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SOME ETHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL ELEMENTS  
IN ERICH FROMM'S CONCEPTION OF MAN

by

LAWRENCE A. FORMAN

Thesis submitted in partial  
fulfillment of requirements  
for the Degree of Ordination

Hebrew Union College-  
Jewish Institute of Religion  
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Referee: Dr. Robert L. Katz

## DIGEST OF THESIS

Man has unique psychic as well as biological needs which must be fulfilled in the process of existence. The psychic needs include the need for relatedness, rootedness, transcendence, identity, and for a frame of orientation and devotion. These needs can be met through unproductive or productive ways of assimilation and socialization.

Modern man's basic challenge is to find a way between freedom and authority as he attempts to fulfill his needs. Once man has cut the primary bonds which gave him security as a child, he stands alone and free. Now he is a separate entity distinct from others and the world. He has two choices. He can overcome his aloneness and separateness by taking the unproductive solutions where man relates to others and the world symbiotically, giving up his freedom to irrational, external authorities, or conforming to mass opinion; or he can choose to relate in a mature way, striving to develop his awareness, his reason, his capacity to love, to the point of transcending narcissistic involvement and arriving at a new harmony with the universe. Here man faces his freedom using his mind and reason. The productive orientation is the most mature and leads to mental health.

Chapter One presents a development of the problem and some basic perspectives, showing the role of freedom in human existence, the psychic needs, and how the character structure is formed. Chapter Two deals with the origins and forms of the non-productive solutions to the conflict between authority and freedom, and involves a discussion of the vital areas affected when these solutions are taken. Chapter Three includes a picture

of the productive solutions and the mature view of religion, faith, ethics, love, conscience, and work. Chapter Four includes a critique of Fromm as presented by John H. Schaar, Walter Kaufmann, and Ruth L. Munroe. Some of the implications and challenges of Fromm's thought regarding the Rabbinate and theology are discussed, with a section on Fromm, Judaism, and Jewish sources.



TO VIVIAN, WITH DEEPEST LOVE

AND

TO DR. ROBERT L. KATZ FOR HIS GUIDANCE AND UNDERSTANDING

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## PREFACE

Dr. Erich Fromm is a socio-psychoanalytic theoretician who has the excellent ability to construct concepts, clarify ideas, and formulate frames of reference which can lead each of us to re-evaluate our position, and guide us toward finding significance and order in an otherwise bewildering world.

His first premise is that a man is ruler of his world because of his reason, and can attain most anything he desires if he puts forth the effort. His second premise is that our society must change from material-object emphasis, to the human, ethical realm, for then many individuals will become healthier, less anxious, and less neurotic, thus leading to a sane society. He posits, therefore, the integral relationship between psychological and social forces and their intimate influence on man. He proves through historical analysis that social and cultural patterns underlie man's psychological structure and influence his needs.

Fromm's psychoanalysis is based on original Freudian hypotheses which he has modified and extended, adding the most up to date insights and knowledge from modern science. He is a creative-revisionist of Freudian theories, a liberal, a humanist, a social scientist, and an idealist.

Fromm has gathered his materials from the great men and ideas of the past, together with his own experience in psychoanalytic practice and as a teacher. Born in Germany in 1900, he studied Psychology and Sociology at Heidelberg University where he obtained his Doctorate. He also studied and taught at the Berlin Psychoanalytic institute. In this country, he

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taught at Yale University, Columbia University, Bennington College, and is Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Mexico. He also lectures at the William Alllison White Institute of Psychiatry. Dr. Fromm is not only a theoretician, teacher, and psychiatric practitioner, but he is also very active in trying to change society to benefit mankind. Recently he took it upon himself to go to Washington with David Riesman in an effort to put across his views on Humanistic ethics.

Fromm has drawn heavily from the humanistic trends in Judaism and has demonstrated great knowledge in this area. This aspect of Fromm will be discussed further on.

In Chapter One I propose to present a full development of the human, existential situation. This will consist primarily of Fromm's view of man, his origins, his needs, the challenges which face him, and his place in the world. This will deal with the notion of man's individuation and his alternatives of freedom or authority, combined with some of the other choices that confront him as he moves through life.

Chapter Two will deal with the origins and forms of the Non-Productive or unproductive "solutions" man often takes in order to meet his basic conflict between authority and his growing individuation and freedom. The unproductive approach is shown in relation to some of the vital areas in which man is involved such as work, religion, ethics and love. Some personality types in which these attitudes are prevalent are discussed along with the orientations themselves. "Alienation" will be pointed to as a symptom of our non-productive way of life. It will further be illustrated that though the non-productive solutions are powerful, they

are self-defeating and ultimately fail to meet man's psychic needs in a mature, mentally healthy way.

Chapter Three will include a description of the Productive ways a man might take to meet his human needs and to find relation with life and the world. The major areas of love, religion, and work are again taken up but this time with the productive approach applied. For Fromm, this is the ideal way to face life. All people are a blend of the productive and the non-productive orientations, says Dr. Fromm, but the individual whose character structure and ways of meeting life emphasize the productive attitudes will be the happier, healthier individual, and have the chance for fulfillment, as he squarely faces his freedom and his human situation.

In Chapter Four I will present the major criticisms of Fromm as revealed in the writings of Walter Kaufmann and John Schaar.

My personal reaction and evaluation will be included, with an attempt to show Fromm's close tie to the Jewish sources he often uses. Some of the implications and challenges of Fromm's writings regarding theology, and the Rabbinate, will be discussed.

My primary sources will be the works of Erich Fromm. These include Escape From Freedom which deals with Fromm's concept of the character structure of modern man, his psychological and sociological problems and conflicts and especially with the meaning of freedom for the individual and his world. He shows historically how man has emerged into freedom, away from slavery and oppression into a freedom to actualize the self. He illustrates how man, now alone without a master, must formu-

ulate what his life is to be. But man is afraid of freedom because it implies responsibility so he tries to submit to new authorities. Rather than develop himself creatively, man submits to a leader, a state or any external power that he feels might give him security. But Fromm is an optimist and holds that man is good and life is good and he points the way for man to creatively actualize himself in freedom. His second book, Man For Himself, deals with the problems of ethics, of norms and values leading to the realization of man's self. Here he re-affirms the validity of humanistic ethics for self-realization. Positing that ethical relativism is not any criterion for a standard of values, he maintains that the true source for a high ethic is to be found in man himself.

This work is integral to Fromm's philosophic-psychological system as he shows how his humanistic-ethical ideals are based on objective and universal standards.

The Sane Society, presents a discussion of man's basic needs, which continues his analysis of human nature and society. He shows how the society influences man and why society must be directed to meet man's needs. He constructs a picture of the good society and his concept of the ideal society.

In Zen Buddhism and Psychoanalysis, Fromm draws the East and West together, pointing out the rifts between modern psychoanalysis and the way of Zen as concerns the individual productively finding his way through life and meeting his human needs in a fulfilling way.

Fromm becomes specific and more penetrating in his analysis of some human needs and what it means to live the best, most fulfilling

way.

Fromm becomes specific and more penetrating in his analysis of some human needs and what it means to live the best, most fulfilling existence in Psychoanalysis and Religion where he demonstrates how man has attempted to fill his need for a frame of orientation and devotion through religion; and in The Art of Loving, where he shows that enlightened, mature love is the only productive answer to the human need for relatedness.

In these books he presents his views on God, human love, and integrity and shows how the mature individual can synthesize such terms into meaningful life experiences.

The Forgotten Language, is a book based upon the premise that all men have the same existential needs and universal concerns. This can readily be shown in the ways men have expressed themselves through fairytales, myths, and dreams.

Sigmund Freud's Mission is a critique of Freud where Fromm shows that the Id is not the only driving force in man. Moreover, man has many good instincts and drives and is "better" than Freud gives him credit for.

Marx's Concept of Man illustrates the wide range of Fromm's interest and scope. Here he wrote an extensive introduction to many of Marx's Economic and Philosophical manuscripts, pointing up the vital role of the Social-Economic system and how it can benefit or alienate man.

His most recent book, May Man Prevail, indicates his political and ethical views about what the world is at present and what man might work and hope for. These last two works show that his present interests center about the current political scene and the relation between society and the individual.



Fromm's ideas are powerful and incisive, often stirring up controversy and discussion. Most anyone writing on modern psychoanalysis includes Dr. Fromm within that conceptual framework. One outstanding critic who devoted an entire book, Escape From Authority, to a survey of Fromm's works is John H. Schaar. Walter Kaufmann briefly dispenses with Fromm within the context of his Critique of Religion and Philosophy. Ruth L. Munroe, in Schools of Psychoanalytic Thought, attempts to place Fromm integrally within a general context of Adler, Horney, and Sullivan. These commentators, with Calvin Hall and Gardner Lindzey, who wrote Theories of Personality, will constitute my secondary sources.

The general method I have used in writing this Thesis is summary and paraphrase. I have documented those apt quotations noted since the materials used can all be found in the works of Erich Fromm, which are in lucid, concise English. The wording and explanations are my interpretations of Fromm's thinking.

## INTRODUCTION

Man is a creature with specific functions and needs. These needs are universal and embedded in the developmental process of evolution. Man can meet his needs in a variety of ways. Basically, he can meet his needs "productively" where he lives the kind of life which is good and which leads to his health and betterment, or he can confront his life on an "unproductive" level, which leads to his alienation from himself, from his society, and from the world, to ultimate destruction.

These needs are based on objective knowledge of what man is, and on what he must strive for if he is to live on earth. Fromm would judge the merit, worth, happiness and virtue of a person on the method and extent to which he has filled his needs in a productive, creative, spontaneous manner.

Mental health is thus based on objectivity, and can be defined not as the adjustment of the individual to his society, but in terms of the adjustment of society to the needs of man. The society is therefore "good" insofar as it helps the individual meet his needs in a healthy way.<sup>1</sup>

The concept of mental health follows from the basic conditions of human existence. These criterion are valid for all men in all ages.

"Mental health is characterized by the ability to love and to create, by the emergence from incestuous ties to clan and soil, by a sense of identity based on one's experience of self as the subject and agent of one's powers, by the grasp of reality inside and outside of ourselves, that is, by the development of objectivity and reason."<sup>2</sup>

In trying to establish these basic needs, Fromm begins by combining an empirical with a philosophical analysis of human nature, and

the reasons for the emergence of the needs.

The central psychological need is for relatedness...to oneself, to one's fellow, and to the cosmos. This need for relatedness takes many forms according to the person and the culture in which he lives. Rootedness is a second deep need. Transcendence is a third basic need. Because each must answer the question "Who am I?", a fourth need, for a sense of identity, arises. Fifthly, man has the need for a frame of orientation and devotion which ties in with the other needs of man for relatedness to something other than our finite existence; for some ultimate concern, some ideal object of devotion that can elevate our lives.

All these needs can be met in either of two directions, but they must be met. Man can work and produce and create and become an integrated self and productively meet his needs. Man can also relate symbiotically, giving up his freedom to some irrational, external authority.

Fromm next takes up some of the personality orientations which have arisen as man attempted to meet and deal with these needs. He classifies these under the headings of the Non-Productive and Productive trends.

One's character is formulated by the interaction and adaptation of human needs to the particular mode of existence of a given society.<sup>3</sup>

"...It is the form in which human energy is channeled in the process of assimilation and socialization."<sup>4</sup>

Assimilation is the process by which one relates to the world by acquiring and using things. There are five major orientations to the

process of assimilation, four of which are non-productive, the fifth being the productive. The non-productive ways include the receptive, the exploitative, the hoarding, and the marketing orientations. The productive orientation is where the individual attempts to express his inherent potentials through his work and his daily activities.

Socialization is the way people relate to others and to themselves. Here there are also five forms, four of which are non-productive. These include masochism, sadism, destructiveness, and automaton conformism. The fifth way is the productive way of socialization which Fromm sees as "love."

The orientations in both assimilation and socialization are usually combined. For example, the person whose assimilative style is exploitive will tend to socialize by way of sadism.

Fromm is unique in his attempt to relate specific personality types to particular social-economic patterns. He makes it a point to show that a given character never represents one of the non-productive orientations or the productive orientation exclusively, but is a blend of the various types. It is the life-style, the character structure as a whole which will lean toward the productive or non-productive orientation. It is often the person who can find some balance between the positive and negative aspects of a given character orientation who will be a "productive" personality, and who will be able to make some sense out of life.

When we do not continually strive to become "fully born," we regress. Some of the mechanisms we use to escape from our freedom involve the various aspects of authoritarianism. These include the

masochistic-sadistic trends, and submission to somebody or something outside the self in an attempt to fuse and become one with, another. In Fromm's terms, authority refers to "an interpersonal relation in which one person looks upon another as somebody superior to him."<sup>5</sup>

Fromm distinguishes between rational and irrational authority, showing irrational authority to be the dominant characteristic of authoritarianism. Automaton conformity is yet another way the individual attempts to escape from his freedom. All of these mechanisms are especially manifest in what we would call the "symptom of alienation."

The productive solutions are the mature ways man meets the world. In this orientation man takes hold of himself and attempts to meet life and his existence from the depths of his being. Here he faces his freedom using his mind and reason, holding mature love as the goal. This can only come about if one's character is oriented in a way that manifests and produces this kind of love.

In order to build mature personalities and mentally healthy ways of living, we must first view the nature and needs of man. Once we have formulated his needs, have seen the basic problems he faces, and how he has met these problems, then we can construct the productive solutions to help man live a meaningful, creative existence.

## CHAPTER ONE

WHAT IS MAN? SOME BASIC PERSPECTIVES

The human person is unique because he is life aware of itself.<sup>1</sup>  
 Man is the only created being who can develop by changing his environment and making it serve his needs.<sup>2</sup> He is animal in that he breathes, has physical needs such as hunger, thirst, sleep, and is controlled by the fact that he is born, lives, and must die. Man's biological needs are universal though reaction and adjustment to these requirements are primarily conditioned by one's heredity and cultural differences. These biological needs are basic and it is imperative that they be met in such a way as to allow for man's highest development.

At the point where biological problems desist, specifically human, psychological problems begin. For man is also human. He has rationality and reason, he has deep, severe feelings and emotions which are his unique response to life, and which form the foundation of his psychic needs.

Man is the culmination of all creatures. He is the only one who has freed himself from a completely integral tie with nature, and who can, because of his rationality, create his own purposes.

From Social Dependency to Individuality...

Man's emergence from a dependent infant to a mature independent individual is well illustrated in what Fromm terms "The Adam and Eve Myth."<sup>3</sup> The garden of Eden is paradise, where all of man's needs are taken care of; where God, who is the omnipotent, protecting, and loving father, watches over all and instructs man as to what is right and wrong. In the garden

man is secure. He is totally dependent upon God and is not forced to stand alone nor to take any initiative. Man has peace here and if he wishes, he doesn't have to make decisions or even to think at all.

Disaster strikes. Man is tempted by the serpent, (which may be a symbol for the free will of man crying for independence) and man eats the forbidden fruit of a tree, the possession of which gives him the knowledge to distinguish between good and evil. God is angry because His command was disobeyed and He expels Adam and Eve from the garden. They are made aware of their freedom to choose, to will, to decide, and are thrown "East of Eden," into adulthood. Now work comes into existence and man is forced to be self-sufficient and exist "by the sweat of his brow."

Adam must now think for himself, provide for his own needs and eke out existence while he is alive. Man disobeyed God, the first act of freedom, the beginning of reason and of true humanity. Man thereby grew by separating himself from the oneness and harmony of nature which he once enjoyed.

This is the story of human growth and development; what Fromm calls "the process of individuation."<sup>4</sup>

When man is an infant he is completely dependent upon mother and father, in fact, the child finds it difficult to distinguish itself from the outside world. He is inextricably tied to the wills of his parents and can have only limited freedom. As the child grows he gradually realizes he is a "self" and that he has differing desires and wishes from many around him.

As he matures, he gains more and more freedom from his environment, and he comes into fuller independence. Through education and the use of his own powers he emerges from the insorptive, taking-in, completely dependent state. This is the situation which brings great security because every need is taken care of. The higher level, however, is the substantive state, where man makes his own decisions, controls external objects, and acts by means of his own brain.

Man is now "condemned" and "privileged" to stand outside the garden, "East of Eden," to face adulthood as a fully conscious individual. Now man is free to develop and express his individual uniqueness as he has become free from world which gave security and re-assurance.<sup>5</sup>

And though man may desire to return to the dependent state, to the garden, to infancy, he cannot. His reason keeps him from succumbing, reminding him that those who re-enter do so only by the path of insanity. "Having lost paradise, the unity with nature, he has become the eternal wanderer, (Odysseus, Oedipus, Abraham, Faust)..."<sup>6</sup>

Though this "symbolic myth" is descriptive of the actual situation of man's ideal growth, development and emergence from the infant state, the majority of us fall short in renouncing primary ties in proportion to our increasing strength and intelligence. Only as the self grows, as it emerges from dependency, will stability result. When the self doesn't grow in proportion to its corresponding separation from primary ties, man becomes more aware of his separateness from others and the world, and he is left with feelings of insecurity, insignificance and uprootedness. Now he will seek new ways of escape from this freedom to actualize his "self."



Where does man seek to hide? He hides by retreating from reality. He flees into submission, "or some kind of relationship to man and the world which promises relief from uncertainty, even if it deprives the individual of his freedom."<sup>7</sup>

Often the non-productive escape mechanisms take the form of neuroses. The degree of severity of the neurosis becomes the degree to which the individual has not been able to tolerate his freedom as a separate, independent self and has adopted destructive, submissive, or conformity attitudes.

Now man's new freedom has become both the essential problem, and the wonderful chance for fulfillment in human existence. Now man can either unite himself with others through love and creative work, or he can find a less productive type of security by submitting to authority and/or conforming to society.

#### The Role of Freedom in Human Existence...

Fromm is committed to the idea that man is free, that freedom is inherently characteristic of human existence and the meaning of freedom depends upon what man does with it.<sup>8</sup>

Man determines his own conduct, says Fromm. Because his behavior issues from his own purposes, man is morally responsible for his actions. Man is the only creature able to rationally will how he will live out his allotted, finite, existence. Because of his freedom, he alone shoulders the responsibility to fashion some meaningful existence for himself.

A man expresses his character through his will. Insofar as we

know the particular mode of a given character structure, so we can determine the way the person will "will" his actions.<sup>9</sup> Fromm agrees with John Duns Scotus in stressing the role of man's will in determining and realizing one's individuality. It is self-realization which can bring satisfaction and meaning to life, and it is up to each man to will this to be, for the will is the determining principle.<sup>10</sup>

The meaning of freedom for modern man can only be understood in relation to his character structure and to the social process. The self is formed only in a social situation, and thus self-realization must be a cooperative venture. Beginning with the hypothesis that man has an inborn, basic nature, Fromm maintains that society is created by man to meet his basic needs. Through interaction of the society and the individual, by each person assuming some responsibility for the common welfare as well as for his own individual well being, each man can begin to realize his own highest development. Thus the bases for one's character structure are found in the relations between an individual and his society and not exclusively (as Freud thought) in various aspects of biological, inherited id constructs.

There are two major sources of tension within the social order. One occurs around his concept of character lag between the social character and economic development of the society. The other is Fromm's concept of the psychic needs which are inherent in the individual and which must be met. If the society fails to provide for the satisfactions of the basic needs, then revolution or reform will occur to change the society.

Today, no society has yet been found or devised to productively

meet all of man's basic needs. Fromm says it is possible to create this kind of society, and he draws a picture of this ideal, calling it "Humanistic Communitarian Socialism." Here everyone would be able to become "fully human" and there would be neither loneliness, anxiety, nor despair ...this society would be man's ideal home, truly fitted to the human situation.<sup>11</sup>

### Man's Nature and Needs...

Out of the phenomenon of individuation where man grows into conscious awareness of his freedom and responsibility, existential problems arise.<sup>12</sup> From the human condition come the psychic needs that must be met on an individual level and by the society. These needs revolve about meaning, purpose, relationship, and belonging. Fromm feels man's basic conflict is between the self and the "unbearable isolation of selfhood."<sup>13</sup> All strivings of man are attempts to find answers to the problems of existence, and are at the same time, attempts to remain sane and function in reality.

Fromm posits that there is creative evolution and moral progress in the history of man and that this evolutionary progress becomes part of the very make-up of man through biological imperatives. As man moves toward full realization of his potential, he has the chance to make his life joyous and sane. Moreover, societies, as individuals, cannot regress past the fullest aspect of freedom and maturity to which they have evolved, or pathological phenomenon will result. This is because evolution, by its very nature, is irreversible.

Thus there is an integral relationship between the structure of

the social-cultural system and the nature of personality and character. This means that one's "real self" is not something that can be discovered, nor is it a "bundle of sense perceptions" as Hume said, but it is the potential capable of being achieved by any particular human individual. Each self reacts to its environment according to its nature; the direction of which may be positive, negative, or indifferent.

Fromm's system of thought is based on the tension and polarity, the dichotomies and paradoxes between seemingly opposing forces. He justifies this by his reasoning that life is not clear cut; it is a manifest phenomenon with multiple aspects. Life must be seen in its total picture, in all its contradictions and disparities. Many people want life to be either easy or impossible. Fromm would say it is often difficult but it is possible and can be wonderful. A person can find himself by living in his totality - with reason and mature relatedness - and the full knowledge that the only meaning to life is that which we give it.

We can know what is good and not good for man by our knowledge of what man's nature is, and what his basic needs are. Once we know man's needs, we can see the dynamics of their composition and can then orient ourselves towards their fulfillment. The response man makes to life which most closely corresponds to objectively mentally healthy ways of meeting man's needs, will best promote his fullest development and lead him to happiness and satisfaction with life.<sup>14</sup>

The psychic needs of man include the need for relatedness, rootedness, transcendence, identity, and for a frame of orientation and devotion.

### I. The Need for Relatedness...

This is revealed in the myth of Adam and Eve. Man has lost his

original instinctual ties to nature and the womb. Yet he has the innate need to tie himself to something in order for his life to have meaning. He needs to "belong," to feel "relation" in order for his life to have direction.

To replace the void of his aloneness in an indifferent world, man must now relate to other beings, and to things. If one is incapable of relating, this person would be completely out of touch with reality and would be insane.

The society one lives in lays the conditions for the types of relatedness and orientations one will have toward the world and oneself. The Nazi regime, for example, was potent because it gave many feelings of group loyalty and security. This played upon man's lowest, destructive tendencies as it advocated domination and subjugation over others.<sup>15</sup>

As with the other needs of man which Fromm postulates, the need for relatedness can be met and satisfied in various ways, the major directions being toward productivity and/or non-productivity.

To relate non-productively is to be related "symbiotically." One can be related by submitting to some outside force, be it another person, an institution, a group, or a God. One tries to overcome his feelings of individual powerlessness and helplessness by submerging with that which he feels is greater than himself. One also relates symbiotically by having authority and power over others. Symbiosis thus implies the reciprocal dependence of human relationships on a parasitic plane. An example of this can be taken from the slave-master society. Here both the slave and the master need each other to function and each is dependent

on the other. What is harmful about such a relationship is that neither achieves independence, and each loses his sense of freedom and integrity. Because each suffers from a lack of inner strength and self-reliance, both slave and master become tools used by the other. Even the fullest realization of the submissive, masochistic, or the domineering sadistic passions never lead to satisfaction. The more these types feel gratified, the closer symbiotic union they crave. In the final analysis, both types become dependent on others. Either one needs others to submit to; or others to dominate. Without these "others," the person feels lost, insecure, and uncertain, because he has never concentrated on self-development.<sup>16</sup>

The productive way for man to satisfactorily solve his need for relatedness is through love, as Fromm defines it. This is the only way to meet the world and retain individuality, integrity, and freedom. Continuing his idea that life is polarity and tension between every factor in life, he says that love is a paradox in which there is complete unity and union with complete separateness and individuality. This kind of love is giving without giving up. "Giving," here becomes the highest expression of what one has and is.

## II. The Need for Rootedness...

In the symbolic epic of Paradise, we note that man has been driven out of the garden, never to return. Man has lost these roots. But these roots would be inadequate for the free man anyway, for in the garden man lacked knowledge, conscience, and freedom. Now man must find new, human roots whereby he can fill his needs for warmth and protection.

At every point where we lose roots there is anxiety and frantic

searching for new ways to security. Man can build these new human ties in an unproductive way or in a soul-fulfilling, mentally healthy, productive way.

Non-productively, man can be rooted incestuously. This idea might be compared with the concept of incest in Freud. This is when man attempts to find rootedness by regressing to incestuous fixations in a desire to become one again with Mother, which is security, which is paradise. Other ways man seeks rootedness is in religion, or in racism, in the tribe or nation. The destructive element is that the man who is bound incestuously to nature, to blood, or soil, loses his individuality, is prejudiced irrationally, and is blocked from full development of self. He remains a child, being incapable of actualizing his creativity.<sup>17</sup> As a man matures, he outgrows "Mother rootedness" and finds himself fulfilling this need in feelings of brotherliness with man. Here, all men are considered as "sons of the same mother," Mother Earth, and each has his right to happiness because he exists.<sup>18</sup>

We re-establish our roots by uniting with our fellows in reason, in love, and theologically...in the image of God...in the realization that all men are in the same existential situation, all men are equally entitled to justice and love.

### III. The Need for Transcendence...

Because of his reason and intelligence, man is driven to transcend his human situation. As man becomes aware of himself, of his independence, his finiteness, his greatness and his limitations, his life, and its cancellation, he must transcend himself. He cannot bear to know that his final outcome is not the result of his own decision.<sup>19</sup>

The healthy way man tries to fill this need is by creating... children, art, religion, thoughts, ideas. It includes inventing and producing material objects. And creation requires love. The satisfaction of fulfilling this need by "creating" leads to happiness. When men are thwarted in creating they meet their need for transcendence by destroying. Destructive attitudes come about when man has not fully given himself to life.

Though meeting this need through destructiveness may be temporarily satisfying, it can only lead to suffering. For the destroyer must have an object to destroy. When he has exhausted the external possibilities for destruction, the destructive forces will be turned on the self with the result of self-annihilation.

"The awareness that man can destroy life is as miraculous as the awareness that one can create life. Because life is the miracle, once one is aware of life, once life is aware of itself."<sup>20</sup>

#### IV. The Need for Identity...

I, as a person, must know who "I" am. I want my existence to have significance and meaning...I want to "belong," but also want to be an individual...I want to be myself. This is only possible if I am aware of my actions...if I know myself as the center and subject of my own powers. To the extent one is free of clan ties and can exist as an independent self with his own thoughts, so he is free.

Most of us, however, do not know who "we" are, and we identify with a tribe or nation or particular occupation, status, or class and say, "I am we." If I cannot achieve a sense of "I'ness," then I become alienated, I conform to become a "regular fellow," to be "as you desire me" not



as I really am. I merge with the particular group...because the "I" needs identity.

But this is an illusory source of identity and one loses the self that he really is; he loses his individuality which is really what we are trying to attain by our conformity.<sup>21</sup>

Problems arise when the individual becomes less dependent on self and becomes more dependent on extrinsic values and external authority and on other people's expectations for his security.

#### V. The Need for a Frame of Orientation and Devotion ...

Man's sense of reason and imagination causes him to seek a sense of values to which he can cling so that he can make some sense of the world. Man needs an object of devotion that can give some meaning to his existence in a world that is often confusing and disjunctive.<sup>22</sup>

Objectivity is a necessity that one's picture of the world be undistorted by fears, irrational emotions, or desires. If man bases his frame of orientation on rationality, on objectivity, and reason, this will lead to his happiness. If he bases his concepts on facts, his view of life will be mature and real and he will be oriented to creating a better life for himself and for his fellow. If man bases his picture of the world on irrationality or blind faith, he is fooling himself because he lives in illusions and fantasy and he is thwarting his powers of critical thought and reason.<sup>23</sup>

As with all the psychic needs of man, these also may be met on various levels. On one level man needs a frame of orientation, be it rational or irrational, true or false, which he uses in life. If he has

no frame of orientation he will take the path of schizophrenia, suicide, or another pathological, insane way.

Man can meet his needs on a higher level if he bases his life on rationality and reality; and if he uses his reason.

The Developing Character of Man...Its Origins and Functions...

Fromm's concept of personality is "holistic." That is, it encompasses the totality of an individual's inherited and acquired characteristics. Every aspect and influence upon the child is synthesized into an organic whole. It is one's inherited constitutional qualities which comprise one's temperament, the given, for any particular person. This aspect of the personality is fixed and non-changeable.<sup>24</sup>

Through one's environment, by the process of introjection and identification, each person grows and develops. He tends to retain the mode of adaptability peculiar to him through his reactions - such as love or hate - and thus acquires his particular character structure from which he creates his pattern of relating to the world. One's character grows with new insights and experiences and is, therefore, a dynamic phenomenon.<sup>25</sup>

"The social function of education, is to qualify the individual to function in the role he is to play later on in society...to mold his character to approximate the social character...and to help his desires coincide with his social role."<sup>26</sup>

Thus the economic and social aspects of a society determine the educational system of that culture, and its educational techniques form the kind of character the society wants.<sup>27</sup>

It is the society and culture as pictured by one's family, one's companions and associates, that will give one his basic orientation toward

life. The parental figures and the way they inculcate their ideas and the ideas themselves, are determined by the social structure of the culture. The individual family thus becomes a communicating agency of society which instills its cultural values in the child.<sup>28</sup>

For example, if a child faces the problem of a threatening father, he will react as the society has conditioned him. If, on the one hand, he feels hostility toward the father and if the society says "this is not good," the child will often repress the hostile feelings. As he does this, the process becomes one of the molding factors in his character structure.

The complex of cultural traits one acquires is one's "social character," which as elaborated, are those aspects and traits developed by the majority of people in a given society as the result of the basic experiences and mode of life common to those people.<sup>29</sup>

That is, the social character is molded by the way a given society lives and functions. Its ideologies and culture, in turn, become rooted in the social character. The dominant individual character traits become productive forces in shaping the social process. Our characters are molded by the external conditions of life, and our whole personality structures are involved in our actions and decisions. In any concept such as justice, or love, for example, the meaning of the term is as different as the character structure of the individual who uses it. If one says he holds certain ideas, if they are not a part of his social character, in moments of crises, he will not act according to his verbalizations.

All the individual aspects of our characters come from the variations on our social character, the personality differences of our parents

and other influential figures, our psychological and sociological differences, and individual hereditary distinctions.<sup>30</sup>

Social character acts as a potent integrator between the individual and society. For example, our capitalistic, industrial system requires that we utilize our energies in some manner of work. If we were not conditioned to expend our energy in this way - in order to live and thereby benefit society which consequently benefits us - there would be much tension and friction in the society and the system would most likely break down, or force would have to be employed in order to keep the economy going. But because our emotional matrix conditions us to adapt to the social requirements, our human powers and energies are attuned to this attitude.

Man internalizes the values of society, of duty, and work, through his conscience and other psychological pressures.

"The social character internalizes external necessities and thus harnesses human energy for the task of a given economic and social system."<sup>31</sup>

Psychologically, the closer an individual's traits are in accord with the social character, the more his inner drives will lead him to do what his society wants, and the happier and more satisfied he will be in that society. (However, if the society is pathological, then one may become pathological if he develops himself toward the goals of the society). Fromm deals with this situation on a moral as well as on a scientifically empirical level. Our concern, says Fromm, is whether the nature of that social character is good or evil. Thus,

"the subjective function of character for the normal person is to lead him to act according to what is necessary for

him from a practical standpoint and also to give him satisfaction from his activity psychologically."<sup>32</sup>

The realm of ethics lies primarily in the realm of character, for it is this aspect of the person which learns and modifies. Fromm sees man as a being who is most strongly influenced by social forces, whereas Freud, for example, saw man as a creature with primarily instinctual, biological forces as the basis for motivations and actions. This idea of personality in Fromm is very important for it differentiates him from other schools of psychology. Fromm sees man as primarily a social being, the outcome of continuous human effort. All that man has become, even his passions, his anxieties, and frustrations are the result of his temperament and the influence of the culture upon him.<sup>33</sup>

When a man acts in accord with the character structure of his society, he meets his needs as well as those of the society, and both forces interact to solidify the entire social structure. When, however, a lag between the given character structure and new, changing economic conditions (for which the older character traits are no longer useful) arises, then there are problems and new anxieties, because the previous way of acting is no longer psychologically satisfying. In transitional periods of change, when old character structures don't fit new societies, as for example when feudalism changed to capitalism, or individual artisan craftsmanship gave way to the factory worker, man is left alienated until he can establish new roots of identity and find himself in the new structure.

However, when ideas do take hold in a particular society, it is because they meet the needs and anxieties which are presently within the

character structure of those particular people. That is why, for example, the ideas of Protestantism were accepted when they were, because they answered human needs of that time.<sup>34</sup>

In summary, as the human person dynamically adapts to the structure of his society and its ways, so his "social character" is formed. When society makes new demands that are contrary to man's psychic and biological needs, he becomes frustrated and alienated, separated from the required necessities of his human situation. The entire society is sick when it fails to satisfy, or give man the freedom to satisfy, his basic needs. Thus, changing social conditions bring about changes in the social character which in turn bring about new needs and new frustrations. New ideas are now necessary in order to meet the new needs. These new ideas, in time, are internalized and accepted as part of the new social character, thus formulating and guiding men's actions.

#### Freedom or Authority...

The moral problem modern man faces is to find meaning and purpose to his individual existence. Each man must solve the problem of living for himself and must continually ask the basic questions. Man must ask the questions of life because he is aware of himself. He knows he is a separate entity, unique and individual. He knows that some day he will die. He is conscious of the fact that his life is brief, and he fears he will die without having lived. He often feels lost and powerless, alone in an alien environment.

Because man is in nature, and yet transcends it; because man has to live his life, and is not lived by it; because he is born and lives

and dies he must ask and search out the meaning of his existence. Fromm says it is life itself which asks man the question. And man must answer this question every second of his life. This question centers about:

"How can we overcome the suffering, the imprisonment, the shame which the experience of separateness creates; how can we find union within ourselves, with our fellow man, and with nature?"<sup>35</sup>

The human person has two conscious choices whereby he can answer this question. One way he can overcome separateness and seek unity, is by facing up to life as a fully conscious individual; by standing straight and giving expression to himself through love; by developing his awareness, his reason and striving to transcend himself by becoming "fully born."<sup>36</sup>

The second answer is to fall back into a negative relationship, to regress to a state of pre-awareness where one gives up his freedom, trying to overcome his loneliness by re-establishing primary ties. This choice is self-defeating for he is surrendering his personal identity and integrity as a human self. If man chooses the way of regression and submission it can only lead to further failure and suffering. There are many forms this regressive pattern takes, which vary according to the individual personality.

The most pathological form of regression is the consuming passion to return to Mother Earth, to the womb, to death. The ultimate end of this urge is suicide or insanity. A less intense drive for regressive unity is when one desires to remain at mother's breast, or in submission to father's authority.

In any case, most of us are fixated on a lower level. We often

feel tied to the parental world where we felt rooted in the security of childhood. So we retain the religion of our parents, the loyalties to the group or sect we were brought up with. Often there will be the projection of a God concept to fill the void, to bring back the security once known in infancy.

We do this because the world is very large and awesome. We feel it impossible to deal with the great universe around us. We feel so little and contingent that we think if we ground ourselves in something bigger, like the social system, or a dictator, or infinite God, that we will gain a sense of belonging and incorporation into the whole.

This is the basis of the power of social systems which dictate to the individual what he must do, and which give a person the feeling of belongingness and rootedness. By attaching oneself intrinsically to the social order, feelings of aloneness, unworthiness, and finiteness are alleviated at least temporarily, as long as the cultural, ritual, and other patterns of the society are explicitly adhered to.

The problem is that the more man submits to authoritarian factors outside the self to determine his life, and the greater man's refusal to accept responsibility which is rightfully and dutifully his, the more man demeans his own powers and frustrates himself. External authorities become even more powerful now, because they gain their power and control from these very powers the individual has given away. This retreat to the "security" of authority is only a temporal satisfaction at best, for sooner or later reality must be faced. If we accept authority without using our reason and thought concerning it, we will regress even further,



creating the circumstances which lead back to the insorptive relation, to non-productivity, and defeat.

Other conflicts arise as man submits to authority. And it makes no difference whether he is forced, if he is lured by the idea that he will be able to transmit his responsibility onto the authority, or if he thinks that the authority will fulfill his needs. If man accepts a dependency status, looking to others for opinions and judgments rather than making up his own mind, he will soon lose the faculties for making any decision on his own. He loses his own power in proportion to his submission and dependency on forces other than himself.

If man chooses the way of maturity and freedom, the productive way of meeting growing individuality and freedom, he will reconnect himself to the world, not through a god-savior or other external authorities, but through love relationships and productive, creative work. This person will accept himself, his life and the process of individuation. He will continually grow by meeting his surroundings with flexibility and adaptability. This attitude is necessary for maturity since man is bound in the world, to a particular society, and he must face the realities of life if he is to make something of it.

We can approach full realization of our potential only as we strive continually for it, through our chosen occupations, by growing emotionally as well as physically. Only in this way can we hope to find "re-connection" to others and to the world and still retain that freedom which makes us human. <sup>37</sup> Each man is responsible to himself, to find answers to the meaning of his life, to realize that harmony and security

can only be achieved through individual confrontation with life and reality.<sup>38</sup>

To find this meaning in life is of prime importance. The way to fill this need is to live with and for a purpose, preferably one which is worthy for a man to devote his life, and which, at the same time, meets his needs.

The challenge of freedom or authority is shown in the ethics of the marketplace as exemplified in our capitalistic economy. The structure of our modern society produces a dialectic of contradictory elements with regard to freedom. The typical citizen is free from authoritarian dictatorial government and church and from authoritarian religion and conscience, but has not matured individually into a person with enough self strength to cope with this freedom. Now he feels lonely and insecure. For though freedom may give the individual feelings of independence, at the same time it brings loneliness and feelings of isolation with accompanying anxiety, which in turn leads to compulsive and irrational activity.

We are bred to conform, and we conform so well that we begin to assume the norms of society as our goals, not asking whether the society itself is pathological or if its ways lead to our self-destruction. We accept the aim of our orientation and its values such as "to have" with our concern misplaced on the perfection of things and a knowledge of how to make them, rather than placing our faith in the more fulfilling and proper aim "to be," with emphasis on the perfection of man. This causes us to feel frustrated and alienated, from ourselves and from others. This alienation is a crucial symptom of our society and individual

retardation. The more alienated we are, the more "insane" we become.

I have decided to classify Fromm's contribution to this issue in two ways. Chapter Two will deal with his ideas on the non-productive ways and solutions to the problems of existence, and Chapter Three will be concerned with the productive solutions men might take as they attempt to answer the questions of life.

## CHAPTER TWO

NON-PRODUCTIVE SOLUTIONSThe Non-Productive Character Structure...

Man seeks flight from his freedom. The most general category of man's attempt to escape is through some form of authoritarianism. Here man looks outside himself, to other persons or objects for an answer. As man seeks escape from the isolation of selfhood, what are some of these external powers he runs to?

"Such powers may be personal and direct, as exemplified in the leader, whether of a totalitarian state or of a Boy Scout troop, in the father or an all-seeing God who enforces decrees by immediate punishment or tender love. The Authority may be internalized as conscience, like the Freudian superego. It may have the anonymity of "natural law" or the still more concealed power of "the market."<sup>1</sup>

This person is trying to find security and certainty in any authority which he feels is more powerful than himself. The major reason man projects his powers on external objects is that he thinks in this way he will elude the burden of individual responsibility. He escapes for a time, but in the final analysis, the more authority one relegates to others, the less the individual has the power to act and create, and the more his chances diminish to actualize his full powers.

Fromm's theory of character includes a picture of the various character types. These are "ideal types." "Pure-types" are not to be expected in any one individual. No individual is wholly productive or completely non-productive, but is a combination of traits, qualities and orientations. The person who tends toward the less productive characteristics, in the tension and polarity of his total character structure,

might be said to have an unproductive orientation.<sup>2</sup> If, on the other hand, his particular blend of orientations emphasizes the productive aspect, this orientation is considered dominant in the mixture.

The non-productive as well as the productive orientations are ways of assimilation and socialization. Each character type, be he receptive, exploitative, or whatever, includes orientations of both assimilation and socialization. The non-productive orientations represent the inhibition and crippling of man's full powers and might be compared to Freud's neurotic character types. The productive attitude expresses the unfolding of the individual in all his glory. The person who operates on a productive, self-fulfilling level can be compared to Freud's genital man.

Both of these orientations are ways man attempts to deal with his basic existential problem of finding relation to oneself, to the world of other people, to things, to the Cosmos in general.

This chapter will present some of the non-productive orientations man takes as he seeks to find a way through life.

### Non-Productive Character Types<sup>3</sup>

ASSIMILATION: How man relates himself to the world by acquiring and assimilating things

SOCIALIZATION: How man relates himself (in the process of living) to others and to himself.

1. Non-productive orientations  
A. Receptive (Accepting)

B. Exploitative (Taking)

C. Hoarding (Preserving)

D. Marketing (Exchanging)

Masochistic) Symbiosis  
Sadistic )

Destructive)  
Automaton ) Withdrawal  
conformity)

### Assimilative Orientations...

Receptive man is the first of the non-productive orientations. This person feels the only way of obtaining what he wants from the world is to receive it from a source outside himself. This is Freud's Oral-passive type. He requires support from authorities and things outside himself...from God, parents, friends, or any other object of authority. His is a need to be "fed." He is passive and receptive. This person would rather have information "ready-made" than dig it out himself or rely on himself at all. This is the optimistic, friendly type person until others fail to help him and he is left on his own. This is the type of orientation that predominated in societies of feudalism or slavery where one group had the "right" to exploit another.

The person who operates within the Exploitative orientation feels, as does the Receptive man, that the source of what is good must come from outside the self. He does not expect to receive things as "free gifts" as the receptive man, but would rather take them by force or cunning. He is attracted to others if there is some trickery involved. For example, this type of individual might love a woman not for herself, but because she is loved by another man. One's own creations are looked upon with derision as useless. This person would rather take by trickery or force. This is Freud's Oral-aggressive type and was exemplified in societies of Robber Barons, 18th and 19th Century Capitalists, and the Nazi-Fascist regime. The exploitative and the receptive need others to exploit or they are nothing.

The Hoarding orientation is different from the previous types

in that security for this person is based upon whatever he can store up and hoard. Spending of any sort is felt to be a threat. He has no faith in others and is miserly with thoughts and ideas as well as with material possessions. He cannot "give" love, but must possess the loved object. He is tight-lipped with a withdrawn attitude, manifesting the need for extreme orderliness. Intimacy is a threat and he feels if he lets something go, he will diminish himself in some way. This is comparable to Freud's Anal type and is manifest especially in a bourgeois economy where property or family are viewed as external signs of inner worth and of God's grace.

The Marketing personality has developed under modern Capitalism. Here, emphasis is on exchange value rather than use value. Personality and character are tools one uses and are objects to be manipulated toward monetary or status ends. The label becomes more important than the product as one sells himself on the market to the highest bidder. The individual loses his sense of self because he tries to conform to what the market desires. As he tries to integrate with the "one", (society), and play the role that will aid him at the moment, (rather than maintaining his integrity at any cost), he becomes estranged from his "true self," alienated, and finds he does not know, really, who he is (though he may know what his role is at a given time), and he becomes nothing. He tries to be "in demand" and seeks status constantly by being willing and flexible to meet the needs of the moment. This person is now dependent upon conditions beyond his control. The market determines his success with life. He loses his sense of identity...he becomes "I am as you desire me." He is not "one with his own powers" but lives in the opinions of

others. "I cannot have my own opinion," he thinks, "if I am to get the highest price for my personality."<sup>4</sup> In modern capitalistic, marketing societies, there are many receptively oriented characters who want the society to grant their wishes and take care of their needs.

The non-productive ways of meeting one's life problems fail on both social and psychological counts. Socially, these orientations hamper the creative productivity of man and keep him from making best use of his own inner resources to deal with his world. If an entire society is based on authoritarian, non-productive, solutions, then the whole structure tends to decay from within.

Authoritarian ethics, eventually destroy the creative self. Even in a democratic society, when authoritarian dictates are given, if they violate our rights as free human beings, rebellion or reform is the only productive solution.

Psychologically, man has an inherent drive to actualize himself and revolt against authoritarianism. This natural tendency will give man subjective feelings of frustration, anxiety, and emptiness, when he is dominated by external authority.

The problem of authority has been prevalent throughout the ages, was primary in 19th Century man, and is of great importance in the study of modern man. The authoritarian character structure is especially noted in social systems where one group is dominated by another, and in patriarchal societies where the male is supposedly superior to the female. Authority was based on the ownership of capital and those who had money could demand submission and obedience from those who did not.



"Authority" in Fromm's concept, refers to the situation where one individual envisions another as superior to him. There are two directions "relatedness by authority" takes. These are rational authority and irrational, inhibiting authority.

Both of these are based on a superiority-inferiority relationship but in rational authority this aspect tends to dissolve itself.

Irrational authority takes place in relationships where one is used by the other to furnish his immediate ends. The relationship between slave-owner and slave illustrates this type of relationship.

#### Authoritarian Ways of Relations...

##### I. Symbiotic Relatedness

The word "symbiosis" means the merging of one individual with another or with a power outside of one's self in such a manner that one loses his integrity and both subject and object become dependent upon each other.<sup>5</sup> This type of relatedness is shown biologically in the relationship between the pregnant mother and the fetus. The fetus receives what it needs from the mother.

"In the psychic symbiotic union, the two bodies are independent, but the same kind of attachment exists psychologically."<sup>6</sup>

Non-productive, irrational symbiotic love attachments are not based on mutual respect for the integrity of the other, but come from inner insecurities. Individuals who relate this way depend on each other because they are incapable of depending upon themselves.<sup>7</sup>

Independence as a full human self can never be achieved in this type of relatedness. The Symbiotic relationship includes the forms of

masochism and sadism, both of which arise from one's feelings of loneliness, isolation, and weakness. Here, the person attempts to find relatedness by "either being 'swallowed' by that person or by 'swallowing' him."<sup>8</sup>

Fromm admits that man is subject to circumstances outside himself which he cannot completely control, such as illness, age, and death, and many of the forces of nature, but he maintains it is a self-destructive, masochistic perversion to pay homage to these forces.

He illustrates the difference between

"the realistic recognition of our limitations and the indulgence in the experience of submission and powerlessness in the clinical examination of masochistic character traits."<sup>9</sup>

He shows that people who think very little of themselves tend to have more accidents, sickness and embarrassing situations than others. These people are driven by an unconscious desire to be weak and powerless, so they delegate and project all their power into the hands of another, attempting to escape from their freedom and personal responsibility. When these individuals manifest sadistic, dominating tendencies, they take their form in sexual perversion and in the desire to be hurt or to harm others.<sup>10</sup>

#### A. Masochism

This is the passive form of the symbiotic union. People whose tendency is toward a masochistic orientation of socialization feel that life is beyond their control and they look for others to solve their problems. Masochistic drives are directed against the self. Here one looks for security by renouncing his integrity and attaching to another by submitting to the others whims and dictums. One rationalizes and

justifies these feelings on a conscious level as being sacrifice, duty, or love. Unconsciously, however, people with this orientation are insecure, have feelings of inferiority, and purposely (on an unconscious level) don't really try to succeed at everything they attempt by their own powers. They act in this way to keep up masochistic relationships.

They continue to react in this manner because they are frightened of their inherent freedom and of its implications. If one can submerge himself completely in another, he would feel he is losing his "burden" which is his "self." Now his wishes, and his interests no longer matter. He sees happiness as possible only by submitting to outside forces. The greater the yearning for submission, the greater a man's feeling of powerlessness and helplessness.

Certain social and cultural conditions can produce and/or intensify this orientation. Submission to the leader of a State, as to Hitler, would give one feelings of belongingness. This can be paralleled to any other neurotic solution. That is, the external, immediate fear is handled, but the real, underlying conflict is never resolved but merely "put off" until this phase-solution loses its effectiveness.

#### B. Sadism

This is the active form of symbiotic fusion. This orientation springs from the same roots as the masochistic tendency. Fromm here agrees with Freud that masochistic and sadistic tendencies are always found together even though externally this may seem like a paradox.

"The difference is only that the sadistic person commands, exploits, hurts, humiliates, and the masochistic person is commanded, exploited, hurt, and humiliated."<sup>11</sup>

One manifestation of sadism is to make others dependent on oneself in order to have unlimited power over them, thus making others tools and means. This is the desire to "swallow" others.

This character rationalizes (to his own conscious mind and to others) that he is doing this for the others good, or as justified vengeance.

Psychologically, the sadistic craving for power over another or over things is rooted in weakness, not in strength. For sadism is,

"but the expression of the inability of the individual self to stand alone and live. It is the desperate attempt to gain secondary strength where genuine strength is lacking."<sup>12</sup>

The sadist needs the person whom he wants to dominate, for his strength is entirely dependent upon the object of his sadistic strivings. Fromm cites the example of a sadistic husband who loves his wife because he dominates her. He beats her and tells her if she doesn't like it to get out. She is fearful of leaving so she stays. If she gets up enough courage to leave, and call his bluff, he will break down and beg her not to leave, thus "submitting" to her. If she stays, he will resume his old ways until she calls his bluff again.<sup>13</sup>

This person may give all kinds of material goods to the object of his sadistic impulses except the right to freedom and independence. Some parent-child relationships are of this nature. Love is given in these cases only when the child complies with the wishes of the parent and submits its will and independence.

Another who gets satisfaction in a sadistic way is the "indignant person." By despising and treating others as inferiors, he gets

temporary feelings of his own "worthwhileness" and "righteousness." These people assume the right of an "authoritarian judge" and things not done the way they want, are "wrong." Their feelings of "moral indignation" permit their often unconscious feelings of hate or envy to emerge under the guise of virtue.<sup>14</sup>

## II. Withdrawal and Destructiveness...

This unproductive orientation is opposite that of the symbiotic where one tries to submerge and draw close to the other because he needs the other. This kind of relatedness is one of distance from others which leads to indifference and superficiality. In our culture, this attitude is exemplified in the marketing orientation.

Man has primary and secondary potentiality, both of which are part of his nature. Primary potentiality is actualized if the proper conditions are present for his mature growth and development. Secondary potentiality is actualized and brought to light when abnormal or pathogenic conditions exist.

Destructiveness is a secondary potentiality in man. Man is not necessarily evil, but becomes evil when the proper conditions for his growth and development are lacking. Destructiveness comes from a fear of being destroyed by others and this person feels if he destroys first he will eliminate threats to himself. This is the active aspect of withdrawal which aims at the elimination of its object.<sup>15</sup>

To the degree that one's life is frustrated and blocked from growth, so destructive traits will occur.

"Destructiveness is the outcome of unlived life...the more the drive toward life is thwarted, the stronger is the drive toward destruction; the more life is realized, the less is the strength of destructiveness."<sup>16</sup>

To the extent the culture suppresses individuality and freedom, so man's creativity and expansiveness will be hampered and the unleashed energies directed to destructive patterns.

This destructiveness which one directs against others, is also in direct proportion to the amount of hostility one feels against oneself. On the other hand, the more life-furthering tendencies, the less the life-destructive forces dominate.

The above assimilative orientations find their correspondent way of socialization as illustrated on the diagram at the beginning of this chapter. For example, the exploitative attitude implies a sadistic type of relationship. "If I take by force all I need from the other person, I must rule over him and make him the powerless object of my own domination."<sup>17</sup>

One of the harmful consequences of escaping our freedom and responsibility in non-productive ways is to produce unhealthy defense mechanisms which lead to further blocking of our potentialities. Often, these result from conflict between innate desires for freedom and the anxiety aroused because of the frustration of such desires by an external (or internalized) authority.

Anxiety, as a pitfall to our mental health and growth, manifests itself in two distinct ways. The first is in over-activity of hurry, scurry, and over-reaction to events and ordinary situations. Anxiety also puts one in a state of paralysis and helplessness, even though one

desires to overcome those feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy. The mind tries to get rid of the anxieties which plague it by transferring these anxieties from their real causes which are often deep and underlying, into symptoms which can be handled. Now irrational psychic needs arise which one feels to be the actual demands of his body, as the need for sleep, for sex, for food, or drink. As one fulfills and satisfies the symptomatic need, he finds temporary relief from the gnawing, underlying anxiety. The difficulty is, that though the anxiety-symptom will be eased, the causal root of the problem will burst forth in many different ways again and again, because the underlying dysfunction has not been cured. The desire for relief will need more and more of the "surface solution" (be it more sex, food, or whatever), until the person undergoes either mental breakdown or is cured.

These anxieties comes from an inner or outer dissatisfaction with oneself and with one's way of life. They come especially to those who would rather have ready-made prescriptions for happiness, than assume the responsibility of thinking their problems through and coming to their own solutions. Each neurosis reveals man's failure to live productively and integrally, and acts as another stumbling block against his fulfillment.

Fromm emphasizes that these unproductive solutions lead to further alienation and anxiety.

"Even if man could satisfy all his wishes for power and destruction, it would not change his fear and loneliness, and the tension would remain."<sup>18</sup>

### Capitalism and Modern Man...

Capitalism, in order to function, needs the presence of legally and politically free individuals. These men must be able and willing to sell their ability - their labor - to the owners of capital in exchange for capital. There must be a market for the labor and product of capital, a way for prices to be set, and for distribution on the market. The underlying principle is that each should work to his utmost ability in order that he receive according to his ability. It is through each man seeking profit for his own self-interest, through competition, that the interests and welfare of all are promoted.

Capitalism has grown from primitive tools and techniques into the mass production age of efficiency and the common market with wide-open competition. The more capitalism advanced, the more the workers were exploited. Man and his labor became another commodity and the worth of the human being as a "person" was diminished. The goal became the fulfillment of material needs and all was based on the profit motive and the market rather than upon the intrinsic worth or use of the goods involved.

Growing capitalism produced the type of social character corresponding to Fromm's description of the hoarding orientation. Followers of this orientation took pride in property and in mastery over things. These people were ingrained with and engaged in competitive, aggressive, and exploitative ventures.

In the 20th Century we have largely overcome the hoarding orientation prevalent in the 19th Century. We became conditioned to the



receptive attitude in combination with the marketing orientation.

There were many reactions for and against capitalism as a system under which man could live and prosper, and this led to the rise of socialists and liberals who wanted to make men equal and non-repressed. Freud was one of those outstanding men who attempted to alleviate guilt feelings and repressions.

Capitalism thus emerged in its most modern garb...automation,<sup>2</sup> with much capital in the hands of the few, growth of huge corporations and decline of small business, creation of a new middle-occupational class, the manipulation of people as things, and above all, a way of life designed for higher and higher consumption.

What is the social character required in this type of society? It is the type of man who wants to consume more and more; whose tastes and rate of consumption are predictable; who will be flexible to the point of conformity; who will cooperate smoothly with large groups; submit to being guided without force, led without leaders, prompted without aim - except one: to make good, to be on the move, to function, to go ahead!<sup>19</sup>

This society needs men who feel free and are independent of any authority, principle, or conscience - yet who are willing to be commanded, to do what is expected, to fit into the social machine without friction.<sup>20</sup>

This type of orientation led to a confusion of values. Now everything was measured on the balance sheet of dollars and cents. Values were relative. Everything had a certain worth. As this orientation persisted, every value had a price. Soon men took on the character of

"things" as their qualities were given a rate-of-exchange worth. Men became commodities to be traded and bartered at any given market-price. The pursuit of fame, honor, sex, and wealth became, in this orientation, a search for diversion from reality. This led to the present spiritual crisis in our Western civilized world. That is, the automatization of man and his consequent alienation from himself and his environment.

### Alienation

Alienation is man's experiencing estrangement from himself. His acts are no longer related to him, but take on qualities of their own. He experiences himself indifferently, unrelately, and he responds to himself and to others as if his actions had no relation to his life. He finds it almost impossible to be by himself because he is fearful of experiencing feelings of nothingness. He has no convictions of his own, he feels that only the majority is right. He is afraid to face his problems, to be alone, even for a moment.

Fromm would agree with Marx's definition of alienation - that it is that condition of man where his "own act becomes to him an alien power, standing over and against him, instead of being ruled by him."<sup>21</sup>

Alienation pervades history, differing in its specific form from culture to culture. In modern society it infiltrates all relationships. Whether one projects his powers to a god, or to the state, in both cases one gets back into touch with his powers by submission to the projected image.

The alienated person has prejudices and opinions but rarely convictions or a will. His desires and tastes are manipulated by propaganda

machines and advertising. As he becomes wrapped up in this sterile and destructive way of meeting life, he becomes even more paralyzed and caught up.

This person can be contrasted to the free individual who is aware of his own powers and who uses them productively, and in so doing, he increases his strength, faith, and happiness.<sup>22</sup>

Alienation is destructive because it doesn't solve any problems but creates them. Fromm cites the tourist with the camera as a symbol of an alienated relationship to the world. Here one just pushes a button, then all is done for him...he doesn't even have to respond to what is happening, and consequently he only sees through the intermediary of the camera. The experience has no affect on him, nor does it change him.

"...the outcome of his 'pleasure' trip is a collection of snapshots, which are the substitute for an experience which he could have had, but did not have."<sup>23</sup>

Fromm further cautions modern man to note that it is not the particular wife, job, or situation which is the cause of one's problems, but it is the realization that life is slipping through one's hands, and that one is not making the most of his one chance at life.

#### Social Relationships in an Alienated Society ...

In an alienated society with a marketing orientation, man experiences himself as a thing to be employed successfully on the market. Whatever powers he does have to love, to think, to create, are relegated to the background. Here the law of the market prevails which says to destroy another if economic views conflict, use another to any extent as long as he can help increase production. Modern man is not so much

interested in what he produces, as he is in how much will it bring.

In this orientation man sells his personality. It is the market that decides the worth of the personality and its qualities, and even the very existence of these qualities, for if they are of no value as a saleable commodity, they should be eliminated. Why should one want to be hampered by "valueless qualities."

The worth of the self is only a reflection of what others think of that person. If he is sought after on the market, he is "worth" something and is "somebody." If his trade or service is not in demand at a particular moment, then he is a "nothing" and a "nobody." Life is experienced and felt in terms of how one is supposed to feel.

As the individual is subjected to the will of society and the market-place, he becomes confused as to what is of value and he is faced continually with new insecurities and feelings of insignificance. <sup>24</sup>

In this society, employer and employee use each other in order to produce and earn more. Man builds the world but has become a slave to what he has created. He worships his works, he drives himself to produce, and as he produces, he sees himself and his fellow humans falling into insignificance. Why? Because he has subsumed the relations which should have taken place between himself and others to the category of "relations between things." As the attitude towards one's fellow is of manipulation and instrumentality, so any possibility for a significant or meaningful relationship is lost. Rather than existing as the center and purpose of his own life, man becomes an object to be manipulated or purchased.

What are some of the ways our society conditions us to feel important and worthy? We are conditioned to be "market items," so we place

our values in material things. The new car or yacht becomes the object of esteem. The more property one has, the higher his value and worth. Possessions become all important as human dignity and warm relationships fade into "what can this or that person do for me, market-wise?" Personal insecurity is temporarily forgotten as one gets respect and admiration for his material possessions. After all, he must be secure. Doesn't his value, his worth come from the property he possesses?

Yet, unconscious feelings of unworthiness build up and man must seek other ways of gaining satisfaction and feelings of importance. He needs the relationship of others. But because of our modern orientation, we are often confused as to where to seek meaningful relationships. Because we still fear our freedom, because we are frightened of life, we turn to conformity to find relation.

### Conformity

The Western world in the 18th and 19th Centuries was characterized by overt rational and irrational authority. Demands were made by parents, teachers, God, the priest, the boss or any other specific external authority. The source of authority was known. One could obey or rebel but one knew what the results would be in either case.

In the 20th Century, the character of authority changed. No longer do we know who gives the orders. Now we find ourselves victims of the anonymous authority of public opinion and the market. In the case of Germany and Russia, we find exceptions, however, as their "escape from freedom" led them into complete submission to the direct, irrational authority of the state.

In our country the authority is for the most part anonymous, invisible, and alienated. Nobody in particular makes demands.

"Indeed, nobody is an authority except "It." What is "It?" Profit, economic necessities, the market, common sense, public opinion, what "one" does, thinks, feels, The laws of anonymous authority are as invisible as the laws of the market - and just as unassailable. Who can attack the invisible? Who can rebel against nobody?"<sup>25</sup>

This anonymous authority is conformity. Here one does what he is "supposed to" feel and do. His activity lacks spontaneity in that it originates from an outside source and not from his own mental or emotional experience. The laws of conformity say, "if one doesn't adjust, he's not normal."

When man faced irrational, overt authority, he could see the problem of conflict and fight or accept it. As he saw his adversary, he experienced himself as a self, an individual who could express himself, - to his exaltation or to his defeat.

Modern man faces a new danger. That of losing his sense of self...his identity. One does not ask if he's "right or wrong" in this modern day and age, but, "am I flexible enough to conform; to adjust." Being "acceptable" means not being different from my neighbor.

"Feeling inferior stems from feeling different, and no question is asked whether the difference is for the better or the worse."<sup>26</sup>

This culture, in which anonymous authority plays an effective role, produces alienated people.

Today, society doesn't need to use coercive force to bring individuals into line. Modern society molds the character of its members in such a way that they want to do what they have to do. Thus whatever the

society feels is good or right for its members, it imposes upon the growing consciousness of the people. Conformity is powerful because it gives man feelings of togetherness, but too often at a sacrifice of his individuality. With the herd, the group, the club, the fraternity, or the state, people can immerse their selves and find some salvation from aloneness. More often we conform even more than our society may ask, because this supposedly alleviates many of our fears of "becoming separated from others."

"Merging with the crowd" tends to lower one's tastes to the mediocrity of the group. Becoming caught up with "friends," afraid to move or make a decision without "them," one becomes alienated from what he would really like to do. He becomes unhappy and doesn't even know why!

The alienated man continually strives for approval from others and soon feels he is worth what he thinks others think he is worth. He loses his self-identity, experiencing the symptom of this illness which is anxiety. The more one strays from the crowd, the more anxious he becomes and the more disapproval he expects. Now he tries to conform even harder, but this leads him to further alienation because it frustrates self-expression. One begins to think of himself as an object in a world of things. He no longer chooses for himself, but with the group.

So many times we suppress critical thinking, saying one thing while acting in an opposite way. If we behave in this manner in the presence of our children, the children become confused, for they sense the discrepancy, but they are so dependent on Mother or Father, they cannot tolerate to criticize these objects upon whom are invested every good

quality. The children go through the process of dulling their senses intentionally, for to pursue such thinking would shatter their inner world of illusion.

Another example can be shown in the way we experience things... be it a play, a book, or a painting. Often we withhold our ideas until we know what our opinion "should be." We wait for newspaper accounts, or book reviews, accepting the opinion of an authority just because he is an authority and we deny our own reason.

Most of us live in the illusion world where we think we are pursuing the goals we want. But too often we are "what others desire us to be."<sup>27</sup> We pursue goals - a better job, a new car, more money, social prestige - but do we ever ask, "so if I do get these dreams, what then? What is the use of it all? Am I not running after some goal which is supposed to make me happy but which eludes me as soon as I have reached it?" Do we really know what we want from life? Fromm says we shun these thoughts just as often as they rear their heads from our unconscious. We want what we are supposed to want, and we avoid the real question, which is "what are we really searching for during our lives?"

The fact that we aren't happy in our conformity is shown in the way man clings to the last vestiges of individuality, such as initialed briefcases and personalized luggage. He hungers for the expression of his unique individuality, for a break in his routine existence, but he is afraid, so he looks for thrills and fantasyland. He seeks to add drama, richness, and variety to his life. Man longs to find meaning in life but too often he doesn't know, or hasn't really given much thought



to what he really does want from life, much less, how to obtain it.<sup>28</sup>

The above-mentioned excitements and deviations are transitory and thereby only temporary palliatives. They do not strike at the root of our problem - "how we can bring meaning and purpose to our lives." We are still left with our basic insecurities and uncertainties. We are internally unhappy, though we may display external bravades of satisfaction and optimism.<sup>29</sup>

### The Alienated Consumer

Another aspect of our alienation is that we are consumers mentally as well as physically. We want to consume and partake in everything, though we do not want to give of ourselves in the process. Because we are passive receivers, we drink in conversation, and entertainment, not putting ourselves actively into the process of living. We are receptive to most anything that will not ask us to use our own inner resources. Thus we remain unsatisfied and disappointed.

Our economy now produces at an all time high, and must continue to do so in order to keep people employed and families fed. Our economy is producing many fine things for man, but we reach a stage where more money is spent on imitating old products just to get another brand on the market and to make money rather than in research for means to human betterment. To buy the latest model or gadget becomes the consuming urge and products lose their use value. Now they have no relation to us at all. We no longer have feelings of true pride in our accomplishments, we only think in terms of how much our neighbors envy us. Intrinsic pleasure for oneself becomes a secondary concern and we live to please everyone else.

We conform to society's standards because we are afraid to set our own.

One of the major problems of our present society is that we do not consume by relating ourselves to the products of consumption,

"we live in a world of things, and our only connection with them is that we know how to manipulate or to consume them."<sup>30</sup>

We want to obtain things in an easy way. We want to "buy" life and its values. We let our needs be determined by advertising, and our tastes manipulated by "public opinion." We hesitate to do something just because we'd like to, fearing we would then be called "selfish" by the conformers.

Modern man is conditioned to acquire things, just for the sake of consuming and possessing them. We never stop to digest what we have. Because we too often live the fictions of advertising, we become conditioned to the principle that every desire must be satisfied immediately, no wish must be frustrated.<sup>31</sup> Of course, we are never satisfied, so we need more and more things because that is where society says to put our values. No thought is given as to whether or not the product is useful or even if we need it.

We build a pseudo-reality of what is real, meaningful, and worthwhile in life. We do this to avoid the realities of our existence - the suffering as well as happiness, serious thought, or real concern. This has happened because our intelligence has progressed at a much faster rate than our reason. "Intelligence" is figuring out how to manipulate things. It is "thought" in the service of biological survival. "Reason" aims at understanding what is beneath the surface, at the essence

of the reality which surrounds us. When we fail to use our reason, we fail to ask what is behind the reality. We have the "know how" but not the "know why."<sup>32</sup>

To use our reason we must have a sense of self. Man can penetrate existence and reality only if he has a sense of identity with which he can relate himself to the world. When man does not have feelings of self-integrity, he associates reality with what others designate as reality, or with only fragments of life. What is real becomes a surface phenomenon for alienated man and he overlooks the vital concerns, namely, his own life and death!

#### Work and Alienated Man...

Man must work if he is to live. In a democratic society he can choose the nature of his work and can make of it what he wills. Work can be a drudgery or it can liberate man, giving him purpose and direction.

"In the process of work, that is, the molding and changing of nature outside of himself, man molds and changes himself."<sup>33</sup>

The more man increases his skill, the greater and more purposeful his work. This is the ideal. In our modern factory type production, however, we find the worker is alienated, and work becomes a duty, a thing to "get done." The trend is now for more output and greater wealth. Work has become a means to an end, which is wealth, and is not a meaningful activity in and of itself. With the development of the factory, there became a vast disparity between the owners of wealth and those who had to sell their physical labor.

Because work has become "alienated," man's boredom is increased and he looks for other things to fill his lonely, dreary hours.

The type of activity and work we engage in has a direct reflection upon our lives and their meaning. The person who is "doing his all" in an event or in his work and who is using his creativity and effort, and knows that he is related to the result of his production, also has psychological feelings that his own life has purpose and meaning. This individual can be contrasted to the automaton, the person who works without any satisfaction; whose life activities and work are non-meaningful and are merely ways to earn a living or to "spend time." Because this person is consciously or unconsciously dissatisfied with his work and his activities, he becomes discontent with himself, and life loses much of its purpose. Incentives of more money, side-bonuses, and inner-factory competition may mean more production, but this in itself does not make the actual work any more conducive to mental health, nor does it change the attitude of the worker toward his job.<sup>34</sup>

People unconsciously try and escape from their meaningless lives and work in cravings for money, power, and prestige. Yet these goals, even when attained to the highest degrees, cannot satisfy man's basic needs which are stunted and blocked by his "forced" or "unnatural" slavery to a mechanized time clock situation.

Our present society retains the illusions that man should be satisfied and happy with the success, power, prestige and money which are, in fact, the compensatory ways man attempts to cover up his real needs. Not to want these things means one is "queer," "a failure," or "a misfit." Thus, in our society to be "a failure" is not to fail in achieving one's

potentiality, or to fail in self-fulfillment, or with living life, but one is "a failure" if one is unsuccessful in holding a meaningless job.

Alienated work results in two un-productive activities. These are laziness and hostility.

Laziness is not normal for the health of the individual. When one says he is lazy, or acts that way, it is often because one is bored with his job, or with himself and is thus mentally suffering. When factory and other alienated types of work are unsatisfying, man longs for "an out," which takes the form of laziness and "doing nothing." Complete laziness or autom<sup>SP</sup>atization can only lead to self-destruction. Thus what one does with his life and the work he chooses, is largely what that person is, and what is more important, what he feels he is. If one is engaged in productive work in accord with his own potential, he also finds himself loving life, producing more and wanting to give his all to his work.<sup>35</sup>

Hostility towards work is a less conscious factor than laziness. This is a reaction against the boss, the worker, or the job. Hostility stems from one's feeling he has no relatedness to his work. He sees his life is flying by and that there is no meaning except that which is obtainable by the pay check.

Were man to take an active part in whatever he does, he would make the act of consumption a meaningful, productive experience. When our society makes economic activities ends in themselves, man is pushed to the background, and he becomes a "slave to the machine and the means of production." The reason consumption for its own sake is "bad" is not because the things we produce are "bad" but that our cravings for things

have no relation to our basic psychic needs, or to the values that can make our lives worthwhile.

In other areas of our lives, often the means become ends in themselves. Often one uses destructive "means," which lead to other "ends," before the original end is ever achieved. Fromm cites the person who may think that his ultimate aim or motive for doing something is the real reason for his actions and that there is no underlying motive. But there is an underlying force or drive which propels a person to act in that given way. For example, if one has a compulsion to save money, he might rationalize this drive according to socially approved motives, such as that the reason he must save is for the end that he will enjoy his life and that his family will be happier and that by "saving" he is fulfilling his duty toward his family. The real, though unconscious aim might be the power he feels he is attaining through acquisition of this money, or perhaps he gets a pleasure from hoarding it.

On a practical level it would seem that even though this individual has this unconscious drive to hoard, that the ends are the same, that his family is still benefitting, and furthermore he is satisfying his need to make a living while at the same time is pacifying an inner drive.

Fromm would say that even though the rationalization may be valid and socially appropriate, this type of person who is compelled to hoard is usually filled with anxiety and doubts and this "saving" gives him feelings of gratification as he temporarily soothes those anxieties which arise from his lack of security.

This means that the person is not really fulfilling himself by

his hoarding, rather he is blocking his own potentialities. Why? Because his anxieties are being met on a superficial level. The hoarding of money symbolically proves to him that he has power, and that he is related to the world. This will never be a true source of satisfaction because unconsciously he feels inadequate except when he has money. Fromm points out that all the money in the world would never alleviate the man's inner insecurities because the money only meets his surface symptomatic needs and does not deal with the causes of his problem.

In our contemporary society we perform activities which should only serve as means to ends, but we have made them "ends" in and of themselves. We are left without goals or "ends" and we flounder about, with little purpose and no direction as to where we are going.

"People work in order to make money; they make money in order to do enjoyable things with it. The work is the means, the enjoyment, the end...We have the most wonderful instruments and means man has ever had, but we do not stop and ask what they are for."<sup>36</sup>

Perhaps it should be one's religion which points toward the goals for which a man should strive.

### Religion and the Individual...

Man yearns to have an important place in the world. He has needs which motivate him to unify and harmonize his existence with the totality of life. "Where do I stand," "What ought I to do," and "Why?" are questions of ultimate concern to every man.

In order to answer these questions he must formulate concepts, and systems of thought which will give him a satisfactory frame of orientation to the world and an object of devotion. Fromm defines a man's religion as a totality of the way one looks at life, how one acts with his

fellow man in the world of reality, and the particular object or objects to which one devotes himself as a matter of ultimate concern.

Objectively speaking, one's object of devotion will constitute the worth or disvalue of one's particular religion. The question to be answered is what type of religion serves man best, and what are the consequences of the practice of this religion for human life?<sup>37</sup>

There are many religions from which man might choose an orientation toward life. The difficulty is, that religion, as stated in principle and ideal, often has little or no relation to the way it is practiced.

But we cannot make this generalization as a categorical imperative applying to all practitioners of religion. Dr. Fromm limits himself to a distinction between authoritarian and humanistic religions, because these areas encompass all types, including the theistic and non-theistic orientations. He holds that authoritarian religion is non-productive for the individual.

#### The Authoritarian God...

The authoritarian religious experience grows in societies which subject the populace to the will of a dictator or strong bureaucracy. Here, the individual is taught to fear authority, to submit and become dependent upon it.

"Whether one worships a punishing, awesome God or a similarly conceived leader makes little difference."<sup>38</sup>

This type of religion emphasizes that man is controlled by a higher power outside of himself, moreover, this outside force is "entitled" to obedience, reverence and worship not because it loves or is just, but because it has power. This is the type of thinking Fromm condemns as being



against modern psychology and antagonistic to the pursuit of mental health.

In the authoritarian scheme, man is nothing as compared to the almighty powers of the great, omnipotent authoritarian God.

This structure might be illustrated in the following manner:

God, or Deity is pictured as infinite power in contrast to and having dominion over powerless, frail, insignificant, finite man. This Deity shines down at His will upon man through his representative authority. Another name for this effulgence is "grace."

Because God is so far above man, He can never be directly comprehended, so God must work through a representative authority. In our present civilization the authority is delegated to Priest, Pope, or Orthodox Rabbi who interprets to every man what the Deity "supposedly" desires. ("Supposedly," because Fromm denies there is such a Deity and says that the authoritarian leaders simply use this as an excuse to impose their will upon the people.)

"Every-man" is considered lowly and inept; an incapable creature who, because of his lowliness, must submit to the representative authority who plays the role of dictating what man must do to placate the great God.

Because man is limited by his nature and is a finite, contingent being, in contrast to God who is infinite, all powerful and transcendent, He must admit to whatever "heavenly decrees" are imposed upon him. The virtue of this type of Religion is obedience and submission to the representative authority since he supposedly speaks for the transcendent God.

"The essential element in authoritarian religion and in the authoritarian religious experience is the surrender to a power transcending man. The main virtue of this type of religion is obedience, its cardinal sin is disobedience."<sup>39</sup>

Authoritarian religion makes obedience its main virtue and disobedience the main sin because its own authority is at stake and it is afraid of criticism. The sin of Adam and Eve, says authoritarian religion, was not the eating of the apple per se, but was their disobedience to the authority of God, and their attempt to become like God. Because of this they were driven from the Garden of Paradise, and forced to live by their own ability. This was their "punishment" for this human act of will.<sup>40</sup>

Fromm interprets this legend in a humanistic fashion and contends that:

"...the real fall of man is his alienation from himself, his submission to power, his turning against himself even though under the guise of his worship of God."<sup>41</sup>

Fromm argues that authoritarian religious systems produce alienation, thus adding to the trend of modern society which promotes man's estrangement from himself.

In authoritarian types of Religion man uses his talents to build a form which he calls his God. He proceeds to project his powers of love, reason, justice and mercy on this created image. As man considers all of these fine powers (which he has projected upon his God image and which he now feels belong to God), he becomes awed by them and is willing to submit completely to whatever this creature wants; so he worships God, praying that It should be gracious and return some of these qualities which he has projected.

By worshipping God, man tries to get in touch with that part of himself which he has lost through the projection of his qualities of love, wisdom, and justice. Now he must pray, begging God to return some of what

was originally his own. This process is self-defeating for the more man continues to submit to his "Idol," the more his own efficacy and strength are diminished, and the easier it becomes "next time" to submit to and rely upon external authority. When man deprives himself of all that is "good," he becomes totally submissive and dependent on God and His authority for mercy.

"In order to get "love from God, man must prove he has no love; and in order to persuade God to guide him by his superior wisdom he must prove how deprived he is of wisdom when he is left to himself."<sup>42</sup>

The more man feels alienated from his powers the worse he becomes for he no longer feels he is in command of his life, or that he is responsible for doing right actions, because it's God who determines what he must do. Man loses faith in himself and in his fellow human beings, feeling he must go "outside himself" to find meaning.

What man is really doing is gaining a false, temporary euphoria at the expense of his will, his individuality, and personal integrity.

Men seeking power have always used "guilt feelings" to increase dependency to authority. A person will invariably commit a "sin." He feels the need to be "forgiven." He goes to the authority for forgiveness and prostrates himself. As he is forgiven he becomes further indebted and dependent upon the authority and he becomes less and less critical of the demands of the authority. Symbiotic relationships are strengthened as the independence of the individual decreases.

If a person commits a "sin" and he feels a need to be forgiven, if he goes to some external authority - to God or his representative the Priest - for salvation and forgiveness, he is bowing before authority. If

he is forgiven, he becomes further dependent on the authority and he feels inadequate to criticize the demands of the authority, so he relegates to the authority more and more power. In this way he is increasing his dependency and alienating himself from responsibility for his own life.

Further difficulty will arise if he is ever rejected by the authority, for then he will have to face himself. Since he had no prior experience with facing himself or standing alone in his freedom, he will feel inadequate to cope with his problems and find himself in despair.

#### Authoritarian, Secular Religion...

This orientation is based on the principle that "might is right." Here the state, the race, or the tribe becomes the object of worship because it has been invested with supreme power, and the individual who originally gave this power is now hopelessly weak.

Systems of this nature emphasize that man should sacrifice all happiness and independence for some future ideal as life after death, or the good of the state.

Man is told that he must be sorry for his pitiful human plight and should feel guilty if he ever thinks of himself or if he dares to put his own welfare above the power in control. Repentance is advocated for this person, that it might make atonement for his "perverted feelings."<sup>43</sup>

This is an example of irrational faith, based on one's emotional submission to irrational, dictatorial authority. In irrational faith, to say, "I believe because it is absurd," is a valid statement. This kind of faith is characterized by blind allegiance to a cause or idea, without going through the process of criticizing it. This is the acceptance of

something as true because an authority or the majority said so. It is self-destructive because it causes one to sit back and passively wait for the realization of hopes and dreams. It is harmful with regard to establishing criterion for morality and justice, because it posits relativism as a valid guide. This means there are no objective values as to right and wrong, and, for example, unqualified submission and allegiance to Hitler would be as valid (in this relativistic system) as commitment to an ideal of democracy and freedom.

Fromm transfers Freud's idea of incest and the Oedipus complex to interpersonal relations. The "incestuous" desire for mommy or daddy, says Fromm, is not a sexual craving, but is the desire to return to the paradisiac protection of the parental figures...the wish to remain a child.

There are other forms of "incest" beside the attachment to parents. The tribe, the nation, the race and various institutions within the society become new "homes" for the individual. This is because one gains a certain security through his identification with others who feel as he does. Now he has a place in society. He cannot objectively criticize his family or his country for then he would be criticizing himself, and since he has not grown up psychologically, this would be intolerable.

These forms of symbiotic relatedness "are symptoms of man's inability to experience himself and others as free human beings."<sup>44</sup>

Fromm shows that man must strive to overcome his emotional fixations and incestuous ties if he is ever to grow out of subjectivity into freedom.

Psycho-analysis has proven through clinical evidence that sub-

jective conviction regarding "the truth" is no criterion of reality. Moreover, a person can sincerely believe he is doing something out of duty or virtue, but be motivated by sadistic strivings. People also tend to convince themselves and believe their own rationalizations.

Thus, to be subjective is not a mature way of determining the validity of religion, or God, for this attitude blocks the full use of one's reason, inhibits one's freedom, and hampers individual self-determining development.

#### Religion and Alienated Man...

Authoritarian religion is dysfunctional because it alienates man from himself. Rather than God being the "image" or "symbol" of man's higher self, God has become the possessor of what was originally man's...his reason and his love. By projecting his powers on God, man becomes impoverished.

Modern man's conception of God, fits into his alienated, automaton character structure. In our alienation-breeding society, God often becomes the machine, the production line, money or success. Nothing is to be taken too seriously. The idea is to be efficient in life, "to invest life successfully and to get it over with without major mishaps."<sup>45</sup>

Standards of true value fall by the way as alienated man conforms to the herd. Religious values come to mean only so many points on the current social scale.

Contemporary man gets along fine when things go smoothly. In fact, in these "good times," we have experienced an upsurge in Church and Synagogue attendance. People have turned more and more to religion, or

so it seems. Too often, however, authoritarian types of religion are sought in order to provide answers to the problems of existence, or to escape from self-responsibility into the arms of security and certainty.

When troubles come, modern man becomes overly-anxious, searching for some kind of faith or principles to guide him out of conflict. But he hasn't had any principles or values for so long, that now he doesn't know where to turn, and finds himself even more frustrated and hampered in meeting life's problems. From his despair he often regresses to infantile states, crying for "daddy" to help him.

In recent sociological surveys it was found that the majority of us believe in God, and we take it for granted that God exists. The rest of us who do not believe, take it for granted that God does not exist. The point is, that either way, God is taken for granted. Fromm shows that:

"Neither belief nor disbelief cause any sleepless nights, nor any serious concern. In fact, whether a man in our culture believes in God or not makes hardly any difference either from a psychological or from a truly religious standpoint."<sup>46</sup>

Many times religion is looked to as a way to help man face his business difficulties with greater energy and efficiency. One prays to "The Man Upstairs," or he "Dials-a-Prayer," or he reads a modern author on "How God can Work for You," or "How to Pray Your Weight Away." In this new religion, "belief in God has been transformed into a psychological device to make one better fitted for the competitive struggle."<sup>47</sup>

"God has been transformed into a remote General Director of Universe, Inc.; you know that He is there, He runs the show, (although it probably

would run without Him, too), you never see Him, but you acknowledge His leadership while you are 'doing your part.'"<sup>48</sup>

### Love and Alienated Man...

Another aspect of our alienation is shown in our love relationships. The person who has become an automaton in Capitalistic society and who wants to get married, desires to exchange his personality package for another, at least, of equal value. Once married, the two become a "well-oiled" team, understanding of each other's whims and foibles, never too angry at each other, treating each other with courtesy and surface pleasantries.

What is wrong with this type of relationship? Fromm says these people remain strangers to each other and to themselves all their lives. They form a shield against the world, and "egoism à deux is mistaken for love and intimacy."<sup>49</sup>

Many think that if they experience adequate sexual satisfaction in their marriages that they will be happy. But sexual happiness, says Fromm, is the result of love. The sexual desire is but one manifestation of the need for love and union.

The individual who has remained on an emotionally immature level is one who fears or hates the opposite sex. These fears cause inhibitions which prevent him from "giving." If one fails to outgrow his childish fears, if one never learns "how to love," then sexual needs will seek fulfillment in substitute, usually deviant ways.

Many factors in modern society create the conditions for neurotic love. This type of love stems from the situation where one or both of the



"lovers" have remained in symbiotic attachment to a parent, transferring the feelings and fears associated with the authoritarian parental figure onto the loved partner. This individual relates in the conditioned infantile pattern, often making irrational demands. The nature of his dependent type of love will follow the principle: "I love because I am loved," or "I love you because I need you."<sup>50</sup>

These ways are non-productive because the person remains a child, emotionally and affectively, feeling no responsibility or obligation to do anything to be worthy of love. This symbiotic attachment is not really "love," and it consequently leads to the downfall of both parties.

Another manifestation of trying to overcome separateness in an immature, neurotic way, is when one goes from one sex conquest to another in hopes of finding some union with the world. When desire for physical union is not stimulated by "love," when it is only a hunger, an unbridled emotion, then the union can be no more than transitory and disillusioning, leading to further despair.

"Sexual attraction creates, for the moment, the illusion of union, yet without love, this "union" leaves strangers as far apart as they were before---sometimes it makes them ashamed of each other, because when the illusion has gone they feel their estrangement even more markedly than before."<sup>51</sup>

In this relationship there is no commitment to the welfare of the other. The feeling is that "others are important only as they satisfy me," "What can I get from him" becomes the standard of value.

Fromm says the selfish person is basically unable to love himself or others, and in fact, he really hates himself and is often frustrated, with the results of an empty life. He can never satisfy his needs

because of his selfishness and is led in a circle to his own destruction. This selfishness is a compensation for his failure to meaningfully relate, and excludes any genuine concern for others.

The problem here is not that people are "too concerned" with their own self-interest or welfare, but, to the contrary, they are not concerned enough with their real needs. They uphold a fictitious notion of where their self-interest lies, and confuse this with "being selfish."

This is illustrated by what Fromm calls "neurotic unselfishness." These people are troubled by states of depression, tiredness, inability to work, failure in love relationships and laziness. Their unselfish feelings become their redeeming factor of which they feel proud.

"The 'unselfish' person 'does not want anything for himself'; he 'lives for others,' is proud that he does not consider himself important. He is puzzled to find that in spite of his unselfishness he is unhappy, and that his relationships to those closest to him are unsatisfactory."<sup>52</sup>

The point is, of course, that his unselfishness is one of the symptoms of his neurosis; the cause is his lack of creativity. Fromm illustrates this with the example of the dominating mother.

"While she consciously believes that she is particularly fond of her child, she has actually a deeply repressed hostility toward the object of her concern. She is overconcerned not because she loves the child too much, but because she has to compensate for her lack of capacity to love him at all."<sup>53</sup>

The mother who deems herself to be "unselfish" equates this with love. Her attitude is taken over by her children, causing them to relate to life unproductively, and to grow in an alienated way.

"The children are anxious, afraid of the mother's disapproval and anxious to live up to her expectations. Usually, they are affected by their mother's hidden hostility against life, which they sense rather than recognize, and eventually become imbued with it themselves."<sup>54</sup>

The effect of the "unselfish" mother is similar to the selfish one. In fact it is worse, because the mother acts under the guise of virtue, and unselfishness, the children cannot openly criticize her. The children project their hostility against life and grow into bitter adults.<sup>55</sup>

There are other forms of irrational love, all of which have their roots in the childhood environment, and which emerge in an alienated society.

Our alienation is shown in our "pseudo-love" relationships with those whom we "idolize". When one falls in love suddenly, the loved person takes on the qualities of goodness, perfection, excellence, and magnanimity. In this process the person worships those qualities in the other person but he does not practice them himself. Why? Because he has projected his own qualities (and some he wishes he had) onto the loved person, who is then worshipped as "the bearer of all love, all light, all bliss."<sup>56</sup>

What is wrong with this relationship is that the person upon whom all these attributes are projected can never live up to them, and the "worshipper" will be disappointed. A new object of idolatry will be sought, with the consequent result being intensified loneliness and estrangement when this object "fails" him.

Another aspect of this projection is that one only sees "what is wrong" with other people but never sees his own shortcomings. The more faults he sees in others, the less faults he thinks he has.

In an unhappy marriage, the children many times fall heir to the unhealthy projections of the parents. The parents are fearful of making a break but say they are holding the marriage together because of

the children. The children, caught in conflict, often become very disturbed.

The desire for children on the part of an unhappy couple shows the wish to project one's own problems of responsibility for existence on to the children.

"When a person feels that he has not been able to make sense of his own life, he tries to make sense of it in terms of the life of his children. But one is bound to fail within oneself and for the children. The former because the problem of existence can be solved by each one only for himself, and not by proxy; the latter because one lacks in the very qualities which one needs to guide the children in their own search for an answer."<sup>57</sup>

Our consumption-oriented minds seek love relationships through magazine love stories, and the loves of movie stars. If we can live vicariously by consuming pictures or the love of others, we think some of this will "rub off" and we too will be able to find satisfactory, healthy love relationships. To the contrary, the more we live in fantasy, the less chance we have.

We live in the past or future and not in the present because we are afraid of reality.

"How many engaged or newly married couples dream of their bliss of love to take place in the future, while at the very moment at which they live they are already beginning to be bored with each other?"<sup>58</sup>

Because love is so glamorized in our society, and our love-life is seen in contrast to the "movie star's ideal marriage," we contract the illusion that, as the fairy tale Prince and Princess, we too "will live happily ever after." The difficulty is that we are not told of the Prince's life after the marriage. If we were, we might note that

conflicts are bound to arise. Two persons, coming from different environments and different parents are bound to have some disparities.

The problem here, however, is not that "normal" conflicts will arise, but that they are masked and arguments center around superficial matters. One reason this happens is that one of the partners fears the other will "find out" about him, will penetrate the other's ground of existence and disarm him. This, says Fromm, is why commitment is so vital to the happiness and fruition of any marriage. If the couple do not find answers to the problems of life and existence through their own love, then no amount of children, no amount of discussion, no amount of years together, will bring them happiness. Only when two people have made their commitment to live as individuals and as a unified organism, working and striving through good times and tragedy, sickness and health; airing and working over their real conflicts and not being bothered by superficial trivialities will they know what it means to be in love. This is the only basis for love.

"There is only one proof for the presence of love: the depth of the relationship, and the aliveness and strength in each person concerned."<sup>59</sup>

#### The Authoritarian, Non-Productive Conscience...

The conscience in authoritarian religion is that of internalized external authority. This may include one's parents, the police, a dictator, or whoever the authorities are in a given society. This conscience is concerned with man's obedience, self-sacrifice, and duty, all with respect to his "social adjustment" and not with respect to his own adjustment to himself.<sup>60</sup>

Because one cannot escape from oneself, the internalized authority is always present. This is the concept of the Super-ego in Freud which regulates the individual's actions by fear of punishment, of abandonment by the authority, or in hope of reward. Without the authority, this conscience would not "know" right from wrong. There may be no relation to the "good" as such, as far as one's actions are concerned, only the fear of the authority. If by some coincidence the demands of the authoritarian conscience are toward the "good" then the person will be motivated toward this end. The important thing is that the authoritarian interests impose this for their own benefit and not in the express interest of the individual.<sup>61</sup>

The norms given by this type of conscience are "right" because they are dictated by an authority, or uttered in the name of "duty." Hitler's followers might have believed they were acting in accord with their consciences when they committed humanly repugnant and reprehensible acts.

The more one is awed by the external authority, so the internalized voice of that authority is magnified and echoed. The more one idealizes the image of the authority, the greater the disparity between the actual authority and the projected idealized image.<sup>62</sup>

The person builds up in his mind images of what the external authority is like, and because he admires any power above himself, he projects qualities of perfection onto the authority which they become an idealized concept of what the person himself is projecting. The ideal projections differ from the "real" qualities and since the person wouldn't

pay homage to another creature no better than himself, he rationalizes the excellence of his projection, fortifying his conception and re-internalizing it...the resulting power, and goodness of the authority now being above any empirical evidence.

The "good" authoritarian conscience is blind submission with intense and ultimate faith and trust in the superior. This comes about when one pleases the authority and thereby feels some security. The guilty authoritarian conscience produces fear and insecurity because one is afraid of either punishment or desertion.<sup>63</sup>

Rebellion against the dominion of the authority is the prime offense, for the external authority supposedly is the epitome of moral excellence and none have the right to criticize or question. The individual is always at fault, never the authority, for if the person criticizes or complains, it is but "proof" of his own guilt. Obedience and submission are maintained as top virtues, while "guilt" is defined as disobedience. A good example of this was the "crime" of Prometheus giving fire to the world and disobeying the authority of the Gods.

When internalization of Authority occurs man can either submit and become the slave, or he can assume the role of the authority and treat himself as his own slave. This authoritarian reaction cripples one's productiveness and this person develops sadistically and destructively. The destructive energies predominate and the individual blocks his own development.<sup>64</sup>

The authoritarian conscience is illustrated in the neurosis of the present middle class as well as in the historical development of

Protestantism and Fascism. The child in a middle class authoritarian-oriented family finds it hard to criticize his parents, or he may feel he doesn't please them and he experiences severe guilt feelings. This is especially true when the parents want the children to make up for the disappointments and frustrations of their lives. The child may be faced with highly charged emotional demands which are often subtle and not overtly expressed. These "hidden-persuasive-authorities" become anonymous powers to stir up new guilt feelings in the child. If definite expectations, or overt demands were made on the child, he could cope with them and face them. Thus guilt feelings result from dependence upon an irrational authority, and from the feeling that it is one's obligation to appease that authority. The anonymous authority becomes the most powerful, because the individual doesn't know what or who he's fighting.

The danger of belief in irrational or anonymous authority, is that man will overlook his real moral problems as he wastes his time and energy dealing with "ephemeral nonsense."

#### Non-Productive Ethics...

Relativistic ethics are not objectively valid because they are conditioned by the historical place of a particular society at a particular time. Each society, Democratic, Fascist, Socialist, or Communist, forms the character structure of its members in such a way that they want to perform in the "right" way according to the dictates of the society. A society built on slavery, though it is harmful to the welfare and growth of its individual members, will instill its culture patterns into its members in order to promote the functioning of the society. This means that



the character and behavior patterns of individuals become so conditioned by the culture that whether one is a slave or master, he will go along with the prevailing mores, and will be happy when he is performing his duty according to the dictates of the society. He will not ask whether or not the society promotes his personal advantage to its general welfare!

These are what Fromm calls, "Socially Immanent Ethics." These are norms necessary for the functioning and survival of a specific kind of society and the mores and folkways of the people within it. These ethics include prohibitions and commands which are necessary for the functioning of the society in a way that generates its growth. It includes the rules of the society which are necessary to maintain its mode of production and way of life.

Each society has its particular virtues. In our society one of the "virtues" is the virtue of industry because the modern industrial system needs men to have the drive to work, to become skilled, and to manufacture. In other societies, for example where cooperation is a necessity for survival, then patience and kindness become the virtues to be cultivated.

The ideologies of a society and its "virtues" are of prime importance where privileged groups dominate. These ideologies will claim, in case the majority uprising and want to revolt, that those who want to overthrow the existing government are "traitors" to the "highest ethics." The leaders who want to retain power will call themselves the "upholders of true ethics" which, of course, is in their own self-interest. In a culture where submission is glorified by the leaders, then the virtues

become complete "unselfishness" and "devotion." The point is that until men succeed in creating the ideal society, there will be conflict between the prevailing ethics of a given society and the welfare of individual man.<sup>65</sup>

"Pleasure" as such is often considered a standard of ethics. Fromm says this is wrong. If "pleasure" is taken as the standard, it still does not prove the moral worth of the activity which brings the "pleasure," because psychologically we know that the satisfactions man derives from his actions are not always healthy. Some get "pleasure" from sadism, drunken-stupors, and by amassing wealth at the destruction of others. Moreover, satisfactions derived from irrational strivings may only be a cover-up for underlying insecurities and inferiority feelings which lead to further self detriment.

Even to have an ethical norm which restricts "pleasures" to those activities non-harmful to others, or which relegates the concept of "pleasures" to deceptive, subjective experience, does not provide an adequate guiding principle for all our actions.

The problem is to inquire as to man's best and real interests, to search out "pleasures" which would fully benefit man as an individual, and to contrast these with those interests imposed upon man by any given society.

### Summary

External authority is limiting and distorting because it causes a withdrawal from the constructive love of self and from the individual's human responsibility for the destiny of himself and of mankind. It leads

to a pseudo-self which is essentially a reflection of other people's expectations.<sup>66</sup>

Man has the power to act and to judge what is good and bad. When he is frustrated, hampered, and deprived of using his powers, they atrophy and wither, and man loses as he becomes impoverished. If one is thwarted in the process of living, the energy which is blocked undergoes a process of change and is transformed into life destructive energy. Destructiveness is the outcome of unconstructively lived life.<sup>67</sup>

Only by making use of one's productive powers will man feel "at-one" with himself, related to others, and master of his life. Man's "success" with life depends upon his willingness and ability to confront it with his total being.

In Chapter Three, we will see some of the productive, positive, and fulfilling "solutions" man takes when he reacts to life in mentally mature and healthy ways.

## CHAPTER THREE

PRODUCTIVE SOLUTIONS: THE ART OF  
LIVING AND THE PRACTICE OF LOVE

The Productive Orientation...

The man of today is a distortion of what he can become. Dr. Fromm doesn't draw this disparity to say that all men can be all great, noble, creative and loving. He is saying that all men can actualize those aspects which will bring out their finest character traits. Anyone can give in to the lower impulses, to the easier way of conformity and submission. But man has the potential for building a life that will bring him the unique satisfaction of being able to say: "I have lived my life in the best and most fulfilling way possible, and I as well as my fellowmen have benefitted."

All of man's needs can be fulfilled in either a creative or a destructive manner. To fill these needs in a destructive way will only bring harm to the self. To fill them through creative channels, will do the most for actualizing whatever potentialities an individual has. It is only logical that if one has his best self-interest in mind, he will move toward creativity rather than destruction as a method of operating in the world.

The productive way of assimilation is though "working"; the corresponding phenomenon of socialization is through "love."

It was shown that man's basic problem is that of his moral-biological evolution; his growing freedom and self-responsibility. He has been released from the bondage of old tradition and authority and is

left outside and alone, with insecurity, and uncertainty. But man cannot return to his previous state of domination or submission for then he would be limiting his own freedom and opportunity. The problem has become: "How can man be free and not alone?" Fromm answers this by positing the productive solutions. By following these solutions, man has the opportunity for realizing his true self, for actualizing his total personality through the blending of his reason, intellect, and emotion into a harmonious integrated whole in active expression.<sup>1</sup>

These solutions come to fruition as one acts spontaneously, with free will, rationality, and the ethic that each individual is entitled to life, liberty and a pursuit of goals and achievements.

Any productive solution to the problem of man's existence must be based on the needs and nature of man, and on the construction of the contents of human well-being. The cure to man's alienation does not merely consist in the removal of symptoms, but in the presence of well-being.

The mature answer to this quest is to be found in what Fromm calls "fully born." That it is up to each man to "give birth" to his emotional and intellectual potentialities throughout his life. This can be done by developing one's awareness, one's reason, one's capacity to love to such a degree that one transcends his own egocentric involvement and arrives at a new oneness and harmony with the world. Birth is not one act but a continual process. Death comes when birth stops. "The tragedy of life is that man always dies before he is completely and fully born."<sup>2</sup>

By positing what he terms "productive solutions," Fromm differs from the Freudian and Horney schools of psycho-analysis. He differs from

Freud in stating that man is naturally inclined to be productive and integrated. He differs from Horney in holding that the basic problems of humanity can be stated concretely, and that they apply to everyone, neurotic or not.<sup>3</sup>

One must meet one's existential life situation in a fulfilling and meaningful way.

"...There is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by the unfolding of his powers, and by living productively within the limitations set by the laws of existence."<sup>4</sup>

This can only occur through the productive orientation, which provides the moral standards of man with the means of finding objectively valid solutions.

The mature individual who relates to the world by full involvement, is productive, and he feels himself to be the creator of his own powers. "I am what I do" is his motto.<sup>5</sup> He has a genuine feeling of identity and he knows who he is. These feelings lead to spontaneous, integrated development of oneself, as one continually re-creates the world and conceives it to be enriched and enlivened by his own powers.

Man must produce in order to live. By applying his reason and imagination he transforms raw materials into tools for his service. Productiveness is man's ability to use his powers guided by reason, to realize his potentialities. Productiveness needs freedom for its expression. As each man becomes all he is capable of, he is on the road to self-realization.

Fromm's definition of goodness and the good life, is hinged upon his concept of productive man.

Every individual has the ability to be productive. We are not all talented artists or musicians,

"...but a person can experience, see, feel, and think productively without having the gift to create something visible or communicable. Productiveness is an attitude which every human being is capable of, unless he is mentally and emotionally crippled."<sup>6</sup>

In productive thinking, man uses his reason to perceive what underlies the superficial, and his intelligence to control his environment. He reacts with his full self to the objects in his world and in turn becomes affected by them. This means that whatever man concerns himself with, the concern should spring from a full, objective response to the object. One must look for the totality of what an object is; he must also see his own relation to the object from the eyes of the object. Objectivity equals mutual respect, not detachment or distortion.

Productiveness also involves the use of one's reason, intellect, and intuition, as one works in this world and applies himself creatively to that function. Herein lies the subjective aspect.

The tension and polarity between the objectivity and subjectivity produces the productive attitude. Man can meet his needs through love. Differentiating between immature, symbiotic, dependent love and mature love which means "oneness" and not "sameness," Fromm shows that only as man has inner freedom and independence and is actively concerned with his own life, can he find an answer to the problems of existence.

This Chapter will show some of the productive solutions men might follow as they endeavor to attain maturity and emotional growth. These will include discussions of the productive aspects of love, human-

istic religion, and productive ethics, with a summary of Fromm's ideas relating productive characteristics with the art of living.

### Work and Productive Man...

In his analysis of productive, meaningful work, Fromm transcends the modern alienated concept that work is a means merely to physical satisfactions. True, one needs the "check" each week, but one needs to find fulfillment with himself and with life even more.

Fromm suggests that productive, useful occupations save men from a boredom they fear more than the pain of labor. This is evidenced by the variety of amusements and diversions men invent or pursue when alienated-type work is "finished for the day."

Productive labor, in its ideal, is an activity, not a commodity. It is the self-expression of man; of his individual physical and mental powers. In this activity man has the chance to develop. It is activity directed to an end beyond itself. It is productive of the necessities which sustain life, and of the goods by which life is perfected. Work is not only the means to the end of producing a commodity, but is an end in itself as the meaningful expression of human energy, and as such, is enjoyable.<sup>7</sup>

In this situation a man's hours would be filled usefully, turning to service energies which would otherwise be wasted or misspent in non-productive idleness and daydreaming, or in neurotic over-activity.

The ideal type of work can only come about with a corresponding transformation of society. The basis for this society, Fromm feels, lies



in a mature socialism which aims at freeing man from being used as a means for purposes outside himself.<sup>8</sup>

This ideal economy must be guided by the principle of production for use rather than for profit. This means that each person should be educated for his particular role in the process of production. The general context wherein this ideal is fulfilled is in a democratic system where a man is treated according to his ability.

The perversion of labor into forced servitude alienates man from his truly productive self. The wages paid to the factory laborer or to the migrant worker are remunerations paid to slaves who are alienated because they are performing meaningless labor. Moreover, merely more money is no cure for this alienating work. The real cure is found in that economy which allows each man the chance to develop his inherent potential through the work he finds productive. If a man doesn't like the work he is engaged in, it is his duty to himself to educate himself, that he might do something more in line with his own satisfactions and potential.<sup>9</sup>

Man's mind is his basic tool of survival. It is the only weapon he has to meet his problems and build a decent life for himself. To remain alive, man must think. Man must use his mind if he is to produce, if he is to control his existence.

Productive work involves a constant acquisition of knowledge and a shaping of matter to fit one's purpose. All work is creative work if done by a thinking mind, and no work is creative if done by an automaton who mimics in unflinching repetitiveness a routine he has learned

from others. The choice of one's work is as wide as one's mind. Work is the process of achieving one's values. The mind controls the body and leads it to achievement and fulfillment. Work can be one of the purposes of one's life, and can lead to self-pride and belief in oneself as the captain of one's own fate.

Reason must be man's ultimate criterion for his values, his productive achievement-his noblest activity.

#### A Mature View of Religion ...

Religion is essentially a human experience. It is man's response to his finitude; his aspiration toward the source of his highest values; his concern about the meaning of his life and his place in the world.

The role of religion is to meet man's needs on a mature, productive level. It must be a functional, working force; a built-in part of one's character that is able to bring man back, time and again, to face the vital problems of life. This religion must contribute to the complete actualization and realization of all man's powers. Its duty is to constantly challenge wherever the need arises, every aspect of human life, institution, or enterprise where secular power has violated the spirit of the religious ideal which seeks the universal peace, welfare, and brotherhood of all men.<sup>10</sup>

Man's religion should help him face the realities and difficulties that his limitations impose upon him, and give him the courage to rise above them. Religion is not a substitute for lack of "something better." Rather, it is the ultimate accomplishment added to every

other activity of the soul..." (for) out of the fullness of life one gives birth to religion, and only then is one blessed."<sup>11</sup>

Humanistic religion is centered around man and the development of his qualities. It is the attitude which makes man the measure of his own spiritual aspirations as he strives for his highest potential. The ultimate concern of man is man, especially the highest type of man he can become.

The highest form of this Religion is in a "human universalism" which overcomes clan or tribal worship. Here all men are affirmed as brothers, each responsible to himself and to his fellowman. These premises include the idea of man as a free individual. Every man is given equal opportunity under freedom to develop in his unique, creative way. He is encouraged to use all his energy to live. Within this structure is man's only hope of uniting humanity to build "that better world" of which the Prophets spoke.

Since all man can rely upon is what he knows, he must work to increase his knowledge, endeavoring to create a society which will instill the character structures emanating mature religion. This is man's moral duty and obligation because only he has the ability to discern what is good and valid from what is evil and untrue. Only through love, understanding, knowledge of self and others, guided by an ethical standard of moral principles, can he even hope to actualize the goals he sets for himself.

#### The Religious Experience...

Fromm joins the mystical elements of religious experience with the humanistic qualities of high ethics to produce his notion of religion.

In our present socio-cultural situation we try and relate to the world by our minds and reason. Our thought processes have given us modern science and we feel that all knowledge is obtainable through these means.

But this is a contradiction. We do not "know ourselves" through thought alone. Thought is necessary in order to see objectivity in the light of reality, but this is only the first step to true knowledge. A natural outgrowth from rational thought processes is the type of "mystical union" which attempts to transcend thought-knowledge. This is the act of union through love.

"Religious experience in this kind of religion is the experience of oneness with the All, based on one's relatedness to the world as it is grasped with thought and with love. Virtue becomes self-realization; faith, the certainty of conviction based on one's experience of thought and feeling. The prevailing mood is that of joy."<sup>12</sup>

Man's duty in the mature religious attitude is to strive to be fully awakened to life, to know "oneself." And though we can never fully know ourselves it is here we must start.

"Even if we knew a thousand times more of ourselves, we would never reach bottom. We would still remain an enigma to ourselves, as our fellow man would remain an enigma to us."<sup>13</sup>

Neither can God be known through thought alone. Fromm demonstrates that there is a mysticism which monotheism grows out of and supercedes. Here man overcomes the fallacy that one can know God by thought. The "higher expression" is the experience of union with God. This transcends any need for knowledge "about" God.<sup>14</sup>

How can man experience "oneness" with God? By performing ethical actions which promote the welfare of the individual and lead to the well-being of all men. The ultimate aim of religion is found in right-actions and not in "the right belief."

This orientation produces other reactions and consequences. First, religions stressing right actions, justice and mercy lead to tolerance of others, of their ideas and convictions. Secondly, it leads to the uplifting of man and his transformation into a more-nobler being.

According to Fromm and the East Indian and Chinese orientations, "the religious task of man is not to think right, but to act right, and/or to become one with the "One" in the act of concentrated meditation."<sup>15</sup> A mature ethical system is the basis for any religion.

Beyond the ethical realm there is a kind of religious experience which comes with the highest development of one's entire being.

The first aspect of this experience is "the wondering, the marveling, the becoming aware of life and of one's own existence, and of the puzzling problem of one's relatedness to the world."<sup>16</sup>

Fromm uses paradoxical language as he shows how we must continually ask "questions of life" knowing, all the while, that the most we can hope for is new questions, and perhaps we will never have any answers as to why we're here, or where we are going.

Each man has an ultimate concern which sustains him and motivates him to act in ways contributing toward fulfillment. This is ultimate concern with the self and the realization that this is the one and only life we have, and anything that does not contribute to our true fulfillment is of secondary importance. This means that our ultimate concern

must be towards actualizing all our finite potentialities. This can't be done by making our ultimate concern something that is not really ultimate, like a nation, success, or money. These are not ultimate because they have an existence in reality and can be grasped in this life. There is more to life than these "idolatrous concerns." Fromm would agree with Tillich in positing God as the symbol standing for our ultimate concern, which should be the complete actualization of our finite potentialities.

A third quality of religious experience is the attitude of oneness and union with which mystics are concerned. This is the potential oneness which can be felt with all of life. This attitude presupposes a sharp awareness of the self-as a being separate from, yet intrinsically connected with, the world. This is part of Fromm's scheme of paradox and tension, where reality is found in the polarity of opposing forces. From this confrontation and dichotomy religious experience springs.

"It is an attitude of pride and integrity and at the same time of a humility which stems from experiencing oneself as but a thread in the texture of the universe."<sup>17</sup>

Mature, humanistic religions have realized that if man and civilization are to continue up the evolutionary path toward higher standards and better living conditions, we must grow up to this type of religious experience.

#### God in the Humanistic Orientation...

Humanistic religions may be theistic and posit a God concept, or they may hold no theistic ideology whatever. In those areas of

humanistic thought where a God idea is held, God is a symbol of man's own powers which he tries to actualize and realize.

God becomes the highest values in humanity; a symbol of all that which is in man and yet which man is not; a symbol of a spiritual reality which we can strive to realize in ourselves...our idealized consciousness and highest principles; our ideal of perfection. God is the symbol of the best and finest and highest realization within us which we can never completely express because we are finite and our time is limited wherein we can grow to the point of unfolding our full selves. God becomes the principle of unity behind all phenomenon and all life. God is not a thing to be grasped, but is a concept in a constant state of evolvment.<sup>18</sup>

Whether one mouths belief in God or not, is inconsequential. What is vital is how a man lives. It is his actions which show whether or not he is devoted to what Monotheism and Theistic Humanism term "the principles of God." Rather than the love of God being a thought experience, it is the incorporation of ideal principles into oneself, which is a taking in of God into the self. These principles include reason, justice, love, and every other attitude leading to the betterment of mankind. This makes "Religion" the problem of each man, and not the problem of a God. Since religion is the response of man to his finitude, there is no one and only way to salvation. As long as a man's response to life is oriented to deeds of brotherliness and love it makes no sense "to fight with others whose thinking has arrived at different formulations."<sup>19</sup>

One's love of God originates from man's need to overcome loneliness and separateness and to experience union. Because God stands for the highest value and most desirable good, each individual must establish what this concept of "highest good" means to him.

"The understanding of the concept of God must, therefore, start with an analysis of the character structure of the person who worships God."<sup>20</sup>

### The Ritualistic Aspect of Humanistic Religion...

Religious rituals are acts shared by a group which express the common strivings of the group and which are rooted in common values. Through these socially patterned ceremonies, the individual finds fellow-feeling, and a symbolic means of communicating with the Deity.

This is the way we express our devotion to and striving for those values which we hold as being supremely worthwhile. This puts religious rituals in a different class than those of the compulsive neurotic. The rational religious ritual is not a reaction against unconscious libidinal strivings and it is not such a vital catastrophe if the rational ritual goes unperformed. One may experience feelings of regret that he didn't carry out the ritual, but he will not fear punishment. "One can always recognize the irrational ritual by the degree of fear produced by its violation in any manner."<sup>21</sup>

We perform many rituals in daily living. We applaud the artist, greet others in prescribed form, and act with the "proper" manners in given situations.

In religion, a rational ritual is one which acts as a symbol expressing thoughts and feelings through action. The symbol points beyond



itself toward the "ultimate concern" of the individual.

Fromm expresses an affinity for rational ritual and he explains there is worth in performing the rite when the ritual has an intrinsic value-concept. The value concept of holiness, for example, is incurred when performing a ceremony, and this value-concept gives the rite its significance. Here the individual is consciously aware of this value when he performs the symbolic ritual. Value-concepts, and ideas of "ultimate concern" are often undefinable except through some ritual or group-shared action.

Rituals tie people together as they face life through shared devotion to ideals. The ideal ritual will be inextricably tied to the most significant and important feelings and strivings of everyday life.<sup>22</sup>

Symbolic language is the language of religion. It has been expressed throughout the centuries in myths and fairy tales. The myth is the combination of symbols of one's ultimate concern. Symbolic language is expressed through our dreams and reveals our inner experiences and feelings. We make a mistake when we attempt to take the contents of symbolic language for real events in the realm of the sensory external world. Our inner experiences and dreams are very significant because they are expressions of our inmost feelings.<sup>23</sup>

These symbolic expressions point to man's need for meaning. As these indicate "something higher," they participate in that to which they point. Symbols and rituals show us other dimensions of reality such as art, poetry and music which cannot be completely expressed through objective, scientific study.<sup>24</sup>

Rituals grow as expressions of a people or an individual for something more than what can be found in surface reality. Man longs for infinity and he expresses this yearning symbolically. That which concerns man ultimately, we express through the symbol, God. This "symbol" not only points beyond itself to that for which man yearns, but participates in that ultimate vision. Thus the symbol God, as ultimate concern, is sought whenever man acts in those ways which he feels lead him toward and beyond the symbol.

#### Faith and Productive Man...

Man is not completely satisfied with his human situation of birth, life, and death. He wants to feel that his life has meaning and purpose. Modern science has taught man to use his reason and rationality in all phases of life. Man's spiritual needs, however, are often beyond the realm of reason. What is beyond reason calls for faith. Faith must be in that which is not contradictory to reason. In fact, its basis must be rationality.

Faith is a centered act of the personality directed towards that which is of ultimate concern. It is faith that life is good and has purpose and that man is more than a fleeting thing. Faith is concern with what is ultimate and infinite. Without this faith man becomes afraid to risk anything in the game of life. Faith can be considered as a basic inner attitude which pervades one's entire life and enables one to face life realistically yet with courage.<sup>25</sup>

This faith is based on thought and feeling as it emerges from reason, and is confirmed in the conviction that man moves toward human betterment. It is an expression of affirmation that man will use his reason

and his ability to establish a social order governed by the principles of justice, freedom, equality, and brotherliness.

People manifest this rational faith everyday. When we walk outside we have "faith" nothing drastic will happen to us. When the Chemist formulates a hypothesis and tests it, or when the Doctor pronounces a diagnosis and issues a prescription, he does so with "faith" based on reason. Any creative thought must be based on "faith" that what is thought is realizable and a possibility. Fromm differentiates between,

"Irrational faith which is the acceptance of something as true only because an authority or the majority say so, (and) rational faith (which) is rooted in an independent conviction based upon one's own productive observing and thinking."<sup>26</sup>

Rational faith is active hope. It is not passive waiting for the realization of that hope. Rational faith is rooted in one's productivity, which means that man must act to make his dreams come true. Fromm cites a story from the Midrash that the Red Sea didn't split for Moses and the children of Israel, until the first man jumped in.<sup>27</sup>

Man's faith is in his thoughts, and within his own powers, only to the degree that he experiences his own growth and the strength of his reason and love. It is only to this extent that we can create and act for our own betterment, and also have faith in the potentialities of others. Since faith is a product of man and is focused upon him, there is no object transcending human experience.

Fromm concisely presents the problem of modern man through the choice of rational or irrational faith.

"Man cannot live without faith. The crucial question for our own generation and the next ones is whether

this faith will be an irrational faith in leaders, machines, success, or the rational faith in man based on the experience of our own productive activity."<sup>28</sup>

### The Productive Conscience...

Each person has a conscience, conditioned by the society and by one's reaction to his environment.

Productive man's conscience is not the internalized authority of the authoritarian personality, but is our own voice, which serves as our guide and helper through life. This is "The Humanistic Conscience," which directs our personality toward its proper functioning. When we have "gone astray" it helps us back to the "right path," towards self-realization.

"Conscience judges our functioning as human beings; it is (as the root of the word con-scientia indicates), knowledge within oneself, knowledge of our respective success or failure in the art of living."<sup>29</sup>

This conscience helps us fulfill ourselves.

"It is the voice of our true selves which summons us to become what we potentially are. It is the guardian of our integrity and can be justly called the voice of our loving care for ourselves."<sup>30</sup>

Man is the only creature endowed with an inner voice which calls him back to his best self and permits him to know what he ought to do in order to become himself. It helps man remain aware of his highest aspirations and of the norms necessary for the attainment of these aims. It leads him to happiness as it warns him against becoming a tool of others, and it controls impulses which would cause a violation of his integrity.

Moral difficulties arise when this type of conscience has not been fully cultivated. Since its function is guarding man's true self-interest, if the person doesn't know who he really is, or what leads to

his best self-interest, he remains undeveloped. The more productively one lives, the more one's conscience guides him toward fulfillment.

"...the less productively one lives, the weaker becomes one's conscience; the paradoxical - and tragic - situation of man is that his conscience is weakest when he needs it most."<sup>31</sup>

Because we are subject to the marketing orientation we listen to everyone except ourselves, often refusing to heed our humanistic conscience. Because we are so conditioned to be passive receivers, when the time comes to speak our minds, we cannot. We are embarrassed to be alone with ourselves, often preferring boorish company or low grade "entertainment."

When one has an unconscious feeling of guilt for not having lived productively, it causes an irrational feeling of horror and fear of death. Each person feels normal fear when he contemplates his death, and this fear rises from our guilt of not having used our productive capacities to what our humanistic conscience feels is the fullest.

If not in our awakened state then in our sleep the voice of our conscience emerges. Too often our defense mechanisms take over and repress the voice of conscience, causing us to forget so that when we awake we may have queasy anxiety feelings, but aren't really "too bothered."

Most people are blends of the various personality types and possess a mixture of humanistic and authoritarian consciences. The point is, if one aims for a productive life, governed by reason, justice, and understanding, then one's humanistic conscience will predominate.

#### Ethics of Productive Man...

The problem of formulating an objective, humanistic ethic is of

vital concern to individuals who seek to live the most meaningful lives possible. How then does mankind, evolve an ethic which is a universal standard of true value and concern? If all man's knowledge consists of human-thought and not God-thought, and if no one individual has the right to will his power over another in a free country, then how do we determine laws with fairness to all? What are the criteria we use?

The source of any humanistic, productive ethic is man's reason. Its validity is based on knowledge and competence. This is founded on an attitude objective to the welfare of man. It is concerned with what is for his good, what best serves his needs, and what can lead each individual toward creativity and self-actualization. We must recognize what is "good" and "bad" for the highest fulfillment of man's needs. This means we must investigate the nature of man to know what, objectively, will lead to his growth and enhancement.

Man's ethics must uplift him, recalling him to inner integrity, regardless of whether it is "good" or "bad" for the particular society at a special period in its evolution. Humanistic ethics maintains that the aim of life is to unfold man's love and reason and that every other activity of the human being must be subordinated to this goal.<sup>32</sup>

Inherent in every organism is the desire to love. (Fromm considers suicide a pathological state.) Since man's situation is that he already exists, his choice is not life or death, but between living a good, productive, satisfying, mentally healthy life, or a non-productive, non-fulfilling, alienated existence.

Because freedom is one of the pre-requisites to the highest type life, any pattern of ethics formulated must be grounded in this notion.

Fromm desires the mature type of ethical system which strives for the happiness of all men, and which advocates those ideals upon which all men, universally, can find fulfillment. We might begin with the "Ten Commandments" (with the exception of the first which bears on man's destiny), emphasizing truth, liberty, human dignity, justice and the right of the individual to his feelings and convictions as they fit within this scheme.

Fromm's concern is to prove that happiness and joy are the outcome of interactions with, and dependency upon objective conditions which promote the enhancement of the individual, and which over-ride subjective experiences. Happiness is the feeling of pleasure which accompanies productive living, and abides with man as he unfolds his power according to his nature.

Happiness cannot be obtained by directly striving after it. It is the by-product of a life well lived. Fromm bases his ideas on progressive science, and claims that his concept of ethics applies on a universal level. Their foundations are freedom, non-exploitation, love, productive work, and the equality of both the rational authority and the subject. The difference between the last two rests on the degree of knowledge and skill one has in a particular field.

Humanistic ethics considers all evil, hurtful strivings as directed against life and maintains that since man has but one short life to live, it should be taken up with those efforts which lead to human excellence.

The positing of a humanistic ethic requires a mature conscience as well as rational, social regulation. The ultimate authority behind humanistic ethics is within man himself. Whatever qualities man has,

originate from what he has made from "the given."

The theory of productive ethics is based upon a society of emotionally mature individuals, who have learned respect, confidence in and love for themselves. This type of person can truly appreciate others and won't feel a need to demean or lower them in order to elevate himself. Only with productive ethics as a basis for living, can each individual make his life a meaningful experience.

### Love and Productive Man...

Man must overcome separateness and find relation. The only way to transcend loneliness is through love. Any other way is not fulfilling. The unproductive solutions fail because though they temporarily reduce the anxiety, the need for union rises again and leads to more of the orgy and less inner gratification. Conformity cannot help us find mature relation. Though we conform with the majority and become one of the many, we lose our individuality and the feeling of separateness remains. Even union through productive work is not a full answer to this need because though one is united to material outside himself, there is often little relation to other people.

Mature love lies in one's capacity to relate productively to himself and to others. It is not dependent upon finding the proper object but is an art. It is a faculty of the mind that must be cultivated, and requires knowledge and effort. The basic elements of this kind of love are care, responsibility, respect and knowledge. Mature ability to love comes as a result of cultivating our abilities to give of ourselves to life. This is the only satisfying way of relating while still retaining



our own integrity and uniqueness.

Every religion worthy of an intelligent man's faith and loyalty makes love the keystone of faith. Fromm makes this the basis of his religious system. Mature love is the guiding principle for the achievement of mental health, for the overcoming of loneliness and separateness.

"Mature love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity. Love is an active power, which breaks through the walls of separateness, and yet permits individual uniqueness. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two."<sup>34</sup>

This mature love is characterized by giving, not receiving. When one knows that love as giving does not mean giving up or being deprived of something, he begins to feel the urge to give of himself, to share the best of himself and the richest of his experiences. He finds his deepest satisfactions -- that he is happiest -- when he is thinking about and doing something for his loved ones.

The first thing that happens when a person really loves, is that he begins to forget himself. He begins to free himself from his narcissistic dreams where his only concern has been, "what can I get from this or that person--what can he do for me?" and perhaps, for the first time in his life, he begins to be concerned with "what can I give to the person I love; what can I do for the object of my love?"

For the productive individual, "to give," is an expression of happiness and pleasure with life.

"In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power. I experience myself as overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous. Giving is more joyous than receiving, not because it is a deprivation, but because in the act of giving lies the expression of my aliveness."<sup>35</sup>

The most important sphere of giving is not of material things, but of the self. As we give what is alive within us, our joy and our happiness, we bring something to life in the other person. This might be compared with Buber's concept of "I - Thou" relationships, where one meets the "thou" by a giving of the whole self. One who can "give" in this way has faith in his own human powers, and the confidence that by "giving" of himself, he will not lose them, rather he will increase them.

When a person begins to see life from this point of view his character and personality grow. Because love, by its very nature, is an enlargement of self, including in one's own fulfillment, the person, the cause, or the object we love.

Love as "Care" is the active concern for the life and the growth of that which we love. Where this active concern is lacking, there is no love.<sup>36</sup> When one loves, he wants to care for the object of his love, to nurture it, and take pride in its growth. Fromm re-tells the story of Jonah in symbolic terms, explaining that the gourd, which grew overnight and perished in a night was not the result of Jonah's labor, and therefore Jonah had no cause to be angered when God destroyed it. Fromm illustrates by this interpretation that the essence of love is to labor for something and "to make it grow." One loves that for which one labors, and one labors for that which one loves.<sup>37</sup>

Respect is the third factor in mature love relationships. Here one sees another as he is and not "as I want him to be" or as an object for my use. This type of respect is achieved with independence.

Knowledge of the other and of oneself are important in any concep-

tion of mature love. Knowledge comes by being sensitive to another, to his needs, to his strivings and aspirations. Still, one cannot know another completely, for a person is not a "thing," but is a changeable phenomenon.

Love through knowledge alone is unsatisfactory. We can attempt to know by plucking the wings off a butterfly or in other sadistic ways, but this will not give us knowledge of another living thing. Similarly with the human self. There are physical parts which correspond between one human being and another, but the essence of each person, the self, is not comprehensible and can never be fully known. The only way to "know" is through the experience of union, through love, as the active penetration of another.

"In the act of fusion I know you, I know myself, I know everybody - and I 'know' nothing. I know in the only way knowledge of that which is alive is possible for man - by experience of union - not by any knowledge our thought can give."<sup>38</sup>

Fromm contradicts the view that love is constituted only by the object and not by our ability to love. Love is an activity, a "power of the soul," an orientation of character toward the world. It is an art which must be nurtured and learned. Seeking the one "right" boy or girl is illusory. The ability to love depends on one's capacity for inner growth and maturity. Moreover,

"If I truly love one person I love all persons, the world and life. If I can say to somebody else, 'I love you,' I must be able to say, 'I love in you everybody, I love through you the world, I love in you also myself.'"<sup>39</sup>

We fulfill ourselves in association with others. As we love, we

develop our character and enlarge our perspective. As we respect others we are respected.

Brotherly love is the mature love which warrants our concentration. It presupposes mature self-interest and self-love; and posits the existence of an underlying bond among men. Each man must find himself within the polarity between complete independence and mutual dependence, as each fulfills his needs. In the Bible this kind of love is exemplified.

Here the central object of man's love is the stranger, the widow, and the orphan, those who are helpless because of some ill fate of adversity. To love those in need of help is the beginning of brotherly love. It is the giving of ourselves with the reward of seeing a fellow man rise from degradation to achieve his independence.

There is no contradiction between self-love and love of one's fellow. In a world where people must live and work together, the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself is a necessity. Perhaps if we translated *find your neighbor* into: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor who is like thee" and live by this credo, we would gain the regard and respect of others, and release our own fine qualities which can draw men together in friendship and brotherhood.

#### The Art of Living....

The person who meets his needs primarily through the productive "solutions" will find self-identity. He will have some idea of why he is living, that his purpose is to unfold his potentials within the given years of his existence.

There is no specific "social prescription" for building a purely productive man. First, because this individual has never become typical for

any society; secondly, because each person lives within the polarity of the productive and non-productive orientations. We might say that the ideal man is the mentally healthy person who is primarily oriented toward the productive solutions and who is, therefore, un-alienated. This person is one who can relate to others "lovingly" and who uses his reason to gain "real," objective, knowledge of the world. He accepts the rational authority of mature conscience and his own judgment as well as the ideas of "the men of the mind." He feels satisfied with life and with himself, because he is continually unfolding himself.<sup>40</sup>

From the time of Moses and the Ten Commandments, men knew what they needed in order to achieve ultimate development. The trouble has been, that we never really took our ideals seriously. With the growth of science and the age of reason, man now can have a "practical" world view of "salvation." Salvation is a term referring to what man might hope for and try to achieve while he is living on earth.

The happiness and virtue of a person can be measured by the degree to which that individual has fulfilled his basic needs in a productive way.<sup>41</sup> A society fulfills its purpose to the extent that it helps the individual satisfy his needs.

"The purpose of culture...is for the complete development of each individual...that each must express his true, unique self and not merely express ideals which are internalizations of external demands."<sup>42</sup>

Life does not need any justification in the modern notion of "success" or anything else external. Its aim is individual human growth and happiness.

Man must rid himself of the "historical dichotomies" which are

those elements making for human misery. These are problems like poverty, slums, authoritarian dictators, wars and such which come from a lack within the society to cope with these issues. These problems are historical and not necessary to the human situation nor are they any consequence of natural law. Their solution lies within man's realm and he must overcome and conquer them if he is to bring about that "messianic era."

Another basis for the building of human betterment is through education. Fromm advocates the "Education State" where each individual studies to the optimal extent of his potential in order to increase self-productivity. He would have employers pay the employees to educate themselves. This would be good for the Company because it would mean higher skilled men who could produce more on a superior level. It is only when work becomes a meaningful expression of human energy that human solidarity can be established.

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Fromm proposes a "guaranteed existence minimum" which would pay men while they are educating themselves for the kind of work conducive to their fulfillment. Many individuals who otherwise might never be able to leave their rut-jobs would benefit. Fromm's plan would productively redirect some of the Federal and State funds which are now being wasted on various trivia.

How can the "average" individual improve his existence?

The point must be made that there is no way to "teach" an adult how to love by giving him a pill or prescription. The steps toward the goal of "love" are the same taken in the practice of any art. As the

individual applies these premises, he can re-affirm his own uniqueness and work toward a more mature orientation.<sup>44</sup>

Discipline is the first step in the practice of any art. Modern man is relatively lax as far as self-discipline is concerned. Without this type of discipline mastery of any art cannot be achieved. We need to discipline our free time so that our lives do not become chaotic, dull, or routine. Continual self-discipline brings meaning and gives "direction to our otherwise frustrated lives."<sup>45</sup>

The practice of discipline should not be based on rigid and authoritarian principles or rules which are imposed from external sources, rather,

"(discipline) should be...felt as pleasant, an expression of one's own will, and that one slowly accustoms oneself to a kind of behavior which one would eventually miss, if one stopped practicing it."<sup>46</sup>

Some examples Fromm cites include: Getting up at a regular hour; devoting a regular amount of time during the day to activities such as meditating, reading, listening to music, and walking. In short, learning to be alone with one's self. This means facing up to life's challenges and not indulging excessively in escapist activities.

Concentration with the full self on the thing one is doing as a particular moment leads to the ability to master an art. Because we fill our lives with meaningless activities, not having to pay too much attention to them, we fall into the trap of not concentrating on anything. In our fervor to "live," our lives are spent in diffuse activities as we try and consume everything at once. One of the reasons for this lack of

concentration is that we accept without protest those activities the society recommends, and because we think we should do them, we do. Because these do not spring from an inner drive to perform such pursuits, we become alienated and further frustrated. It is only by concentrating on what is important enough to take one's full and complete energy that can bring the kind of fulfillment from life we seek so urgently.<sup>47</sup> Any concentrated activity, be it work, play, or rest, can be invigorating.<sup>48</sup>

Patience is necessary in the endeavor to achieve mastery of an art. Most of us try and save time. As Fromm has shown, we save time, and then we don't know what to do with the time we've saved. We should put ourselves into what we are doing and cultivate this quality. By learning patience we lift ourselves from the realm of the "efficient machine" and acquire "human rather than machine values."<sup>49</sup>

Whatever the art, its cultivation must be our supreme concern if we desire to master it. "If one wants to become a master in any art, one's whole life must be devoted to it, or at least related to it."<sup>50</sup>

If one strives to involve himself within the elements of patience, concentration, and discipline, he will be on his way to commitment and devotion to life.

The main condition for the achievement of the ability to love is overcoming narcissism.<sup>51</sup> This is when one experiences only what exists within oneself as having validity or reality. The polarity and opposite of narcissism is objectivity, where one sees others as they are and not as "I desire them to be."<sup>52</sup> In one's subjective, narcissistic view, the husband may appear as the knight-in-shining-armour, or the wife as the



beautiful, never-make-a-mistake princess. If one maintains the illusion world, when the mate makes a mistake one may lose all perspective.

One must use reason, with the attitude of humility, and attempt to achieve a rational faith which is a conviction rooted in one's own experience of thought or feeling. It is the quality of certainty and firmness which convictions should and will have if one bases knowledge on objectivity and reason.

To cultivate faith in life and its goodness; to believe in the self as a fundamental core of the personality "which is the reality behind the word 'I' and on which conviction of one's own identity is based,"...  
53  
this is the road to the productive orientation.

To have, this rational, productive faith requires courage

"Whoever shuts himself off in a system of defense, where distance and possession are his means of security, makes himself a prisoner. To be loved, and to love, need courage, the courage to judge certain values as of ultimate concern--and to take the jump and stake everything on these values."<sup>54</sup>

This kind of courage is the courage to live. There are many problems and frustrations in life, many difficulties and sorrows. If these are taken as new challenges which, to overcome, make us stronger; if they are not rationalized as having happened to us because of our sins; if we rise up and overcome these obstacles by living ever fuller, more productive, creative and spontaneous lives, then we will show the kind of faith characteristic of the mature personality.

Love is an act of faith. Here a person commits himself to another in the hope that love will be returned.

"We hope that the strength of our love will produce love in the loved person, but for this there is no

guarantee. (Moreover) whoever is of little faith is also of little love."<sup>55</sup>

Love is the only productive answer to the problem of human existence....love of self, love of one's neighbor, and of all men.

## CHAPTER FOUR

SOME CHALLENGES AND IMPLICATIONSChallenges and Implications for the Rabbinate...

Erich Fromm's thought has deep implications for anyone concerned with life and its meaning and purpose. For the Rabbi this is especially true because more and more people are turning to religion to find some answers.

No longer can the Rabbi quote scriptural passages, bring in the appropriate Rabbinical Ordinance, or quote the Shulchan Aruch in order to answer the dichotomies and frustrations of human existence. The modern Rabbi must consider the nature and needs of the human person. If he is to be effective, he must have an awareness of the dynamics of psychology, of the interaction between reason and emotion.

The Rabbi must have purposes and goals toward which he is aiming. If he hopes to be of service to others, he must know where he is headed himself. He must be aware of his own ideals and values.

Fromm claims the Psychoanalyst is a "physician of the soul" and is concerned with the same problems as the mature religionist.<sup>1</sup> There need be no disparity between the Rabbi and the Psychoanalyst if both approach man as a human person striving for self-realization and unfolding in life. But when organized religion is authoritarian and sets dogma higher than the individuals who seek something from the Church, psychoanalysis departs from its viewpoint.

Unless the Rabbi uses the Torah as a tool to control the people, and of this there is not much danger today, we will be faced with this

challenge. Since Reform Judaism doesn't concentrate on dogma or set creed and is open to a humanistic interpretation, it can be a powerful force in aiding man to develop himself and to find a meaningful orientation to life.

Fromm does not account for the "Liberal" idea of religion and "revelation." According to the liberal view, the essence of revelation is not the communication of infallible truths; rather it is the guidance of human life by divine effort to higher levels of achievement. The task of the Rabbi is to interpret what this divine power is, and to show its effect on human life.

By stressing divine-human cooperation rather than revelatory creeds, by emphasizing reason over dogma, one can have a "humanistic" religion with the motivation of divine purposes.

To Fromm, religion is the way a person faces life, senses his environment, and strives for "something even more." One's happiness is dependent upon a mature confrontation of one's problems, a continuous sensitivity to his rational conscience, and the readiness to respond to it.<sup>2</sup>

This point of view is in line with Reform Judaism. The problem for the Rabbi is to make the contents of Judaism an expression of a striving for all that man can become, and to help instill those values which can lead to a higher expression of existence; to emotional growth and happiness.

Judaism's idea of ritual and symbol also preceded the Frommian formulation. Modern Judaism's contention is that if a ritual becomes compulsive, it is irrational and should be seen for what it is - a temporary, overt response, which serves as a symptomatic cloak to deeper problems. If,

on the other hand, a ritual is performed because it expresses a striving for what is valid and meaningful in human experience, it can fulfill a deep human need. The symbols and rites performed can bring one's yearning for the infinite into some tangible reality, expressing a common devotion to ideals.

For over 5000 years, Judaism has built up a unique symbol system. The emphasis in Judaism is on the content and meaning of that which the symbol expressed and not on the form itself. That is, in the notion of "Liberal Judaism," the emphasis is on "Liberal" as the orientation toward life; and the "Judaism" is the particular form, or mold into which one pours the content. For example, "Passover" is the form whereas the content of "Passover," or what it means, is in terms of freedom, justice, and righteousness. The "values" become "the content."

Our task as Rabbis, is to keep the emphasis on the symbolic meaning of the rite and not upon performance of the act for its own sake.

Modern Judaism would agree with Fromm that the valid and enduring questions of religion should center about "what can reduce human suffering," "how can man further unfold and develop himself," and "the relation and concern of man for himself, to others, and to the universe."<sup>3</sup>

Fromm denies there is any force external to man which has power over him. This view is held by many liberal Jews and by those following the philosophy of M. M. Kaplan and Reconstructionist ideology. It is when Fromm maintains categorically and dogmatically that "to believe in a power transcending man is identical with disbelief in the growth of potentialities which are yet unrealized,"<sup>4</sup> that I must disagree.

Throughout his works, Fromm equates belief in God with the outcome of authoritarian religious systems. Man is taught to believe in a deity who operates through His representatives on earth. The "representatives" are the Priests who carry the "Word" to the people. The people obey the Priest and he thereby gains power and keeps the people in submission, denying them full freedom.

I would agree that we need not submit to any power which "rules" over man in this way. Moreover, each of us has the same opportunity to know the infinite, but our knowledge of God depends upon our individual capacity for seeing Him in the various aspects of our lives. My conflicting attitude comes when Fromm says dogmatically that if you believe in "God," (and he doesn't fully say what "God" might mean in liberal religion) you are necessarily the victim of an authoritarian orientation to life which, of necessity, leads to non-productivity. I wonder if humanism such as Fromm advocates is possible if man has no conscious awareness that there is a force transcending him.

God, in rational non-authoritarian religions such as Reform Judaism, manifests Himself in a person's actions and way of life. The Deity can be accepted, negated, or ignored according to the individual involved. The content of Deity depends upon the individual and the value concepts which he invests in his God. God, therefore, is not a fixed, irrational power transcending man, but is as diversified in concept as the individual who is conceiving.

I agree that rituals can lead one to higher value-concepts and a higher code of ethics. Can't the symbols of religion also lead man to

an existent reality, perhaps limited and operating in a rational world, yet actually transcending man? The question remains open.

I would not question Fromm's goals because I am in complete accord with him. I am saying that room can be made for a mature God concept where one uses his reason to the utmost, then makes "the leap of faith" that life is good, that our existence is worthwhile. Fromm would throw out the term "God" and say that man is fooling himself and should really say "these highest values spring from his own being and not from an external source. What Fromm calls "Rational Faith," I would call a possible God concept. My argument does not center around the informational uses of the term "God," but the function such a term has in reality. Anyone can argue as to whether or not "God exists." I do not say "God causes so and so." I do say, however, that God stands for aspects of life like the highest good, or the ultimate hope and goal of man, and I would use God as a term to designate the highest aspirations and ideals for which man might strive.

Judaism constitutes a heritage and tradition not to be lightly overthrown. For me, it is not an incestuous tie if I find some meaning by praying for ideals, by giving expression to inner needs in a community of worshipers, where each knows the other is trying to mature and develop and find meaning to life. In a common effort to ever aspire for that which is true and beautiful in life, I find no fault. Would that Fromm's next book find a place for the liberal, progressive religion which stresses freedom, reason and the ideal that each man should strive to be "fully born."

Fromm, Judaism, and Jewish Sources...

Erich Fromm demonstrates his knowledge of Judaism as he traces the development of the God idea in the Bible. From Adam and Eve, to Abraham and Noah, he pictures how the symbol of God changed and matured. He moves through the Talmud, showing how the humanistic aspect of Judaism grew and emphasized the autonomy of reason over the supernatural. He continues with Chassidic times, comparing the Chassidic idea of joy-as the equivalent of virtue, and sadness-as the equivalent of sin, to his humanistic concept of mature religion.

His familiarity with Hebrew terms reveals more than a surface knowledge of his heritage. This is noted in his interpretative translations of words such as *שלום*, which he translates as "harmony" and "completeness" as well as "peace"; *נצנץ*, meaning "to glow"; productive love as *אהבה*, "to know" which he identifies with the mature form of "to love."

Productive "faith" is *אמונה*, "firmness," which denotes a certain quality of human experience, a character trait rather than the content of a belief in something. "*אמונה*" stands for the concept of motherly love, for the love relationship between a man, his neighbor, and his God, based on the fact that the root of *אמונה* is *אמן*, which means "womb."

He cites stories and examples and in fact quotes directly from the Talmud with a footnote stating that the translation is his own.<sup>5</sup>

Every individual is a total of his heredity, environment, and self-uniqueness. When identification with Judaism and Jewish people have



become a positive factor ingrained in one's being, it cannot be pushed aside without some damage to the emotional growth of the personality. If a person begins with his entire character structure, he can relate and advance his own goals as well as promote the aspirations of others on a universal level. By working from his own perspective, if it is mentally healthy and satisfying, he can rise to his highest potential and have a better chance for fulfillment.

Dr. Fromm's brilliant use of Jewish sources and themes not only illustrates a vast knowledge of Judaism, but links him to the tradition. If Fromm's Judaism was not an integral part of his personality structure, he has lost relatively little by moving to the Humanistic position, for Liberalism and Humanism both represent a search for meaning and the good life. Perhaps Fromm abandoned chauvenistic attachment to Judaism because he felt he had matured into a broader, universal outlook. Regardless, Fromm stands in the tradition of the Prophets who pointed out failures and instituted programs of reform, showing people where and how they might improve. Dr. Fromm is a unique, talented person who has grasped what it means to live, and who would lead all men to a messianic goal.

In Escape From Authority, John H. Schaar critically analyzes the writings of Erich Fromm. He organizes Fromm's concepts into three major sections: (1) His analysis of human nature and the human condition; (2) Fromm's consideration of how modern society came to be sick, and how the sickness manifests itself today; and (3) his view of what man might strive for as an individual and as a member of society.

Schaar criticizes Fromm as often superficial and for basing his

position on many "murky premises and implications."<sup>6</sup>

He praises Fromm's analysis of the present day human situation, his thoughts on alienated man and the problems of society. He is at odds with the answers Fromm poses. He attacks what he thinks is Fromm's basic position, that of an optimistic naturalist who uses the label of the humanist to disguise his system. By placing Fromm in the category of the naturalists, he further criticizes him by showing that the naturalist can state what "the good" is only if he has a complete knowledge of human nature. Since Fromm rests his theory of man on the needs and qualities specific to the human person, he must have full knowledge of the laws of human nature. Because we will never know all the laws of human nature, says Schaar, Fromm's position is weak.<sup>7</sup>

I disagree. If man does not establish some premises under which to work, he will go in circles, never getting anywhere. Modern science has progressed only because it has worked within the theories it postulates and in the hypotheses it constructs. It is because Fromm begins with what we do know of man, his psychic and physical needs, that we can establish the requirements for the good life and the good society.

The bulk of the critique attacks Fromm's ideas of tension and the polarity of opposites. He claims Fromm never resolves the dichotomies and paradoxes he sets up; that Fromm is a "juggler" of contradictory principles and concepts; that to juggle these incompatibles is illogical, inconsistent, and even irrational. This is <sup>Schaar</sup> Schaar's big mistake. What Fromm is attempting to do is to show that there are "incompatibles" constantly in tension and polarity and man must find his way between the

various dichotomies he faces. Schaar misses the beauty and validity of the dynamics involved in the polarity between opposites. Because Schaar begins his critique from premises opposite Fromm's, he often misinterprets what Fromm has to say.

When Schaar tries to paint the picture of "Productive Man," he fails to realize that any attempt to portray the purely productive man will fall short of what Fromm was trying to do. When he tries to put productive man into a corner he sterilizes him. Fromm repeatedly states that every individual is a blend of his productive and non-productive orientations. In reality, a purely productive person can never exist. Only an analysis with this view in mind will succeed. The point is, the characteristics of man are in constant paradox and polarity and by taking the qualities out of tension, you have the description of a stagnant, listless individual. This can be compared with a taut spring holding two objects in extreme tension. When the spring is removed, the objects remain, but they are now non-functional and non-productive.

The ideal, productive individual Fromm attempts to portray is the person who actualizes most of his potential in the process of daily living. He is never completely actualized, nor fully-born, but emphasizes those qualities which bring richness and meaning to his life. He is not the perfect soul that Schaar claims, but is a human being who tries to rise above his faults.

Fromm doesn't want to resolve the paradoxes and dichotomies he sets up. He can't, and he claims no one can because they are all part of the human situation and in constant interplay.

Schaar tries to disprove Fromm's theory that there are such absolutes as love or justice, and limits Fromm's categories to "cultural variables."

"The meanings of love, justice, creativeness, and the rest, vary from culture to culture, and no amount of calling for love will alter the fact that the meanings of love are many and that what stands for "love" in one society may be entirely absent from or mean something very different in another."<sup>8</sup>

I differ with Schaar for I think there is "an objective validity" as to what is good, what is just, and what is love. If cultural relativism is all that exists, Schaar would have to say that such dictators as Hitler were "all right" for their particular societies.

Schaar points out that Fromm admires mysticism where the religious individual "crashes through all barriers to a personal union with God."<sup>9</sup>

"It is not easy to see how Fromm can square his admiration for mysticism with his distaste for symbiotic relatedness and his admiration of individuality; the mystical union, after all, is the complete absorption, the total disappearance of the one in the One."<sup>10</sup>

Schaar has a good criticism. Fromm never fully explains what he means by "The Mystical Experience" in contrast to the religious philosophy of ethics and rationality which he has previously established. After Fromm has taken so many pages to illustrate the destructiveness and irrationality of symbiotic union, it is difficult to see how he can now wed the ultimate of symbiotic mystical "oneness" with reason.

Schaar claims Fromm is not utopian enough in his conception of "work." He would advocate beginning with the attitude that man is a sloth

and work is a drudge. Thus work would have its proper place and man wouldn't have guilt feelings concerning materialism or about not liking his routine, dull job. If we faced this reality, we could use all our energies to develop a technitopia where routine labor is done by machines. Thus all men might better themselves and work in those areas best benefiting their particular nature. Moreover, merely to give the worker partnership in owning capital, is to diminish the efficacy of capital to create new ideas, and techniques of production. In the workplace the worker should have a voice regarding those matters which directly affect his particular situation. But what is really needed, says Schaar, is a basic change of attitude.

"If the radical says that the worker is not a commodity, he should go on to accept the implications of the statement. Those implications go far beyond Fromm's co-management and co-participation. They entail a thorough rejection of the cult of efficiency and a thorough acceptance of the principle that the only cost of production that matters is the human cost, and that the test of an economic system is not how many cars it makes but what kind of men it makes."<sup>11</sup>

What is needed today is a program of content and "not a socialists slogan of technique; but a new vision of the moral purpose of work and life."<sup>12</sup>

Fromm says the ideal society is where rank and status are based upon one's abilities and talents. It is to this end that we must work even though barriers such as the power of the family, the growing elderly population, and the masses themselves stand in the way of its complete actualization. That is, even though the above groups demand security and desire insulation against a "cruel world," we must strive for a Meritocracy which can build a State based on merit and talent.

The paradox is that we must have such an emphasis on the developments of talents and capacities of individuals. For only then can they produce, invent and create those things which the masses can use. Without the "brains" of the intellectual, the masses would have nothing and poverty. By allowing the intellectual the opportunities to develop, we would be on our way to a better way of life.

Schaar contends that he who lives for living, whose only goal is life's own unfolding, is "a life which merely turns round and round within itself, becoming lost in its own labyrinth."

"The directed life requires a goal. And this goal is not the living of life, not the motion and fever of living, but an end outside the self toward which the motion is aimed."<sup>13</sup>

This is in argument to Fromm's claim that "In the living of life is its meaning." Now it is Schaar who raises the dichotomy.

"The dilemma is that while each of us must live his life alone, by and for himself, if one does not live his life toward some goal outside his own life, his life will lack tension and power, achievement and meaning."<sup>14</sup>

Man must neither submit to one side of the dilemma or the other or he will lose his freedom and be submerged in slavery. Within this area man must often make painful choices. This decision must be made in view of what is the good life and what is best for each individual.

Fromm says man must set up goals and purposes and strive for them. These goals must be individual, social, and ideally, for the good of all. He holds that in a free system bound with liberty, if all men use their reason, while finding fulfillment in productive, meaningful work, we will be on our way to a world less alienated where individuals

can come to understand and live in peace and harmony with one another.

Schaar says that "Fromm's doctrine, if taken seriously, would drown all true individuality in a sea of brotherhood."<sup>15</sup> I disagree. Fromm has taken his position because we are so sorely in need of such philosophy at this time. He does not advocate submission to the state; nor the abolition of politics, nor the disappearance of individuality, nor the idea that the good man is always, of necessity, the same as the good citizen of the good society. He emphasizes that productive man will transcend his society and create new modes. If the society does not fulfill its function, man's duty is to rebel. Were each person to worry more about himself, his own goals and fulfillment, it would be a much better world. We are hampered in our goals of brotherhood because we are frustrated in self-actualization. Only when each man lives as a unique individual, will he be happy and be able to love others.

Schaar cannot accept all of Fromm's enthusiasm and optimism. He even claims that "life would be a dull business without some moodiness, some gloom, and even some downright nastiness."<sup>16</sup> With Fromm, I think that there is enough trouble, gloom and nastiness already in the world without wishing for more just because life might "get boring" without it.

Schaar cites a score of illustrious personages from Van Gogh to Dylan Thomas; from Keats to Shakespeare, all with defects and disabilities. He tries to prove that many great creators "have had more than a slight touch of madness" and for the most part these people were "profoundly disturbed in their own souls."

Fromm would agree with Schaar that these men were afflicted. But

whatever they were, was their best self! Who knows how much more they might have achieved had they not suffered!

Schaar agrees with Walter Kaufmann that Fromm doesn't appreciate "the tragic sense of life"; or that there are conflicts which cannot be resolved; that there are tragedies which wrench the soul from its lethargy and raise man to an even higher level.

"Chastened and freed from the bondage of passion, the mind grasps newer and deeper meanings in reality. The spirit, now strengthened and deepened, gravely prepares for the new duties and the courageous acceptance of whatever fate brings."<sup>17</sup>

Fromm maintains that man must do all in his power to avoid tragedy, punishment, and suffering. There will be enough without looking for more. Man must do all he can to make his fate; to live his life. When tragedy strikes, as it surely will, through death of a loved one, or from an illness for which man has not yet found the cure, then man must gather his courage and accept. Within his capabilities, he must work for solutions to his human problems.

Schaar's difference is subtle yet revealing. Man is not God, though he strives to be. He is subject to tragedy, to desires quenched and hopes unfulfilled. Man can be what he wishes only to the extent the fates do not deal too harshly with him. Schaar also posits that Fromm's ethical outlook will do for the days of our youth, when life is all richness and promise.

"...but it will not serve for the whole life, during which we must watch our powers wane and see our hopes defeated, and know that the highest state man can achieve in this world is still a state of qualified unhappiness."<sup>18</sup>



Schaar feels this attitude will give us a truer perspective of life and will let us see the beauties which man creates in lowly circumstances and in "the fallen state." We should strive for the "city on the hill," but we should not overlook the homes in which we live.<sup>19</sup>

Escape From Authority is a penetrating, vivid account of man's rise and development. It opens a new approach which should stimulate appreciation of Erich Fromm, his insights and greatness.

Ruth Munroe, in Schools of Psychoanalytic Thought, feels that the problem of our age is not only "emptiness" and "alienation" but revolves around Horney's concept of the "idealized image" of the self, and the problem of borderline psychosis. (In this latter problem, the self fails in organizing perceived reality in dynamic relationship to its inner needs.) Her main criticism is that Fromm's view is reductionistic rather than all-encompassing in that his approach "tends to oversimplify the problem at the individual, psychodynamic level."<sup>20</sup> This can be noted where Fromm specifies the underlying process of individuation as the one major reason for tension and the fearful aspect of freedom.

Fromm is also guilty of reductionism when he stereotypes and generalizes regarding "ideal types and negative orientations," basing his conclusions on few "established" principles.<sup>21</sup>

I disagree. Though he draws a black and white picture of the productive and non-productive orientations, Fromm makes it clear that these must be seen as "trends" of individual personalities; that each personality is a unique blend of the various orientations.

Munroe agrees with Freud who said that there is an irreducible core of aggression in every man. She feels Fromm gives man too much credit

for possessing all love and all goodness. Now if this "evil core" is part of man's potential, and Fromm says that man should fulfill his potential, isn't this evil a part of man's potential which must be actualized?

Fromm would say that man should strive to bring all his potential for the good into reality. Fromm's remarks are always qualified by his concept of an absolute ethic which guides man to actualize those productive capacities which would benefit him as well as others.

Sometimes Munroe makes Schaar's mistake of criticizing certain limited aspects of Fromm's thought. Fromm must be taken as a whole, for only then can his thought be understood.

In Critique of Religion and Philosophy, Walter Kaufmann contends that Fromm's comparison of authoritarian and humanistic religions is untenable. Fromm doesn't allow authoritarian religion anything but "sorrow and guilt," while he elevates humanistic religion to a striving for "love, truth and justice."

Moreover, Fromm doesn't account for the authoritarian elements in the examples of Isaiah, Jesus, Lao-Tze and Buddha, which he cites as "purely humanistic." He mixes these diverse ingredients together as symbols of non-authoritarianism, although historical analysis reveals many instances to the contrary.<sup>22</sup>

Thus "(Fromm's) central dichotomy is misconceived and he generally finds in a text only what he has believed all along."<sup>23</sup>

Kaufmann says that by historical analysis it can be proven that humanism and authoritarianism are not mutually exclusive terms, and that love and compassion can flow out of obedience to "the Law."

To prove this, Kaufmann tells of the Prophets who based their concepts of ethics and righteousness on what God wanted. Since the justification of the value concept was in obedience to God's will, the authoritarian elements became the basis for humanistic ideals. He elucidates that Isaiah and Amos were authoritarian in that they felt God's will had to be carried out and obeyed, but that "God's will" stood for the supreme values of human life; for love, justice and truth. He gives examples of the Rabbis who sought authoritative support from Scripture for their humanistic ideals.

He cites Jesus and the gospels from an "authoritarian point of view" to show how one can choose various passages from a given source to prove whatever thesis one wishes. He points to the Jesus who stressed obedience and not the development of reason; the Jesus who threatens his listeners and imbues fear and trembling into their hearts; the Jesus who performed miracles in order to establish his authority. Thus to deny that authoritarian - based religions do not concern themselves with love or the welfare and development of man "involves a plain logical and historical error."<sup>24</sup>

Kaufmann indicates that many times in "humanistic," orientations, though anti-authoritarianism is the principle running through the attitude, there is often no connection with love and justice. He specifies the story of Buddha and the hare upon whom a mango fell. The hare thought the world was caving in, but the Buddha, by reasoning to the cause, pointed out logically that this was not the case. There is no over-concern for justice or love here, says Kaufmann, and Fromm makes an

error by thinking that merely a lack of authority produces these higher elements. In fact,

"If one should care to insist that the authoritarianism of Akiba and the Zen masters detracts from their humanism, then one must face the fact that there never has been any completely humanistic religion."<sup>25</sup>

Another of Fromm's errors is that he overlooks the aspect of tragedy, the profound ambiguity, and the authoritarian elements which are as much or more a part of the works from which he eclecticises.

"The real issue of all tragedies," says Kaufmann, "is that which makes them tragedies." It is this aspect of life which the humanists such as Fromm overlook...that guilt is part of life; tragedy part of the human experience.

"Tragedy occurs where society dissolves and man stands all alone, like Oedipus, Antigone, and Hamlet."<sup>26</sup>

Life is not all just or noble. Perhaps guilt, with repentance, and reconciliation, can raise man even higher than a humanistic approach which glosses over the weaknesses of man.

"What the great religious scriptures and tragedies know, and what popular religion and such humanists as Fromm and Dewey ignore, is the sheer misery of being human and the experience that only self-immolation can redeem this misery."<sup>27</sup>

Kaufmann illustrates how individuals have transcended finitude by accepting the guilt of others and sacrificing themselves in order to redeem a multitude. Humanism is not profound, nor is it an adequate answer to what man is seeking from life.

For Kaufmann, Fromm has religiousness without religion. This is transitory and a reaction to our age. It is shallow optimism which cannot last, for it does not encompass the whole of life. Religion

without some kind of guiding authority will soon dissolve, or result in a kind of anarchy.

### A Final Note...

Erich Fromm has made a major contribution to modern thought through his structural theory of existence, and his analysis of the historical, social, and psychological forces which interact in the life of man.

His philosophy involves not only a conception of man as he is, but a vision of man as he ought to be. He places man at the top of the ladder of evolution, positing that he is the only creature who is fully aware of his own existence, that he alone is responsible for his life, his welfare, and his happiness. Joy is the goal of his existence, and this joy is to be achieved, not stumbled upon. All is up to man, and his prime obligation is to himself.

Through education and self-development each must learn to distinguish right and wrong, gain vision to see the truth, develop the courage to act upon it with a dedication to the good, and muster the integrity to stand by the good at any price.

Every man should attempt to make himself an authentic person. His whole life - his work, his family, his aims and desires - should be a striving for a complete, integrated existence. Every one of our achievements should be the outgrowth of our love of life and for a single value - the drive toward the highest potentiality of our existence. Man alone has the power to choose the kind of life he will live but he has no power to escape the necessity of choice. Would that we choose the way of Fromm; the way of life!

## FOOTNOTES

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4. Erich Fromm. Man For Himself. New York, Rinehart and Company, 1947, p. 59.
5. Escape From Freedom, p. 164.

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3. Erich Fromm. Escape From Freedom. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1941, p. 34.
4. Ibid., p. 34ff.
5. Ibid., p. 31.
6. Man For Himself, p. 41.
7. Escape From Freedom, pp. 36-37.
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9. Man For Himself, p. 232.
10. Escape From Freedom, p. 71.
11. The Sane Society, p. 362.
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3. Ibid., p. 111.
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12. Escape From Freedom, p. 162.
13. Ibid., pp. 145-146.
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