

# The Challenge to Change

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The goal of this course is to provide an atmosphere in which a person, through self discovery, can move toward psychological maturity. This movement toward maturity calls for a deep and sincere examination of attitudes and values . . . and a willingness to change in the face of new insights and knowledge.

In this course we use seven terms to describe aspects of the life process which leads to psychological maturity:

Structure, Function, Need. These first three aspects are the "givens"—that which already exists and which we must come to terms with and accept.

Dialogue, Method. The next two describe the process of conscious interaction between the individual and the "givens."

Nature, Social Outcome. The last two aspects are the outcome of the process on an individual and collective basis.

Everything in the universe has a structure. "Structure" is another way of saying the way things are. It includes all laws that govern relationships. For man, the life process begins with the awareness that there is structure and that all things are subject to it.

The function of anything is determined by its structure. In the case of a machine, function is automatic. For a plant or an animal it is natural or instinctive. But for human beings, correct function calls for consciousness leading to a continual process of discovery and action.

All living things have a built-in need to be in right relationship with the structure. That is what motivates us to search for meaning and so we enter into a dialogue with the structure. This involves the asking of questions, the process of trial and error, the stretching of the mind to discover, to understand, to know.

Dialogue leads inevitably to the choice of a method. If a person chooses the goal of psychological maturity (or, in other words, reaching his highest potential), he must also accept the fact that the method for reaching this goal is already determined. For the method, too, is part of the structure.

When persisted in over a period of time, the chosen method becomes part of a person's nature. The effect produced in the world by the sum total of all people's natures is what we call social outcome. For the world is as we are. And it is therefore crucial that an increasing number of individuals change their natures in the direction of maturity, responsibility, and the realization of their highest potential.

# structure

Structure is everything that is. It's reality. All. Everything from a grain of sand (a simple structure) to the order of the universe (a complex structure). Structure is "the way things are."

Everything is a structure . . . existing within a greater structure . . . related to and interdependent with all other structures. For example, a fish is a structure living within a structure (the ocean), related to all other fish, plants and the ocean itself.

On a physical level, man is a structure which exists within a structure (the planet) and is dependent on other structures: sun, air, water, plants, animals and people.

Structure determines what I can and cannot do. I cannot fly, but I can build airplanes. I can share ideas with you, but I cannot force you to accept them. I can know many things, but I cannot know everything. There will always be mystery.

What is possible and impossible is determined by the unchangeable, dependable, ultimate structure we call "natural law." All science is based on natural law. I cannot change natural law, I can only discover and obey. Each new discovery adds to our knowledge and understanding of the ultimate structure.

We are constantly doing things once called impossible. But nothing in the ultimate structure changed to make this possible. We just discovered-and obeyed-natural laws set by the structure. And with each new discovery of basic truth, the structure of the individual's mind changed.

This—the changeable structure of the mind—is the concern of this course: seeing reality, changing attitudes, and taking new action.

Structure determines the purpose of my life. There is an order, a plan, a correct functioning for every structure. The purpose of all living things is to grow. A redwood must grow from a seed to a seedling, to a tree, and then give off its seed again in order to live.

Man's destiny is to grow to his highest potential. To discover and claim the true purpose of his life and act accordingly.

Herein lies the hope and promise for our planet.

## **Main Point**

The way of life for a man begins with his awareness that there is a reality . . . a greater authority . . . an ultimate structure outside himself, to which he is subject: life requires obedience.

# function

The function of anything is determined by its structure. To ask what is the function of anything is to ask, "How does it work?" "What does it do?" "What is its meaning?" "Why was it created?" And to understand the function of a human being, one must ask these questions of himself.

Every structure has a function. To understand the correct function of anything is to know the purpose for which it was created. A doctor must know how the kidney or liver is designed to function in order to diagnose malfunction. If it is not functioning in the correct way, it is not doing what it is designed to do. When a person discovers, claims, and acts upon what he is designed to do, he experiences correct functioning.

Function is dynamic, alive. In the case of a machine, correct functioning is automatic. In the case of a plant, it is natural. But a human being is more complex; he can function consciously or unconsciously. In other words, he can become aware of what his true purpose (potential) is and function accordingly, or he can remain unconscious and function on a hit-and-miss basis.

The human is structured to function on four levels:

Physical	Experiencing, sensing
Mental	Understanding, comprehending
Emotional	Feeling
Spiritual	Seeking meaning

Correct functioning at each of these levels is characterized by a minimum of resistance. This comes with increased knowledge of where one is going and how to get there; what one is doing and how to do it; how to diagnose a problem and how to solve it.

The correct functioning of a human being is to:

- Perceive reality—know truth
- Have a spirit of good will
- Take creative initiative in relationships and situations

To exercise creative initiative a person must:

- Know his goal
- See what to do to realize it
- Act accordingly

Man was designed to be fully functioning; to realize his highest potential. What is required is to align his wants and desires with what reality—the structure—calls for. The outcome is freedom, and a sense of meaning that everyone consciously or unconsciously seeks. When shared with others, that meaning becomes a spirit powerful enough to move all mankind.

## Main Point

Man must see clearly what he was created to do; accept that responsibility; act accordingly: **DO**.

# need

All living things have needs. The structure requires that in order for us to function correctly-to fulfill our purpose as humans-all of our built-in needs must be met. And whatever our need, be it physical, mental, emotional. or spiritual, the structure can meet it.

The predicament of the planet is that too many people do not see reality (structure) clearly. They do not realize what their true function is. They pursue desires and wants in place of true needs; short-range goals are put before the quest for meaning in their lives. In other words, they settle for too little.

The hope is for a new consciousness of reality, a new understanding of what we are meant to do (function). Then we will strip away illusion, respond to true needs and experience maturity which is the destiny inherent in man.

	<b><u>ILLUSION</u></b> (Out of right relationship to the structure)	<b><u>REALITY</u></b> (In right relationship to the structure)
Physical	Cigarette smoking is necessary to quiet my nerves or keep my weight down.	Cigarette smoking is injurious to my health.
Mental	My ideas are as good as those of anyone else.	My ideas are good only if they meet the test of truth.
Emotional	I need to receive love to be fulfilled.	I need to give love to be fulfilled.
Spiritual	If I find happiness, I will have meaning in my life.	If I find meaning for my life, I will experience happiness.
The Crucial Question	What do I want out of life?	What is life asking of me?

## Main Point

We must recognize that everyone has needs which must be met in order to be in right relationship with the structure. We must distinguish between wants, desires, and true needs to be able to function at our highest.

# dialogue

Dialogue is the search to be in right relationship. It is a trial-and-error process of testing an idea or an assumption to see if it is valid. It is a way of discovering what works and what does not work.

Dialogue exists in many dimensions. One can dialogue with nature, with people, within one's self, or with ideas. In short, dialogue is the interaction of the person with the structure (the way things are).

It involves the asking of questions: How? Where? When? What? Why?

The purpose of dialogue is to discover answers to the questions:

- What is the nature of the environment?
- What is the purpose of my existence?
- What do I need?
- What must I do for meaningful survival?
- What must I do to attain psychological maturity?
- What must I do to reach my ultimate potential?

There are prerequisites which must be met in order for the dialogue to successfully lead to discovery. One must:

1. Genuinely desire to know, not just be "curious"
2. Maintain an attitude of openness in order to perceive clearly
3. Be willing to accept and act upon the truth thus perceived (regardless of how it may impinge upon my pet ideas!)

Meaningful dialogue leads to discovery of the method-the way we must function to be in right relationship.

Each of us is in relationship with the entire world. At this time in history our willingness to enter into conscious, responsible dialogue means survival for mankind.

## **Main Point**

For man to continue his existence and have meaning in his life, it is crucial that he search out answers to what the structure is asking of him in this time and place, and that he act on what he discovers.

# method

Method is the action taken on what is discovered through dialogue. The method we are concerned with is that which leads to right relationship with the structure. Being in right relationship leads to psychological maturity, toward reaching our highest potential.

If right relationship with the structure is my conscious goal, the means for reaching that goal are set. Yet, we continue to think that we can choose war as a means and peace as a goal. We think we can hang onto hostility, hate and prejudice, and still have good will. We think we can pursue money, power and pleasure, and still reach the goal of right relationship.

Right relationship involves all areas of existence—of a person with himself, with other people, and with the environment around him. Someone who is in right relationship with himself is an integrated, self-actualizing person, able to function with creative initiative. He is open, giving, responsive to others, and in harmony with his environment.

The structure already contains the method for reaching that goal. The method is:

1. To see the world as it really is and that what affects one, affects all. To see that responsibility is to all, not just to one or the few.
2. To examine personal conditioning. To see where prejudices, misconceptions, hurts, hostility, anger, and illusions have been acquired. Then to begin the process of de-conditioning: seeing that the old patterns no longer apply to the current situation, and dropping or changing them. The results are exciting and rewarding.
3. To shift attitudes and actions from being resistant to non-resistant, from being self-oriented to being "other-oriented." To see that I am not the center of the universe; the world does not revolve around me.
4. To act. Method requires total commitment to action on what is discovered. Commitment is an act of the will.

Acting on the answers means establishing new behavioral patterns. We become what we act out. The old patterns were built one act at a time—so will the new.

## **Main Point**

Man must choose the goal of right relationship with the structure. And he must act on the pre-determined means for reaching that goal: the means determine the end and vice versa.


# nature

Any method, when persisted in over a period of time, becomes a part of a person's nature. If someone uses harsh methods, we call him a harsh person; if someone uses gentle methods, we call him a gentle person. Persistence in the method to right relationship produces a whole nature, which is man's birthright—being at one with all life, rather than separate. The demand of the new age is for many people to choose consciously the method that will lead to their true, whole natures.

We often excuse anger, greed and other emotions by saying that they are "just human nature." Or that wars must continue for the same reason. But that is true only if we are willing to settle for something less than our potential. Here we are concerned with something much more—the true nature of man.

It is not beyond our reach. Think of when you have experienced functioning at your highest. What then is the nature of a person who constantly manifests the spirit of goodwill—who perceives truth and acts on it?

History has provided a number of individuals as guides to the true nature of man: Buddha, Jesus, Gandhi, Mohammed, Einstein, Schweitzer, Teilhard de Chardin, and others. These few are single figures, isolated in history. But mankind is moving and maturing. At this point in time, many can and must become what Jesus was what Buddha was.



The true nature of anything is  
the highest it can become.

# social outcome

The world is a product of the people who inhabit it. If it is a good world, it is because the people have a good spirit. If it is a bad world, it is because the people have a bad spirit. As people change their natures, the world changes.

The world is an expression of human nature. This we call "social outcome." If the world is to change it will be the result of many people changing. The social outcome we have now is the result of what has been set into time by persons. If we seek maturity in the world, we must first manifest it in ourselves.

People are under the illusion that it does not really make any difference how they live. The mission of this work is to help many people see that they do make a difference in the world. When people see this reality, the way is open for them to embark on the path that leads to fulfillment, to the realization of their highest potential, to life. This is the social outcome men have dreamed of over the ages. It is a possibility. But it will become a reality only if a substantial number of people—a creative minority—see the possibility, commit themselves to its realization, and move forward in positive action.

History has consistently shown us-time after time-that a small group of dedicated people can change the world. The number of individuals has seldom been great, only their commitment. The only thing preventing us from establishing a world fit for our children-a world without war and famine and greed-is this same dedication in a relatively small number of whole people.

Any change we make sets into time a new Social Outcome.

There is a choice.  
It does make a difference.  
It starts with you and me.

Think of yourself as a teacher, a transmitter of values and ideas, a walking, breathing broadcasting station with extraordinary powers and capabilities. For you are just that! An individual committed to attaining his highest potential and acting out his commitment is an awe-inspiring and powerful demonstration—a catalyst of change. When we see this possibility for ourselves, we experience hope. As the number of people acting out such a commitment grows, this hope becomes a vision, an attainable reality, a social outcome.

## **Main Point**

The world is as we are. The world will be as we become.