considered himself important. That is not strange. Almost everyone considers himself

.

The life of many a person could probably be changed if only someone would make him feel important. Ronald J. Rowland, who is one of the instructors of our course in California, is also a teacher of arts and crafts. He wrote to us about a student named Chris in his beginning crafts class:

Chris was a very quiet, shy boy lacking in self-confidence, the kind of student that often does not receive the attention he deserves. I also teach an advanced class that had grown to be somewhat of a status symbol and a privilege for a student to have earned the right to be in it.

On Wednesday, Chris was diligently working at his desk. I really felt there was a hidden fire deep inside him. I asked Chris if he would like to be in the advanced class. How I wish I could express the look in Chris’s face, the emotions in that shy fourteen-year-old boy, trying to hold back his tears.

“Who me, Mr. Rowland? Am I good enough?”

“Yes, Chris, you are good enough.”

I had to leave at that point because tears were coming to my eyes. As Chris walked out of class that day, seemingly two inches taller, he looked at me with bright blue eyes and said in a positive voice, “Thank you, Mr. Rowland.”

Chris taught me a lesson I will never forget-our deep desire to feel important. To help me never forget this rule, I made a sign which reads “YOU ARE IMPORTANT.” This sign hangs in the front of the classroom for all to see and to remind me that each student I face is equally important.

The unvarnished truth is that almost all the people you meet feel themselves superior to you in some way, and a sure way to their hearts is to let them realize in some subtle way that you recognize their importance, and recognize it sincerely.

Remember what Emerson said: “Every man I meet is my superior in some way. In that, I learn of him.”

And the pathetic part of it is that frequently those who have the least justification for a feeling of achievement bolster up their egos by a show of tumult and conceit which is truly nauseating. As Shakespeare put it: “. . . man, proud man, /Drest in a little brief authority, / . . . Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven/As make the angels weep.”

I am going to tell you how business people in my own courses have applied these principles with remarkable results. Let’s take the case of a Connecticut attorney (because of his relatives he prefers not to have his name mentioned).

Shortly after joining the course, Mr. R drove to Long Island with his wife to visit some of her relatives. She left him to chat with an old aunt of hers and ther rushed off by herself to visit some of the younger relatives. Since he soon had to give a speech professionally on how he applied the principles of appreciation, he thought he would gain some worthwhile experience talking with the elderly lady. So he looked around the house to see what he could honestly admire.

“This house was built about 1890, wasn’t it?” he inquired.

“Yes,” she replied, “that is precisely the year it was built.”

“It reminds me of the house I was born in,” he said. “It’s beautiful. Well built. Roomy. You know, they don’t build houses like this anymore.”