

EIGHT

A Unified Theory of General Human Motivation and Behavior

*When we are born, we cry that we are come
To this great stage of fools—*

SHAKESPEARE
King Lear

*A vague but powerful sense of impending doom in
the face of the unknown that was us and everything
about us is every person's first experience after
birth . . .*

SECTION 1, THIS CHAPTER

*. . . personal independence and self-sufficiency . . .
only develop in the crucible of no-choice.*

SECTION 99, THIS CHAPTER

Introduction

Early man survived despite a more or less constant sense of dread and impending doom. He existed within a terrifying unknown. What did he do to help himself? He invented a rich variety of belief systems to feel somewhat less vulnerable. By arbitrarily assigning some characteristics to the unknown features of his environment he felt more secure. In many ways primitive man was almost like a newborn infant, unable to comprehend or to control most of his environment. But unlike the newborn he was

at least conscious of externality and able to manipulate his body at will.

Fear would have become unbearable without his delusions. Man would have had no choice but to tune out his awareness much of the time, the least efficient way of coping with reality. Living by erroneous beliefs based on fabricated "knowledge" of the universe was not ideal, but it cost less. He had to find some way to survive in a world densely populated by dangerous ghosts without faces.

"In the beginning . . . the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light." Now we know that these words from Genesis reflect people's birth experiences more accurately than they mirror the creation of the world, but for a very long time we claimed that our own personal experiences provided the key to understanding the universe. This egocentric and simple-minded view pervaded our theories, including those of physics. The Ptolemaic system was based on Man's belief that he was favorably situated at the hub of the universe, and that from this grandstand the scheme of nature would simply unfold itself to him.

Even now most people see themselves, their relationships, and the universe from a naive perspective. We still derive much reassurance and solace from those whom we proclaim deities or personal saviors. Widespread mental depression, interpersonal conflict, and premature death by suicide, homicide, wars, and avoidable illnesses are the result.

Man was unable until recently to explain the nature of things on the basis of factual knowledge. He was capable of verifying only his most immediate physical experiences, acquiring bits and pieces of knowledge only slowly. Even so, throughout history he had to discard some of his primitive beliefs as his understanding of reality has constantly expanded.

Copernicus, Galileo, Newton, and Einstein elucidated the basic laws of the physical universe in the relatively short span of several hundred years. They have enabled us to look out ever further into space. It was relatively simple to verify hypotheses about gravity by dropping objects from the Leaning Tower of Pisa, but a revolution in thinking had to precede this development: Facts had to be verified.

Nonexistent tools and novel procedures are often needed to check the validity of new hypotheses and theories; these must

first be developed. Though proof may not be immediately obtainable, it must eventually be found. Einstein's general theory of relativity has not been conclusively confirmed in all its details even today, since our knowledge and instruments are not quite sophisticated enough even now. So the process of verification continues. In spite of such difficulties we have been rather successful in uncovering the secrets of the physical world. With the big bang theory we have even made a serious attempt to explain creation itself, 10,000 million years ago.

We have not done nearly as well in the psychologic realm. Here we must look inside ourselves, and we are simultaneously the observers and the subjects of the observation. Whatever we see affects us directly. We naturally tend to shy away from looking into areas that cause us pain, embarrassment, or fear. So we know less of what happens in our inner space than of what happens far away in outer space. We are only beginning to grope in this dimly lit internal universe.

It was only yesterday that we learned to correct many of the physiologic and anatomic malfunctionings of our internal environment. Until recently medicine was almost completely non-scientific. Before the introduction of anesthesia, surgery was woefully primitive; antibiotics, organ transplantation, and the many technologic marvels that we now take for granted simply did not exist. And we are even further behind in knowing how to treat the ailments affecting Man's mind, which has not been mapped out as well as his anatomy. Even now these conditions are considered to be of interest mostly to priests, social workers, and gurus; or else they are regarded as chemical disturbances treatable by medications alone. Ignorance abounds.

The Cartesian view holds that nature is composed of two independent realms, matter and mind. This separation enabled science to develop, since it overcame the powerful Aristotelian model upheld by the Catholic Church. God's nature and the human soul were no longer the main subjects of interest to the seekers of new knowledge. Contemplation and speculation were henceforth regarded as less valuable than observation and experimentation. "Inert" substances and mechanistic relationships became legitimate subjects for scientific study once they were separated from the spiritual.

It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that compartmentalizing and dividing the universe was a mixed blessing. We have achieved technologic success but with it came human alienation

and greater despair. In spite of our unique brain, which allows us to understand so much, we failed to see that all phenomena were still bound together, as always. Although Man could neatly categorize the physical universe, he remained a complex being full of contradictions between thinking and feelings. *He* was not inert and could not be packaged so neatly. He, the observer, was wrong in believing that his powers of observation made him as easy to define as the other things he observed. Even though he could explain so many of the phenomena around him, he did not become explainable; many of his acts were not rational.

Because of the miraculous abilities of his mind, Man began to think of himself as essentially different from all the other living creatures. Having eaten of the tree of knowledge, he began to behave as if he were becoming a god. His ability to make judgments and to choose filled him with so much pride and with such a sense of power that he was blind to his continuing fragility and error. Perhaps he could banish powerlessness forever by the use of his rationality! In the flush of discovery Man forgot that in spite of all his achievements he remained not only mortal but also subject to the sway of his emotions, those irrational forces that delude him again and again.

Man can indeed become more powerful and exist just below the angels, but not easily and not while he clings to his delusions. Like the Patriarch Jacob, every person must first wrestle with and conquer the basic tendency to avoid the frightening and the difficult. It is easier and much more natural to dream and to evade fear by repeatedly escaping into unreality, even if this condemns us to remain smaller and weaker than we potentially are.

Our wishful thinking has led us to believe that we have become powerful already. But Man is destined to continue groveling in depression unless he finds the courage to look at and into himself realistically. Descartes and Freud took us a few important steps forward in the dark abyss, but we must now detour around them if we wish to proceed further, just as Einstein did with Newtonian concepts.

The Eastern mind sees the universe in terms of unity. All opposites are regarded as parts of the same, all comparisons recognized as belittling and confusing. This integral view is closer to modern physics, which explains the universe as an internally consistent system, an ever-expanding and contracting whole. Nothing is inert. Even our mind is part of the physical universe.

Man is not basically different from all the other physical phenomena. In spite of his unique potential, he remains part of the animal kingdom.

According to Einstein's general theory of relativity, space is not three-dimensional and time is not a separate entity; both form a four-dimensional "space-time." Mass is nothing but a form of energy stored in the resting object. Gravity curves both time and space. Such difficult concepts stretch our imagination. Ordinary language and knowledge derived from direct personal experiences had to be transcended. This caused an unsettling revolution in our understanding not only of the universe but of ourselves. We had to give up Euclidean geometry and mechanistic Newtonian physics, and with them some of our smugness that we had a "solid" understanding of everything. The same is even more true as we consider a new theory of human motivation and functioning.

Is it not likely that in the psychological realm, as in the physical one, a single key exists that can unlock the mysteries of all the strange and divergent behavioral phenomena of our species? It is, in fact, much easier to imagine one basic motive uniting the seemingly unrelated and complex behaviors of Man than it was to conceptualize the unity envisioned by Einstein.

This chapter is an attempt to elucidate such a theory. In its light, every human act should make sense. It will have to be modified, or its claim to be a general theory will have to be dropped, until it is capable of explaining all aspects of Man's behavior. The fact that full verification may not be immediately possible does not invalidate it, however. Acceptable proof must be marshaled, but this may require some time if the instruments needed for validation do not yet exist. Careful scrutiny by many independent and objective observers will determine the eventual worth of this effort.

The Theory

MAN'S EARLIEST BEGINNINGS

1. A vague but powerful sense of impending doom in the face of the unknown that was us and everything about us is every person's first experience after birth, always completely out of consciousness. Since we exist in that situation before we have any comprehension of anything, including time, it is a timeless

experience. It is felt as eternal. The entire experience has absolutely no meaning for us, no direction, no framework, only dread.

2. The sense of dread is the direct and unavoidable result of the newborn's suddenly being thrust into an altogether new environment. After many months of living in a relatively constant and finely regulated setting, it abruptly finds itself under radically new conditions, without any time for transition. It must suddenly adjust to a gaseous environment, totally different from the liquid one in which it existed before. Its physiology must suddenly function in a totally new way.

3. Dread or irrational fear is therefore the earliest and often the most persistent companion of every living person. This was not obvious in the past because realistic dangers were much more prominent. Only in modern affluent societies living in peace has Man's physical survival not been constantly under threat. Large and powerful animals do not devour humans anymore, death from hunger or exposure is less common, the Black Plague and other scourges have been wiped out, and lesser illnesses are being treated better than ever. Dread is much more evident these days, since it is no longer so obscured by real danger.

4. Nothing is lost in the universe. Even though we have no conscious memory of our early experiences, our body remembers. We adapt to them or perish. The sudden infant death syndrome may well be a respiratory expression of such a failure to adapt. Every person's physiologic reaction patterns are residues of these earliest experiences. Our automatic bodily reactions are usually fixed for life, although they can be altered by persistent therapeutic efforts. These early adaptations are the most central ones of the personality, and they limit and color all future adaptations and learning by the organism.

5. In the absence of prior knowledge about how to adjust, any stimulus that exceeds the threshold of sensation shakes the entire body and affects it in a generalized and non-specific way. Differentiated and partial reactions occur after a while, but the original reactions are generally total and out of proportion to the strength of the stimulus. Such all-or-none reactions exhaust the organism. Further stimulation during regressive periods used for regrouping may cause only a faint reaction or none at all. Such periods are the prototypes of the resignation and the deep sense

of futility often associated with disappointments and defeats later in life.

6. The fear of non-being is the earliest and the most profound fear of all. It is generally unconscious and unknown as such, although every living person experienced it and fears its re-emergence. It is not the same as the fear of dying, which is less intense.

7. Above all, Man wants to avoid re-experiencing the panic he had to endure early in life. Any knowledge or memory of it is usually blotted out of consciousness. Gaining power, real or imaginary, in order to undo the sense of vulnerability is the single, basic force at the root of all human behavior. The push away from fear or dread supersedes everything. All the otherwise unexplainable phenomena of human behavior begin to make sense in the light of man's omnipresent push to gain real or even imaginary power and thus to avoid re-experiencing unfathomable panic.

By nature Man is neither good nor bad, he just is. Capable of compassion when he feels safe and content, he can also be extremely cruel when in the grip of fear. At such times he may totally lack any consideration of anyone besides himself.

8. Whatever anyone does is *subjectively* experienced at that moment as the best one is capable of doing. Even the most dastardly, stupid, and self-destructive deeds must be regarded as such. This does not imply that illegal or immoral acts should therefore be tolerated or excused by others. Deeds that may be objectively damaging or even destructive to the doer are often not recognized as such until much later. Everyone would surely act more wisely if only they could. Why does anyone ever do anything that is not really in his best interest? Because the urgent push to avoid fear commonly distorts perception, often in a surprisingly gross fashion.

9. Character change and even lasting behavioral change require a prior shift in one's perception of all relationships to oneself and to others. Improved insight and greater understanding do not, however, in themselves bring about much change of any kind. Feelings usually continue to exert a powerful influence, forcing a person to remain the same for as long as possible.

10. The newborn is constantly alert for as long as it has the strength, as anyone would be who suddenly finds himself in a

totally incomprehensible environment. Even the most terrifying science-fiction films present only mild examples of such a fear-filled situation. A viewer can separate himself from the experience; the newborn cannot. The only escape the newborn has is to withdraw emotionally into itself.

11. The newborn is best understood not as a person but as a developing complex of physiologic reaction patterns. A person has at least some conscious awareness; the newborn has none. Subjectively it exists in a precarious state, at the mercy of powerful and strange stimuli that rob it of its tranquility without rhyme or reason. Even objectively the newborn may be subject to much abuse. René Spitz observed, for instance, "that surgeons in leading hospitals routinely perform mastoidectomy without any anesthesia on defenseless infants."

The sense of dread is greatest during the earliest moments after birth when the extrauterine reactions of the physiology are first being tested and before the organism "knows" that they can sustain its life. Although we can ameliorate the shock slightly by improving the external conditions of the birthing room, no one can escape this experience.

12. Every person reading these lines, rich or poor, king or servant, is therefore truly a survivor. A sense of impending danger and at least traces of irrational fear are imbedded in everyone's body. People generally try to deny the experience of such fear, partly because they know of no good reason for its existence; its dimensions are much larger, however, and its roots deeper than ever described before. The fear is often responsible for major errors in judgment since it greatly interferes with the capacity to evaluate what one sees.

13. Being consciously frightened makes people aware of their vulnerability, so they deny and hide their fears, both from themselves and from others. Fear that is successfully repressed or suppressed is not experienced as such, but it nevertheless continues to be a powerful force. All other feelings are experienced and expressed only in the space that fear does not occupy. Anger, hate, and romantic "love" often serve to keep fear out of sight.

14. The attempts to hold fear and the accompanying sense of powerlessness at bay command much of Man's time and resources. All conscious choices, including life-style and value

system, are limited to and determined by these attempts. Thoughtful and fear-free living is possible, but it is achievable only with much work over time, never spontaneously.

15. Most newborns are not ordinarily in real danger. The sense of dread that carries over into adulthood is therefore not only unrealistic but usually also incomprehensible to most adults. This further fuels the pump of anxiety. People are generally sustained by their belief that they at least know what to expect in reality. Powerful subjective experiences that make no rational sense threaten this belief. A correct theory of human behavior cannot eliminate dread, but it can help preserve some of Man's rational self-image.

THE "PULL OF REGRESSION" AND THE "PUSH AGAINST PROGRESSING"

16. No mothering is ever perfect. Everyone experienced at least brief moments of panic when the mothering person did not respond properly or fast enough to some physiologic need. The absence of, or delay in, response at such moments causes a generalized tensing within the organism, which then uses its entire force to undo what it experiences as danger. Its crying, screaming, and shaking appear to observers as powerful efforts to summon help, but more accurately they are merely attempts to re-establish equilibrium.

17. Such powerful early experiences leave traces in the body. The wish to live without fear is synonymous with the wish to be mothered perfectly by oneself or by others, and it continues to be every person's basic goal throughout life. In adulthood it has many of the same forms it had in infancy (as listed in Section 65): to be touched, to be held and seen, to be given to, and to be unconditionally loved, welcomed, and accepted.

18. The generalized wish to be mothered by others rather than by oneself is the "pull of regression." It normally exists at least as a minor force in everyone, and it commonly interferes with intimate, mature relationships. It is responsible for much interpersonal friction and conflict, especially but not exclusively within the family. This "pull of regression" is universally an important part of Man before he matures psychologically, and it remains a central expectation till death, unless the process of individuation is essentially completed.

19. Mammals know the engulfing warmth of Mother's body, and their young are not weaned easily. Even some birds have to be pushed out of the nest before they attempt flying. In Greek mythology, tortoises were evil demons, perhaps because humans could not otherwise explain why those creatures buried their eggs in the sand and let their newborns fend motherlessly for themselves.

Unlike tortoises, we know our mothers and we understandably hold on to them tenaciously and refuse to let go. In some primitive cultures mothers paint their nipples with a black and bitter substance when their babies are old enough, to force them off the breast. This must also be done psychologically. The growing human organism does not assume responsibility for its own care automatically. It wants freedom to have its own way and to make its own decisions, but it also expects others (mothers) to do whatever it does not wish to do for itself.

20. The continued wish to be mothered is not always recognized easily. It is often expressed in the form of chronic helplessness, with the obvious aim for getting attention and help. In order to be cared for, people sometimes become sickly, chronically ill, financially dependent, or professionally incompetent. Criminal and other socially unacceptable behavior that forces society to take the offender into custody and thus care for him and chronic poverty in the midst of affluence can also be disguised forms of this hidden wish. Chronic forgetfulness, inattention, confusion, and functional learning disabilities sometimes serve the same purpose. Such pathologic expressions may remain totally unconscious, but they nevertheless keep some people helpless in spite of all the help that others repeatedly offer them.

21. Mothers who were themselves not mothered properly or not enough find it difficult to mother their children or to wean them appropriately and on time. They are often impatient with the clinging and scared baby, or else they overidentify with its needs and overlook its increasing competence. Babies who are not weaned properly—too early, too late, or too abruptly—tend to remain dependent and to become addicted to helplessness in its many forms. They unconsciously expect that helplessness will assure Mother's presence forever. Weaning in the broadest sense refers to the giving up not only of Mother's breast but also of the possibility that anyone outside the self can forever provide warmth, comforting, assurance, and nutrition.

22. The "push against progressing" is the persistent refusal to grow up and to acquire mastery, and it may be conscious or unconscious. It is also the persistent refusal to mother oneself appropriately and lovingly. The "push against progressing" is based on the delusion that infantile wishes are fulfillable, and it ignores the basic changes in circumstances that occur with time. Normally, both the wish for mothering by others and the refusal to become self-sufficient are given up only after protracted struggles, when it finally becomes obvious that no other choice exists but to adhere to the unyielding demands of reality. (See also Sections 9 and 99.)

23. Unlike the "pull of regression," which is normal and universal, the "push against progressing" is pathologic. Both the pull and the push are powerful forces that affect the personality profoundly and often determine a person's entire life-style and level of competence.

24. The "push against progressing" blossoms fully only in the absence of an effective father and in the presence of an immature mother who approves at least tacitly of the child's refusal to progress. No child dares to reject self-sufficiency for long without a powerful ally. Very early in life this is always the person who provides the mothering.

Mothers who are frightened and ill-prepared are most likely to be insensitive as they wean their babies, and they are likely to do so clumsily and at the wrong time. They commonly misjudge both the real helplessness and the growing competence of the infant, thus withholding help it really needs or overprotecting and pushing help that it does not. The child's "push against progressing" is often tolerated as an unconscious compensation for inadequate mothering. Besides, the mother may herself be addicted to it.

25. The pathologic "push against progressing" commonly masquerades as the non-pathologic "pull of regression," because the wish to be taken care of forever has less legitimacy. Although people in general do not consciously know the difference between the two, they tend to be much less tolerant of those who refuse to grow up than they are of the others who are truly afraid to proceed.

In the last analysis, the resources of society are called upon to provide for all those not producing what they consume, whatever the cause. One of the basic requirements of all past civili-

zations was therefore that Man not yield either to the "pull of regression" or to the "push against progressing." Like it or not, he was commanded to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow. In leaner days this was also a necessity for survival.

26. In highly developed and affluent democratic societies the "push against progressing" is often accepted as legitimate. Those living by this push are also voters. Self-indulgence, which consists of thoughtless acts that provide regressive gratification in an area already freed from fear, is thus encouraged.

Legislation that legitimizes the pathologic refusal to mature and that supports those living by it sabotages their chances ever to become self-sufficient, and condemns them to living without maturity, mastery or a sense of pride.

27. Politicians, journalists, and reformers are human too and not exempt from the "pull of regression" or even from the "push against progressing." They often tend therefore to overidentify with both the truly disadvantaged and those who merely claim to be helpless. So help is frequently offered at the wrong time to the wrong people, in the wrong form and in the wrong amount. Such "help" tends to perpetuate the "push against progressing," since it diverts the normal "pull of regression" into pathologic channels.

28. Healthy maturation consists of overcoming both the regressive pull and the associated push. The satisfaction and pride obtainable from mastery are soon recognized as having far greater value than receiving any handouts. Emotionally mature individuals can mother themselves whenever they need support, although they can also accept solace and help from others. Such "self-mothering" consists of settling down while in the midst of anxiety, without regressing. It requires taking appropriate time away from adult responsibilities and duties for resting, relaxation, and recreation.

29. Adulthood is correctly defined by age and body size. It does not necessarily signify intellectual or emotional maturity (as the terms "adult education" or "adult movies" prove). The chronologic, intellectual, and emotional ages can be and often are totally unrelated.

Most adults are physically grown-up children of various emotional ages. They typically act and react on the basis of their earliest life adaptations as reflected in their feelings and physio-

logic reaction patterns. They often keep their feelings hidden from public view, however, because of the fear of social disapproval. Shame and embarrassment cause people to hide and to deny their infantile connections for as long as possible.

30. Hidden or not, feelings always yield reliable clues about a person's emotional age. Behavior and body language reveal the nature of hidden feelings. Many intellectually mature adults are often emotionally not much older than toddlers. Intellectual, political, financial, and other achievements tend to confuse and to conceal the marked discrepancy that often exists between the emotional and the chronologic age.

THE BOUNDARIES OF THE SELF

31. The boundaries of the self (or ego) are not as clearly demarcated as those of the physical body. Once the umbilical cord is cut we become a separate physical entity, but our dependency on Mother continues for many years, and so does our wish to be taken care of. For a very long time humans are really incapable of caring for themselves, and their extensive need for others becomes addictive to many. In a sense, we are all born prematurely. Becoming psychologically separate is not as automatic as physical separation, which is abrupt and about which we have absolutely no say.

32. The boundaries of the self are only symbolic concepts, existing psychologically without physical representation. They cannot be observed directly, but their nature can easily be deduced from the ways a person typically relates to other people and things. Such external attributes as educational achievements, financial status, political position and power, and physical attractiveness are all irrelevant in judging the integrity of personal boundaries.

33. A person must individuate to become a separated individual, and this is achieved by clarifying and firming the boundaries of the self. An individuated person senses clearly where he begins and where he ends, what is internal and what is external. Such clarity about one's boundaries is quite uncommon, and it is hardly ever fully achieved automatically. Anxiety in varying degrees is everyone's occasional companion before individuation is achieved. Panic is commonly evoked when a non-individuated person suddenly senses his or her aloneness. A desperate need to be psychologically attached to another person, a cause, or an

activity generally drives people at such times without respite or mercy.

34. The wish to remain psychologically attached always co-exists with an opposite wish for self-sufficiency and separateness. But since all children encounter situations that they are unable to master, fear often overrides the wish for independence. Really letting go of all mothering figures is therefore a very scary prospect, analogous to, but much more frightening than, letting go of the side of a deep swimming pool for the first time and daring to venture into its middle. (See also Section 22.)

35. Those with fuzzy or imperfect boundaries tend to hold on to mothering figures longer and more tenaciously. The more clearly defined one's boundaries are, the less the fear of self-sufficiency and personal independence. Paradoxically, reasonably intact boundaries also allow a person to become somewhat emotionally dependent, since fusion is not perceived then as a real danger.

36. No real intimacy or closeness is possible without a sense of clear boundaries. Close contacts without tension are best maintained between individuals or states that are stable and secure within their boundaries and more or less equally matched in terms of power. Disturbances in the balance of power typically precipitate turmoil and unrest. When the psychologic or geographic borders are not clearly demarcated, the person or state is in constant uncertainty and flux, and closeness is commonly experienced as a dangerous encroachment.

37. Open or indefensible boundaries of states or of people are perceived as dangerous to the existence and the integrity of those involved. Invasions from the outside are believed to be an ever-present possibility, and so are takeovers and annexations by more powerful neighbors. One way to preserve oneself is to trade independence for protection; another is to arm oneself heavily and let no one come close. The first is taken by those who experience themselves as having no better choice, since their sense of vulnerability is extreme. The second way is open to those who experience their fears as less extreme or less immediate. With sufficient armor and while on constant guard they can perhaps maintain their independence and separateness.

38. Open borders of states or people are often sensed as openings through which one's "life substance" might ooze out. To-

talitarian regimes cannot prevent their populations from escaping except by coercive barriers, as the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain illustrate well. People lacking an intact psychologic skin also put up barriers to keep others from coming too close, lest they be sucked dry by them. The fear of losing all of one's strength, vitality, and even identity causes many people to continually maintain great distances from others. Intimacy can only be achieved after the boundary defect of the self is repaired.

39. People with ill-defined boundaries therefore shun real love and friendship; their predominant fear is of engulfment. They usually seek romantic "love," the security pact of the non-individuated, while rejecting the gifts of true love. Conflicts, divorce, and even violence are common in romantic "love," because the closeness eventually exceeds the tolerance for it by one of the partners while insufficient for the other. Discord often results for no other reason than one partner's wish to maintain a safe distance.

40. The earliest conscious fear is that of abandonment, and clinging is the typical way by which infants and adults defend themselves against it. Infants never feel really safe before they attain an internalized sense that Mother can be counted upon to be present. Without it, the developing organism exists essentially in a state of intermittent panic.

But all clinging must eventually come to an end, even if the boundaries between the self as a separate being and Mother have not yet been clearly demarcated. The inevitable separations intensify the panic. The greatest boundary defects result from premature or abrupt separations from Mother, since they activate the fear of abandonment.

The fear of engulfment originates from a somewhat later stage of development, and pushing away is the typical way of defending against it.

41. Both the fear of abandonment and the fear of engulfment normally co-exist in every person, along with the tendency to cling and the urge to push away. But the proportional strength of each changes from time to time, depending on later life experiences. More intense anxiety is usually associated with the earlier fear of abandonment than with the fear of engulfment, so clingers are generally at the mercy of pushers-away and are often exploited and used by them.

42. Clingers typically camouflage their panic about being abandoned by offering romantic "love," which is how they trade independence for protection. Those fearing engulfment sooner or later become suspicious of such "offers," which they eventually experience as choking. The stronger their sense of choking, the more powerfully they push away, usually using the power of anger. Pathologic relationships often persist for long periods, however, even when they are destructive to both partners, if the fears of those involved are complementary and essentially in balance.

43. Pushers-away are generally too fearful to experience their yearnings to be held or to cling, but such wishes always exist underneath. Although clingers experience much more overt anxiety and appear more fragile, they actually face a more primitive fear and are therefore usually somewhat ahead in the struggle to become whole.

44. Those basically afraid of abandonment cling to causes as well as to people. Political and religious movements and even places of steady employment serve as attachment points, as do real mothers, marriage partners, lovers, and gurus. Clingers always become followers. The anxiety and dread are held in check as long as the psychologic attachment remains essentially undisturbed.

45. Those basically afraid of engulfment and of being taken over tend to withdraw from others and into themselves, even when they appear to be socially involved. Psychologic isolation is often hidden by excessive physical mingling.

46. A person's predominant fears yield reliable clues about his or her earliest life experiences. Major alterations in later life circumstances sometimes modify a person's way of being in the world, but these are usually only temporary changes. The type and magnitude of a person's typical fears also convey useful information about the state of his or her boundaries.

Those with unclear personal boundaries tend to develop a rigid character structure which helps them define themselves. Rigidity is not an indication of strength, as flexibility and softness are not necessarily signs of weakness.

47. Those with unclear personal boundaries also tend to overidentify with others with whom they have an emotional affinity, even when they do not see that similarities exist.

The more extensive the boundary defect, the greater the confusion that results from overidentification. The fears, hurt, and rage of others are experienced by those who overidentify as if they were their own. Such overidentification always interferes with the ability to assess the real interests of those with whom one overidentifies. This is a common difficulty among those who enter the so-called helping and teaching professions.

Overidentification generally remains unrecognized, and its very existence is commonly denied because it is self-serving. Veiled or not, overidentification is a common source of much harm. For instance, decent people normally empathize and identify with the powerless and the sexually abused child, not with the abusers. But overidentification interferes with understanding the problem and it reduces the chances of containing the damage.

In general, unrecognized overidentification with others poses extreme dangers to democratic societies in the age of mass communication. Public opinion is very malleable, and the feelings of viewers can now be influenced most powerfully, and even changed directly and instantaneously. Widespread confusion and doubt are often the result, even though generally no malice is involved. Personal relationships are regularly damaged by overidentification, and it often paralyzes the ability of free societies to pursue policies of reason in their best interest (See Sections, 89, 90, and 92.)

48. People with well-defined boundaries also identify with others, but they do not overidentify. Since their psychologic skin is more intact, they are generally less fearful, and they tend to identify with those who are perceived as more powerful. They often espouse conservative positions even if they are economically not so well off, since their subjective experience is one of greater safety in the world. They are not so eager to change things as to conserve and preserve them.

49. Those with diffuse personal boundaries, on the other hand, usually experience themselves subjectively as powerless, and this colors their "choice" of values. Such people commonly identify with the have-nots, and they tend to become liberal or even revolutionary in their politics or economics, even if very wealthy. The paradox of the Kennedys or Patty Hearst is often described in terms of guilt, but it probably is better explained in terms of diffuse boundaries. Although such people usually insist on holding on to the many objective advantages that they have,

they often support those who wish to destroy the existing order. In spite of their riches, they are looking for a better world in which they too would feel safer. Wealth obviously does not insure safety, and it is not the key to real power.

50. Ill-defined personal boundaries are often shored up and strengthened by pushing against something outside the self, usually another human being. Seemingly senseless angry attacks upon objects or people often serve an important, if socially unacceptable, purpose: to define for the attacker what is not part of the self and indirectly what is.

51. People with ill-defined boundaries tend to be "other-directed." The greater their boundary confusion, the more they are dependent upon outside influences to define who they are, what they stand for or against, and what they must do. Their antennae are always acutely attuned to the outside to make sure that they either please or displease others, depending on which of their fears is predominant. Such a state of unrest and agitation eventually leads to premature physical or emotional collapse.

52. Those with reasonably well defined boundaries, on the other hand, tend to be "inner-directed." Both the sense of self-esteem and the basic understanding of right and wrong are well rooted within. They comfort and discipline themselves more competently than others. They fear less, they get hurt less frequently and less severely, and they become bitter and angry only with greater provocation. In general, fewer pressures from the outside threaten self-worth when its measurement is safely anchored within the self.

53. The attainment of well-defined ego boundaries is the ultimate goal of maturation, and it is not achievable through formal learning or by gaining insight. The self is only defined by repeated testing of one's size and strength in relation to other humans and things. This yields reliable and useful lessons only if those with whom the testing is done are predictable, consistent, and emotionally stable.

Damaged or incomplete boundaries of the self can be repaired provided that the same conditions exist; the work can be done only in long-term relationships that are deeply involving and truly reliable. They must be sturdy enough to withstand even repeated tests under the most intense stresses that can occur between people. Formal, superficial, or essentially intellectual relationships do not provide the setting needed for reaching this

difficult goal. Most current attempts to repair boundaries in psychotherapy fail because the relationship is not real enough and the mutual involvement only tenuous and insubstantial. Character change is at least as difficult a process and almost as time consuming as character formation was in the first place.

54. Only the chronologic age matters before the law, in the marketplace, and in the electoral booth. Ignoring the emotional age of individuals is unavoidable, especially in democracies, but it explains most of the gross distortions in all societies.

55. The primitive and immature nature of individuals finds wider expression today because affluence and relative national security in the West have combined to form more permissive societies. In such settings the concept of democracy is often incorrectly understood, which sometimes encourages irresponsible action. Democracy does not mean that everyone is entitled to "do his thing," but only that everyone has the right to have a say and to expect his vote to be counted.

Highly structured totalitarian societies force their populations to act in mature-like modes that obscure but do not change the underlying emotional immaturity. This limits irresponsible action, however, at least in public, and it has markedly reduced street crime. (See Section 89.)

OBSERVATIONS ON PERSONAL POWER AND ON POWERLESSNESS

56. Long before we gain consciousness we associate the most dreadful sense of danger with the experience of powerlessness. The push to gain power has such a tremendous force because it is the only hope Man has had of overcoming his sense of precariousness.

Max Weber, like many others, defined power as "the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behavior of other persons." Everyone's earliest experiences consisted of being subjected to the will of others more powerful than oneself, so Man reasoned in adulthood that power must consist of the ability to control rather than be controlled. But such definitions cannot be correct. Men and women with much political, financial, sexual, and other power to control others are not free of dread. It affects high military and governmental officials and millionaires no less than poverty-stricken and marginal people.

57. Like desperate alcoholics or drug addicts, those who experience themselves as powerless always frantically grab at any

straw, any idol to believe in, anything offering momentary relief, regardless of the cost.

58. Powerlessness and dependence are what we dread the most. All excessive pursuits of wealth, pleasure, political influence, and territorial dominance—even the pursuit of happiness itself—are attempts to minimize vulnerability and the possibility of being hurt by others. Yet happiness is not achievable by pursuing it, only by not pursuing anything.

Most people spend most of their resources throughout most of their lives to attain power in whatever form they believe it exists. But if the goal is ever reached, unexpected disappointment and despair often follow. The pursuit itself keeps hope alive. Joy and peace of mind are findable only in the absence of irrational fear, which commonly rises to the surface just as one reaches the goal of retirement, riches, or fame. This may well be the secret meaning of the biblical dictum that one cannot see God and live, for having found a god outside of the self condemns Man to never discover power within himself.

59. Confusion about the correct definition of power has always kept Man busily pursuing pleasure, distraction, wealth—or anything else he thought or felt power to be—without finding peace of mind. The push was always so intense that neither the prophets of old nor the preachers of today have ever dissuaded him from the pursuit.

Man has understandably equated finding "pleasure," which lessened his panic, with attaining real power. He felt less vulnerable for a while in the embrace of an accepting mate or in the grip of some cause, under the influence of alcohol or in the numbness of drugs—even though many of these pursuits were labeled "morally inferior." Like a drowning person, he knew that his urgent need was immediate relief, not a promise of rewards in a world to come.

60. As suggested in Sections 48 and 53, real power is a function of individuation, the attainment of well-defined ego boundaries. Then neither the fear of abandonment nor the fear of engulfment play any significant role, although the fear of non-being may continue to lurk in the background. This most horrible of fears may still haunt us in extreme or life-threatening situations.

Real power is derived from control over one's own life. Rather than being at the mercy of emotions or constantly having to

please or displease others, those with personal power face adversity as well as joy with their whole beings. Little energy is wasted on attending to unreal concerns or to unresolved conflicts from the past.

61. First religion and then science claimed to have the power to free Man of panic and dread. As long as he faithfully believed in either system the promise was kept, at least in the short run. Since death often arrived before disillusionment, the short run was all that mattered. But we no longer die quickly enough today to escape anxiety or disillusionment, and this is why they appear to be more common.

62. All delusions have the power of reality for those who live by them, because they temporarily dispel the sense of powerlessness. This is why so many deranged individuals claim that they are Christ or Napoleon.

63. True believers exist by their beliefs, even if these are objectively fallacious. Their fanaticism is derived from their semi-conscious sense that their feeling of relative security depends upon the validity of their belief system. This is why they commonly display so much zeal in proselytizing non-believers: Every convert firms up their own shakiness.

64. We have already observed in Section 15 that newborns are not ordinarily in real danger; panic is mostly a subjective experience. The newborn's physiology nevertheless adjusts to such non-objective experiences, since they are perceived as real. In general, most of our knowledge about the universe is subjective, and subjectivity contaminates practically all objective observations. The way we are is the way we survived, so we tend to hold on to our basic convictions and views about reality with the greatest tenacity. It is often obvious that what we claim as rational is no more than a poor rationalization, but we are usually the last to notice it.

Achieving objectivity requires the courage to critically examine cherished positions and to abandon those that no longer make sense, even though they may have been important sources of our security in the past.

THE BASIC WANTS OF INFANTS AND OF ADULTS

65. All the newborn "wants" is to feel safe. This is primitive pre-knowledge, obviously physiologic and not cognitive. Obser-

vations of infants allow us to deduce what each of them typically "expects":

1. It wants to be held firmly and tenderly for as long as it wants it, and no longer.
2. It wants to be touched.
3. It wants to be fed well and in time. It expects always to be satisfied and full.
4. It wants to be "seen" and immediately recognized and served.
5. It wants to be taken care of and unconditionally loved at all times.
6. It wants what it wants now, without delay.
7. It expects all its wants to be fulfilled not only instantaneously but also perfectly.

Since all adults are grown-up infants in various stages of maturity, at least traces of these wants normally continue to be present in everyone.

66. Newborns and infants obviously do not know that they want, but they behave as if they do. Their expectations can be grouped into three general categories:

1. They expect more.
2. They expect to control their caretakers.
3. They expect to be restored to a state where they do not even have to express their wants, where everything is automatically taken care of, where they are exquisitely "understood," always satisfied, and never disappointed.

The traces of these expectations that linger in adults are usually kept in hiding, since they are so patently unreasonable. The civilizing process is designed to eliminate these primitive wants, but it usually succeeds only in changing their modes of expression, and often not even in that. These basic wants commonly go underground instead of being resolved, and from there they continue to influence or even to determine many adult "choices."

67. All these wants of infants and of adults serve but one purpose: to minimize fear. No one is totally exempt from such irrational yearnings, since we are all human. We become more content when we are treated in a way that satisfies many of these

primitive wants. Our muscles are less tense or less jerky then, and we relax more easily. We feel safer.

68. People devote most of their time, energy, and resources to satisfying as many of these wants as possible; this sometimes banishes the sense of powerlessness. Many adult activities are valued essentially because they gratify these wants. Work and play; the pursuit of financial advantage, social position, or political power; fine dining; and even sexual intercourse all fit into this pattern. VIPs or "notables," for example, are "seen," recognized, and served more readily than ordinary people. Since they can often have more of what they want without delay, they can believe more easily that they are always loved. This gives them at least a temporary sense of power, and it diminishes their experience of fear. Other activities, such as the use of alcohol, serve to distract users from their failure to satisfy these wants.

69. The basic wishes of the newborn as described in Sections 65 and 66 are referred to collectively as "preverbal hunger." When it is not satisfied or not satisfied quickly enough, the healthy infant expresses its demands loudly and powerfully, totally disregarding time and circumstances.

70. These expressions of unsatisfied preverbal hunger raise the infant's temperature and blood pressure. Its body and face redden and tense, as if it intended to cancel the "injustices" heaped upon it. These outbursts of fury are collectively referred to as "preverbal rage."

Both the preverbal hunger for more and the preverbal rage at not having it satisfied are universal and normal. Significant residues of both are found in the lives of all adults until the process of individuation has been essentially completed, which is rare.

71. The history of civilization is the history of failed attempts to recognize real power and to attain it. Gaining power over others has not satisfied preverbal hunger or put preverbal rage to rest. They generally continue to gnaw at the person from within when the effects of temporary victories wear off.

72. Even the most powerful expressions of preverbal rage cannot always summon Mother or her surrogates fast enough. She cannot always satisfy the infant's demands fully or in just the

right way, even when she wishes to do so. The panic that results from the subjective sense of having been forgotten or perhaps even abandoned forever is always followed by resignation to one's inevitable fate, as already suggested in Section 5.

A deep sense of helplessness and hopelessness eventually emanates from such early experiences. They sensitize the organism to expect pain and panic as unavoidable. These are the progenitors of the expectation that life is full of disappointment and despair; they are the foundation of all distrust and at the root of all depression.

73. Profound physical exhaustion is associated with the sense of resignation each time the infant emerges from an episode of panic and rage. The "realization" of its powerlessness over the environment soon brings the panic back, but not before it expresses its fighting spirit again in explosions of preverbal rage. Yet psychologic acceptance of relative powerlessness gradually becomes an integral part of everyone's personality, as the physiology eventually tires of the repeated efforts to reach out and fight back. Narcissism is a delusional attempt to deny this painful reality.

A deep sense of futility eventually becomes an important feature at the core of most people's character structure, and it forms a matrix for their future expectations. It is referred to as "subclinical depression." This is the basis of the common sense of foreboding which holds that it is ultimately impossible to prevail. Losses later in life often activate this dormant matrix and add to it, to form the clinical syndrome of depression.

74. Months later, when the young infant learns to express itself at will, it will notice that other people seem to respond to its command. It is understandable therefore that humans tend to idealize their capacities to demand and to speak. We hold these to be almost all-powerful, since they appear to have helped us to reverse and to undo the terrible sense of helplessness.

The tenacity with which adults hold on to the delusion that they have real power when they can command others is directly proportional to their sense of panic early in life. "Difficult" and colicky babies typically become complaining, pushy, or compulsively rebellious adults. The fear they experienced early in life must have been so overwhelming that above all they dare not become vulnerable again. Commanding others is their way of appearing invincible and powerful.

FEELINGS VS. THINKING

75. Man used to believe that the earth was the center of the universe and that he was not only the crown of creation but its purpose. A major breakthrough occurred when he reluctantly accepted his less exalted position in the scheme of things and realized that the earth was merely one of the lesser planets around the sun, which itself was a minor speck in the cosmos. Giving up his egocentric point of view required Man to realize that he could no longer trust his senses as the source of knowledge. In spite of what he saw, the world was not flat. A similar revolution has yet to take place in our understanding of the nature of Man.

76. Thinking does not exist at the beginnings of life, everything the infant experiences is processed through its feelings. This tendency often persists in adulthood. Consequently, central aspects of most personality theories reflect the fears and wishes of the powerless infant within the adult. This specifically includes the various definitions of power, as noted for instance in Section 56. Such theories are therefore essentially unrealistic.

Many of our political, economic, social, and personal conflicts have remained forever without solution because our basic assumptions about Man were wrong. Inflated and pompous language as well as unnecessarily complex conceptualization are often used to hide the infantile roots of erroneous assumptions.

77. All feelings, conscious or suppressed, are the residues of a person's total previous life experience, at least from birth on. Many of the most profound influences that shape character and determine lifelong reactions occur before consciousness and memory exist. Quite often we all react very powerfully in ways that do not make conscious sense even to ourselves. This threatens our self-image of rationality, so we commonly invent rationalizations to explain and justify our reactions to ourselves and to others. This occurs automatically and usually without awareness, which explains why we also believe that our inventions are true.

Shame and humiliation are commonly associated with panic or hurt, since we frequently cannot find any reasonable explanation for their existence. We therefore often deny that they exist within us, to avoid the experience of shame, but others can clearly see them by observing our behavior and bodily expressions.

78. We hold on to our rationalizations tenaciously, since our view of ourselves as rational beings depends on their validity. Specifically this includes the rationalization that we are rational beings.

79. Modern man never knew a better way to hold irrational fear at a safe distance than to guard his self-image as a rational being. This helped him maintain the delusion that the idealized intellect was the seat of real power. At one point rationalism was progress. Man still tends to hide even from himself the fact that many of his life's most important choices and decisions are made on the basis of feelings, not rationally.

Daily speech confirms this. We are routinely told, for instance, that "the president feels that the situation is well in hand" or that "the financial analysts feel that the dollar will rise (or fall)." Even so, the suggestion that Man is essentially guided not by rational thinking but by irrational feelings is often unwelcome, since it endangers our sense of power. We have the potential to live thoughtfully, just below the angels, but too seldom do we do so. Most people still hold on to the delusion that they are more in control than they really are.

80. Feelings commonly camouflage themselves as thoughts. It is more acceptable and easier to yield to our impulses when we believe that they result from consideration and thinking. Thus we save face and maintain the delusion that we are rational beings. But much thinking is circular and ruminative and leads to conclusions already arrived at by our feelings.

Learning to really think requires first that we make room for it by diminishing the domain of feelings. It is not merely, or even essentially, achievable through academic learning alone. Notions from our infantile past in the form of feelings commonly persist as guideposts in adult living.

81. The residues of fear, hurt, or anger generally accumulate in the body over many years, from birth on. The energy required to keep these stored residues from breaking out and from overwhelming the person is directly proportional to their sum and intensity. Withdrawal into the self, various chemical crutches, and overt behavior that supports the denial are all used to maintain control for as long as possible.

The more that fear, hurt, and anger have been suppressed, the greater the damage if and when the dike finally crumbles under the internal pressure. Such uncontrolled floods of strong feelings

are universally feared, with good reason. They can, however, be discharged safely if titrated gradually in well-controlled therapeutic settings. All feelings can be expressed with the greatest intensity yet without causing any damage when they are totally divorced from any other form of physical action.

82. A mature person's satisfactions are altogether different in quality from those of newborns and childlike adults. Essentially they are based on a sense of personal mastery. A person enjoys real power when he or she is self-sufficient, psychologically and otherwise, and free from actual or emotional domination by others or by one's own impulses.

The civilizing efforts of non-totalitarian societies are directed toward this goal. They usually fail, however. Most modern philosophies of education are based on the delusional idealization of the brain as the ultimate seat of power, as if knowledge would make us the masters of our irrational nature. When the efforts succeed, they mainly develop the intellect, and little else. The young usually receive insufficient as well as incorrect guidance or help in the difficult task of maturation.

The central role of feelings, and especially of irrational fear, is usually ignored. Sometimes it is even actively denied. Yet feelings obviously do not simply disappear when their existence is not acknowledged, nor is their powerful influence thus diminished. On the contrary, lack of preparation decreases the ability of people to cope with emotionally stressful situations. This is but one example of the widespread damage wrought by the idealization of the intellect.

83. One of the basic assumptions in free societies is that truth will eventually prevail in the marketplace of ideas. This well-meaning but naive assumption is based on the false belief that societies are made up of mature individuals who reach their decisions through the exercise of reason. The quick up-and-down movements of the stock market and of popularity ratings suggest that this is as untrue in democracies as it is in totalitarian regimes.

Individuals have little freedom to express themselves independently in totalitarian societies, but many opportunities exist in democracies to act out infantile and primitive wishes. By giving a voice to normal anxieties and dissatisfactions, a free press and uncensored television make greater room for them. This exposes the decision-making process in free societies to tremendous irrational pressures. Here people can associate with each other

freely on the basis of shared concerns, yet preverbal hunger and rage are often the forces that drive them. Feelings thus often determine public policy.

DANGERS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FREE SOCIETIES

84. Fear of parents and of social institutions can bring about behavioral conformity but usually not internal change. Preverbal hunger and rage continue to exert their powerful influences even as we admire mature ways of being and strive to acquire them. Since striving requires much self-control, those not mature enough can at best strive only intermittently.

It is easy to identify with accomplished athletes and to admire their tenacity. Such identification often gives us a vicarious but short-lived sense of mastery and self-sufficiency, but this also does not change us internally. Even athletes do not always live by these standards in their non-athletic lives. They often train hard and perform well in order to fulfill their infantile wish to be recognized and served, to be loved, and to be taken care of.

85. The basic nature of Man does not change just because he is under the rule of one form of government rather than another. Everywhere he tends to act and to react in ways that would decrease his fear and maximize his sense of security. Since Man is easiest to manipulate when he is immature, dependent, and afraid, it is in the interest of totalitarian leaderships to maintain their populations ("the masses") in this state. This is also their fundamental weakness.

86. Man's nature clearly favors the success of totalitarian dictatorships. Since fear is so rampant, a clever and determined "Big Brother" who offers protection in return for obedience usually meets little resistance and has wide appeal, at least for a while. Conscious and fear-free living is only achievable through very hard work, and this goes counter to Man's natural tendency to follow the path of least resistance.

87. The opposite is true in democracies. Freedom is not a free gift, and its maintenance requires thoughtfulness, courage, and the taking of risks. Only in the relative absence of fear can long-range goals be pursued and difficult decisions made. A majority of the population in a democracy determines its course, so it is in the best interest of such a society to have citizens as free of irrational fear as possible. This ultimately is the fundamental strength of free societies. Freedom from fear maximizes the

chances to evaluate risks realistically and to arrive at conclusions rationally.

88. The basic fears of Man must therefore be overcome if affluent free societies are to survive. But even in the past, before almost-instant mass communication existed as a powerful force, they have never survived for very long. Man's hidden irrational fears can be exploited by the enemies of free societies, and they actually are, more so now than in any previous age. Television and other forms of mass media are frequently naive if innocent partners in the spread of disinformation and other "news" items that activate Man's barely dormant fears and doubts.

89. Totalitarian regimes have a built-in advantage by suppressing mass expression of preverbal hunger and rage and by treating public behavior based on fear as treason. Democracies, on the other hand, have been immobilized from time to time when the irrational fears of their citizens paralyzed the ability to govern. These situations are usually characterized as a "failure of will." (See Section 47.)

90. Democratic societies are therefore always exposed to the possibility of breaking up from within. They can only be saved by leaders who understand that their prime responsibility is to dissuade a majority of the population from acting on the basis of feelings. Winston Churchill is the best example in modern times. Even immature adults can act responsibly for short periods of time if mobilized by deft leadership. The personal maturity or immaturity of the leadership determines to a large extent the eventual fate of a democracy. Ancient Rome demonstrates well the consequences of inadequate leadership in a free society.

91. Affluence and relative security enable individuals and societies to exist in the feeling mode for a while and therefore unrealistically. This is a luxury of questionable merit, since it encourages delusional living. Self-indulgence in the pursuit of "more" is possible only when actual survival is not an immediate concern. Having more obviously does not satisfy the yearnings for more, which are irrational. (See Section 26.)

92. Public opinion polls are a feature of political life only in democracies. Politicians who wish to get elected routinely make promises based on them, and they often influence public policy. In spite of their name and claim, such polls reflect not opinions

but feelings, the most powerful of which is irrational fear. The quick swings of such polls confirm that they reflect feelings, whose nature it is to change rapidly.

We have already noted in Section 83 that fear, anger, and hurt are fanned and intensified by media exposure. Public policies and political promises based on polls that reflect emotional storms are therefore inconsistent. They are often not even in the best interest of those whose momentary preferences they reflect. By giving wide exposure to irrational fears and other feelings, the media give them credence which they lacked before the age of mass and instant communication. (See Section 47.)

93. The political push toward isolation from world affairs is usually couched in high-sounding and thoughtful phrases, but it generally represents a summation of hidden individual fears. Without courageous leadership, majorities will always be shaped by fear and policies determined by caution. History has shown, however, that minimizing risk in the short run often maximizes danger thereafter.

But children and immature adults cannot envision distant consequences, so they succeed only rarely in making long-range plans on their own. Normally they prefer junk food now over a nutritious and balanced meal a little later. In poor and rich societies alike the majority of the population tends to live much of the time by impulse and to "choose" on the basis of feelings, provided that they have the freedom to do so.

94. Powerful storms of hurt and rage are unleashed when personal or political promises remain repeatedly unfulfilled. Throughout history they have sparked revolutions and wars and caused the disappearance of the most advanced societies. Those in the West who wish to get elected often fail to understand that promises awaken and activate preverbal hunger and its accompanying preverbal rage, both of which are unsatisfiable in reality.

An explosion of unrealistic expectations is often kindled by new hope that powerful yearnings to be cared for can be perfectly satisfied after all. Cynicism about the political process in democracies represents only a small part of the damage that is inevitable when such promises are made and then violated.

95. Totalitarian regimes are not safe from self-destructive decisions either, as Hitler and Stalin demonstrated well. Here too the maturity or immaturity of the leadership and the quality of their judgments determine the fate of these societies. But the

mettle of dictators is not tested by powerful irrational pressures from below. The push by individuals for more at the expense of society's overall interest has few if any opportunities to express itself. Irrational fear is given no room to influence public policy. Totalitarian regimes can pursue unpopular long-range goals, sometimes for very long periods of time, before collapsing as a result of their inherent weaknesses.

96. The mistaken notion that adulthood is related to maturity has had disastrous consequences in modern permissive societies. The raising of children by adults who are still emotionally in childhood is responsible for societies with childish mores. Having fun and seeking thrills or distractions are not solid bases for building character. The self-indulgence that typifies much public and private behavior in such societies could not have been so prominent before the age of waste and affluence, when self-restraint and individual responsibility were needed for survival.

Nations arise from geographic and historical factors merging with the aspirations of a dynamic population in need of an identity and a home. Like individuals, nations evolve slowly and continuously. Historical forces continue to exert their influence, and from time to time they break up nations no less than they form them.

Excessive fat and feasting without exercise and with an insistence upon remaining comfortable and always at rest cause occlusion of life-sustaining blood vessels not only in individuals. Societies that regularly shun taking necessary risks also stagnate and become calcified. They lose their agility and their capacity to respond to disease as well as to danger, and they die.

97. The family is among the first victims of self-indulgent living. Proper parenting is especially crucial when children are raised in nuclear families without grandparents, uncles, aunts, and other family members. Many such children have only one parent to help them accept the constraints of reality. An increasing percentage of the population in many advanced societies lives under the delusion that such constraints can be avoided, with tragic consequences both to the individual and to society.

98. The mature satisfaction from work and from a job well done is also giving way to a sense that it is almost unfair to make a person work to make a living. From the perspective of the young and perplexed infant, any demands to do anything difficult are indeed unfair, unjust, and harsh, arbitrarily made by

unknown and unreasonable outside forces. From this perspective, all authority is a necessary evil, since it insists that some standards be met. Many adults live this way also, and they are always preoccupied with opposing every authority. Still seeing themselves as small, they experience everyone in a position of power as high-handed, merely because their tendencies to live impulsively may be challenged.

Labor unions were originally established to gain dignity and a fair wage for honest work. They were supported not only by their members but also by many others. But under constant pressure to get "more," some unions have deteriorated into mouthpieces for the preverbal hunger of their members. (This was even somewhat true of the "Solidarity" movement in Poland.)

Expressions of preverbal hunger regularly give rise to outbursts of preverbal rage. These are safe and necessary in therapeutic settings, but otherwise they lower morale and sabotage the productivity of workers and the quality of their output.

99. The survival of free societies, in which Man can speak his mind and determine his governance, requires that both preverbal hunger and its accompanying rage be recognized for what they are, and that fanning such feelings not be allowed. Expectations based on unrealistic wishes are even more dangerous when they relate to justice, equality, and fairness, which are never perfect. When public "opinion" demands absolute justice as a condition for self-acceptance and for the acceptance of others, free societies are condemned to let themselves be enslaved, or die.

Historically, affluent free societies have always failed to repel the onslaughts of barbarism. They have not lost every battle, but eventually they weakened and disappeared. Their peoples usually followed their feelings and lacked both understanding and determination to defend themselves. They are often unable to mobilize the moral strength, the stamina, and the will needed to survive.

If a free society is to be more than a passing historical episode, its public policies must insist that each individual be responsible for all his or her deeds. It must actively shape the characters of free men and women capable of governing themselves, since no one ever is born free, nor is anyone free of fear before he or she is freed from it. This very difficult task is made easier when the laws of the land reward personal independence and self-sufficiency, which only develop in the crucible of no-choice.