

# TOWARD A HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY\*

A. H. MASLOW \*

I BEGIN with a credo, a confession, a personal statement. I've never made it quite this way before because it sounds so presumptuous but I think it's about time for it.

I believe that the world will either be saved by the psychologists or it won't be saved at all. I think psychologists are the most important people living today. I think the fate of the human species and the future of the human species rests more upon their shoulders than upon any group of people now living. I believe that all the important problems of war and peace, exploitation and brotherhood, hatred and love, sickness and health, misunderstanding and understanding, the happiness and unhappiness of mankind will yield only to a better understanding of human nature.

I believe that medicine, physics, law, government, education, economics, engineering, business, industry, are only tools—powerful tools, powerful means—but not ends. I think that the ultimate end to which they should all be bent is human fulfillment, human betterment, growth and happiness. But these tools are all evil in the hands of evil men, and are good and desirable only in the hands of good men. The only way to heal evil men is to create good men. To understand people better, to know what creates them, and to know how to cure the evil and let the good come out, we must know what evil is and what good is, that is, what psychological health is, and what psychological sickness is. And this is the job for the psychologist.

Therefore I feel myself, as a psychologist, to be an important man. I must confess that mostly I feel fortunate at this blessing that has been bestowed upon

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Dr. Maslow's paper was originally given as a public address at The Cooper Union of Arts and Sciences, New York City, March 7, 1956. He is professor of psychology at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.; his most recent book is *Motivation and Personality* (1954).

me. I think being a psychologist is the most fascinating life there is. As a matter of fact I found myself recently (this is a confession, too) being kind to people who weren't psychologists, like the rich man who doesn't want to be too ostentatious about his good fortune.

Psychologists must be considered fortunate for several reasons. They can be officially virtuous about being Peeping Toms and asking impertinent personal questions of everybody they run across. They can ask the most embarrassing questions and say, "Well, this is psychological research," and thereby get answers. Not only can psychologists deal with the most fascinating objects in the world—human persons—not only can they by their own studies, their own scientific work, more efficiently work out even their own personal problems as human beings, but most of all they can feel so important. Everything that they discover will be magnified a million times. Learn more about human nature and you thereby automatically learn more about all the works of mankind. The more you know about the human being, the more you know about his products, and the more you can manipulate and better the products as well. Basic to the study of law, of education, of economics, of history, ought to be an improved study of the human being who has made the law and made the history. Paul Valéry has said it well: "When the mind is in question, everything is in question."

**I**T MUST BE quite clear now that I speak out of a special conception of the call of the psychologist, his mission, his vocation. I think that there are rules and responsibilities for him that don't apply to other scientists. I know it sounds a little Messianic, but my reasoning is quite simple. Our most pressing and urgent problems today are problems arising out of human weaknesses—sorrow, greed, exploitation, prejudice, contempt, cowardice, stupidity, jealousy, selfishness. These are all human sicknesses. We already know that we can cure these sicknesses if we can manage them one at a time. Psychoanalysis, for example, is one particular deep therapy, that can manage these problems, given enough time, enough money, enough skill.

If we die in another war or if we continue being tense and neurotic and anxious in an extended cold war, this is due to the fact that we don't understand ourselves and we don't understand each other. Improve human nature and you improve all.

But before you can improve human beings you must understand them. And there it is, just as simple and blunt and unavoidable as I can make it. We just don't know enough about people, and this is the task facing the psychologist. We need psychology, and we need it more than anything else that I can think of, whether more bombs or more religions or more diplomats or more bathtubs. Even more than physical health, more than new drugs, we need an improved human nature.

Furthermore, we need it in a hurry. I have a sense of historical urgency about

this. Time's a-wasting and the dogs of history are barking at our heels. War may break out about our ears any day.

The psychologist has a call, then, in the same sense that a minister should have. He doesn't have the right to play games and to indulge himself. He has special responsibilities to the human race. He ought to feel the weight of duty upon his shoulders as no other scientist needs to. He ought to have a sense of mission, of dedication.

Another point in this credo. By psychologists I mean all sorts of people, not just professors of psychology. I mean to include all the people who are interested in developing a truer, a clearer, a more empirical conception of human nature, and only such people. That excludes many professors of psychology and many psychiatrists. I would include some sociologists, anthropologists, educators, philosophers, artists, publicists, linguists, business men—anybody who is pointed in this direction; practically anybody who has taken upon his own shoulders this task that I consider so great and so important.

Since psychology is in its infancy as a science, and so little is known (only the psychologist knows how little this is) by comparison with what we need to know, a good psychologist should be a humble man. Unfortunately, too many psychologists are not humble, but are, instead, arrogant. There is no greater danger than an arrogant psychologist or psychiatrist.

**F**EELING as I do about psychology—its importance, its unfulfilled tasks, its areas of ignorance, and its tremendous promise—I should like to submit a series of prescriptions as to what psychology needs if it is to realize itself as a science and therefore perform the tasks it must perform for the troubled human race.

1. *Psychology should be more humanistic, more concerned with the problems of humanity, and less with the problems of the guild.*

The sad thing is that students come in to psychology almost always with humanistic interests. They want to know about people, what makes them tick, how they can be improved. They want to *understand* about love, hate, hope, fear, ecstasy, happiness, the meaning of living. But what is so often done for these high hopes and yearnings? Most graduate training, even most undergraduate courses, turn away from these subjects (I couldn't even find the word "love" indexed in any of the psychology books on my shelves, not even the ones on marriage). Such topics are called fuzzy, unscientific, tender-minded, mystical. What is offered instead? Dry bones. Techniques. Precision. Huge mountains of itty-bitty facts, having little to do with the interests that brought the student into psychology. Even worse, teachers of psychology try, often successfully, to make the student *ashamed* of his humanistic interests as if they were somehow unscientific. Hence often the spark is lost, and students, becoming graduate psychologists, settle down to being members of the guild, with all its prejudices, its

orthodoxies. The creativeness goes, the daring, the unorthodoxy, the sense of high mission, the prophetic sense, the humanistic dedication. Cynicism closes in, and I am horrified to report that most graduate students in psychology speak guardedly of the Ph.D. as the "union card" and expect not to enjoy doing their dissertation research, tending to regard it as an unpleasant job rather than as a privilege, something to get out of the way so they can get a job.

What cultivated man in his right mind would read a doctoral dissertation? or an elementary textbook on psychology? How few psychology books there are that I could recommend to the general reader that have the approval of the technical psychologist? The only ones that I can think of which would help people to understand themselves and their friends better are called inexact, unscientific, "clinical." They are said by most technical psychologists to come more from the psychotherapeutic tradition than the scientific. For instance I may recommend Freud and the neo-Freudians, but I doubt that Freud could get a Ph.D. in psychology today, nor would any of his writings be acceptable as a doctoral dissertation. And only a few months ago, in a standard journal of psychology, a presidential address compared Freud with phrenology. And this for the greatest psychologist who has ever lived—at least from the point of view of non-members of the guild, who constitute most of the human race.

And what is offered in exchange for Freud, Adler, Jung, Fromm and Horney? Beautifully executed, precise, elegant experiments which in half the cases or more have nothing to do with enduring human problems, and which are written not primarily for the human species, but for other members of the guild. The guild's disdain for the public's concerns is reminiscent of the keeper at the zoo who was asked whether the hippopotamus was male or female. "Madam," he replied, "it seems to me that that would be of interest only to another hippopotamus."

Psychologists are, or should be, an arm of the human race, a help to them. They have obligations, responsibilities, duties to every person now living, and to every one who will ever live in the future. They just have no right to play little autoerotic games off in a corner of the laboratory.

2. *Psychology should turn more frequently to the study of philosophy of science, of esthetics, but especially of ethics and values.* I am sorry that psychology has officially cut itself off from philosophy because this means no more than giving up good philosophies for bad ones. Every man living has some kind of philosophy, usually an unconscious, therefore uncriticized, uncorrectable, unimprovable one, what Philipp Frank called a "chance philosophy." If you want to improve it, make it more realistic, more useful, and more fruitful, you have to be conscious of it, and *work* with it, criticize it, improve it. This most people (including most psychologists) don't do.

And I mean more than the philosophy of science. I mean also the study of values, of *wby* science is, of what it is for. Where did science come from any-

way? Why do we spend so much time on it? What's in it for us? And I mean the philosophy of esthetics, of creativeness, of the mystic experience, that is, of the highest and deepest experiences the human being is capable of. To concern oneself with these matters is a way of avoiding shallowness and busy-work, and of setting a suitably high level of aspiration. If the priests of science themselves are small men, with limited, superficial goals, then the religion of science will be petty and trivial also.

Too many psychologists have looked for their philosophy of science to the mathematicians and physicists of the 19th century, and simply imitate them. Their reasoning is apparently that these scientists were successful: let us see how they did it, and imitate them, and then we too will be as successful. But this is foolish. Psychology as a science is in its infancy and has to work out its own philosophy, its own methodology, suitable to its own nature and problems and goals. A little boy doesn't become a man by putting on his father's shoes, smoking his pipe, and trying to speak in a bass voice. He has to *really* grow, not make believe he's already grown.

I don't mean to make heroes out of professors of philosophy either. They're probably no better and no worse than the psychologists (or physicists or chemists). There are as many sterile philosophers as there are sterile psychologists (or chemists or poets). And yet in philosophy, there are many growing points, points of penetration and improvement and advancement in human thought. Unless they know the great philosophers, the psychologists are likely to remain arrogant rather than humble, trivial rather than profound, repetitious rather than creative. And they are likely to continue trying to live up to their "little boy" effort to "make like" a Hollywood scientist, to wear a white coat, have a stern, tough look on his face, and not to bleed when cut.

The trouble with many psychologists is that they are content to work with but a portion of the human being, indeed even to make a virtue out of doing so. They forget that ultimately their task is to give us a unified, empirically based conception of the whole human being, of human nature in general, i.e., a philosophy of human nature.

But such a task takes courage and a willingness to step away from the narrow platform of certainty. This certainty is and must be narrow for the simple reason that we just don't know enough about human nature to be sure of anything but small bits of knowledge.

Everyone, even the one-year-old child, has some conception of human nature. It is impossible to live without a theory of how people will behave, of what to expect of them. Every psychologist, however positivist and hard-boiled and anti-theoretical he may claim to be, nevertheless has a full-blown philosophy of human nature hidden away in a concealed place in his guts. It is as if he guided himself by a half-known map, which he disavows and denies and which is therefore immune to correction by newly acquired knowledge. This unconscious

map or theory guides his reactions and expectations far more than does his laboriously acquired experimental knowledge.

The issue is then not over whether or not to have a philosophy of psychology, but whether to have a conscious or an unconscious one.

Another truth that we have learned from the philosophers is that you must have a map if you are not to waste your time. It may sound sensible to say "after all, facts are facts and knowledge is knowledge. Let us just accumulate facts of all kinds one by one, only making sure that they are valid and reliable and we will slowly nibble away at the unknown. Slow but sure. Let us have nothing to do with theories—only certain facts."

But we now know that most facts, maybe *all* facts, are expressions of a theory. The anthropologists, particularly the semanticists, have proven that even naming an object, "that is a chair," or "that is a man," is an expression of a world outlook, and that in order really to understand the statement you must know the world outlook.

I am by no means arguing against detailed work, as my own detailed work can testify. Every clash of broad issues eventually works itself down to small crucial experiments, and these experiments ought to be done as well and as carefully as we know how. What use is it doing an experiment if your results tell you nothing for sure? Ultimately, the experimenter, the researcher, is the Supreme Court before which all theories are and must be tested.

**B**ECAUSE we know so little for certain about human beings (by comparison with what we should know and would like to know) intuition, common experience, wisdom, intelligence, and insight all become tremendously important. Even a stupid man can understand when there are enough certain facts, but when there are not, only the innately perceptive, wise man can know. Philosophies of human nature have been expounded by theologians, poets, dramatists, artists, statesmen, and industrialists. We should respect these—as theories, as suggestions—almost as much as we should the theories of the psychologist, and use them as frameworks for criticism, for suggested experiments, as tentative road maps to be tested and examined. We can still learn much from Marcus Aurelius, from Goethe, from Spinoza, from Coleridge, although I hope and expect that the day will come when we will know more than any of them, as today any high school boy knows more about biology than Aristotle did. This is the triumph of science, that ultimately it can take the wisdom of the great intuitors, correct it, test it, and come out with a better product, with more certain and reliable knowledge. When the scientists, after years of theorizing, debating, experimenting, checking, and counterchecking arrive at the same conclusion that Rousseau or Shakespeare did, it is not actually the same conclusion. It is now knowledge, whereas formerly it was a theory. And I remind you that we need a principle by which to select from among the various contradictory theories

which have been offered. Not only Rousseau's theories must be checked, but also those of Rousseau's opponents. And who is to check them, who is to decide, but the scientist? And on what basis can he decide if not on the basis of empirical research?

We must pay special attention to the synoptic thinkers, the producers of theories of the whole man in his whole world. It is easy enough to develop a sound theory of the learning of nonsense syllables, or of rats running in mazes, or of the conditioning of the dog's salivary reflex. To integrate these miniature theories with the whole of psychology—that is another matter. To relate them to love and hate, to growing and regressing, to happiness and pain, and to courage and anxiety, exposes the weakness of nibbling away at the edges of reality instead of making reconnaissance flights over the whole of it.

3. *American Psychology should be bolder, more creative; it should try to discover, instead of try only to be cautious and careful and to avoid mistakes.*

Why is it that there has never been a great American psychologist in the sense of making bold, new discoveries. Our best American psychologists have been excellent scholars, excellent systematizers, excellent experimenters, but *not* great discoverers. All the great breakthroughs, the great innovations have come from European psychologists; all the brands of psychoanalysis, Freud, Adler, Jung, Rank, Fromm, Horney; all the Gestalt psychologists, Wertheimer, Koffka, Kohler, Lewin; the Rorschach test; Goldstein's organismic psychology. Even behaviorism, so specifically American, began with Pavlov.

I have been told that something very similar is true for the other sciences. The most dramatic example of course is atomic physics. Einstein, Bohr, Fermi, Szilard were all European. The United States is way down on the list in the number of Nobel Prize winners when size of population is taken into account, and it would be even further down if wealth and opportunity were also taken into account.

Why is American science so essentially conventional, so hostile to creativeness, to beginnings, to speculation, to unorthodoxy, to really new ideas? Why are American psychologists so characteristically appliers of other people's ideas? Why normally do they despise and attack the innovator for ten or twenty years and *then*, when they've finally got used to the shock of thinking unconventionally, make it conventional, and swarm in with hundreds of working-out experiments on other people's ideas? As Picasso said, "First you invent something and then they make it pretty." Why can't they recognize where they get their ideas from in the first place?

I remember how saddened I was and how irritated by an official report of a major committee of the American Psychological Association on the future of psychological science and its improvement. The recommendations amounted finally to methodological ones mostly; how to be cautious and conservative, how to check, how not to make mistakes, how to pick out other people's mis-

takes, how to validate, how to be accurate and precise and sure and certain. Hardly a word was there about creativeness, new ideas, sticking your neck out, breaking out of the rut, taking a chance, *encouraging* uncertainty and confusion and exploration. It was so much like the road maps we get at a gas station, telling us how to make our way from known place to known place. Not a word about the no-man's land out ahead, the place where there are no maps and street signs and paved roads, not a word about the pioneering and trail-breaking and sketchy surveying that are necessary *before* the maps can be made.

But once admit creativeness and then you're smack in the middle of a mess of poets, artists, musicians, and other dirty people who don't have a Ph.D. in psychology and are therefore clearly social climbers who don't have any *right* to know anything about human nature. Once you let the door open a crack *anybody* can get in. And then who knows *where* things may lead? As one lady once said, "The horrible danger of murder, rape, and arson is that they may lead you to smoking."

4. *Psychology should be more problem-centered, and less absorbed with means or methods.*

If you are primarily interested in doing what you can about important questions or problems, then techniques, methods, apparatus, become secondary. For instance, if your quest is "What is love?" and you propose to do the best you can to find out, then you will stick with the problem even though you have to improvise. And you will have to be content with inexactness and uncertainty in the early stages of exploration. If you insist on using only elegant techniques and demand "scientific" exactness, elegance, validity, and reliability, then you just can't work with this problem and must give it up, because the techniques and methods and machines now available won't help much with it.

Those who *do* insist on precision from the very beginning can therefore never begin. All they can do is to come in on the later stages of development of the problem.

Therefore if you identify science with exactness, with precision, with quantifications, with precisely defined variables, and with good control of all these variables, you have thereby repudiated as "unscientific" all the first stages of work with any problem, when hunches, intuitions, naturalistic observations, speculations, and theories are all you have.

To put it even more bluntly, to define science primarily as method is to make of it a senseless game or ritual. What is it a method *for*? If pertinence, worth, goal, value are understressed, and validity and reliability exclusively sought for, it is very much like boasting "I don't know or care what I'm doing, but see how accurately I'm doing it."

The situation in American psychology, in which most researchers do what they can do well, rather than what needs doing, is largely due, I think, to this mistaken notion of what science is and should be.



5. *Psychology ought to be more positive and less negative than it is. It should have higher ceilings, and not be afraid of the loftier possibilities of the human being.*

One major shortcoming of research psychology (and of psychiatry as well) is its pessimistic, negative, and limited conception of human beings. It has so far revealed to us much about man's shortcomings, his illnesses, his sins and weaknesses, but rather little about his virtues, his potentialities, or his highest aspirations. This is true for every area of psychology, of all its subdivisions.

I am not calling for optimism. Rather I am asking for realism in the best and fullest sense of the word. To identify realism with darkness, misery, pathology, and breakdown as so many novelists have done in our time is idiotic, but psychologists have committed the same error. Happiness is just as real as unhappiness, gratification is just as real as frustration, love is just as real as hostility.

I want to stress the most important single example of our present mistaken emphasis, namely, the contrast between our knowledge of psychological sickness and our totally inadequate attention to psychological health. Now that I've tried myself to study healthy people, I can understand why this is so. It is a difficult job, ringed about with philosophical reefs of all sorts, particularly in the area of the theory of values. In addition there are cultural problems, methodological ones, and clinical ones. Yet psychological health clearly calls for study. We must know what men are like at their best; not only what they *are*, but also what they can become. The byproducts of such knowledge are incalculably important. My own belief is that such a health-psychology will inevitably transform our deepest conceptions of human nature. It will wean us away from the almost universal habit of regarding normality as a special case of the abnormal, of being content to regard a healthy human being as simply "not very sick." It will teach us rather that the abnormal is a special case of the normal, and that psychological illness is primarily a struggle toward health.

Another aspect of this same mistake, this preoccupation with the negative, this stress on fear rather than courage, is the great amount of time that has been spent on the defensive processes, on self-protectiveness, on safety and security, and on homeostatic processes. The implication is that life is a process of avoiding pain and of *fighting* trouble and unhappiness.

But there is another side to the human being and another set of motivations, the positive ones, the tending to grow stronger, wiser, healthier, to actualize one's potentialities, to be curious, to enjoy, to wonder, to philosophize, to be creative. Not only do we adjust, we also rebel.

It is true that we tend to shrink within ourselves when something threatens: we do try to avoid pain. And there is much pain in life for most people. Yet if life were simply an avoidance of pain, why would we not cut our throats, all of us, and thereby avoid pain forever? Clearly life has more to offer than pain. Then why not study this "something more"?

6. *If this is all so, then therapy should be taken out of the office, and spread to many other areas of life. Furthermore, it should not only be more broadly used but also more ambitiously defined to include the growth-fostering techniques.*

Some of the more elementary psychotherapeutic techniques can be boiled down to very simple processes that can be taught to teachers, parents, ministers, doctors, and even to all of mankind. Support, reassurance, acceptance, love, respect, the giving of safety, all of these are therapeutic. We know also that many of the good life experiences are therapeutic *through* giving these basic medicines—the good marriage, good education, success at a good job, having good friends, being able to help other people, creative work. All these can be studied more carefully than they have been, so that we can know more about them. And whatever knowledge we do have can be much more widely taught than it has been.

In any case the conception of therapy as getting rid of symptoms and of illnesses is too limited. We must learn to think of it more as a technique for fostering growth and general improvement of the human being, for encouraging self-actualization. This means that many other techniques not now included under the head of psychotherapy will belong there, if only we can expand the meaning of therapy to include all the growth-fostering techniques, the educational ones particularly, and *most* particularly creative education in art, in play, and all other kinds of education that avowedly improve creativeness, spontaneity, expressiveness, courage, and integration.

7. *Psychology should study not only behavior on the surface but much more the depths of human nature, the unconscious as well as the conscious.*

I am aware that this sounds silly, or even fantastic, and yet the truth is that official, academic, experimental psychology does *not* study the depths as it should. It is preoccupied with what can be seen, touched, or heard, with what is conscious. The greatest single psychological discovery that has ever been made was the discovery of unconscious motivations, and yet the situation is that the unconscious is still out of bounds for many research psychologists. Its study has been mostly the preoccupation of psychoanalysts, psychotherapists, psychiatrists. Only in the last few years have some experimental psychologists begun to tackle the problem.

The consequence, as judged, let us say, by the standard texts in general psychology, is a kind of half-psychology, in which human nature is presented, so to speak, "from middle-C upward." This is like defining an iceberg as only that portion which can be seen above the waterline. Most of the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* is written as if Freud had never lived.

The final product is an "official" psychology which deals with rationality but not with the irrational, with the cognitive far more than with the conative and emotional, with adjustment to external reality and hardly at all to internal reality, with the verbal, mathematical, logical, and physical and hardly at all

with the archaic, the preverbal, the symbolic, the illogical, the fluid, the intuitive, the poetic (what the psychoanalysts call "primary process").

Not only do our depths make trouble for us; this is also where our joys come from. If we go about the world not knowing what's going on inside ourselves, not knowing what we're looking for, unconscious of the forces which largely determine our behavior, we are blind to the sources of both our ills and our pleasures. This lack of understanding means certainly a lack of control over our own fate.

8. *Academic psychology is too exclusively Western, and not Eastern enough. It turns too much to the objective, the public, the outer, to behavior. It should learn more about the inner, the subjective, the meditative, the private. Introspection, thrown out as a technique, should be brought back into psychological research.*

American psychology is behavioristic, concentrating on watching the overt actions of others from the outside. This predilection originates in a praiseworthy though naive effort to be "scientific." Of course it is our hope as scientists to be able to demonstrate, to prove, to repeat the experiment in another laboratory. Yet we must face the hard fact that this is an *ultimate* goal rather than an immediate one. By sticking to the observation of external behavior we must thereby overlook all sorts of human activities which do *not* show themselves externally in a simple form.

Behaviorism originated in a sensible reaction against anthropomorphizing animal psychology, but the reverse error has happened instead, of *rodentomorphizing* human psychology, of studying the person as if he were no more than a complicated white rat. It is truly a mistake to attribute human motives to laboratory animals, but is it a mistake to attribute human motives to humans?

I would like to bring back introspection for another reason that I have recently become impressed with. We are discovering, more and more of us, as we study personality in the depths rather than at the surface, that the deeper we go into ourselves or any other person, the more universal we get. At our deepest levels, we seem to be more alike than different. Therefore if you can manage to get to these depths within yourself (usually the aid of a therapist is needed), you find out not only about yourself, but also about the whole human species. The non-academic psychologists of the East have always known this; now we in the West must learn about it too.

9. *Psychologists should study more than they have the end experiences as well as the means to ends, the pragmatic, the useful, and the purposive.*

What experiences does man live for? What makes living worth while? What are the payoffs? What experiences in life justify the pains of existence? In other words, which experiences are worth while in themselves? We know that we reach the heights of living in the moments of creation, of insight, of esthetic experience, of mystic experience, of delight, of love-sex experience.

(I have called these the "peak-experiences.") Were it not for these, life wouldn't make any sense. We would then be living in order to . . . in order to . . . in order to . . . in order to . . . and so on with no end. We must ask ". . . in order to what?"

Remember too that end-experiences need not be *only* the peak-experiences of life. We get milder payoffs and rewards in simple zest of living, in enjoying all the activities that are done for themselves and not for the sake of something else. A healthy organism enjoys just *being*. Our over-pragmatic psychology, preoccupied with purposive behavior, neglects behavior that is not purposive—that is an end in itself.

10. *Psychology should study the human being not just as passive clay, helplessly acted upon by outside forces, and determined by them alone. It should also study the ways in which he is (or should be) an active, autonomous, self-governing mover, chooser and center of his own life.*

The so-called stimulus-response psychology has created, without meaning to, what we might call a Stimulus-Response man, passive, responding, shaped, adjusting, learning. With this picture we must contrast the creative, active man, the one who invents, who is responsible, who accepts some stimuli and rejects others, who creates his own stimuli, who makes decisions both about stimuli and about responses.

Perhaps posing this opposition may help clarify why more and more psychologists are getting worried about the concept of "adjustment." Adjustment whether to the culture, to other people, or to nature means being passive, letting yourself be shaped from the outside, living by the will of other people. It is like trying to make other people happy, asking "What does daddy want me to be?" instead of asking "What am I like, really? What is my real self?"

Then, too, this is why, increasingly, psychologists criticize the conception of learning as a passive process only.

11. *All intellectuals tend to become absorbed with abstractions, words and concepts, and to forget raw experience, the fresh and concrete, the original real experiencing which is the beginning of all science. In psychology, this is a particular danger.*

My own remedy for this is to turn to (a) the general semanticists, who devote themselves to this danger in particular, and (b) the artists, whose particular job it is to experience freshly, to see (and help us to see) the world as it is, and not as it looks when screened through a web of concepts, verbalisms, abstractions, categories, and theories.

12. *The lessons of Gestalt psychology and of organismic theory have not been fully enough integrated into psychology. The human being is an irreducible unit, at least so far as psychological research is concerned. Everything in him is related to everything else in him, in greater or lesser degree.*

13. *I believe that psychologists should devote more time to the intensive*

*study of the single unique person, to balance their preoccupation with the generalized man, and to generalized and abstracted capacities.*

There is one great difference between what psychology studies and what all other sciences study. Only psychology studies uniqueness. One white rat is as good as another, one atom is like another, one chemical like another. Their differences don't really matter. So all other sciences study similarities, which means abstracting. Now psychology has to do this too, but it also has the special task that no other science has (except anthropology) of studying uniqueness.

This has at least one very important consequence that I must mention. In his most essential core, no human being is comparable with any other. Therefore his ideals for himself, the path of growth must also be unique. His goal for himself must arise out of his own unique nature, *not* be picked up by comparison or competition with others. It is dangerous to pick up an ideal for oneself from a father or teacher or some other model or hero. Essentially the individual's task is to become the best *himself* in the world. Joe Doakes must not try to be like Abraham Lincoln or Thomas Jefferson or anybody else. He must become the best Joe Doakes in the world. That he *can* do and only this is possible and even necessary. And here he has no competitors.

14. *Finally, as we get to know more about what the person legitimately wants and needs for his growth and self-fulfillment, i.e., for psychological health, then we should set ourselves the task of creating the health-fostering culture.*

I think that this is, in principle, no more difficult a task than the making of the A-bomb. Of course, we don't know enough to do a really good job right *now*. But part of the ultimate task would be acquiring the necessary knowledge. I see no theoretical reason against this.

Such an enterprise, when it comes, will be the proof that psychology has matured enough to pay off, not only in individual terms, but in social improvement as well.