

(Mr. Bryan was nearly half an hour late for this interview. Shortly after the hour of his appointment he telephoned, saying that he was delayed, but would arrive late and had some -interesting things to talk over.")

C491. Still puffing a bit, hm?

S491. Oh, yeah. I walked pretty fast. I'm sorry to be late. (Pause.) I was sitting at a bar last evening, having a few drinks and thinking about myself and psychology in general, so I jotted down some things here. (Pulls out a paper.)

C492. I see.

S492. I can interpret them now. We were talking about the speech situation the other day. One of the things that was brought up was that when I forced myself into such a speech situation over a period of years, there does seem to be an improvement in that situation. I was wondering if I used the same technique for all the outward symptoms, what would happen to the fundamental negative that underlay all of those symptoms. I was wondering whether you can attack the fundamental behind all of the symptoms by attacking the symptoms one by one, or whether there's a constant jumping there which would make new symptoms crop up anyway.

C493. You're wondering whether trying to attack one aspect of it would just make it crop up somewhere else.

S493. M-hm. I thought maybe that technique would not be radical enough.

C494. I suppose it depends on what the fundamental thing is.

S494. M-hm. But we had noticed that although the speech had improved, the deep-seated negative feeling was still there and cropped up in other ways. Now, I got a feeling too - I think this was after the third shot — that I should force myself into any and every neurotically resistant situation, and if any improvement shows, to dwell on that improvement and value the satisfaction of it. I think that might be a gradual way of improving it, and of course, I got a parallel thought with this - that I also might be worsened that way - that is, I might have defeat situations which would make me feel worse. Now, I was wondering, is this my healthy or my neurotic self advising me to force myself into situations? I mean, I don't know which self-

C495. You feel you can't quite tell your selves apart.

S495. Well, you see it might improve and it might make me worse, so I don't know which from whence that advice comes. Now, I got a conviction last night that I'm willing to do anything for the cure — - I mean, I'm not asking for any easy way. I just don't know just exactly what to do. And then I was wondering

C496. What you're saying - what you said a moment ago part of your thinking about what you might do.

S496. M-hm. Then I got to thinking about your technique. I was wondering whether your technique might not be to have every neurotic sort of prescribe for himself - that is - then I asked myself, does my prescription mean does

that above prescription that I made does that mean that the technique would be generally the same for all people, or is it that every neurotic who seeks to do something about it can get an inkling of what to do in his own individual case, since he has a budding healthy desire - does that budding desire give each individual inklings of what to do for his own particular case, or is it sort of a generalized technique?

C497. I think it's both, and it seems to me that's a beautiful statement of it. That is, that each person - I don't care whether they're neurotic or not - essentially has to write his own prescription. I mean, if anybody could write it for him, why fine — why have him write it himself? But when you get right down to it, who knows what steps you can take and what steps would really improve your situation? Well, you don't know off-hand, but no one else can tell you either.

S497. Well, I got a pretty definite conviction there that the budding healthy desire has implicit in it means to its achievement for each of the individuals, and that the fact that they do want to do something about it will give them inklings of means to employ. I suppose that's perhaps largely intuitive, yet not to be invalidated for that reason, necessarily. I mean

C498. In fact, that's what you found happening in your own case.

S498. Yeah. I got a definite feeling — I said, "Well, now you know that you're not going to cure yourself in a vacuum. You can only achieve growth by meeting real situations." I said, "Now, that's just the bunk - what you were saying the other time. What you're looking for there is a way of avoiding situations, not a way of cure." So I jotted those notes there.

C499. M-hm. You came to see pretty clearly that that kind of statement on your part last time was really another element in this balancing proposition, "Do you want to go forward or do you want to go back?"

S499. M-hm. But as soon as I have a new goal, why, then I'm going to be able to prescribe means to myself, the same as I prescribe means to myself for the old goal.

C500. Sure. Absolutely. Absolutely. We find ways of putting into effect the things that we most deeply want to do.

S500. My satisfactions, of course, suggest means of achieving them, whether it be voluntary or deep-seated involuntary. I mean

C501. That's right.

S501. Take eating a piece of beef. The act of cutting it up would be voluntary, but the flow of juices, and so forth, would be involuntary; yet they both tend to get toward the same satisfaction that of eating.

C502. Right. M-hm.

S502. And then I went on: if one says to one's self, "I'll do anything to be healthy," and then sits home and does nothing, words and resolves are meaningless, because such words and feelings cannot pass the vital test of real activity. And to mean business about curing himself, one must enter into what his own self regards as healthy activity, and grow by achieving. And I had a parenthesis here - one may get worse this way too. (Laugh.)

C503. (Laugh.) You gave yourself quite a lecture at the bar.

S503. Yes. M-hm. Right. Yes. Let's see (reading) - "grow by achieving, and valuing this achievement." I think there ought to be some kind of some sort of meditation on each little bit of achievement. Overvaluing it one might say of course, that's all a relative term. But at least

C504. Well, perhaps merely seeing it in relation to the goal. I mean, take some of the things you've talked about before one of the things that interested me it really was pretty swell the way

you handled that fraternity situation on the photographic job. But if you look at that merely as some isolated incident - well, what's its value? If you see the relationship of that to going forward- to meeting real situations in a better way, well, then it has some value.

S504. M-hm. Of course, when I have a reaction, why, then I tend to forget all about that.

C505. That's right.

S505. It's just sort of lost and unimportant— that sort of thing, so I think a person should have a constant dose of actual situations.

C506. M-hm.

S506. And then I got to wondering what the technique should be in case of a setback. I guess it should just lead to more resolve and more determination rather than allowing one's self to get morbid about it.

C507. Well- and one point that might be helpful there too; a setback doesn't occur without some reason. It may be a silly reason it may be a very minor reason, but something hits you that tends to make you feel, "Oh, I'm no good - this isn't worth the struggle," and so on. And to

S507. Well, to the person himself it wouldn't be silly or minor

C508. No, that's right — but often you can if your purpose is fairly clear-cut, then you can be objective enough to find what it was that set you off, I mean, what started this bad mood.

S508. M-hm. It can usually be linked up- I mean, it's some egotistical setback, or some betrayal of loyalty perhaps that you had that you were counting on, or some slip magnified - anything like that.

C509. M-hm. That's right.

S 509. Success breeds success and failure breeds failure - that sort of thing.

C510. And if you can see it in terms of the specific incident that caused it, then it doesn't seem quite so overwhelming as if you just feel, "Well, nothing's worth trying." That's a general mood and feeling. But sometimes we can see it in terms of a specific incident, and it doesn't appear so important. S510. M-hm. (Pause, studying his notes.) Some of this stuff I can't reinterpret.

C511. Well, if it's all as good as what you've given, you'd better take time to figure it out. (Laugh.)

S511. Well, I've got a pessimistic thought here — that maybe my majority goal is self-destruction. Since I haven't really done so much about avoiding the draft, I thought maybe I had some kind of a hidden motivation there to go to war, which might be on the morbid side — or perhaps was it that I would be influenced by the glamorous conditioning that has been attached to war? I made an application for a job at the roller-bearing plant, but I suppose I should have gone back and pestered them awhile — that seems to be the usual technique of getting a factory job— you have to show them that you want to work. Just signing the application doesn't seem to be enough.

C512. Well, it interests me that you made the application, and it also interests me that you don't seem nearly as overwhelmed by the thought of the draft as you did earlier.

S512. Well, I picked up a couple of techniques that I think can get me deferred that I have a lot of confidence in. I still have just as much objection to going.

C513. M-hm.

S513. I don't know how, though—I think they'll work out pretty well. Darned if I can make it out (looking at his notes). (Pause.) Oh, that had to do with a girl I got to talking. She said she hoped that there would not be a strip-tease to the floor show, and I was trying to analyze why she

objected to it. I guess maybe she didn't want any competition. Either she would feel that the girl would be superior to her, or she had secret desires in that direction which she could condemn in someone else, but not in herself.

C514. Doing a little evaluating of others' motives as well as your own, hm?

S514. Oh, yes. I've always done that. Well, I've always analyzed others perhaps a little bit more than myself. (Pause.) Well, then, to sum all this up: I think that I should seek out every and all healthy situations and enter into them. noticed a curious thing. When I made the resolve that I would take the hard way, and even though it might be the long way too, although I made the resolve in a vacuum, I got a release (laugh), so that way back in the last analysis, one experiences only one's own nervous system, so that it seems to be the resolve that counts, but at the same time that resolve does have to be nourished by the outward situations. And I suppose once in a while a person can resolve in a vacuum when they really sincerely mean it, but it's too hard to keep meaning it in a vacuum.

C515. And also, as you pointed out before, perhaps your earlier notion of doing something in a vacuum was really not too much a desire to make a resolve, but more a desire to get away from making a resolve.

S515. M-hm. Well, there're all sorts of masks. (Pause.) Well, what do you think of my prescription? Do you care to add anything to that?

C516. No, I think that- well we might be able to add details to it, but I think that that is the prescription that really will count toward more long-time satisfactions. I think you're right- it may be a hard road, may be a long road. But

S516. At least it's the only road.

C517. It's a road that you feel pretty well convinced now offers more satisfactions in the long run than the other direction.

S517. M-hm. The other direction seems to be a series of brief satisfactions with long intervals of great dissatisfaction. Of course, a curious thing about the human mind — it can be motivated by very brief moments. Some fellow told me that he wanted to write a book not so much to achieve academic greatness, but to have a girl praise him for it - have a dream girl come and praise him for it. And he said that that one moment when his ideal girl would react to his book that way and praise him for it would be the sufficient satisfaction — I mean, that that was the real thing that he wanted. Just that one moment. Time seems to be weighted. I mean, some instants are very, very precious metal, and others are not.

C518. And it's quite evident that since our last talk there've been some fairly heavily weighted times.

S518. Yes, that's right. One practical element enters in here. Say I had my choice of two healthy situations. Should I attack the easier one first and work up to the harder, or attack the harder first? I was wondering whether to take more risk of a defeat and at the same time take a chance on greater satisfactions, or take the easier one and work up to the harder one, as it were?

C519. I suppose that's hard to say, and evidently you're wondering there how much defeat you could stand, for example.

S519. Yes.

C520. Where eventually, I suppose, your goal is to be able to take both success and defeat without being too much disturbed by either one.

S520. I think that would probably depend largely on mood. Sometimes you're in a gambling mood-all or nothing. Other times you say, "Well, right now failure in this particular instance might do me more long-run harm, and moderate success would do me moderate good, so the easier goal - I better choose that." I guess it becomes a rather flexible thing, after all.

C521. I don't myself see any hard and fast rule that would settle it.

S521. M-hm. Sometimes a terrific success in one situation might shorten the cure by a month's time. I have the definite feeling that some outstanding success might even though it took a lot of resolution — might pay big dividends in shortening the time for a permanent cure to be achieved.

C522. That might be true. You feel that the road to cure is all success?

S522. It depends on what you mean by success. If by success you mean completely mastering every situation - no. But if by success you mean the ability to take ups and downs, why-yes.

C523. That's right. Yes, I wasn't quite sure how you were defining it. Yes, I think that the right road

S523. If a person needed one hundred percent environmental success, why, that would mean he had some sort of success mania there to cover up inadequate feelings. I mean, the ego should not need that much bolstering.

C524. No, and the real success, or the real feeling of success, probably comes from being willing to do our damndest, no matter how it turns out objectively.

S524. Well, the feeling that you have a stout ship, as it were, that could take all sorts of weather, and not pay so much attention to the weather as to the ship itself.

C525. The storm may tatter the sails once in a while, but you could still have the feeling that it's a good sturdy craft.

S525. M-hm. I have a chance to go on a trip for a couple of weeks. Do you think that that intermission in our talks would be detrimental or

C526. No, I don't. As a matter of fact, one thing I was going to talk about was just what we would do in that regard, because I'm going to be gone probably part of the next two weeks, during vacation.

S526. M-hm. I'll leave Saturday morning — this coming Saturday morning, and get back, let's see — the thirtieth, I imagine. What is - do you know when you'll be

C527. Yes, or at least I know when you could come again. We could have an appointment — oh, in the first couple days of next month. We could have one more on Friday of this week, if you wish.

S527. All right, fine. I've got another photographic job today, and possibly two. I'm going to try to get a society man to let me take pictures of his wedding ceremony. (He describes the details.) I think that'd be a nice thing I think that'll appeal to him.

C528. Very good.

S528. Charge him twenty-five bucks for a half hour's work.

C529. Well, this was no empty resolve, was it?

S529. No. Those empty resolves remind one of Hamlet, don't they? (Laugh.) Where he sits and soliloquizes for long paragraphs. Did you ever have a dream where you were very thirsty and kept on drinking and didn't get any satisfaction from drinking? I mean, you drink and drink and drink - I mean, drinking water

C530. M-hm.

S530. — and yet your thirst wasn't at all satisfied. That seems to me what resolving in a vacuum boils down to sort of drinking in a dream.

C531. M-hm. And although you're determined to get a little of

S531. I did get that flash, but I think that that was an initial flash that would have to be kept nourished by the actual situations. When I did resolve to go into actual situations, why, then I got a healthy feeling. But I felt that I would need to immediately follow that up by actually going into the situation, rather than keeping on resolving in a vacuum.

C532. Yes, and I think your earlier statement is right, too. There isn't anything wrong with thinking in a vacuum, but real growth is much more apt to take place in contact with real situations.

S532. Well, there's no sense in making it easier for you to kid yourself, which is what you'd be doing.

C533. That's it.

S533. Because resolves can be sincere, or they can seem sincere.

C534. It's pretty important —

S534. The vital test would be to go out and get in the situation.

C535. Well, I think that you've done a real job of writing your own prescription. I think you'd better save that paper. (Laugh.)

S535. M-hm. Well, I felt that I would be more satisfied if I relied on myself, and if your rôle was one of gentle sug- gestion and not too much revelation — let me find out for myself. And I imagine that's the rôle that you most like to adopt anyway. I suppose some people do lean on you more heavily than others.

C536. Well, the thing that one finds so much is that leaning on someone is such a deceptive support. I mean, it seems like a support only for a time, and eventually it comes back to the individual himself, just as he's -

S536. So you're just wasting time, in the last analysis. Yes, it comes right down to "dear Brutus," doesn't it?

C537. That's a good one. "Dear Brutus" seems to have done a pretty good job. (Laugh.) Well, now, I've got some other things that I have to do I mean, I haven't much time beyond our usual hour, but we can get together again on Friday, if you like, at four. Is that O.K.?

S 537. Fine.

C538. And then at that time we'll set an appointment for early next month.

S538. M-hm. Yes.

C539. O.K.

S539. Perhaps my trip will be a physical factor that will help — I mean, there's no sense in drawing a line between the mental and physical.

C540. Surely. Those things don't do any harm anyway. Well, I think that

S540. I think I can do some photographic work down there too, to keep myself in active situations.

C541. So that it won't be entirely vacation, it'll be also

S541. The equipment — it's a matter of persuading the owner of the equipment that I'll do some good for him with it.

C542. M-hm.

S 542. Of course, it's a little disappointing to share the profits. Wish I had my own equipment. It's up in and it's too big to lug around anyway.

C543. Your own equipment is up in

S543. M-hm. So I've been getting equipment here. I know several people — of course, they're using it somewhat heavily, so I have to scurry around for it, but at least I can get ahold of it.

C544. Mhm.

S544. It would be better, of course, to have my own cameras.

C545. I'm sure you would like that better.

S545. Well, see you Friday.