SEARCH FOR REALITY: PART 2

Is Each Individual Born With a Purpose?

Lectures on Personal Growth

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910 Los Feliz Blvd. — Los Angeles, California 90027

ISBN NO. 08-89314-325-1

Published by

THE PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY, INC.
3910 Los Feliz Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90027

Printed in the U.S.A.

Is Each Individual Born With a Purpose?

IT is surprising how many people cannot conceive that they are here for any reason. They do not feel or believe that they are going anywhere, are accomplishing anything, or, for that matter, that there is very much to be accomplished in this process of living. It is obvious to all of us that the pressures under which we live today make perspective difficult, and it is easy to fall into a kind of fatigue, taking the attitude that the only solution is to sort of slide along through life with as few complications as possible. Yet even if we only believe in the doctrine of evolution, it is evident that we are here for at least one reason, and that is to grow. Therefore, we do have a general, collective purpose, and that is to contribute to the common evolution of life.

The individual certainly has the opportunity, during the course of years, to gain some understanding and insight. One of the most common difficulties is his rejection of the challenge to thoughtfulness. Unless he thinks a little as he goes along, life cannot have very much meaning for him. He grows because of dedications on an emotional level and reflections on an intellectual level, and unless he trains himself, at least to a degree, to make use of his own internal mental and emotional resources, life must

remain rather dull. If, however, he is willing to give some consideration to improvement, he will find life much more interesting.

One of the basic difficulties in our way of life today, is that the average person is afraid of the very concepts of growth, thoughtfulness, or reflection. We are all afraid to use muscles that have seldom been used, because the moment we do, we develop mysterious aches and pains. The person who, in the enthusiasm of a new craft shop or a new set of golf clubs, goes to work too strenuously, will be uncomfortable for a while. In the same way, when we ask the average person to suddenly use his mind, he is going to develop intellectual stress and strain; he is going to ache mysteriously. Probably in this case, the aching will be a sense of inferiority that comes over him. He suddenly realizes that he cannot cope with ten or fifteen pages of logical, sequential development of an idea; he is not used to such processes. And when he is expected to contemplate upon some great philosophical principle, he is bewildered.

The answer seems to go back to education. The faculties the individual needs to control and direct his own life, as a person, have never been adequately developed. He slides through education, becoming totally bored with it, and after he has spent fifteen years in school, education is simply a word; he does not want to hear any more about it. And as his education has not given him the instruments with which to approach self-analysis, and not bestowed any incentive for the development of his internal faculties and powers, he drifts along through

various activities that occupy the practical faculties of the mind, keeping it busy, and keeping it off essentials.

It is only when some emergency arises that he is forced to use other faculties, and consequently, an emergency appears to him to be a very serious crisis. Perhaps it would be no emergency at all, if he used all his faculties and grew accustomed to thinking. When such an individual becomes older and no longer dominated by immediate ambitions, and the material activities of life begin to lose interest, he has a tendency to become lonely, isolated, disturbed, and prematurely aged, because of lack of internal life.

There are certain professions that give us a clue to our problem. We observe that whereas most trades and crafts, and many business activities are age-bound—that is, the individual reaching a certain age can no longer adequately maintain the rhythm or pace of his work—the so-called higher learned professions seldom have this age limitation. A great artist can paint until the day he dies; a great composer can write music to the closing years of his life; the great doctor, although he may no longer wish to keep an active practice, can continue in a consulting capacity throughout his entire life. There are cases of physicians in this country who are active in the fulfillment of their profession at the age of eighty or ninety.

This would indicate that wherever the mind or the emotions mature or are developed into a specialized field, man begins to escape the retirement problem. He discovers that his interest is just as active after sixty as it was before forty—perhaps more active and richer— and there-

fore he does not have to look forward to long periods of semi-retirement because his physical strength is not equal to the pace of the time in which he lives. It is the same with our total intellectual life, entirely apart from our business considerations. The stronger the mental-emotional consciousness of the individual, the more he can control and direct every day of his living to the attainment, in the end, of a full and complete life, without the terrible letdowns that we have where the person depends completely upon external circumstances.

Thus, in evolution, and in the growth patterns of human beings, it seems that man moves in the first third of his life through a period of attainment of knowledge. He is busy with his schooling and with social adjustment problems. Then, through the long plateau of middle life, he is a producer; he must maintain and support the responsibilities he has assumed. He must make his career, and prepare for his own future. In the later years of life, he enters into a reflective condition, which may extend from his fiftieth or sixtieth year through his life expectancy, which today, in many instances, will pass eighty.

Therefore, we have a comparatively long afternoon and evening of life—much longer than our ancestors knew. It is true that we produced centenarians a thousand years ago, but the general expectancy was not as long as it is today, and fully half the population of Europe in the 17th century failed to reach the age of fifty. Today, a very large percentage will be efficient, capable of personal growth and integration, for twenty or thirty years more than our forefathers were.

This confronts us with the great problem of the use of time, and shows that, by degrees, the responsibility for activity moves from the physical to the mental. In our older years, physical limitation is mental opportunity. We are gradually pressed by circumstances out of the haste of earlier living, into a leisure for which we are being more and more protected. This leisure is our problem, and most of the individuals who come without any pattern, looking forward to leisure as extraordinary boredom, simply have never created any directive concept of life within themselves.

Those who have created such basic patterns, and have established them well, find that the later years of life are not as dismal and difficult, even though perhaps economic situations may become limited. The person does not find that reduction of income, as long as there is actual security, prevents the gradual development and enrichment of the internal life; nor does it prevent the individual from being useful. It is where income is depleted and the inner life impoverished at the same time, that we have a desperate situation.

Studying this pattern, then, it would seem that man is supposed to move from the childhood pattern of attainment of knowledge, through useful labor, to a kind of repose and rest. The East Indian philosophies have emphasized this clearly by dividing the life of the individual into three major sections: youth, which is a period of dependency upon the support of family; maturity, which is self-provision, attainment, and the meeting of social responsibilities and obligations; and more advanced age, which is man's peculiar time set aside for himself,

the years in which he can do as he wishes within his own sphere of activity. It is when he does not wish to do anything that he is in trouble at this time.

With this obvious pattern everywhere unfolding, we perceive that man has gained a distinction over the animal kingdom around him. Very few animals ever die of old age or survive the decline of their physical powers. They become prey to other forms of life; or, as the first sickness appears, it is mortal, for lack of available remedy. But man has been given this other length of years, by which he is more divided from the animal, perhaps, than by his biological differences. He is divided from other lives, inasmuch as he has a great cycle of reflection available to him, a tremendously enriching period of years that can be faced with a great deal of security if he builds for it.

Actually, of course, the ideal situation is that thoughtfulness should begin in childhood, and that the person should early develop a plan—a purposed living—so that all the way along, he can be mindful of these values which he will later need. This is not easy, however, particularly where there is no social example. If it became fashionable, all our young people would do it, but while it is not fashionable, it is difficult to cause the individual to see why he should be more thoughtful than his associates. Yet if he could begin life by planning, rather than by purposeless pressures, he would reach those years of retirement, the philosophic years, in far better condition to enjoy them.

Mistakes we make along the way, excesses we indulge for escape-mechanisms, and various unreasonable de-

mands upon life, may result in poor health in declining years. These pressures reduce our philosophic allotment, or at least make it less comfortable and enjoyable than it could be. Many of our health problems arise simply from lack of orientation. Confusion can result in pathology; it is one of the most enervating, debilitating emotions that we can possibly experience.

We come to the basic thought, then, that evolution is offering us a patterned existence, and the purpose that evolution wishes us primarily to attain is that we shall leave this world wiser than when we arrived; better able to understand and interpret the essential values of life; richer in internal memories, recollections; better equipped to counsel the young. For it still remains true that age must lead youth in serious reflection. If, however, the necessary qualities have not been developed, the prestige of age is lost. The rewards that come from the realization that we can serve others are taken from us, if we have not prepared adequately for such activity and service.

I have observed through the years that there is one thing that always helps, because it provides a secure foundation from which right conduct springs naturally. There is one basic concept that will never fail us: the conviction that existence is a planned and purposeful project; that the Creator of all things—whether we regard this Creator as a person, or mind, or an intellect, or a consciousness—has fashioned an inevitable plan that is unfolding for the purpose of bestowing ultimate good upon all creation.

If we can get this idea of meaningful, lawful existence into our consciousness, we begin to understand that we

live under Law, and that obedience to and fulfillment of that Law is the essential purpose for our own existence. We are here as instruments of purpose, not as biological incidents or accidents. We exist because there is a pattern of life which must unfold through us, and through infinite other creatures which we may or may not know to exist. If we accept the idea that we live within a universe of purpose, then our own life becomes a purposed experience and a magnificent opportunity to cooperate in the fulfillment of this purpose in every way we can.

Unfortunately, the world as a whole has never conceived a universal purpose or actually thought of life as the unfolding of a plan. We still have a tendency to think of life as a kind of sea, which can be torn by storms and directed by innumerable currents. We think of ourselves as slaves on inadequate ships upon that sea, tossed about, wrecked by the pleasure of the winds. This attitude makes us desperately desirous to survive, regardless of ethics, morality, or religion. And out of this desperate, undirected, self-centered struggle to survive, we have produced most of the miseries of mankind.

Philosophy and religion today can help us a great deal if they will strengthen our conviction of purpose. But the conviction by itself will not achieve a better life for us. We can read about purpose to infinity, and still remain purposeless. The moment we begin to sense purpose, we must direct our attention to life in terms of purpose; we must evaluate our own experiences, and the experiences of others, in terms of purpose.

If we study every aspect of society from this perspective, and do it in a quiet, intelligent manner, we shall

inevitably discover the grand plan of purpose. We shall irrefutably bring home to our own consciousness the realization that this vast creature which we call creation, crawling through infinite time and infinite space, is going somewhere. Every fragment of life is evidence that we live within a lawful world—a world of regulation and fact. As soon as we begin to experience, by observation and reflection, that our old platitude about progress is no platitude at all, but a reality, we can gradually convert ourselves to progress.

Perhaps most persons feel that such a conversion is not necessary, because they already understand progress, but let us use a simple test of this. If we accepted purposeful progress as a reality, then we would be moving forward through circumstances placidly, wisely, lovingly, and in a friendly manner. If we are not living well, we have not given the idea the attention it deserves. Regardless of how much we have intellectualized it, we have never vitalized it, and *vitalizing* simply means to discover it everywhere and in everything. If we do this, the fact of it will gradually move in upon our subconscious, and once we really, honestly, completely believe it, we will act accordingly.

There will, of course, always be a few skeptics who will insist that this concept of purpose is something with which we are simply hypnotizing ourselves. But the number of these skeptics is diminishing, because what they have given us as a substitute for purpose, is something that we cannot live with. In taking away purpose, they gave us the worst crime wave in history; they handed us atomic physics without moral control. The removal of

purpose, in the form of a universal pattern, has become so impossible a situation that even great physicists like Sir Jeans can no longer accept it.

Experience leads to a series of acceptances. What we cannot further deny—that which is obvious to us all—must be accepted. Out of the acceptance gained through observing experience, and by beholding this world of law and order through increasing insight and a sharper instrument of reason and thought, we gradually move into a universe of essential value; a universe that is essentially good. And as we become aware of this in all the fields of life, we develop the most powerful instrument of good that we know—faith.

Faith is necessary, for it has to carry us across certain intervals in which our own immaturity prevents us from having rational conveyance. Faith, however, cannot be blind; it cannot be merely the acceptance of innumerable things not experienced and not understood. Faith has to begin where the faculties of experience end. Through observation and reflection, the individual carries the facts of living to a certain point. Beyond that, he cannot be sure, but he has every reason to believe that the universe, which is lawful in all the parts that he can examine, must also be lawful in those parts which he cannot examine. He can also be reasonably certain that patterns which are universally true in the world as we see it and know it, will probably be true in all the parts of the world which we cannot see and cannot know. If all the effects of creation are orderly, we may also expect the cause to be orderly.

Faith, therefore, is our common expectation of good projected into the future, the unknown. It implies the ability to accept the belief that if we keep the Law, the Law will keep us. This is demonstrated in many ways scientifically, but on the ethical and moral levels, it must be demonstrated by action. Faith also gives us the courage to believe that the universe of science is merely the extension of a universe of reality into a material sphere, and that the exactitudes everywhere demonstrable in science are only the shadows of greater exactitudes everywhere active in space. The good life is one harmonious with these exactitudes; and a good religion gives us not only the recognition of a divine exactitude, but also the courage and morality to live this exactitude every day.

It seems to me that this is the root of personal growth for all of us. If we fail to assume that we can operate according to this divine plan, then doubts become strong and divide us from eternal certainties. If we lose sight of the lawfulness of life, we come into confusion and lose our own orientation. All knowledge, therefore, should lead us gradually but triumphantly to the realization that we live in a good world—a world of realities—and that we are capable of adjusting to this world.

This is an adjustment not only to the material phases of life, but to the requirements that nature is eternally demanding of us. Having equipped man with innumerable potentials, nature is trying to bring these out and give him the full control of the faculties and powers with which he was divinely enriched in the beginning. If he uses these powers properly and reasonably, he will move

through creation and toward identity with the Creator of all things.

The beginning of this process is to take a strong personal stand to live according to principles, with the conviction that this is the only practical way to live. As these certainties increase within our own natures, so that we are less law-breaking and more law-keeping; as common sense begins to dominate our desire to do as we please, we will come to realize that we cannot break the rules and win. We may appear to do so, but in every instance, we pay; and the only way to have a pleasant payment, is to earn it.

We have within ourselves everything necessary to live harmoniously with ourselves, and patiently with those around us. We have everything necessary to overcome unreasonable psychic stress and sorrow, and to keep our health. Man is capable of self-direction and of moving toward a world that is secure, peaceful, and integrated. And such progress depends, first of all, upon the individual moving his ideals out of his mind and heart and into his living.

Apart from this pattern of natural expectancy of progress, we have another interesting situation to consider. Each human being who comes into this world is a kind of individual equation. Each person differs from all others, for he has a certain allotment brought forward from previous activities—the merits and demerits with which he is endowed at birth. If we do not wish to assume this to be true, then we can say that heredity bestows certain allotments to him, and that because of these allotments, no two human beings can be identical. They feel that they are much the same, but still, there are internal dif-

ferences of appreciation, understanding, capacity—values that we cannot falsely or suddenly and artificially stimulate.

From the beginning, then, each individual, because of the formula at the root of himself, must have a destiny that is a little different from the destiny of anyone else. When I say a little different, I mean in terms of our relative existence here. I do not mean ultimate destiny, but rather, immediate destiny. This immediate destiny is different not necessarily because our virtues differ, but because our abilities or levels of attainment differ.

It would seem perfectly natural and reasonable, then, to assume that the values or patterns that we natively possess indicate the general course that we could or should follow. Every limitation within ourselves is a challenge; every strong, powerful attribute which we possess is an opportunity. We are responsible for our weaknesses, and our strengths are our privileges of service and direct progress.

This being inevitably true, there must be a peculiar kind of destiny that is intrinsic in the archetype of birth; that is, at the moment of birth, the individual is in a position to attain a certain end. We all recognize, for example, that every child who comes into the world might become president of the United States. Most of them will not attain this end, and, as they get older, many will not want to; but presumably, the potential is there until we learn something to the contrary.

As the child unfolds, we begin to perceive that its own individuality is going to affect its destiny. We find that it is inclined to certain lines of thought; that it has apti-

tudes and abilities which we encourage and educate to try to help the person find his place in this life. His place is the result of himself, and to the basic characteristics must therefore be added the strength of decision or determination. The person with many potentials and very little continuity of purpose may not attain anything, while a person with fewer potentials, but with greater continuity, may attain considerably.

Thus, it is not only a matter of the capacities we possess, but the resolution with which we work with capacities. Herein lies another weakness of our people. We are not inclined to work very strenuously with our capacities, and we divide them clearly into two groups. The one group, which receives the greatest attention, is that which opens or promises greatest economic progress. The individual will develop, for the sake of his survival, such abilities as seem to indicate economic security. He will therefore devote considerable time and effort to learning his profession or business or craft, in order that he may be a respected citizen capable of a sphere of financial influence suitable to his needs. But the constant development of these economic potentials results in an unbalanced total psychic pattern.

Perhaps there is no point in psychology that is less emphasized and more important than this constant social process of developing in an unbalanced manner. The individual gradually focusing all his resources upon one material objective, may attain penetration in his chosen field, but he ignores too much of his own nature. As a result, he reaches this older period, in which he could enjoy total integration, with no capacity to attain it.

From the beginning, therefore, there should be a balanced program of growth. There may be a question as to whether such a balanced program is possible in our way of life. Is it actually within the range of human endeavor that man today could be economically secure and at the same time develop his total personality? I think it is possible, but it requires greater effort. Yet this greater effort also produces a greater reward. The reason we do not realize this, is that we keep our eyes too close to the economic pattern under which we live.

Today, particularly, the possibility of a balanced personal growth rests with our people, especially the American woman. It is more and more possible for her to divide and organize her resources so that she can develop more in the form of a well-balanced, integrated internal than ever before in history. The same thing is true, to a lesser but increasing degree, with men.

The average person today is not under the pressure of labor that he knew long ago. He is no longer up at six and working until sundown six days a week. Today, with shorter working hours, greater advantages, and more vacation time than ever before, the individual could and should begin to develop his own resources in a more balanced manner. We can and do have more leisure, but because we have it, we no longer value it.

When the individual worked every day, and perhaps once a year found a little time for himself, this was precious time; but today, we have many hours that we twiddle away doing nothing—perhaps arguing, fretting, worrying, fussing, reading the paper and having our day spoiled, watching some program and becoming angry at

the whole theory of television. We do these things; they are our way of life; but they remind us that the individual has the time, if he wants to use it, to make major improvements in his total integration pattern.

This does not mean that a person should sit down and read all night; nor does it mean that he should wander about in a condition of heavy self-responsibility. Rather, it is quite conceivable that modern man can make a social experience out of growth, because growth is, to a large degree, social integration. We have the possibility of making leisure useful and interesting at the same time. We can cultivate purposeful leisure—leisure that helps us to build something, to know people better, to find opportunities for usefulness; leisure that calls into active operation thoughtfulness, generosity, consideration, unselfishness, and tolerance. Such activities will help the person to become integrated. If he could use his leisure to find out why his prejudices are false, he would be way ahead. To do this, however, he must take the time to really learn something about those things toward which he now has unreasonable opinions.

Leisure is one of the great problems—both economic and psychological—in our society. The individual no longer spends his free time in a pleasant adventure in the forest enjoying buttercups, like Thoreau did. Today, leisure means to pile the family into the car and start out to ruin a $20 bill. One of the reasons for this is that leisure has become entirely objective. The individual is simply spending money to get his mind off himself, or, as he might say, to get his mind off his responsibilities. This type of leisure cuts very seriously into his economic

resources and confronts him with perpetual temptation to overstep the reasonable boundaries of his budget.

It is important to remember that there are other kinds of leisure which do not require any such expenditures, but which can result in improvement in family and social relations. Most of all, leisure is an opportunity to understand people, and through this understanding, to learn more about ourselves. It is far more important to find out something about how other people think, and how other people feel, than it is to devote our spare time to the elaborate productions of the entertainment world.

Through our entertainment, we are pressed constantly into the contemplation and acceptance of the abnormal, the unusual, the unique, the exceptional, and sometimes the impossible. As a result, we develop a psychology of life built around fantasy instead of reality. And as we build more and more into fantasy, our selfishness and ambitions increase; we want everything we see. By allowing ourselves to drift in this way, we make life more difficult for everyone with whom we come in contact.

Of course, it is rather certain that if a person tries to be thoughtful, he is going to become involved with others who are not thoughtful, and a few perhaps rather serious crises may immediately develop. This is again a test of ingenuity and true thoughtfulness. There is no reason why the individual's desire to improve should transform him into an uninteresting and unpleasant snob, looking down his nose at the trivia of other people. This is a serious mistake. He must understand that trivia, just as he wishes to have his more serious thinking understood. I have noticed that among young people who get together

and start arguing the larger problems of the universe, a truly serious thought soon gets support, becomes interesting, and is carried on.

Actually, most people would like to be serious, but they do not wish it to interfere with their social relationships. They are afraid that they will be stigmatized as a highbrow, and be left alone as though they were a contagious disease. Underneath this common indifference, there is a constant hunger. Man does not believe his own sophistication, and finds it of very little comfort to him in time of emergency. He really wants to think, but he does not like to have other people find it out. He also would like to be an idealist, but he is afraid that his idealism will result in his being exploited. He is afraid that his honesty will mean that he will be an economic failure.

This is a very bad state of affairs, and inexcusable in a world that calls itself civilized. We build monuments and memorials to the honorable people in society, and then we carefully avoid their practices. We must sometime recognize that the entire progress of our community and of our world depends upon an increasing constructive thoughtfulness, the enriching of our lives and our capacities. Each individual has the right to release all that is available in his nature, and this is his reasonable destiny, suitable to himself.

If, then, there is this problem of fulfillment, we should give a little thought to our instincts. Most normal, healthy persons have creative instincts, but they carefully conceal them, or turn from them with a sigh because it seems

so unlikely that these instincts can ever be gratified. I know one man who is now well past middle life, whose great desire was always to play the pipe organ. He has sufficient means to buy a moderately priced electric pipe organ if he wants it, and has time enough to play it. His family presents no problem; in fact, they probably would be delighted, one of the reasons being that he would no longer be wandering around like a ghost in his own home. Yet although he has always wanted to play the pipe organ, he does not do a thing about it. He reads the paper, watches television, probably has a little more to drink than is good for him, and finally goes off to bed, with a purposeless existence. Yet he wants to play the pipe organ. He just has never been able to get himself around to doing it.

It is true, of course, that a person starting a musical instrument as late in life as he would be starting, and with no previous training, is not likely to attain extraordinary virtuosity. He probably could not be the greatest pipe organist in the world; in fact, he might be pretty well down the line. But he could enjoy it himself, and in a simple way it would bring pleasure to those around him. You do not have to be great to have a pleasant relationship with an art. In this man, we have an example of an ability gradually rotting out. Perhaps one of the reasons he has not taken up the music is because he is afraid to play scales in front of his own children. He does not want to start in and be a child again with them in an art; he is trying to hang onto his maturity. He wants people to think that whatever he does, he does well, and he knows that the moment he starts on the pipe organ,

they will know that he does not do it well. So he will simply never expose himself.

There are all kinds of peculiarities in human nature, but here is a good example of total waste of potential possibility. This person will go out of this world with one large area of natural ability untouched, and because of this, he is going to be a lesser person than he would otherwise be; and to the degree that he falls short of being the person he could be, he falls short of his own destiny.

Actually, the total person that it is possible for the individual to be, is the best person. This means that, whether we realize it or not, there is a kind of archetypal relationship. There is a peculiar over-pattern that moves with us, and we are created with the potential to transform this into living destiny. We are quite capable of making a unique contribution, and this is the end of any destiny. It may be that it will not be a world-shattering contribution, or one that will change the course of history; but who knows when so few persons ever attain the perfection of their own archetype? If we could think more of these essential patterns, we might be able to advance our civilization ten thousand years in a hundred years.

This problem of purpose can be approached on still another level, and that is the Oriental doctrine of karma. We are here, apparently, to do two things—to increase our virtues and to correct our faults. Therefore, to a large measure, the "drag" in us is due to our faults, and the law of karma tells us that these faults are the result of wrong action. It we could correct our faults, we would

probably achieve most of the major goal already indicated; namely, total integration.

It is our faults that forever frustrate the total expression of the good within us. The Eastern philosophers say that the individual is bound to the cycle of necessity, the mystery of birth and rebirth, as long as a fault remains in himself. Thus, if we would like to graduate from the lower grades in this difficult school of hard knocks in which we are all enrolled, then we must recognize that the purpose of life, at least in part, is the correction of our own mistakes.

This does not sound exactly glamorous, but it is more satisfying than we think. Someone once pointed out that perhaps the real reason why we are not more interested in correcting our own mistakes, is that people do not applaud us so loudly for that. They do not care much about the struggle we have on the inside, but if we go out and struggle on a tennis court or in a bowling alley, everyone sees how hard we are working.

This is not quite true, however, because while no one may applaud us for the correction of a fault, we are rewarded in a mysterious and wonderful way, because everything that was kept from us by that fault is now available to us. We will find that while our faults are not appreciated, our attainments become the basis of a new sense of values, not only on our own part, but on the part of others.

This purpose of correcting our own faults can, in itself, become a lordly career. Nature not only expects us to try, at least moderately, to accomplish this end, but penalizes us very heavily if we do not. Nature keeps from us most

of the things we want, because we are what we are, and do not deserve these things. I like the Oriental philosophy of just deserts. It is sometimes a little difficult to appreciate, but there is a rugged honesty about it that we desperately need because of our natural over-inclination to escape personal responsibility whenever and wherever possible.

So if we observe that down through the years, we have certain patterns of trouble, largely because of certain attitudes we ourselves practice, then it is time to think about it and do something about it. Sometime ago, a very able man came to me with a serious problem. In the course of ten or fifteen years, he had changed occupation about ten or fifteen times. He just could not stay with a job. He said he became bored. As soon as he could understand it and do it well, he did not want to do it anymore. Actually, this man was in a predicament because he did have a family, but his own boredom was more important to him than the support of his children.

Here was a serious situation arising simply from the fact that this person had never been able to integrate a sense of responsibility. He did not realize that it is good for an individual to do the things that may deprive him of some lesser pleasures because they give him the sense of internal self-respect, which is important. He did not have the ability to make this adjustment, so all through the years, and probably into the future, he will lose self-respect in order to cultivate and protect his own personal love of change.

These things have to be thought out. I know individuals who have lost every good thing in life, including

two or three homes, because of jealousy. Yet they have never seriously attempted to correct it. And when you tell them that they must correct it, they look at you very helplessly—how? How are we going to get over these things? How are we going to feel differently inside from the way we do feel inside? How can we go against a feeling?

To most people, this is just not conceivable. It implies, of course, the development of self-control, and this is something that is seriously lacking in our way of life. The modern philosophy of life even has a tendency to cause addiction to the belief that we should do exactly what we please. Thus, we find a cheerful evasion from personal growth. But the result of this philosophy is misery, and therefore it is not practical.

We would gain a great deal if we could, for example, take some of our leisure time to strengthen something that has disappeared from our lives, and that is our social relationship patterns. If we could actually come to see, more directly and more continuously, the result of action as it is revealed in the lives of those around us; if we could become a little more conscious of other people's philosophies of life, watching the result of their actions, estimating, weighing the patterns and problems in which they are placed, in terms of patterns of conduct, we would have a valuable group of testimonies by which to judge our own actions.

One of the reasons why we can continue to be thoughtless, is because we are not brought into constant recognition of the penalties of thoughtlessness as these are played out in the lives of our own associates. We do not

weigh other people's characters in terms of what is happening to those people. If we did this, we would have newer and stronger inducements to correct the same faults in ourselves.

Another purpose for our existence, then, is to learn to bring life under the discipline of conscious reason; to learn to do those things which are right and those things which are next. We must learn to create a patterned existence, with the assurance that to the degree that we develop this pattern and live within it, and allow it to unfold naturally and reasonably, we shall live with a minimum of stress, difficulty, and disaster. Nature is constantly telling us that we are not using our resources correctly.

People have succeeded in controlling themselves, and, strange as it may seem, the people who have succeeded are not those who make the greatest to-do about it. The individual, under certain conditions, will wake up and suddenly realize that if he does not control his life, then his life will control and ruin him. He finds that he cannot survive by a philosophy of accidents; that he cannot drift from day to day hoping for the best; and that he is wasting more energy in hoping than he would be in making certain that the best occurred. If he finds himself in dismay about this, and does not know which way to turn, then he is really pointing out a deficiency in his own background—a deficiency he should remedy as rapidly as humanly possible. Every effort should be made to bring himself to the point where he can handle his own life with a reasonable amount of dignity. Until he can do this, he is not going to be safe or secure.

It would accomplish a great deal, in this destiny problem, to think all these things through, but because man's mind is not completely organized, and because he has not been given the proper conditioning, he is not always able to make all the necessary adjustments. He is therefore presented with another attitude toward the subject of destiny—one that is much ridiculed today, but has, nevertheless, a great deal of truth in it; namely, that what he cannot overcome by brute force and awkwardness, he can transmute by simple relaxation.

It seems, according to some articles in popular journals, that many people are protesting against what they call "the age of relaxation." Why they are protesting against it, no one seems to know, because it is difficult to find a relaxed person. But in the public mind, the danger seems to be that if we let down a little, and were not quite so hectic or violent in everything we do, we would gradually go into decline. Actually, we are in decline already, only we do not know it. Also, the individual who cannot relax is a little envious of anyone who can, so there is an element of sour grapes in this concept somewhere.

In a great many instances, relaxation is our only hope. If you take a highly confused pattern like the human personality, which is being torn constantly by impulses and attitudes and opinions until it is being twisted into the most inconceivable snarls and tangles, every part of it becomes exceedingly tense. Therefore, the inner life of the person is fatigued merely because of this motionless intensity of vibration. It is not going anywhere, but it is all tied up in a nerve spasm. And because it is tied up, and because nerves, in a mysterious way, affect

the muscles, you have the psychological equivalent to a person in whose physical body there is muscle-nerve stress resulting in distortion of function.

In this situation, trying to tear these muscle-bound elements apart, or to break through this nerve tension, is to fight a situation that is already in a highly complex and painful state. It is like wrestling with a sore muscle or an aching nerve; it only hurts more. So we come to an entirely different possibility. If we can relax these pressures and tensions, there is a good chance that all the parts of the psychic nature will fall into place. When we are not forcing them to be what they are not, they will gradually reveal what they are. When we do not interpret the truth out of them, we will find the truth that is in them. And when we are able to let down this false forcing of things inside ourselves, our own psychic life will find its natural place. It will suddenly reveal itself to be the victim of our pressures. Man is not the victim of his psychic life; his psychic life is the victim of his external existence, bound and twisted and distorted by his own pressures and his own intemperances.

Thus, by a kind of relaxation, man can come to the reorganizing of his internal life. This relaxation will take pressureful points out of activity. He will no longer be forcing this, decreeing that, commanding something else. And as he learns this sense of relaxation, he gets a wonderful psychological therapy, and at the same time, perhaps gets the first look at what he really is. This is important, because before he can discover what he can do, he must find out what he has to work with.

Here is where the mystical or religious factor becomes so important, for faith takes the fear out of relationships and circumstances, and where fear diminishes, pressure lets down; and as pressure lets down, solutional value begins to emerge. The fearful person is preventing himself from solving his own fear. He is making it impossible to use the faculties by which he could overcome fear naturally.

Faith, therefore, causing the letting down of pressures, can be a simple and direct approach to integration. The individual develops a sense of the strength of truth, the strength of reality itself, and begins to feel that if he can form a partnership with reality, all else will work well. From faith, he also gains an emotional experience that is positive and esthetically sound, for faith carries with it a certain serenity, an admiration for good, a sense of honesty, and a degree of humility. These, together, exercise emotions that we do not use to any great degree in our objective living.

These values—the growth of faith and the realization of the fact of good—throw the entire pattern of man's subconscious into the positive. He begins to energize archetypal ideas that are constructive and therefore has less energy for those ideas which are not constructive. He develops a habit of constructive internal visualization. This is a long step toward solution. It also causes the individual to take a receptive attitude toward intangibles. Instead of immediately tearing everything to pieces with his own doubts, he begins to assume the possibility that there are values which should not be and cannot be

assailed, because they are true. And these values, coming through himself as greater comfort, relaxation, and integration, usually are not questioned.

Man needs this core of faith in good, truth, beauty, and in the ultimate victory of principle over compromise. This faith will gradually affect his distribution of resources, making internal strength available and releasing potentials. The individual, becoming receptive to this spiritual force from within his own nature, also becomes receptive to his total internal. He becomes a servant of the archetypal need of his total being; whereas before, he was trying to tell his total being what it could do and what it could not do.

Thus, faith makes the person settle back into the archetypal design. The little parts form again the magnificent geometric snowflake that is the true picture or symbol of the thing that we are and the thing that we can be. From this archetype, we can move with a greater hope, a greater personal dedication. We find, therefore, all the way along, that constructive thinking and constructive emotion are the unlockers — the powers that help us to estimate the purpose of our existence. If we can develop them, we will find also that they carry with them dedication.

The person moved by a strong inward faith begins to organize his outward life. If he believes in good, he will not only visualize it, but will attempt to bring it forth out of himself into manifestation. Faith therefore provides the individual with new work to do. Many persons who have had the experience of faith have realized that for the first time, they can accept a duty for others; they

can find their happiness in serving, rather than in selfishness. These people begin to find new interests; their lives are fuller; they are not leaning upon others for security. They do not have to compromise, because their principles satisfy them.

All this adds up to a sort of broad pattern; namely, that there are purposes on every level to which we must contribute, and we have the power to do it, just as we have the power to be conscious servants of the plan that underlies our way of existence. We were born to serve, and we are never happy until we do. We permit faith —a warm, idealistic, emotional creativity—to lead us in this way of service, which will bring us greater satisfaction than we can attain in any other way.

Each person has a duty toward the responsibilities that he has voluntarily assumed. We are here, each day, for the purposes that we have accepted, and if we fail in these, we are in a measure humiliated internally; and in spite of our bluffing, we do not feel as well as we would had we done better. We are here, also, because of a common need. Living in a highly interdependent world, no individual can simply have his own career without affecting others. Consequently, we are here to advance those phases of our lives which are most benevolent in their effects upon both ourselves and others. We are here not only to grow, but to keep faith, and to keep certain laws; and our real happiness comes from these realizations well applied.

Today, in a sense, the world is perhaps less happy than ever before. We have more, and we are more dissatis-

fied; we live in a perpetual insecurity and psychological chaos. We know this, but we have not recognized the importance of meeting the challenge. The human family of today has the tremendous and radiant opportunity to correct the faults of the ages. Sometime, there must arise the practical solution to world problems, and it must come from man releasing his total resources, and not merely those phases of his energy which are economically profitable. As surely as our physical success depends upon science, so the moral will to exist and survive depends upon the enlightenment of our inner lives. Without this inner motion, we become weary, disillusioned, disappointed; and these emotions inevitably lead, collectively, to racial suicide, and individually, to loss of opportunity.

I would say, then, in answer to this question—are we here with a purpose?—we very definitely are. It is the purpose of truly being ourselves, and the failure to attain this purpose is the principal source of unhappiness in this world. The individual who falls short of himself, is unhappy; the individual who fails to make use of his available resources, is frustrated. Frustration is not being prevented from expressing. The greatest frustration of all is the lack of desire to express; for if the determination is great enough, man will express. Nothing can stop him except the weakness of his own impulses.

Thus, in order to attain health, adjustment, security, and peace, the individual must release, strengthen, and dedicate himself, until his character is sufficient to his need on every level of action. In this, also, he fulfills another important purpose, for it is his responsibility, col-

lectively, to leave this world a little better than he finds it. To leave this world on the brink of catastrophe, is an indictment of all of us. It means that we have never gathered ourselves into a determined pattern of anything. Man must increase his internal sense of values, and the only way this can be done is for him to release some of the real greatness that is locked within him. It is there, and it had better come out, or Hiroshima will be nothing compared to the future.

These things are reminders again that we do live in a lawful world, and that we must work out our salvation with diligence. The salvation of the individual means that he must stand firmly with truth; that he must place principle above everything else, and build his entire economic system upon fact, instead of upon the shifting sands of inflated profit. The moment he envisions his own purpose, he will be aware of world purpose. He will not live in a nation or in a world that lives only for today because it does not know where it is going tomorrow, and is not sure that it cares.

Today we have no dream, no purpose, no hope, as far as a national or international perspective is concerned. Our only thought is that we must outlaw certain evils; we must find an answer to war. How, we do not know. We hope the United Nations will tell us; but it will not, as long as our personal internal psychology is falling to pieces all the time.

Destiny is discovery. We must discover certain values, and we must learn to live them and to make them important. For it is our job, our destiny, to preserve the work of

the ages, to advance it, and to make it grow; to preserve the heritage we have and pass it on as a better heritage to others. These are our jobs, and we have a great deal of work to do. So the problem is to stop fussing and worrying, stop being self-pitying, and roll up our sleeves and go to work. And let us begin with the one unit in which we know we can succeed if we want to—ourselves. Moving out from that, from accomplishment, we will find that, by degrees, we can watch the world grow better as the result of the conscientious effort of even a small minority of enlightened persons who have accepted their job and who realize what their true destiny actually is.