad ramifications of mental hygiene.

RYAN, W. CARSON, *Mental Health through Education*, New York: Commonwealth Fund, Division of Publication, 1938. 315 pp.

The book presents a picture of the mental health status which obtains in our public schools. It indicates some of the things which should be done to improve the mental health of the nation. The necessity for affording children psychological satisfactions through their schoolwork is forcibly presented. Prospective teachers will find a valuable viewpoint.

SNYGG, DONALD, and ARTHUR W. COMBS, *Individual Behavior*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949. 386 pp.

This book is for the serious student of education or psychology, intended to give him a better understanding of how and why the individual acts as he does in the particular situation in which he lives. How problems of adjustment arise and how they can be successfully attacked is a major emphasis of the authors.

Chapter 9

SOCIAL ADAPTATION:

I. NATURE AND ORIGIN

No matter what line of activity a person engages in, he will have to have many and varied relationships with those about him. Success, efficiency, and happiness, in all the diverse activities of life, will be conditioned to a very large extent by the type of social adaptations the individual can make. Indeed, one of the reasons why social organizations exist is so that people may engage in various lines of activity and thus supplement the work of their fellow men. People in social groups, the world over, exchange the products of their labors for the things that others do or produce.

The conception of the isolated individual as separate from society, which has often exercised the ingenuity of philosophers and absorbed their attention, is a pure metaphysical fiction. Any such being is not to be discovered in the world of actual fact . . . man, gradually and more or less unconsciously, has discovered that he is able to realize his interests much better through cooperative endeavor than through individual effort unaided by his fellow men.¹

In a consideration of the problems of individual human adjustment, the study of social functioning is, therefore, of paramount importance. Students of mental hygiene should seriously consider what they can do to facilitate this adjustment.

FACTORS IN SOCIAL ADAPTATION

Social adaptation in a democracy. In a democratic society the matter of social adaptation is particularly significant, because all share in a common destiny. Instead of being mere cogs in a smoothly functioning

¹ Jerome Davis and Harry E. Barnes, *An Introduction to Sociology*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1931, pp. 41-42. By permission of the publisher.

machine, as in a totalitarian state, citizens in a democracy are called upon to think and to help make decisions. In an effective democracy, not only do men direct their own lives, but they should have some consideration for fellow citizens. Therefore, though social functioning is a concern of all men, it is even more important to citizens of a democratic society.

The universality of social contacts. From the earliest times man has found it advantageous to live in social groups. The basic group in any human society, in previous generations as well as in our own, is the living unit that we call the family. Other primitive types of social groups were clans and tribes. These ultimately developed into larger groups, such as the nation. In our own time, a characteristic of modern society is world interdependence, if not world cooperation.

A study of the individual, as well as of the race, forces the conclusion that social contacts are universal. The infant is totally dependent upon the adults around him for the satisfaction of his needs. His physical wants for food and clothing are not less important than his emotional needs. The need for security, for love, and for significance must be satisfied by his family and older people about him. It is in the social unit of the family that basic personality trends are formulated, and in that unit the basis for mental health or instability is established. As the child grows older, into adolescence and early adulthood, his educational needs are still largely dependent for fulfillment upon adults. Even when adulthood is reached, a person is, in varying degrees, dependent upon others. Adaptations must be made to bosses, to fellow workmen, to wife or husband, and to those who direct social, economic, and political institutions. In fact, adaptations must be made to all those with whom a person may come in contact in any way, either directly or indirectly.

It is apparent that the need for social adaptation has always been faced by human beings. This area of functioning is a problem for the individual, whether he realizes it or not, from the time of his birth. Moreover, the problem is prevalent in all areas of life: home, play, group, school, church, government, and work. Since social adaptation is so pervasive a concern, some knowledge of its nature and functioning may be helpful toward achieving and maintaining mental health.

Problems involved in social adaptation. It is obvious that the successful operation of the various groups is largely dependent upon the

ability of the individual members of the groups to make social adaptations. To the extent that successful adjustments are not made, men experience unhappiness, strife, fear, hate, suspicion, jealousy, and other unsocial manifestations of behavior. Each of these manifestations is a symptom of mental ill-health and, hence, is a concern of the mental hygiene student. Unhappiness is an evidence that a person is not harmoniously and effectively adjusting to his environment, whether physical or social. Strife is indicative of fruitless or misdirected effort and, hence, is an indication of inefficiency. Hate is a strong emotion which prevents a harmonious adjustment between individuals or groups of individuals. Suspicion is a response which particularly concerns mental hygienists, because it indicates a tendency to withdraw from social contacts and often precedes serious mental disorders.

The question of resolving the difficulties which result from social maladaptation has been investigated from the standpoint of the effect that culture has upon human groups. Such investigations have been made in the fields of sociology, ethics, and political science. Social functioning has been approached from the standpoint of the individuals who constitute the group. For example, the study of psychology and mental hygiene is mainly concerned with the effect of individuals upon the surrounding culture, as well as with the effect of environment upon the individual. Of course, the group and individual approaches are clearly interdependent; but emphasis on the latter approach will be used here because, ultimately, the successful functioning of a group is dependent upon the way the individuals who make up the group carry on their activities.

THE BASES OF SOCIABILITY

The innate basis of sociability. The universality of social activity has led some to the conclusion that it has an instinctive basis. Evaluation of this belief is, to some extent, dependent upon the interpretation that is given to instinct. If instinct refers to a rather definite pattern of action, there is reason to question the validity of an instinct of socialization. On the other hand, if instinct means a tendency to action, rather than the manifestation of the tendency, there is some reason for believing in an instinctive basis for socialization.

In recent years psychologists have questioned more and more the concept of instincts. The word "instinct" has so many interpretations that it has come to be a rather meaningless term that lacks definiteness. Anyone who speaks or writes it is likely to mean something other than the interpretation of the hearer or the reader. Furthermore, the impossibility of making a sharp distinction between the innate and the learned has led to further questioning of the instinct concept. Many things which at one time were thought to be instincts have turned out, on careful analysis, to be largely the result of habit formation. The objections to the concept of instinct in general lead to a doubt as to the validity of a specific instinct for socialization.

It appears, then, that there is reason to suspend judgment regarding the innate bases of sociability, as is indicated in the following quotation:

There is the possibility that socialization is simply the unfoldment of innate nervous predisposition. Those who look to the "*gregarious*" or "*herd instinct*" as a dynamic entity for an explanation of man's socialized action, approach this extreme (the belief that social activity is entirely dependent upon instinct) at times. But there is the possibility that man is entirely unsocial, so to speak, at birth, and must learn everything connected with the process of socialization. This point of view has definite evidence in its favor.²

This latter conception will be examined in the following paragraphs.

The learned bases of sociability. The more widely accepted point of view regarding the bases of sociability is that it is learned through the experiences of the individual. This interpretation makes it easier to explain the variations in conduct observed in different people. According to this belief, manifestations of human conduct may be influenced by the many organic and environmental factors which act upon the person in formulating the nature of his responses.

There seems to be little doubt that the average person could rather easily fit into almost any culture if he were reared from infancy in that culture. Hence, society could choose that environment which makes for a desired social order and by education could attempt to

² Francis F. Powers, "Social Growth and Character Formation" in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1936, p. 223. By permission of the publisher.

achieve that purpose without regard to the social "instincts" of man. It is due to this recognized modifiability of mankind that in our culture so much emphasis is placed on education. In fact, you have all probably heard many times that each generation must learn anew the lessons that teach it how to live. It is not necessary to repeat the errors of the past, since old ways of living can be dropped and newer methods can be substituted.

This fact is well illustrated in a rather typical clinical case study. Walter J., a nine-year-old boy, was brought to a psychiatrist because his extreme aggressive behavior had caused his mother and teachers so much trouble. He was allowed to work off his tensions by free and vigorous play and by talking with the therapist. The real solution to his problem, however, lay in uncovering the fact that the parents were expecting too much of the boy (though he was a superior child) and in demonstrating to the parents that their own tensions were reflected in Walter's behavior. In order to work this out, the analyst had to get detailed information about the homes in which the parents had been raised—homes which had generated similar tensions by holding unduly high expectations. When the parents understood the source of Walter's difficulty, they lowered their expectations and were rewarded by even better accomplishment than had been realized under pressure. In this case, the mistakes of at least two generations were revealed and eliminated, and it is reasonable to expect that ultimately the home which Walter may establish will have a more helpful influence on children.

It must be realized that organic factors play a part in socialization. People who are handicapped by lack of health have greater difficulty in making social adaptations than do those who enjoy more favorable health. It is a common opinion that physique is an important factor in social adjustments. There is a belief that large individuals develop into leaders with slightly greater frequency than do smaller ones. Various types of compensation may result from physical stature which may condition a person's social functioning. It is entirely probable that there are characteristic differences, as regards sociability, between those who are good-looking and those who have an ugly appearance. This is not equivalent to saying that health, physique, or looks cause certain social manifestations; but one's reactions quite probably are conditioned by the view which he takes of either his handicaps or his assets.

Even when the fact is recognized that organic conditions enter into social reactions, people must be careful not to believe that they are direct causes. The man who says "I am naturally more nervous (or hot-tempered) than other people" may be stating a truth, but he may also be excusing his action in the belief that there is nothing he can do about his behavior. It would be much better for such a person to realize that a great part of his conduct is learned and habitual. It is highly probable that he could change his conduct if he made up his mind to do so, instead of resorting to rationalization. Probably it would be nearer the truth for him to admit that he had been successful in managing his parents, when he was a child, through displays of nervousness or temper and that he was continuing to use his habitual techniques in an attempt to control his wife, children, or colleagues. It is essential, from the standpoint of mental health, to face the problem of controlling one's antisocial characteristics by accepting responsibility for them.

The learned basis of social behavior is more acceptable from the mental hygiene viewpoint because learning lacks the finality that instinct strongly implies. If behavior is learned, it is possible for unsuccessful responses to be replaced by more acceptable actions; but if behavior patterns are inborn, fixed as instinct, there is little that can be done to correct the patterns of response that are unsuccessful. Moreover, rationalization based upon the instinct theory is questioned by the mental hygienist, because it tends to limit the possibility of growth. The viewpoint of learned socialization is more acceptable to him, because each individual can then have more confidence in the possibility of self-direction.

The theory of acquired social behavior furnishes a more optimistic basis for belief than the instinct theory does. If we believe that a child acts as he does because of his instincts, there is little hope for his social development. On the other hand, the idea of development is implicit in the meaning of the "learned" basis and the hope for improvement is stronger from that standpoint. Anyone who is interested in the improvement of his own conduct can count on that hope. Optimism, a hopeful view of the future, is an indication of mental health. The idea that social behavior is based upon learning is, therefore, entirely acceptable for the student of mental hygiene. However, heredity doubtless sets some limits of development for each individual beyond which en-

vironmental stimulation will be ineffective. The important thing to remember is that no one should be too hastily condemned to a level of mediocrity on the basis of his original personality equipment. Incidentally, it is pertinent to add that a lack of belief in the learned basis of behavior is the source of racial discrimination, which is, the world over, a great handicap to facile and effective social adaptation.

Experimental evidence on the learned basis of sociability. Certain experiments and observations indicate that, at least to some extent, socialization is learned. A review of the experimental control of social behavior will serve to illustrate the force of environment in shaping certain aspects of personality.

At the University of Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, experiments have been conducted to see whether environmental conditions will affect the degree of aggressiveness or submissiveness manifested by a child.³ Two children, one who was considered by his teachers to be markedly aggressive and one who was considered to be submissive, were used as subjects. The child who was submissive was taught how to manipulate rather complicated toys, while the aggressive child was not given such training. When the two children were placed together in a room where the complicated toys were, the aggressive child pushed the other away from the toy he was engaged with and assumed control. The submissive child went to another toy and began to play with it. Soon the aggressive child came and took away that toy, but had no more luck in manipulating it than he had with the first. Presently the aggressive child was receiving instruction from the submissive child and the latter began to show signs of dominance. After the process had been continued for some time, the two children had exchanged roles, *i.e.*, the aggressive child became submissive and vice versa. Furthermore, they tended to keep these roles when outside the experimental situation. Such evidence seems to prove that personality characteristics not only are learned but, under certain conditions, can be learned rather rapidly.

Further evidence supporting the belief that social characteristics, as well as other personality traits, are learned is that children frequently

³ L. M. Jack, "An Experimental Study of Ascendant Behavior in Preschool Children," *University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare*, Vol. 9, No. 3, 1934.

reveal the same types of maladjustments as do their parents. Some would say that this merely indicates the role of heredity; but foster children show the same resemblance to their foster parents that most children usually have to their true parents. In even such a trait as intelligence—which for a long time was thought to be fixed, barring accidents, at birth—it has been found that the measurable intelligence of foster children tends to gravitate toward the intelligence level of the foster parents. In some cases, even children whose true parents were known to be feeble-minded have turned out to be of normal intelligence when placed in superior homes. Since intelligence is an indication of potential behavior, this phenomenon is of extreme importance to mental hygienists, because it indicates that even intelligence is to some extent learned.

Observations of children in school also support the view that behavior is learned. In surprisingly short periods, school children assume some of the personality characteristics of the teachers with whom they have contact. In one study

. . . the mental health of seventy-three fifth and sixth grade teachers was surveyed and a similar survey made of the mental health of their 1,095 pupils. It was found that the pupils of teachers in good mental health showed measurably greater mental and emotional stability than did the pupils of teachers in poor mental health . . . the records show in graphic fashion the extent to which the health of the class as a whole tends to improve or deteriorate depending on the health of the teacher concerned.¹

It has been demonstrated by experiments for studying the effect of “autocratic and democratic atmospheres” that the manifestations of social behavior can be modified by controlling environmental circumstances. Equated groups (in which the individual members of one group were very much like the members of the other group) of boys ten to eleven years old were studied. In the autocratic group, the boys were told what to do, with whom and how to work. In the democratic group, policies and activities were decided by the members of the group. The following effects were noted within as short a period as five days.

¹ C. Roger Myers, *Toward Mental Health in School*, Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1939, p. 133. By permission of the publisher.

Democratic Group

56% of the time they worked in groups of four or five.
 47% more feeling of "we-ness."
 More cooperative endeavor.
 More objective attitude.
 Higher degree of constructiveness.
 Feeling for group property and group goals were well developed.

Autocratic Group

Much hostility expressed between members of the group.
 Less stable group structure. 12% of the time they worked in groups of four or five.
 Members of group were more dominating.
 Destroyed property or individuals kept it at the end of the meeting.

The reporter of this experiment evaluates it in the following words: "These experiments point anew to the great possibilities vested in education, and to the responsibility given to moulders of young lives which are so sensitive to the present social climate and are so dependent upon it."⁵

Such experiments and observations seem to indicate that many of the manifestations of social behavior are not due to inborn characteristics but are, to a large extent, subject to the formative influences of environment. This plasticity of human nature⁶ presents a hopeful outlook to the person who is concerned with shaping his behavior with a view toward better social adjustment.

FACTORS IN SOCIALIZATION

It has already been indicated that a large part of man's activities involve contact with his fellow beings. Since socialization is largely learned, all the many and varied contacts that man has are instructive factors in socialization. However, for the sake of more complete understanding, some of the influential factors may be mentioned as illustrative examples.

The home. There is good reason for the statement that the first six years are the most important in an individual's life. Many of the outstanding trends in personality are fairly well established during that time. (This does not mean, however, that personality then assumes a fixed and final form—never to be altered.) To a very large extent, the first six years are spent in the home, so the importance of that institution should not be underemphasized. The story is told of a woman who,

⁵ Kurt Lewin, "Experiments on Autocratic and Democratic Atmospheres," *Social Frontier*, Vol. 4 (July, 1938), pp. 316-319.

after an interesting lecture on child education, asked the speaker, "Sir, when can I begin the education of my child?" The authority asked, "How old is your child?" "He is six." "Madam, hurry home and begin your work. You have already wasted the most precious six years." He was emphasizing the fact that the influence of the home in those plastic first six years leaves a permanent impression.

Everyone in the home contributes toward and helps to shape the characteristic social behavior of the other members of the family. It would be of real benefit to mental health if there were more who could fully realize that, whether or not such is their wish, their conduct greatly influences that of other members of the family. The fact that problem children so frequently come from broken homes is no mere coincidence. The lives of such children have been adversely influenced by the discord and conflict which have led to the divorce. Children are extremely responsive to the emotional situations surrounding them. Their actions, their attitudes, their ideals about what is worth while, and their individual ambitions, as well as their characteristic moods of happiness or discouragement, are influenced deeply and quickly by the behaviors of all with whom they share such intimate contacts as those of the home.

Professor L. M. Terman, in his book *Psychological Factors in Marital Happiness*, vividly emphasizes the formative influence of the home when he says that marital happiness seems to run in families. Yet marital happiness certainly is not inherited. It is something that a person learns and then puts to use at a later time. The children in their formative years learn the conduct of their parents with regard to settling disputes, making allowances for the shortcomings of others, controlling tempers, listening to the views of another, and sharing responsibilities. This one example, marital happiness, shows as clearly as possible that the home is without an equal as an educative factor in social adaptation.

To stop with this statement regarding the direction of family influence would leave an incorrect impression. Each young person should keep in mind that he is contributing a part of the emotional climate that characterizes his most intimate social group. If he is cheerful and courteous, this becomes a desirable factor in the emotional weather; but if he is gloomy and tempestuous, he contributes to a less enjoyable atmosphere. The reactions of others to him derive in part from the

nature of the influences he puts forth. In short, the individual, even before marriage, has a definite responsibility in conditioning the factors in the home which make for or against satisfactory social adjustment.

The church and religion. "Larger than the home in its circle of members, and exerting its influence at a later time, the church and religion play a dominant part in the determination of the direction of social functioning of the individual."⁶ In the church, the growing individual—and this includes adults—comes into contact with ideals and precepts which, if applied, would greatly improve social adjustments. Tolerance, respect, obedience, love, charity, honesty, courtesy, justice, responsibility, and truth are among the human values which the church stresses. Each of these ideals can contribute to better social adaptation.

The church is important at any time, but particularly when the home is being subjected to many disintegrating influences, about which the sociologists warn. Many of the evils which characterize society at the present time, such as the rate of crime, the extent of divorce, the excessive use of alcoholic beverages, and the increase of promiscuity, are in part attributed by sociologists to the decline of the importance of the church. These scholars do not lay the sole responsibility for solving such problems on the church, but they do consider it one of the strong contributing factors. It is felt that, if the church could be made more significant in the lives of individuals—could be a more dynamic factor in socialization—the seriousness of many of our social problems would be appreciably reduced. It is certain that the church, emphasizing the factors named in the foregoing paragraph, could serve to keep basic factors in facile social adaptation more clearly in the minds of those who make up society.

Elizabeth Hurlock stresses the place of religion in the lives of young people in the following words:

The adolescent needs religion but not theology. Because adolescence is a period of strain and insecurity, the individual needs a religion that can give him faith in life and a feeling of security. This he cannot get from authoritative dogmas and sentiments. Studies of primitive peoples have shown that religion is a factor that produces security almost universally among them.⁷

⁶ Powers, *op. cit.*, p. 237.

⁷ Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Adolescent Development*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949, p. 333. By permission of the publisher.

Later in the same book, Hurlock points still more emphatically to the role of religion in mental health.

The core of religious experiences is worship. The music, ritual, and prayers that make up religious worship help the individual to evaluate himself and to see his weaknesses. Thus, they help to promote good mental health. Confession, which plays an important role in some religious faiths, serves the same purpose. It has proved to be so valuable for its cathartic effect that it is used by many mental hygienists in dealing with personality disorders.⁸

Just as there are negative influences in the home, as regards social functioning, so too there are dangers which result from too great dependence upon the church. When religion permits a person to escape from the pressing circumstances of life, there is danger of mental breakdown. If religion is used as a means of escaping from reality, if all the emphasis is on an after life and the hope for better things to come then, there is a very real danger to mental health. When this occurs, the accusation that "religion is an opiate" is likely to be true. However, if one has a religion which stresses the facing of reality and the courageous solving of the problems of life, there is good reason why it should be viewed as a highly influential factor in personality integration. A religion which emphasizes human values and human conduct, besides being concerned with supernatural strength and values, can be a distinctive asset in social adaptation and mental health.

Governmental institutions. A comparison of the ideals and activities of Fascistic governments with those of democratic governments reveals that government, as an institution, contributes largely toward shaping the life of the individual. For example, the young Germans of today have been reared in the tenets of Aryan superiority and devotion to the "fatherland," while American youths have before them the ideals of freedom of speech, freedom of worship, and individual worth. The very concept of citizenship involves the problem of getting along with others—particularly in a democratic society. In fact, our government is organized for the purpose of making easier the carrying on of human relationships. Laws are created in order to systematize and regularize these relationships.

The role of government in shaping the avenues of social adaptation

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 364–365. By permission of the publisher.

of individuals was recognized by President Truman in his Executive Order creating the President's Committee on Civil Rights. He said, in part,

Freedom From Fear is more fully realized in our country than in any other on the face of the earth. Yet all parts of our population are not equally free from fear. And from time to time, and in some places, this freedom has been gravely threatened. It was so after the last war, when organized groups fanned hatred and intolerance, until, at times, mob action struck fear into the hearts of men and women because of their racial origin or religious beliefs.⁹

The Committee, in assuming the responsibility assigned to them, also expressed the idea that the governmental institutions under which people live shape the kinds of human relationships that will be experienced.

No fair-minded student of American history, or of world history, will deny to the United States a position of leadership in enlarging the range of human liberties and rights, in recognizing and stating the ideals of freedom and equality, and in steadily and loyally working to make those ideals a reality. Whatever our failures in practice have been or may be, there has never been a time when the American people have doubted the validity of those ideals. We still regard them as vital to our democratic system.

. . . We would want to emphasize the disappearance of brutality from our society to a point where the occurrence of a single act of violence is a shocking event precisely because it is so out of keeping with our system of equal justice under law. And we would want to point to the building of our present economy which surely gives the individual greater social mobility, greater economic freedom of choice than any other nation has ever been able to offer.¹⁰

When we stop to consider the vast differences which exist between individuals and between groups, in different sections of our country, it is easy to see why the institution of government is so difficult to understand. Similarly, when the complexity of governmental responsibilities is examined, the reason why some people have so much difficulty in adjusting to them is apparent. An understanding of the purpose,

⁹ *To Secure These Rights*, Report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights, New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1947, p. vii. By permission of the publisher.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. ix. By permission of the publisher.

form, responsibility, and functioning of government would go far toward removing the inability of people to adjust effectively to an institution which, in a democracy, is established to create and conserve the interests of its citizens. Thus, again, we see the role of knowledge in maintaining mental health; the vital role of learning is also reemphasized. The acquisition of that knowledge extends beyond the scope of this particular book on mental hygiene. It is the responsibility of organized courses such as civics, political science, and law. Organized civic groups frequently undertake responsibility for teaching in this area. The important thing here is for the mental hygiene student to realize that he has an obligation to himself to study and to participate in governmental institutions.

Economic institutions and conditions. Economic conditions of the country as a whole and the economic status of individuals are without doubt important in mental health. Persons who live in poor economic conditions, near the poverty level, are subjected to strains and tensions which are constant threats to a wholesome state of mind. A feeling of security regarding financial conditions is just as necessary to anyone living in a capitalistic society as is a feeling of social security to the Eskimo in his cooperative society. Almost everyone has experienced certain degrees of discouragement caused by having the accomplishment of desires limited by lack of funds. It is difficult for anyone to face life with an optimistic attitude when he is constantly confronted with the threat of impoverishment.

The effect of low economic conditions on individuals is presented in the following passage:

There are many factors in socio-economic status which affect children's emotions and attitudes. Crowded, dilapidated homes, inadequate clothing and other evidences of "inferior" status leave certain marks on children. They cannot have the sense of personal adequacy which comes from the feeling that one can be proud of one's home, that one's clothes are as good as those of others, that one's father is a "success." They cannot, especially in adolescence, feel "equal" to asking any girls they choose for a date, or to asking any boy in the class to "come home and meet my family." False standards of snobbish over-valuation of material things is not involved here. Children from modest homes can and should be proud of the real values of such homes. But to be conspicuous for the holes in one's clothes, or

because one cannot produce a nickel for morning milk leaves a deep mark on any child's feelings of self-adequacy.¹¹

As this quotation indicates, it should not be assumed that the possession of wealth is a guarantee of mental health. There are many other factors to be considered; but a modicum of material resources counts as an asset to mental health. This is particularly true if the one who has wealth views his resources as a means to various worth-while ends. On the other hand, if wealth generates snobbishness, if there is a constant struggle to climb higher socially, if meeting the "right people" becomes a dominant motive, then the possession of wealth turns into a liability to mental health. Regardless of such situations—and they do exist—it must be admitted that in our capitalistic society the factor of having financial assets provides one phase of the security which is of importance in mental health and confident approaches to social functioning.

Economists recognize the truth of such statements, but as yet they have not solved the problems involved. It is probable that before mental health can be universally attained, economic institutions will have to be changed so that there will be a more equitable distribution of wealth. In the meantime, the lack of favorable economic conditions can probably be somewhat softened by the achievement of the realization that, after all, money is but a means to various physical, social, and psychological satisfactions, and that it is possible to achieve many of these by means other than direct purchase.

The community. Claiming that the community is a factor in socialization may seem to be another way of saying that the church and the government are institutions that shape social behavior. However, besides these two, there are other elements that might well be included in the community, such as play groups, industrial organizations, housing conditions, play facilities, theaters, museums, and libraries. All these have their place in social adaptation.

Some progress has been made in recent years toward improving the functioning of these agencies in the interest of mental health, but there is still much to be done.

Today both public and private organizations in the community offer recreational opportunities designed to give those individual satisfactions which enrich life, promote health, increase working efficiency, and develop per-

¹¹ Marian E. Breckenridge and E. Lee Vincent, *Child Development*, Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1949, p. 224. By permission of the publisher.

sonality. Many communities have been awakened to the desirability of providing a year-round leisure time program adjusted to the cultural, physical, and social needs of the people. *In all too few places*, however, has there been such mobilization of community resources as would make possible a unified educational-recreational program or even a minimum opportunity for every person.¹²

Studies indicate that in some cases there is an unnecessary duplication of effort in connection with community activities, while in other instances there are totally neglected areas, which need attention. The establishment of medical and dental clinics, as well as of psychiatric services, may represent what is being done in the way of encouraging development. These developments also indicate an increasing recognition of the role of the community in personal and social adjustment and in physical and mental health.

Community services are not restricted to mental health as an objective, but mental health is a probable outcome of the many activities in which the community can and does engage. Mental health is only one phase of a complete life; therefore, what is done to enrich life in its other aspects, by way of enjoyment, recreation, health, living conditions, and education, will tend to have a beneficial influence on mental health. Certainly, the extension of community activities into these areas can surely help to facilitate our complex problems of social adaptation.

In the section dealing with government as a factor in socialization it was stated that the individual has obligations as well as opportunities. This is also true in respect to community factors in social adaptation. Not only do play groups, museums, libraries, and various community organizations serve as educational factors in socialization; participation in the effort to make these things operate is itself an opportunity for gaining experience in the realm of facile social adjustment. It might be well for us as adult members of the community to bear this in mind when active workers ask our help in making calls for the church, soliciting for the Red Cross or the Community Chest, or acting as leaders for Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls. Such requests offer more than the privilege of being of service; they give, besides, an opportunity for the more complete exercise and development of our social capacities.

¹² *Social Services and the Schools*, Educational Policies Commission, National Educational Association of the United States, Washington, D.C., 1939, p. 45. By permission of the publisher. (Italics not in original.)

Formal education. As a factor in socialization, the school is probably surpassed in importance only by the home. It is one of the foremost agencies of the community for fostering socialization. A school that is well organized and efficiently run should minister to the mental health of its pupils. Yet, in many ways a school may thwart the optimum development of an individual, both socially and individually. It may be a direct cause for mental deviations in only a few cases, but in many other instances it may serve as an aggravating cause of maladjustments that have been begun in the home or the play group. An understanding of the role of the school in advancing mental health would constitute a big first step forward in helping it fulfill its function in the pursuit of mental hygiene.

It should be borne in mind that the function of the school is not restricted to inculcating factual learning; attitudes and ideals are also highly significant contributions of education. Nevertheless, the mastery of certain basic knowledges is one of the necessary outcomes of formal education. The value of developing an adequate vocabulary, to be used as a tool in the acquisition of knowledge about individual and social relationships, has been stressed throughout this book. The development of further language skills will be of inestimable help in the acquiring of valuable facts taught in the school's courses. Groups of people can do much to set forward the mental health of succeeding generations by studying and encouraging the development of educational institutions that recognize and capitalize upon the conditions productive of mental health.

The mores of the group are learned, in great part, through the institution of the school. One of the frequent causes of mental breakdown is ignorance of what society expects of an individual. In fact, criminals are likely to offer as an excuse for their conduct the explanation that they did not know they were doing wrong. Conflicts of the individual with society can quite often be prevented more easily than they can be remedied after certain action patterns and emotional responses have become established habits. People in all walks of life will be helped by having an understanding of what society expects of them. Moreover, it is probably more economical and less painful to learn these things through formal instruction than by means of direct experience.

One definite suggestion as to how the school might serve to facilitate social adaptation will make the foregoing generalizations more mean-

ingful. A knowledge of social techniques is of particular value in promoting better social adaptation. In fact, Arthur T. Jersild states that the development of sympathy begins with the learning of the techniques and skills of courtesy and good manners. "Manners may become mere formalities, but even if they are only superficial (which need not be the case) a child who has acquired such skills is at least better off, and decidedly more agreeable to others, than the child who has learned neither the form nor the substance of courtesy."¹⁸ Most teachers consider instruction in this area to be an integral part of their responsibility.

Much of the influence of the school is, of course, exerted not through the direct exercise of teaching, itself, but through the so-called "concomitants" of learning. Interests, attitudes, ideals, likes, and dislikes are as important in the person's life as what he knows. More and more, formal education is inclining to the viewpoint that these things are as much a legitimate, direct objective of instruction as are factual knowledges. If such qualities as sympathy, tact, truthfulness, and regard for others are to be developed in the school pupil, then the personnel of the school must employ these qualities in dealing with the pupil. Mere textbook teaching or preaching is not sufficient to bring about the desired end. If the child is to be prepared for living in a democratic society, democratic methods for dealing with him in the school must be adopted. Above all, it is important for the teachers themselves to be in the very best of mental health and to exemplify facile social functioning, if the contribution of the school is to be most effective.

The role of the individual in socialization. The factors in socialization already mentioned do not constitute all the things which influence a person's growth. Moreover, these factors have been discussed only as they shape the individual. It should be remembered that the individual, in turn, influences the effect that these factors have. The way they affect him is dependent upon the way he reacts to them. This assertion is justified by the fact that two persons living in the same environment react to entirely different aspects of it. Two students listening to the same lecture have different reactions. One says, "That was an inspiring lecture," while the other grumbles, "The same old drivell!"

It is not enough to say that circumstances shape the individual. To

¹⁸ Arthur T. Jersild, "Emotional Development," in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 70. By permission of the publisher.

conform with the requirements of mental hygiene, each person must take some responsibility for the way he reacts to the influences which surround him. It is weak rationalization to say, "I am what I am because of environmental circumstances." There is an element of truth in such reasoning, but it does not lead to the self-development which is required in a program of personal mental hygiene. William Ernest Henley's poem contains a stimulating mental hygiene lesson, especially in the last stanza:

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll;
I am the master of my fate,
I am the captain of my soul.

SUMMARY

The ability to make social adaptations is essential to a program of mental hygiene because most of one's activities involve relationships with other members of his social group. Social groupings have characterized man's life from the earliest of times, and these, or similar groups, are still universally present. The successful functioning of these groupings is largely dependent upon the ability of the individuals who constitute the group to make harmonious social adjustments.

Though sociability may have its basis in part in natural equipment in the form of desires, needs, and capacities, a large part of it is the result of learning from the experiences afforded by the culture which surrounds a person. Since social behavior is largely learned, social competence should be actively studied and developed.

Controlled experiments and observations have demonstrated not only that social behavior can be learned, but that it sometimes seems to be shaped in relatively short periods of time. Mental hygienists and psychologists are desirous of controlling the molding influences of the environment in such a way that the beneficial, short-time effects can be incorporated into a relatively enduring environment. Thus, the short-time effect can be transformed into the long-time effect of better personal adjustment.

Among the factors which condition the mode of social behavior are the home, the church, government, the community, and the school. These should be so shaped that they give rise to the types of conduct

that have been found to lead to socially adaptive behavior. Finally, it should be emphasized that, even though certain factors tend to shape social behavior, the individual still has a large share of responsibility in his social adjustments.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. Hermits and other recluses are characterized by the fact that they live their lives completely independent of other people.
2. Social contacts had become one of the important problems of mankind at about the time history began to be written.
3. The study of sociology and political science cannot be sharply distinguished from the studies, like psychology, which deal primarily with individuals rather than groups.
4. When instinct is defined as a definite pattern of action, we can state positively that there are no social instincts in man.
5. There is evidence to indicate that man is entirely unsocial, so to speak, at birth and must learn the processes involved in socialization.
6. Mental and emotional, rather than organic, factors must be considered as the basis of social adaptation.
7. Belief in the innate basis of socialization is acceptable to mental hygienists because the problem of adjustment is less perplexing when it does not have to be learned.
8. Experiments at the University of Iowa Child Welfare Research Station indicate that people can be divided into two broad classes, the aggressive and the submissive.
9. The mental and emotional habits of children are relatively fixed by the time they enter school, so the teacher's main aim should be to see that her pupils learn a large number of facts.

10. When people are told what to do, they become more tractable in social groups because they do not have to make decisions for themselves.
11. The development of sympathy begins with the learning of the technique and skills of courtesy and good manners.

Suggested Readings

ANDERSON, JOHN E., *The Psychology of Development and Personal Adjustment*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1949. 720 pp.

Student needs and problems are discussed in this thorough text combining general psychology and mental hygiene. The student is led to an analysis of his own problems by studying the nature of human development in general. The sections on Orientation to Adult Life and Adjustment to Family Life chart the way to a continuing study of mental hygiene.

MORGAN, JOHN J. B., *How to Keep a Sound Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947. 391 pp.

The book would be pertinent supplementary reading for many chapters but the stress on social adaptation is particularly emphatic. The need for social maturity as a means of gaining personal mental health is repeatedly mentioned. The book is very readable and informative. Practical steps to be taken "point up" the theoretical discussions.

TYLER, HENRY E. (ed.), *Learning to Live*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1940. 473 pp.

This book is addressed specifically to college students. It deals with problems they encounter in school, at home, in society at large, and in their vocational adjustment. Adjustment to self is a major consideration.

WEBB, EWING T., and JOHN B. MORGAN, *Strategy in Handling People*, Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1930. 260 pp.

Techniques for getting along with people, selling ideas, winning good will, using praise gracefully, and gaining cooperation are suggested. The strategy is illustrated by using anecdotes about famous people. Much valuable information is contained in the book if one will not consider it a "get-rich-quick" scheme.

Chapter 10

SOCIAL ADAPTATION:

II. LIABILITIES AND ASSETS

Among the facts presented in the previous chapter, two are of particular significance to persons concerned with their personal mental health: (1) Much of social behavior is learned; (2) the individual has a responsibility for what he learns. With these facts as background, this chapter will examine into some specific aspects of social adaptation that can be learned and will consider how they are learned. Some of these aspects are assets while others are liabilities. That is, some of the things that are learned interfere with optimum social adjustment, whereas other things tend to facilitate social adaptation.

LIABILITIES IN SOCIAL ADAPTATION

Egocentricity. The growth of the individual toward social maturity is perhaps best illustrated by the outgrowing of extremes of egocentricity. A child is characterized by a high degree of egocentric behavior. That is, he seems to believe that the world is centered about him, his needs, and his interests. Since all of his needs and wants are satisfied by other people, it is easy for him to get the idea that his own welfare is of paramount importance.

As a person grows up, he is expected to assume more and more responsibility for the satisfaction of his wants. As this occurs, the growing child may come to feel that his parents or his brothers and sisters are neglecting him. In that case, he may assume an attitude of helplessness in order to get the attention he received at an earlier age. He will resort to attention-getting devices, such as asking repetitious questions, fussing over his food, getting in the way, and doing things that call attention to himself. Sometimes a child goes so far as to be willfully disobedient, even when he is sure to be punished for his

deeds, because this is more pleasant than feeling that he is being overlooked.

In order to prevent excessive manifestations of egocentricity in the child, it would be beneficial for him if the parents progressively assigned him more and more responsibility. He should be taught to put away his toys, to dress himself, to take care of more and more of his personal needs, and to assume responsibilities about the home. As a person grows older, he should take care of still more of his individual needs—choose his own clothes and earn more of his spending money. His attention-getting behavior should not be too successful. He must learn the meaning and value of obedience. Along with his developing responsibilities, he should learn that it is profitable and courteous to do things for other people.

When anyone with a high degree of egocentric behavior enters a social group other than his family, he will find himself at a distinct disadvantage. There he was an individual of marked importance; here he is only one member of a social group. This is even more difficult for the college youth than it is for the young child. *The person who realizes that the very security and significance which he seeks is thwarted by egocentric behavior has taken a long step toward outgrowing egocentric tendencies.* It must be realized that other members of society are equally desirous of making their personalities felt and will resent an undue display of egocentricity. The college youth who has learned that he must sometimes bend to the will of other people and can do so graciously has developed an asset to his personality (see Fig. 21).

Self-centered behavior is aggravated by the high value that is placed upon competitive behavior. It would be well for a person to realize that he cannot excel in everything and that he should be willing to give credit to others for their abilities and accomplishments. Yet an egocentric person will usually look upon the success of others as though it were of relatively small importance. For example, an egocentric person may try to minimize the success of the A student by saying "Yes, but she is a bore and a bookworm," or "Well, she would be wiser if she spent more time enjoying herself." If he wishes to offset this tendency, such a person should lay stress upon his own improvement instead of comparing himself with others, all the time. It frequently happens that in the attempt to cover his own weaknesses,

the egocentric will develop unwholesome compensatory behavior, aimed to obtain the attention that he would otherwise miss. A youth who has failed to make the basketball team may call attention to himself by loud talk—particularly, in criticism of members of the visiting team or the referee. The bench jockey and the bleacher coach are familiar to everyone.

Another phase of egocentric behavior is the tendency to develop the defense mechanism of projection, *i.e.*, the placing of blame for

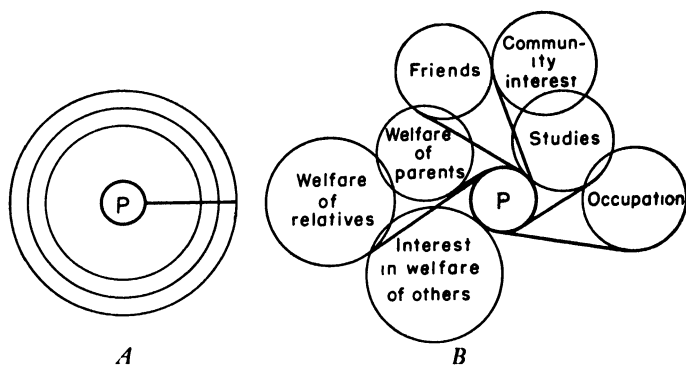


FIG. 21. Egocentric behavior contrasted with outgoing behavior. Part *A* illustrates the limits of the world of the egocentric person. The limiting "string" of his selfishness circumscribes the world in which he lives. Part *B* illustrates the ever-expanding world of the person whose interests are tangents rather than concentric (egocentric) circles.

one's shortcomings upon other people. The poor student, for example, asserts that it is too noisy in his house for him to study, thus blaming others for his own habits of neglect. He ignores the fact that his roommate gets good grades, in spite of the noise. He has the feeling that he is being unduly discriminated against and that others are trying to make him feel inferior or are not giving him proper credit for his great accomplishment as a wit or a "lady killer." It is easy to understand that such attitudes are working against the optimum adjustment of the individual. His adjustment in social groups is complicated rather than facilitated, because he adds the liability of offensiveness to his liability of selfishness. His mental health is being threatened by his egocentric behavior, because he will eventually be excluded from the group in which he now moves.

Exhibitionism. A liability of personality which is an outgrowth of egocentricity is exhibitionism. With rare exceptions, the exhibitionist in the college classroom is the student who otherwise gets little recognition. This does not mean that all poor students have this trait. The quiet, retiring individual sometimes does not want to draw any attention which will reveal the fact that he lacks knowledge of a particular subject. However, in many a class there is likely to be someone who stamps his feet as he walks into the room, then falls noisily into a chair, scrapes another chair closer for a footrest, and talks in a loud voice to the person sitting next to him. This sort of person apparently gets the attention he is looking for, but it is not actually the kind which he fundamentally craves. His classmates generally think of him as a boor or a pest and tend to avoid him. Rarely is such a person attractive to people. Rather, it is the quiet (yet not "mousy"), confident person who will probably become the center of a social group.

Besides the general type of exhibitionism described above, there is a kind which is more specific. A boy may talk loudly, make "wise-cracks," or go through odd movements (such as clapping his hand to his neck or holding his nose), in order to secure the attention of a particular girl. Talking about the "inferiority of women" is frequently nothing more than a device to gain the attention of some member of the "inferior" sex. One good-looking college girl who played in a band resorted to exhibitionism by suffering from a tight collar. She pursed her lips, stuck out her jaw, stretched her neck, and ran her fingers under her collar, in order to rid herself of the discomfort. The person whom she was trying to impress felt embarrassed rather than proud. This girl probably did not realize that people were laughing at her, not sympathizing with her. Psychiatrists have reported many case studies of plump girls who try to attract boy friends by wearing their dresses shorter than the current mode.

In all cases of exhibitionism it is apparent that the reaction has a boomerang effect. Instead of furthering adjustment, the obtrusive behavior is so distasteful that it makes the situation all the more difficult. Many of those on whom the impression has been made would prefer not to associate with the offender.

Lack of understanding. A frequent cause of inability to make adequate social adaptation is lack of understanding of the values and problems of other people. In an earlier section it was pointed out that ego-

centric behavior indicates the undervaluing of the rights and abilities of others. When an understanding of the wishes and drives of others is achieved, there is less necessity for indulging in egocentric attitudes.

A common manifestation of lack of understanding occurs in race discrimination, in which color of skin, rather than developed abilities, is made the criterion of human value. Some people who accept the supposition that white people are more intelligent than Negroes, draw satisfaction from this assumption that they are superior intellectually because they have white skins. Acquaintance with, or understanding of, the facts might help them to realize that a person is of importance because of what he does and not because of his color. A college boy revealed such a lack of understanding when he said, "I know I'm not prejudiced against Negroes because I make a particular effort to be nice to them."

A somewhat similar type of discrimination consists in rating a particular economic or social group as superior to another. If one is born on "the wrong side of the tracks," he is supposed to be a person of inferior standing socially. Again, when the facts are known, it is clear that, given the same opportunities, this person might very well be able to make as significant contributions to the welfare of society as would anyone else. Here in the United States, where one of the ideals of our government is social equality, we see evidence of this lack of understanding in an "aristocracy of great wealth." A rich person who marries outside this aristocracy makes the headlines. In spite of the lessons of a long economic depression, many still cling firmly to the belief that if the unemployed had the ability and the desire to work they would be able to find employment. That hundreds who have both ability and desire to work have been unable to find occupation—through no fault of their own—often seems incomprehensible to those whose lives are remote from such conditions.

Lack of understanding on a large scale marks the attitudes of citizens of various nations toward one another. The citizens of one country are inclined to suspect the citizens of another country of base ideals, selfish desires, dishonest tactics, brutality, and cowardice. People of one nation too often believe that while its citizens are motivated by high ideals, brotherhood, bravery, charity, and the like, those of another nation are characterized by just the opposite qualities. An intensified example of this situation was too evident in the Second World

War. An understanding of the facts would remove much of the rancor of such bias. Sociologists and anthropologists have made many studies which indicate that the actual differences are only negligible. Exaggerated differences between the people of various countries are often dreams of active imaginations. Absence of calm understanding of these truths leads to lack of social adjustment between nations and becomes an aggravating factor of economic, social, and military strife. Removal of this lack of understanding is considered by some to be the first step toward the abolition of war. A wave of speeches, books, and radio programs dealing with the importance, personally and nationally, of gaining a better understanding of our fellows all around the world is a hopeful indication of aroused interest. It is obvious that knowledge is a contributing factor to the mental health of nations, just as it is to the mental health of individuals.

Lack of understanding among people of various nationalities is often the result of conditioning. This country's population looks down upon that country's population or is suspicious of its motives, not because of specific acts as a rule, but because of disparaging reports heard from parents, friends, teachers, or chance acquaintances. One who has heard his parents or classmates refer to "niggers" or "blacks" tends to think of them in those terms rather than as Negroes. The point to be grasped is that, if a person understands the source of this lack of understanding (even if it be a result of conditioning), he has taken a step toward better understanding. Moreover, reconditioning may take place. The attitude may be changed by actively cultivating contacts with persons from the other nation, who will most likely be found to be "just other human beings." In short, a person seeking a better understanding of others should examine the causes of his prejudices which prevent understanding, and then work on the specific factors involved.

Dishonesty. Effective social adjustment is fostered by the existence of dependable persons. When words and actions can be relied upon, the matter of social adjustment is facilitated. To the extent that people are dishonest and undependable, the process of social adjustment is threatened. It is difficult to have satisfactory social relations with thieves and liars. The thief has not learned to respect the rights and properties of others. His conduct is immature and egocentric. In some cases he may have rationalized his conduct by saying that he had no choice

about being born and that, consequently, the world owes him a living. The fact that he excuses his own conduct does not argue that other members of society will accept his reasoning; his social adaptation is only made the more difficult. The liar has not learned the need for squarely facing reality—a need which is repeatedly emphasized in any program of mental hygiene.

One difficulty in the evaluation of lying rests on the lack of definiteness in defining a lie or lying. A person is expected to be honest; yet if he has not enjoyed himself at a party, he will hardly be expected to tell his host the plain truth. Perhaps one really did not want the gifts he received for Christmas, but he is supposed to make the donor feel that what he received was the very thing he wanted the most. Such discrimination is sometimes difficult. At one time telling a lie is considered dishonest; yet at another time telling the truth is equivalent to being thought a boor or a prude. Then, too, it frequently happens that someone is not entitled to know the full truth. It may be that the habitual "gossip" in your dormitory is not entitled to know the intimate facts which you could reveal about a classmate. One might tell the "gossip" it is "none of his business" or give a good report by omitting the negative factors, when a more exact report would reveal a less attractive picture.

It is a real problem to discover where lying ceases to foster social adaptability and begins to make for social maladjustment; but as the individual achieves emotional maturity, it should be easier for him to foresee the consequences of his act and to judge accordingly.

It is necessary to study the values which are inherent in honesty to prevent the development of dishonest tendencies. It would be well to try to foresee the final results of being honest or dishonest. A person should attempt to anticipate the result of his actions upon his own personality as well as to study their effect on others. In most cases it will become apparent that being dishonest is hardly in harmony with the mental hygiene principle of facing reality. Frequently, dishonesty is the result of a misdirected effort to secure the undeserved approval of companions or to receive unmerited recognition. Should this be the case, it might be well to stop to consider whether or not the securing of unearned approval brings about the inner satisfaction desired. It is probable that the satisfaction a student obtains from a good grade on an examination on which he cheated is much less than the satisfac-

tion he would have gained from a mediocre grade which he really had earned; and in mental health the inner satisfaction is more important than the grade in the course.

While the matter of truth is an ethical problem, some general suggestions from a social viewpoint may be pertinent. If the final result of telling the truth will be more disastrous than lying, then lies may be justifiable. A doctor may save the life of his patient by indicating that he is in no danger, so that the sick man may have the courage to fight for his life. A mother who lost her son in the Second World War suffered unnecessarily when told by an "honest" companion that her son died from the complications of venereal disease and not in action on the front as she had previously been led to think. Lies that are intended to prevent hurting the feelings of others, when no one is seriously misled by them, cannot be seriously condemned. In many cases it may be possible to avoid telling a lie and yet to withhold the truth. It appears, then, that truth is relative to particular situations and that a generalization concerning it is difficult to form; but when the social outcome of truth is more seriously detrimental than a lie, the lie might well take precedence. However, there is the ever-present danger of rationalizing all lying—a tendency which must be guarded against. Experience and the development of problem-solving ability will help in evaluating such situations.

Fear. Fear in any form is probably a liability to optimum social adaptation, since the fearful person tends to lose the respect and admiration of his associates. But more important is the fact that fear prevents the aggressive action that may lead to the solution of problems. Fear, in the form of timidity, is especially detrimental to effective social behavior. The timid person is likely to shun situations which demand communication with his fellow beings. In extreme form, timidity leads to such manifestations of mental ill-health as seclusiveness and a withdrawing type of behavior, which, according to psychiatrists, is a serious form of maladjustment. The timid person may compensate for his lack of sociability by withdrawing from reality or by resorting to undue indulgence in daydreams.

Timidity can be, and has been, overcome by the development of skills. Almost any skill or knowledge can serve as an asset for overcoming timidity. A good game of tennis, bridge, or golf or the knowledge of certain subjects (stamp-collecting, politics, or sociology) will

give a person the confidence that will aid him in overcoming his timidity. It is essential for anyone who is hampered by timidity to realize that social competence is not learned from books but from experience. He must enter into social situations, even though he feels that it would be more comfortable to refrain from such contacts. He must realize that, in the end, his satisfactions from effective social adaptation will be greater than the temporary feeling of safety he experiences from nonparticipation could possibly be.

The overcoming of timidity, like the development of any personality characteristic, is a matter of growth and development. It does not come about immediately as the result of making a resolution. Timid college students—and there are many of them—must take advantage of the chances they have for talking with other people, engaging in new activities, and getting acquainted with strange viewpoints. They can do this by substituting what Mikesell calls “bold behavior”¹ for their ordinary actions. This is a deliberate attempt to do the very thing for which one lacks confidence. One person who was timid applied “bold behavior” in a rather extreme manner, but it worked for him. He bought a one-way ticket to a strange town, spending all his money for the ticket. When he arrived, he had to ask for jobs, to seek relief, and in general to fend vigorously for himself. By the time that he had earned enough to buy his return ticket, he reported that he had a substantially different outlook on life.

While one must take active steps to participate in social experiences in order to overcome timidity, it is, at the same time, necessary to guard against aggressiveness. The development of aggressiveness would probably defeat the very purpose of social intercourse, *i.e.*, effective social participation. It would probably be unnecessary for a person to push himself in, if he were to accept such invitations to social functions as he received. Thus, he could steer between the extremes of timidity and aggressiveness. Earlier in the chapter it was shown that aggressiveness sometimes develops from having skills or knowledges which others do not possess. It follows that, in order to prevent undue aggressiveness, a person should be interested in developing new knowledges and skills, instead of placing emphasis solely upon the demonstration of skills already possessed.

¹ W. H. Mikesell, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939, pp. 246-247.

Attitude is important in overcoming timidity, just as it is in dealing with other personality problems. An important attitude to develop in overcoming fear of social situations is that of placing emphasis upon the activity being engaged in, rather than upon one's own self. That is, one should think about the other person and the situation rather than about how he himself is going to react and what is going to happen to him. One person who was bothered with timidity in social situations reported that a big step in the solution of his problem was taken when he achieved the realization that others were probably thinking about themselves rather than about him. He said, "I stopped worrying about what others might think of me when I realized that probably the primary question in their minds was what I was thinking about them." He was able, in this way, to get his mind off himself and to concentrate on other persons and on the objective situation.

Anger. A person who is given to fits of anger is generally at a disadvantage in social groups. Anger is a strong emotion and tends to prevent an individual from making the best social adjustment. Giving way to anger may result in a person's doing things for which he will be sorry in calmer moments. Furthermore, an action manifesting anger is likely to arouse an angry response in the person at whom the action is directed. The consequence is that the possibility of solving the difficulty at hand is greatly diminished. A realization that "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" will go far toward assuring one of the futility of anger in social situations.

It would, of course, be a rather sterile existence if emotional responses were never set free. There are probably many instances in which a feeling of righteous indignation—especially against situations and institutions rather than against persons—is a boon to people in some social situations. The use of emotion, including righteous indignation, as a drive to action should not be universally condemned; but it is important to make sure that intellect directs the energy.

Anger is generally aroused by restraint of some sort. Various types of social restraint or thwarting of desires by other people frequently occasion anger. It follows that the avoidance of anger will lead to acquiring skill in dealing with social situations. Participation in social activities will help to develop the skills which tend to reduce the necessity for resorting to anger. If a person examines situations in which he has lost his temper, he will find that, as a rule, his anger did

not do much toward solving the problems. Calling an opponent down or talking to him angrily does nothing but complicate the situation. Skill, tact, and reason are the techniques which are more likely to be successful.

A frequent manifestation of anger in some people is the tendency to pout—the characteristic reaction of a child to thwarting, which is too often carried over into adult life. Although pouting is probably less likely to arouse emotion in the other person than would more vigorous manifestations of anger, still it has its danger. In the first place, the problem at hand cannot be solved and the other person is thwarted just as surely as though anger were expressed vigorously. His emotion thus tends to mount. In the second place, the person who pouts is storing up his anger, and the bodily results of a strong emotion are having their harmful effect. Finally, by blaming others, the pouter is refusing to face his own problems, and this is something that a person who seeks mental health should do only on very rare occasions.

Jealousy. A most frequent cause of social maladjustment, especially between two persons, is the emotion of jealousy. Here, again, is an undesirable form of behavior which commonly arises in the home of the child but which may be carried over into adult life. As is true of other forms of behavior, the example² set by parents seems to be a strong determining factor. When one parent is jealous of the other, he tends to center undue affection upon the child, so that the child develops the same characteristic. Favoritism of one parent toward a child will almost certainly cause the child to feel that on many occasions he is being unduly discriminated against by the other parent.

Jealousy is a result of comparisons with other individuals and a desire to possess some of their property or characteristics. Young children are sometimes jealous upon the appearance of another baby in the family, because they feel that they are being neglected. "It is believed that the feeling of jealousy, which is obviously a reflection of the deeper feeling of *insecurity*, results from the child's sense of loss of parental preferment."²

² Louis P. Thorpe, *Psychological Foundations of Personality*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938, p. 284. By permission of the author and the publisher.

Jealousy is manifested all too often between various groups. On the campus, living groups are jealous of the accomplishments, victories, and rights of other groups. In the business world, various groups are jealous of the prestige, fame, and reputation of competing groups. To the extent that jealousy is paramount, cooperation between such groups is made difficult, with the result that adaptation is difficult. Such feelings would be greatly diminished if members of the groups would but realize that all have distinctive contributions to make to the welfare of mankind and that the very life of a democracy is based upon cooperative action. Jealousy is an emotion that prevents intelligent behavior.

Such . . . emotional reactions gnaw like a cancerous growth upon one's energy and undermine his capacity for effective and happy social adjustment. Imagine how much happier, cooperative and effective we should be if we were willing to cast out petty interprofessional jealousies which warp our perspective and cause us to give lip service to cooperation, but without operation.³

The prevention of jealousy must include the setting of a good example and an early detection of the undesirable behavior trend. It should include the true evaluation of the jealous person's personality assets. He should be led to value his good qualities and encouraged to develop the characteristics which are weak. Since jealousy is occasioned by comparison, the troubled person should be led to compare himself with the other *as a whole*, rather than to compare isolated traits in both. If one girl seems to be more popular than others in her group, an objective evaluation of the whole situation may reveal that she is not so favored in her academic work or in ability to direct group activities. Jealousy might then be avoided by overcoming the tendency to select but one phase of the girl's total conduct pattern. In short, it is necessary to see both the assets and the liabilities of oneself and of the other person, too.

In somewhat the same way, prevention of jealousy between groups will be facilitated by an understanding of the nature and function of other groups. Jealousies between groups have been diminished by each one's learning something about the duties and hardships of the oppos-

³ Frank E. Howard and Frederick L. Patry, *Mental Health*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1935, p. 185. By permission of the publisher.

ing groups. For instance, jealousy between living groups on college campuses varies from one institution to another. In instances where jealousy runs high, it has been noted that there is little social intercourse between the houses. On a campus where jealousy is not prominent, there is much joint social activity. On one campus the writer found such a high degree of jealousy that members of the football team would not cooperate with teammates who belonged to other houses than their own. The outstanding players made poor passes, would not block, or otherwise made it difficult for teammates other than their fraternity brothers to show up well. The team has been in the lower division of its conference for years. The coach of another school established his name by making it clear that such actions would not be tolerated. By way of further contrast, an institution where men from different houses have close contacts with each other has, with a rather high degree of regularity, finished high in its conference. The avoidance of jealousy has resulted in real satisfaction to all concerned.

Exchange of dances and dinners gives members of the living organizations a chance to observe that students in other houses are not different—that they, too, have made contributions to the welfare and prestige of the university. When one group has had an opportunity to understand the aims and purposes of another group, the chances for the development of jealousy are greatly diminished. This truth lies back of the establishment of the Rhodes Scholarships. Cecil Rhodes made it possible for thirty-two students from the United States, each year, to study in other countries, in the hope that mutual understandings thus brought about would diminish national jealousies. Students from Australia, Canada, and certain other countries also participate in these scholarships, forming contacts that tend to dissipate the intolerance which builds up national jealousy.

Infantilism. The tendency to cling to early behaviors, even at an age when they are no longer appropriate, is a common defect among the socially and emotionally immature. Such inappropriate manifestations may be classified as infantilisms. The present section may be considered a summary of the discussion of immature traits and attitudes; but when they are regarded as infantile, they will probably seem so repulsive that a desire for more adequate development may be aroused. Wendell Johnson illustrates this repulsiveness very pointedly as follows:

Insofar as Jones at age twenty-five retains the attitudes and behavior of Jones at age five, he is likely to be regarded as an ass, a poor sport, or a sufferer of some kind of "mental" disease. Infantilism, the failure to grow up, to change one's "mind," one's behavior, sufficiently with age, appears, indeed, to be in varying degrees an almost universal form of maladjustment in our civilization, in which similarities are respected more than differences and change is resisted accordingly. We resist the change from childishness to maturity, from one stage of social development to the next. We remain infantile, just as we remain culturally retarded. We pine for the golden age of the past, deplore the new generation, and fear for the "collapse of civilization."⁴

Johnson's statement emphasizes an outstanding theme of this book, *i.e.*, that growth is unequivocally demanded of the mentally healthy person. To stress this point with regard to improving traits that bear on social adaptation is merely to show the pervasive nature of all growth processes.

Other liabilities to social adaptation. Egocentricity, lack of understanding, dishonesty, fear and inferiority, anger, and jealousy are not the only liabilities to social adaptation. Others are hatred, envy, sarcasm, cynicism, cruelty, and stubbornness. Each of these traits tends to complicate the achievement of social adjustment. However, enough has been said about the nature and treatment of the first-named qualities to provide clues to the treatment of those which have not been specifically discussed.

(1) Direct experience in social situations is a paramount need. Such experience will broaden one's understanding of his fellow beings and open the way toward solving his own problems. (2) Regard for the rights and importance of others is an essential step toward effective social adaptation. (3) Personal growth, rather than personal comparisons, should become a main objective. (4) The development of knowledges and skills will help in the removal of most of the liabilities to social adaptation. (5) A forthright facing of problems—the meeting of reality—is fundamental to any personality growth, including the development of social competence. (6) Anticipating the ultimate consequences of habitual reactions will help to place an evaluation upon them and will provide clues as to whether or not such actions should

⁴ Wendell Johnson, *People in Quandaries*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946, pp. 28–29. By permission of the publisher.

be continued. (7) While emotion cannot and should not be eliminated, the individual must see to it that the emotion is directed by thought. (8) Setting a right example for the growing child is a serious responsibility of all adults, especially parents and teachers. (9) Finally, elimination of a certain characteristic or the acquisition of one is a process of growth; sudden transformations in personality cannot be expected. Self-responsibility and trust in the deliberate process of growth are essential to the elimination of the liabilities to social adaptation.

ASSETS IN SOCIAL ADAPTATION

Altruism. The altruistic individual is one who has, to a large extent, attained emotional maturity—one who has outgrown the infantile characteristic of egocentricity. He is one who perceives the rights and interests of others, who is interested in the welfare of his fellow beings, and who sees himself as one member of the large social group. He is one who is capable of love for other persons. An individual who is excessively egocentric, on the other hand, is incapable of loving others. The capacity to love is certainly a great asset to social adaptation, one to be cultivated zealously. This is emphasized in the words of Erich Fromm, "One is not loved accidentally; one's own power to love produces love—just as being interested makes one interesting. People are concerned with the question of whether they are attractive while they forget that the essence of attractiveness is their own capacity to love."⁵

There are some who argue that all conduct is self-centered, that even altruistic conduct has as its ultimate objective the preservation or security of self. They reason that we do things for others because we see in such action our own ultimate welfare. Such reasoning *seems* to be a mere play upon words; yet, apparently there is no way to settle the argument. For example, if a man risks his life by entering a burning building to save someone else, the argument is that he did so because he would feel uncomfortable or guilty if he did not do it. Regardless of the motive, his act of entering the building is itself a manifestation of altruistic conduct; his action did serve someone other than himself. It can be argued in the same way that there is no such thing as love,

⁵ Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1947, p. 100. By permission of the publisher.

that what is called "love" is merely the seeking of one's own ultimate satisfaction. Such juggling of words solves no problems in human conduct. The fact remains that people actually do things for other people.

Even if we admit that there may be truth in such arguments, it is still a pragmatic fact that altruism—regard for others, devotion to the interests of others—is an asset in social adaptation. The person who has regard for the welfare of his fellow beings, even if it finally works for his own benefit, is capable of devotion to the universal good of society. He is willing to sacrifice his own immediate and selfish desires when they conflict with the good of others.

In discussing other assets in social adaptation—understanding, sympathy, and dependability—we shall see the element of altruism continuously at work.

Understanding. A great part of social maladjustment is based upon misunderstanding. Conversely, facile adjustments are based upon an understanding of the interests, welfare, and problems of the people with whom we seek to adjust. Understanding, itself, is based upon knowledge—knowledge of the factors which motivate conduct, such as this book aims to give. A comprehension of the drives and problems of mankind in general is begun when a person understands the basis of his own conduct. Two of the most familiar of all quotations show that recognition of the value of self-understanding is far from a new or modern point of view. It was Shakespeare who put these words into the mouth of Polonius:

. . . to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

And by way of contrast, the old Quaker said to his wife, revealing a lack of understanding of himself and others that is not unique, "Sometimes I think the whole world is queer save thee and me, Rachel, and sometimes I think that thee is a little queer." Such an attitude cannot fail to be detrimental to social adjustment.

Wide experience in social relationships, both direct and vicarious, is of value in building up the understanding which underlies social adjustment. As has been indicated before, much of the lamentable misunderstanding between nations is traceable to lack of a comprehension

by each of the other's problems; just as surely, misunderstanding between members of a family is traceable to ignorance of one another's motivating drives and conflicts. When you are able to "put yourself in the other person's shoes" you are already taking long steps toward understanding him.

Certain proverbs carry implications that give clues to a better understanding of people through recognition that there are values in men that we can discover if we will but open our eyes to them. For example, "There's enough bad in the best of us, and enough good in the worst of us, that it ill behooves the most of us to make fun of the rest of us," and, "No man is so ignorant but that I can learn something from him." To these may be added the pertinent advice: "Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world."

Other qualities which further understanding are similarity, intelligence, insight, and aesthetic interest. People can best understand those who are most like themselves. This is closely related to experience, and continued experience tends to make a person more like his associates. Contacts with businessmen in general may result in people's assuming the attitudes of that group. Contacts with college students tend to make a person more like college students. The same tendency may be noted among religious groups, social groups, and economic levels. Intelligence is an asset to understanding, since the relationship of past events to present affairs is more readily perceived, cause-and-effect relationships are better realized, and the motivating factors of conduct are known better. Insight into one's own conduct and that of others makes it more likely that understanding can be achieved. A tolerant attitude enables a person to judge the harmony, balance, essentials, and trivialities which are observed in another's attempt to adjust himself to his problems. That is, he is able to perceive the goals, desires, or wishes of other people and to make the allowances necessary to a complete and valid understanding of them. In all these qualities, the place of experience can be readily perceived.

Sympathy. Understanding leads directly to a feeling of sympathy for other people, without which social adjustment is difficult indeed. The word "sympathy"—by derivation, "feeling (or) suffering with"—refers to attitudes which lead to behavior directed toward the welfare of another person or group. Just as the ability to put oneself in the

place of another is an important aspect of understanding, it is an indispensable factor in sympathy. "Unless a child acquires this ability to some degree he will always be a bungler in his social adjustment; he will not only be rude and tactless, but he also will be likely to acquire many resentments and grudges that never would develop if he were more capable of regard for the other fellow." ⁶

The capacity for sympathy is a phase of the individual's development into social maturity and is, of course, affected by environmental conditions. Obviously, it is necessary for the person to have some sort of social experiences that give him an opportunity to exercise his capacity for sympathy. These experiences must vary with the degree of maturity which he has already achieved. At first, it is to be expected that his sympathies will extend only to the members of his immediate family. Such selective sympathies should be regarded merely as a phase of his development. As he grows older, his sympathies should broaden. But, if he is incapable of the elementary phases of sympathy—that is, within his family and among his companions—he will be likely to fail in its broader application to people and things in other regions and in other lands.

Certain conditions can be provided in the individual's environment that are conducive to the development of sympathy. He should not be subjected to continuous competition; otherwise, the preservation of self is likely to lead to egoistic, rather than sympathetic, actions. He should not be overprotected, because he will then continue to feel that the world and the people in it are placed there for the satisfaction of his own selfish wants. He should be given an opportunity to associate with others of his own age, so as to learn that there are interests which conflict with his own and that cooperation contributes not only to the satisfaction of the wants of others but also to his own benefit. Having an opportunity to help with cooperative activities will give him a feeling of significance and, at the same time, a sense of being of service to the other members of the group. Lincoln Steffens says that one big help to him in the development of social tendencies, including sympathy, was the opportunity to own and care for pets.

⁶ Arthur T. Jersild, "Emotional Development," in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 69. By permission of the publisher.

Acquaintance with the rules of courtesy and good manners, it has been frequently pointed out before, will do much toward developing the type of conduct that is characterized by sympathy.

Many lessons in sympathy can be learned by both children and adults from stories, books, motion pictures, drama, and radio. All these mediums abound in accounts of persons who have found it rewarding to conform with the demands and interests of others. The truly "big" people in stories, pictures, and radio, as in life, are those who are human, friendly, and thoughtful of others. Their behavior gives evidence of their possessing the invaluable asset to social adaptation which is called "sympathy."

Dependability. Dishonesty has been included among the liabilities to social functioning; conversely, the characteristic of dependability is an asset to personality. When we can be sure that a person will do the things he has promised to do, it is easy to place confidence in him. Dependability contributes directly to a feeling of security, which is so universally desired. Even when the thing that can be depended upon seems undesirable, as in the case of punishment, the results are not detrimental to mental health. Much of the condemnation expressed about punishment is due not to the punishment itself but to inconsistent application of it. Children are confused not so much by the scoldings they are given as by the fact that sometimes they are scolded for a certain act, while sometimes the same act is met by a laugh from their parents. Dependability in parents will work more favorably for the development of mental health in their children than will fluctuation between lenience and harshness.

Dependability can be fostered by setting the right example for the growing person. Making promises that are never intended to be kept will inevitably result in an undervaluing of the worth of dependability. Giving a child some responsibilities that vary in complexity with the degree of maturity he has reached will serve as a valuable lesson to him. It should be pointed out to the learner that (1) lack of dependability leads to undesirable results, while (2) instances in which one has given evidence of dependability should be praised. The college student should realize that his mediocre attainment is probably due to the fact that his classmates cannot depend upon him to assume such responsibilities as getting his news report in on time, seeing that refreshments are ordered, attending his house meeting, or getting invitations into

the mail. On the other hand, the person who can be depended upon to accomplish such tasks is appreciated by his fellows.

The early establishment of a definite routine for the execution of one's duties will help to preserve dependability. There are so many things that we want to do and that should be done that, unless we plan our time carefully, many of those things will have to be neglected. The establishment of a routine is especially important for the adult, but it should not be overlooked in the training of the child. Very frequently it is found that the things for which people have not had time were the things for which they did not consciously plan. It follows that planning the use of time is an asset to the development of dependability.

One phase of planning the use of time which every college student can utilize is the habit of making a start on some activity. Almost every task is relatively easy to accomplish after it has once been started. Overcoming the inertia of inactivity is more difficult than continuing the activity after it has been initiated. Many of the writer's students have reported that they have put off going to the library to do an assignment as long as they could. Later they discovered that by getting started immediately and completing their job promptly they secured a satisfaction which increased the enjoyment of leisure after the assignment was finished; and, of course, their dependability was substantially improved.

Wide interests. Altruism, understanding, and sympathy will be fostered by the development of a wide variety of interests. The person whose life is centered about one interest will have difficulty in developing the understanding and sympathy which are essential to effective social adaptation. A variety of interests makes it possible to establish bonds of union with many people, since they can then be met on somewhat common grounds. When one of our interests is similar to the interest of another person, the resultant relationship is usually closer than it would be if the meeting were forced or superficial.

Interests are the result of experiences. They do not come "out of the blue," so we have here an area which is capable of being cultivated. The reason why people do not share interests in common with all others is that they have had no experience with the objects or activities of others' interests; their experiences have not been sufficiently wide.

Since interests are the fruit of a process of development, the person who is interested in the cultivation of them should begin with the interests he already has. He should then attempt to see those interests working in a wider application. For instance, an interest in tennis might easily lead to participation in badminton, handball, or squash. Interest in novels might be expanded into the reading of biography, history, and drama. An interest in one's profession—say, medicine—might be expanded to embrace a study of the social worker's activities. The study of business principles might well include a study of sociology and psychology—not just the psychology of advertising, but the study of educational psychology and mental hygiene. In each of these interests the person seeking to develop altruism and understanding is not expected to plunge into something entirely new but to begin with the interests he has previously cultivated and see that they lead into related fields. There is no end to the expansion which may result.

A second suggestion is that a person should see the new interest in terms of his own being. Probably one reason why there are so many things in which we are not interested is that we do not see them in terms of our own selves. When a subject or an activity is highly abstract to us, when we do not see how it relates to our personal life, the possibility of acquiring an interest in it is remote. Anything that can be connected to oneself seems more vital than things that are remote and comparatively meaningless. An earthquake in Turkey seems of much less significance to us than does one in an adjoining state. As the new subject is studied, there must be an attempt to see its relation to things that are already known and comprehended.

This does not imply that one cannot develop an interest in those things which have no intimate personal significance. Frequently, interests are developed by means of the success which one experiences because of vigorous application. Thus, the study of Greek may not be vocationally useful to the student; but he can be interested in it because of an intellectual challenge and because of having met the challenge with success. A person may not be a botanist, but he may evolve an interest in plants by learning their names, cultivation needs, and uses. Many interests are created out of mere curiosity and through satisfying that curiosity by means of learning.

The power of self-suggestion, or we might even say "autointoxication," is a factor worth noting. If students go into a class in which a

required subject is being taught holding firmly in their minds the idea that they are not going to like the subject, they will probably get just the results that they anticipated. On the other hand, those who say to themselves, "I'm going to like this course," will look for the good things they can find in it and will probably acquire a lasting interest. The same thing may be said in regard to social relationships. If a person decides beforehand that he is going to be bored by a certain social function, he probably will be bored; but if he thinks of it as an opportunity for the expansion of personality, he is likely to enjoy the contacts afforded. Anyone who decides before meeting a person that he is going to dislike the prospective acquaintance will probably see in him only the negative qualities that were expected. On the other hand, the person who reserves his judgment and decides to give the other a fair chance to prove himself is nearly sure to perceive likeable qualities, which everyone possesses to some degree. Since interest is something that exists between the person and an external object, at least part of the blame for lack of interest must be placed upon the individual himself. Thus, the matter of attitude, the role of autosuggestion, and the influence of mind-set become apparent.

Conversational ability. Most of man's contacts with his fellow beings take place through the medium of conversation. The ability to express thoughts clearly, concisely, and accurately is a valuable asset in social behavior. Countless numbers of people acknowledge that they have been greatly helped in their social adjustment by developing conversational ability or by taking courses in speech. The mechanics of speaking is a factor well worth cultivating.

Something to talk about is no less important than skill in the mechanics of speech. Here the importance of wide interests becomes plainly apparent. A few questions will generally indicate some topic with which both participants in a conversation are somewhat familiar. One university student said that he solved the problem of conversation in just this way. When the other person was interested in books, he revealed his own interest in books; with those who liked to dance he showed that he, too, enjoyed dancing. It was not necessary for him to be an authority in every field, but he did have varied interests and enough knowledge of each subject to ask intelligent questions. He was willing to let the others talk about what they knew of a particular

topic instead of trying to show what he knew. He regarded the situation as an opportunity for extending his own knowledge.

Letting the other person talk is an essential feature of conversation. Morgan strongly emphasizes the fact that conversation means talking *with*, not *to*, another person. Being a good listener is a vital part of being an interesting conversationalist. The person who monopolizes the conversation is known as a bore. There are others in the group who have viewpoints which they should have an opportunity to express. There are people who have had unique or very unusual experiences and who can ably entertain a group with stories of their adventures; but the experiences of most of us are not sufficiently different from those of others in any group to be set forth as of unique interest or value. There are some who go so far as to say that the best conversationalist is the one who listens; but, of course, both speakers and listeners, interchanging views, are needed to furnish a balanced situation in worth-while conversation.

Having something to talk about is essential but the quality of oral expression is of great importance, too. Tone, pitch, volume, enunciation, and pronunciation are factors by which the personalities of the speakers are judged. Correct use of words, variation in sentence structure, and talking without embarrassment are accomplishments which can be developed through study and practice. "Good speech is a matter of habit," and the habit is one which can be formed as an asset to personality.

Personal appearance. When a person is seeking a position, he usually does his best to make a favorable impression on the prospective employer. He sees that his fingernails are clean and his hair is brushed. He shaves and dons neat and appropriate clothes. The applicant who does this is using the correct tactics. Appearance is the thing upon which a first judgment of a person is based. Frequently a snap-judgment as to the personality of an individual is made on this basis. Personal appearance must be in conformity with what society judges to be acceptable. Anyone who deviates markedly in dress, hair-do, or make-up is likely to be branded as an eccentric.

Aside from the impression made upon others by one's dress and personal appearance, the person's own feeling of self-confidence is enhanced by the consciousness that his whole appearance is acceptable.

That is, careful and correct dress creates the psychological effect of assurance. Probably most college students can think back to some occasion when they approached a social function with pleasurable anticipation because they knew they were wearing the proper clothes for the occasion. At other times they may have experienced a sense of insecurity because they did not know what to wear or did not possess appropriate clothing. While it is not altogether true that "clothes make the man," they can contribute much to a desirable impression.

SUMMARY

There are certain factors, or personal characteristics, which operate against optimum social adjustment. These liabilities to social competence are frequently the result of incorrect or misdirected kinds of learning. However, they can be eliminated or diminished by more carefully directed learning experiences.

A step in the acquisition of more favorable characteristics is to recognize the nature and functioning of these liabilities. Such traits as egocentricity (in its many manifestations), ignorance, dishonesty, fear, anger, and jealousy are detrimental to social adaptation. These characteristics can and should be prevented in the college student and eliminated or minimized in the adult. It is not enough to recognize that these traits were produced by early experiences; something must be done about them at once.

While the liabilities of social competence are established through unfortunate learning experience, the assets to social adjustment are acquired through more wisely chosen and better learning experiences. Assets to social functioning are altruism, understanding, sympathy, honesty, a wide variety of interests, proper personal appearance, and conversational ability. These should be consciously striven for in one's daily life. They must be lived in more modest proportions before they can blossom into full maturity, *i.e.*, they must by practice become habitual modes of social response.

Experience, good examples, desirable attitudes, knowledge, and emotional control are the means by which social competence is achieved. Such development cannot, of course, be achieved through mere wishing. The slow process of personally directed growth plays a dominant role.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. A child who ignores the rights and interests of other people may actually be motivated by social drives.
2. While egocentric behavior may be motivated by desire for social approval, in the long run the actual results are just opposite of the thing hoped for.
3. An effective way to help develop social understanding is to assume that other people are just about the same kind of persons we are.
4. Since we are what we are largely because of our heredity and environment, it is logical for us not to blame ourselves for our shortcomings.
5. The mentally healthy person should not resort to lies since he will then be undependable and unreliable in social situations.
6. The best way to overcome timidity is to develop skills which will give a person a feeling of confidence.
7. We should do everything within our power to eliminate the emotion of anger.
8. Jealousy is an emotion which sometimes accompanies personal comparison; in order to avoid it we should stop thinking about others.
9. We are not jealous of those whom we know well.
10. Before a person can love, he must have achieved a certain degree of emotional maturity.
11. If you understand a person you will not have to forgive him for his transgressions.
12. You can be courteous without being sympathetic, but you cannot be sympathetic without being courteous.

13. A student should try to select interesting courses by finding out what other students think of those courses.
14. Infantilism, in reality, consists of a large number of traits, instead of being a single characteristic.
15. When speaking of conversations, there is more to giving attention than there is to giving an ear.

Suggested Readings

BOWMAN, H. A., *Marriage for Moderns*, 2d ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1948. 556 pp.

This book deals effectively with the many problems involved in making and maintaining a successful marriage. The author places at the disposal of his readers the result of research and his experience in teaching a course dealing with marriage.

DEWEY, JOHN, *Human Nature and Conduct*, New York: Modern Library, Inc., 1922. 336 pp.

The foremost philosopher of America and one of our most noteworthy psychologists discusses the importance of social adaptation. He shows how the inherent potentialities for development in man are shaped by the social customs and institutions of his environment. Habits and thinking receive detailed consideration.

LANDIS, PAUL H., *Adolescence and Youth*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945. 470 pp.

The problems that youth face in the process of maturing are clearly defined and suggestions for their solution are made. The author emphasizes the fact that adjustment is at least partially dependent upon cultural, economic, and governmental factors but also indicates some of the responsibilities of youth for their own welfare.

ZACHRY, CAROLINE B., *Emotion and Conduct in Adolescence*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1940. 563 pp.

Many of the problems of adolescents are seen to be matters of social acceptance and social competence. Relationships with family, peers, and adults are treated at length. A chapter is devoted to social-emotional factors in marriage. The whole book points toward the achievement of maturity.

Chapter 11

THE IMPROVEMENT OF THINKING

Most college students are definitely seeking to improve the quality of their thought processes. They want to know how they can better use the thinking equipment they have. Certainly, this is as it should be. Mental efficiency is assuredly among the problems which are worthy of study by anyone interested in mental health. The definition of mental hygiene, cited earlier, mentioned the need for efficiency, harmony, and happiness. The chapter on physical health and habits has outlined certain suggestions for achieving competence in the physical areas of life so that the individual might enjoy greater harmony and happiness. But physical efficiency and harmony form only part of the total problem to be solved for the evolving of a personality that is well-rounded and complete. Mental hygiene must be concerned, as well, with revealing the conditions which may advance the better functioning of mental processes. If a person knows the circumstances that promote sound thinking, and if he makes use of them, he can work out a more effective adjustment to everyday problems.

NATURE OF AND NEED FOR THOUGHT

The need for clear thinking.¹ The role of clear thinking in a program of mental hygiene cannot be overemphasized. Every student has heard many times the statement that a major function of education is the development of normal, integrated personalities. An integrated personality could justifiably be described as one possessed by a person who engages in successful problem solving. Those individuals who can

¹ Dreaming, reverie, compulsive and obsessive ideas are sometimes considered to be forms of thinking; however, in this discussion thinking refers to the mental activity which results from encountering an obstacle and then utilizing evidence in such a way that the situation may be mastered in a personally and socially acceptable manner.

solve the problems of social, personal, and occupational adjustment are considered normal. Those who fail to solve their problems are misfits, failures, and burdens; they are the frustrated and defeated who are called "maladjusted." Some people who have not the mental equipment to do effective thinking may not *feel* maladjusted; nevertheless, they are not adjusted to society and to the world at large. There is seldom a mentally ill person the major cause of whose illness is not an unsolved problem of adjustment. The exceptions are those who have incurred such illness through accident or organic disease. When people learn how to solve the problems of their own personal adjustment to one another and how to adjust to nature, the frequency of "institutional cases" will no longer be the major concern that it is today.

It is apparent that a study of the art of thinking and the application of the results of thinking is essential to the achieving of a well-developed personality—the personality belonging to someone who lives his life in accord with the principles of good mental health. It is conceivable that a person could be "integrated," in the sense of not being dissatisfied with himself, but unless he can adjust on a dynamic as well as an habitual level, he will lack integration in the sense of continuous growth and adjustment. Thinking is, for example, a first step in the intelligent application of the suggestions which are made throughout this book for securing and maintaining mental health. The improvement of thinking should be of particular interest to college students because, as prospective holders of responsibility, they will have to make decisions rather than to carry out routine, semiautomatic activities. In fact, a prime purpose of higher education is to produce just such thinking individuals.

The desirability of thinking may be made evident by an examination of some of the dangers which result from refusing to think productively. The person who does not think straight is not necessarily one who does not act. On the contrary, it sometimes seems that the non-thinker acts more readily than the person who suspends action until he has done some thinking. Hasty, unthinking actions may be harmful both to the individual and to those about him. It seems that men somehow find it difficult to think, but relatively easy to feel and to act. Some wit has said, "One per cent of the people think, five per cent think they think, and ninety-four per cent would rather die than think."

Whether or not the percentages are just, there is, regrettably, some foundation for the quip. It is necessary, however, for the emotion and feeling which stimulate action to be governed by intelligent thought. It is acknowledged to be one of the major purposes of education to develop the attitudes and habits of clear thinking and to reduce the multitude of thoughtless, impulsive actions. Several writers have expressed the belief that a person who does not have the habit of thinking has a tendency to "emote," or, in other words, to behave in an irrational manner. He acts on impulse, prejudice, habit, and imitation.

This does not carry the implication that thinking can or should be devoid of emotion. Such a situation is not possible. The point to be noted is that thinking should help to balance the blindness of misleading emotions. Then, too, not all emotions are productive of inappropriate behavior; but thinking can guard against those emotions which do mislead. When emotion, rather than thought, dictates action, there are many pitfalls, some of which are a too-ready acceptance of propaganda and a blind following of selfish leaders. Besides, people act according to old prejudices, which are more often than not unjustified. Slogans are accepted rather than evaluated. Proverbs become the answer to any and all problems. Catch phrases often appear to state deep, fundamental, and lasting values and virtues. But it is impossible for situations to remain static. Many factors bear upon human problems, and that which is accepted as valid in one generation is often much less applicable to another time. Individuals vary, and a commendable course for one person may be less justifiable for another. A terse statement cannot, then, have equal validity for all people and all times. Catch phrases cannot be depended on for a proper evaluation of all immediate circumstances. Those who act according to propaganda, prejudice, slogans, and catch phrases are victims of what has been called "canned thinking," because, like food bought in cans, such answers are highly palatable, they involve little work, they are easily swallowed and convenient to use. Canned thinking is particularly dangerous because it makes an appeal to emotions—the very thing the thinking person is warned to place and keep in proper perspective.

The absurdity of "formula" thinking may be readily perceived by examining some common sayings in which many people have placed some degree of confidence.

The Slogan

Look before you leap.
 Each man for himself.
 Punishment should fit the crime.

An eye for an eye.
 You can't teach an old dog new tricks.
 Nobody ever won a war.

Some False Beliefs

Red-haired people have hot tempers.
 Criminals are innately depraved.
 Jews are moneygrabbers.

A chip off the old block, *or*
 Like father—like son.

Beautiful but dumb.

Strong back—weak mind.

He's smart but lazy.

Its Competitor

He who hesitates is lost.
 Thirty dollars every Thursday.
 Young law breakers should be separated
 from the habitual criminal.
 Turn the other cheek.
 You're never too old to learn.

Make the world safe for democracy.

What Science Indicates

Color of hair is no index to personality.
 Circumstances mold the person.
 Differences within a race are greater
 than are those between races.
 About half the child's inheritance comes
 from the immediate parents. (Father
 and son are really chips off the same
 block.)

Poor traits are usually not compensated
 for by strong ones.

In general, the more intelligent person
 is healthier and stronger.

Industry is an aspect of intelligence.

Those listed above are familiar examples of the mistaken ideas that may influence a person who uncritically accepts neat statements which sound inviting but which have no adequate basis of factual evidence.

The need for clear thinking is especially urgent in a democratic country, where the citizens are called upon to voice their opinion at the polls. From the time our nation was formed, leaders have stressed that a durable organization for society must be based on right thinking. We see evidence of this about us daily. A stable society obviously cannot be set up haphazardly, by opportunistic devices. There is too much chance for conflicting direction. Social organization must be directed by citizens and statesmen who have assimilated their lessons through experience and thought. A strong society cannot be based on kindly good feeling and on unintelligent, even if well-intentioned, actions. Obviously, blind acceptance of the slogan of the propagandist, or credence in apt catchwords generally, would be in direct contrast to the needs of a successful democracy. J. Stanley Gray states the need for thinking citizens in a democracy as follows:

. . . Under no other form of government is the problem solving ability of the common man so important as in a democracy.

This means that the proper education for citizenship is more difficult under a democracy than under any other form of government. It is more difficult to teach people to solve problems and think than it is to teach them to obey and conform. The democratic citizen must be taught to think for himself; in other forms of government the citizen must be taught to accept the thinking of his rulers. The democratic citizen must be taught *how* to think; in non-democracies he must be taught *what* to think.²

The value of thinking, both on the part of the individual and for the group in which he lives, is indisputable. The need for thinking is urgent. To consider what clear thinking is and how it can be accomplished is the problem undertaken in the remainder of this chapter.

What is thinking? "Thinking" is so generalized a term and is used in such a number of circumstances that to define it to the satisfaction of everyone is difficult, if not impossible. Therefore, it seems advisable to describe characteristics of thinking rather than to give a specific definition that will oversimplify its meaning.

A central focus for thinking is the necessity for making choices. The person who is able to make choices which foster adjustment is one who is doing good thinking. The choices that are made generally precede overt action and involve implicit, or internal, language behavior; that is, the person talks to himself—silently, in most cases—regarding the possible alternatives of prospective actions.

The starting point for thinking is the occurrence or the recognition of an obstacle or a problem situation which complicates the course of possible activities. In this new situation, previous activities or knowledge will not immediately provide the key to effective action. Perhaps previous actions in a similar setting have not worked out advantageously. Thinking is the process by which one determines a course that will result in a more advantageous response. It is a process which leads to a stress-reducing response. Thinking might be said to be the desired outcome of a problem situation, except that the real goal of the thinking person is the rewarding, the effective, response (not just the process

² J. Stanley Gray, "Problem Solving," in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 228. By permission of the publisher.

of thinking). True thinking is problem solving, not just taking a contemplative look at the situation.

Although thinking is a type of behavior, it can be said to be generally an antecedent to physical, overt activities. That is, thinking is a type of internal activity which usually precedes the actual, objective attack of a problem. (Sometimes thinking follows the act: "I wish I had thought beforehand.") Therefore, it is a kind of mental activity which comes as the result of stimulation but which generally occurs before an objective attempt is made to modify the conditions that have given rise to the problem. This mental activity consists largely of two types of elements: language and imagery.

The above conditions may be summarized in this way. Thinking is mental activity involving language or imagery or both. It precedes visible attack on an obstacle or a situation that requires the making of choices before that obstacle can be successfully overcome or the situation can be made less complicated.

Types of thinking are not clearly differentiated. It is in deciding where good thinking begins and impulsive action leaves off that difficulty is encountered in developing a concept of thought. Does a football player who has to step to the right, instead of to the left, in order to make more yardage, engage in a thought process? If he steps to the right and gains by it, we are likely to say he is a quick thinker. If he steps to the left and is tackled, he will be accused of not thinking. Does the banker who has to decide whether or not to make a certain investment carry on a thought process? If he makes the investment and it results in profit, his colleagues give him credit for being a sound thinker; but if the project results in loss, his action will be labeled thoughtless. Therefore, it would seem that thought, as it is popularly conceived, is the antecedent of successful action, which is definitely not the case. Thought does not necessarily lead to successful activity. In the cases of the unsuccessful ballplayer and the unsuccessful banker, perhaps both had done some thinking. In the other situation, even though success was the outcome, both may have been acting according to certain predetermined rules—in which case thinking, in each of those particular situations, was not the reason for success. Both men had merely acted automatically, according to precedent or rule. It may be that the ballplayer always acts automatically and the banker always thinks. The answer to this dilemma will have to be in line with the beliefs of the

persons who are doing the judging as to whether or not real thinking had taken place. It is safe to say, however, that thinking has taken place when unsuccessful actions were discarded, new plans were formulated, and different actions were performed the next time a similar situation was encountered.

At any rate, it is clear that where nonthinking action ceases and thinking begins is a purely academic question. It seems sufficient to say that there are many different degrees or kinds of thinking. What interests the student of mental hygiene is increase in the efficiency of thinking, at whatever level it has begun. He should seek to replace many of his actions which are based on impulse or habit with more actions based on the time-consuming process of deliberation.

Regardless of the lack of any clear distinctions between impulsive action, casual thinking, reflective thinking, and creative thinking, certain suggestions can be offered which, when put into practice, will improve the quality and raise the level of thinking.

FACTORS INVOLVED IN THINKING

It must be obvious, from the countless results of thinking, that it is an extremely complex process. As such, it cannot readily be reduced to simple rules. However, certain generalizations concerning the process may be of genuine assistance to a person who is seeking to improve his thought processes.

Good thinking depends upon (1) strong motivation for the particular problem in hand, (2) constant general interest in problem solving, (3) the alertness and flexibility that favor insight over the continued use of stereotyped procedures and (4) the wide range of wisdom that gives insight—the perception of novel relationships—something to work on.³

The role of stereotypes has been discussed earlier. Further explanation of other factors listed in the preceding extract is made in the paragraphs that follow, though under different names. Motivation is a factor in recognizing and defining the problem. The need for interest is further developed in the section dealing with the importance of an open-minded

³ Reprinted by permission from *Foundations of Psychology* by E. G. Boring, H. S. Langfeld, and H. P. Weld, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1948, p. 212.

gathering of data. The wide range of wisdom that gives insight is more extensively illustrated in the need for formulating and testing the hypotheses formed. All these steps in thinking should be considered as generalizations which can be widely applied in improving thinking.

Recognition of a problem situation. It has already been stated that an obstacle, or a problem situation, is essential to thinking. The other element, obviously, is a person to do the thinking. Actually, these two are inseparable. As far as thinking is concerned, an obstacle might, and often does, exist without being recognized as a problem situation. A child may not have the toys that would help him develop physical strength and coordination. An obstacle to his development exists, but it is not recognized as such and, hence, is not a problem to him. A potential problem, unrecognized as such by the individual, may bring forth random, trial-and-error activity or may even crush him, without his being aware that there is a problem. For example, people living in filth and disorder may not notice the filth because they have nothing in their experience with which to compare it; nevertheless, the filth can bring upon them both physical disease and mental stagnation and thus be a very personal obstacle. A person's present position, whatever it may be, is not a problem to him until he begins to wonder how he can improve his work or status. Perhaps someone will call to his attention the fact that his work can be improved. If he accepts this viewpoint, his position then becomes a problem. Actually, the obstacle to progress was there all the time; but thinking will not begin until the problem is *recognized*. Another person might recognize the problem by himself and attempt to solve it. In that case, it is no more and no less an occasion for thinking than it would have been if an outsider had provided the stimulus.

Paradoxically, thinking may result from a state of confusion regarding an existing situation and it may result from a clearer perception of a situation. Let us suppose that a student is lacking the feeling of security which arises from being loved. He may be confused because he feels that he is not so happy as his classmates. He begins to wonder why and he seeks for solutions. The lectures he hears, the books he reads, conversations in which he engages, talks with his professors become possible sources of information that are given special attention when they are examined in the light of the perplexing situation. Perhaps he has the fortune to read some book on psychology which em-

phasizes the importance, the need, of being loved. In reexamining his symptoms, he feels that this factor may actually be pertinent to his own case. If thinking is to be effective, there must be more than a recognition of the problem; some proposed solution must be formulated. His next step is to postulate some course of action. Accordingly, he decides to stop being sullen, to take the chip off his shoulder, to cease appearing to be suspicious, and, altogether, to give his acquaintances a chance to find him a congenial person responsive to overtures of friendship. When something like this happens, thinking has been born of confusion, has progressed as the situation became more clearly perceived, and will progress still further as hypotheses are tried, reformed, or rejected. A college student who is confused about reasons for his not doing better scholastic work may begin to think. He may have no idea why he cannot seem to do better. As he perceives his specific difficulties (vocabulary, time schedule, and the like), his thought may take place on the somewhat higher level of a clear perception of the difficulty. Thus, confusion and clarification (though these are paradoxical) are aspects of the same thought process.

A problem, then, does not exist apart from the problem solver, and a first step in refining one's thought processes is to recognize the existence of his problems and define them as clearly as possible. He must realize that there are other ways of doing some habitual acts, that immediate conclusions may not be absolutely correct, and that many areas of change are possible. Everyone should recognize that his personality might possibly stand improvement, that his mental health can be enhanced; that is, his efficiency, harmony with others, and personal happiness can be bettered.

A first step in the recognition of a problem, and a first step in thinking, has been taken when the need for a change has been realized. Another step in recognition is to begin to gather information and knowledge—knowledge of facts that will help one perceive more clearly those things which constitute problems. In short, information helps one recognize problems; it improves awareness of difficulties.

Many college courses have as a direct aim the pointing out of problems through increasing knowledge. These studies represent an attempt to extend the experiences of students. Sociology courses indicate many problems in social living that may not previously have been recognized. Psychology points out such problems as motivation of conduct,

development of interest, emotional control, and others, which are part of the experience of employers, teachers, and social workers. Political science outlines problems encountered by all people, because they live in groups. Philosophy is characterized by its study of many difficult problems involving right and wrong in all lines of human endeavor. Courses in aesthetics, business administration, economics, engineering, and science all deal with problems which students are expected to face at some time. Many students, however, are dissatisfied with their courses because they are not given an answer for every problem that may trouble them. Usually, some answers are supplied in such college courses, while tentative conclusions are suggested for other problems; but it is a mistaken view for students to demand that answers be provided for all problems. Thinking individuals must realize that the recognition of difficulties is in itself a step forward.

College students frequently criticize their courses as not practical; *i.e.*, not providing unequivocal answers. Actually, the best courses are often those which give an impetus to thinking by raising problems. Since thinking starts with the individual's recognition of a problem, the courses which increase awareness of existing difficulties are an impetus to thinking. Each one of you might examine your own orientation, to see whether you are seeking answers or seeking questions.

Probably the most impressive indictment that can be made of our educational system is that it provides the student with answers, but it is poorly designed to provide him with skill in the asking of questions that are effectively directive of inquiry and evaluation. It teaches the student to "make up his mind," ready or not, but it does not teach him how to change it effectively. Any attempt to improve our educational system that does not involve a clear recognition of this defect of it can hardly be expected to lead to substantial reform. In fact, any attempt to reeducate a maladjusted individual that does not leave him with effective techniques of inquiry cannot be trusted to result in substantial and lasting benefits.⁴

Failure to recognize a problem situation is a direct cause of much mental illness. It is said that "following the line of least resistance is what makes men and rivers go crooked." (Beware of canned thinking.) Many a warped personality has been molded by following the line of

⁴ Wendell Johnson, *People in Quandaries*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946, p. 55. By permission of the publisher.

least resistance and avoiding problems rather than attacking them. Distorted personalities may also result from failure to recognize the problem sufficiently well to analyze it with some degree of accuracy; or even when the problem is recognized, the individual may lack the ability to attack it successfully. It is precisely at this point that the beginning of mental disease is found. Escape mechanisms are ways of avoiding or denying problems. Rationalization, daydreaming, projection, identification, regression, and self-pity are results of attitudes that do not welcome knowledge of the existence of a problem situation. It follows that the person who would attain a high degree of mental health is not one who is free from problems but one who sees in their recognition and analysis an opportunity for personality development.

Recognition of a problem, to be really constructive, must be accompanied by an acceptance of the problem. It would be of little benefit if, upon the recognition of a difficulty, a person should try to avoid it. (This is what happens when anyone resorts to the use of "defense mechanisms.") The person who would develop his thinking powers must have the attitude of welcoming a difficult situation as an opportunity to make some personal growth. If one is to improve his thinking, he must first want to think. He must have an open mind, must question that which he sees and hears, and must be willing to change his conclusions. It is well to add that these things—an open mind, a questioning attitude, willingness to change—must meet with enough success, enough rewarding reaction, for the person to want to continue seeing and recognizing problems. As soon as a man makes up his mind, fails to see further problems, or accepts defeat, he closes the door to the improvement of his thinking.

In mental hygiene there is a concept known as "tension-tolerance," which designates the ability of a person to face and withstand conflicts. The higher the tension-tolerance of an individual, the better is his chance for efficient adjustment; because he does not then so readily resort to escape mechanisms as ways of avoiding difficulties. In short, the difficulties cause him to seek for answers, whereas the person whose tension-tolerance is low avoids the situation by resorting to those defense mechanisms. Such a man is somewhat like the fabled ostrich who buries his head in the sand at the approach of danger, so that he cannot see the difficulty. Tension-tolerance is developed by building up the habit of directly attacking problems. Early childhood experiences may

explain some cases of low tension-tolerance. The child's early attempts at independence may have resulted in failure, with the distress of shaming, spanking, or deprivation of privileges. Such a background makes difficult, but all the more necessary, the development of an attitude that welcomes problems. If a person can force himself to face and analyze problems, his mental health is fostered because he is raising his level of tension-tolerance. Thus, it is evident that a problem situation and the thinker's recognition of it (including his attitude of acceptance) are intimately related to the quest for better mental health.

Thinking depends on knowledge. Almost everyone is extremely desirous of learning some short cut to the development of thinking. There is a short cut, but it is paradoxical. The quickest way to start developing the power of thinking is to get rid of the idea that there is a short cut and to step out at once on the road that leads to thought.

After a problem has been recognized, it is necessary to gather a quantity of information that seems to be related to the situation or to begin using the fund of knowledge that already lies waiting in the problem solver's mind. The greater the amount of information already at hand or collected for the particular situation, the better will be the resulting thought. Thinking is greatly simplified when the information available for the solution of the problem is adequate. In fact, it may very well be that what appears to be good thinking is often merely a manifestation of the thinker's having collected a sufficient store of information regarding the problem. The mechanic, businessman, teacher, doctor, or salesman whose thinking in his own field is successful has probably done much studying and had wide experience in his particular area.

While there is no actual short cut to the gathering of information, this does not mean that the longest route—direct experience—is the only one. Indirect, or vicarious, experience can make fact gathering more simple. Reading can offer solutions. In the United States there is more reading material per capita than in any other nation, and this includes both books and magazines devoted to almost every imaginable topic. The difficulty is that too many people think of reading solely as an escape from pressing difficulties. They read the same type of material over and over again. They do not discover in reading a means of widening their experiences and do not realize that it could help them to become better thinkers if they used it for enlarging their fund of informa-

tion. Talking with others, especially with those who have faced problems similar to one's own, will help to widen one's experiences, both directly and vicariously. This does not imply a shifting of responsibility for making decisions. It does mean an enlargement of the amount of information regarding the problem.

Finally, a person's own past experiences can be brought to bear on the present problematic situation. In such a case, it is not necessary to seek new knowledge. How have similar problems been attacked in the past and with what results? What are the similarities between the present situation and the past activities? What has been behind past successes and what factors were involved in past failures? The answers to these questions will provide clues—bits of information—which will be of value for the problem of the moment. In short, it is necessary to refine what one already possesses by using one's own thinking equipment.

These factors—attitude toward problems, knowledge of what constitutes a problem, acquisition of information, and intelligence—undergo a process of development from rudimentary beginnings to the more complex. As in other aspects of mental health, one must start from where he is and adopt the attitudes and apply the methods which are consistent with improving the thinking process. There is no magic formula, unless it be conscientious application.

As has been noted earlier, one of the functions of college courses is to bring about a recognition of problems. Another function of these courses is to offer knowledge which will be of value in solving problems. Although college is not, by any means, the only source of knowledge, much valuable information can be gathered within its walls. The libraries of institutions of higher learning hold rich stores of facts, theories, and experiments. College students seeking efficiency in their lives not only must know how to get information but must store up some of it for themselves, before they "get on the job." It is not always possible to start looking for information after a problem is encountered. Mental health—efficient, harmonious, happy adjustment—is largely dependent upon the possession of knowledge. The more information anyone has, in anticipation of difficulties that might be encountered, the better his mental health will be. All this may be summarized by saying, "The foundations of mental health should be laid now."

Certainly a college career in which attention is given only to transitory experiences is not wholly sound. There must be an attempt to gain

specific knowledges that are to be found in books or revealed and explained by professors, which will provide the basis for constructive thought. College years present the right time for developing those habits of work, application, and thinking that one will carry through life. Robert S. Woodworth and Donald Marquis have emphasized this fact in these words: “. . . the young should not delay putting forth their best efforts until they become middle-aged. If they have anything original in them it should begin to come out while they still look at the world with the clear eyes of youth, and while they still burn with the fire of youth.”⁵ One can hardly have a clear view of the world if he depends upon his firsthand experiences alone and fails to acquire some of the “accumulated wisdom of the ages.”

Emphasis on knowledge is not intended to give the impression that facts are of importance in and of themselves. Isolated facts and bits of knowledge can be found in dictionaries and encyclopedias. They become important when they are used in the evaluation or the solution of a problem. The educational task is to challenge development in the competent use of knowledge. This competence can be acquired through practice in debate, conversation, formal discussions, the writing of papers, and participation in conferences and in committees. Again, there is no short cut. Knowledge used operationally must go through trial and practice periods. It is important in such activities that one try to call to mind the facts which he has acquired or, even better, to accumulate the knowledge through research procedures which are most pertinent to an already existing problem. The existence of an actual problem gives direction to the search for pertinent information.

Formulation of the hypotheses.⁶ Logically, though not always in practice, the next step in thinking is the formulation of the guesses, or hypotheses, as to what the solution of the problem might most advantageously be. It is entirely possible that, as data were being gathered, a number of solutions were suggested. Thus, in reality, the gathering of data and the formulation of a tentative solution are not sharply distinguished from each other.

⁵ Robert S. Woodworth and Donald G. Marquis, *Psychology*, New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1947, p. 302. By permission of the publisher.

⁶ The plural is used because many problems cannot be answered in either-or terms or on a yes-or-no basis. Frequently two or more discoveries must be made to solve one problem.

The formulation of the hypotheses will be much easier if the problem has been clearly defined—that is, when the problem is recognized, it should be made as specific as possible. An attempt should be made to formulate a few questions, the answers to which will be the major factors in the solution of the problem. Answers that bear upon these questions will have more than one side; there are valid arguments that might logically be presented on many sides. In such a case, posting the arguments in various columns on a piece of paper and weighing their relative values will aid the formulation of the hypotheses. Place the “pros” in one column, the “cons” in another, and the “maybes” in still a third column. The summation or balancing of these alternatives will furnish a set of working hypotheses. In other words, a person should try to anticipate the trends his actions will take by implicit (internal) discussion, by audible verbalization, or by visualizing the situation as clearly as possible. The hypotheses are the resulting guesses regarding the solution which he thus anticipates.

Much thinking is defective because the hypotheses are formulated in too much of a hurry. If a person forms his hypotheses so fast that some essential elements are omitted, the thinking which follows will be erroneous, because the basic assumptions upon which the thought is based are invalid. This hurry is what is commonly known as “jumping to conclusions” or “generalizing on insufficient data.” Both of these processes are serious detriments to effective thinking. Besides hurry, another obstacle to forming good hypotheses is the tendency to permit emotion to sway beliefs or guesses, rather than to make sure that reason is uppermost. One can hardly think rationally about prohibition, politics, morals, or ethics if he has determined beforehand what the results of his thinking should be. It follows that one thing a person must do in formulating his hypotheses is to guard against emotional bias.

Formulation of valuable hypotheses (and this step in problem solving involves thinking) will be facilitated by the observation of certain conditions. (1) State the problem as clearly as possible, preferably in one concise question. (2) Know the conditions which impinge upon the problem—that is, take cognizance of both the positive and the negative side of the question. (3) Use accumulated knowledge, bringing as much experience to bear upon the problem as you can recall; do additional research for both corroborating and conflicting data. (4) Avoid

emotional bias; be willing to accept the facts that study and research reveal.

Testing the hypotheses. Applying the hypotheses will involve two steps when the thinker is thorough. The first step is a subjective evaluation of the probable result of actions based on the hypotheses. It is an attempt to imagine what the result of the proposed solution will be. The accuracy of this subjective process will be determined, to some extent, by the innate ability of the thinker; but that innate ability must have been exercised beforehand in other situations and must be supplemented with sound information. In short, good hypotheses—and thought processes, in general—are not to be achieved by saying, “From now on I’ll be a good thinker.” Such achievement is the result of intellectual growth, just as mental health is a product of growth.

The second step in the evaluation of the hypotheses is to test them in the actual situation. After they have been refined and revised in the light of subjective evaluation, they are given a trial. The subjective evaluation enables a person to come to a tentative solution. The test in the real situation will reveal the validity of the solution; it gives evidence as to whether or not the solution is workable. This is the point at which mental hygiene enters very noticeably into thinking; it is here that people must learn to act upon tentative conclusions. It would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to wait until anyone was absolutely sure of himself before he went into action. The mentally healthy person is one who is willing to go forward upon tentative solutions. Furthermore, even when the hypotheses work in an actual situation, it is well to regard the conclusion arrived at as tentative. If a man regards his conclusions as final after they have worked in certain situations, he denies himself the opportunity for further change, because he will then cease to be open-minded.

College students have an opportunity to examine the formulation and testing of hypotheses in much of their academic work. Some hypotheses have withstood continued investigation and others have had to be discarded. Lamarck’s theory (in the field of biology) of the transmission of acquired characteristics seemed to be satisfactory for a time, but later experimentation did not support the theory. The test of the hypothesis was the critical point. Lombroso’s theory (in the field of sociology) that criminals bear certain facial characteristics appeared to be true, from observation; but continued observation showed that

facial characteristics are an unreliable index to personality. The theory of compensation (in the field of psychology), which asserts that if a person is weak in one characteristic he will be strong in another, did not withstand more careful studies. The rise and fall of these hypotheses provide samples of problem solving. They emphasize the need for sufficient evidence. They indicate the exact meaning of the dictum, "conclusions must be tentative." They show the value of actually testing a conclusion. They demonstrate the fallacy of hasty generalization.

Effective use of hypotheses in high-quality thinking will, then, proceed something like this: problem, hypotheses for thinking, mental check, refined hypotheses, check by trial, reformed hypotheses, further check, additional refinement, tentative conclusion.

Making a generalization. The final step in highly refined thinking is that of making a generalization. A generalization is a verbal description of the basic phenomena of a classification. It is a widely applicable principle—a defining set of characteristics. This basic generalization states a truth which is applicable in all, or at least most, cases consisting of a particular set of facts or phenomena. The generalization is what conserves previous findings regarding a special set of conditions. Such conservation makes it possible for people to benefit from their previous experiences. It might seem that generalizations would almost invariably result from experiences, but this is not the case. Some people do not reflect upon the experiences they are having and, consequently, make no generalizations concerning them. As a result, such persons go on making the same mistakes over and over again. Generalizations, then, must be the outcome of reflective thinking based upon observation—observation of the elements in various situations which are identical, similar, or contrasting.

A common error in thinking is to rush into generalization. A dependable thinker will generalize cautiously and will be certain that he has taken into consideration a sufficiently large number of cases to justify his conclusion. The number will vary with the problem, but very frequently generalizations are erroneous because they are made upon only two or three observations. Many prejudices have no more valid bases. A person having observed two or three Germans or Jews who exhibit similar characteristics will generalize that all members of the German or the Jewish race have those traits in common. Should someone else try to convince him to the contrary, he will cite the two or

three instances with which he is acquainted as being final and unquestionable verification of his contention. He is generalizing on insufficient data.

AN EXAMPLE OF PROBLEM SOLVING—SUMMARY

Citing an example of problem solving in an actual situation may have certain advantages; but there is also a danger that one may not look beyond the specific to the wider applications which have just been described. However, this danger may be overcome by your making analyses of other situations, as an exercise, in somewhat the manner described in the following paragraphs.

Howard M. had asked for an appointment and, when he appeared at the office, stated that he was worried about his school progress but did not know what he could do to improve the situation. He was asked such questions as "What are your grades?" "Which subjects are giving you difficulty?" "Have you any additional worries?" But none of these seemed to provide a clue. Howard had recognized a problem, but it was not definite enough to be clearly defined.

He was asked to read some references on methods of study, and an hour was set when he was to report back. When he returned, he had gathered the information that you have read about in the chapter dealing with efficiency in college; *i.e.*, the necessity for good reading skills, the need for vocabulary development, the applied time schedule, and the value of stating objectives clearly. Howard then had gained some knowledge which should be of value in the solution of his problem.

The information he had gathered enabled him to make a guess as to the cause of, and the solution for, his problem. He decided that his difficulty was lack of reading skill. A few more questions were asked: "How long does it take to read thirty pages?" "Do you do any recreational reading?" "Are your most difficult courses ones which depend heavily on reading?" There seemed to be no indication from the answers that his reading was deficient. Next he was given standardized tests in both reading and vocabulary, in which he ranked in the upper centiles for college students. Howard had taken two more steps in problem solving—formulating and testing a hypothesis. The test (it cannot always be a written one) indicated that the hypothesis was in-

valid. It was necessary to gather more information or to formulate a new hypothesis.

Howard looked more carefully at his data and finally concluded that scheduling his classes by days and hours did not constitute a sufficiently detailed time schedule. His hypothesis now amounted to "The cause of my academic problem is unplanned time; class time is automatically scheduled but study time also should be regulated definitely." The test of this hypothesis was to make a more complete time schedule and try it out for a period of days. This he did and shortly afterward reported that at least he was more confident of his classwork and felt that he was doing better. Results at the end of the term showed some, though admittedly not spectacular, positive improvement, in the form of higher grades.

Howard may have had no need for a generalization, but it might have been stated something like this: Investigations and experiments show that reading, vocabulary, and a time schedule are important elements in effective study. If any of my classmates have academic difficulty, they should immediately investigate these factors as a causal factor.

In conclusion let it again be emphasized that this is an illustrative example and should be used for comprehending more fully the details contained in the theoretical description of the steps involved in thinking.

Summary of the factors in thinking. Persons interested in improving their ability to think must keep in mind all the steps in a complete act of thought. These steps are (1) recognition of a problem situation; (2) the gathering of information; (3) formulation of the hypotheses; (4) testing of the hypotheses, both by anticipation and by actual tryout; (5) the making of a generalization or conclusion.

Actually, these steps are quite inseparable. The steps may follow each other in a variety of orders. That is, the thinker is formulating hypotheses as he gathers information. He may be making a hypothesis at the same time that he is recognizing and defining his problem. He may use the test of the hypothesis as another means of gathering information. Finally, the generalizations will in many cases remain the same as the original hypothesis. Moreover, for a specific problem a generalization may be unnecessary. That a person has decided not to buy a certain book after thinking the problem over does not indicate that he should generalize by saying, "I shall buy no books." But, for

good thinking, most of these steps, including generalization, will somehow be involved.

THINKING, WISDOM, AND MENTAL HEALTH

There are many levels of thinking. It takes a child only a moment to decide that the way to get a long stick through a doorway is to turn it lengthwise. A much more complicated kind of thinking is needed for dealing effectively with such a problem as the reduction of delinquency. The difference between the solutions of these two problems lies in the requirement for deeper reflection and wider research in the second problem. Besides, more time must be given to fitting the various data into a coherent and unified pattern. When the thinking is based upon the extended gathering of data and upon deliberate reflection, wisdom in behavior will be more likely to be attained.

Thinking must be directed. The foregoing section might leave an impression that thinking does something to improve the "mind." This idea now constitutes a discarded theory of psychology that was called "mental discipline." The belief was that the "mind" was sharpened—made more efficient by use—that thinking was improved by work devoted to difficult problems. Chess was declared "good" for a person because it improved the ability to think. Difficult school subjects were more "respectable" than practical school subjects, because they were more abstract and thus provided more mental discipline. Such views are now largely replaced by the conviction that learning (including thinking) is of value only when it has transfer value; that is, knowledge (or the study of school subjects) is useful only when it can be transferred to real problems faced by the individual. The transfer can be either in the area of usable knowledge, which makes the solution of a problem easier, or it can be a transfer of method—or both. We can say, then, that thinking is of value, aside from the filling up of gaps in time, only when it bears relationships to some aspect of the person's life; a person's thinking and his knowledge are of value only when they are used operationally. This operational use of knowledge can be called "wisdom."

If thinking is to be something more than "mental discipline" (which does not really discipline), the activity must be directed toward the solution of some problem of adjustment. If thinking is to be anything

more than entertainment, it must contribute to wisdom by having transfer value. The information, the techniques, and the pertinent conclusions employed in thinking must be transferred to other problems if thinking is to produce maximum benefits in the area of personal adjustment and mental health.

Wisdom, which involves the use of "real" evidence, may be defined as the ability to use discerningly and pertinently facts which may bear on the many problems of adjustment. It is, therefore, much more than knowledge or mastery of facts, since it involves the intelligent use or application of information. Thus, thinking may involve the use of facts, as in the case of rationalization; but it is not necessarily true that thinking is equivalent to wisdom. This point can be illustrated by means of a case of rationalization. Many people feel that the making of "small talk" at a tea given in honor of some dignitary is boring or even frustrating. They think that it will be just a little easier if they become somewhat more relaxed through the aid of a stiff cocktail or two—even three, for greater relaxation. They use facts to justify their plan of action. Liquor in moderate amounts does no permanent harm to the body; it tends to release social tensions; people do not become alcoholics because of an occasional drink or two; there is no need to be ponderously intelligent at a tea; ready humor may be even more civilized than subtle wit. So they go on calling to mind arguments to support their position. It is a type of thinking, but whether the facts selected and used to justify the conduct are indicative of wisdom would be vigorously questioned by many.

There are other ways besides the selective marshaling of facts for employing thinking without arriving at wisdom. One is to use as evidence pseudo reasons, statements which appear to be true but which on analysis are found to be unreliable. Notions concerning unique racial characteristics are in this class, *i.e.*, that Negroes lack intelligence, that Jews are avaricious, that Englishmen are slow-witted, that American men are inept lovers. Most of these we reject, but there are others, of a similar degree of inaccuracy, which we tend to accept because our parents held them or because we have had some specific (isolated, rather than typical) experience that impressed us.

A factor in wisdom—in the operational use of thinking—is to develop the habit of criticizing the sources of information. The story is told of a schoolboy who, unprepared with his lesson, answered the teacher's

question, "What color is the ocean?" with the word "Pink." When corrected, he argued, asking whether any of the pupils in the room had seen the ocean. No one had. Had the teacher seen the ocean? She had not. How did she know the ocean was not pink? The book said so. How do we know the writer had seen the ocean? The case seems absurd, but many books are written which give misleading and even incorrect information. As a matter of fact, the ocean has many different colors, and even on occasion has been reported to be pink by some observers.

The writer has a book called *Character from Heads and Faces*, which is crammed with well-written misinformation. Advertising often employs misleading and carefully suggestive statements. Many slogans and mottoes are erroneous. All this adds up to the conclusion that a part of wisdom lies in examining the sources of our data. Such a process of thinking is quite as much a matter of attitude as it is a technique of procedure.

Wisdom involves practice in the use of knowledge. Modern school practice emphasizes the need for giving students practice in the use of knowledge. This is done by having them work on "real" problems—problems which have significance to them in some rather personal and direct manner. Instead of having children study the topic, "epidemics," the teacher gives them a chance to acquire and use knowledge about epidemics by investigating at first hand the reason for Mary's six-week absence from school and corroborating by library research the symptoms of the "epidemic." Instead of teaching a course in civics, teachers may encourage students to engage in some community project, such as the building of a playground or the establishment of a teen-age recreation spot. In carrying out these projects, they have to get acquainted with the executive, legislative, and judicial aspects of government. Facts are not undervalued, but they are studied in context and are used in an operational milieu.

Many colleges are encouraging such practice in the use of knowledge by installing school-work programs, where the student spends part of his time on the job and part of his time in school. Knowledge is thus acquired functionally; it is sought for the purpose of solving some specific problem, not just with the object of producing an educated person. This is not to be interpreted as a plea for the elimination of textbooks or courses of study. But it is an argument against the ac-

quiring of facts for the purpose of passing an examination. It condemns the process of memorizing merely because an assignment has been made. There are, probably, too many people who have knowledge but who have little wisdom.

Wisdom requires evaluation and insight. Wisdom goes beyond the mere gathering of data; but the intake, or discovery, aspect should not be neglected. There must be preparation for thinking and wisdom, in the form of experience and study. It frequently happens that what is assumed to be above-average intelligence is nothing more than the result of a full store of knowledge pertinently used. What appears to be good thinking may, like wisdom, be the result of the person's having had wide experience, so that he has an abundance of information on which to base his activities; but this information must be evaluated so that the various facts fit into a pertinent pattern or relationship.

If, then, anyone is to be a good thinker and to acquire wisdom, he must be concerned with the gathering of knowledge. He should read and study. He must travel and observe. He must examine and evaluate things in his selected field very closely and carefully. He should be acquainted with the interrelationships existing between his field and others. He should talk with others about his observation of these relationships. He should supplement his academic training by direct experience with facts and ideas. "A person must know in order to think."

Time, as well as information, is needed for the acquiring of insight, which may be defined as the perception of relationships. During this period, ideas have to be "mulled over," some of them to be discarded, some to be modified, and others to be fitted into the proper places. The time element allows for this sorting, discarding, modification, and accepting to take place.

The writer has frequently advised his students to take advantage of the time factor involved in insight by intentionally planning to think over what has been read. Many students, probably most of them, read an assignment and then, when they reach the end of the chapter or a reading selection, slam the book shut with a feeling of, "Thank goodness, that's over with." This tendency greatly diminishes the chance for insight to take place. It would be very much to the student's advantage if he would take just a few more moments to think back over what he has read and see how the ideas that have been presented fit together and how they accord with his own experience. It would be

wise to seek insight by asking, "What new information have I gained?" "How can these ideas be used?" "Does this follow logically from what I read yesterday?" The person who does this will find that the planned period for weighing ideas pays larger dividends than any other equal period of time devoted to study. Shutting off the mind as soon as a reading selection has been completed, or as soon as the class bell rings, is certainly a case in which "haste makes waste."

The meaning of this evaluating period may be clarified by likening it to the incubation of an egg. No food is supplied to the egg from external sources, but the contents become integrated, the parts differentiate, the organs of the chick-to-be take on forms that will permit those organs to carry on their specialized functions when the egg is hatched. In a like manner, during the period of "mulling over," no new ideas need be introduced but the existing ideas are assembled into a coherent pattern and the various aspects of them are sorted into those of value and those of less or little value. But comparing the incubation of thought to that of an egg has its shortcomings. The egg grows without conscious direction; in thinking the individual must give conscious attention to the sorting, classifying, and weighing of existing material. Questions such as the following must be asked and answered. Where did this information come from? How has this thing worked before? Is my basic premise sound? What is likely to happen if I act on what I now think is right? These questions indicate that the period of evaluating is one involving activity—not merely a passive waiting for the facts to assemble themselves.

Wisdom the result of study, experience, evaluation, and insight.

Wisdom is the outcome of (1) the acquisition of information, (2) the correlation of insight with direct experience, (3) the evaluation of knowledge in the light of a specific goal, and (4) the fitting of all these into a pattern which accords with the total milieu of the individual. Wisdom, the pertinent and successful application of the products and processes of thinking, is a difficult but desirable goal. It requires the expenditure of time, energy, and intelligence. It may be that, as individuals, we cannot increase our intelligence; but we can make good use of what we have by adopting sound procedures in thinking, with the attainable hope that we shall achieve wisdom at our particular intellectual level.

William James long ago pointed out these very areas of personal responsibility and their relation to wisdom in the following words:

Let no youth have any anxiety about the upshot of his education, whatever the line of it may be. If he keep faithfully busy each hour of the working day, he may safely leave the final result to itself. He can with perfect certainty count on waking up some fine morning to find himself one of the competent ones of his generation, in whatever pursuit he may have singled out. Silently between all the details of his business the *power of judging* in all that class of matter will have built itself up within him as a possession that will never pass away. Young people should know this truth in advance. The ignorance of it has probably engendered more discouragement and faint-heartedness in youths embarking on arduous careers than all other causes put together.⁷

SUMMARY

The question, "How can a person improve his thought processes?" cannot be ignored by those who are seeking mental health. Thinking or, more specifically, problem solving is a means of increasing the behavior variability which tends to make for efficient, harmonious, and happy living. When a person can do effective thinking, he has a better chance to make adequate adjustments to the problems he encounters. The use of slogans and catch phrases, though seemingly convenient, cannot take the place of straight thinking.

Clear thinking, contrasted with impulsive mental flashes, may be different only in degree, but the difference is still a significant one. In order to think, a person must recognize a problem or an obstacle and try to make it as specific as possible. He must then seek knowledge which seems pertinent to his problem and must search his mind for knowledge he already has that seems to bear on the situation. Some bits of knowledge may have to be discarded later, but the process is still thinking. Next, some hypotheses or tentative conclusions must be formulated. There must be an attempt to put together the knowledge in an arrangement so systematic that a valid answer will be the result. After hypotheses are formulated, they are put to test—either in an actual situation or in an imaginary one. Sometimes when the solution is tested, a generalization or a statement which is commonly applicable

⁷ William James, *Talks to Teachers on Psychology* (new ed.), New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1939, p. 78. By permission of the publisher.

is formulated; frequently, however, the tested solution works, and is expected to work, only in a specific situation.

The desirable outcome of learning and thinking, particularly from the standpoint of mental hygiene, is to acquire wisdom. This involves the pertinent use of knowledge. Wisdom involves the functional application of information; it requires study and experience, based on a willingness to change the good for the better. Above all, wisdom is dependent upon the cultivation of patience, which will allow time for the process of incubation.

College students who welcome problems as opportunities to practice thinking and who will go to the trouble of gathering information and then turn over that information in their minds can make strides in improving their mental health. They should not, however, expect to become good thinkers overnight but must trust to the process of growth. If they realize that time is required for such growth, they will be less likely to suffer the discouragement of which William James speaks. They will know that their thinking can and will be improved as they gather information, assimilate it, and then put it to use.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. If a person knows the conditions of good thinking, he will make a more effective adjustment to obstacles he encounters.
2. There is essentially no difference between daydreaming and problem solving; both of them are types of thinking.
3. Slogans are used by many people as a substitute for thinking.
4. The first step necessary for clear thinking is a fund of information which is related to a particular situation.
5. The main reason why it is so hard to define thinking is that thinking occurs on many levels of complexity.
6. Escape mechanisms, while sometimes desirable, are usually the result of refusing to face a situation which calls for thinking.

7. Tension-tolerance may be increased by developing the attitude that problems should be welcomed as opportunities for growth.
8. The best way to acquire knowledge is by reading books and attending school.
9. Most questions can be analyzed into such terms that the answers will be in terms of "yes" or "no."
10. The most important step in problem solving is the testing of the hypothesis in an actual situation.
11. Preparation for thinking consists of the thinker's recognition of the problem and his acceptance of it.
12. Incubation is a passive process in which the individual waits for his information to arrange itself in his mind.
13. Insight is largely dependent upon the problem solver's ability to use his information constructively.
14. Since it requires time for insight to take place, the person must be patient and permit growth and development to take place.
15. There would be less discouragement on the part of college youth if they would realize that steady growth can ultimately result in superior competence.

Suggested Readings

BODE, BOYD H., *How We Learn*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1940. 308 pp.

Although written primarily for students of education, this book presents information that can be successfully applied by any individual. The author describes and evaluates various theories of learning and makes suggestions as to steps to be taken in making better use of our thinking processes.

DEWEY, JOHN, *How We Think*, Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1910. 224 pp.

This book is considered a classic in its field. Steps in the complete thought act are explained and analyzed. Kinds of thinking and conditions which improve the processes are indicated. The role of language in training thought receives major consideration.

GRAY, J. STANLEY (ed.), *Psychology in Human Affairs*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1946. 646 pp.

The chapter by Ross Stagner, *Psychology in Public Opinion and Propaganda*, is particularly pertinent to the problem of thinking. There are other chapters dealing with psychology in college life, psychology in mental illness, and psychology in human adjustments that will be of interest to the student of mental hygiene.

STEINER, LEE R., *Where Do People Take Their Troubles?*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1945. 265 pp.

Many people realize the need for getting help with their problem of mental health but do not even know there is a field of mental hygiene. These uninformed and misled people go to self-named "psychologists," lonely hearts clubs, quack vocational counselors, divine healers, fortune-tellers, hypnotists, palm readers, or astrologists, and subscribe to personality-development courses. The deplorable facts are illustrated with incidents and case reports.

Chapter 12

ACHIEVING MENTAL EFFICIENCY

The college student who is interested in mental health—concerned about living a fuller, happier, more harmonious, and more effective existence—must give attention to many factors. He must seek to attain and maintain as high a degree of physical health as is possible. He should seek to achieve higher levels of emotional maturity. He will welcome the information and direct experience that will further his social adjustment. These factors are discussed elsewhere in this book. He will also be concerned with the continuous effort to improve his thought processes. The present chapter, which deals with the area of mental health concerned with mental efficiency, should be thought of as a continuation of the previous chapter, Thought and Its Improvement.

It may be well, at this point, to reiterate that the factors of mental health (physical, mental, and emotional) cannot be sharply differentiated one from another. In a person's actual life they cannot be isolated, as might be inferred from the above paragraph. They are separated here only for the sake of convenience in discussion. In the human personality the physical, mental, and emotional are inextricably interwoven and intimately interdependent; but because they cannot all be treated at once, they must, for the time being, be artificially separated. With a realization that mental efficiency is related to other aspects of mental health, the factors which contribute to the efficient use of the thought processes can be further discussed.

AIDS TO MENTAL EFFICIENCY

Relationship of thinking to mental efficiency. There can be no doubt that mental efficiency is primarily based on straight thinking. One can hardly be expected to attain proficiency in intellectual processes until he has capitalized upon the steps involved in problem solving. In fact, many of the considerations dealt with in this chapter might have been

included in the previous chapter if it were not for the danger of clouding the main factors with details of explanation.

As an aid to mental efficiency, then, it is of major importance (1) to seek an improved sensitivity to problems; (2) to gather information that can be used in solving problems; (3) systematically to construct hypotheses; (4) to test these hypotheses in either a verbalized or an actual situation (both, if possible); and (5) to make a generalization which will summarize the results and which will be of use in the solution of additional problems.

It should be stressed, however, that these steps constitute a bare outline of the entire process of achieving mental efficiency. There is a need for showing how other factors bear upon the competent use of the basic steps. There is a need for illustrating some of the obstacles to achieving mental efficiency. There is a need for showing that efficiency is not just a short cut that will eliminate the necessity for study, for work, for application. There is a need for indicating the role of emotion in either favoring or limiting mental efficiency.

Language as an aid to thinking and mental efficiency. It has been shown that thinking is a kind of internal, inaudible language behavior. The immediate cause of thinking is some problem situation recognized by the individual. In each of the steps taken in thinking, language plays a predominant role. The richer a person's language development, the more refined is the thinking he is able to do. We, in the United States, have a language which has reached a high stage of development; so it would seem advisable for anyone who is interested in his optimum mental health to become as well acquainted as possible with that language. Particularly, he should aim persistently at the enlargement of his vocabulary, so as to be able to command more and more of the vast heritage that is his in his native language. Such development will increase his behavior variability by broadening his comprehension of the environment and will facilitate his coping with it.

A rich vocabulary tends to improve perception. Modern psychology teaches that psychological behavior actually changes the organism. W. H. Kilpatrick makes the statement that learning builds organic structure.¹ The acquisition of language skills gives support to this assertion. As a person develops his stock of words, he tends to increase

¹ W. H. Kilpatrick, *A Reconstructed Theory of the Educative Process*, New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935, p. 4.

his behavior variability. Thus, a child is not expected to have as great behavior variability as an adult; he does not understand many of the things that are said to him and consequently cannot profit adequately from the experience of others. As he grows older and his command of language increases, he is expected to listen to requests and directions and to exercise more and more control over his behavior. Of course, language is not the only means of increasing behavior variability, but it is one of the more effective media for fostering such development. The acquisition of language skills contributes to potential behavior just as surely as the development of greater lung capacity would add to the endurance of a distance runner. "The value of sentence language in solving problems is as great as civilization itself. It enables man to pre-solve his problems and to foresee the consequences. He can thus cross his bridges before he comes to them and reduce his errors a hundredfold."² In short, his perception of the future is improved.

As the individual grows, he learns the names of more and more objects about him and is able to make finer distinctions between the stimuli that affect him. In his early stages of development, the word "dog" may mean to him any kind of animal; but as time goes on, the child learns that this word applies only to a certain kind of animal. He is increasing his powers of perception. Later on, modifying words will be used with the word "dog" to denote particular breeds. Still later, the learner will be familiar with such terms as dog-eared and dog-tired, or with the kind of dogs used in logging. By degrees the person's behavior toward the word "dog" becomes more and more discriminating. Similarly, such words as key, hinge, rock, and knob come to be recognized as denoting many different things, and the person is able to act more intelligently for having learned to differentiate among the various meanings which these words have in particular situations. Some of you may have had the same kind of experience in connection with foreign-language study.

Psychologists have carried on experiments to determine whether an increased vocabulary will result in improved perception. Their findings are significant. Their subjects were taught the names of more colors than they had known previously and more than the ordinary person knows. When the subjects knew the names of many colors,

² J. Stanley Gray in C. E. Skinner (ed.), *Educational Psychology*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1945, p. 218. By permission of the publisher.

they were able to detect differences between shades much more readily than they had previously done. It seems as though the learning of a more extended vocabulary relating to color had actually increased the power of perception. This experiment gives support to Kilpatrick's contention that learning actually builds structure. The structure of the eye was not changed during the process of learning words, but the nature of the working of the central nervous centers where perception takes place had been altered.

Color is not the only sphere in which language increases the power of mental perception. When a person has adequate command of language, he is able to improve his behavior variability in any line of endeavor in which he is engaged. Complex situations often cannot be analyzed into simple words because the simple descriptions do not carry the definiteness of meaning that is needed. Language development must precede or parallel the development of accurate perception. In fact, most scientists seem to agree that the further development of science is partly dependent upon the construction of a vocabulary that will give more definiteness to thinking. "We must recognize that a vast body of scientific and philosophic formulations cannot be so simply stated as two and two make four. We should therefore espouse the need and desirability of creating new symbolic expressions which more adequately portray the colorings intended."³ These words, from a book on mental health, add weight to the foregoing generalizations concerning the significance of language and vocabulary. We can safely say that, as far as the study of mental hygiene is concerned, the understanding of its basic principles will become clearer and firmer as the vocabulary of the subject is mastered. It is also true that anyone seeking improved efficiency in general should not fail to give earnest attention to acquiring skill in the use of language.

Studies of people who live in culturally impoverished areas give further support to the contention that language increases behavior variability. Inhabitants of isolated mountain districts, gypsies, and other folk who have little educational opportunity make lower scores on tests of intelligence than do those living in regions which are more favored culturally; and intelligence is sometimes defined as the ability to make adjustments and discriminating choices. It would seem that one

³ Frank E. Howard and Frederick L. Patry, *Mental Health*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1936, p. 218. By permission of the publisher.

factor contributing to the low scores of certain peoples is their lack of language development.

Language, then, is of important service in the achieving of mental efficiency because, by increasing the powers of perception, it makes a person more aware of the problem situations which give rise to thinking. And furthermore, it enables one to deal more precisely with phenomena already perceived.

Vocabulary aids in mental efficiency by facilitating the gathering of data. Since language increases perception, it is of use in the gaining of indirect experiences, such as those involved in listening to the oral description of another's experiences, as well as in comprehension of the written accounts describing various situations.

Language can increase the value of personal experience and, hence, can serve in the gathering of data. In the account of the perception of color, the importance of language was demonstrated. Language also helps in the conservation of experiences. If the experience is accurately described in precise words by means of a generalization, the impression will be more permanent. Football terminology can be used to demonstrate this point. It would be very hard for anyone to give an account of a football game or to remember it, unless he were acquainted with such terms as clipping, spinner, off side, safety, delayed buck, punt, drop kick, and the like. He will certainly remember the game better and be able to give a more accurate account of it if he knows these words and if his correspondent is acquainted with them. So, too, experiences in a coal mine, factory, mill, store, office, or museum are more valuable when they are conserved in accurately expressed conclusions.

As has already been noted, language is of value in the gaining of vicarious experience from the oral accounts of narrators. If a man were listening to an account of a football game, his knowledge of football terms would help him to understand the progress of the game. Most people have had the experience of listening to a lecture during which the speaker used many words that were unfamiliar. Consequently, such a listener may have understood little of what the lecturer was trying to convey. It is evident that anyone who is acquainted with the words employed in a lecture is better able to comprehend the speaker's message.

College students have sometimes been dismayed upon realizing that

they had elected courses in which the terminology was new to them. Some students are so timid, so unaggressive, that they will drop a course rather than try to overcome the obstacle. Others have taken the situation as a challenge, understanding as much as they could of the lectures and then reading in the field, with direct emphasis on vocabulary, whereupon, they have found that after a while they could enjoy and profit from the presentations that had once been so strange. In this case the vocabulary itself, besides furnishing data for their more complete understanding, was also providing a means for acquiring more data, which would be beneficial in solving later problems in life.

Finally, language is of value in the accumulation of data from written sources. Just as the listener secures more knowledge when he understands the vocabulary of a lecturer, so the reader acquires more information when he is familiar with the terminology of a writer. Most authors deliberately choose the words that will present their meaning accurately. If the reader skips the words that he does not understand, he is likely to miss some of the distinctions and implications which the writer wishes to impart. But a reader who studies the meanings of the words that are not familiar to him will find that the particular situation in which the words were used has greater significance for him; whatever he reads from that time on will probably be more easily and completely comprehended. Whatever language skills one may acquire will be valuable not only for immediate use but also for future reference and enlargement of understanding.

Jotting down the idea. Because unfortunately the mind of man is prone to forgetfulness, a positive asset to the development of thinking is the habit of jotting down facts or ideas, so that they will be quickly available later. Ideas are fleeting by nature, but they may be captured in writing on a piece of paper. Many people admit that they have "staircase wit"—all the brilliant things they might have said at the banquet or the party come to mind too late, only when they are climbing the stairs to their rooms. But, even then, they fail to jot down the story or the idea, and at their next party they again remain silent, though the flashing bit of fun or fancy could have been at hand when needed if it had been anchored with lead (pencil).

An editor of *Harper's Magazine* told of riding with a man who suddenly stopped the cab, rushed out, bought some paper and a pencil, scribbled a few words, then told the driver to proceed. He explained

that something had been said which started a train of thought he believed to be worthy of further development. Working out the idea, the man eventually wrote an article for *Harper's* on the subject. He told the editor that he habitually recorded ideas—as a rule, keeping a pencil and cards handy. When a number of cards had been filled, he would sort them over, finding some apparently unworthy of further consideration while others were of real value. He had adopted a rather mechanical but highly profitable aid to his thinking.

Note making will probably not make a genius of any man, but famous men have employed this method habitually. Darwin was particularly careful to record ideas which did not agree with his own, because he felt that unfavorable facts are more likely to escape than favorable ones. Robert Louis Stevenson always carried two books—one from which he read and one in which he wrote. Many use the margins of their books for recording their reactions, and this is a good way to make sure of having reactions to what is read. Thomas Hobbes had a specially constructed head on his staff, which held an inkhorn and a pen; these he used for making notes while on long walks, during which he did fruitful thinking. Jonathan Edwards wrote memorandums while traveling on horseback, pinning the scraps of paper to his coat until he looked like a bulletin board.

When a person reads, when he takes time to walk and think or to sit and ponder, he would do well to jot down those elusive ideas which at the time seem so prominent but which, when called for, may have completely disappeared. After hours have been spent on the reading of a book, it seems absurd not to take a few minutes for recording the reactions of the reader or the thoughts that have been awakened.

Taking time to think. Thinking is an active process. It is a putting out (generalization) as well as a gathering in (getting data) of ideas. This active process requires time, but all too frequently the gathering-in phase is not balanced by the expressive (reaction) aspect. For instance, many people who read do not take time to think. For them the main thing is to get through the book or the article. They have no reaction. "Sit still and label your thoughts" is sound advice given by Carlyle.

A man noted for his well-informed viewpoints was asked how it happened that he knew so much more than those about him did. He answered that he would know no more than others if he read as many

books as they. As a matter of fact, he read—then studied and thought about what he had read, so that it became a part of him. There are too many people who use reading just as a means of escape. Aldous Huxley has said that “it is obvious to anyone who candidly observes himself and other people that excessive reading can devour a man’s time, dissipate his energies, vitiate his thinking and distract his attention from reality.”⁴ It is such “excessive” reading, leaving *no time for thinking*, that is to be condemned.

Probably, many people do not know the value of taking time to think while reading. In the words of R. R. Updegraff, “The great trouble with most of us is that we are mentally lazy. We are slipshod in our mental habits. We read voluminously, without stopping to absorb what we read, without cogitating upon it and relating it to our experience, previous observation, and knowledge of the subject. We do not pause often or long enough in our reading to affix impressions upon our minds.”⁵

Great thinkers know the value of taking time to think while reading. To quote Updegraff further, “The secret is in giving the mind a bit of rope. If the imagination becomes excited by some idea encountered in reading and starts off on a new thought-path of its own, *it is good sense to close the book or periodical for the time being and give the mind free rein to do a bit of exploring*. This is to treat reading as a stimulus to original thinking.”⁶

Students would do well to take five or ten minutes to think back over the material they have just read, instead of making the typical response of slamming the book shut, saying, “Thank goodness, that’s over with!” and rushing off to the next activity. Admittedly, taking time to think after reading is a minor detail; yet it is by utilizing just such minor opportunities that the difference between mental efficiency and mental incompetence is established.

Using emotion as an aid to mental efficiency. It was pointed out in the previous chapter that for man to feel and act is relatively easy, but for him to think is difficult. This is not equivalent to saying that emo-

⁴ Aldous Huxley, “The Perils of Reading,” *The Reader’s Digest*, Vol. 34 (March, 1939), back cover. By permission of the publisher.

⁵ R. R. Updegraff, “Make a Note of It,” *The Reader’s Digest*, Vol. 34 (January, 1939), p. 17. By permission of the publisher.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 19. (Italics not in original.)

tion must be eliminated if mental efficiency is to be achieved, although some emotions are detrimental. The drive to solve problems, to gather data, to keep at a job is an emotion the development of which should be encouraged. A tolerance for the viewpoints of others, for conflicting data, for distasteful facts is also a valuable emotion. The open-mindedness of the expert problem solver is a desirable attribute which can be set over against the emotions of fear, jealousy, and suspicion.

The question is immediately asked, "How are these emotions of drive, tolerance, and curiosity to be developed?" If you were fortunate, you acquired them through the example and encouragement of your parents, brothers and sisters, playmates, teachers, and others who conditioned you in early years. If you still need to develop them, the first step is to realize their importance. You can seek such realization by reading, by associating with those who have drive and tolerance, and by acting on the positive psychology of suggestion⁷ that these are desirable traits. That is to say, act (even if only for a short time at first) as though you already possessed this drive; deliberately search out views that contrast with your own, and attempt to see the valid aspects of these views; and pretend that you really are curious about the life of Caesar or the life of the amoeba.

Acting on the positive psychology of suggestion will tend to produce the success which encourages additional activity in the same area. When you achieve success through the application of drive, when you are praised for your tolerance, and when the curiosity which stimulated study results in increased knowledge, you will have a rewarding sense of satisfaction, which will serve as a reinforcement of the drive. Thus, drive contributes to more drive and tolerance to more tolerance. The reciprocal relationship leads one to wonder where the original bit of

⁷ A positive psychology of suggestion refers to a frame of reference or point of orientation accepted without dependence upon analytical thought processes. In the specific instance above, it refers to acting on the faith or belief that drive is something of value and also to a pretense that you already have drive, or at least can make better use of the drive you already possess.

It would be incorrect for the reader to assume from these statements that suggestion psychology is something which one creates from "willing" it. As a matter of fact, environmental pressures and demands are more significant "suggesters" of behavior than are willed factors. But it is also true that ideas we hear and read about can become a part of environmental "suggesters."

drive comes from. For you it can start right here with your acceptance of the idea that you can capitalize on the impetus received from the reading of these words. Ideas of suggestion begin with acceptance of the validity of the notion presented.

However, there are emotions which so handicap mental efficiency that some of the people who are controlled by them find it impossible to think straight and to act effectively. Despair and feelings of futility prevent a person's thinking about and working for the improvement of a situation. An antidote for these emotions is to keep in good physical health, to adopt an aggressive attitude of attack upon problems, and to realize the inevitability of both change and disappointment. Again, the device is one of adopting a positive psychology of suggestion and reassuring oneself that blaming the past will bring about no good solution.

Another detrimental emotion, which is easily acquired through contagion and which prevents straight-line thinking, is prejudice. It prevents anyone's viewing objectively many of the situations in which he may become involved. It sidetracks the opportunity of capitalizing on the wisdom of others. For example, if we are prejudiced against taxi drivers, Republicans, or women who smoke, we tend to think that their views on any subject are not worthy of attention. It is just this irradiation, this tendency to spread the effects of our feelings, that makes prejudice such a liability in mental efficiency. Further, it makes us more likely to accept the negative elements of a situation as truths and, consequently, leads on to an unbalanced conclusion or generalization.

Emotional attachment to symbols is closely related to the concept of prejudice. Along with the facts of life that we pick up through daily contacts and personal experience, we absorb uncritically an attachment to symbols. This includes not only words but figures and pictures; for example, the swastika, the eagle, the fasces, the triangle and the letter "G," and the six-pointed star. We may think of the swastika as a symbol of selfishness, aggression, and intolerance; of the eagle, as a symbol of justice, strength, and unity. It must be remembered that these symbols are not causes of the way persons act in a society, that individuals are blameworthy or respectable in terms of their actions, not in terms of the symbols that are often associated with them. Again, an antidote can be applied by thinking with facts, taking time to analyze, and generalizing carefully.

Since we are primarily acting and feeling, rather than thinking, beings and since our acceptance of symbols or meanings is an emotional rather than a logical one, we are inclined on the one hand to let them operate without subjecting them to the cold light of reason or our own experience, and on the other hand to become resentful and defensive when these "taken for granted" ideas or beliefs are challenged. In other words, we accept the full emotional tone with which symbols, whether they be words or visible signs, are charged, and act in accordance with the emotions thus stimulated. All the rabble-rousers, the evangelists, the dictators recognize full well the value of catch words, of emotionally toned symbols, and use them often to achieve ends which are a distortion of the original meaning.⁸

It is clear that emotion is a handicap to thinking when it clouds the facts, causes us to close our eyes to evidence, and creates a selective assembly of ideas. Thus emotion is a detriment when it becomes primary. When emotion is secondary, when it is directed and controlled by intelligence, it aids in efficiency by providing the impetus for sticking to a job in spite of obstacles and handicaps.

Mental set as a factor in efficiency. Mental set may be defined as the readiness or tendency, the preparation, of an organism to act in a certain way. A rabbit hunter, having a mental set for rabbits, may often see other objects—rocks, stumps, and uneven clumps of earth—as rabbits. Mental set undoubtedly is partially responsible for the shooting of so many deer hunters every fall. A person expecting an evening

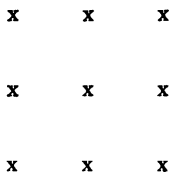


FIG. 22. Join the nine x's with four straight lines without lifting the pencil. Try it before reading more of the text.

caller may, because of his mental set, momentarily interpret the telephone bell to be the doorbell. The influence of set may be illustrated in the puzzle indicated in Fig. 22.

⁸ S. H. Kraines and E. S. Thetford, *Managing Your Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947, pp. 33-34. By permission of the publisher.

The solution of the puzzle will seem impossible if your mental set is such that the lines you draw are not longer than the distance comprehended by any three x's in a row. Change your mental set to include drawing lines longer than the distance between the x's on any corners. The puzzle indicates that one's mental set may be either harmful or helpful in the solution of problems.

Set is a handicap to one who closes his mind to such an extent that some factors are eliminated from consideration. Thus, in the problem of individual social adjustment, a student could not get very far if he were to search for causal factors of maladjustment only in the reactions of others and in the opportunities for social participation provided by the school. As soon as a person is willing to include among his data the supposition that he himself is a causal factor in the situation, he will come closer to a realization of what should be done for improvement. If in your daily classwork your mental set consists of the attitude that the "professor does not know his stuff," that the requirement of a particular course is unreasonable, or that the study can mean nothing to you personally, you will have difficulty in learning what is being studied.

When it is realized that mental set can be either a liability or an asset to intellectual efficiency, the kind of set that will facilitate clear thinking can be sought for and adopted. First of all, it might be well to court the mental set that conditions (those composing a problem) can be improved. This will encourage an aggressive, confident attack. It will energize the work involved in seeking information, in trying out hypotheses, and in constructing generalizations. Another kind of set to be fostered is that it takes work to get things done. This, we have seen, is one of the advantages of a detailed time schedule. If one has planned to study history on a certain day at a certain hour, it is easier to get started on the work involved. Indeed, it is even irritating to be interrupted. If the work is unpleasant or difficult, the mental set that "it shall be done" helps to overcome the inertia of inactivity. An office manager who has planned to write letters on a certain morning finds this task easy on the appointed day but may be ineffective in conducting personal interviews at that time; while on the following day, interviews are a pleasure and letter writing seems an irritating responsibility.

Other kinds of mental set that tend to promote effectiveness are tolerance, respect for the opinions of others, analysis of and avoidance

of superstition, and a respect for objective data. There is considerable truth in the lines, "Look for goodness, look for gladness, you will find it everywhere. Look for evil, look for sadness, you will also find it there." The truth lies in the psychology of suggestion, which produces a favorable or an unfavorable mental set.⁹

Capitalizing on group wisdom. One has but to take part in some kind of committee work to realize the strength of the "group mind." Going into a committee meeting, you have probably carried some rather definite views as the result of study and reflection. You have certain plans which you think will result in an effective approach to the goal that is being sought. But as you present the views to the group, they undergo marked revision or sometimes complete change. Frequently modifications result in a strengthening of ideas, by virtue of the number of situations in which various members of the group anticipate the operation of the idea. Presently a view is achieved which receives the sanction of a majority, sometimes all, of the committee. The "group mind" has reached a mature conclusion. But the process need not end at this point. The committee makes its report to a larger body, and the plan is likely to undergo further modification before being accepted.

There are two ways in which you can capitalize on the factor of group wisdom. One is actively to seek the advice, opinion, and view of other people regarding situations that you have encountered. This need not take place formally in the presence of a committee, but can be carried on through several different meetings with single individuals. Seeking the views of several others will bring you the advantage of their pooled opinion, and it will help to press your own ideas into a more workable form.

The other way in which to utilize group wisdom is to present your problem to a formal group and have the members voice their views, both of your problem and of the contributions made to its solution by others in the group.

It is faith in the validity of pooled wisdom that constitutes the strength of our democratic system. True, the process is slow, sometimes even cumbersome, but the outcome has consistently indicated the superiority of shared conclusions over the single-bias decisions of a dic-

⁹ The next section, on propaganda, might well be considered to be an analysis of the approaches that are constantly being made to generate a kind of mental set that will produce action which is not primarily directed by intelligent people.

tator. Young people would do well to capitalize on the factor of group wisdom (1) by studying and learning to appreciate its advantages and (2) by learning the techniques which can be profitably used.

Several generalizations that can be used to produce maximum effectiveness in the pooling of group wisdom are given below. Each of them stems from some suggestions made previously regarding thinking and intellectual efficiency.

1. The meeting should be concerned with problems which beset all members of the group. (Awareness of problems.)
2. Each participant should come prepared to make a contribution to the problem. (Thinking is based on information.)
3. Responsibility for conduct of the meeting should be shared by several leaders. (Group wisdom.)
4. There should be a review of purposes and objectives before the members begin to deal with details. (Problems should be clearly stated.)
5. The group should be small enough to allow everyone a chance for expression. Break up a large group into subgroups if necessary. (Variety of data.)
6. Participants must be concerned with getting ideas rather than with getting ideas across. (Prejudice versus open-mindedness.)
7. Time must be allowed for the maturation of ideas. (A period of incubation is helpful.)
8. There must be an attempt to carry into action the conclusions and recommendations at which the group arrives. (Test the hypotheses.)

The last of these points deserves additional attention. People must learn to act on tentative conclusions. Rarely, if ever, can all the data on any problem be gathered together. If men go too far with the idea that further thinking is needed and wait until that thinking can be accomplished, action will be deferred so long that it will never be arrived at. There is a mid-point between rushing to conclusions and holding action in abeyance. To define this point in a book would be more difficult than your defining the point with regard to specific problems.

The role of work in efficiency. Much of the difficulty in achieving mental health would be overcome if somehow the point could be made

emphatic enough to persuade everyone that work is essential to accomplishment, efficiency, happiness, and harmony. This thought has been given recurring emphasis throughout the entire book, but it merits special attention in connection with the topic of mental efficiency. "Genius is five per cent inspiration and ninety-five per cent perspiration" is not only a motto but also a self-evident truth. It takes work to gather data—the sufficiency of data that will include the answer. It takes work to test the hypotheses. And it takes work to apply the results of problem solving, without which there would be no evidence of efficiency.

The importance of work has been implied by a pair of writers who emphasize that knowledge is a fundamental requisite for creative thinking. They stress the fact that the leading thinkers in any field must possess an enormous fund of information.

. . . consider one of our great creative chemists. His field is so extensive that it is almost essential that he has the formal education requisite for the doctor's degree, to give him merely his preliminary mental background for thought. It is quite safe to assert that all our leading chemists under sixty years of age have the Ph.D. degree. On the foundation of the knowledge thus laid, he adds more and more in his special area of interest and gradually increases his creative output.¹⁰

The building of a solid foundation in any line of activity requires work in the form of study, practice, and application in real situations. No youth can afford to neglect the building up of work habits that will facilitate his attack on problems. This is just as true of the person outside school as it is of the person in school who desires to make the best of his potentialities. Professor I. L. Kandel, editor of *School and Society* magazine, expresses this great need in the following words:

One of the charms of American youth is its unbounded ambition and optimism. One of its less attractive features is its failure to give any thought to the effort that must be put into the attainment of their aims. . . . One of the points that has not received the attention that it merits . . . is that little is achieved in life without devoted effort and hard work.¹¹

¹⁰ Raymond M. Hughes and William H. Lancelot, *Education: America's Magic*, Ames, Iowa: The Iowa State College Press, 1946, p. 132. By permission of the publisher.

¹¹ I. L. Kandel, "The Immature Mind" (editorial), *School and Society*, Vol. 70 (Oct. 1, 1949), p. 218. By permission of the publishers.

ANALYZING PROPAGANDA—AN EXAMPLE OF APPLYING THOUGHT

Present-day life constantly surrounds us with evidence that many advertisers, politicians, and rabble-rousers are attempting to produce a mental set favorable to the acceptance of their particular products or ideas. We are constantly bombarded with advertising—over the radio, on billboards, in newspapers, and in magazines—which promises great things and is calculated to make us feel “needs” that are really non-existent. In our country, where action is free and direction is a matter of choice, it is especially worth while to be able to recognize the techniques that are in widespread use. If our decisions are to be sound, if our actions are to be most productive of beneficial results, we must be able to distinguish the true from the false, the fundamental from the ornamental. This is particularly true when, as so frequently happens, specialists seek to bring about decisions which will be of value to themselves rather than of broad social benefit. The favorite technique of such specialists is called “propaganda.”¹²

Propaganda and mental health. The analysis of propaganda will serve as a good example of the need for straight thinking, as well as of the way the thinking process can be advantageously employed. Furthermore, persons who are aiming at mental health must be able to evaluate propaganda so that their actions will bring about the highest possible degree of adjustment. A discussion of propaganda, then, has its fitting place in a consideration of mental hygiene. The topic is particularly pertinent to college students, because they will be the leaders in the next generation and must be able to think through and to analyze propagandas, so as to make the most satisfactory choices.

Propaganda is defined as an organization or plan for spreading a particular doctrine or a system of principles. There are both good and bad propagandas, and it is the responsibility of the intelligent citizen to make thoughtful distinctions between them in the interests of effective behavior.

Clyde R. Miller, founder of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis,

¹² It should be noted that much advertising is truthful and represents an honest effort to sell an excellent product; but there is advertising that is primarily selfish and untruthful or, at best, deceptive, and that partakes heavily of the nature of propaganda.

lists seven common devices employed by propagandists: (1) name calling, (2) glittering generalities, (3) the device of transfer, (4) the device of testimonial, (5) the device of plain folks, (6) card stacking, (7) the band-wagon technique.¹³ Analysis of these techniques and devices will serve to illustrate the steps in thinking, as well as to emphasize the importance of both language and information in clear thinking. Further, this analysis will be a help toward a more harmonious and effective existence—a condition which we call “mental health.”

Name Calling. By means of this device the propagandist tries to influence people to think in a certain way regarding some nation, race, or policy. To achieve this end, he applies to that nation, race, or policy a name which carries unpleasant associations. An appeal to basic convictions which arouse unpleasant responses will ordinarily call forth from the people the desired response, unless they are on their guard and do not allow emotion to gain control over the thought processes. In wartime, the soldiers of the opposing side are labeled “murderers.” In politics, a person who does not agree with the way things are being done is declared to be a radical or an anarchist. Other words that have been colored by unpleasant connotations are Jew, Red, communist, fascist, Jap, and nigger.

When the employment of propaganda is suspected, several questions may be asked which will serve as safeguards against one's being carried away by the name-calling technique. First ask, What does the name mean? This reveals the need for an understanding of the various shades of meaning that a word may have. Next ask, Who calls the name? This calls attention to the need for gathering data, for having a fund of information at hand. Other questions are, What are the motives of the name caller? What group, if any, does he represent? Where would the results of following the pattern of conduct proposed by the propagandist lead? By preparing definite answers to these questions the person is making his problem specific. He is gathering data. He is formulating hypotheses. And he is making a subjective test of his proposed solution. Finally, he will make a generalization which will aid in solving this particular problem and be a guide to similar decisions later.

Glittering Generalities. This technique is similar to that of name calling, except that the propagandist uses terms which carry pleasant

¹³ S. Stansfeld Sargent, *Basic Teachings of the Great Psychologists*, New York: Barnes & Noble, Inc., 1944, pp. 289–290.

connotations. Color words having a rosy glow, such as truth, beauty, freedom, and equality, are employed to cover up more fundamental meanings; *i.e.*, the color words are made to serve as camouflage in the discussion of policies which might not be agreed with if the whole truth were known.

These virtue words are dangerous, because they are omnibus words on which all manner of meanings may ride. If a propagandist talks in terms of virtue words, we may subscribe to what he says, and find ourselves subscribing to a policy which is just contrary to what we, ourselves, adhere, or should adhere if we reason the thing out.¹⁴

The safeguard against glittering generalities is to analyze the statements into component parts and attempt to apply them to actual situations. This is exactly what is called for in problem solving—that the thinker gather data, analyze them, formulate hypotheses, and make a subjective application of his generalizations. In short, protection against glittering generalities is afforded by making use of the reasoning processes and by not permitting oneself to be swayed by emotion.

The Device of Transfer. “Here the propagandist would transfer the prestige and the sanction and the authority of some institution we respect, like the state or the university or the Church, to some cause he would have us respect. Or it works in reverse.”¹⁵ For example, in the First World War the Germans had a motto, “Gott mit uns,” and in the Second World War the British slogan was “For God, for King and Country”—each enlisting the Deity on its own side. Symbols and cartoons are common instruments of the device of transfer. Cartoons of Liberty, Uncle Sam, and Justice are used to depict action of the type the propagandist would have men pursue. The device of transfer is frequently used in the field of advertising, where the picture of a pretty girl suggests pleasant associations with a particular product—almost any product—although the associations are sometimes quite out of keeping with the product itself.

Safeguards against the device of transfer, similar to those used in evaluating the other devices, include analysis of motives, evaluation of

¹⁴ Clyde R. Miller and Louis Minsky, “Propaganda—Good and Bad—for Democracy,” *Survey Graphic*, Vol. 28 (November, 1939), p. 707. By permission of the publishers.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

the actual objective situations, a guarding against emotional conduct, and contemplation of results which would accrue from the course of action being recommended by the propagandist.

The Testimonial Technique. This technique, widely used in advertising—which is a form of propaganda, possessing both beneficial and detrimental qualities—is also used in political and social fields. In this method, a famous character is called upon to endorse some product or program by testifying that he approves it. Familiar examples of testimonials are the endorsements of breakfast foods by professional baseball players and of cigarettes by noted singers. The implication is that if such personages would approve of a given product the article must be all right. If some prominent person approves of a political project, it seems that he must have good reason for his belief, and his prestige clinches the decision. Thus, it is made to appear that people who are supposedly less intimately acquainted with the thing being endorsed would do well to follow the lead of the notable person who is quoted.

Antidotes for the testimonial technique are quite like those used for the other propaganda techniques. The problem must be made specific by asking questions: Upon what facts are the testimonials founded? What is the motivating force back of the testimonial? (Money, personal fame, selfish gain, or a genuine desire to be helpful.) Where would the following of the course of actions proposed by the testimonial lead? Is the person giving the testimonial really an authority in the realm concerned? The steps in clear thinking are again called into service: make the problem specific, gather data, formulate a hypothesis, test the proposed solution, make a generalization.

The Plain-folks Device. This device is particularly appealing because of the apparent intention that the program proposed is to be of ultimate benefit to the masses of the people. The propagandist identifies himself or his program with the plain folk. Speeches, articles, and books make it appear that the common man will be the one to derive the greatest benefit from the proposed course of action. "A chicken in every pot," "Share the wealth," and "Thirty dollars every Thursday" are outstanding examples of the plain-folks device.

Protection against the plain-folks device is afforded by resort to the thinking process. Is the scheme practical? What are some similar programs and how have they worked? What is the motive of the instigator

of the plan? The thinking person must get behind the catchy statement or motto and determine what the real elements in the situation are.

The outcome and the fallacy of the plain-folks technique were well illustrated in a state election in 1948. As the result of campaigning based on the plight of the old folks, the people voted a pension of \$50 a month to every person over the age of sixty. Apparently there was no thought of how the sum of money required to pay the pension was to be raised. After considerable study and delay, state officials had to declare the pension inoperable because of lack of funds. The people—voters—had enough sense of humor to laugh at themselves, write self-deprecating “letters to the editor,” and joke about the matter in their daily conversations.

The Card-stacking Device. Just as the crooked gambler stacks the cards so that his opponent will be dealt losers and he will be dealt winners, the propagandist stacks his arguments and “facts” so that the truth will not be perceived. This stacking may be outright misrepresentation or merely minor distortion and the use of innuendo. Card stacking is difficult to detect, because the gifted propagandist (quite like the deft gambler) has put on a naive front, consisting of the most plausible untruths. In this, as in the other devices, the propagandist does not want the people he is trying to sway to be aware of the fact that there is another side to the question involved. So he makes a point of presenting only the elements that he wishes to have examined.

Obviously, the antidote for this technique is to uncover the facts which may support the opposing side. Further examination into the facts which have been presented will afford insight into the degree of their validity. Gathering data is a paramount consideration. The same ways of getting information are offered here as were suggested in the general procedure of problem solving; *i.e.*, actual experience, talking with others, and reading the literature available on the subject under consideration. It is in the information about a problem that one will find the suggestions—frequently the full data—for the solution of the problem.

The Band-wagon Technique. The appeal voiced in this technique is intended to get everyone to follow the crowd. Do not (it seems to say) make yourself conspicuous by doing things differently than your neighbors do them. The propagandist advertises the fact that everyone else

is "doing it" and implies that only the "piker" will refrain from following the leader. He makes an appeal to the fundamental desire of mankind for the security that is afforded by conformity.

Protection against the band-wagon technique is afforded by some knowledge of the psychology of crowd behavior. Anyone who knows that crowds are characterized by a predominance of emotion over the rational processes will be more hesitant about getting on the band wagon than would one who was not aware of that phenomenon. If the person knows that a man in the crowd loses his individuality and sense of responsibility, he will be less likely to identify himself with the crowd. When he is aware of the fact that fundamental motives are appealed to, he will make an effort to have thinking control the emotions. The man who realizes that crowds are very suggestible will guard against doing things which in calmer moments would appear to be unreasonable. These considerations indicate that one can prepare for the onslaught of propaganda before it actually begins to play upon him; *i.e.*, mental efficiency does not have to wait for a particular problem to demonstrate its usefulness, but can most advantageously be made a part of a person's everyday order of living.

Some general considerations. In all the suggestions for counteracting or evaluating propaganda, the necessity for clear thinking has been emphasized. Such thinking will be greatly improved by acquaintance with the meaning of the words, symbols, and techniques that are employed. Language, both literary and symbolic, is a valuable asset in the process of arriving at justifiable conclusions.

Another important consideration in the evaluation of propaganda is the necessity for realizing that there are more sides than one to a given question. For example, the problem of the Jews would be much less acute if people were to realize that psychological and anthropological studies of races reveal no fundamental differences that cannot be largely ascribed to environmental influences. The ability to respect other nations and peoples would promote a more accurate evaluation of much of the propaganda to which people are exposed. Not only proper respect, but sympathy for and understanding of other peoples arise from knowledge about their work, ideals, and general culture. Such knowledge must be acquired in the way that information is gathered on other problems.

The study of mass thinking, in a democratic society, which propaganda seeks to influence, is as important to the student of mental hygiene as is the consideration of his own personal efficiency. Men increase their own happiness and effectiveness as they learn to make adjustments to the social order in which they live. Employment of the thinking process is a means of facilitating such adjustment. While this thinking process has been illustrated by the workings of propaganda, the student should bear in mind that thinking is called for in countless other situations.

SUMMARY

The previous chapter dealt with the various factors, or steps, involved in the process of problem solving. This chapter has elaborated the discussion of those factors by showing how they may be applied in specific situations.

Intellectual efficiency is a product of straight thinking, which requires precise use of language. A growing vocabulary facilitates the clear perception of problems, aids in the gathering of data and the consolidating of the results of experience into generalizations. As ideas, even good ones, tend to be transitory in nature, it pays to record one's ideas in writing so as to be able, later, to review, classify, and discard or expand them. It is necessary to take time to provide an opportunity for thoughts, plans, and projects to incubate and mature. It is particularly helpful to take time immediately after reading for reflection on and evaluation of the ideas which have been encountered.

Emotion, in the form of drive, initiative, and optimism, may serve as an aid to intellectual efficiency; but such emotions as pessimism, anger, prejudice, and the like can be a solid wall blocking competence in problem solving. Emotion also takes the form of mental set, which, in turn, may be either a help or a hindrance. A positive psychology of suggestion—one in which the individual is optimistic and open-minded, and in which he manifests initiative—is an aid of first importance to mental efficiency.

Capitalizing on group wisdom, through seeking the advice of various individuals and taking a problem to a formally organized group, is a technique which warrants the serious consideration of the individual who is seeking optimum mental efficiency. Finally, it is necessary to

assert emphatically that efficiency is possible only when one is willing to apply himself through serious, hard work.

An example of the application of thought to a real problem dealt with propaganda. Not only college students, but other men and women, as well, could improve their mental health if they would study the techniques of propaganda and apply their knowledge. One can analyze some propagandas by asking certain questions: What does the name really mean? Is all that glitters really gold? Are the associations that are made logical ones? Which people have good reason to have their testimony believed? Where would the proposed course of action finally lead? Are *all* the known facts regarding a proposition contained in a particular presentation? Is the majority always right—or wrong?

Mental health, the achievement of a harmonious and effective existence, can be enhanced by applying the techniques of and the aids to straight thinking.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. "Intellectual efficiency" is a term which can be used as a synonym for problem solving.
2. There can be no problem solving on a successful level without the aid of language.
3. A highly developed vocabulary adds to behavior variability just as surely as does organic development.
4. The maturation of ideas takes place sometimes without planned periods for concentration and reflection.
5. Adequate language descriptions, or ability to make such descriptions, actually increases the power of perception.
6. If a thing can be described in verbal terms, it will be more easily remembered.
7. Only people with average or below-average memories should have to write down their best ideas.

8. One can assume the attitude of being interested, even if he sees no value in a particular activity.
9. Symbols take on an emotional connotation because of the processes of association and conditioning.
10. The main advantage of pooling ideas is due to the fact that the majority is always right.
11. If a person really achieves intellectual efficiency he will have less work to do.
12. Propaganda can be a constructive factor in the hands of the right people.
13. In analysis of propaganda, the speaker or the writer should be studied, as well as his words.
14. Using the picture of a pretty girl to advertise an automobile is utilizing the device of testimonial.
15. Card stacking is a device which can be used successfully only by an expert who has studied the technique.
16. When a strike is called on a batter from your home team, you are likely to think it is a ball because of the same factors which operate in the band-wagon technique.

Suggested Readings

BORING, EDWIN G., HERBERT S. LANGFELD, and HARRY PORTER WELD, *Foundations of Psychology*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1948. pp. 185-214.

This chapter describes some of the psychological problems involved in thinking and makes specific suggestions as to dangers that must be avoided. Recommendations are made for improving the quality of thinking.

JASTROW, JOSEPH, *Effective Thinking*, London: Noel Douglas, 1932. 263 pp.

This book is written for the layman rather than for the scholar. It is direct and clear. The author shows the factors involved in thinking, tells why thinking sometimes goes astray, and then offers constructive suggestions for doing better thinking in a world filled with new ideas and theories.

JOHNSON, WENDELL, *People in Quandaries*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. 532 pp.

This book presents a unique approach to the problems of adjustment—that of semantics. The author suggests that we would solve many of our problems if we were to use words more carefully, note minute details meticulously, and apply the techniques of good thinking more consistently. It is a book to be studied rather than read.

Chapter 13

DANGER ZONES OF MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health has been described as a way of effective living. Effective living implies that the individual is well adjusted to his social and physical environment in terms of his own capacities and limitations. However, the word "adjusted" is not quite adequate, because it seems to imply a static condition. A better term would be *adjusting* individual, which conveys the impression that adjustment is a continuous process—as, indeed, it must be if mental health is to be maintained.

It is desirable, in the study of mental health, to learn what effective adjusting means, so that one may have definite goals toward which to strive. Previous chapters have been concerned with the description of such desirable adjustive processes. At this time it seems appropriate that some of the undesirable forms of so-called "adjustment" should be explained, in order that certain of the danger zones in the maintenance of mental health can be avoided.

Continuous adjusting is necessary because of ever-present conflict. Conflict is not an undesirable condition. Rather, it is something to be desired, because only through successfully dealing with obstacles and problems can desirable personality growth be effected. However, in many cases conflict does not bring about a successful solution of problems, as will be learned from a study of this chapter. The aim is that of resolving conflict so that frustration will be avoided.

COMMON TYPES OF DEFENSE MECHANISMS

A defense mechanism, or defense reaction (also called "dynamisms"), is a way of avoiding or reducing the painful effect of a particular conflict. It is the result of a person's attempt at personality adjustment. Frustrated desires lead the individual to seek satisfaction in one or several types of defense mechanism, such as the more common ones, described in the following paragraphs.

Rationalization. Probably the most common defense mechanism is rationalization, which is false reasoning, or the glorified explanation of behavior. It is the false justification, through misguided mental processes, of some act—be it completed, contemplated, or presently being carried on. The word has a meaning contrary to the definition which might be inferred from a study of the root of the word. It is *anything but the rational* explanation of conduct. In fact, it is based upon irrational thought and might better be called “irrationalization.” Whereas a correct explanation of certain conduct would be an admission of defeat or inadequacy, rationalization involves the introduction of imaginary noble motives and actions. The man who steals and justifies his action on the ground that money would work harm to its previous possessor is resorting to rationalization. The truant who states that he went to the woods to increase his knowledge of nature is probably rationalizing.

A student who was taking a course in history was getting along satisfactorily until the time of the mid-term examination, when his results fell down considerably below his previous marks on weekly tests. Instead of seeking the real cause of his difficulty, he resorted to rationalization, asserting that the instructor gave unfair examinations, covering materials not assigned, and that, therefore, there was little use for studying. He did not duly consider the fact that his classmates had passed the same examinations. Moreover, he pointed out that history was of little use to him, since it had no connection with present events. A further elaboration of the reasons for his poor work was that history was an elective subject that played no vital part in his major curriculum and did not warrant additional attention. Finally, he was positive that the instructor had a personal grudge against him, evidenced by the fact that his grade was low. It is apparent that his rationalization kept him from getting at the real source of the difficulty and prevented his doing anything constructive about it. This lad's rationalization may seem fantastic, but that is frequently the way with this defense mechanism—one weak reason calls for support by another excuse, which is often equally weak.

Perhaps everyone rationalizes to some extent, and often without serious results. The real danger lies in the fact that when the rationalization is carried to an extreme degree, it prevents the facing of reality and circumscribes the possibility of a socially approved and successful

solution of the original conflict. Instead of solving the problem, it really adds another problem to the burden—that of running away from difficulty.

Projection. This defense mechanism, really only another form of rationalization, is a kind of false perception of events, or a misinterpretation of them, which involves placing the blame for some deficiency or defeat upon the shoulders of another individual, thus avoiding the necessity for the victim's admitting a fault or a failure. A person who has serious problems of social adjustment criticizes the popularity or emphasizes the unpopularity of his acquaintances at every opportunity. He attempts to divert attention from his own problems by calling attention to those of others. Love of scandal is based on the mechanism of projection. Pointing out the deficiencies of those who make the news affords a glow of righteousness to the scandalmonger. A form of projection is found in childish actions wherein people blame their frustration upon inanimate objects; a child slaps a chair because he has stumbled against it, or a man swears at his car because it will not start readily. This is clearly a case of the clumsy carpenter blaming his tools.

Projection is an attempt to build up or conserve the ego by adopting a "holier-than-thou" attitude. The person who resorts to projection discusses the faults of another because it tends to diminish his own shortcomings or diverts attention from them. The one who is criticized becomes an object of social disapproval, serving as the "goat," while the "projector" tries to establish his own superiority. Projection is, thus, a device used by persons who refuse to place a true evaluation upon their own conduct. They have not learned that it is only human to make mistakes and cannot concede that they themselves have ever made any errors. It is not necessary to look far for evidences of the widespread practice of projection. Quarrels and arguments afford many examples. "He started it." "Why give me a ticket for speeding? I was only following the car in front." "Of course, I shoved you; you walked all over my feet." "I can't see why I should be polite; you were rude to me." These are samples of the numerous situations in which personal blame is evaded by the projection of complaint upon someone else.

Persons who have not developed healthy attitudes toward sex are likely to use projection to afford some release from their own confused feelings. Fanatical crusaders against vice see evidence of lust and vile-

ness in picture magazines, theater productions, novels, dancing, and even the innocent play of children. Such "righteous" individuals seem to get a vicarious thrill out of constant talk about the sin of sex. Such attitudes might be condoned and overlooked as being merely a symptom of poor mental health in some unfortunate, if it were not for the harm they do in shaping the thoughts of those who do not see a defense mechanism at work. Then, too, there is the danger that listening to the condemnation of others will lead those who are not particularly well adjusted in their own sex life into the support of the original critic. The seeker of mental health should attempt to avoid this situation by (1) being suspicious of violent denunciators and (2) seeking to develop balance in his own views regarding the genuine satisfaction of natural motivations.

Projection, as is the case with rationalization, does nothing to solve difficulties and diminishes the likelihood of direct attack upon problems. When carried to an extreme form, projection may result in hallucinations or visions, which are mental perceptions for which there is in reality no objective stimulation. In fact, excessive exercise of projection is frequently an early indication of the mental abnormality called "dementia praecox" (early onset of withdrawal from reality).

Irradiation. This defense mechanism has no set pattern; it is a means of reducing tension by "taking it out" on anyone or anything, in all one's activities. It might be likened to projection except that, instead of blaming one person or situation, the individual seems to bear a grudge toward many people and many situations. For instance, a student may get up some morning to find that there is no hot water for a shave. He correctly blames a fellow student for sleeping in and failing to start the water heater; but, in addition, his frame of mind is such that he finds fault with the way his roommate leaves his clothes scattered about. He goes to breakfast and finds that, for the sixth time (his count) that week, grapefruit is being served. The friendly dog outside the dining room is too loud in his welcome and is slapped roughly in return. Next, the bus driver stops five paces beyond where the student has been waiting, and a big, brawny athlete is filling half the aisle with his enormous feet. In class, the dilatory instructor is later than usual and then fails to consider the assignment that had been prepared. So it goes from one thing to another throughout the day. From one source of irritation this exasperated individual expands his

frustrations to all the people and situations that come his way. "Like concentric rings spreading over the entire surface of a pool into which a stone has been thrown, so irritability, starting from a single repressed memory or from a particular immediate disturbance, can so irradiate as to color all reactions and attitudes."¹

The dangers of irradiation are obvious. It produces a pessimistic view of the world, it leads to projection, it creates difficulties in social adjustment, and it upsets digestion—to mention just a few of its ill effects. The remedy lies largely in one's point of view. If we can place minor things in their proper perspective, if we can be objective in our evaluation of situations, if we can allow for our own shortcomings as well as those of our fellows, we ought to be able to avoid this misery-begetting response.

Identification. This is a defense mechanism closely related to both rationalization and projection. In identification, the individual imagines himself to be undergoing the experiences of another person. His imagined experience may be either victory or suffering. Through identification a person may picture himself as the great conqueror described in a book or he may feel that he should be receiving sympathy for such suffering as his hero on the motion-picture screen is enduring. Identification is adopted as a defense against personal feelings of insecurity and inferiority. At college a student may take pride in belonging to an exclusive social set, fraternity, or sorority, so as to identify with the group and share its victories and accomplishments. Adults become members of clubs and lodges for the satisfaction they get from identification. Of course, there may be other reasons for joining, but identification is frequently one of the basic reasons. It may be well to mention that one of the dangers of identification with a group is the tendency to distort the view one takes of the group until an attack on it is considered an attack on the members and a criticism of the group is taken as a criticism of oneself.

Identification, like rationalization and projection, is the result of the formation of a bad habit. Probably no one deliberately sets out to acquire this defense mechanism; but a lack of personal accomplishment may lead a person into securing satisfaction from the exploits of others.

¹ S. H. Kraines and E. S. Therford, *Managing Your Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1947, pp. 143–144. By permission of the publisher.

Many persons who practice mild forms of identification are considered normal and mentally healthy. The danger lies in the probability that they will resort to it to a greater and greater extent, because through its exercise they can evade the painfulness of conflict. It is most likely to be adopted by persons who are tormented by an excessive sense of inferiority.

While visiting Canadian mental hospitals a few years ago, one of the authors was impressed by the large numbers of patients who had identified themselves in one way or another with the United States and claimed to be American secret agents, relatives of the President, or to be receiving messages from the "hearts of the American people." No similar preoccupation with Canada is apparent among patients in American hospitals. In the United States such attempts at identification with a strong group or leader are by no means uncommon. We have recently seen our old people flocking to the banners of the Townsend Plan, and even more recently many returning servicemen find importance and comfort in the powerful veterans' organizations.²

Parents are inclined to use identification as a cover-up for their own deficiencies or imagined deficiencies. They may seek to establish a feeling of present adequacy through identification with the successes of their children; but this may work a hardship on the children by virtue of the pressure of its demands upon their achievement. The outcome may be that the young people are urged into occupations or professions in which they have no particular interest and for which they have no special aptitude. They are likely to have difficulty in growing away from their parents because of the abnormal attachments that have been created. Finally, such identification makes it less necessary for the parents to participate vigorously in their own activities, the circular result being that identification is all the more necessary as an escape for them.

A moderate amount of identification may secure certain satisfactions for a person. It may assist him in achieving his own goals, provided that activity takes the place of daydreaming. That is, identification with a person of high ideals may lead one to adopt those same ideals. On the other hand, excessive identification may lead to delusions, such as are

² Donald Snygg and Arthur W. Combs, *Individual Behavior*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949, p. 75. By permission of the publisher.

observed in the insane man who believes himself to be Napoleon or Washington, a great writer, or President of the United States. In such cases, contact with reality is lost and the world of fantasy replaces objectivity.

Daydreaming. Daydreaming, or fantasy, should have a welcome place in the life of every normal human being. Without the motivating force of dreams and ambitions there would be much less aggressive action and genuine accomplishment than there is. When, however, daydreaming constitutes a danger zone in mental health, it is because so much satisfaction is derived from fantasy that real accomplishment is neglected. Mental hygienists and psychiatrists have found numerous cases in which persons have resorted to daydreaming to such an extent that there was a complete lack of vital connection with reality. Such separation from the external world is illustrated by what are called "absences," which are temporary lapses of contact with the immediate environment; that is, the person can be so deep in his daydream that when he is spoken to he gives no indication that he has heard. Even a sudden movement directly in front of his eyes will not attract his attention.

Other phases of lack of contact with reality are known as obsessions. These are obtrusive, often unwelcome, but persistent thoughts that predominate over the perception of events that actually are happening. Hallucinations also give evidence that dreams are sometimes stronger than what is real. In hallucinations a person perceives something for which there is no visible or tangible stimulation; hearing voices and seeing visions are examples. Absences, obsessions, and hallucinations, which are abnormal developments, frequently start with excessive daydreaming.

Nevertheless, daydreaming, in and of itself, is not a cause for worry. It must have been an exceedingly wild flight of imagination that first set before men the prospect of their flying; yet today that dream is realized. Apparently, then, it is not just the extent or the intensity of the daydream that makes it valuable or dangerous. (Even the seemingly absurd dream of man's flying had a happy outcome.) The final test is in the outcome. If dreams are productive of renewed vigor in one's work or of ideas which solve problems, they are valuable; whereas, if they lead to withdrawal from life's struggles and retreat from reality,

they are dangerous to mental health. Therefore, if they are to contribute to mental health, daydreams must be the forerunners of activity.

The danger of excessive daydreaming is apparent in the case of a boy who wanted to be a hero in the eyes of his playmates. His conception of the hero role was that of an outstanding athlete. As his participation in the boys' games did not bring him immediate stardom, he forsook the difficult route of actual accomplishment for the easier path of daydreaming. Withdrawing from the group, he devoted his time to the construction of imagined successes on the playing field. Here his success was unchallenged. Since he controlled all the imaginary players, he could always assume the hero's role, and he dreamed that he received the adulation and praise which he desired. Luckily, he came into contact with a teacher who was concerned with his withdrawal and was willing to help attack the problem. By slow stages the teacher secured the confidence of the lad, learned of his daydreams, and used them constructively, showing the boy the necessity of going through a learning period preparatory for successful participation in sports. He helped him develop his latent capacities and the boy actually did become competent, though not a star. After a time, the degree of accomplishment afforded enough satisfaction so that the boy gave up his world of fantasy for the thrill of real participation.

This case illustrates the fact that, while excessive daydreaming can result in withdrawal (shunning active participation in life), a moderate use of it can set worth-while goals. Preoccupation with daydreams is more common in the child than in the adult, but it must be guarded against because of its tendency to become a habitual response. There can be no doubt that such dreaming gives a pleasurable color to life through the exercise of a vivid imagination. Daydreams that result in the setting of goals—as do those of artists, writers, and inventors—and that are followed by activity may become a valuable asset to personality growth and the achievement of mental health.

Regression. One particular type of daydreaming may result in the mental disease known as "regression," which is a return to childish and infantile forms of behavior after having shown indications of mature reactions. Temper tantrums are probably the most common example of this so-called "adjustive" mechanism (actually it does not adjust). A frequently cited example is the child who, upon the arrival of a younger brother or sister, finds that he can get more attention by being

a crybaby than by being a "little man." The man who refuses to attend a club meeting because his close friend, who would afford him a feeling of protection, cannot go is regressing to childish behavior. Obviously, this type of action, instead of solving a problem, sets up two problems where previously there was only one. To the necessity for facing reality, which was already present, has been added the necessity for overcoming an inadequate response to a difficult situation.

An example of a person's resorting to regressive behavior in college and continuing it thereafter is that of Mrs. M. As a girl, she had been granted her every wish by indulgent parents who could not bear to see her deprived of some of the things they had lacked earlier in their lives. She received parental help with her high-school studies and made frequent visits home while attending college. In order to make these visits, she frequently had to cut classes and even miss examinations, a fact which was ignored by her parents. Her roommates condoned her conduct because they did not perceive that she was failing to do work commensurate with her abilities. Things went satisfactorily until she fell in love and married an ambitious and independent young man. He refused to accept the help proffered by the girl's doting parents and insisted that they must live on their own budget. When the husband said that they could not afford a new dress for an important social function, the wife broke down in tears. Crying had been a successful device with her parents and she now regressed to this infantile level of conduct to control her husband. When he remained firm in his intention to have independence, she packed up and returned home, where she could find the security that she had been accustomed to as a child. Regression was the factor at work; reality was too heavy for her to bear. The adult responsibilities of a wife were too difficult for her to face. It was easier to be a child and have others solve her problems for her.

Glorified memories of the past may be an indication of mental regression, but they are not necessarily dangerous. Fond recollections of bygone days may be of actual value in preparing one to face the difficult obstacles of the present. Freedom from emotional tensions is afforded to many adults through attending a circus, indulging in a game of marbles, or wearing old clothes around the yard on Sunday. Such regressions are entirely normal if the return to present conditions is not unduly delayed. It is when an individual resorts to infantile or

childish behavior and then fails to return to adult reactions that concern over his mental health is justifiable. All too frequently the accusation leveled against an adult is quite just: "He acts like a two-year-old. Whenever something goes wrong, he pouts just as childishly as my baby sister does."

Hypochondria. Some persons are prone to blame lack of health for their limited achievement. Illness furnishes them with an opportunity to avoid the stigma of defeat. Consequently, they find it convenient to be sick. The word "hypochondria" is used to describe such a state—one of preoccupation with one's health and an undue exaggeration of relatively minor physical discomfort, which provides an avenue of escape from unwelcome duties. The hypochondriac acts as though each slight indisposition were a very serious ailment. If the actual bodily condition is at all poor, it is greatly exaggerated by a worried state of mind.

This type of escape is probably more common than is generally realized. Children soon find that they can be absent from school without blame if they display the symptoms of illness. The excuse of a headache offered by an adult to avoid certain social activities is a commonplace. It is likely that there are relatively few people who have not at some time or other either invented or exaggerated convenient physical symptoms to relieve themselves of carrying out some distasteful obligation.

A mother who was acquainted with the phenomenon of hypochondria dealt wisely with her young son when he showed evidence of using this escape mechanism. The boy contracted a cold accompanied by a headache and was permitted to stay away from school. As he had developed a mild dislike for his schoolwork, he hit upon the plan of having a headache when it was time to leave home. However, the headache left him as soon as it was too late to attend his classes. After this had occurred several times, the mother decided that something should be done about it. She explained to her son that if he were sick it was dangerous to be out of bed and active, so she kept him in bed all day long. Because he was so ill, she declared, it would be unwise for him to have toys in bed or to receive company, so his day was barren of any interest. When the boy discovered that to be sick just before school meant his being treated as an invalid all day, he promptly recovered his health. Too many people, not having such wise mothers, have per-

mitted hypochondria to become a habitual defense pattern which they cannot easily discard.

It is more difficult to justify hypochondria than to justify certain daydreams. Although there may be an occasion when getting out of some activity on the plea of illness is justifiable, the danger involved is probably hardly worth the price. There comes a time when hypochondria progresses into a state of hysteria. The patient, rather than admit that his illness was merely an excuse, assumes the actual symptoms of disease and becomes convinced that he is ill. He may be so fully persuaded as to the actual functioning of his body's being impaired that his power to control his body will be reduced. This condition will be explained later, in the discussion of the more serious types of defense mechanisms.

Compensation—direct. Lack of a desirable characteristic may lead an individual to place particular emphasis upon the thing lacked, with the result that this characteristic is so developed as to function normally. Glenn Cunningham compensated for his burned feet and legs by practicing running until he became one of the great American distance runners. The classical example of direct compensation is Demosthenes, who by his determination to overcome a speech defect became the greatest orator of his time. However, not all efforts at direct compensation have such happy outcomes. Sometimes the attempt to compensate results regularly in defeat, no amount of effort sufficing to create the desired ability. In other cases, compensation has been achieved only through the unwarranted neglect of other capacities, so that the individual has developed a warped personality. In short, the compensations of Cunningham and Demosthenes do not cover the entire explanation of their success; they had latent capacities which, when exercised, attained to superior accomplishment. If such underlying capacity did not exist in the first place, no amount of practice could make it appear.

Giving vent to anger is an unwholesome manifestation of direct compensation. When a person's pride is wounded by another, he may compensate by becoming angry. He desires to get even with the one who has frustrated him and thus to reestablish his pride.

The angry individual in attempting to crush the offender might say that he is paying him back in his own coin, but he generally never does. He nearly always pays him back in worse coin. If I receive an insult and get angry

over it, I return the insult with a greater one. If I receive a blow in the face and anger results, I may attempt to maul my enemy's face more seriously. If scandal has besmirched my name, and I resort to anger, I smear the slander thicker upon my slanderer.³

It is easy to perceive that in such cases compensation is gained at too great a cost to personal integrity.

The danger of direct compensation can also be recognized in the realm of mental activities, as well as in that of physical and emotional traits. Many students enter college in high hopes that they will become doctors or lawyers. The courses may be difficult for them, in view of their limited capacities. Nevertheless, they continue to fight for their goal, feeling that it would be revealing weakness to admit defeat in a particular curriculum. In order to secure passing grades they study continuously, never taking time out for the rest and recreation essential to mental health. They neglect the valuable opportunities afforded by college life to develop their social competency, because they dare not take time off from their studies to engage in social activities. Likewise, their opportunities to explore the fine arts, which would enrich their lives through a broadening of viewpoints, are ignored because of a lack of time. Ultimately, these students may get their degrees and become professional workers, but the cost has been great. Their personalities have been warped through exclusive concentration upon a single goal. Their success is limited because they have failed to develop the human understandings and the implications of their work, which is essential to success in the professions. Then, too, it frequently happens that, in spite of the attempt to compensate for lack of mental ability through excessive study, they may fail their final examinations. If there is no alternative goal, an additional threat to mental health must be met.

Direct compensation then, while it does have certain advantages, has its undeniable dangers. Before attempting such compensation, the individual would do well to study himself carefully, to find out whether he has latent capacities. On the other hand, it would be the method of mental hygiene not to give up a cherished goal before being sure that one did not possess those capacities. Often what is mistaken for a lack of ability may be merely a temporary slowing down of learning, which

³ W. H. Mikesell, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939, pp. 379-380. By permission of the publisher.

psychologists call a "plateau." But to think that hard work is sure to make up for actual lack of ability is an erroneous conclusion, and the mentally healthy person should rid himself of it. The need for moderation and balance is apparent.

Compensation—indirect. Lack of a desirable capacity does not always lead to laying particular stress upon the development of the same area. The person may decide to build up some other quality, to take the place of the one that is deficient. To do so is to make use of indirect compensation. For example, a boy who is poor in athletics may decide to make a special effort for excellence in scholarship. A girl who is socially incompetent may try to derive satisfactions from becoming an authority on nursing or literature. If ability in one area is entirely lacking or if achievement in that direction can be secured only through the expenditure of a disproportionate amount of energy, the individual who employs indirect compensation is acting wisely. It is likely that many cases of success can be explained on this basis.

The benefit of indirect compensation is well expressed in these words of Sadie Shellow:

Suppose we take the case of a homely girl with protruding teeth. She knows she can never overcome this defect. She may withdraw from social contacts, become shy, never smile (for fear of showing her teeth) and be pensive and sad all her life, or she may look the fact in the face. "Yes, to be sure I am not beautiful, but I have other qualities. I will develop those. People will like me and seek me in spite of my looks." She may become philanthropic, generous, charitable, sympathetic, and people will flock to her for advice and sympathy and comfort. This kind of spirit has been the one which has stimulated many of the great geniuses. Steinmetz, with his poor deformed body, developed his mind so remarkably that the whole world revered and respected him.⁴

Such people are making a wholesome use of indirect compensation.

It sometimes happens that indirect compensation is unwholesome because the substitute activity is not socially oriented. A young person who cannot gain prestige through physical or mental accomplishment sometimes will resort to stealing, to establish himself in the eyes of his comrades. Students have been known to compensate for lack of atten-

⁴ Sadie M. Shellow, *How to Develop Your Personality*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1932, pp. 209-210. By permission of the publisher.

tion from teachers because they could not recite in class by creating various sorts of disturbance—whispering, shuffling of feet, or loud laughter. If they could not or would not compensate by studying, they would draw attention to themselves by socially disapproved means.

Thus, there are two dangers inherent in indirect compensation: (1) the action may not be socially approved; (2) there is danger that the person will continue to regret the fact that certain abilities are lacking. He fails to get the satisfactions from his compensation that he should by continuing to dwell upon the desirability of the undeveloped ability. The point to remember is that a person's attitude should be so changed that genuine satisfactions will be derived through wise compensations. When the goal is changed, the viewpoint toward the one that has been discarded must also be altered. If indirect compensation is to be wholesome, the person must feel assured that a good substitute has been chosen and that it is just as meritorious to be superior in one area as in another.

Conclusions. The common types of defense mechanism treated above are employed to some extent by almost every "normal" individual. There are certain values to be attained from a limited use of rationalization, projection, identification, daydreaming, compensation, and even occasional regression. The danger lies in using them indiscriminately and continuously as substitutes for genuine activity and accomplishment. To possess mental health, one must see to it (1) that these common defense mechanisms do not prevent him from facing reality, (2) that they do not limit his aggressive attack on life's problems, (3) that they are not employed to an excessive degree, and (4) that he is at all times aware of his use of these mechanisms.

MORE SERIOUS TYPES OF DEFENSE MECHANISMS

An individual, in seeking to adjust himself to the conditions and problems of life, may try many different kinds of reaction. In some cases these reactions are successful and the person becomes adjusted to the situation involved. He is able to resolve a particular conflict by changing his approach, varying his goal, or altering his viewpoint toward his troublesome problem. The person who has accomplished this enjoys mental health; he is competent and happy and is able to live harmoniously. Sometimes, however, the attempt to adjust oneself is not success-

ful. Then the person who has failed may seek to evade or diminish the severity of his problems by adopting various defense mechanisms, some of which were discussed in the foregoing section. However, defense mechanisms do not always furnish a satisfactory solution of the conflict.

Defense mechanisms are sometimes ineffective because they are not planned in the light of knowledge concerning their operation. They are the result of the unconscious formation of the wrong kind of habits. The so-called "defense" mechanism fails to afford a real defense because the person remains unadjusted. He may think that he is getting rid of his problem, but it remains in the background as a perplexing difficulty. What actually happens is that *another problem is added*—that of finding a way of escape from the dangers of the defense mechanism itself. Some of the most familiar of these nonadjustive defense mechanisms will be described.

Hysteria. Hysteria is a form of mental illness through which a person attempts to resolve a conflict by taking on the symptoms of an actual organic disability. In reality there is little, if anything, wrong with his physical being, but he thinks, and firmly believes, that there is an organic disorder. As has been stated before, hypochondria constitutes a danger zone in mental health because it may lead to hysteria. The person who resorts to hypochondria in order to avoid his difficulties may deceive others, but he does not completely satisfy himself. As a result, a conscientious individual, sensing his own duplicity, really develops symptoms of organic disease; he experiences the pains that accompany sickness and becomes completely convinced that he is ill. When this stage is reached, he has the disorder which psychiatrists call "hysteria." It takes numerous and varied forms, but the common characteristic in all cases is the development of the symptoms of an actual disease in order to disguise a feeling of conflict and to satisfy *conscience*.

This defense mechanism is used also to cover up a fear, a repressed desire, a strongly emotionalized belief, or a personal secret, as will be made apparent in the following case.

Harry G., a chief motor machinist in the Navy, came into the office toward the end of the war, but before the cessation of hostilities, seeking help from a variety of symptoms. His appearance was that of an extremely sick man. His color was so pale as to seem almost yellow, he had huge dark circles under his eyes, his

flesh was so wasted that the skin sunk deeply between the bones in his hands and face. The fingers on his right hand were stained a deep brown from the constant string of cigarettes he smoked, lighting each off the butt of the previous one. He reported frequent nausea; inability to sleep (in spite of marked feelings of tiredness); decided startle reactions (jumping at the sound of sharp, even though slight, noises); and sharp pains in his eyes and forehead. He was observed to stare blankly and to listen intently when the sound of a car or a truck was heard.

After several interviews his story began to come out in a coherent fashion. He had been in the Pacific area from the beginning of the war, had been one of those who retreated before the victorious Japanese as they took islands farther and farther to the south. He was still on the same ship when the tables were turned and the Japanese began to be found only on the islands farther to the north. All these years, relief had been promised but it had not come. He was anxious to get out of the conflict but did not become physically ill at any time. His most traumatic experience was to pull the bodies of American marines and sailors from the water after they had floated about for several days in one of the bays of a repossessed island. Even this did not seem to affect him too strongly at the time, though he remembered it vividly later.

When relief finally came, he was one of the few on his ship to return to the states. During this voyage he became ill and after he had landed the symptoms described above developed more and more markedly. This appeared to be strange until he finally revealed how he felt about returning. He kept thinking about his buddies who were still left on his ship. He felt that he was a quitter to be leaving combat duty while his shipmates were still serving. Here, in one case, were several of the contributing factors to hysteria. He had had a fear that he might be injured or killed or that he would have to keep fighting forever; he had a desire, through the months, to get out of it and return to his farm; but most of all, he had the emotionalized belief that he was a quitter. This he had kept secret from all those "statesiders" with whom he had talked and who, he felt, could not understand him. The physical symptoms of hysteria made his escape both from the conditions of his

naval service and from the mental and emotional conflict more "respectable."

A commonly cited example of hysteria concerns soldiers during the course of a war.⁵ Dreading the conflict of battle and knowing that physical handicaps would permit them to avoid fighting, they developed feelings of numbness in certain parts of their bodies—often in the trigger finger. This numbness suggested a way out of their difficulties, and they overemphasized its importance, with the result that functional (not organic) paralysis developed. They actually lost control over the finger or, in some cases, over the whole limb, which they thought was paralyzed. Proof that the paralysis was not organic was determined by means of electrical stimulation. That is, an electric shock brought into action again the seemingly paralyzed limbs. However, the mental conflict was not solved through the application of electric shock, and the soldiers then developed symptoms of illness in other parts of their bodies. Whenever the mental conflict was solved, complete recovery resulted. Numerous soldiers are reported to have regained their health suddenly when hostilities ceased—an indication that the disturbance was of a functional nature.

It is not entirely a figure of speech that a disagreeable task "gives you a pain." The "nine o'clock headache," which disappears when it is too late to go to work or to school, is essentially a mild hysterical adjustment. Almost everyone becomes more fatigued when a given amount of effort is to be expended on a distasteful job than when it is to be devoted to play or to a hobby. There is a continuum from the defense mechanisms of normal people to the most severe hysterical psychoneuroses.⁶

Hallucinations. Excessive use of daydreaming, resorted to for the avoidance of mental conflict, may lead to hallucination, which is the experience of seeing or hearing things when there is no environmental stimulation that should cause such perceptions. A person suffering from

⁵ Hysteria was given the more comforting title of "battle fatigue" during the last war, but the escape-mechanism characteristics were nevertheless those of hysteria.

⁶ Reproduced by permission from *Foundations of Psychology*, by E. G. Boring, H. S. Langfeld, and H. P. Weld, published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1948, p. 535.

hallucinations will hear nonexistent sounds and voices or see people whose only existence is in his mind. Frequently these voices and these people direct him to do something which he wants to do but knows he should not do. In this way he finds justification for committing certain acts which may be socially disapproved. His hallucination provides a defense for his fears or his wishes.

Joan of Arc is probably the most outstanding example of those who have had hallucinations. Her "voices" directed her to lead the French armies to victory and to have the Dauphin crowned at Reims. These commands she was able to carry through. Another experience of hallucinations is reported thus:

It began with a noise in my head. It just wouldn't stop pounding. Then it got so I could understand what the noises meant. The voices talk to me every day and tell me what I must do if I want to be saved. Sometimes I see God Almighty. Yesterday he came to me in this very room. I could see him as plain as I can see you. I can't tell you what he told me. Most of the time he sends me messages through the voices. Once I got a message through a sparrow.⁷

Most of those who are afflicted by hallucinations are in institutions for the mentally sick. Their escape mechanism is the misinterpretation and exaggeration of sounds and visual objects. They have allowed their perceptions to be colored by their emotions.

Obsessions. Closely related to hallucination is the phenomenon of obsession—preoccupation with a strange, haunting, obtrusive, and unwelcomed, but persistent idea. It is based upon fear and usually implies some degree of self-reproach. The obsessed person is aware of his abnormality and tries to get rid of it, but the idea persists so strongly that the victim ultimately develops a sense of subjection to it. He knows that the condition is foolish, but he seems to be unable to do anything about it. Fear of disease, of sharp knives, of suicide, and of murder are characteristic obsessions. It is interesting to note that the victims of obsessions were in childhood excessively sensitive and gave evidence of anxiety in such matters as health, sex, and religion. They tended to be excessively punctual and desirous of adult approbation. These antecedent conditions point to the urgency of making an early

⁷ Louis Berg, *The Human Personality*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1937, p. 267. By permission of the publisher.

application of the principles of mental hygiene. The need for balanced thinking is indicated, as well as the need for normal social participation and the development of a true appraisal of personality traits.

Compulsions. A condition somewhat similar to the obsessive state is compulsive behavior, in which the patient is led to perform exaggerated, spasmodic, and peculiar actions. The obsessive idea is so powerful that the one dominated by it feels compelled to carry out some act. If he is obsessed with the idea that he is being followed, he will be compelled to turn around, to try to see his pursuer. Among such compulsive actions are excessive hand washing, the placing of articles just so, and the touching or counting of items in certain classifications.

A typical example of a compulsion is that of a man who had a tendency to move his hands about his face and head. He would sit in class diligently taking notes for some time, then suddenly would lay down his pencil and start twisting a lock of hair around his forefinger. After pulling and twisting the hair for half a minute or so, he would pick up his pencil and start writing again. This would happen four or five times during a class period. Another act of compulsion is that of a ten-year-old boy who was brought into the writer's office. He did not answer when first spoken to but carefully touched each corner of the desk, after which he said "Hello." It was this symptom of touching the corners of rectangular objects upon entering a room that had caused his mother to seek advice.

Delusion. Just as in the visual field there are false perceptions, called "illusions" (e.g., straight lines running through a checkerboard pattern seem to be curved), in the emotional field there are false beliefs, called "delusions." A delusion is caused by a wish to believe and is based upon the desire to establish one's superiority. In delusions of persecution, for example, the individual attaches undue importance to his own prestige, abilities, and worth, and feels that those about him are afraid of his prestige and are doing all in their power to kill him or to do him physical injury. Emotional distortion leads him to believe that individuals or societies wish to get rid of him because of his superior knowledge or importance. Thus, a college student may feel that certain of his failures are due to the jealousy of faculty members or students who do not wish him to succeed. Likewise, delusions of grandeur stem from the patient's feeling that he is a person of extreme importance. De-

lusions are so obviously false that their irrationality is readily perceived by outsiders, but no amount of persuasion or logical proof can shake the patient's comforting belief.

One source of delusion is the tendency to blame others for one's own failures and difficulties. Therefore, it is an unwholesome extension of the rationalization pattern previously characterized as "projection." The person suffering from delusions lacks mental integration and the ability to do discriminative thinking. These conditions are at the bottom of delusions of persecution, grandeur, and defense; and the causes must be removed before any remedy can be effected. Delusions must be cured by changing the highly emotionalized beliefs of the subject. The first step in this process is to find the reason why the person wishes to believe the absurd thing about which he is deluded and to furnish him with more desirable avenues for adjustment. It will do no good merely to present facts or to argue with him, because his delusion is the result of rationalization, which he has already thought through, even though the processes were illogical. In fact, arguing with him only offers him a better chance for building up his defenses. On the other hand, agreeing with him will provide an opportunity for gradually leading him to a realization that the difficulty is one that has arisen in his own mind. The underlying aim must always be to get the patient to face reality squarely, recognizing both his assets and his liabilities. When this cannot be accomplished, the deluded person must be committed to an institution where his own life and that of others can be protected. To keep out of this danger zone is much easier than to get out of it.

Paranoia. Paranoia is, generally speaking, a mental disorder based upon fixed and systematized delusions of grandeur or persecution; it is, therefore, an extension of delusions which includes several false beliefs, rather than just one. Paranoids are intellectual extremists who have built up defenses which seem to be intelligent but which, in reality, are founded on the *irrational* process of rationalization. Extreme suspiciousness, intense pride, and haughtiness are among the manifestations of paranoia. The paranoiac's conviction that others are trying to persecute him is an extreme type of rationalization. These delusions of persecution are indicative of feelings of inferiority. The subject develops a systematized rationalization for his own fears and faults which will reestablish his superiority. This he does by blaming others for

their persecution of him. He blames his jealous fellows for his misfortunes and disappointments. Often he tries to eliminate those who, he believes, are causing his troubles. The paranoid person is suspicious, brooding, isolated, sensitive, and difficult to aid, because the systematized delusions grow increasingly rigid. He fails utterly to see that he should shoulder any blame for his condition. He can see in his own conduct neither unwholesome compensation nor the element of projection.

In order to avoid this mental disease, it is necessary to develop a true evaluation of oneself, to acquire the mentally sound habit of facing and fighting conflicts, rather than seeking refuge in the dangerous haven of blaming others for deficiencies. One must learn to be independent and to experience both success and failure with emotional poise. Resort to wishful thinking tends to build up mechanisms which may lead to paranoia. Conversely, the ability to accept just blame is a wholesome trait, one which should be actively cultivated.

Hebephrenic schizophrenia. The need for getting along with people and for developing social competence has been emphasized as an element in mental health. Persons who have not acquired such reaction patterns, when the cases are extreme, are victims of the disease known as "hebephrenic schizophrenia," which is indicated by a tendency of extreme withdrawal from one's fellow beings. While every normal person at times enjoys being alone, the avoidance of all social relationships is unnatural and undesirable. Anyone who wishes to live in a condition of mental health will necessarily develop an attitude of interest in the activities and welfare of his fellow men. Hebephrenic reactions are in the same danger zone as are regressive tendencies. In fact, the word "hebephrenia" is derived from Greek words meaning "youthful mind." Instead of facing reality, the victim retreats from life's struggles and seeks defense in childish levels of conduct which are characterized by a lack of personal responsibility.

In everyday life we can often observe this mechanism in less marked form. A girl will go off to college (a symbol of striking out for herself) and upon graduation will return to her "manima" to take up life where she left it. She expresses great sorrow that she ever went to college, saying that it robbed her of her childhood and all the "beautiful" things that went with it. She plans her future very carefully so as to avoid responsibility and

rationalizes her conduct by such statements as "Mamma needs me" or "Papa is getting old and I must make his last years happy."⁸

Avoidance of this danger zone might well be guided by the following precaution: Learn to achieve appreciations from normal activities and, above all, to get satisfaction from the present moments of life. A person should work to achieve something each day, so that he can be satisfied with his minor accomplishments. He should not depend on others too heavily. It is necessary to bear in mind that the most dependable kind of improvement in behavior and adjustment is self-improvement. The truth must be accepted that any improvement must be the result of consistent, persistent work. Work has previously been mentioned as a therapeutic (curative) measure; here it can be said to serve in a prophylactic (preventive) capacity.

Manic-depressive. Manic-depressives (or cyclothymoids) are emotional extremists—persons who are for a time on the crest of a wave of pleasant emotions, then, soon after, in the trough of a feeling of discouragement and hopelessness. The word "manic" pertains to conditions of elation and hypernormal (excessive) emotional states, while the word "depressive" is applicable rather to a mood of dejection or a hyponormal (below normal) emotional condition. Periods of marked zeal may bring about an elated state of mind and overactivity, while lack of accomplishment induces a depressed attitude and great underactivity. Naturally there are varying degrees of elation and depression; but the manic-depressive patient is one who suffers from overemphasized cheerfulness contrasted with excessive moroseness, his moods shifting from one extreme to the other too rapidly.

Clifford Beers, in his book, *A Mind That Found Itself*, describes his own manic-depressive reactions, which were characterized by excessive zeal for his writing activities, during which he hoped to reveal existing conditions in asylums and thus bring about reform. He felt that he would then become a famous humanitarian. Following after the elated state would come a depressed condition, during which he had to have his guards take away his manuscript for fear that he would destroy it. Sometimes he felt compulsions to destroy himself and

⁸ John J. B. Morgan, *The Psychology of Abnormal People*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1937, p. 498. By permission of the publisher.

would ask to have dishes removed that could be broken and used for cutting himself.

The causal factor of manic-depressive states seems to be a basic hereditary predisposition to emotional instability caused by abnormal circulation of blood through the brain. In manic states there is more than normal oxidation of the brain and, in depressive states, just the opposite. The precipitating factor is some period of stress and strain, such as loss of position, financial reverses, loss of a loved one, frustration caused by change of living conditions, prolonged illness, childbirth, and obsessive fear.

It follows that a person should maintain physical health and should develop the habit of squarely facing his difficulties and placing an honest evaluation upon his abilities and accomplishments. It is highly probable that a wide variety of interests would be most beneficial, because there would then be alternatives to which one might turn in the event of disappointment in some particular area of activity. Participation in a variety of leisure-time pursuits would afford normal release and exercise of the emotions. These steps must be taken before the disease has developed. The advice would be dangerous to those already afflicted, because they are likely to engage in harmful self-accusation when their "will power" fails.

Dementia praecox. Dementia-praecox patients (schizophrenics) comprise the largest single group of those who suffer from mental and nervous diseases. They are individuals who refuse to face the situations which confront them and who live in an artificial world of their own construction. Schizophrenia is really a classification of mental diseases which includes some of those listed above, such as delusions, hallucinations, and paranoia. Two characteristics are particularly outstanding: exaggerated introversion (shut-in personality) and emotional poverty, or lack of response to ordinary pleasures and displeasures.

A number of theories regarding the nature of schizophrenia include the following:

- (1) *Arrested mental development.* Some persons have insufficient energy to tide them over during periods of crisis. However, it is probable that regression is a more important factor than is arrested development.

- (2) *Autointoxication*. The disorder is the result of certain physiological conditions arising from the glands, especially the sex organs. While the theory has not been disproved, neither is there much direct evidence to support the view.
- (3) *Vicious mental habits*. Conduct characterizing schizophrenia is the result of the habitual use of defense mechanisms. This theory is gaining in popularity.

Schizophrenia is a good illustration of flight from reality into a world of fancy in which the patient becomes so completely detached from objective facts that he is incapable of personality integration. The theory that schizophrenia is the result of vicious mental habits and that one of these habits is flight from reality affords a clue to the prevention of the disease. Excessive daydreaming must be avoided, as it is the forerunner of flights of fancy. Daydreams should be used only as a source of stimulation to activity, as a means of setting goals for real accomplishment. Finally, the practice of confronting life's problems firmly must become a habit that will replace the habit of fantasy. In this respect the process of avoiding the danger zone called "schizophrenia," within which the majority of mental patients are found, is much like the procedure that is advised for the avoidance of other danger zones.

Conclusions. The more serious defense mechanisms, such as hysteria, hallucinations, obsessions, and delusions, are quite frequently developed through the habit of resorting too often to the more common and less intense forms. The common defense mechanisms are employed by normal people; but when these become ingrained in the personality as habitual responses, so that the individuals have lost control of them, they develop into distinct abnormalities. Accordingly, the common defense mechanisms are danger zones that border on still more dangerous areas of personality deviations. It is therefore necessary for a person to realize the existence of danger zones and to avoid them, so that serious maladjustment can be prevented, because progression from one area to another is perilously easy. Normal people can and should avoid the serious defense mechanisms by frankly facing their problems, attacking them vigorously, and when necessary, accepting temporary frustration.

DANGER ZONES ORIGINATING IN PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

In the two preceding sections of this chapter, danger zones of mental health have been described which have their origin in exaggerated mental habits. To a very large extent, those abnormalities are preventable by an application of the principles of mental health; *i.e.*, they can be avoided by careful discrimination in the use of defense mechanisms. In this section, mental diseases will be discussed which have as their causes certain organic or physical disturbances. For the most part, the individual has but little control over the causal factors in these diseases; but it is of interest and of value to know the names and general characteristics of some of the disorders.

Hypophrenosis. As the derivation of the word indicates, hypophrenosis refers to a condition in which there is underactivity, or subnormal activity, of the mind. Among the many causes of feeble-mindedness are heredity factors, glandular disturbances, prenatal malnutrition, and arrested mental development caused by impoverished environmental conditions. The feeble-minded, those who by test show an intelligence quotient below 70, represent about 2 per cent of the total population.

Control of hypophrenosis is mainly a preventive task. Poor stock may be prevented from reproducing by being placed in institutions or by being sterilized. In some cases the use of thyroid extract has been used to prevent feeble-mindedness in those whose trouble is a defective thyroid. Recently much stress has been placed upon the provision of an environment rich in stimulating conditions that will bring out the full potentiality of an individual.

Infectious psychoses. Sometimes mental abnormality is due to the effect of disease. In such cases certain microorganisms attack the brain and the nervous structure and cause injury. One of the more common of such diseases is paresis, or syphilitic infection of the brain. Sleeping sickness, or *encephalitis lethargica*, frequently leaves in its wake marked personality disturbances. Children who were once well behaved may become irritable, unstable, and quarrelsome as an aftermath of the illness.

The avoidance of these brain diseases is largely a medical problem and about all that the individual can do is to live by the principles that make for good physical health. Periodical medical examinations may

lead to the detection of such diseases before they have made devastating inroads upon personality characteristics.

Traumatic psychoses. Mental aberrations which result from injury, or trauma, may sometimes deeply affect mental activities. Many such cases have been due to battle wounds received in the world wars. Falls and automobile accidents account for a number of such psychoses, but the total count of those affected by such events is relatively small.

Probably a majority of traumatic psychoses will be unpreventable until nations have learned how to live peaceably with one another and to eliminate war—the major problem of mankind.

Senile psychoses. Senile psychoses are the result of deterioration of the brain in old age. When one grows old, the brain becomes less and less pliable and plastic. Senile psychosis probably accounts for what is generally spoken of as “second childhood.” It seems inevitable that deterioration will take place, but there is no need to be unduly concerned about this. The most advisable course may be to consider such mental decline entirely normal and to treat old people with kindly consideration. There is some possibility that deterioration can be postponed by one’s living a life in which the personality is kept flexible by constant contact with the contemporary world and with lively interests.

Somatopsychoses. Somatopsychoses, or mental deviations resulting from bodily malformations, account for a small fraction of the feeble-minded or insane. Abnormal development of the body may result from glandular disturbances or malformations present at birth may be the causal factor. It is debatable whether the disturbances which produce bodily malformations also cause personality deviations or whether the bodily malformation causes certain types of defensive mechanisms to be used which result in warped personality. In the latter case, the personality characteristics are called “secondary” characteristics, or indirect results of the bodily malformation.

As yet medical science has found little that can be done about the activities of the internal glands, but encouraging beginnings are being made. If, on the other hand, the personality defects are a secondary outcome of the malformation, occupational therapy and training in mental hygiene can be of benefit.

Toxic psychoses. This classification of mental disease includes ills that result from poisons acting upon the brain tissue or the nervous system.

"Some of these are secreted within the body and may be secondary results of some infectious disease. Others, such as lead, alcohol, morphine, and cocaine, are taken into the body from without. The means of prevention of mental disturbances from such sources is obvious." ⁹ Again it must be stated that there is some question as to whether or not alcohol and drugs are resorted to as defense mechanisms against potential psychoses which have already beset the individual.

Whether toxic psychoses are cause or effect, the prevention of disorders of this sort lies in healthful industrial conditions and in the maintenance of such sound mental health that the use of drugs will not be resorted to as an escape mechanism.

Epileptopsychoses. Psychoses which accompany some forms of epilepsy are known as "epileptopsychoses." As yet not much is known about epilepsy. Certain authorities believe that some of the cases may be due to nutritional deficiencies. Sometimes it is difficult to determine whether the patient is a true epileptic or whether he is suffering from hysteria. At any rate, the number of persons affected by epileptopsychoses is relatively small, constituting less than 3 per cent of the 30 per cent of those having mental troubles¹ which are primarily caused by organic disorders.

Conclusions. Besides the danger zones that have their origin in exaggerated emotional and mental conditions, a number of abnormalities have as their source disease or injury. To some extent, these latter conditions are unavoidable. However, some of the types of mental disease that are dependent upon physical ailments can be avoided by observing the precautions necessary for maintaining physical health. Periodical examination by a physician may assist in the detection of disease before it can make a lasting effect on the personality patterns of an individual. The main purpose of this section has been to show that mental disease has definite causes and, therefore, need not be a major source of worry to the normal person.

SUMMARY

Every normal individual is constantly meeting obstacles and is faced with conflict. His personality integration is dependent upon his ability

⁹ John J. B. Morgan, *Keeping a Sound Mind*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1934, p. 419. By permission of the publisher.

to overcome obstacles and resolve conflicts. To the extent to which he is unable to do this he is disintegrated. To the extent to which he can solve his problems he enjoys mental health. The main concern in this chapter has been to deal with disintegration or threats of disintegration.

Probably every normal person resorts in some degree to the more common types of defense mechanisms. These include rationalization, projection, identification, daydreaming, regression, hypochondria, and direct and indirect compensation. Each of these, if it is not indulged in too frequently, may have value in bringing about adjustment. Danger lies in their too frequent use so that they will become habitual.

More serious types of maladjustment result from the extended use of the above defense mechanisms. Hypochondria may lead to hysteria; daydreaming may lead to hallucinations, obsessions, and delusions; paranoia may be the result of indiscriminate rationalization; regression may progress to schizophrenia, and manic-depressive states are the outcome of excessive emotional displays. Each of these more serious danger zones is more easily avoided than cured. The principles of mental hygiene must be applied early and continuously.

Some of the danger zones in mental health that are caused by physical disturbances, infectious psychoses, toxic psychoses, and epileptopsychoses can be avoided, at least to some extent, by the maintenance of good physical health. Senile psychoses may at least be deferred by observing the conditions of mental health. Hypophrenosis, traumatic psychoses, and somatopsychoses are for the most part unavoidable; but since they occur but rarely, they need not arouse personal concern in a normal individual.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. The word "rationalization," in spite of its relationship to the word "rational," does not refer to straight thinking.
2. Projection means that a person "thinks himself into the 'shoes' " of another individual.

3. Identification is the dynamism which is used when a person gets a feeling of glory from the successful accomplishments of a movie hero.
4. A person who gets a great deal of satisfaction from asserting that he is a member of the white race and, therefore, is superior to colored persons is resorting to identification.
5. Daydreaming is especially helpful in reducing the darkness of defeat, because the individual can get satisfaction from dreaming of the great things he will do in the future.
6. The hypochondriac imagines himself to be sick to such an extent that he takes on the symptoms of illness even when really there is nothing organically wrong with him.
7. Direct compensation is all right as long as the person has a capacity which can be developed into a skill.
8. Indirect compensation can make valuable contributions to personality, particularly if the person will forget about the thing for which he is compensating.
9. Hysteria means that a person is unable to control his emotional expression; he may cry or laugh excessively and uncontrollably.
10. A hallucination is a false belief.
11. Paranoia is nothing but an extended series of hallucinations.
12. Schizophrenia always refers to various types of regressive behavior.
13. The best way to avoid hypophrenosis is to be careful about the kind of parents you choose.
14. Somatopsychoses, while they accompany bodily malformations, are not of necessity caused by them.
15. Toxic psychoses may be caused by excessive indulgence in alcoholic drinks.

Suggested Readings

SHAFFER, LAURENCE F., *The Psychology of Adjustment*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936. 600 pp.

Serious students will find here an answer to the underlying factors of adjustment. Part II, Varieties of Adjustive Behavior, has one of the most detailed treatments of the various defense mechanisms that can be found in any text. Applications of positive mental hygiene will be found for students who intend to go into business, education, or social work.

SHERMAN, MANDEL, *Mental Conflicts and Personality*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1938. 319 pp.

The author shows how attitudes and desires may lead to conflict; conflict, to inferiority and insecurity; these, in turn, to the difficulties which go by the names of neuroses. Easy reading with sufficient limitation so that an understanding of basic problems may be achieved.

WALLIN, J. E. W., *Personality Maladjustments and Mental Hygiene*, 2d ed., New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949. 581 pp.

This book is thorough and reliable and is made readable by the citing of many case studies of real persons. The extremes to which attempts at adjustment may be carried is pointed out effectively. The book is especially recommended for those who are majoring in psychology.

Chapter 14

MENTAL HEALTH FACTORS BEYOND INDIVIDUAL CONTROL

A true picture of the subject of mental hygiene cannot be secured if external factors—those which lie outside the individual—are ignored. Although the major emphasis in this book is upon what the individual himself can do to attain a way of life that is characterized by mental health, that phase alone does not present a complete view of the conditions of mental health. In any person's life there are, without doubt, many factors over which he has relatively little, if any, control. In this chapter the emphasis is quite different from that in all the other chapters. Whereas, up to this point, what the individual can do for himself in attaining mental health has been stressed, here a review is made of some of the conditioning factors of mental health which lie largely outside the individual's personal power of control.

PHYSIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL FACTORS

Among these external forces over which the individual has relatively little control are those which have to do with the physical aspects and physiological functioning of the body. Nothing can be done about a man's hereditary equipment. At least, no fuller equipment can be supplied than that with which he is born, although the conditions of birth—especially if they are extremely difficult—can detract from the hereditary potential. Finally, poor health or injury may bring about conditions which have both direct and indirect effects upon mental health. The effects of these three factors (heredity, conditions of birth, and accident and disease) will be discussed under the next three headings.

Hereditary factors in mental health. Man is a creature made up of many complex, but closely related, factors. Part of his being is molded by the force of environment, while another part is the product of heredity."The genes and the chromosomes (the carriers of heredity)

have placed upon every individual limitations beyond which he cannot reasonably expect to progress. One who has the capacity for being a musician and whose environment is favorable to the development of that capacity will probably become a musician. But one who, by virtue of hereditary limitations, lacks a sense of rhythm and of time, or who has not the ability to discriminate quickly and accurately between tones, can hardly expect, by any amount of practice, to make a great musical artist of himself. A person with an I.Q. of 90 (when the average for all people is 100) would be sure to experience failure if he aimed to graduate from college as a lawyer or a doctor and to achieve eminence in his field. A boy whose visual response is slow—that is, one who catches sight of a moving object more slowly than the average person—cannot reasonably hope to achieve distinction as a big-league baseball player.

One of the sad cases illustrating the fact that there are conditions beyond control is that of the birth of a mongoloid. This accident of birth has not been fully explained, but in it some set of circumstances seems to prevent normal development of the child. In spite of the fact that his parents and his brothers and sisters are normal, the mongoloid has identifying characteristics—eyes that appear to slant; a large, deeply fissured tongue; and bulky facial features. The physical malformation is usually accompanied by inability to develop average intelligence. The mongoloid cannot be expected to assume responsibility for his own life; he will be unable to profit from conventional school experiences and inevitably will not be equal to competing with his brothers and sisters in the development of ordinary daily skills. This condition has been aptly described as one of the “cruel tricks of nature.” Many other unfavorable conditions, quite as surely beyond control of the individual, may be less readily recognized.

It is to be hoped that some day there will be somewhat accurate measurement of latent capacities. In the meantime, those who wish to achieve mental health must realize that every person has some limitations. Goals, purposes, and desires must be in accord with one's personal limitations. “Where there's a will there's a way” cannot be accepted as always infallible. Certainly, it is a handicap to achieving mental health to believe that if we just work hard enough at anything we shall be sure to succeed.

While it must be admitted that a person is born with certain potentialities or capacities which may or may not be developed by the environment in which he lives, it is still true that his attitude toward his capacities (or limitations) is an important factor in his development. Just as surely as it is unwise to ignore hereditary factors, it is stupid to blame all one's limitations upon nature's not having provided a more favorable endowment. In short, each of us must find the workable midpoint between quitting because of imagined limitations and trying to achieve the impossible.

Conditions of birth. Genetic psychology, which is a method of investigating psychological characteristics as they develop and grow, seeks to get at the cause of a person's present behavior by studying what has occurred in the past. Genetic psychologists, going back to the time of birth, have traced the developmental experiences of the individual, seeking explanations for present behavior.¹ Such an analysis is of much value if the conditions discovered are not believed to be the sole cause of the person's reactions. The principle of multiple causation should be recognized and present circumstances should be assigned some causative role.

Some psychologists (especially, certain psychoanalysts) point to the possibility of birth trauma (injury) as the source of a poor condition of mental health in later life. Their claim is that, for the most part, the development of an individual takes place in a gradual and orderly manner; but at birth the organism makes a sudden and marked change in environment, which is shocking and painful. The more difficult the birth, the greater is the possibility of personality deviation. Other psychologists are of the opinion that the theory of birth trauma is overstressed because, after all, birth is merely one of the natural steps in the growth process. Nevertheless, there is some possibility that the conditions of birth, in certain cases, do count as factors in development that cannot be controlled by the individual, although to believe that all limitations are due to a difficult birth is probably generalizing beyond the evidence established by actual facts.

Aside from the phenomenon of birth as a psychological trauma,

¹ Actually, genetic psychologists go back further than the time of birth, since they are interested, besides, in the principles of heredity and the prenatal influences, which also bear directly upon the development of the organism.

there is the possibility that some actual physical injury during birth might have an effect upon the child's later development. However, in many cases it has been found that the effects of such injuries can be at least partially overcome by improving physical conditions and by applying special training.

The college student who would excuse his personality defects by tracing them to conditions of birth would probably be indulging in unwholesome rationalization. He has already achieved far above what the average "man on the street" has accomplished; hence, it is likely that his handicap has not been so great that it could not be overcome. It would be much more in line with the premise of this book for him to face his problem and attempt to go on accomplishing, in spite of the fact that some of his difficulties could conceivably be traced to the conditions of birth or to unfortunate childhood experiences that cannot now be changed.

Accident and disease. "Accidents are caused." While this is a true statement, accidents do occur and frequently leave their marks upon those to whom they happen. Car accidents take a large toll among college students. Almost every year in the major universities some students suffer disfiguring and disabling accidents which, to say the least, undermine their confidence. Accidents may even have a direct effect upon the mental equipment of a person involved in them, so that a change in plans for a life career may be unavoidable. Thus, shock may cause loss, or partial loss, of memory or a diminishing of the ability to concentrate. The loss of a finger or an arm may force one to give up the hope of being a musician. Scars on the face may result in the abandonment of a career in dramatic activities. Loss of sight may make it wise to give up the coveted dream of becoming a man of science or of letters. Accident may decree that a person must abandon a career for which he has marked talents and adopt one for which his aptitudes are less evident. The validity of these statements is supported by the writer's experiences in prepsychiatric screening during the late war. Between 10 and 25 per cent of recruits who were suspected of being "inadequate personalities" had suffered severe falls, been in serious car accidents, been kicked by a horse, or suffered an injury in play or at work. In such cases the accident had caused the appearance of symptoms that, up to the time they were noted, seemed to be permanently handicapping. Apparently, then, any of the above-described

conditions may have very direct effects upon the outlook and efficiency of a person and, consequently, upon his mental health.

In spite of the rapid advancement of medical science, the exact causes of some diseases have not been located; and many of these diseases still impose a heavy toll upon the health of men, women, and children. Even when the cause of a disease is known, precise means of using this knowledge have not yet been achieved in a number of cases.

There are still, as we know, dangerous and obscure diseases which too often are fatal or deeply damaging. Infantile paralysis, sleeping sickness, and spinal meningitis are among those which most severely threaten physical security. Some diseases—such as sleeping sickness, syphilis, and possibly epilepsy—affect the central nervous system and, therefore, have a direct effect upon problems of adjustment. The effects of other diseases may be only indirect; that is, the effect may be due not to the disease itself but to the lack of opportunity for exercise, to the emotional reaction of the patient, or to other people's reactions to the patient. Whether the cause is direct or indirect, the acquiring and maintenance of mental health are made more difficult by the disease. On the other hand, the stimulus exerted by a handicapping disease may arouse a compensatory drive that will result in great accomplishment. The superb records of several of our national heroes belong in this category; but there are also notable examples in everyday life around us.

A case in point is that of Harvey S., a husky (from the waist up) college youth who suffered the loss of both legs through disease. He did outstanding college work; was an honor student; won an essay prize in his senior years; was active in student government; habitually met his fellow students and teachers with ease; and, if he felt sorry for himself, did not show it. In spite of the fact that anyone with such a handicap is not frequently appointed as a teacher, this young man has held positions in several localities, each time leaving to improve his status. Everywhere he has taught, he has received laudatory recommendations, and enthusiastic efforts have been made to retain him on the staff.

Last year the dean of a school of education told the writer of another such case. A young man enrolled whose face had been badly disfigured by a gunshot wound in the war. He had literally to talk out of the side of his face. The dean felt that he should discourage the

young man from continuing in teacher training; but because of his sincerity and scholarship, the aspirant was allowed to do student teaching on a trial basis. He quickly won high rapport with his students, challenged them with meaningful materials, and was evaluated highly by both the students and the supervising teacher. The dean was able to help him secure a teaching position, and the reports on his progress are nothing short of commendable. Said the dean, "I wish that more students without handicaps could do as well."

The serious effect of disease can be reduced to some extent by the attitude of the patient, particularly if the effects are indirect, or secondary. Observance of the principles of health and the practice of sanitation may reduce the incidence of illness. At present, however, it must be admitted that to some extent the rigid control of disease and accident is beyond the power of the individual. It is important to recognize and face the facts if mental health is to be maintained in spite of encumbering disease or crippling accident.

CULTURAL FACTORS IN MENTAL HEALTH

Man has achieved his present status because of certain physical and mental equipment—stereoscopic vision, complex brain, ample nerve system, mobile thumb, and the power of complicated speech—which distinguishes him from other animals. In addition, man is a cultural animal; that is, the particular way he develops his unique capacities is dependent upon the culture in which he lives. Culture denotes those aspects of environment which are the accumulated results of the experience and work of previous generations. Aspects of culture include such developments as technology, the economic system, social and political institutions, religion, formal education, art, and customs and morals, all of which are influential in shaping the thoughts, attitudes, personalities, and acts of individuals. In fact, in a program of mental health, cultural factors may be more important than physical factors, such as temperature, climate, and facilities for getting food and shelter. Most adults can earn their own living, but there are many who do not get along harmoniously with themselves or their fellow men. Particular aspects of the culture, together with their mental hygiene implications, are discussed in this section.

Home life. Evidence is constantly accumulating which points to the

home as a source of many of the mental health problems of any given person. Since one spends the major portion of his early formative years in his home, it is not to be wondered at that many of his emotional patterns are intimately influenced by the conditions of life in that home. In fact, many students of human behavior assert that a considerable number of the individual's major reaction patterns are set in the first few years of life. This means that, although a person has the power to make minor changes in his emotional and mental reactions, the broader outlines of his conduct have probably been fixed by his early home life.

In speaking of the pervasive influence of the home upon each member of it, M. F. Breckenridge and E. L. Vincent say,

. . . It not only gives him his bodily inheritance, but the standards and expectations of *his* particular family background. In the ordinary course of things, the home feeds, clothes and shelters him, thus laying the foundations of his present and future health, both physical and mental. Parents protect him from diseases or, through their ignorance or carelessness, expose him to infections which may affect his growth. They provide (or should provide) him with affection, a sense of "belongingness," a satisfactory discipline, a working set of good physical and psychological habits and attitudes. His parents are his background and his tradition, his protectors and providers, his earliest guiders and educators, and his closest companions. They set the atmosphere for his moral and ethical standards, his physical well-being, his aesthetic appreciations, his concepts of family living and his philosophy of life in general.²

Specifically the influences of one's home life have left their mark on many fundamental attitudes and personality traits. The home will have affected the person's feelings of personal worth and security and will have influenced his attitude toward authority. What he has learned from his parents is of great importance in determining his attitude toward sex. Many of a person's habits—his cleanliness, punctuality, industry, etc.—can be traced to family teachings. The extent to which a person is independent or dependent is conditioned by the way he has been treated by his brothers and sisters. Any college student can easily trace back his ideas of what is "good" and "bad" to impressions he received in the home. Studies have been made which indicate that,

² Marian E. Breckenridge and E. Lee Vincent, *Child Development*, Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1949, pp. 176-177. By permission of the publisher.

while school may temporarily change the feelings of a student toward sex, race, politics, or religion, after a while the student's attitude will probably resemble again that of his parents rather than the one he had manifested immediately after his school experiences and teachings had influenced his point of view. Even when the young person accepts views from outside which differ from those expressed in his home, his adjustment to both situations is not necessarily made easier.

In order to see how the home environment may influence the outlook of an individual, let us consider how differently unemployment compensation or a widow's pension may affect the attitudes of families who are dependent on such funds. Some of the children get the idea that society owes them a living; they may even have heard their parents complain about the pettiness of the income. Dependents who take this point of view are likely to assume an insolent and martyred air. Others, feeling ashamed of their condition of dependency, may tend to withdraw from social contacts, blame themselves for not being able to do without help, and continue to fight for independence. On the other hand, some undergo destruction of ambition and initiative. They are likely to feel that the world is in such a mess that it is futile to "row against the current." These become "adjusted" to the role of being helped. Some may even have to struggle against relatives, as well as against their own condition. This happened to a young woman, who would have lost her orphan income had she gone against her mother's demand that she should not work: "You can get fifteen dollars a week for not working but only eighteen for working."

The dilemma of a youth of foreign parentage who comes into contact with one set of ideals in the home and another set in the community presents a good illustration of the role of the home in creating mental hygiene problems. If the parents expect their child to begin work at an early age, if they require him to be home before nightfall and to give unquestioning obedience to their commands, they are simply acting in the way their own former culture would dictate. The youth, however, sees others of his age doing no productive work, playing on the street until late hours, and occasionally questioning parental authority. He may react in any of several ways, none of which make for wholly comfortable feelings. He may entirely cast aside his parents' wishes and shun them, yet feel uncomfortable in doing so. He may accept his parents' desires and avoid the influence of others of

his own age, but this gives him the feeling of being a social outcast or, at least, of being a strange person. He may try to cling to both home and outside ideals, without knowing just where the influence of one should leave off and the other begin. In this last case, because of indecision he will react in an inconsistent manner, which will leave him in a continuous state of uncertainty. The problem of the child of foreign-born parents is different only in degree from similar problems faced by children of native-born parents. Probably in but very few cases do young people find that the demands of the home are entirely in line with the demands which seem to be made by factors outside the home.

Community influences. The artificial line of distinction between the home and the community is sometimes difficult to locate. Actually, the home is quite likely to be a phase or reflection of the total life of the community. For example, the homes within the same neighborhood tend to be somewhat alike. Certain areas of a city are given over to homes of the well to do, others to the homes of salaried workers, and still others to homes of those who earn small wages or perhaps have only part-time employment. Parents in these various communities have different ideas regarding such things as the continuance of school, the age for marriage, organized recreation, and drinking; they differ in their attitudes toward a youth's sex adjustments and toward law observance, authority, and the like. Each of these community types presents unique mental hygiene problems. To announce that these community influences can be ignored merely by changing one's attitude is to add a somewhat mysterious element to mental health. Attitudes cannot, in most instances, be changed merely by a person's saying "From now on I'm going to think differently." Indeed, it must be a rather marked change in community influences that will bring about such shifts in attitude. Often, of course, the change to a college environment is so marked a change that shifts in attitude can be rather readily accomplished by the individual who has become a member of the college community.

A girl revealed just such a shift of attitude in a class discussion on racial feelings when she said, "My father opposes the idea of Negroes living in the same apartment house that we do. I am perfectly willing to respect his feeling in the matter; but I hope I shall grow up in such a way that the merits of my neighbors will be judged in terms of what they as individuals are." Her attitude influenced her behavior, because

she was neither unfriendly nor condescending to the two Negro youths in her class.

It has sometimes been said that children in well-to-do homes frequently are not given the parental care and personal attention that are necessary for the healthy development of a feeling of belongingness. Extreme cases of introversion are thought to be the outcome of such parental neglect. At the other end of the scale, children of parents who lack economic security are likely to be neglected because the parents have to work. The children hear their parents talk of economic privation and see manifestations of material want. Sometimes they are led to believe that those who have money are unjust and selfish or that they themselves are justified in using fair means or foul to "get their share." If they see their parents receiving community help, they may adopt the view, "the world owes me a living." Such environmental influences as these lead to a feeling of personal futility which can be altered only by other experiences which convince the individual that he can be of worth both to himself and to society.

Neither the characteristic conditions of the rich class nor those of the poor class are *sure* to result in particular maladjustments. The rich child may have mental health problems which most commonly seem to be the lot of the poor child, and the reverse is true, as well. In many cases children grow up to have excellent mental health, in spite of such negative conditions as have been described. Nevertheless, community influences do in many, many cases supply valuable explanations of the behavior of those who have poor mental health. Manifestly, the individual does not have it in his power immediately to change the characteristics of the community and its influence upon him.

The provision of playgrounds has been found to exert a very direct influence on the mental health of children in a community. Where there are adequate play centers, the rate of delinquency is much lower. Conversely, where there are no playgrounds, the rate of delinquency is much higher. While the citizens of a city, as a group, may provide more playgrounds, the individual by himself—particularly if his finances are limited—can do little to change conditions. Again it must be said that not all children who have no playgrounds will become delinquents, but the fact remains that the community environment does directly affect the mental health of its residents.

Incidentally, it is interesting to note that some mental hygienists be-

lieve there is danger of overorganizing the activities of young people. They feel that if too much is provided in the way of entertainment and supervision, the child is deprived of the opportunity of developing his own resources. This danger is firmly expressed in a letter which was recently received from a teacher:

And I have a word to say about the kiddies who live in this neighborhood or similar places. Mine go swimming at the "Y" Monday nights, piano lessons Tuesday, dancing lessons Wednesday, Cub Scouts Thursday, swimming again Friday, see the local movie Saturday afternoon, and go off on the fine day's trip with the family Sunday. In the summer they travel all over the United States and Canada. School becomes simply the place you have to go to before you can dash off some place to play. But is it even play? My children do not know how to play together, or even play alone. They have no "inner resources" because they have never had to "kill" a series of afternoons after school. They go someplace where someone organizes the play for them. Again, they are never given a moment to sit down and relax. I have never seen such a huge congregation of over-stimulated children!

Clearly this teacher sees the direct effect of the community upon the personality development of children; and the children do not have the freedom to choose their community.

Housing conditions represent another factor in mental health. When whole families are crowded into two or three rooms, many mental health problems occur. The proper desire for privacy is thwarted. The desire for significance is likely to be unfulfilled. The requirements of physical health are not satisfied; and the consequent effect on mental health is disastrous in most instances. A shabby house is likely to make its residents feel inferior to companions who have better homes or who live in a better neighborhood.

Social status. Closely allied to, perhaps a part of, community influences as a determining factor in mental health is social status. Allison Davis and John Dollard have made one of the more penetrating studies of the effect of social status on personality.³ In a number of clearly presented case studies they point out its effect and limitations on youth's personality patterns. Theirs is a study of Negro youth, among whom

³ Allison Davis and John Dollard, *Children of Bondage: The Personality Development of Negro Youth in the Urban South*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941. 299 pp.

class lines are sharply drawn. It is difficult almost to the extent of impossibility for these youths to shift from a lower class to a higher one. Those in the lower classes sometimes strive desperately to get into a higher class, but are quite likely to give up in despair when they fully perceive how rigid the class lines are. When they do progress from a lower class to a higher one, it is at the expense of losing their old friends, avoiding their parents (for whom they often have no great love), and waging a continual struggle to maintain the gains they have made. The attempt to climb out of one class into another is the more difficult because there is no one to teach the youths of one class the ways—habits and customs—of the class next above. The study throughout demonstrates the powerful hold that social status has upon a person's mental health and personality.

Class lines among the whites, while they are not so rigidly drawn, exist nonetheless. Social fraternities in college often draw upon a certain stratum of wealth for the majority of their members. People of Jewish ancestry are excluded from many organizations, and, consequently, their opportunities are lessened. Religion, occupation, extent of formal education, and intelligence sometimes constitute barriers between classes. All these have a tendency to mold certain behavior patterns in the individual who encounters them.

Not all individuals react in the same way to social status. Some persons apparently find it convenient to conform to the ideals and attitudes of their own group, while others reject these settled standards and actively strive to make a transition into another group. Some accept their handicaps with silent resignation, while others evidently view these handicaps as challenges and seek to overcome them. In Davis and Dollard's study is described the case of Edward, who responded to his handicaps by becoming progressively more delinquent; and, in contrast, the case of Chester, who fought a continuing battle to become a self-made man—one who would win respect.⁴ The different reactions of these two boys cannot be adequately explained in terms of social status only. In other words, their reaction to the environment formed as important a part of the total picture as did the environment itself.

National affairs and mental health. Another set of factors lying largely beyond the individual's power of control is involved in current

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 68–96, 99–126.

national affairs. At no time in history has any nation been without many unsolved problems. This broad assertion is warranted by the evidence of centuries of change upon change. Nevertheless, it seems to be a rather fundamental tendency of human nature always to regard existing conditions as the most adverse that have ever challenged man. The present state of national affairs is no exception. But, although the problems of our day may not be the most threatening that have ever loomed over the citizens of the United States, many of these unsolved problems are conditioning the mental health of those who live under their shadow.

The effect of the inequitable distribution of wealth has already been mentioned. There are many people whose health, physical and mental, is impaired by the fact that they do not have money enough to obtain what is considered to be adequate food, clothing, and shelter. The wastage of natural resources—soil, forests, mineral supplies, and even natural beauty spots—is a threat to the continued existence of our economy. In many cases this wastage has already brought about harsh living conditions for those who had previously taken abundant living from such resources. The high incidence of crime is a source of insecurity to those against whom the crimes are directed, but numbers of others suffer, too, indirectly. Parents are gravely concerned about the crime rate, because they realize that the factors which contribute to criminal acts in others may have the same effect upon their own children. Multitudes of incompletely assimilated immigrants pose a particularly difficult problem for citizens in a democracy to work out. These are immigrants who do not understand us and whom we do not understand, with the consequence that they sometimes seem to be blindly following some leader who makes them believe that he perceives their problem. Thus minority groups are formed which threaten the stability of our existing form of government and contribute to a feeling of insecurity on the part of the individual.

One problem that has particular gravity for the youth of college age is the shift in the average age of the general population. Owing to a declining birth rate and the increase in length of life resulting from the successful application of medical science, our nation is becoming more and more a nation of old people. That is, the percentage of people in the upper age groups (sixty years and over) is steadily becoming larger,

while the percentage of people in the younger age groups (nineteen years and under) is rapidly growing smaller.⁵ This circumstance has several implications for youth. Old people are holding jobs for longer periods of time, which means that there is less opportunity for young workers. This, in turn, increases their dependence upon their parents, with the inevitable result that the process of psychological weaning is delayed. Then, too, if a large proportion of the population is mature, many of the customs of society must be designed to fit their interests rather than those of youth. Commercial entertainment must be directed toward adult appreciation rather than toward that of youth. Church services are designed not for youth but for adults. The period of formal education for youth has been lengthened to "take up the slack," but often these youths do not fit the "academic mold," which is not yet widely adjusted to meet wide individual differences. The time of marriage is often delayed until the young people have been able to establish themselves. Sometimes this delay is so prolonged that children are born after the age when both father and mother are biologically best fitted to become parents.

Economic factors. Not only are economic factors important in the determination of social status, but they enter into human life in ways which are not strictly social. Probably the strongest effect is the bearing that economic factors have upon a person's feeling of security. The lack of security is not limited to any particular economic stratum, though the consensus seems to be that those persons who are at the lower end of the economic scale are the ones who most frequently suffer. After stating that anxiety is a prominent characteristic of occidental civilization, Daniel A. Prescott says:

Insecurity and fear of insecurity are widespread. The insecurities most generally met or feared are loss of opportunity to work, illness, old age without income, and poverty. These causes of suffering grow out of seasonality of occupation, business cycles, the development of machinery to replace labor, changes in public taste, the mechanization of agriculture, the uncertainty of foreign markets, the restriction of foreign trade by barriers of various kinds, the undependability of investments including insurance, the fluctuating value of money, the high cost of medical care and the neces-

⁵ In 1900 about 4 per cent and in 1945 about 7 per cent of our population was sixty-five years of age or over. By 1975, it is estimated, more than 10 per cent of the population will be sixty-five years of age or over.

sity for buying almost everything. The anxiety occasioned by economic insecurity is most persistent and deranging because every aspect of life serves as a reminder of the danger. It is experienced alike by executives, white-collar workers, industrial and agricultural laborers, and farmers. Of course, some groups are more vulnerable than others, and often the more vulnerable are the less capable of meeting economic crises because they lack intelligence, education, investments, and influential friends.⁶

It is worth while to mention, aside from the effect that economic factors have on education and investment, the part they play in affecting food, clothing, and shelter—items that are considered fundamental to health and happiness. Many suffer from undernourishment because of lack of funds. This, of course, has a direct bearing on mental health, as was indicated in an earlier chapter. Clothing, besides the physical effect of keeping the wearer warm, has a psychological influence. If a young person has to wear castoff clothes or garments that are not similar to those of his companions, his feeling of belongingness is directly affected. Many adults admit that their feeling of confidence is heightened when they are well dressed. College students are anxious to have appropriate clothes and feel insecure when they do not have them. While it is not true that “clothes make the man,” undoubtedly, good clothes can make a man (or a woman) feel much better. The effect upon members of a family of being crowded into small living quarters has already been discussed. When a person cannot enjoy some privacy, cannot know that some articles are his exclusively, and cannot avoid hearing the bickering of other members of the household, his mental health is bound to be conditioned, because his feeling of personal worth is undermined through utter lack of privacy.

There is always a danger in the hasty use of superlatives—claiming, for instance, that one thing is *most* important—but it probably is true that among the environmental influences shaping mental health there is nothing else which touches so many phases of a person's life (home, housing, health, education, occupational training, social status, community) as do economic factors. Not all will be affected in the same degree. Some will have good mental health in spite of unfavorable economic conditions. Others will have poor mental health when they are in what for most people would be altogether favorable economic

⁶ Daniel A. Prescott, *Emotion and the Educative Process*, Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1938, p. 146. By permission of the publisher.

situations. But the fact remains that the problems of mental health can never finally be solved until society improves the economic conditions, economic security, and economic outlook of those who make up that society.

It would be an additional handicap to personal mental health if anyone were to feel that his economic status was entirely of his own making. Depressions, cyclical unemployment, and the stimulation of business and industry resulting from war are factors that are beyond individual control. To the extent that a person can *justly* attribute his economic status to such factors, he will have a better chance to achieve the objectivity and poise that will help him to endure the factors he cannot change.

Unemployment. William H. Burnham has emphasized, as the minimum essentials for mental health, a task, a plan, and freedom to carry out that plan.⁷ Each of these elements is influenced by the widespread existence of unemployment. The fallacious notion that if a man is good enough at his work he can get a job has to be discarded—in spite of emotionalized attitudes—when there are no jobs available. The task is just not there. A person cannot develop a plan when there are many factors beyond his control. Finally, when unemployment is prevalent, there is a lack of freedom for carrying out even the plans that are formulated outside the realm of the job itself. Unemployment upsets the normal process of living and tends to disturb the habitual patterns of conduct that are based upon having an income and work to do—a purpose. A job gives reality and purpose to one's activities. When the job is lacking, the purpose of life itself is largely lacking.

One of the most serious problems confronting man in contemporary society is unemployment or the threat of unemployment. Worry, illness, and disability—both psychological and physical—frequently go hand in hand with joblessness. Insecurity, undernourishment, poor health, and poor housing are all familiar ills among the unemployed. It has been indicated previously that there is an intimate relationship between mental and physical health. This relationship is quite apparent when a study is made of the effects of unemployment:

. . . unemployment affects health because of the mental conditions which it engenders. One of the great advances in modern medicine centers about

⁷ William H. Burnham, *The Wholesome Personality*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1932, p. 86.

the recognition of the role which psychological factors play in sickness. Worry, despair, tension, uncertainty, all may be as important causes of ill-health as infection. And these are inseparable from unemployment.⁸

Many scholars have recognized unemployment as a factor in the mental health problems of individuals. Specifically, our attention is called to such conditions as loss of morale, shattered family life, a hopeless outlook, chronic despondency, humility, loss of self-respect, and feelings of futility and discouragement.

Some of the effects of unemployment, especially those which have to do with a person's feeling toward himself, can be better realized by studying the plight of an unemployed man. When he first loses his position, he feels that he can soon find another, because he knows that he is capable. As he looks for a position and does not find one, he begins to realize that there is no job available, but he thinks that the passing of time will bring about an improvement of conditions so that he will be rehired. Time goes by and the change does not come. He then begins to feel that probably there is something wrong with himself, that he must have deficiencies or a lack of skills that are necessary. He gradually loses his self-confidence and adopts a servile manner when applying for work. The prospective employer discerns the lack of confidence and is likely to think that it must be the man's fault that he cannot find work. Finally, the man is fully convinced that he is not employable and gives up even looking for a job. Such a person cannot be blamed for his attitude, because it has been pushed upon him by the force of circumstances. It is one thing to tell such a person that the failure to find work is not his fault, but quite another to get him to believe you. He can always point out that, in spite of what is said to him, there are many who have jobs, while he has none.

Mental health rests firmly upon actual living conditions. These living conditions must provide opportunities for the development of the many aspects of personality. Purposeful employment of some sort is the very source of such opportunities. A task, a plan, and freedom to carry out that plan cannot be realized in the face of unemployment.

Youths of college age today are hit particularly hard by the condition of unemployment. There are probably many young people who

⁸ J. H. S. Bossard, *Social Change and Social Problems*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934, p. 149. By permission of the publisher.

are in college, not because they want to be there or are fitted for college work, not because they feel that college has something to contribute to their growth, but because there is no remunerative work for them to do. Even those who feel that college has a place in their chosen lifework realize that their chances for employment may be very limited. It is not just a problem of getting the job for which one is prepared; it is a matter of getting a job. "At present, with many young people, the question is not whether they will be placed appropriately, but it is whether they will be placed at all." ⁹ The feeling of "What's the use?" is one that is quite understandable in view of the lag which frequently occurs between graduation and employment. That some college graduates will take "anything they can get" does not mean that they have no conflicts, doubts, or feelings of insecurity and futility. The youth who hears an older person say, "If you were talented you could get a job" is at least partially justified in having mixed feelings of pity (for that person's ignorance), contempt (for his tolerance), and disgust (for his own apparent incompetency).

College youth and the problem of employment. It is, of course, impossible to say what the future will bring to the present-day college student; but a few factors bearing on mental health may be considered here with some profit.

Probably the first consideration should concern the hopes and ambitions of college men and women, of whom the great majority are, doubtless, looking forward to employment in one or another of the professions. The number of students who are preparing for a given profession is far in excess of the number of vacancies that would be probable under the best of economic conditions. This means that numbers of graduates will have to change their vocational choices, even after having prepared for them. In fact, this has been the case for a number of years. Men trained in engineering have to accept jobs as mechanics. Women trained for teaching count themselves fortunate if they can get clerking positions. People with business-administration degrees find places as bookkeepers.

Studies show that, although about 60 per cent of those who are gainfully employed in the United States are engaged in agricultural,

⁹ Joseph Miller, in Frank G. Davis (ed.), *Pupil Personnel Service*, Scranton, Pa.: The International Textbook Company, 1948, p. 273. By permission of the publisher.

mechanical, or industrial pursuits, about 8 to 10 per cent of the high-school students choose such occupations as their goals. It is apparent that many graduates will have to change their aims or else have their purposes defeated by circumstances that will otherwise be beyond their control. In either case, the problem is one that belongs to mental hygiene.

This problem is made more difficult by the influence of some time-honored traditions. Many still cling to the belief that "there is always room at the top." But an employer who needs two engineers to do his work, is not likely to hire two more, just to have them on hand. "If you work hard enough, you will succeed" is another firmly rooted adage. Even without a thorough study of conditions of employment, the student who has studied only a little psychology knows that some people are not intelligent enough to do certain jobs, no matter how hard they work. Besides, many a young worker finds advancement in his occupation quite slow, not because he is not competent, alert, industrious, and anxious to do well, but because some older person is ahead of him. This is what the railroad men call "seniority" and is based not entirely on competence but on the length of time served.

College men and women could do a great deal toward meeting these conditions if they were to study the problem of unemployment with open minds. In the first place, it would be well if college youth would accept the fact that real contributions to human welfare can be made and are being made outside the professions. It is probable that the employed mechanic has better mental health than the unemployed doctor. In the second place, it would be advisable to study trends in employment. There are continual shifts in the demands for men and women who have particular training. For instance, in recent years analyses have indicated that there is a decreasing demand for workers in the fields of diesel engines, air conditioning, routine stenography, secondary school teaching, and journalism. More promising spheres, for the same period, are ceramics, chemistry, stenography (when accompanied by a specialized vocabulary in chemistry, medicine, or law), and truck driving and other transportation jobs for a person who has specialized training. Trained statisticians are in great demand, and there are open opportunities for small service businesses, such as radio repair, photographic studios, laundries, and beauty parlors. These trends are men-

tioned, not as guides for the vocational choice of youths today, but as an indication that demands tend to change, that trends can be studied, and that definite study should precede a vocational choice. Doing what one's father has been doing or following the path that kind parents or fond relatives recommend is not necessarily the wise, or even the easy, course. " 'The time to start looking for a job is at least five years before you need it. That gives the chance to choose rather than just find work, to become informed of trends and outlooks.' And time for training in the interval." ¹⁰

If attention is given to occupational trends, if a determination to do well what is available is fostered, if one trains oneself in occupational adaptability, the impact of unemployment may, perhaps, be softened somewhat for some; but, for others, employment will still be largely beyond their personal control. What becomes most important then is the view that one takes of his problem.

Military service—a mental health factor. A national circumstance bearing directly upon the mental health of young people is the prospect of military service. Young men have to look forward to the possibility of devoting a year or two of their lives to training for possible participation in war. Just at the time when they naturally feel that they would like to become independent, they may have to enter the army at a subsistence salary. Just as they have made a decision as to the course of their college career, their education is interrupted by their being drafted. Just when they would like to be establishing themselves in business, trade, or a profession, the prospect of that career is "nipped in the bud." Just as they are longing to get married and establish a home of their own, they feel the threat of being called to service and, consequently, fear to undertake the responsibility of taking a wife. Under such circumstances, the young man who is already married may not want to bring children into a world where the immediate future is so uncertain. The consequence of these conditions is that many young men—probably with only slight justification—develop attitudes expressed by such statements as "What's the use of going to school? The government will determine my future." "Well, I will not have to make up my

¹⁰ William F. McDermott and J. C. Furnas, "Blueprinting Jobs," *Survey Graphic*, Vol. 26 (April, 1940), p. 226. Adapted from Lyle M. Spencer and Robert K. Burns, Science Research Associates. By permission of the publisher.

mind; the government will do that for me." "No use planning; we'll all have to go to war."

During the Second World War, one lad of the writer's acquaintance stopped his college career ten weeks before graduation, saying, "What's the use of getting a degree? My number is low. I'll be called in June and in my profession (teaching) I have to go to school for a year after I get my A.B. degree. I may as well *live* for a while." The future was so uncertain for him that he lost faith in his own ability to control that future. He decided that, rather than be dependent upon his mother for continued support with no immediate prospect of repaying her, he would begin at once to earn money at any job he could get. He did this against the wish of his mother, who assured him that her greatest satisfaction would be to see him finish college.

Even though it be admitted that this factor is one which cannot be ignored, the fact remains that for young men who have a different attitude regarding uncertain prospects the problem is less acute, from the mental hygiene viewpoint. Some of these lads, realizing that the future probably has never been really certain for most people, take the attitude that their own difficulties are merely a set of challenges to be met.

One boy who was to be called into service at the end of the school term came into the writer's office and asked for advice about books that would be helpful in the study of personnel work. His intention was expressed in this way: "I have been called into service but I want to be more than just another soldier. If I study personnel work while I'm in the army, perhaps I'll find use for it while I'm there. If I don't, I'll at least have that much of a start when I'm released. I know it is going to be hard work. I'll be tired, but there is some time that I can use in my own way. I'll stick to it and do a little bit at a time." He was regarding his military experience as another learning opportunity—perhaps not one that he would choose, but nevertheless an opportunity.

Other cultural factors in mental hygiene. The problems reviewed above are representative of many that might be discussed. The threat of the atomic bomb is one to which frequent reference is made in newspapers, magazines, and lectures, and on the radio. Each of us is acutely aware of the danger which this weapon creates for us as individuals and for the world as a unit. Such problems as the danger of

automobile accidents, the lag of social progress behind technological progress, the inefficiency of many city governments, the spread of certain diseases (such as syphilis), and the use of narcotic drugs serve further to set forth the wide range of problematic situations which bear upon the mental health of individuals and over which little or no control can be exerted by an individual.

However, we cannot do justice to the study and practice of mental hygiene if we throw up our hands in despair and declare that nothing can be done. Each of us has the social responsibility (and the opportunity for personal development) of doing what we can in our small ways to solve the problems. We would do well to remember that in previous generations there were always problems which were beyond the individual control of some but which, when they were attacked by optimistic and energetic persons, were successfully solved for the benefit of all.

SUMMARY

A complete view of the field of mental hygiene must include not only those aspects of behavior which can be controlled by the individual but also those external factors which are largely beyond personal control. The emphasis in this book has been upon what the individual can do to secure for himself mental health. The burden of this particular chapter is to show the boundaries beyond which individual control is difficult, if not impossible. However, that the argument may be in keeping with the main emphasis, the reader is reminded that *he can control the way he looks at the factors* which he cannot modify.

Heredity sets limits beyond which a person may not develop. Some shortcomings may be ascribed to hereditary limitations. However, few people achieve to their full potential. The conditions of birth may result in either psychological or physiological injury which may influence the state of a person's mental health. Such defects are regarded by some as incentives to personal effort, but for others they furnish an excuse for accepting defeat. The home life of some children has been such as to lead to personality defects which cause mental ill-health. Psychologists and sociologists point to the powerful influence that the home exerts, even after that particular home has been replaced by another. So too, the community exerts an influence for good or bad upon

the individual in his attempt at adjustment to the problems of life. Some hope is found for personality adjustment for those who live in poor homes or communities in the fact that not all persons react in the same way to negative influences. Social status may affect the attitude of anyone in such a way as to make difficult the achievement of mental health.

Economic factors are for some persons a cause of discouragement; for others, a vital stimulus to personal endeavor. Too easy a life economically may develop laziness, but it is also true that too little of economic resources may bring about many kinds of frustration. Widespread unemployment is a particularly difficult obstacle to the mental health of young men and women. It may deprive them of feelings of accomplishment and worth. It is likely to cause the postponement of marriage. Young people cannot help it if there are millions of people unemployed, but they can be more careful about searching out their chances for employment in their chosen careers. They can revise their outlook toward what constitutes honorable and dignified employment.

National affairs—the difficult problems encountered in a democracy—are a source of concern to those who are intelligent enough to recognize the gravity of current problems of government. The distribution of wealth, the high incidence of crime, the shift in the average age of the population, and the phenomenon of rapid change in the ways of life are all factors which impinge upon the mental health of the people of a nation. One of these baffling problems, especially for youth, is the program of selective service. This in some produces a feeling of defeat and futility, while to others it appears as a temporary obstacle to be met and overcome.

It is apparent that cultural factors are of real importance in the achievement of mental health. A realization that there is such a thing as reality—that there are some phases of life beyond personal control—is an asset to a balanced view of mental health. Recognizing that environmental forces shape personality is not a reason for declaring that a person is just a product of external forces; rather, this recognition points the way to a more intelligent attack on the problems presented in everyday life. The clue to this attack may be found in the words, "Our problems are frequently not so serious as the attitude which we take toward them."

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. "Try, try, and try again" is a motto which must be constantly applied in the seeking of life's goals.
2. A person can do anything he wants if he just works hard enough, long enough, and with the conviction that he will succeed.
3. The person who seeks for the cause of all his limitations in his hereditary equipment or in the conditions of his birth is probably rationalizing.
4. The culture in which a person lives determines the kind of individual he will be.
5. A person's fundamental attitudes are determined by his early home environment.
6. Homes which differ markedly from other homes in the same community are likely to cause personality conflicts in the members of that home.
7. A college student has a unique opportunity for bringing about changes in attitudes or ideals.
8. It is essential to a person's mental health that he have a room of his own in which he can enjoy a degree of privacy.
9. Class lines should be ignored by white people, for the sake of mental health.
10. The clothes one has to wear have a marked effect on the mental health of the wearer.
11. An adult must have work to do before he can experience real mental health.
12. A college student should so plan his career that alternatives in occupational choices are provided.

13. Many of the problems of mental health are really economic problems.
14. Though one cannot control all the conditions of mental health, it is still true that the view one takes of his problem is of utmost importance.
15. One should always view obstacles to growth as challenges to be met.

Suggested Readings

ADLER, ALEXANDRA, *Guiding Human Misfits*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1938. 88 pp.

The author, a psychoanalyst, has drawn upon her experience and theoretical training to present an explanation of abnormal behavior. Chapters on childhood and adolescence explain how deviations get started. One chapter deals with the psychology of the criminal—a topic only mentioned in many books on mental hygiene.

CAMPBELL, C. MACFIE, *Destiny and Disease in Mental Disorders*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1935. 207 pp.

The author feels that the answer to personality can be given neither by a laboratory study of subhuman animals nor by a study of normal people. The workings of personality can be best understood when the two afore-mentioned approaches are combined with the study of the abnormal. The author therefore devotes his book to a study of the schizophrenic psychoses.

LANDIS, CARNEY, and JAMES D. PAGE, *Modern Society and Mental Disease*, New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1938. 190 pp.

Statistics and charts are used to show the seriousness of the problem of mental health in the United States. Some of the chapters deal with eugenics, sterilization, age factors in mental illness, the outlook for the mentally ill, and the question as to whether or not mental illness is increasing.

MENNINGER, WILLIAM C., and MUNRO LEAF, *You and Psychiatry*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948. 168 pp.

This book is designed to bring the layman to a better understanding of the psychoanalytic approach to the reconstruction of personality. Technical terms are described in understandable language. Development is traced and the danger factors in growth are indicated.

Chapter 15

RELIGION AS A FACTOR IN MENTAL HEALTH

Throughout this book constant emphasis has been placed on the thought that mental hygiene is a way of life. This way of life cannot be summarized in a sentence; but one fact deserving special mention is that mental health is dependent upon the exercise of as many of man's potentialities or capacities as is possible. Among these potentialities are the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual aspects of life. Previous chapters have dealt with ways of living which will help one to come closer to attaining his physical potentialities, to increase his mental efficiency, and to gain greater satisfaction from his emotional behavior. This chapter will deal with the problem of exercising the spiritual nature as a means of achieving improved mental health. The reader should bear in mind that these various aspects of man's life are not separately shelved in the living personality. On the contrary, there is a relationship between our spiritual satisfactions and our physical well-being; there is a close bond between emotional satisfaction and religious devotion; and a mentally healthy religion can be entirely in accord with intelligent thinking.

The writer takes the view that all too little attention is paid to the factor of religion, not only in mental hygiene, but in both formal and informal educational institutions. It is the exceptional book in child development or the psychology of adolescence which devotes more than a paragraph or two, possibly a few pages, to the role of religion in healthy development. Yet many writers, in describing the development of civilized culture, place the control of man's actions by values and ideals high on the list of factors that stimulate growth. It is in this very area of values and ideals that religion can make its most vital contribution. The study of the Bible, Sunday-school lessons, sermons, devotional circles, and religious publications are available to all who will but give the study of values and ideals a place in his developmental pro-

gram. Religion can, and frequently does, provide the core for developing a constructive philosophy of life.

There are many who feel that religion is a most important unifying force, something which gives stability to man's emotional being and lends force to his mental power. There are those who want it scientifically proved that religion is a vital factor in healthy living; but there are others who feel that religion goes beyond scientific fact and that, because it does, religion must be a matter of belief.

This chapter will not attempt to prove the value of religion on a scientific basis; however, some evidences of the shortcomings of religion and evidences of its positive values will be indicated. For those who wish to have their lives based on fact alone, it is hoped that they will read and study the materials presented with the open mind of the scientist. It is hoped that those who are "believers" will find cause for more diligently developing the religious inclinations they already possess.

THE MEANING OF RELIGION

A concept of religion. One of the difficulties involved in man's understanding of other men is that words may mean different things to different people. There are probably many ways of defining religion; but for the present, dependence will be placed on the following definition: Religion is a system of faith in and worship of a higher being. Perhaps the meaning will be clarified by saying that the religion discussed in this chapter is spelled with a small "r" rather than with a capital "R." This distinction will help to separate the usage from the concept of religion which refers to creed—having to do with a specific system of worship, which may be called Methodism, Catholicism, Buddhism, or Presbyterianism. Religion has to do with devotion and reverence, stimulated by a faith or conviction that a higher being is concerned with the way man lives his life. Again, as far as this discussion is concerned, the devotion is the basic element. Prescribed forms and conventions—that meat must not be eaten on Friday, that baptism should be by sprinkling or by immersion, that prayer must be spoken aloud, that one prays only when kneeling, or that one worships on Saturday rather than on Sunday or when facing the sun—these are only ways and means of showing devotion and expressing worship. They are not the core of religion. The particular form that one accepts tends to emphasize religion with a

capital "R." In summary, it may be said that the religion with which this discussion is concerned is the experience of living by faith rather than by a given creed.

Belief is a basic factor in religion. Belief can be contrasted to knowledge. Of course, we believe in things that we know, in things that have been proved; but religious belief also embraces those things which we do not see, which have not been proved conclusively. Belief is bolstered by evidences but is not wholly dependent upon incontrovertible evidences.

There are some who discount the element of faith because they feel that it is unscientific or unintellectual, especially if this faith refers to religion. However, aside from religion, many of our activities are based on faith. We have faith in the fact that our parents are really our own. We have faith that democracy is a way of life superior to many, if not all, others. We have faith that we are capable of accomplishing more in our lives than we have previously achieved. Faith, then, is an accepted factor in our daily lives and as such might well be further examined to see what contributions an extended faith can offer toward making our way of living more effective.

Religious faith—belief in a higher being or power—has been effective for many people. Entire nations, both in peace and in war, have been motivated in the prolonged attack upon their problems by their faith in religion. More specifically, let it be said that faith aids inestimably in giving meaning to life, in establishing purposes which lead one away from excessive introspection; and it relieves personal stress by emphasizing the conviction that we are not alone in our struggles.

Religious belief can forward the achievement of mental health. To cite one way in which it helps, the belief that each of us has a reason for being—that each is an indispensable unit of a continuing universe—will do much to counteract some of the negative forces of mental health. Feelings of futility, indifference, inertia, defeatism, frustration, personal tension, and arrogance are offset, at least to some extent, by belief in our own significance as an element in the world as a whole.

MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS SUPPLIED BY RELIGION

Man needs to grow. It has been indicated earlier that mental health is dependent upon a growth process. Religious belief is a stimulant to

growth for two reasons. First, religious faith holds before us the challenge to grow toward a better understanding of our deity's plan and purpose. Second, religious belief holds before us the challenge to become more like the ideal person which we think our deity wants us to be. These goals might be said to be "ceilingless areas" and thus are enduring goals. Therefore, additional growth is always possible.

To give belief, as contrasted with knowledge, a place in one's life is to help supply an opportunity for developing the emotional as well as the intellectual phase of personality, both of which are needed. Belief can provide for the satisfaction of emotional needs, which are frequently more compelling than intellectual drives. Such emotional responses as confidence, a sense of security, hope for betterment in the future, forgiveness of others' shortcomings, generosity to all men, and self-respect may be stimulated into vigorous growth by religious belief. To discard this force because it is not intellectual is to deprive oneself of an incalculable help in progressing toward more effective living. There is a great deal of empirical (based on observation) evidence to support the claim that religion fosters development. William James, the founder of pragmatic philosophy, asserts that the hypothesis of God does work.

. . . I have shown small respect indeed for the Absolute, and I have until this moment spoken of no other superhuman hypothesis but that. But I trust that you see sufficiently that the Absolute has nothing but its superhumanness in common with the theistic God. On pragmatistic principles, if the hypothesis of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is true. Now whatever its residual difficulties may be, experience shows that it certainly does work, and that the problem is to build it out and determine it so that it will combine satisfactorily with all the other working truths.¹

Religion is needed in facing factors beyond control. A previous chapter has dealt at some length with a number of factors bearing on mental health which are beyond an individual's personal control. Among them are diseases, accidents, limitation of abilities, war, unemployment, and financial cycles. The disappointments and hardships that are thrust upon the individual by these factors are made easier to bear

¹ William James, *Pragmatism*, New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1907, p. 299. By permission of the publisher.

by a suitable religious faith. The handicaps of disease and accident can be made more tolerable by a belief that each of us as an individual may as yet be unable to see the entire pattern of life and that perhaps the accident or the disease is a challenge to further and more satisfying growth. The limitation of our abilities may signify that our energies should be directed to advancement and development in areas where less prestige is possible but where there will be ample opportunity for self-expression and accomplishment.

One of the writer's students, a mature person doing graduate work, wrote the following letter, in which she expressed gratitude for a religion that was helpful in a time of stress:

About one year ago my father took his life after a period of nervous trouble and mental depression. Though I did not become hysterical or ill, the shock and sorrow was deep-seated and my own effort toward adjustment would not have been sufficient, I feel, were it not for the background of a Christian philosophy. To me real mental health is best achieved by sincere emphasis and application of spiritual values through a personal faith in a living Saviour, without discounting the importance of the mental, physical, and emotional phases.

It is apparent that this student has not used religion as an escape. She does not regard it as the only factor in a program of mental hygiene. She does see in religion a way of making bearable certain circumstances of life and death over which she has no control.

Religion and the need for a sense of security. Writers in the field of mental hygiene stress the fact that feelings of security are provided in childhood by intelligent and loving parents. When parents are consistent in their treatment of children, when they show that the child is accepted heartily as an important member of the family, and when they demonstrate that they themselves are dependable in time of stress, the child develops a sense of security. When the parents are intelligent enough to let the children have independent experiences and help them face disappointments with equanimity, the sense of security is enhanced. Children cannot throughout their entire lives continue to have the protection and comfort of their parents. As development takes place, increasing independence must be achieved. It is at this later stage of development that religion is especially helpful in the maintaining of a

sense of security. When factors beyond control threaten mental health, one's faith in a higher being is a source of emotional poise in meeting the frustrations. A faith that the worth of the individual is recognized and that each of us is considered in some way in a universal plan makes tolerance of any disappointment easier. We can put up with frustrations when we have faith that a time will come when we shall more clearly perceive a beneficent plan.

Just as our parents provided the security that eased our disappointments in childhood, religion can supply security in adulthood by assuring us that we are worthy of consideration and help; but this sense of security provided by a beneficent higher being can violate the principles of mental hygiene if it results in a mere waiting for things to become better or a failure to continue to stand on one's own feet. If, however, to the faith is added the belief that work should be added to prayer, then the attitude toward negative factors is in accord with the admonitions of mental hygiene. In short, the promise, "Ask and it shall be given you," is complete, in a mentally healthy sense, only when the sequel, "Seek, and ye shall find," is added. A false security is generated by dependence upon the asking alone, for then asking is followed by spineless waiting for one's pleas to be answered in a comfortable and effortless manner. The psychologically sound security is based upon both belief and work.

Religion and the need for "getting outside oneself." It has previously been shown, especially in the chapters on Social Adaptation, that mental health is enhanced by "getting outside oneself." That is, the mature, healthy, and efficient person has become progressively more concerned about the welfare and interests of others. His actions are less egocentric and more sociocentric as he grows to psychological maturity. Many, if not most, severe cases of mental ill-health (of the functional variety, which is the concern of this book) ² are those in which the individual is excessively bound up in his own thoughts and feelings; he becomes morbidly introspective, feels sorry for himself, dreams of ways of getting even with a cruel world, and often puts these morbid dreams into operation. The mentally ill are inclined to feel that their own handicaps are so uniquely heavy that both the physical

² A functional disorder is one in which the individual manifests the symptoms of physical disability, although his trouble is actually of mental or emotional origin.

and the social world are in league against them. Often the source of difficulty lies in a combination of such feelings, with a lack of faith in self, all these thoughts revolving around the circumscribed area of the patient's individual life.

A religion which stresses social adaptation and consideration for others can be a powerful factor in turning thoughts and attention away from the selfish concern that is the opposite of getting outside oneself. Religions that are influences for mental health make just this emphasis. The idea may be expressed differently in various creeds, but the healthy core is contained in the words, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." It is this type of orientation that makes religion a powerful force for full and effective living. The teaching that places primary stress upon helping children, the ill, the unfortunate, and even the inconsiderate furnishes a principle of living that emphatically points the way to getting outside the narrow confines of a self-centered world.

The religious tenet of helping others has withstood the pragmatic test—it works. Many books, without mentioning religion, have stressed the truth that, in an interdependent society, man must necessarily consider others. We are advised by mental hygienists, not religious teachers alone, that one has to place himself *beneath* another if he wants to "get even." Philosophers dwell upon the same point in explaining that happiness is not obtained by direct pursuit, that real happiness (in contrast with transitory pleasures) is a by-product of socially considerate living. In our classrooms, teachers try to illustrate to their pupils the advantages of cooperative behavior. Homes in which all members are happy are those in which mutual give-and-take is the custom; in which no one desires, or is allowed, to arrange activities without regard to the wishes of others. Success in marriage is largely dependent upon the capacity of the partners to recognize the wants and interests of each other.

Religion, by reminding the individual of his responsibilities in socially oriented activities, impels its adherents ever closer to the goal which is pragmatically sanctioned.

The college student and the need for religion. More than two and a half million of America's most intelligent and promising young men and women are currently studying in our colleges and universities. In the

not-too-distant future these young people will have much to do with the thought, policy, and life of the people of our country. Either their influence and efforts will help to lift our nation to higher human and spiritual levels, or that influence and those efforts will be used on the side of those who think of material things only, whose life is centered about the idea of power and wealth, to the neglect of spiritual values.

It is generally accepted that our nation is in need of an increased emphasis on the spiritual aspects of life. Men in high places in government have repeatedly called attention to the importance of this need. Educators on every level recognize it. For centuries, philosophers have stressed the same requirement of mankind. Labor and industrial leaders also indicate that life is something more than food and shelter, something more than jobs and money.

Such a shift in emphasis must be accomplished by the college students' turning toward and studying these spiritual values. It is hoped that there can be adequate leadership on the adult level for such a movement. But more important still is the attitude that our youths will take toward the leadership, as well as the interest and activity with which they will undertake the study. If the groundwork laid in childhood is not sufficient to provide such orientation, there is still hope that youths will start from wherever they may be. This chapter will have served its purpose if some of the readers resolve to study and apply these values, which are admittedly constructive but which people in the past have found difficult to apply consistently.

RELIGION AS A MENTAL HEALTH HANDICAP

It must be admitted that not all "Religions" are assets to mental health. Those which stress fear as a means of obtaining conformity with dogma are in this category of handicapping "Religions." Those which foster the belief that there is only one true "Religion," and that adherents to other creeds are lost souls are liabilities to mental health. Religions that are detached from everyday living and that categorically denounce simple pleasures are, in the long run, inimical to sound mental health. But to condemn all religions because of the limitations of a "Religion" is quite comparable to dumping an entire box of apples in the garbage can because a rotten one is found on the top layer. Wholesale condem-

nation of religion is as reasonable as saying, "All people are mentally unhealthy because I know a man who gets drunk and beats his wife."

Religions may lack balance. We have seen that mental health demands a balance of interests and actions. Some physical exercise is needed but too much attention to muscle can cause neglect of cultivating the intellect. Dieting can be as disastrous as gluttony. Too much work is as circumscribing to well-rounded development as is continual play. A "Religious" fanatic is as deserving of our sympathy and pity as is the outspoken atheist.

A "Religion" which stresses only an afterlife and gives little or no attention to current problems cannot really satisfy physical, mental, emotional, or *spiritual* needs. If life eternal is a goal which is independent of efficient, considerate, and courteous life today, the question of "Religion's" contribution to mental health can well be raised. This point is illustrated by a particular case.

Fred J. was a man about forty years of age who was married and had a boy aged twelve (at the time). He spent a great deal of time praying and reading the Bible. His conversations dealt to a large extent with the subject of life in the hereafter. He was regular in church attendance and undertook responsibility for several church functions. It seems just to say, however, that his devotion lacked balance. He was an indifferent worker, shifting frequently from one job to another with periods of unemployment interspersed. Even during harvest season, when he could have worked every day, he would take two or three days off—presumably for meditation. The result was a precarious economic situation for the family, which forced the wife to do housework for hire and to do her own washing, ironing, cleaning, and cooking after finishing her outside labor. Little household repairs, like tacking down the linoleum, replacing the broken screens, cleaning the furnace, and repainting peeled-off surfaces were neglected, on the basis that the home was only a temporary abode. But the real justification for condemning this way of life is that there were marked tensions in the home, which indicated that no one in the family was living joyously at the time. The boy failed to develop healthy attitudes toward work, but he also neglected the study of religion. He displayed all the symptoms of becoming a pitiful ne'er-do-well.

This kind of case points clearly the need for balance if religion is to be an asset to mental health. It was because of a lack of balance that religion in Russia fell into disrepute. There servility and obedience were glorified, to the exclusion of self-realization and social welfare. Those in political power used religion to keep the masses in subjugation.

Religion may be used as an escape mechanism. The facing of reality is one of the necessary conditions of mental health; yet in certain religious expressions there is much that seems to indicate that religion is an escape. When one prays to be made "safe in the arms of Jesus," it might be that he would not have much will to fight his own battles. If one is content to rely on the rewards which will come in the "sweet by and by," he may lack incentive to improve his efficiency in contemporary living. Men who regard war, sickness, and evil deeds as the Almighty's testing devices of man's humility and endurance can hardly be credited with facing reality. It should be obvious that war and sickness and criminal acts must be fought against by men who are unwilling to wait for a higher being to solve their problems.

It would seem that "Religionists" are evading reality when they advise taking no thought for tomorrow, meaning that man need not work. That nation would be seriously ill which depended on faith without works. Perhaps some of you have encountered a pious person who spends time in prayer, reading, and meditation, yet who does not translate these into productive work. It is this kind of individual who tends to turn the industrious person against religion. As a matter of fact, it is not the religion that produces the shortcomings, but the manner of interpretation that results in escape from individual responsibility which should be blamed. Here again we see the need for balance in religion. Time spent in devotion and meditation has advantageous results when action and application follow as a natural sequence. A religion that is devoted only to the life hereafter lacks the balance and the facing of reality which would make it acceptable in a mental hygiene program.

The power of the divine being may be used as an excuse for escape from reality. Some people argue that, since God is all-powerful, He moves his people about as He pleases, so that there is no need to fight and struggle against adversity. This pessimistic conception is an obstacle to mental health because it assumes that what is going to happen will happen anyhow and there is no need for the individual's accepting re-

sponsibility for his acts. This view is unacceptable because it is a denial of the mental health principle that personal growth provides a deep source of personal satisfaction. An Almighty who would deny us the privilege, the opportunity, and the challenge to grow would be one who certainly was not cognizant of mental health factors. It is one thing to think that God has power over our lives but quite another to think He must do all the work. The view that a deity does all the labor is an escape from the reality that most men, including many religious men, have denied throughout the entire history of mankind. A healthy religion cannot deny man's responsibility for choosing and acting.

Religion as dogma is mentally unhealthy. If man is denied the opportunity to think, to investigate, and to grow by virtue of religious dogma, settled truths, then that "Religion" is a handicap to mental health. Blind acceptance of religious creed can make no appeal to a man who desires to exercise both his intellectual and his spiritual capacities. There is no challenge to growth in a "Religion" that has ready-made answers to all man's problems. Religious dogma cannot satisfy men who live in a changing society. In short, a religion made static by dogma cannot be of help in the dynamic world in which we live today.

Dr. Elizabeth B. Hurlock has expressed this possible shortcoming of religion, especially as it pertains to young people, in the following words:

. . . Dogmatic teachings, aloofness from everyday life, and the practice of scolding and condemning those who do not take an active part in church affairs or attend church regularly are all quickly recognized by youth for what they are. He detects this insecurity, bigotry, and dogmatism and resents it. This in turn makes him skeptical about whether or not religion holds anything for him.³

Does man need theology? Does he need dogma? The answers must hinge upon the meaning of the words. In this presentation, theology refers to the systematic and critical study of religion and religious beliefs. It has to do with man's search for knowledge regarding the nature and purposes of a higher being. In this sense, theology is needed. Dogma, in this discussion, refers not to approaches but to tenets. Dogma

³ Elizabeth B. Hurlock, *Adolescent Development*, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949, p. 349. By permission of the publisher.

lacks the dynamic quality of theology; it is static. It refers to settled principles, stating opinions as fact, ready-made answers, and rules laid down by authority. Used in this manner, dogma is a mental health handicap. It is probable that altogether too frequently for some people this distinction is not made and that dogma and theology are considered to be synonymous. It is this writer's opinion that theology has a constructive quality, which dogma lacks.

Literal translations of religious writings are among the confusing dogmas which perplex youth. They are taught that they should not question, even though they are learning in school and by experience that such literal interpretations are not in accord with facts. It is apparent that the adherents and sponsors of dogma are not acquainted with the fact that religious writings have been translated and retranslated, that copying is subject to the limitations of human accuracy, and above all, that the meaning of specific words changes as time passes. Thus, for example, the passage from the Bible, "Take no thought for the morrow" means to many people that they should not plan or work for the future. Such an idea is directly opposed to the factor of personal responsibility which is a teaching of mental hygiene. If, on the other hand, "Take no thought for the morrow" were interpreted to mean, "Do not worry about the future," we should have a sound mental hygiene principle; for worry is to be distinguished from thinking, planning, and working.

Religious dogmas which deny the enjoyment of everyday pleasures, such as card playing, dancing, social visits on Sunday, or even secular reading on the Sabbath, are unnecessarily restrictive. Card playing may lead to a waste of time or money and dancing may be sexually stimulating, but they do not necessarily lead to excesses. Such dogmas are inimical to mental health because they foster feelings of guilt, sin, and fear, none of which can be endorsed by the mental hygienist.

It would be absurd, if it were not so tragic, that narrow dogmas could drive people away from religion; and that the positive values of religion are obliterated by the petty minutiae which are dogma.

Religion does ill if it clings to old interpretations of human life simply because it has built these into revered institutions and practices. When a thing as complex and inadequately known as our own nature is being dealt with, there is need for constant alertness to new discoveries and implica-

tions. For this is precisely what man appears to be: *A mind on the way to knowing more than it has known before.*⁴

When dogma denies the right to question, investigate and evaluate problems of daily living, the potentiality of the individual for growth is circumscribed. Religion, as dogma, is especially handicapping, in that it is at variance with our democratic way of life. In democratic living the wisdom of groups of men is considered, there is a cooperative solving of problems, there is a questioning and open-minded attitude. An authoritarian "Religion" denies man an opportunity to exercise these qualities of democracy and may even militate against the attitudes which lead to investigation and study. There is real danger that the power to think will atrophy in a milieu where authoritarianism and dogma are prevalent.

Clashes in belief are sources of poor mental health. When mankind is so diligently seeking to learn the lesson of how to get along with fellow men, it is unfortunate to have to admit that clashes in belief sometimes foster human strife. Religious wars have been fought to "save sinners" who had different beliefs; community dissension has been fostered by inability to reconcile differences in belief; families have been split by the discord aroused by intolerance⁵ in "Religion."

The privilege of worshiping as we please is guaranteed to American citizens as a legal right; but the right loses much of its value when the form of worship is sneered at, criticized, and ridiculed by the citizens of a community who are in the majority sect. The weakness of "Religion" thus provides a means of exercising the weakness of man. His own jealousies, insecurities, and inferiorities are vented on the scapegoats made up of the minority groups. Such men justify their own inadequacies (symptoms of mental ill-health) on the ground of "Religion."

Religion should be a force for uniting men all over the world, it should be a common meeting ground for the mutual solution of perplexing problems. When differences are stressed, when shortcomings of

⁴ H. A. Overstreet, *The Mature Mind*, New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1949, p. 265. By permission of the publisher.

⁵ The opposite of intolerance, tolerance, is still not adequate as an orientation for living. To tolerate—to put up with, to endure—is not enough. The desirable goal would be to respect and admire the divergent beliefs of our fellow men.

other creeds are given even a weak emphasis, the value of religion—even considering its other values in mental health—is diminished to zero. It is not religion but the obscuring of religion by “Religion”—with a capital “R”—that must be blamed. When youths observe that some things are disapproved in the name of one “Religion” (dancing, smoking, going to movies, etc.) and countenanced in the name of another “Religion,” they have a right to question the universal “wisdom” which is purportedly revealed. They may either repudiate all religion or use these differences to separate themselves from contact with those of divergent belief. Neither of these attitudes is particularly conducive to mental health.

There will always be differences in religious belief as long as religion is developing and changing. It is the method of reconciling the differences that must be questioned. When the technique for reconciliation depends upon emotion and power, as contrasted to socialized and democratic techniques, the value of “Religion” is debatable. If religious people can avoid a vitriolic and catastrophic approach to differences, variation in belief can be constructive. The search for knowledge and understanding can transform an inherent liability of “Religion” into a positive asset (the pursuit of development) for mental health.

Religion based on guilt and fear is a threat to mental health. One need not seek diligently to discover many aspects of religion which are based on fear. There is the fear that one will be punished for his sins by everlasting torture. There is fear that one’s thoughts are not of the clean, pure type demanded by a sinless Almighty. There is a stress on personal guilt that arises from natural, childish sex exploration.

Adult education in mental hygiene has an extraordinarily difficult task, which unfortunately is made more difficult by the present attitude of many ministers and priests who are teaching parents to rear their children by fear and terror, by a strict discipline that refuses to tolerate infantile and childish explorations and activities but treats every act as deliberately wicked or disobedient, in an attitude which regards sex as something obscene and degraded and subhuman so that the child’s love-life and acceptance of masculine and feminine roles are distorted and frequently perverted into the sad pitiful cases we see every day in the newspaper. Mental hygiene has no quarrel with the church, nor does it underestimate the incalculable value of religion for helping the personality to find emotional security and integration. But mental hygiene must protest against certain beliefs about human

nature and the practices of child rearing that still carry ecclesiastical sanctions today.⁶

"Hell-fire" sermons are still heard from the pulpit and over the radio; but these, as far as mental hygiene is concerned, must be placed in the same category as militant discipline in the home. Mental hygienists, clinical psychologists, and child specialists are agreed in heartily criticizing fear and the threat of punishment as means of influencing children's behavior. The religion which stresses fear and the threat of punishment may be even more dangerous than a dominating father. The father is feared, but he is known; religion is still more feared because it introduces the unknown. One who studies the psychology of fear knows that it is much less devastating when the cause is known than when it cannot be made specific. In fact, fear is likely to disappear when the source is known.

There can be no doubt that fear is often productive of conformity; but in intelligent, happy living, the forces influencing the choice of behavior should be positive rather than negative. The negative forces of fear, guilt, and insecurity do not promote the confident, cheerful, and aggressive attack on problems that is characteristic of the mentally healthy individual.

RELIGION AS A POSITIVE FACTOR IN MENTAL HEALTH

The previous section has indicated that religion is not consistently a positive factor in mental health; but the point was made that it is the kind of "Religion," rather than religion in essence, that makes for or against mental health. True religion can be and often is a real force in more effective living. In this section an attempt will be made to point out some of the vital influences of religion which are in harmony with the teaching of mental hygiene.

Religion can help to establish goals. Effective behavior must be directed toward a goal. Random activity, purposelessness, vacillation, and doubt are wasteful of energy. The more definite our goals become, the easier it is to eliminate nonproductive behavior. It can truly be said that the purpose of this book is to help the student define and perceive

⁶ Lawrence K. Frank, in P. A. Witty and C. F. Skinner (eds.), *Mental Hygiene in Modern Education*, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., 1939, p. 287. By permission of Rinehart and Company, Inc.

more clearly some desirable goals of growing and living. Although at times we might wish that it were not so, the incompleteness of man and the consequent challenge to growth are what make life worth living. If we were born perfect men in a perfect world, life would probably be perfect, too; but we are not perfect men and, from the view we have, it would seem that a world in which there were no problems would soon become fatally boring.

A religion which stresses the need for individual and social growth becomes a means for helping in the choice of productive goals. A religion which expresses faith in mankind produces confidence that progress can be made along the road to self-realization. A religion that emphasizes the power of love is a positive aid in the goal of "getting outside oneself." Religions that promulgate the importance of social justice, equality, and respect are dealing with fundamental problems and with goals of sane, healthful living. All such goals as these are in accord with the experimental and empirical findings of psychologists, educators, and mental hygienists. These teachings can be made more effective in the establishment of personal goals by virtue of their being sanctioned by religion. Thus emotional and spiritual force is added to intellectual knowledge.

Love as a positive religious force. Great religions, such as Judaism and Christianity, emphasize the importance of love for fellow men as a way of showing respect and admiration for a higher being. It is unfortunate that this emphasis is sometimes overshadowed by a stress on fear, sin, and dogma. People who have accepted a religion of love have an inner security that places them at ease in dealing with their marriage partners, their children, their neighbors, and the citizens of the world at large. In their consideration of others they find not only an expression of devotion to a higher being but also an opportunity for more complete self-realization (though the latter is not directly sought).

The kind of love recommended in the New Testament is not an impossible ideal. It leaves room for righteous indignation, for self-expression, and for the inconsistency of human foibles. It also points the way to constant growth and better understanding. There is no shining prospect that we shall see in this decade, or in the next hundred decades, a full realization and application of the "love-thy-neighbor" goal, but as an ideal toward which to grow it has been found to be eminently successful. It has worked wherever it has been consistently applied.

The ideal of love is given further force when to the values proved by experience is added the conviction that it has spiritual sanction. To cite a specific instance, it has been observed that marriages solemnized in church tend to be more durable than those in which civil authorities perform the ceremony. One of the reasons for this additional durability is the feeling that the church wedding carries religious sanction, whereas the civil ceremony is regarded solely as a private and personal affair. On the one hand, a church wedding encourages discordant partners to find and resolve the cause of their difficulty; whereas the civil marriage tends to foster the notion that the sooner a more congenial partner can be found, the better it will be for both. In other words, the church marriage ceremony stimulates the finding of the cause of problems; but the civil type may seem to offer a chance for running away from difficulties. If the various forms of love—charity, good will, consideration, respect, forgiveness, understanding, and the like—are given play in married life, the partners have a greater chance of achieving happiness. The feeling that these manifestations are also expressive of religious devotion adds power to their meaning.

Many distinctions are made between man and the lower animals, but the one distinction most worth noting is man's ability to love. The power to love provides a means of breaking down the barriers which tend to prevent men from working together. It offers an opportunity for more intimately relating oneself to the world by joining all men in the pursuit of happy, harmonious living. We can better understand our world through a combination of reason and love. Therefore, to neglect the factor of love is to deprive ourselves of congenial and enriching contacts with others, and to neglect a religion which adds meaning to love is to circumscribe the possibility for its most complete fruition.

In some respects, the most audacious of all the great insights that have come into the world was the apparently absurd conviction of Jesus of Nazareth that men must love one another. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." We can easily imagine the bewilderment—even the ribald laughter—of his hearers. A world that was still very far from reaching the level of universal justice could scarcely rise to the level of universal love.

In reality, this "new commandment" was not an absurd and arbitrary rule laid upon man from the outside. It was, rather, the most profound insight

into man's nature that had yet been achieved. Today every psychiatrist would affirm its truth. Man is sound in psychological health to the degree that he relates himself affirmatively to his fellow men. To hate and to fear is to be psychologically ill.⁷

Religion provides an avenue for mental catharsis. The cliché, "a trouble shared is a trouble halved," expresses an experimentally proved psychological fact. Sigmund Freud gave emphatic demonstration of this truth by helping his patients gain emotional balance through talking themselves out. The talking out provided a means of cleansing, or purging, the patient of his tensions, suspicions, fears, and frustrations. There are many techniques for catharsis, such as conversing with a therapist or a friend, writing biographies or imaginative stories, and giving tensions an outlet through painting or modeling, or through dancing and the drama.

Religion may be of direct benefit to mental health through the provision it offers for catharsis. The techniques which religion uniquely makes available are (1) prayer, (2) the confessional, and (3) pastoral counseling. It is entirely reasonable also to include among the cathartic techniques of religious expression the singing of hymns and participation in religious ceremonial.

Countless human beings are helped in facing their problems by resorting to prayer, even though they may not apply the technical name "catharsis" to their practice. Praying gives one the opportunity to describe, to "lay at the feet" of his deity, the problems which bother him. Describing the problem, sharing it with Another, bringing it to the surface—these are means of keeping it from festering within. A medical practitioner, Dr. Hyslop, speaking before the British Medical Association, declared that the best medicine he had discovered was prayer; that those who practiced it found in prayer a calmer of both mind and nerves. This calming effect is due to the operation of the principle of catharsis and to faith; for prayer is more than catharsis. When prayer is coupled with faith, there is a sense of a binding comradeship, which produces poise, serenity, and persistence. The strength comes from the faith of sharing the deity's love, power, and fellowship. Just as the psychiatrist must have the confidence of his patient in order to be of

⁷ Overstreet, *op. cit.*, pp. 101-102. By permission of the publisher.

benefit, so the individual who prays needs to have faith that his deity is attentive to him and is concerned with the problem presented.

The confessional, like prayer, is effective in the release of tensions because of the principle of catharsis. Again, there is a talking out, a process of laying one's troubles at the feet of another, and a sharing of burdens. Not only is there a reduction of tension by means of the confessional, but there is, besides, an incentive to the mending of one's errors. The confession thus serves the dual purpose of setting one free from the restrictive burdens of the past and of providing incentive for facing the future more boldly.

To tempt the sufferer into confessing what he did not know enough to confess, is the substance of psychiatry. I have discovered that my neurotic patients do not get along well in the presence of family trouble—and that, when we can induce them to “confess,” “make up,” and “begin over again,” then, and not until then, do the patients with “nerves” begin to improve.⁸

The education of ministers at the present time includes an emphasis upon the principles of mental hygiene, psychology, and an introduction to the field of psychiatry. Because of this, there are available today men who are not only devoted to religion but who are cognizant also of the services they can perform in psychological counseling. Pastoral counseling affords three contributions to mental health. There is the comfort to be derived from the confessional aspects of counseling. There is the opportunity of receiving sound information regarding the view one should take of his problem. And there is a store of intelligent advice regarding steps to be taken in the solution of the problem.

The prestige of the minister as the representative of a religious point of view adds effectiveness to his work as a practical psychologist.

Church services may contribute to mental health. It must be admitted that some very admirable persons do not attend church. It is true that certain types of services do not make a similar appeal to all people. And there is no doubt that religious ceremony is only an external aspect of religion. In spite of these admissions, it must be recognized that church services can and do make tangible contributions to mental health.

⁸ William S. Sadler, *Modern Psychiatry*, St. Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company, Medical Publishers, 1945, p. 761. By permission of the publisher.

The most significant of these contributions is that the church services are a periodic reminder of the social obligations we have as human beings. It is easy to lose sight of the importance of sociocentric behavior. The church, by emphasis upon the social aspects of religion, reminds us of the goals of this nature, which are so important in healthful living. This, it seems, is the answer for those who claim that they can live good lives without going to church. It is true, you can and do live constructively; but it is entirely possible (and probable) that, by being reminded of what unselfish living is like, you can live an even more constructive life. Like a seven-day clock, men and women need to be wound up periodically.

It is probably dependent upon one's point of orientation, but the ceremonial of church services provides comfort to many. The organ music and the singing, the lighting of candles, and the uncovering of the elements used in communion are conducive to a state of repose that contrasts with the speed of living in the twentieth century. The emphasis given to the different aspects of the services varies from church to church. Since different individuals respond differently to these ceremonies, the part of wisdom seems to be to seek out the kind of service that makes a personal appeal—and, we might add, not to criticize those whose taste is different. The writer visits various churches, not so much for ceremonial as to find a minister who seems to share the point of view toward religion which is represented in this chapter. Particularly does he shun the "Religionist" who stresses a jealous God, fear, sin, and the "worldly" nature of simple pleasures.

Church services also make for mental health by providing a meeting ground for people. There should be, and frequently is, the feeling that worshipers are gathered together in a common cause—that of becoming better men through faith in themselves, their fellow men, and their deity. There are congregations which are split by various issues and in which individuals display such symptoms of mental ill-health as jealousy, criticism, suspicion, and slander. But there are also congregations which are united and in which the individuals actively try to overcome any differences that do appear. If we pay attention to the meaning and implications of church services, trying to see the good in people and seeking to understand the shortcomings of others, then we can add to our motivations the desire better to serve our deity.

Religion helps one face the future with courage. One of the many causes of emotional breakdown is inability to face the future. Some feel either that they cannot put up longer with the unpleasantness of a continuation of the present, or that although the present may be bearable, they cannot bear the uncertainty of the future. Either of these situations can be improved through the aid of religion.

The source of courage for facing the future lies in faith. This faith may be in oneself—that it will be possible to meet and solve the next problems that are presented. Frequently, however, this faith in self weakens. It is then that faith in a higher being is helpful. The person who has religious faith feels that there is a purpose in life; the purpose may not as yet be clearly defined, nevertheless, it is assuredly there. The person with well-developed spiritual feelings knows that he is important and that his needs are recognized; he knows that his deity really cares. This caring is as effective a support as is the growing child's confidence in his parents. Belief in the idea that divine power is on his side supports the faith that one has in himself. Even the skeptic who does not believe in any kind of god must admit this empirical fact: faith is on the side of good or positive suggestion. This "good" suggestion is just as factual an aid to facing the future courageously as is faith in the doctor and his medicines a necessary element in the curing of serious illness. Sir William Osler, the great British medical authority, has asserted that such faith is the foundation of the medical profession. Faith in a better future is the foundation of an effective and happy life.

Linked with faith is the feeling of not being alone, which is a help in facing the future. We all know from experience that we are encouraged to try things in companionship with another that we should find difficult or impossible to do (or even to try) if we were alone. It is easier to solicit for the Community Chest, to sell from door to door, to swim across a river or a lake, if there is someone with us. Religion supplies the feeling of companionship that fosters a courageous facing of the future. This has been the experience of countless individuals who have had the fortune to develop their religious tendencies.

Religion aids one in facing the uncertainties of the future by furnishing a better perspective. The believer's knowledge that his deity is "from everlasting to everlasting" gives him courage to carry out his

own role. It is this timelessness that brings the immediate future into a balanced perspective. Courage to face the future has been needed in all past generations; it is needed today. The student of mental hygiene can ill afford to neglect the development of a source of courage which so many have found to be of inestimable value in past generations.

Religion is a unifier of self. The writer has observed that the two or three most serene personalities he has known are those of religious persons. Their being "serene" means, here, that they calmly face serious problems in their lives, take success and joy in stride, and face the little details of living with equanimity. They are kind and considerate. They seek to understand the "why" of others' shortcomings, as well as of their own. They do not condemn and blame. None of these most "serene" persons is fanatical; religion is a part of their living, not the whole of life. Religion is the hub of their life, not the entire wheel.

The observation of one person is open to question; so a class of graduate students was asked, "Would you say that the two most serene persons you have known were religious (in the theological sense)?" Twelve of fifteen students indicated that the question, in their experience, should be answered in the affirmative and that religion appeared to be the unifying factor. Two of the remaining three said that religion was a unifying factor in the lives of their serene personalities, but that it was not religion of the church-going variety. The third felt that the serene persons he had known were not religious.

The evidence is empirical, not experimental. The sampling is small. Nevertheless, it seems justifiable to say that religion can be a vital factor in the serenity that characterizes the mentally healthy person.

The realization of serenity is probably achieved through a combination of such factors as have been mentioned above; *i.e.*, the establishment of goals, the free giving of love, being loved, capitalizing on the process of catharsis, respite from a fast-moving world derived from church attendance and devotion, and courage to face the future. Religion serves as a unifying force in bringing the many elements of living into a purposeful pattern. Through socially acceptable behavior, an avenue for high self-realization is opened. In short, the unified, the serene personality puts into effect the pragmatically sound advice, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," in which there is consideration for others, *as well as for self*.

MENTAL HYGIENISTS LOOK AT RELIGION

Some reader of this chapter may feel that the views expressed here regarding religion's importance in mental health may be considered one of the peculiarities of the writer; but other writers share and support these views. The following extracts are representative of the conclusions reached by many mental hygienists. They should be regarded as a random sampling rather than as an attempt to summarize such contributions.

William James says that the greatest remedy for worry is religion: "The sovereign cure for worry is religious faith." The greatest sublimation is, therefore, religion. The world's greatest blasted hopes and dreams are drained off through its channels. All that people want or are deprived of through tribulation are spiritually provided in religion. Knowing that religion is the refuge deprives worry of its sting. Those who worry least are the most religious, for their faith enables them to believe that "God in some way will make everything come out all right." Even when stark, terrific tragedy appears ready to stalk before them worry is often allayed by saying, "God's will be done." Religion completes the picture left damaged by circumstances. But in this day of flaunting independence and lack of simple faith, many are failing to provide themselves with the religious safeguard. It would pay many to return to this simple innocent faith-state of mind to quiet their worry.⁹

. . . To the mental hygienist, respect for the personality, as asserted by the Western religions, demands a thoroughgoing revision of much of the ethical and moral teachings of the churches. . . . In this plea mental hygiene is harking back to the essential ethics of Jesus so long overlaid and distorted by theological teachings that the modern psychiatric teaching of the primary essential value of personality, of the need for greater, more affectionate acceptance and constant love of the child, of the futility and self-defeat, of aggression, and hostility and finally of insightful charity toward everyone, comes almost as a new gospel to help man in his never-ending search for social order and inner emotional peace.

We all need these teachings and we need a psychologically oriented religion to help us to integrate our personal lives and to define and sustain

⁹ William H. Mikesell, *Mental Hygiene*, New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1939, p. 329. By permission of the publisher.

our aspirations toward the human values that have for so long been frustrated and defeated by the individuals whose mental ill-health has compelled them to block or destroy what they could not themselves accept or enjoy. Mental hygiene is pointing to the new faith in human nature that promises to be the central conception of the reorganized religion of tomorrow.¹⁰

No one can appreciate so fully as a doctor the amazingly large percentage of human disease and suffering which is directly traceable to worry, fear, conflict, immorality, dissipation, and ignorance—to unwholesome thinking and unclean living. *The sincere acceptance of the principles and teachings of Christ with respect to the life of mental peace and joy, the life of unselfish thought and clean living, would at once wipe out more than one half the difficulties, diseases, and sorrows of the human race.* In other words, more than one half of the present affliction of mankind could be prevented by the tremendous prophylactic power of actually living up to the personal and practical spirit of the real teachings of Christ.

The teachings of Jesus applied to our modern civilization—understandingly applied, not merely nominally accepted—would so purify, uplift, and vitalize us that the race would immediately stand out as a new order of beings, possessing superior mental power and increased moral force. Irrespective of the future rewards of religion, laying aside all discussion of future life, *it would pay any man or woman to live the Christ-life just for the mental and moral rewards it affords here in this present world.* Some day man may awake to the fact that the teachings of Christ are potent and powerful in preventing and curing disease. Some day our boasted, scientific development, as regards mental and moral improvement, may indeed catch up with the teachings of this Man of Galilee.¹¹

The psychologist can commend religion as a sound factor in personality balance in the case of those who are neither too fanatical about its practices nor too cynical about its mysteries. Some of the advantages of religious belief may be stated as follows: (1) It encourages the development of those social skills that mean so much for winning the approval of others. (2) It recommends a humility which in turn may tend to keep the ego within bounds. (3) It provides an avenue for the realization of a balanced blend between the self and selfless motives. (4) It encourages self-indulgent individuals to perform as duties those homely tasks which they do not naturally want to do. (5) It provides opportunities for service in a compelling cause. (6) It is an antidote for crude pragmatism. (7) It offers a life plan

¹⁰ Frank, *op. cit.*, pp. 287-288. By permission of the publisher.

¹¹ Sadler, *op. cit.*, p. 760. By permission of the publisher.

resting on the comforting factors of faith and hope. (8) Finally, it offers a form of security that may go far toward guarding the individual against the various forms of psychological disorders to which the human personality is heir.¹²

A most serious problem in the world today is the substitution of material ideals for older spiritual values. The founders of our nation were, for the most part, God-fearing men who believed that the establishment of the American nation was a part of divine purpose. The development of material civilization and the consequent cultural lag we have mentioned have destroyed many of the spiritual ideals of our fathers. However we may personally feel about the observance of religious customs we should not minimize the importance of religion to the state. It is interesting to note, for example, that the totalitarian regimes have done their best to destroy organized religion in their countries. Allegiance to God and allegiance to a dictator do not go hand in hand.¹³

The church has always been the refuge and helper of those in difficulty. Long before the concepts of terminology now associated with mental hygiene existed, the church was doing mental hygiene work.

The church has taught that sound moral attitudes and judgment are of fundamental importance in every significant situation in life. By insisting on the supreme value of spiritual integrity, the church has been instrumental in developing an idealism which helps the individual to solve his own problems as well as to aid others.

The church has been interested in man's entire being. It has taught a body of doctrine at once intellectual and moral, ideal and practical. It has served as a great integrating force in life and regards ability to face facts and to see life whole as the highest wisdom.

. . . The social ideals of the church constitute a criterion for social standards generally. The influence of the church has contributed immeasurably to the improvement of school, family, and community relationships. It appears, therefore, that in addition to other advantages which religion holds for those who accept its promises, it constitutes for many the major hope for adequate adjustment.¹⁴

¹² Louis P. Thorpe, *Personality and Life*, New York: Longmans; Green & Co., Inc., 1941, p. 229. By permission of the publisher.

¹³ Harry E. Tyler, *Learning to Live*, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, Inc., Publishers, 1940, pp. 440-441. By permission of Rinehart & Company, Inc.

¹⁴ Ernest W. Tieggs and Barney Katz, *Mental Hygiene in Education*, New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1941, pp. 258-259. By permission of the publisher.

Among my patients in the second half of life—that is to say, over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his religious outlook. This of course has nothing whatever to do with a particular creed or membership of a church.¹⁵

SUMMARY

Human beings have continually sought an easy answer to the problems that life presents. Panaceas, cure-alls, and short cuts to any goal are viewed with eager anticipation. But the easy answer is doomed to inevitable failure. Life is complex and therefore the approaches to living must be varied. Life cannot be lived solely on an intellectual, a physical, an emotional, or a spiritual level. All these approaches must be combined in well-balanced and rounded human behavior. All too frequently, one or more of these aspects of living is neglected. The spiritual aspect, for instance, has received far too little consideration in so-called “objective” studies of mental health.

Man needs a religion because it helps to supply the means for the fulfillment of certain needs. Among these needs are the need for challenges to continuous growth, the need for facing and accepting factors in experience which are beyond individual control, the need for feelings of security, and the need for getting outside oneself.

Unfortunately, the emphasis upon creed and dogma has too frequently obscured the emphasis upon human understanding and relationships—which is the religious emphasis of paramount importance to mental hygiene. Religions which lack balance, by virtue of being unrelated to life; religions which encourage escape from reality; and religions which emphasize dogma and authority, rather than growth and personal responsibility, are detrimental to mental health.

Religion can, however, be an invaluable asset to social and personal mental health. Religion can help one select and define worth-while goals for personality development. Love as a comforting and construc-

¹⁵ C. G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1933, p. 264. By permission of the publisher.

tive force in living is given additional power and meaning by religious interpretation and sanction. The methods and personnel of religion provide people who are beset with problems an opportunity for health-promoting catharsis. The faith which is promulgated by religion helps people face the uncertainties of the future with more courage than they might otherwise be able to evoke. The health-giving power of religion is recognized by many people—educators, statesmen, religionists, parents. Many psychologists and mental hygienists state that religion is a positive force for mental health that has all too frequently been belittled or ignored.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. Religion is primarily an emotional response which is generated by ceremony and creed.
2. Belief should, to as great an extent as possible, be based on factual knowledge and firsthand information.
3. Personality growth is stimulated by one's seeking to understand better the implications of religious life and belief.
4. Religion fosters a sense of security when a person feels that God will protect him from the impact of environmental forces.
5. Religion has a scientifically sound basis in many respects.
6. The fact that there is much evil in the world indicates that there is no divine being who governs the world.
7. There are no mental hygiene advantages which may accrue from the ritual and dogma of religion.
8. All aspects of religion which rely on fear as a motivating factor should be eliminated or revised.
9. Emphasis upon love as a practical force has been proved valid by both experiment and experience.

10. Mental catharsis is of no value unless it also provides a person with ideas or motivations for improving future behavior.
11. Church attendance finds its greatest justification in the fact that it tends to slow down the pace of living.
12. The feeling of courage that is provided by confidence that our deity is with us cannot be endorsed by mental hygienists.
13. Modern psychological discoveries place new meaning on the old teachings of Christ.
14. Even assuming that love cannot work effectively in national welfare, it still can be an effective goal for individuals.
15. If religion is to be of maximum benefit, its spiritual emphasis must be changed to an intellectual emphasis.

Suggested Readings

GOODSPEED, EDGAR J., *The New Testament*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1923, 1946. 481 pp.

The reading of the New Testament has been made easier, but nonetheless effective, by this translation in the modern English which all of us use in our daily living. The life and problems of Jesus are portrayed in a manner that will appeal to moderns.

JUNG, C. G., *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1933. 282 pp.

A psychoanalyst takes the position that science alone is not a sufficient safeguard for the good life. Psychology and psychotherapy are intimately bound to the philosophical and moral problems of man. He recognizes some of the shortcomings of religion but also calls attention to the contributions which religion makes to mental health.

LIEBMAN, JOSHUA, *Peace of Mind*, New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1946. 206 pp.

The author shows that religion and psychiatry have but one goal—that of the achievement of a better life. He shows how religion can make a contribution to the solution of many of the problems of life. The chapter Grief's Slow Wisdom can be of great help in facing the inevitability of death.

PEALE, NORMAN V., *The Art of Living*, New York: PermaBooks, 1949.
190 pp.

Case studies and personal experiences are used to show how religion can serve to make a more effective and harmonious life. The emphasis is upon the role of faith and believing. The book will probably appeal more to those who have religious convictions than to those who are seeking to be convinced; but one student said, "One of the truly great books of the twentieth century."

Chapter 16

A POSITIVE PROGRAM FOR MENTAL HEALTH

An understanding of the conditions, problems, values, and principles of mental health should result in the student's being able to direct his life more intelligently. A study of the foregoing chapters will have revealed to the reader many steps that can be taken toward the achievement of a "fuller, happier, more harmonious and more effective existence." Each student will have to work out for himself a specific program for promoting better mental health; but there are some summarizing suggestions which might well be considered in the planning of each one's Positive Program for Mental Health. The individual's plans, laid out for himself, may become the starting point for the formulation of his own philosophy of life.

It must be clear to the reader that "rules" in mental hygiene do not fit all cases and that such rules tend to violate statements that have been made with regard to the value of tentative conclusions. Nevertheless, many generalizations concerning mental health seem to have been rather widely endorsed by mental hygiene authorities, and these suggestions are summarized in the following pages.

Maintaining sound physical health. Many persons who violate all the principles of physical health are still able, because of strong constitutions, to maintain a high degree of physical soundness and vigor. But for the most part, observance of the principles of physical health can do much for the improvement of mental and physical efficiency. There should be moderation in diet, provision for appropriate physical exercise, balance between work and play, and rest and relaxation from both work and play. The determination of individual needs as to a sufficient amount of sleep should not be neglected.

In spite of many departures from the ideal, "a sound mind in a sound body," that show the mind can be sound and efficient without the support of a vigorous body, there can be no doubt that, in general, poor physical health detracts from the joy of living and increases the com-

plexity of the problems of adjustment. Numerous case studies indicate that there is a close relationship between the conditions of the body and those of the mind. This fact is particularly apparent in the case of endocrine-gland disorders. Conversely, many physical ailments have been traced to mental disturbances. Observance of these relationships has led psychologists and mental hygienists to emphasize the oneness of body and mind. In the living organism the two are not distinguishable; only in discussion are they separated, and then simply for convenience in study. The whole field of what is called "psychosomatic" medicine is a recognition of the truth that mental and physical health are inseparable.

It follows that one should set regular periods for examination by a physician and should consult him about minor ailments. Provision for such consultation should be made in the financial budget. The cost will be repaid in terms of mental health. While care should be taken not to overemphasize the mental causation of physical disturbance, it is safe to advise that during attacks of blues and depressions particular attention should be given to physical health. Many are those who can say that, after an enjoyable meal eaten at leisure, or after a night of calm rest, the world seems to present a much more wholesome appearance.

The principles of good health are familiar. The fundamentals are studied in the grades at school. It but remains for the individual to put those principles into active operation in his own daily life. Knowledge is power only when that knowledge is put to good use.

Developing a wholesome attitude toward sex. For some strange reason, perhaps because the pervasive role of sex is little understood, there is a great deal of reticence about discussing the problem. Strong taboos operate against frank consideration of it. The difficulty, however, cannot be solved if it is ignored. Sex problems are common to all and must be faced by all. A basic step for mental health is that each individual accept the reassuring fact that sex impulses are physically and emotionally normal and that sex cravings are just as respectable as are cravings generated by other physical needs. Sex functions are not disgraceful. In fact, they are important adjustive factors and, when exercised in conformity with the standards and mores of society, are a source of rewarding satisfactions and open an avenue for rounding out the personality.

Unwholesome attitudes toward sex are fostered by ignorant but well-meaning parents who condition sex attitudes with fear by telling the girls of the danger of criminal attack or the boys of the danger of disease or insanity. Wholesome attitudes can be fostered by frank discussion, answering of questions, maintenance of confidence between parent and child, encouragement of normal social relationships, and opportunities for developing wide interests. Denying the existence of sex drives and shamefaced avoidance of discussion only serve to make the young person more curious about an apparently mysterious subject. These conditions are mentioned to make the reader more aware of his own background and consequently to be better able to evaluate his own attitudes.

Married couples should realize the normality of their sexual desires and regard them as manifestations of physical and mental maturity. The sexual relationship should be studied before marriage in order to prevent mistakes that will leave a deep impression upon the mate. Frank discussion is again at a premium. Consultation with a doctor is highly advisable. Especially to be guarded against are the feeling of reticence on the part of the woman and the feeling of ownership on the part of the man. There are many excellent books on the market which should prove helpful to those seeking information.

The mental hygiene of sex has numerous ramifications, but some of the most common errors can be avoided rather easily. First, parents and teachers should treat sex as an ordinary topic and give sex information to children when they ask for it, trying to avoid an attitude of secrecy, shame, guilt, or disgust. Secondly, childish explorations and experiments in the realm of sex and sex activities should be regarded for what they are—passing phases of development. This will be more easily accomplished if the older persons are well informed about normal sequences of sex development. Third, each one should realize that his own attitudes are due largely to previous conditioning and experiences and should evaluate his views accordingly. Sex is not all there is to life certainly, but there should be no denial that it is an acceptable part of full and complete living.

Gaining objective insight into one's own nature. It is difficult, in making a personal evaluation of oneself, to be perfectly honest in appraising both the assets and the liabilities of personality; but it is possible for an individual to gain some objective insight into his own con-

duct by studying his own motives and comparing them with those of other people. An example of such study is afforded in the previous section, concerning sex. A person who knows the fundamentals of human nature in general will be better able to know himself. He must be on guard against rationalizing his conduct and should attempt to face the realities of life at all times. Many of the writer's students have reported that their study of the psychology of adolescence had been particularly helpful because it made them realize how much like their classmates they were. Other studies can make similar contributions of self-knowledge.

If the individual is willing to accept friendly criticism, he will find that the assistance of others is valuable in his effort to arrive at an objective appraisal of himself. Outside help frequently makes it easier to distinguish between a personality trait that is desired and one that is already possessed. Such cooperation will help the person to see the other's point of view with regard to his personality traits.

Objectivity implies a person's being capable of evaluating the force of external stimulation but at the same time being able to perceive that his reactions to those stimuli are to some extent personal matters. That is, the way people look upon external events is as much a part of their perception and reaction as is the stimulation itself. Objectivity designates a response which is primarily intellectual, as contrasted with the emotional response. An impartial view of self means that errors and failures can be frankly admitted and even laughed at. Denying, to others, what one knows to be true about himself is a form of self-deception that is as likely to persuade himself as the other person. Insight into one's own nature can be approached through reflection upon the experiences one has had. Such insight is, therefore, quite capable of being developed by the adult person—since his experience is probably broader—in spite of the notion that older people are too set to change. It is hoped that the study of this book will have resulted in such an understanding of motivating forces that insight into one's own conduct has come closer to being realized. This, it might be said, is the primary reason for the study of mental hygiene of the normal person.

Achieving self-confidence through success. Repeatedly, throughout this book, the value of successful participation in life's activities has been emphasized as a phase of mental health. A person who is lacking in self-confidence is generally one who does not have any well-developed

abilities with which he can participate on an even level with other people. He lacks the ability to play, to converse, to do his job satisfactorily, or to keep up in his school activities. The importance of success in bolstering self-confidence is recognized in the modern school, of which an underlying concept is to "fit the curriculum to the child," thus making it possible for every child to enjoy the experience of success.

The increasing emphasis which is being placed upon the work cure, rather than the rest cure, for the rehabilitation of mental cases is an indication of how much the building of confidence depends upon the achievement of success in some activity. Success attracts attention from fellow members of society. It gives the person a fulfillment of his fundamental desire for significance and accomplishment.

The desirability of success does not necessarily mean that everything a person attempts should be easy. Obstacles and frustrations are as essential to personality growth as is achievement. Some difficult problems should be tackled, even though there is danger of failure. Almost everyone needs the tonic derived from prolonged and intensive effort toward some goal. Even the gifted student in school, who does ordinary tasks with ease, should be stimulated by undertaking something that is hard for him to accomplish; otherwise, he is likely to get an exaggerated opinion of his prowess. The ability to face failure should be cultivated with the same sincerity that characterizes the pursuit of success.

Probably everyone at some time feels that his activities are more or less futile. He should recognize that this is a common characteristic and should be prepared for undergoing it. He will be prepared for it if he recalls having experienced varying degrees of failure beforehand and if he realizes that such feelings generally occur under conditions of mental or physical fatigue. In other words, it is possible for a person to achieve success in viewing and meeting failure.

Seeking to improve relationships with other people. Most of the activities engaged in by human beings involve, in some way, contact with others. Mental hygiene involves the problem of continuous adjustment, and adjustment to one's contemporaries is a major concern in a mental hygiene program. A full, happy, harmonious, and effective existence is, to a large extent, dependent upon wholesome relations with one's fellow beings.

Two considerations that deserve special attention are those which

involve contacts with groups and those which have to do with individuals. It follows that the person seeking to facilitate his relationships with other people should, first, engage in normal social activities and, second, maintain confidential relationships with some other person.

From the point of view of mental hygiene there are several reasons for the belief that social activity in work and play is comparatively superior to individual activity. There is a satisfaction to be found in joint accomplishment that will offset feelings of personal inferiority. Group work helps one to get outside his personal difficulties and problems. The necessity for communication with others makes it more difficult to engage in fruitless fantasy; and the companionship of others reduces individual anxieties. The group is helpful in the maintenance of the objective viewpoint, which has been discussed above; and the stimulus provided by the group serves to keep the individual alert to present circumstances.

The law of mathematics that if something is taken from a quantity that quantity becomes smaller is not true of social relationships. In social activities, when a person contributes to the welfare of the group, when he contributes to the satisfactions of the group, something is added to his group and something is added to his own personality, as well. In short, his devotion to others makes him a more likable and more valuable person. This is expressed in the aphorism, "You get out of something only as much as you put into it." He who gives generous attention to the welfare of those about him is not neglecting himself. Rather, he is building up his personality in accord with mental hygiene principles.

The maintenance of confidential relationships with some other person is valuable, and its acts in both directions, just as do activities with groups. There are several benefits that accrue from a confidential relationship. In the first place, talking about one's problems serves as a means of catharsis, opens an avenue for tension reduction. Talking about his problems helps a man to see them in more accurate perspective. The conversation serves as a sort of analysis and thus tends to offset nonadjustive emotional responses. Problems that are talked about cannot be completely repressed, because they are being given some form of expression, even if only indirect. The need for sharing personal difficulties can be plainly seen in child psychology, in which the necessity for the child's having confidence in some older person is given

strong emphasis. In the second place, the person who is confided in also receives certain benefits. His understanding of his fellow men is being broadened. He is enabled to see his own difficulties in comparison with those of his confidant, which may make him realize that his problems are less serious than he had formerly imagined.

Facing stress and strain with emotional poise. Saying "face stress and strain with emotional poise" may seem like telling a person, "You should not have a headache." Facing difficulties with calmness does not come about as the result of being told to be calm. Emotional poise is attained, like other assets to mental health, through personal experience and a process of habit formation.

A basis for establishing a calm attitude toward problems of adjustment is the formation of the habit of analyzing problems. When, for instance, one is faced with the problem presented by a shortage of funds, he would do well to reflect upon previous experiences with this obstacle. It may be that at some prior time the same problem has been encountered and satisfactorily solved. The dire consequences anticipated at that time probably turned out to be not so serious as it had seemed they might be. Listing the liabilities and assets regarding a particular difficulty provides an excellent means of analyzing many a problem.

Another means of attaining emotional poise is to make a comparison of one's own problem with similar problems being experienced by people around him. This is, of course, difficult to do when a person feels that his problem is about as harsh as one could be, yet it is the very essence of facing strain and stress calmly. Anyone who can be objective in making this comparison is undoubtedly substituting thinking for emotionalizing. The process is the direct opposite of rationalizing, since it involves assigning true, observable explanations to a particular event.

Emotional poise can be strengthened by the realization that, after all, *one event in a person's life is only a part of the whole series of events which constitute his total life's experiences.* What, at the moment, may seem like a major disaster is probably only a more or less trivial incident. This fact is easily realized when one reflects upon some of his victories. An achievement which at one time promised to be a great milestone in life now is seen to be just one step in the pursuance of the day's work, a natural outcome of persistent effort. Such a realization will help to prevent one's becoming the emotional kind of person

who habitually reacts to ordinary details as if they were major crises. Making mountains out of molehills is a symptom of poor mental health. The person with emotional poise has a great advantage; he can smile at his own mistakes and look forward to doing better next time.

A final suggestion for the achievement of emotional poise is one which has already been frequently mentioned; it is welcoming obstacles, with their stress and strain, as challenges to, or avenues of, personal growth. No one is much surprised when a child will not play if he cannot be the captain or if he cannot be the winner of a game. But when adults take the same attitude, they are regarded as childish and are not respected by their associates. When they encounter an obstacle—something for which their experience has not adequately prepared them—it is necessary for them to contrive a new response; they must do some figuring; they must make some personal growth. Solving the present difficulty will be a means of preparing for future activity. Each obstacle encountered, each conflict resolved, each defeat suffered gives an individual that much more knowledge of life. It should be remembered that even “good” things can get monotonous. The unpleasantnesses of life serve to emphasize the pleasant aspects. A defeat is not an excuse for crying and giving up, but a challenge to find something different to do. Problems provide opportunities to gain the satisfactions which come from having met, courageously and squarely, some difficulty. Feelings of stress and strain are indications that we are fully alive to the world about us. Perhaps realizing that others have the same feelings, in common with us, will be of help. Knowing that things are sure to change is reassuring. A conviction that growth must be *from* something is a help in meeting stress and strain with emotional poise.

Substituting planning for worry. Students frequently react negatively to the advice that they should not worry. They argue that worry is inevitable if one does any thinking, if he has any respect for the future, or if he is to learn from the experiences of the past. Some may admit that worry is not advisable, but claim that it is impossible not to worry; while others condone worry because it has apparently done them no harm in the past. Pointing to their own adjustment, they compare their success with the plight of the “nonworriers” who have failed to accomplish anything noteworthy. The nonworrier has a smooth brow and an unruffled countenance that seem to indicate an

inner vacuousness. The sponsor of the "no-worry" mode of life is placed on the defensive.

It seems likely that there is no fundamental difference between the attitude of the nonworrier and that of the constructive worrier. The difference is in the definition of terms rather than in attitude toward problems. The advocate of worry would say that there must be concern for the present and the future; he believes that planning is a requisite to success; he knows that contemplation is a necessary adjunct to effective action. We must agree that, for anyone with such a concept of worry, resort to worry is more than excusable, it is an advisable activity. The critic of worry, however, does not accept this concept, which claims for worry the definition that the nonworrier would reserve for planning, thinking, and justifiable concern. The critic of worry holds the view that worry is circular thinking, that it is a process of repetition, not of construction. It involves thinking over one's predicament again and again without coming to any conclusion, either tentative or final.

The concept of worry as circular thinking is the one used in this book. It is not advisable for a person to ignore his problems. A state of blind optimism is not recommended. The happy-go-lucky person who passively accepts all that comes his way is not simply a nonworrier; he is an evader of reality. One can realistically take a dark view of some things and proceed to figure out plans of action to counteract the pessimistic forecasts of the future. But the planning must be systematic and progressive and must lead to results. When one finds himself repeating over and over the same thoughts, again and again arriving at the same impossible obstacles and impractical conclusions, it is time to stop—at least, temporarily. At that stage, it might be well to consider the exhortation in the depression year's song, "Let's Put Out the Light and Go to Sleep," or to adopt temporarily the attitude of Scarlett O'Hara, of *Gone with the Wind*, and say, "I'll think about it tomorrow." In short, when forward-moving thinking is taking place, there is no room for worry; but when thinking stops moving forward, then worry solves no problems, produces no relief, and becomes a threat to mental health.

In order to substitute rational planning for worry, a person must formulate a method of attack. When the particular obstacles appear to be insurmountable, as they sometimes are, worry still can accom-

plish nothing, and the thing to do, in accordance with mental hygiene, is to put that problem out of mind by changing one's goals. Anyone who persists in taxing himself beyond his powers, adding to the burden a heavy load of worry, is headed for a dangerous emotional depression. Changing a goal involves planning, just as surely as does the formulation of a program for the continued pursuit of the original goal. In changing the goal it is necessary to think of substitute activities, their values, and the means of obtaining them. Incidentally, this is one of the supporting reasons for engaging in a wide variety of activities.

When planning is substituted for worry, it is necessary to gather information. One should read, talk, and engage directly in the various aspects of the activity. By this course, instead of worrying about a future occupation or profession, the young person would be following hygienic principles to take definite steps in planning. He could get books on many professions, even some in which he thinks he would not be interested, could read them and try to formulate some idea of how he would function in the work set forth. He might talk to people about their professions and find out how they react to the problems they encounter, what some of their particular enjoyments are, what the prospects for future development seem to be, and how these people think he would be able to perform in the new activity. Of course, he would not need to take their conclusions as final, but would regard them as offering one source of evidence and information. It would be extremely desirable for him to gain some actual experience in the line of work he contemplates, if that is at all possible. This might be done during summer or after school hours. Such a program would leave no room for worry.

If a shortage of funds is bothering him, instead of worrying, he would be wise to construct a new budget, to figure what the essentials and nonessentials are in his present expenditures, and to revise accordingly. He might investigate odd-time jobs that would be available if he were to become more aggressive in the solution of his own problems.

It will be seen from the foregoing that, underlying the substitution of planning for worry, there is a deep-seated need for living in the present. A person must think about, although he cannot cross, bridges before he comes to them. Instead of dreaming about the "good old

days," he should be concerned with altering the mistakes of yesterday by making the best of today. Planning will help him to realize that progress is accomplished by means of the little steps he takes from day to day. He will see that there are many aspects to his difficulties and that each phase can best be attacked by itself.

Finally, when he substitutes planning for worry, he is substituting thinking and overt action for internal emotional responses; and control over the emotions is a prime consideration of mental hygiene.

Learning the values of both dependence and independence. One of the fundamental desires of mankind is for achievement. Achievement, it is obvious, comes about only as the result of individual application. What another person accomplishes is his own attainment; it is not a victory for others. Reflection on your own experience will reveal that some of the greatest satisfactions you have had have been those which resulted from your having done some difficult task. To have been "born with a silver spoon in your mouth" might have its convenient aspects; but for most men and women there comes a time when it is necessary to meet and solve personal difficulties with which no one else can help. Under such circumstances, the person who has always had his problems solved for him is not really fortunate, since he has not learned the lesson of independence and personal responsibility. Those who have met difficulties and mastered them are the ones who are able to satisfy the desire for achievement. It is apparent that everyone needs to learn this lesson of independence.

Probably the sooner the lesson of independence is learned, the better off a person will be, because independence is a matter of habit. Wise parents give their children opportunities for exercising the desire for independence from a very early age, the amount depending upon their intellectual and emotional maturity. Teachers of young children note marked differences in the ability of their pupils to dress or undress themselves after a recess or a nap. Investigation of the backgrounds of the dependent children reveals that they have not had the opportunity to learn independence, because of oversolicitous parents who have insisted on helping them upon every occasion. These parents either regretted "losing their babies" or insisted upon a degree of competence which was difficult for the child to attain.

Placing the blame on parents may be very well for the child and for an understanding of the origin of the problem; but for the college

student the resolution to take steps to remedy the situation is itself a step toward independence. Blaming one's background is no more than admitting that he is dependent. If past experiences are to blame for his being dependent, then future experiences *which he himself selects* can bring about the habit of independence. He must answer his own questions, satisfy his own wants, choose his own activities, direct his own work. These are ways of becoming independent. It may sound like one's trying to lift himself by his own bootstraps; but on the other hand, it is quite as much a matter of substituting bold activity for an avoidance reaction.

There are, nevertheless, some advantages in a certain amount of dependence. Degrees of dependence are entirely normal. The very young child is totally dependent upon social organization and governmental services for the satisfaction of many of his needs. Yet the adult who is totally dependent upon parents—as is the college student who demands that his father shall start him in business—is to be pitied rather than envied. Such a person has not learned that dependence implies certain obligations, and the chances are that he will go on expecting his father to soften the blows that he encounters. College is a place where people must, perhaps for the first time, get rid of many habits of dependence and replace them with habits of independence. It is small wonder that many a student finds going to college a difficult transition. The desirable thing, from the standpoint of mental health, would be for each student to have learned by successive and progressive steps to solve his own problems as they are encountered, or at least to face these problems with a minimum of emotional disturbance. This is not meant to suggest that the college student should not seek the advice of his counselor and his fellow students, but it does imply that the final decision should rest with himself.

Providing for both work and play. The importance of balance, with which mental hygiene in general is seriously concerned, has been especially emphasized in the preceding paragraphs. There must be a definite relationship between the amount and the kind of food eaten and the energy expended, between daydreaming and activity, between sleeping and waking hours; and there should be both acceptance and rejection of many of the recommendations made in this book. For the mentally healthy person there should be, as well, a balance between work and play.

Work may be defined as "continued exertion or activity directed to some purpose or end"; play, as "action without special aim or for amusement; opposed to work." Actually, the distinction between work and play is not so easy to make. Play may have very specific purposes and work may involve the expenditure of less energy than play. So far as amusement is concerned, there are undoubtedly many people who find their work truly amusing. Possibly without too much argument, we might say that work is what one does to gain a livelihood (professional baseball players undoubtedly work) and what one feels he has an obligation to do. Play is what is done for recreation and variation—something that is done, not because the player feels any pressure, but because he "just plain" wants to do it. However, it certainly must be granted that work frequently supplies greater recreative values than does play. Most hospitals for the mentally ill are successfully employing what is called "therapeutic work" as a means of recreating their patients.

Work, involving continued activity, is likely to be accompanied by mounting tensions. In spite of the undeniable values of work, from the mental hygiene viewpoint, it should occasionally be supplemented by some recreative activity. Play that contrasts rather markedly with his special work would probably be best for an individual. An office worker would get most relief from types of play that involve vigorous bodily activity, such as tennis, golf, baseball, hiking, or swimming; whereas, a policeman or an athletic coach, who customarily has much physical activity, might derive more good from quiet parlor games or from reading.

Just as work can be employed to dissipate emotional tensions and bring personal satisfaction, play can serve similar purposes. After temporarily turning his mind away from work, a person can return to his task refreshed and ready to attack it with renewed vigor. Play, too, can bring personal satisfaction in the form of new skills and new accomplishments. Caution must be exercised to keep play from becoming work (thus losing some of its value) as occurs when a person is ambitious to be the best player and the outstanding star or to get his golf score below par. A balance between work and genuine play preserves physical and mental rhythms in a way that may be compared to the physical building-up and tearing-down processes of bodily metabolism.

Work alone does not furnish a guarantee that mental health will be sustained, although it must be admitted that some mentally healthy persons apparently play very little. Neither does play, in itself, give assurance that mental hygiene principles are being observed, although a person who plays all the time may appear to be happy. Nevertheless, the balance between the two is a condition basically essential to mental health. Play, to be genuinely enjoyed, should be contrasted to work, in that the process is something that is really desired. This helps to provide the variety in life which makes living, including work, highly enjoyable. Similarly, work, to be most enjoyable, should be contrasted to play, in that its objective or goal supersedes the importance of the process.

The writer has emphasized the value of play to some of his students, only to have them ignore the part of the recommendation that has to do with work. They seem to feel that if play is so essential to mental health, if it can be so highly recommended, then more play should assure more mental health; but in this they are wrong. They are ignoring the vital part of the suggestion that would promote balance. Play should make a particular contribution to the phenomenon of relaxation. The "re" in relaxation would seem to involve the matter of preexisting tensions such as those which might be generated by prolonged application to work.

Placing a high valuation on tentative ideas. Since mental health involves the process of continuous adjustment, it is apparent that tentative conclusions may have much value. Final and absolute answers to many scientific problems have certainly not yet been worked out. Still less are the "laws" of human behavior unequivocally known. Certain general trends and principles may be noted, but there are few psychological laws. However, it is not necessary, on this account, to hold all activities in check until the absolutely correct answer is known. The right choice, in this dilemma, is for individuals to act on tentative conclusions.

No matter what the present state of affairs, men can be sure of one thing—that there will be change. Their ideas must change to meet the changed, and changing, conditions which surround them. Intellectual flexibility must be sought through a desire to adjust to these changing conditions and must be achieved through the development of the ability to change. As has already been urgently affirmed, *the*

only way that mankind can achieve real security is by being able to keep upright while their feet are on shifting sands.

The value of tentative ideas can readily be perceived by those who will reflect upon past experiences. They have acted upon certain ideas which were acquired in various ways, only to have their actions end rather disastrously. If they go on acting upon the same ideas, it is probable that further mistakes will occur. On the other hand, if the idea were tentative, the proposed course of behavior could be given up and some new and more successful plan could be adopted. In this way it would be possible to profit from former mistakes. It is no sin to make an error, but to keep on making the same unsatisfactory response is certainly not in line with the counsels of common sense.

The young person who makes a vocational choice and then changes his mind about it is not necessarily weak-willed. It may be that he started with a tentative idea and then, after having gained more information about the chosen vocation, decided that there were other fields which offered him a better future. He should be admired and respected rather than condemned, because he had had the ability and the inclination to base his actions on a tentative plan. He is a growing person who is able to make adjustments to changes that are taking place within himself and to changes taking place in his environment.

Acting upon tentative ideas will, in many a case, indicate that the person is substituting rational thinking for "emotional thinking." The very core of scientific thinking is that data are secured and tried out, and that conclusions are formulated, only to have these formulations modified when further facts have been presented. The steps in thinking are pertinent at this point. Thinking involves a felt need, the gathering of data, the formulation of a hypothesis, a testing of the idea, and the making of a generalization. Placing a high valuation on tentative ideas involves elements which rather closely parallel these steps in thinking. A person must have a felt need for a change in ideas. If he is sure that his present stock of ideas is adequate, they must necessarily be fixed rather than temporary. Unless he gathers data about the way these ideas have worked in the past and the way they might work in the future, he will probably see little need for change. Tentative ideas necessarily imply that hypotheses be reevaluated. In the case of a tentative idea, the person is at all times testing his idea. To omit this consideration would mean that he felt the questions had all been satisfac-

torily answered. Making a generalization would probably involve the application of his conclusion to other related problems, with a view to changing the activities involved, if necessary.

It is probably not amiss to state again that ideas' being tentative is no indication that there is no activity. Some people, realizing that there are two sides to most questions, are unable to make up their minds to do anything. They suffer from the mental disorder known as "abulia," which is characterized by the inability to make decisions. Too much deliberation leads to an attitude of indecision. It is, therefore, necessary that one should be more or less arbitrary about his activities and put his ideas into action. The mentally healthy person will avoid abulia by putting his tentative plans into action and giving them a trial, instead of being inactive, in the vain hope that the course of the decision will be clarified by waiting. Again the concept of moderation and balance comes into consideration. Actions should not be headlong and precipitate; neither should they be held completely in check. The lesson of this situation is that a person faced with the necessity for making a decision should get all the data he can and then put his tentative conclusions into operation.

Learning to enjoy life. Telling people to enjoy life may seem a rather pointless bit of advice. However, just as there are ways of achieving mental health, there are ways of learning to enjoy life. Probably the fundamental requisite underlying enjoyment is the exercise of one's capacities and abilities; and closely allied to this is the desirability of expanding and creating interests. It is a psychological fact that, if an organism is in a state of readiness to act in a certain way, then to do so is satisfying and not to do so is unpleasant. The person who has intellectual capacities enjoys being a student; the person who has athletic ability likes to participate in games and sports. Educators can verify the fact that people who can read well generally like to read, whereas those who cannot read efficiently do not enjoy reading.

It follows that the admonition, "Learn to enjoy life," is not futile advice or an outgrowth of armchair philosophy. Enjoyment is based upon certain psychological principles. The enjoyment of life depends upon nothing more extraordinary than the exercise of many of one's capacities for enjoyment; and because man has a great number of capacities, he can learn to enjoy widely. It would be well to have such a

variety of experiences that more complete exercise of the physical, mental, and emotional capacities would be possible.

Perhaps the idea of enjoying life can be made more explicit by a description of some of the things that can be enjoyed. Of course, these might include almost anything that is encompassed by human experience—the simple, as well as the complex. They may be costly or free for the taking. Wide variety and personal suitability are factors worth consideration in the development of enjoyment.

In keeping with the fact that the field of enjoyment may be almost as wide as human experience, it is pertinent that men look for the enjoyable aspects of their everyday activities, take note of the pleasant things that happen during the working day. Human perception is such that people tend to find what they seek. If they look for instances of failure and hard luck, they will probably find them. If they are alert for evidence of happiness and success, those things are more likely to be apparent. People must count their victories, at the same time that they are learning from their defeats. In even the most serious person's life, there are aspects that can be enjoyed, if he will become attuned to them.

Another suggestion is to enjoy the free gifts of nature. These include not only external things but those within the individual, as well. Fresh air and sunshine; the awesomeness of a thunderstorm; the beauty of white snow, mountains, plains, lakes, running water, clouds, forests, and numberless other natural phenomena are among the "free gifts" that can bring delight. One's own natural gifts—health, intelligence, natural talents, and personal potentialities—may be reckoned as other free gifts of nature that can be cultivated and become a source of enjoyment.

To gratification from these natural gifts should be added a third category—the enjoyment of the fine arts. Music, literature, painting, architecture, drama, and the like are rich sources of pleasure and happiness to those who have learned to appreciate them. There is the enjoyment that may be derived from hearing and seeing the work of others in these fields, as well as the pleasure that comes in the form of emotional release through personal production of these arts. One can well begin his appreciation through the routine of getting acquainted, which is an active process, in itself.

Religion is another source of enjoyment that is passed on to man by

preceding generations. That human beings have a universal capacity for religion seems to be amply proved by the fact that men in all ages and in all regions of the earth have developed religious beliefs and rituals. There seems to be something in man that impels him to extend his personality outward by worshipping a higher being. Religion not only reaches out toward a higher being, but it brings man into closer rapport with his fellow beings. It provides a sanctuary from the misfortunes of this world that offers people time to plan a new method of attack on existing difficulties. Our forefathers fought for the right of freedom of worship, and it would appear justifiable for the present generation to exercise its capacities for religion by taking advantage of the opportunity that has been given to us.

Accumulated knowledge in the guise of scientific information provides enjoyment for those who have made the effort to develop their capacities in that direction. Investigating the nature of the world of man is an interesting occupation for the utilization of intellectual capacity. Our heritage provides much information with which to start. Even in ancient times, men were greatly interested in the stars and the planets—phenomena which were far away from them. In contemporary times, study of the nature of man has come into greater prominence. Thus, those who seek knowledge today have available the fields of natural science and also the engrossing study of man himself as possible sources of understanding and of enjoyment.

The mentally healthy person should enjoy companions. He should derive some of his greatest enjoyment from contact with people—those closest to him in his family, as well as friends and the short-time acquaintances he meets in the pursuit of special projects, such as Red Cross drives and Community Chest soliciting. His friends and relatives should be more to him than sources of help in times of need. He will find in them many of the finest personal qualifications that exist in this world: loyalty, cheerfulness, generosity, kindliness, devotion, faith, hope, and especially love. We all recognize, at least on an academic plane, the fact that human personality occupies a high place in the “good life.” It is the responsibility of the individual himself to put this view into functional operation. When one puts to fullest use this ability to enjoy his companions, he has taken a big step toward a better understanding of himself.

It has been repeatedly emphasized throughout this book that one

should participate in a wide variety of activities. This participation should have a double objective—first, to exercise many of one's capacities and, second, to provide a basis for wisely choosing a special interest or area of activity. That is, one activity should be made a special hobby. Such concentration upon one pursuit will give a person an opportunity to develop skill and competent knowledge that will bring him the satisfaction of accomplishment and unique recognition.

Doing the best you can. The steps for achieving better mental health suggested throughout this book may seem difficult, in some cases well-nigh impossible, to achieve. One is tempted to say, "Only a saint or a god can do all this," which is probably true; but therein lies the challenge to mental health. It is the process of achieving, not the achievement, that is most significant in giving one a continuing goal for personality improvement. There is no panacea, there is no short cut, to getting the satisfactions from life that are reaped as the result of a growth process. It is therefore of transcendent importance that we ask ourselves only to do earnestly and honestly the best we can. This is not a philosophy of mediocrity; it is a very practical and basic attitude.

Some years ago, the author had an experience that has been generalized and capitalized upon in many situations. The experience involved learning to shoot on a pistol range. Instructions had been received and improvement was noted up to a certain point, short of recognized excellence; then progress ceased. One day the instructor said, "You are having the same trouble that many do at this point. You are trying to do better than you can do. As long as you keep trying to hit the bull's-eye every time, you are going to be tempted to jerk the trigger when you think the sights are lined up with the target. Can you hit the bull's-eye every time?" The answer was "No." "Of course not. Few people can. Can you do anything better than you can?" It was a peculiar question, but the answer was certainly "No." "All right! Just do the best you can. Line up the target, keep *pressing* the trigger; keep pressing, even though the sights do not seem right. Keep pressing; by the time the gun goes off, you will probably be lined up better than when you jerk when things seem right." The advice worked. The score went up to the point of recognized excellence.

"Just do the best you can" is sound advice for other activities. Do not try to shoot par golf on your first day out. Just do the best you can; you will experience less pressure. Do not try to make straight

A's if you are now a C student; you will have less anxiety about your work and will be able to demonstrate what you do know. Do not try to save \$1,000 on a \$3,000 job; just do the best you can and you'll have fewer worries. Do not try to reach all the goals for mental health in one year. Just do the best you can and be satisfied with the little steps forward you have made, are making, and will make if you do not become discouraged short of perfection. There will be a great extension of mental health when more people stop trying to be perfect and just do the best they can.

SUMMARY

Putting the principles of mental health into effective operation is not a simple matter. There are many factors involved in mental health, so there must be many areas that warrant attention. The areas mentioned in this chapter may be of great value if they progress from mere abstractions into motivating principles of conduct. In short, if they are to foster mental health, *these suggestions must be put into action:*

1. Maintain sound physical health.
2. Develop a wholesome attitude toward sex.
3. Achieve objective insight into one's own nature.
4. Achieve self-confidence through successful participation in life.
5. Seek to improve relationships with other people.
6. Face stress and strain with emotional poise.
7. Substitute planning for worry.
8. Know the values of both dependence and independence.
9. Make provisions for both work and play.
10. Place a high valuation on tentative conclusions.
11. Learn to enjoy the many pleasurable aspects of life.
12. Do the best you can.

These principles might serve as a questionnaire to diagnose one's own mental health. Such a check-up can provide a key to needed aspects of growth and thus serve as an outline for individual personality development.

1. Do I pay attention to the simple rules of physical health?
2. Do I consider sex a normal phenomenon of human life?

3. Do I rationalize my conduct or do I understand my motivations?
4. Have I developed skills which serve as a core for self-confidence?
5. Do I get along satisfactorily with other people?
6. Is every point of stress in my life considered an act of fate against me, or do I look upon obstacles as a challenge to growth?
7. Do I fret about the past and the future or do I profit from the mistakes I have made and plan for the future?
8. Do I have a reasonable degree of both dependence and independence?
9. Does my plan in life provide a place for both work and play?
10. Do I have set ideas or a closed mind, or do I base my activities upon tentative conclusions?
11. Do I get as much fun out of everyday life as I should or could get?
12. Am I doing the best I can?

A person's answers to these questions will give him a good *starting place* for personality building, by providing an evaluation of his mental health. He can then apply his knowledge of mental hygiene to the construction of a fuller, happier, more harmonious, and more effective existence.

Test Your Comprehension of the Chapter

Decide whether the following statements are true, false, or questionable, and check with the content of the chapter or compare with others who have studied the material.

1. There are several positive rules of mental hygiene that everyone can employ to his distinct profit.
2. Everyone should provide for some vigorous physical exercise in his daily program pointing toward mental health.
3. One's physical condition determines the appearance of the mental and emotional aspects of life.
4. In order to preserve the spirit of romance, women should be reticent about the discussion of sex and participation in sex relations.

5. Ignorance about sex makes it easier to repress unwholesome sex desires and activities.
6. The help of other people is beneficial to an objective insight into the character of personal motivations.
7. The most common cause of lack of self-confidence is recognition of personal limitations.
8. If you are to attain mental health, it is desirable to be successful in every undertaking in which you engage.
9. The best way to improve your relations with your fellow men is to determine that you will be friendly to everyone you meet.
10. Poise in meeting stress and strain is primarily an emotional, as contrasted to an intellectual, problem.
11. It is probable that only the person who has no brains with which to think is capable of achieving control over the matter of worry.
12. Since the person who has everything provided for him in youth starts life on such a high plane, it is probable that his ultimate success will be greater than that of a person who starts with much less.
13. The definition of work and play must be, rather predominantly, an individual matter.
14. Tentative ideas are rather dangerous because there is a likelihood that indecision will lead to a lessening of activity.

Suggested Readings

FOSDICK, HARRY EMERSON, *On Being a Real Person*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1943. 295 pp.

Out of a wide experience in pastoral counseling the author has drawn some generalizations about effective and happy living for the normal person. He deals with healthy approaches to living that will help reduce fear and depression. The underlying theme is that of integration—getting the self to be truly unified in thought and action. It is good philosophy and sound psychology.

LANGER, WALTER C., *Psychology and Human Living*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1943. 286 pp.

The author's aim is to capitalize upon psychological knowledge so that the present younger generation may create more humane and workable designs for living than have their elders. Difficult frontiers of living are yet to be mastered.

TERHUNE, WILLIAM B. (ed.), *Living Wisely and Well*, New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1949. 95 pp.

One of the three contributing authors deals with mental hygiene in childhood, another with the mental hygiene of adulthood, and the third with mental hygiene in later maturity. Each chapter is sound and constructively applicable. Startling figures to emphasize the need for a comprehensive program of mental hygiene are given.

TRAVIS, LEE EDWARD, and DOROTHY WALTER BARUCH, *Personal Problems of Everyday Life*, New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1941. 421 pp.

Although written for college students the book deals with problems of adjustment from the time of birth to adulthood and the appearance of the next generation. Everyday adjustment is discussed in such chapters as Adolescent Days and Man and Woman in Marriage. What the individual can do for himself is a major thesis of the book.

LIST OF VISUAL MATERIALS

The following films have been selected from a vast amount of visual materials available on mental health as having special pertinence to the point of view of this book. Where necessary, special notes and references to other available materials have been noted under the individual chapters.

A directory of sources, listing the producer or primary distributor, is appended. With a few exceptions, however, the films are carried locally by state university film libraries, commercial libraries, and other sources. It is best to try nearby before you order them from a distant primary source.

All the films listed are 16mm, black and white, sound films, unless otherwise indicated.

CHAPTER 1. THE MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HYGIENE

Emotional Health (McG-H 20 min). Shows a young man with ailments for which the school doctor can find no physical cause. He is sent to a psychiatrist and through discussion is able to understand the basis of psychosomatic illness. Later he understands the early origins of his own problems and is able to solve them.

Feeling of Hostility (McG-H 27 min). The case history of Claire from early childhood, when her father dies suddenly, to her development into an outwardly successful "career woman." A trailer reviews and emphasizes the episodes in the girl's life which contribute to her emotional maladjustment.

Feeling of Rejection (McG-H 23 min). The case history of Margaret, a twenty-three-year-old office worker, is reviewed as she discusses with a psychiatrist the origins of her frequent headaches. Group therapy is also shown.

The Inside Story of Seaman Jones (U.S. Coast Guard 30 min). Adjustment problem of a small-town football hero in naval service. Contains an animated cartoon sequence explaining daydreaming and other symptoms.

Learning to Understand Children (McG-H Part I—21 min; Part II—23 min). *Part I*—A case study of Ada Adams, an emotionally and socially maladjusted girl of fifteen, which shows how an understanding of children can be attained through the use of diagnostic techniques, such as observation of the child's behavior, study of her previous records, personal interviews, and home visits. *Part II*—A continuation of the case study of Ada Adams. Miss Brown, her teacher, uses Ada's interest in art as a means of improving Ada's self-confidence and interest in her schoolwork.

Overdependency (McG-H 32 min). The story of a young married man with hypochondriacal symptoms. Shows how treatment by a general practitioner helps him to discover that he suffered in childhood from overdependence on his mother and sister, which was later transferred to his wife.

Preface to a Life (Castle 28 min). The story of young Michael Thompson and the four different ways he might turn out, depending on the way his parents treat him in his earliest years.

What's on Your Mind? (NFB 11 min). Indicates some of the ill-effects of today's problems on the mental health of individuals, describes progress scientists are making in treatment of mental and emotional disorders, and debunks a few of the current fads and quack practices.

Feelings of Depression (McG-H 30 min). The story of a thirty-year-old businessman, of how he became depressed, and of the factors that precipitated his depression. Among other things, the film shows how John's personality development from childhood made him vulnerable to those factors.

CHAPTER 2. GROWTH PROCESSES AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Ages and Stages Series (McG-H).

He Acts His Age (13 min color). Shows how children develop at various ages and how their parents can help lay the basis for habits which will let them grow up emotionally stable and happy.

The Terrible Twos and Trusting Threes (20 min color). Divided into two parts, this film studies the social behavior of the child at two years and of the same child under the same conditions at three years. Examples of relationships with other children of the same age and

reactions to parental direction bring out the increasing maturity of the young child.

Child Development Series (McG-H). Correlated with Dr. Elizabeth Hurlock's textbook, *Child Development*.

Principles of Development (17 min). Outlines the fundamentals of growth and change from early infancy. After defining the principles of development, the film considers the variables which make each child different.

Heredity and Pre-Natal Development (21 min). Step-by-step picturization of growth, subdivision, and eventual union of male and female sex cells. Describes fertilization and traces the development of the fetus until delivery.

Child Care and Development (17 min). Gives over-all consideration to the habits of daily physical care that ensure a happy, healthy child. Stresses correct attitudes and procedures toward establishing good habits of eating, sleeping, and bathing.

Children's Emotions (22 min). Discusses the major emotions of childhood. Narrator points out that the principal characteristics of children's emotional reactions are intensity and frequency, though they may be of short duration, which result in a wide variety of behavior responses.

Social Development (16 min). Film offers an analysis of social behavior at different age levels and the reasons underlying the changes in behavior patterns as the child develops. Stresses the importance of guidance from understanding adults.

Baby Meets His Parents (EBF 11 min). Shows how differences in personalities can be accounted for, not only by heredity, but also by the environmental factors during the first years of life.

Child Development Series (EBF). Produced in collaboration with Dr. Arnold Gesell, Director of the Yale Clinic of Child Development.

Growth of Infant Behavior, Early Stages (10 min). Growth of behavior patterns in early infancy. The reactions of an infant at different stages are compared.

Growth of Infant Behavior, Later Stages (10 min). Demonstrates increasing ability of the infant to use his hands in manipulating objects. The growth of the fetal hand is shown.

Posture and Locomotion (10 min). Shows the development of postural control.

From Creeping to Walking (10 min). Further analysis of the mechanics of locomotion and the stages by which the infant gradually attains an upright walking posture.

Baby's Day at Twelve Weeks (10 min). The infant is followed through his day from the time of his waking in the morning to the final breast feeding at night. An interpretation of the significance of his various reactions is offered.

Thirty-six Weeks Behavior Day (10 min). Reactions are compared with those of twenty-four weeks earlier.

Behavior Day at Forty-eight Weeks (10 min). Methods of child care, including the administration of cod-liver oil and orange juice, the bath, dressing, feeding, elimination, floor play, and daytime naps and sleep. Emphasis is placed upon the psychological implications of the infant's everyday experience.

Behavior Patterns at One Year (10 min). Depicts behavior patterns of a normal infant fifty-two weeks of age. The baby's manipulative and other reactions are interpreted. Test situations involving a cup and a spoon, cup and cubes, pellet and bottle, ball, ring and string, paper and crayon, etc., are discussed.

Learning and Growth (10 min). The relationships between age, growth, and learning are indicated. (24-48 weeks.)

Early Social Behavior (10 min). Manifestations of personality in children from eight weeks to seven years.

Children Growing Up with Others (BIS 23 min). The story of children in their relationship to parents and friends. We see the child's development from its early and involuntary dependence to an increasing self-reliance, tempered by membership in its group.

Children Learning by Experience (BIS 32 min). Shows children playing and working together in natural surroundings. Sequences are devoted to the urge to learn, practicing simple skills, understanding the world about them, learning at second hand, and learning through play and imagination.

Helping the Child to Accept the Do's (EBF 10 min). Portrays the child learning to live in a world defined by the Do's, and explains how his personality is influenced by the extent to which the Do's are ac-

cepted. Illustrates, with life situations, the types of Do's the child must learn to accept: (1) the Do's for personal living, (2) the masculine and feminine Do's, and (3) the Do's for human relations.

Helping the Child to Face the Don'ts. (EBF 10 min). Reveals how the young child meets a world of Don'ts and how he reacts by conforming in his own distinctive ways, thus forming his own individual personality. Classifies the Don'ts as: (1) those which protect the child from danger, (2) those which restrain him from taking things that belong to others, and (3) those which teach him to respect the rights of others.

Know Your Baby (NFB 11 min b/w or color). Illustrates approved methods of psychological care of newborn infants. Shows a home situation where other children are present, and deals with clothing and bedding, bath, breast feeding and bottle feeding, maintenance of normal home atmosphere, etc.

Life with Baby (MOT 18 min). Mental and physical development of young children. Under the direction of Dr. Arnold Gesell at Yale University Clinic.

Life with Junior (MOT 18 min). Follows the normal day of one of the nation's small fry and the alternating delight and consternation of parental reaction.

Problem Child (Castle). The story of a mother who believes she has a problem child. She visits her doctor, who reviews the child's life and finds that she is wanted by her parents, she is loved, and she is normally self-confident. The doctor explains further that the child is merely going through a phase of difficult behavior, and the mother must be prepared to look upon it as normal.

Problem Children (Ohio State 20 min). A story of two children and how their personalities are affected by their relationships in home and school.

Studies of Normal Personality Development (NYU color or b/w).

Balloons (17 min). Shows how differently two children, two months apart in age and from similar backgrounds, respond to a graduated series of opportunities and invitations to break balloons.

Finger Painting (20 min). An introduction to the use of finger paints by children by means of which personality patterns are recognized.

Frustration Play Techniques (35 min). Demonstrates techniques developed by Dr. Eugene Lerner of Sarah Lawrence College. A series of games indicates how children respond to intrusions, prohibitions, and competition.

This Is Robert (80 min). Traces the development of Robert, an aggressive, "difficult," yet thoroughly appealing child, from his arrival in nursery school at the age of two up through his first year in a public school when he is seven.

Meeting Emotional Needs in Childhood (33 min). Concerned with the problems of helping children develop positive attitudes toward other people and toward the community.

Your Children and You (BIS 31 min). The care of young children from the first months to the age of four or five. On the psychological side, gives hints for the prevention of unnecessary fears, boredom, and maladjustment.

CHAPTER 3. PHYSICAL HEALTH FACTORS IN MENTAL HYGIENE

Attitudes and Health (Coronet 10 min, b/w or color). Marvin didn't make the first team in basketball, and he hasn't been feeling well lately. His sister remains in bed when she finds out that she missed out on an office promotion. A physician explains to Marvin and his mother some of the ways in which attitudes affect physical health and how to avoid bitter disappointment.

Body Care and Grooming (McG-H 20 min). Describes some recommended daily habits that can help everyone to make the most of their natural endowments. Throughout the film there is continual emphasis on the social advantages of a clean, healthy appearance.

The Centre (BIS 20 min). The Pioneer Health Centre at Peckham was started before the war by private initiative and with private funds. It is designed and equipped as a club where the whole family can go to enjoy their leisure hours. Uniquely, the Centre is a study in social biology, for the directors and staff are biologists who investigate the patterns of family behavior and their results.

A Child Went Forth (Brandon 20 min). An intimate, affectionate picture of two- to seven-year-olds in a nursery camp. The film shows the wide scope of activities possible through sympathetic guidance,

where children have a well-rounded program of eating, rest, and play, with freedom to exercise their curiosity and imagination.

A Modern Guide to Health (BIS 10 min). This cartoon film provides a few common-sense health rules which can be easily adopted by anyone. Although the treatment is humorous, the suggestions for combating slovenly posture, unsuitable clothing, and nervous tension are very sound.

Play Is Our Business (Sun Dial 20 min). The work of play schools in solving some of the community problems which affect children during after-school hours and in vacation periods. A variety of activities is shown, with emphasis on the theme that for children work is play and play is work, and both are integral parts of the learning process.

Playtown, USA (Association 25 min). Illustrates the need for public-sponsored recreation by emphasizing the harmful results of lack of facilities for all age groups. Shows step-by-step plans for the organization and development of community recreation.

Problem Drinkers (MOT 19 min). Depicts a man's progression from "moderate" to uncontrolled drinking and how, through Alcoholics Anonymous, he regains his position in the world. Shows other efforts to fight alcoholism and discusses the community responsibility.

I Am an Alcoholic (McG-H 18 min). Through the experiences of one man, this film portrays the steps taken by members of Alcoholics Anonymous to bring a man back to his rightful place in society.

Understanding Children's Play (Educ 10 min). Designed to show how adults can understand and help children through observation of their use of toys and play materials.

Why Won't Tommy Eat? (NFB 16 min b/w or color). Develops the theme that the basis of feeding habits is formed in early infancy; shows a little boy who has lost his appetite and explains why. Weaning, introduction of solid foods, self-feeding, and other methods of feeding are shown.

Your Children's Meals (BIS 14 min). A guide to parental understanding of good eating habits, stressing regularity of mealtime schedule, proper parental example, attractively prepared food, and patience in meeting the eating problems that are inevitable much of the time.

Your Children's Sleep (BIS 23 min). Stresses the importance of good, sound, healthy sleep and shows parents how to ensure it for their chil-

dren. Points out that children have worries and problems of their own, at home, in school, and in their relationships with their contemporaries. These may cause sleeping difficulties. Parents should be prepared to give sympathetic and helpful understanding.

CHAPTER 5. ACHIEVING EFFICIENCY IN COLLEGE

Note: The following three films were produced primarily for the use of high-school students. Much of the material they contain is applicable to college students, but the instructor should, if possible, preview them to make certain that they are appropriate for the maturity level of his students.

Build Your Vocabulary (Coronet 10 min). Shows Mr. Thompson embarking on a systematic campaign of vocabulary improvement after a dramatic incident of vocabulary failure.

How to Read a Book (Coronet 10 min). Considers the important factors in selecting a book and the technique of finding information quickly.

How to Study (Coronet 10 min). Designed to motivate better study habits and give practical hints on study technique. It makes an appeal to the student by showing how study is made more pleasant and profitable through the cultivation of proper techniques.

CHAPTER 6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

See materials listed under Chapter 1.

CHAPTERS 9 AND 10. SOCIAL ADAPTATION

Democracy (EBF 11 min). Discusses the nature and meaning of democracy. Its two unique characteristics—shared respect and shared power—are defined and described.

Despotism (EBF 11 min). Illustrates the thesis that all communities can be ranged on a scale running from democracy to despotism. The two chief characteristics of despotism—restricted respect and concentrated power—are defined and illustrated.

Experimental Studies in Social Climates of Groups (Iowa 30 min). Shows the behavior of groups of boys organized in clubs run on demo-

cratic principles, as an autocracy, and as a laissez-faire group. Shows responses when groups are changed from one type to another. Graphs and charts give statistics as to group action and reaction. Visualization of the famous Lewin experiments on group behavior.

Family Circles (McG-H 31 min). Shows how the interplay of school and home influences affect the development of today's youngsters. Experiences of three children illustrate vividly how parental indifference, lack of imagination, and emotional conflict at home can destroy the confidence and enthusiasm necessary for a child's success at school.

Who Will Teach Your Child? (McG-H 24 min). In a series of classroom situations we see what teaching means to different persons. Portrays some of the problems confronting teachers and suggests possible solutions.

Fitness Is a Family Affair (NFB 15 min). Neighbors, by pooling their resources, find new interests and enrich community living. Two families in a neighborhood are contrasted, the first family being persuaded to try out the cooperative ideas of the second.

Human Reproduction (McG-II 21 min). Stresses the biological normalcy of reproduction and the importance of clear, objective familiarity with these facts to the success of marriage and parenthood. Models and animated drawings are used to describe the anatomy and physiology of the reproductive process.

Marriage and Divorce (MOT 15 min). A frank survey of the problem of broken homes, which offers the opinions of many experts as to what should be done. Marriage and the founding of a family, the film points out, hold out today a greater promise of self-realization than any other course in life.

Courtship to Courthouse (McG-H 15 min). This film shows how impulsiveness, not enough clear thinking, and present-day environment and living conditions are some of the contributing factors which lead to divorce.

Marriage for Modern Series (McG-H).

This Charming Couple (19 min). The significance of unrealistic romantic feelings in premarital judgments, told through the story of a marriage that failed.

Marriage Today (22 min). Offers some of the answers to questions raised in *This Charming Couple*, through the analysis of two marriages

that *did* work, of two couples who knew each other realistically and had a clear idea of their mutual aims.

Choosing for Happiness (14 min). Eve asks, "Is he right for me?"—and finds flaws in all the boys who are interested in her. The film points up her own need for self-analysis before she can really choose.

Who's Boss? (16 min). The story of a couple whose marriage almost failed because they did not appreciate the importance of sharing responsibility.

It Takes All Kinds (20 min). Indicates the importance of realistically appraising personality differences in choosing a mate by showing how differently people react to a difficult situation.

CHAPTER 11. THE IMPROVEMENT OF THINKING

Note: Subject to the same caution indicated in the note to films listed under Chapter 5.

How to Judge Authorities (Coronet 10 min). How to evaluate various authorities intelligently by using internal evidence, experience of the authority, and one's own experience.

CHAPTER 13. DANGER ZONES OF MENTAL HEALTH

Note: In general, the more technical films on psychiatry and psychology have been avoided. The films listed below are intended for lay audiences, and many of those listed under Chapter 1 also have pertinence for this subject. A more complete list of technical films, often restricted to professional audiences, may be obtained from the National Institute of Mental Health, Federal Security Agency, under the title of "A List of 16mm Motion Pictures."

City of the Sick (Ohio State). A mental hospital from the inside, through the eyes of an attendant.

Psychiatry in Action (BIS 63 min). The work of a British hospital specializing in the treatment of military and civilian war neuroses with the aim of rapid rehabilitation. Scenes include preliminary interviews, psychological testing, drug therapy, electric shock therapy, narco-analysis, group recreational and occupational therapy, and reassignment of patients to civilian or military duties.

Psychoneuroses (NYU 23 min si). Patients are shown who manifest signs and symptoms of a seemingly psychogenic nature, but who also show syndromes suggestive of organic diseases.

Shades of Gray (U.S. Army 66 min). Problems of the NP patient in the Army. Reviews childhood of two men and shows results of good and bad parental training in later wartime situations. Various cases of war hysteria are shown and short-term treatment in combat areas is demonstrated. Various types of psychotherapy are shown, including narcosynthesis and hydrotherapy.

CHAPTER 14. MENTAL HEALTH FACTORS BEYOND INDIVIDUAL CONTROL

Children of the City (BIS 30 min). The problem of juvenile delinquency in a Scottish city is approached through the child's home environment. Three boys from different types of homes are caught robbing a shop. The film describes in some detail how each boy is dealt with. It makes it plain that better city planning is needed to take into account the needs of children.

Children on Trial (BIS 62 min). Tells the story of two boys and a girl, repeat offenders, who are sent to approved schools for the rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents. Resentful and uncooperative at first, they finally realize that they are being given a fresh start in life and decide to take advantage of the opportunities offered.

The Quiet One (Athena 70 min). A remarkable document about an unwanted child of Harlem, who is sent to Wiltwick School for treatment. Shows the environmental and psychological factors that drove him to delinquency.

Valley Town (NYU 30 min). A documentary study of an important factor in the unemployment problem—that of workers displaced by automatic machinery. Includes a section expressing the psychological effects of unemployment on family life.

CHAPTER 15. RELIGION AS A FACTOR IN MENTAL HEALTH

For All People (Cathedral 30 min). A story of all races that dramatizes a real social problem. The church saves a crucial situation that reveals the importance of Christian evangelism.

Power of God (Mo Synod 56 min). Shows how the problems of modern life can be solved by the word of God spoken at the right time by plain Christians.

That They Might Have Life (MBM 20 min). Influence of religious missions on the young people of the slum areas.

LIST OF PRODUCERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

Association—Association Films, 35 West 45th St., New York 19.

Athena—Athena Films, 165 West 46th St., New York 19.

BIS—British Information Services, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York 20.

Brandon—Brandon Films, 1700 Broadway, New York 19.

Castle—Castle Films, 1445 Park Ave., New York 29.

Cathedral—Cathedral Films, 1970 Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood 28, Calif.

Coronet—Coronet Films, Inc., 65 East South Water, Chicago 1, Illinois.

EBF—Encyclopaedia Britannica Films, Inc., 342 Madison Ave., New York.

Educ—Educational Institute for Learning and Research, 65 East 96th St., New York.

Iowa—University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa.

McG-H—McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 West 42nd St., New York 18.

MBM—Methodist Board of Missions, 150 Fifth Ave., New York.

Mo Synod—Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, 3558 South Jefferson, St. Louis, Missouri.

MOT—March of Time, 369 Lexington Ave., New York 17.

NFB—National Film Board of Canada, 1270 Avenue of the Americas, New York 20.

NYU—New York University Film Library, 26 Washington Square, New York 20.

Ohio—Ohio Division of Mental Hygiene, Department of Public Welfare, Columbus, Ohio.

Ohio State—Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

Sun Dial—Sun Dial Films, 341 East 43rd St., New York.

U.S. Army—U.S. Army, Chief, Medical Illustration Services, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, 7th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C.

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