

seeking out ways to humiliate, punish, and generally diminish themselves."

The psychologist friend mentioned before told me how he helped one of his patients to stop committing "mental and spiritual suicide." "This patient," he explained, "was in her late thirties and had two children. In lay terminology she suffered from severe depression. She looked back on every incident of her life as being an unhappy experience. Her school days, her marriage, the bearing of her children, the places she had lived all were thought of negatively. She volunteered that she couldn't remember ever having been truly happy. And since what one remembers from the past colors what one sees in the present, she saw nothing but pessimism and darkness.

"When I asked her what she saw in a picture which I showed her, she said, 'It looks like there will be a terrible thunderstorm tonight.' That was the gloomiest interpretation of the picture I've yet heard." (The picture was a large oil painting of the sun low in the sky and a jagged, rocky coastline. The painting was very cleverly done and could be construed to be either a sunrise or a sunset. The psychologist commented to me that what a person sees in the picture is a clue to his personality. Most people say it is a sunrise. But the depressed, mentally disturbed person nearly always says it's a sunset.)

"As a psychologist, I can't change what already is in a person's memory. But I can, with the patient's cooperation, help the individual to see his past in a different light. That's the general treatment I used on this woman. I worked with her to help her to see joy and pleasure in her past instead of total disappointment. After six months she began to show improvement. At that point, I gave her a special assignment. Each day I asked her to think of