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MASLOW'S LEGACY

THE only critical thing we have been able to formulate regarding A. H. Maslow—directed at him and his judgment and not at the body of his work—is that he was too optimistic concerning the general influence of the discoveries which he and two or three other psychologists made about the nature of human beings and their potentialities. The reality of these discoveries was so clear to him, their importance so striking, that he expected the modern world to embrace their meaning and to set about the basic reforms that quite evidently are required.

This idea—this completely forgivable criticism—occurred as a result of reading an excellent article on Maslow in *East West* for May by Edward Hoffman, author of *The Right To Be Human: A Biography of Abraham Maslow*, published earlier this year by Tarcher. In his article, after noting that this year marks the eightieth anniversary of Maslow's birth, Hoffman says:

> Perhaps more than any other American psychologist in the last half century, Maslow has powerfully affected how we view ourselves. His provocative ideas about self-fulfillment, creativity, and well-being have not only influenced such fields as psychology and counseling, but health care, education, business management, and theology. They have helped to transform popular values about the way to lead a worthwhile life. Yet, the specific content of Maslow's vast legacy and his own odyssey have remained largely unknown.
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> Abraham Maslow was a man with a mission: his goal was nothing less than to reverse the gloom and cynicism of our time by offering a more attractive, hopeful, and yet realistic picture of human personality.
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> Throughout Maslow's life, he argued that a new philosophy of humanity is needed—a new enlightenment—to help recognize and develop our loftier capacities for creativity compassion, love, ethics, spirituality, and other uniquely human traits. Without such a true portrait of human essence to guide us, Maslow consistently declared, our society will continue to generate fragmented and ineffective—and, inadvertently, even destructive—social policies and programs from economic planning and social welfare to criminology and the treatment of addiction.

The foundation volume of Maslow's psychology is *Motivation and Personality,* which first appeared in 1954. The next edition (also Harper & Row) was completed in 1970, just before his death. In his much enlarged preface to the second edition he intimated his growing awareness of the obstacles to what he had to say, while stressing its importance.

> Human life will never be understood unless its highest aspirations are taken into account. Growth, self-actualization, the striving toward health, the quest for identity and autonomy, the yearning for excellence (and other ways of phrasing the striving "upward") must by now be accepted beyond question as a widespread and perhaps universal tendency.
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> And yet there are also other regressive, fearful, self-diminishing tendencies as well, and it is very easy to forget them in our intoxication with "personal growth," especially for inexperienced youngsters. I consider that a necessary prophylactic against such illusions is a thorough knowledge of psychopathology and of depth psychology. We must appreciate that many people choose the worse rather than the better, that growth is often a painful process and may for this reason be shunned, that we are afraid of our own possibilities in addition to loving them and that we are all of us profoundly ambivalent about truth, beauty, virtue, loving them and fearing them too.

He saw the downward tendencies prevalent in the present:

> A purely materialistic motivation is preferred to a social or metamotivated one, or to a mixture of all three. It is a kind of paranoid-like suspicion, a form of devaluation of human nature, which I see often but which, to my knowledge, has not been sufficiently described. . . .

> And of course I am sure that the historian of ideas would find it very easy to find many examples, in different cultures and in different times, of either a general trend to downlevelling or uplevelling of human motivations. At the moment of writing, the trend in our culture is very clearly toward widespread downlevelling. The lower needs are being heavily overused for explanatory purposes and the higher and metaneeds are being badly underused. In my opinion this tendency rests far more on preconception than on empirical fact. I find the higher needs and metaneeds to be far more determinative than my subjects themselves suspect, and certainly far, far more than contemporary intellectuals dare admit.

He pointed out that gratification of needs does not bring lasting happiness but usually a desire for more. He then comments:

> But this amounts to a revision of the theory of happiness that has ruled us for three hundred years and that has determined our concepts of heaven, of the Garden of Eden of the good life, the good society, the good person. Our love stories have traditionally ended "And they lived happily ever after." And so also have our theories of social improvement and social revolution. So also, for instance, have we been over-sold—and consequently disillusioned—by the very real though limited improvements in our society. We were over-sold on the benefits of labor unionism, of women's suffrage, of the direct election of Senators, of the graded income tax, and of many other improvements that we have built into, e.g., the amendments to the Constitution. Each one of them was supposed to bring a millennium, eternal happiness, the final solution of all problems. The result has tended to be disillusionment after the fact. But disillusionment means that there had been illusions. And this seems to be the clear point to make, that we may reasonably expect improvements to take place. But we can no longer reasonably expect perfection to come to pass, or permanent happiness to be achieved.

Maslow's impact was more felt by the general reader and inquirer than by those in the healing and helping professions. The reason for this is simple enough: he devoted his life to developing and teaching a psychology of *health*. He based it on study of the most healthy-minded people he could find. The sacred, he maintained, is *"in* the ordinary . . . found in one's daily life, in one's neighbors, friends, and family, in one's backyard . . . to be looking for miracles is a sure sign of ignorance that *everything* is miraculous."

In his *East West* article, his biographer, Hoffman, says:

> Speaking often at Big Sur's Esalen Institute in California and at countless professional, ecumenical, and student groups, he thus stressed that the world's great religions have always preached against over-reliance on inner contemplation at the expense of action. He explained that Buddhism, for example, distinguishes between two kinds of mystics: the lesser, privatist *Pratyeka Buddha* "who wins enlightenment only for himself," and the nobler *Bodhisattva*, who having attained enlightenment, regards his own salvation as imperfect as long as others remain in confusion and ignorance.

Hoffman says in his conclusion:

> Above all, Maslow planned to turn his attention to the issue of human nature and evil. He considered it a tremendous mistake for many humanistic and transpersonal thinkers to minimize or avoid facing the reality of some genuinely hurtful, malicious people in the world who must be recognized for what they are.
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> Yet, Maslow was not pessimistic. He was certain that eventually the new, human-centered approach that he had helped establish was steadily going to replace the outworn and inadequate concepts that had dominated our thinking in the 20th century. More and more people were realizing that we all have innate needs for creativity and love, altruism and friendship, beauty and spirituality. This situation in turn, would lead to dramatic changes in all our social institutions from the schools to the workplace.

For Maslow, the psychologically healthy person is what he called the self-actualizing individual. He means by this the person whose best qualities govern his life. "They are capable of more fusion, greater love, more perfect identification, more obliteration of ego boundaries than other people would consider possible." They have deep ties with a few individuals. One subject said: "I haven't got time for many friends. Nobody has, that is, if they are to be *real* friends." And they often regard as ends what other people regard as means. "Our subjects are somewhat more likely to appreciate for its own sake, and in

an absolute way, the doing itself. . . . Wertheimer pointed out that most children are so creative that they can transform hackneyed routine, mechanical, and rote experiences, e.g., as in one of his experiments, transporting books from one set of shelves to another, into a structured and amusing game of a sort by doing this according to a certain system or with a certain rhythm."

Another characteristic of the self-actualizing person is the capacity to see wholes instead of parts of things. The climactic form of this perception is the peak experience in which the individual sees and feels all of reality at once. "Since the whole of Being is being perceived, all those laws obtain which would hold if the whole of the cosmos could be encompassed at once."

> Concrete perceiving of the whole of the object implies, also, that it is seen with "care." . . . American psychology, or more broadly, Western psychology, in what I consider to be an ethnocentric way, assumes that human needs, fears and interests must always be determinants of perception. . . . The further assumption is implied that cognition is a coping, instrumental mechanism, and that it must to some extent be egocentric. It assumes that the world can be seen *only* from the vantage point of the interests of the perceiver and that the experience must be organized around the ego as a centering and determining point. . . .
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> My findings indicate that in the normal perceptions of self-actualizing people and in the more occasional peak experiences of average people, *perception can be relatively ego-transcending, self-forgetful, egoless.* It can be unmotivated, impersonal, desireless, unselfish, not *needing*, detached. It can be object-centered rather than ego-centered. . . .
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> *The peak-experience is felt as a self-validating, self-justifying moment which carries its own intrinsic value with it.* That is to say it is an end in itself, what we may call an end-experience rather than a means-experience. It is felt to be so valuable an experience, so great a revelation, that even to attempt to justify it takes away from its dignity and worth. . . . The mystics have affirmed this great value of the great mystic experience which may come only two or three times in a lifetime. . . .
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> The implications of my findings for a psychology of values are very puzzling and yet so uniform that it is necessary not only to report them but also try somehow to understand them. To start at the end first, *the peak-experience is only good and desirable, and is never experienced as evil or undesirable.* The experience is intrinsically valid; the experience is perfect, complete and needs nothing else. It is sufficient to itself. It is felt as being intrinsically necessary and inevitable. It is just as good as it *should* be. It is reacted to with awe, wonder, amazement, humility and even reverence exaltation and piety.

It is important to take note of the fact that Maslow had little in common with the psychologists who regard their work as helping people to "adjust" to their environment. Suppose it is a bad environment? Adjusting to it will only hide a person's ills with the covering of conformity. His thinking along these lines was covered by certain penetrating questions: "How good a society does human nature permit?" and, "How good a human nature does a society permit?" Toward the end of *Toward a Psychology of Being* these questions appear in another form in the chapter on "Health as Transcendence of Environment." Here he says:

> We must not fall into the trap of defining the good organism in terms of what he is "good for" as if he were an instrument rather than something in himself, as if he were only the means to some extrinsic purpose. . . .
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> First I mention some data I presented in a 1951 paper called "Resistance to Acculturation." I reported my healthy subjects to be superficially accepting of conventions, but privately to be casual, perfunctory and detached about them. That is, they could take them or leave them. In practically all of them, I found a rather calm, good-humored rejection of the stupidities and imperfections of the culture with greater or lesser effort at improving it. They definitely showed an ability to fight it vigorously when they thought it necessary. . . . They also showed a surprising amount of detachment from people in general and a strong liking for privacy, even a need for it.
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> For these and other reasons they may be called autonomous, i.e., ruled by the laws of their own character rather than by the rules of society (insofar as these are different). It is in this sense that they are not only or merely Americans but also members at

large of the human species. I then hypothesized that "these people should have less 'national character,' and that they should be more like each other across cultural lines than they are like the less-developed members of their own culture."

He then expands on this idea in an important footnote:

> Examples of this kind of transcendence are Walt Whitman or William James who were profoundly American, most *purely* American, and yet were also very purely supra-cultural internationalist members of the whole human species. They were universal men not in *spite* of their being Americans, but just *because* they were such good Americans. So too, Martin Buber, a Jewish philosopher, was *also* more than Jewish. Hokusai, profoundly Japanese, was a universal artist. Probably *any* universal art cannot be rootless. *Merely* regional art is different from the regionally rooted art that becomes broadly general—human. . . .
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> The point I wish to stress here is the detachment, the independence, the self-governing character of these people, the tendency to look within for the guiding values and rules to live by.

At the end of this chapter he draws some conclusions which are seldom noticed, showing the revolutionary character of his philosophical psychology. He says:

> Being focussed on a task produces organization for efficiency both within the organism and in the environment. What is irrelevant is pushed aside and not noticed. . . . What doesn't help to solve the problem becomes unimportant . . . For cognition to be complete, I have shown that it must be detached, disinterested, desireless, unmotivated. . . . To the extent that we try to master the environment or be effective with it, to that extent do we cut the possibility of full, objective, detached, non-interfering cognition. Only if we let it be, can we perceive fully. Again, to cite psychotherapeutic experience, the more eager we are to make a diagnosis and a plan of action, the *less* helpful do we become. The more eager we are to cure, the longer it takes. Every psychiatric researcher has to learn not to *try* to cure, *not* to be impatient. In this and in many other situations, to give in is to overcome, to be humble is to succeed. The Taoists and Zen Buddhists taking this path were able a thousand years ago to see what we psychologists are only beginning to be aware of.

Here, at the end, we'd like to add something from a passage in *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* which shows Maslow's hard-headedness. In this passage he is discussing creativity.

> We are a species and we are different from other species. If this is so, if you can accept this instead of the *tabula rasa* model, the person as pure clay which is to be molded or reinforced into any predesigned shape that the arbitrary controller wants, then you must also accept the model of therapy as uncovering, unleashing, rather than the model of therapy as molding, creating, shaping. And this would be true also for education. The basic models generated by these two different conceptions of human nature would be different—teaching, learning, everything.
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> Is then creativeness part of the general human heritage? It does very frequently get lost, or covered up, or twisted or inhibited, or whatever, and then the job is of uncovering what all babies are, in principle, born with. Well, I think that this is a very profound and very general philosophical question that we are dealing with, a very basic philosophical stance. . . .
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> Sometimes creativeness can be a horrible nuisance. It can be a troublesome, dangerous, messy thing, as I learned once from a "creative" research assistant who gummed up a research that I had been working on for over a year. She got "creative" and changed the whole thing in the middle of it without even telling me about it. She gummed up all the data, so that a year's work was lost, messed up. On the whole we want the trains to run on time, and generally we want dentists *not* to be creative. . . . This is important, I think, not only in our society, where, with our division of labor, we ought to be able to take orders and to carry through a program and be predictable. . . .
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> In simple terms of time, bright ideas really take a small proportion of our time. Most of our time is spent on hard work. My impression is that our students don't know this. It may be that these dead cats have been brought to my door more because my students so frequently identify with me, because I have written about peak experiences and inspirations and so on, that they feel that this is the only way to live. Life without daily or hourly peak experiences, that's no life, so that they can't do work that is boring.

No better reason could be given for reading Maslow, his work, his life.

REVIEW
FREEDOM IS RECONCILIATION

DOWN in Talbot County, Georgia, years ago, things were run according the best judgment of Mr. Charlie—Charlie Hendricks. Someone would come to him and say that Punkin, a black man, was in jail for selling whiskey, and he would say, "I'll go get him first thing Monday." And someone else would say: "Mr. Charlie, Freeman been messing with my little girl," and Charlie would say, "Tell him I want to talk to him."

Then, towards the end of his life, a young social worker and an agent of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation came to see him about an alleged case of "peonage" on a nearby farm. The social worker, a woman, said:

> "We know, Mr. Hendricks, that you don't approve of that sort of thing any more than we do," she began. "You know, I was raised around here. Went to school with two of your boys. Never heard any black person who worked for you say you did him wrong. We want you to help us with that black man over on the Lawson place. You know who I'm talking about. He wouldn't even talk to us. Too scared I suppose. Just sat on the steps of that little lean-to beside their house and stared at us. And we've heard they make him work all the time. Plowing, hoeing, hanging out the wash. Everything. When we were there he was shelling butterbeans. Two bushels of butterbeans. And you know what they call him? Sure you do. Dummy. That's what they call him. Dummy! Those days are gone, Mr. Hendricks. That sort of thing won't do anymore in this county. We need your cooperation. Your testimony."
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> "Did you talk to the Lawsons?" Mr. Charlie asked, motioning them to a bench under a giant pecan tree behind his house.
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> "Yes sir, we did. Or tried to. All they would say was that he had been in their family for forty years. Like he's a piece of antique furniture. We're going to put him in a home in Atlanta."
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> Mr. Charlie spoke in his usual calm fashion. "Well, it's true that he's been in their family for forty years. Sleeps in that lean-to by their house like you say. And yessum, he does work hard. Like we all do around here. Have to, to get by. And yeah, well, they do call him Dummy 'cause that's what his mamma called him. You know he can't hear. And he can't talk. Born deaf, so they tell me. His mamma had him over in another county. He was a grown boy when she moved over to the Lawson place. She died during that bad pneumonia winter—'course, you weren't even born then—and after she was buried the boy disappeared." The man with the social worker had turned on a little tape recorder. Mr. Charlie asked him to turn it off and he did.
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> "He didn't have any kin. Leastwise, none that cared anything about him. And never had a daddy, if you know what I mean. Some hunters found him way over in the Flint River swamps. Said he was eating beech mash. Like the hogs do. In middle of winter. Old man Lawson heard about it and went over there and brought him back here. Then when he died and his grandnephew took over the farm, Dummy just sort of went with the place. That might not sound right to you, but that's just the way it was. He just went with the place. If I was you, I think I'd leave him alone. Too late for him."
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> "No, Mr. Hendricks. We can't do that. It isn't too late. They can teach him sign language at the home in Atlanta. It was built for people like him."
>
> "Yessum. I know about the home. It's been there a long time. They wouldn't take him in the home back then though. Wouldn't take colored children. And he didn't know the folks who built the home. Never even been to Woodland far as I know. Atlanta's awful big, young lady. And a long way off. You said you wanted me to help you. Far as I can tell, best leave him where he is."
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> They said the social worker and the GBI man never came back. Mr. Charlie had a lot of influence.

This is an extract from *Forty Acres and a Goat*, an autobiographical memoir by Will D. Campbell, a hard-headed Baptist preacher who tells the story of his fight against segregation in the South with so much gusto that one can hardly stop reading his book long enough to try to review it. The publisher is Harper & Row, the paperback price $8.95.

Campbell skips around a lot, from encounters and beatings on the picket line to matter of fact recountings of years of history of the struggle. Here is an example of the latter:

> Nineteen sixty-five was one of the most violent years in the civil rights struggle. In many ways it was

also the most promising. The years leading up to it had seen riots in Harlem, Brooklyn, Rochester, Jersey City, Chicago, Philadelphia, and many other cities in the North, where the passive resistance of Dr. King and others had little influence. Physical retaliation became commonplace there. In Harlem, where a white off-duty policeman shot a black teen-ager to death, rioting broke out and had it not been for the life-risking and brilliant street speeches of James Farmer, then national Director of CORE, there seems little doubt that many would have perished in the ruins of upper Manhattan. In the South black citizens continued to absorb the violence through ongoing massive demonstrations, boycotts, mass meetings, and community organizing. In Mississippi a few weeks after the Harlem riots, the bodies of three civil right workers were discovered in a farm pond levee, but the resulting frustration and anger were channeled into even more constructive determination.

It was also the year that Martin Luther King, Jr., became the youngest man in history to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. And the year in which, in addition to the three men murdered in Mississippi, there were eighty physically assaulted, more than one thousand arrested, and thirty buildings bombed or burned in that state alone.

Then came "Bloody '65." Selma, Alabama. That was the year and point. Gains had been made. But concurrent with the gains there had developed a schism between whites and blacks who had worked side by side for justice, and that schism soon would make a mockery of the badge of honor of a beloved community. The label "white liberal," worn as a badge of honor for many years by white people sympathetic to what was considered the black cause, seemed overnight to become a term of scorn.

The worst 1965 assault by whites on blacks came in Selma, Alabama, when several hundred protesters tried to march across the Pettus Bridge in Selma. A black pastor and friend, known as T.J., told Campbell what happened. White lawmen, many of them deputized for the occasion, on motorcycles, in squad cars, on horseback and on foot blocked the road way.

When the marchers continued to move, the phalanx charged the unarmed citizens in violent and crazed defense of the Edmund Pettus Bridge and Alabama's sovereignty. With gas masks in place, giving them the appearance of extra terrestrial marauders, they stormed the ranks of protesters with bull whips, billy clubs, electric cattle prods, and gas canisters. Generations of hate, long held in escrow for such an opportunity, was turned loose on their defenseless prey. Screaming invectives, they trampled young and old, men and women alike, popping the whips on exposed flesh, dubbing the fallen, chasing the blinded trying to escape the clouds of tear gas. In a little more than a minute, what had been a compact and well-mannered formation seeking justice had become a scattered, bleeding, hysterical throng seeking physical survival.

T. J. did not speak of Campbell's absence from the scene but Campbell sensed his disappointment.

As I listened to the stark horror of the scene, another part of me was glad that I was not there. Knowing that, I wanted to ask him to forgive me for not being there and being glad that I wasn't. That didn't seem appropriate, was somehow strained and presumptuous. Who was I to assume that my meager efforts would be missed by this dynamic black Movement? Or wanted in the first place.

Perhaps I was also bothered that while others had been killed, jailed, or beaten, my participation in the Movement had been from a relatively safe distance. . . . T.J. seemed to sense what I was feeling. "I think it was what they did to the horses that upset me the most," he said, looking far into the distance.

"The horses?" I asked, for the moment relieved. "What did they do to the horses? I thought it was all directed at y'all."

"They made the horses do it," he said. "They made them run over us, step on us, knock us down. Horses don't do that to people. Horses are kind. I saw one of them jump straight over a young girl lying on the ground, like jumping over a hurdle at the steeple chase. The man—he didn't even have a uniform on—wheeled the horse around, kept spurring and jerking on the reins, trying to make him step on the girl's head."

"Jesus God," I said. "I'm really sorry." The words sounded hollow and I wished I hadn't said anything at all. Then I said something equally as vacuous. "You know, sometimes I get tired of working behind the scenes."

"Yeah. I guess it does get kind of crowded back there sometimes," he said, chuckling for the first time. That was as close as he came to expressing

what I suspected he was feeling, that white folks get the safe assignments.

In the closing chapter of this book Will Campbell recalls:

> "The civil rights gains we have made are largely cosmetic," my old friend Kelly Miller Smith, told me just before he died. . . . Were too many of us partly persuaded by that era of anger? And by our own academic platitudes of, "We're not trying to change attitudes, just behavior"? If so, black and white together must now share in the responsibility. Both should have known better. . . . For surely we are created to love one another. It has to be all right that the other is there, or old attitudes will some way, some time recapitulate old behavior.
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> *Freedom* is reconciliation.
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> "They still don't love me." That was what my dying friend was telling me. *Freedom* is love.
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> When our last tearful embrace was over and I was about to leave his hospital room, I could think of but one thing to say. "I thank you Kelly. You gave me my freedom. I'm sorry I couldn't do more to give you yours."

COMMENTARY
LISTENING TO THE SELF

IN *Farther Reaches of Human Nature* A. H. Maslow does what he can to make clear the meaning of self-actualization. Early in the book he asks, "What does one do when he self-actualizes? Does he grit his teeth and squeeze?" What, in short, does self-actualization mean in terms of actual behavior, actual procedure? He replies at some length.

> *First,* self actualization means experiencing fully, vividly, selfllessly, with full concentration and total absorption. It means experiencing without the self-consciousness of the adolescent. At this moment of experiencing the person is wholly and fully human. This is a self-actualizing moment. This is a moment when the self is actualizing itself. As individuals, we all experience such moments occasionally. As counselors, we can help clients to experience them more often. We can encourage them to become totally absorbed in something and to forget their poses and their defenses and their shyness—to go at it "whole-hog." From the outside, we can see that this can be a very sweet moment. In those youngsters who are trying to be very tough and cynical ,and sophisticated, we can see the recovery of some of the guilelessness of childhood; some of the innocence and sweetness of the face can come back as they devote themselves fully to a moment and throw themselves fully into the experiencing of it. The key word for this is "selflessly," and our youngsters suffer from too little selflessness and too much self-consciousness, self-awareness.
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> *Second,* let us think of life as a process of choices, one after another. At each point there is a progression choice and a regression choice. There may be a movement toward defense, toward safety, toward being afraid, but over on the other side, there is the growth choice. To make the growth choice instead of the fear choice a dozen times a day is to move a dozen times a day toward self-actualization.
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> *Self-actualization is an ongoing process;* it means making each of the many single choices about whether to lie or be honest, whether to steal or not to steal at a particular point and it means to make each of these choices as a growth choice. This is movement toward self-actualization.

Verbally we understand him, or think we do. But the fact is that when we make the wrong choices we do not think of them as either lying or stealing. In fact, we would probably find it very irritating to have it suggested that we are *capable* of either lying or stealing. What we do simply seems "natural," and that it has a moral quality does not even occur to us.

But Maslow must have caught himself at these self-deceptions. How did he do it? That is the real secret of self-actualization. Maslow speaks of this, in a way. He says:

> There is a self, and what I have sometimes referred to as "listening to the impulse voices" means letting the self emerge. Most of us, most of the time (and especially does this apply to children, young people), listen not to ourselves but to Mommy's introjected voice or Daddy's voice or to the voice of the Establishment, of the Elders, of authority, or of tradition.

How does one catch oneself at listening? Well, he suggests to his students that when they are given a glass of wine and asked if they like it, they not look at the label on the bottle. Thus they will not use the label as a cue to whether they are *supposed* to like the wine.

> Now they are ready to look within themselves and try to shut out the noise of the world so that they may savor the wine on their tongues and look to the "Supreme Court" inside themselves. Then, and only then, they may come out and say, "I like it" or "I don't like it."

What is he doing? He is teaching responsibility. "In psychotherapy," he says, "one can see it, can feel it, can know the moment of responsibility."

> Then there is a clear knowing of what it feels like. This is one of the great steps. Each time one takes responsibility, this is an actualizing of the self. . . . One cannot choose wisely for a life unless he dares to listen to himself, *his own self,* at each moment in life. . . .

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

FAILURE OF THE BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM

WE have from Canada, a book, *Skipping School in Earnest,* by Freda Lynn Davies, published by Afore-the-Wind, South Gillies, Ontario. The author participated in a cooperative alternative school, home-schooled her son, and carried on dairy farming. She says her book was largely inspired by reading Ivan Illich and John Holt. She writes about the formation of opinion and the way in which parents may free themselves of conventional attitudes. Her criticism is directed toward materialistic values, prejudicial attitudes toward children, misapplications of scientific methodology, and our "patronizing, authoritarian heritage." She says at the beginning:

> The school system shows little respect for children. It is in its very essence a coercive institution, and coercion cannot dwell together with respect. Erich Fromm has said, "Respect means a concern that the other person should grow and unfold as he is." Coercion means that the other person should be moulded into a shape that the control-wielding person desires. It is not that the school system and other authoritarian structures are unfamiliar with the word, respect. The understanding of it, however, is totally different. To the authoritarian, respect means fearful awe of the person in authority. That person is to be regarded as a superior being by all of those positioned under him, and must be seen as infallible to all but his fellow superior beings.

This has direct application to the institutional form of education. As the writer says:

> It is amazing how we adults become oblivious to the unjust ways we treat children. One would think that having gone through the experience of childhood ourselves, we would decide to treat our children more justly than we had been treated. But the entrenched beliefs about children die hard, and we continue to be convinced that children must be regarded as subhuman "for their own good." We say it is natural to herd groups of age-segregated children into rooms of limited space and leave them there for several hours with one adult whom they are expected to obey without fuss. Yet we would never want to put ourselves into similar circumstances, except perhaps if we were well paid.

Freda Davies quotes Dr. Einstein: "A community of standardized individuals without personal originality and personal aim would be a poor community without possibilities for development."

> Yet the accepted common view is that standardization is a good thing, and along with this goes another widely held affirmation—
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> that certificates obtained from schools are the mark of an educated person. What one learns or does in the course of one's life outside of school is not counted as part of an education. Learning is something which happens only in schools. The resulting conclusion often follows that one must go on enrolling in courses and putting oneself under the direction of teachers if one is to continue to learn anything.
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> Capacity for self-directed learning becomes completely eroded—many remain unaware of even such a possibility. Millions have been persuaded that it is perfectly satisfactory to grade people, like eggs or vegetables, into the exceptional ones, the useful ones, and not-so-useful ones, and to use academic qualifications as a means of doing so. It isn't so long ago that people seeking employment were chosen on the basis of personal assessment by their employers. Now no one trusts assessments. We have been sold on the idea of relying on the results of tests and examinations which reduce human beings to a few numbers and letters on a single sheet of paper. . . .
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> This system has become so much part of most of our lives that the following point of view is taken as a matter of course: that education must be a lock-step process. A child cannot be considered for grade one unless he has completed kindergarten; one cannot enter university without a high school diploma, and so on. Proper learning cannot be expected to take place in any way but within this precisely delineated framework. . . .
>
> Creative learning without any set curriculum at all (that is, learning what one needs to know as one encounters the need) is a totally heretical notion. It is ironic that the explorative thinking of young children untouched by the top-down approach of customary teaching methods, is more akin to that of seasoned creative thinkers, than is any of the prescribed learning activity foisted upon students in the schools.

Later in her book Freda Davies discusses the rights of children, noting that in legal discussions the focus is usually on the rights of children in custody battles and the rights of young offenders. But very little, she points out, is said about the interference with children's rights by compulsory school attendance laws.

> There is no consideration of the real meaning of "compulsory," but simply a leap to the soothing misconstrued definition which our society passes on from generation to generation to keep our children's discomforting questions from opening up to us the truth. Compulsory schooling is most definitely not the same thing as the right to an education. A right to something gives us access to that thing; it does not force the thing upon us. Compulsory schooling is not a right at all, but an imposition. . . .
>
> Another problem for children's rights is that the attitude of courts, reflecting that of society as a whole, demonstrates a nearly complete obliviousness to a child's state of personhood; the preoccupation remains solely with the paternalistic protection of children. . . . Though children are apparently entitled to basic rights and freedoms in law, everyday experience shows that little attention is generally paid to this entitlement. It is at least encouraging that there is some movement toward improving procedural provisions for children in court, by increasing their access to counselling and representation. The doctrine which seems to prevail, however, is the one referred to in law as *parens patriae*, whereby the state takes on the obligation of defining a child's best interests, when parents are judged not to have done so. The ability of the child to define his own best interests is presumed to be nonexistent.

Toward the end of her book Freda Davies says:

> No school or state education system can guarantee that the children in its care will be educated according to anyone's expectations, including its own. There are simply too many unknown and unpredictable factors. If the state can make no guarantees of results, no one else should be expected to do so either. Therefore a learning environment cannot be judged according to a prearranged set of criteria. Some other way must be found of looking at the situation.
>
> It is worth remembering here the fate of the native North Americans whose skills and culture have been shattered, in large part, because their children were forced to be educated in the white man's ways. We might be less troubled today by the plight of our aboriginal peoples, and our whole society would have a richer source of alternative thought, if native affairs, keeping their culture alive, while gradually assimilating those parts of the European experience that they found valuable for themselves. When individuals or families or cultural groups are subjected to institutionally sanctioned prejudice, then almost any alternative is preferable to remaining in the institution.

In her Epilog she says:

> For those embedded in the traditional system, and hearing almost daily of the need to compete and fit into the machinery or corporate and bureaucratic structures (a need which in turn, officially requires the achievement of institutionally defined standardized tasks), it is very difficult to see how persons growing up in an environment that seems to be the antithesis of conventional education, could ever make a contribution to society.
>
> But if one searches beyond the daily media bombardment, there can be seen trends arising, to which the non-school, liberated ways of learning fit very well. The most obvious of these is the trend toward small scale family or community-based enterprises, where flexibility and ability to blend into local conditions are more useful than the rigidly defined curricula of formal institutions. It is painfully evident that large corporate and bureaucratic systems are not sufficient for the existence of a just and decent society.

FRONTIERS

Various News

THE contents of *Worldwatch*, the magazine recently begun by the Worldwatch Institute (which publishes the annual *State of the World*), continue to be encouraging. In its second (March-April 1988) issue, Cynthia Shea reports on the spreading use throughout the world of wind power, especially in California. Of California, she says:

> In a little over a year, the number of turbines and their cumulative generating capacity had increased 10-fold. By 1986, they had multiplied 100-fold. At the end of 1987, the state had 16,661 turbines capable of turning out 1,437 megawatts' worth of electricity. California now produces enough wind-generated electricity to meet 15 per cent of San Francisco's electrical demand. . . .
>
> California hosts most of the intermediate-size wind turbines in use around the world in three mountain passes—Altamont, San Gorgonio and Tehachapi. Quirks in seasonal wind patterns in Altamont and San Gorgonio make them particularly advantageous for windfarming: Windspeeds are highest in the summer, when utilities' power needs are greatest.

Equipment costs have been going down:

> The average installation cost for an intermediate-size wind turbine has fallen by almost two-thirds since 1981, to some $800 to $1,200 per kilowatt. . . . In many markets, these turbines now cost less to install per unit of capacity than either coal or nuclear facilities. Costs are likely to be reduced further as more manufacturers start to mass produce turbines.

There are other favorable factors:

> Because wind turbines are much smaller than either coal or nuclear plants, they provide greater adaptability in responding to unpredictable growth in power demand. [Don] Smith [a utility consultant] notes, "When the turbines were available, windfarms have been built in Altamont Pass in less than go days from surveying to operation." Coal and nuclear plants, on the other hand, frequently take a decade to plan and construct.
>
> Generating electricity with wind also offers many environmental advantages. Windfarms do not emit climate-altering carbon dioxide, acid rain-forming pollutants, or respiratory irritations. The latter of these is of special concern in areas of California plagued with poor air quality. Nor do windfarms produce radioactive waste.

Lester Brown, editor of *WorldWatch*, writes on oil-based farming:

> When this century began, the world's farmers were almost entirely energy self-sufficient. The sun supplied the energy for crop photosynthesis, livestock provided fertilizer and draft power for tillage, and farmers and their families supplied the labor for planting and harvesting.
>
> Today, the world's farmers depend heavily on fossil fuels, principally oil. On average, they use the equivalent of more than a barrel of oil to produce a ton of grain. Each year, producing a ton of grain takes more oil than the year before.
>
> Today's burdensome grain surpluses and weak oil prices during the late eighties are diverting attention from long-term trends that will one day present governments with difficult choices.
>
> Unfortunately, surpluses exist for the wrong reasons. When world grain prices doubled in 1973 and remained high for the next few years, the world's farmers brought millions of acres of new land under the plow, much of it too erosive to sustain cropping. Had that erosive land not been farmed, there would not be any grain surpluses today.

In his conclusion, Lester Brown points out that agriculture cannot expand in a world where oil production is falling. And it may be noted as a good sign that Wendell Berry's latest book, *Home Economics*, has an excellent review in *World Watch*. The reviewer, Alan Durning, says:

> As Berry write, "we cannot prepare a good meal from poor food, produce good food from poor soil, maintain good soil without good farming, or have good farming without a good culture." . . .
>
> The value of soil, for example, is not and cannot be adequately accounted for in monetary terms. It serves a biological function that we are powerless to replicate. By recycling nutrients, topsoil turns death back into life. That ecological value is "inestimable; we must value it, beyond whatever price we put on it, by respecting it."

According to *Elements*, the newsletter of the Geltaftan Foundation, which carries on the work of Nader Khalili, structures of fired clay and brick will be erected on an 850-acre site in New Cuyama, California, 130 miles northwest of Los Angeles. It will be known as the City of Friendship and will house about 2500 people. The designer of the city is Harry Kislevitz.

> There will be three different types of housing in the City of Friendship. Clustering on both sides of the spine will be seven domed villages, with shared outdoor green space between individual homes. . . . Another type of housing planned is court-yard-style houses, designed for single-family occupancy and based on the comfortable, introverted style of living found in desert climates in the Middle East and Mexico. Some of these houses will be traditional in design, but all will use arches, vaults, and domes as the basic design elements. . .
>
> Visitors to the City of Friendship will first see a landscaped earth berm or a rammed earth wall fronting the main highway. When the design is approved, the wall will incorporate Chumash Indian rock art designs. . . . Both visitors and residents will leave their cars in parking lots near the entrance, and proceed on foot, bicycle, or in small solar-powered electric cars. They will walk through a Moroccan-style market displaying produce and crafts made by both the city's residents and by invited artists and craftsmen. . . . Most of the 850-acre parcel will remain an agricultural preserve, which will be used for organic farming of food and cash crops appropriate to the region's climate and low rainfall.

This is good news about the future. There is also good news about the present, in *Seedling News*, issued bimonthly by TreePeople. The TreePeople have been sending food-producing trees to Africa and last May/June made this report:

> Two years ago, 5,000 bare-root fruit trees were planted in Africa. They looked just like sticks stuck in the ground. Today those once barren sticks are feeding people!
>
> Spirits were high when Project Manager, Susan Becker, returned to Africa this year to check planting sites. She visited locations in Kenya and Ethiopia, and received progress reports from Tanzania and Cameroun. In nearly every village, the trees were producing fruit. In Ethiopia, the results were astounding. One of the sites lies in a hard-hit famine area, and 50 trees there had borne 300 Granny Smith apples in the past few months! *This village can export 1000 apples next year.*
>
> One sign of success is the villagers' eagerness for more trees, and their willingness to pay for part of the shipping. The Kenyans have ordered 180 almonds, apples and plums Ethiopia has requested 400 more apples and peaches, and Tanzania wants 340 additional trees. . . .
>
> The ultimate goal is self-sufficiency of all nine communities in four countries. That requires dedicated follow-up for two more years. . . . if you'd like to contribute now to the success of this program, send your check, clearly marked "Africa," to TreePeople, 12601 Mulholland Drive, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210.