

This essay, about Humanistic Psychology, Third Force Psychology, the Human Potential Movement and Esalen Institute, is a critical analysis of the movement. Social analyst Geoffrey Hill concludes the movement produces selfishness and immaturity. This essay is one chapter in a book Hill is writing about the rampant disease of selfishness and immaturity within Western culture.

THE FAILURE OF THE HUMAN POTENTIAL MOVEMENT: FROM SELF-ACTUALIZATION TO EXPERIENTIALISM

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I've led two workshops at Esalen Institute, the center of the Human Potential Movement. The first one was a very pleasant experience, with no problems whatsoever. The second one was a very disturbing time, with numerous troubles. The first one, for whatever reasons, attracted a very mature crowd, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. The second one attracted some intensely disturbed persons. I'm convinced at least one participant of the bad session had dissociative identity disorder, or multiple personalities, and at least two or three were borderline personalities. It's possible that one of the reasons for the disturbing second session was that the topic was love, given during the weekend between Christmas and New Year. I suspect it attracted some very angry, depressed and lonely souls at that depressing time of year when lonely hearts are the most susceptible to fits of depression and rage. But I also suspect there are also other reasons why these disturbed souls were attracted to it, as I'll explain below.

Initially, I thought it was just the persons in my workshop. But throughout the grounds that weekend, especially at the tables in the cafeteria, I heard numerous conversations about how things seem to have gone seriously downhill at Esalen. It was a very strange weekend. I heard several persons tell others that they would never be coming back to Esalen again. In their search for answers, many that weekend seemed very disappointed.

My own experience that weekend started out bad on my way there. I got up at 5:30am to get a flight early enough to arrive well ahead of my Friday evening opening session. But it was a rainy weekend all over California, and all flights at all airports throughout the state were seriously delayed. Having spent an entire day trying to fly from Southern California to Monterey, I ended up arriving at Esalen an hour late, with no baggage, because it was lost by the airline. Knowing I would be spending the entire weekend with no change of clothes or toiletries, and showing up an hour late for my workshop, I walked in with what I believed was a warm, flexible and mature attitude. I apologized to the class, I thanked them for their patience in waiting for me, and I explained my situation to them, which was entirely out of my control. But immediately, in the midst of my introduction to the attendees, at least three of them were immediately hostile toward me. One of them warned me forthrightly that he and the others would never forgive me for being late. Another chastised me for not driving up the coast instead of flying. And another said it was my fault because I didn't take an earlier flight, in spite of the fact that I booked the earliest flight available more than three weeks in advance, plus I arose at 5:30am to get to the airport early enough to fly standby on a flight earlier than the one I booked.

From the time I walked into the workshop room and throughout most of that weekend, until the last of the complainers left, most of the weekend was filled with intense bitterness directed toward me from at least four or five participants. One person told me he dropped out of the workshop because he couldn't handle the rude and rageful participants in the group. Even after speaking with several of the troublemakers in private, and extending an open dialogue with them, still, they remained as disturbed throughout the entire weekend. Much of the conversations in the cafeteria that weekend had to do with similar whiny types which many seemed to think regularly populated Esalen, especially that weekend. The general consensus seemed to have been

that Esalen attracts a growing number of bitchy, whiny, aging, baby boomers who sign up for a class, find extreme fault with the leader, the content, and participants, then they drop out in anger, and spend the rest of the weekend leering at naked bodies at the baths.

I've actually given hundreds of lectures, seminars and workshops in many different settings, having encountered thousands of persons in my presentations over the last twenty five years. In all my years of experience, where I have received countless thank you letters and hugs of appreciation, never have I encountered such an onslaught of rude, unappreciative, immature, infantile grownups as I have that one weekend at Esalen.

I've asked myself if perhaps there was something hidden to myself which could have provoked such intense rage from these workshop attendees. But even after engaging some of them in private dialogues where I tried to reconcile with them, their anger, and in some cases, their severe paranoia, was intensified. What was very obvious to me was that there was a predominance of extremely disturbed persons attracted to Esalen that weekend, several of whom, for some strange reason, chose my workshop to attend. The severely disturbed members dropped out one by one throughout the weekend, and by the end, we were finally left with a small handful of very intelligent, tolerant, and relatively healthy persons relating responsibly to me and the others.

After more than a year since that experience, I've asked myself if perhaps there was something I could have done differently, because after the initial hostility to my arriving late, no matter what I did or said after that, somebody was complaining about me. I suspect that even if I had arrived early, I would have still received the same abuse; for what was blaringly obvious was the severe psychological pathologies within several members of that workshop.

If I would have had a history of either attracting or provoking extreme pathology within my public presentations, I would say there must be something within me or my material which causes it. But since my history has been exactly the opposite, and since numerous persons at Esalen that weekend complained about the same type of persons I observed to be troublemakers, I can't help but believe there is something inherently within the system itself which fosters and attracts such pathology.

As a social analyst, I've gathered my thoughts on the subject into this examination of Esalen and the Human Potential Movement. From having spoken to numerous other persons about Esalen in particular, and having studied Esalen and the movement a great deal since then, I've come to the conclusion that Esalen and the Human Potential Movement have actually created an atmosphere where certain pathologies are attracted to something unhealthy within the movement.

The catalogue warns participants that the workshops, for the most part, are not for those in severe states of psychological turmoil, that is, most workshops are not for intense, process-oriented, group therapy. Yet, the most disturbed persons in my workshop insisted that's exactly why they were there, to process their intense psychological disturbance.

I've had the pleasure of having studied many different movements and subcultures, particularly those of extreme emotional persuasions. And what I've observed about Esalen and the HPM is that like all other subcultures and movements, the directive of the movement will determine the attraction and direction of the members. The following thoughts, therefore, are my observations and analysis of Esalen and the Human Potential Movement, or the HPM.

The phrase, "Human Potential Movement" sounds like a vibrant, healthy, legitimate progression toward a brighter future. It has all of the promises of enlightenment, higher thought, evolutionary progress, social justice, and human and environmental dignity. Unfortunately, the promised movement toward greater human potentiality seems to have fallen far short of its intended goals. Like most religions, therapies and technologies of the soul, the movement which promises potentiality for human growth seems to carry the seeds of its own failure within it. The movement, of course, is generally synonymous with Third Force Psychology, or Humanistic Psychology, and its center of propagation has been Esalen Institute, founded in 1962 at the Hot

Springs bearing its name on the coast at Big Sur, California. Similar to all technologies promising a path to higher consciousness, the path itself, and its guides, seem to ironically subvert the intended destination toward enlightenment.

There has been much good done over the thirty plus years of the movement. The subculture and the persons leading it and participating in it, are to be commended for their efforts to reach greater human potentiality. That goal itself, and many of the promised methods to get there, are noble attempts toward enlightenment. It is usually an admirable endeavor when persons reach toward higher levels of awareness and power. Unfortunately, most adherents of such methodologies never see the bigger picture; they rarely see the shortcomings of their own plan, because they don't take the time to analyze the philosophy and its practical application.

Some emotional and philosophical viruses are usually hidden within each methodology which hinder the promised redemption from ever being fulfilled. This is especially so when certain seemingly promising elements of a particular movement are over-emphasized at the exclusion of other, less exciting, but healthier elements.

For example, when the Seventh Day Adventist Church places a major emphasis on the Seventh Day of the Week, at the exclusion of grace and tolerance, they inevitably promote legalism and attract passive persons willing to be abused by a legalistic system of religious sadism.

To begin an understanding of the Human Potential Movement and how it has fallen short of its goals, it will help to view it from a bird's eye view. All movements, whether of a religious, political, social or philosophical nature, have certain traits in common which make their group actions rather predictable. This is so because social movements are really just larger pictures of individual human movements. All social movements, by their very nature, operate in a similar way to a single person moving through life individually. Just as a single individual moves as one, so also do social movements move as one body, propelling themselves according to the groupmind which has been set in motion by the most influential members of the movement.

Like all other social movements, the Human Potential Movement, after certain inner conflicts were resolved within it, has moved inexorably toward its present and future destination, dictated by the loudest voices within the tribe. Unfortunately, some of these voices, like the voices in an individual's head, have predominated and guided the movement toward some rather pathological destinations.

This is why it is usually dangerous to follow movements wholeheartedly, for the most pathological voices are usually the ones guiding it. And this brings up the paradoxical nature of all movements. On one hand, the positive, healthy aspects of a movement empower individuals toward their desired ends, and there is always much greater potential in numbers more than in the individual. On the other hand, the greater the adherence to the movement, the more depowered is the individual subscribing to it. On one hand, a movement can accomplish much good which an individual can not do on her own. On the other hand, the individual can preserve authenticity of mind on her own, which is usually sacrificed within the movement. The ideal would seem to be a movement made up of authenticated individuals who refuse to surrender their individual minds to group consciousness, yet who recognize that power in numbers can accomplish what they can not do alone. The reason movements rarely possess this ideal is because the loud, predominant voices within each movement demand the attention and obedience from the majority, thus robbing individuals of their individuality and authenticity.

So, like all movements with good ideas, the Human Potential Movement has been led astray from its good ideas by its most vocal leaders, and in my opinion, has been walking down a narrowing and limiting path for many years. I'll show you why I believe this throughout this examination.

As I've said, the founders, leaders and disciples of the movement are to be commended for their faith in human potentiality. Humanity, after all, is the only entity which can solve the problems created by humanity. The problem is not in believing that humanity has potentiality.

Part of the problem is found in the interpretation of potentiality. I believe humanity has the potentiality of doing marvelous things. Unfortunately, most persons who throw around the idea of human potentiality misapply the concept by employing it to their own personal potentiality, while neglecting the potentiality of humanity at large. This happens, not only because all humanity is flawed, but also because the leaders of the movement have provided the ideology which perpetuates the movement's less than enlightened mentality.

Understandably, the founders and leaders of the movement, like all seemingly good movements, see the obvious, which is that humanity is desperately in need of some grand, cosmic jolt of transformation to get us going in the right direction. Most movements, including religious, social, political, philosophical and psychological ones, see the glaring frailties of struggling humanity, and they want to provide some solutions. This is what is commendable. But like religions which start out with a good idea of human liberation or redemption, within a generation, they usually do more damage than good.

The Jesus Movement, made up of thousands of disgruntled youth in the late sixties and early seventies, saw great potentiality for liberation within the revolutionary ideals of Jesus. Unfortunately, they got swallowed up into draconian, fundamentalist churches which completely robbed any liberating spirit from their ideals. Likewise, the HPM lost its healthier ideals when it was swallowed up by its own imbalanced philosophy.

Not surprisingly, the HPM was born at the coming of age of the baby boom generation, a transcendently hungry generation, ready for new ideas. The first wave of baby boomers to come of age in the 1960s was like a tribe of spiritual pioneers, searching for new vistas of human experience. Thousands were caught up in cults, new religions and political movements. The first generation born after the shock of World War II was ready and willing to try new ways of being, whether through spirituality, drugs, sex or activism. It was the generation which, unlike all before it, demanded honesty, integrity and authentic reality, even if they had to transcend reality to make it more real.

With all the experiments with mind alteration, mind expansion, spiritual questing and social change, the sad reality is, only a very small minority of the boom generation have actually realized authentic human potentiality. The majority of the generation, even those who experimented heavily with alternative realities, have seriously compromised their quest and have settled for rather mediocre lifestyles of bourgeois comfort. If potentiality has been attained, it has been found far more in personal career and financial rewards than in the invisible, altruistic, or higher-state side of the equation of which Abraham Maslow spoke.

One of the grand successes of the Human Potential Movement has been that it has attracted a very loyal following of dedicated boomers forever attached to feel-good experiences. There is no doubt that the movement has been immensely successful in perpetuating a mass addiction to experiences of feeling good.

While the leaders of the movement would prefer to distance themselves from the New Age Movement, the widespread mentality of super-experientialism prevails in both camps. After all, this was the first generation to explore on a large scale, alternative experiences, many of which are highly emotionally charged and addictive.

Some of the blame of the movement is not so much on the founders or leaders, as much as it is within its most prominent generation, the boomers. For just as there is a general personality structure for each movement, likewise there is a general personality structure for each generation, which has been convincingly argued by William Strauss and Neil Howe in their book *Generations*.

The sad thing about most movements is that they are usually highly generationally specific, rarely leaving a progressive, expanding, changing philosophy and practice for any generation beyond the one baptized in the golden age of the movement. That's why religions and movements sacralize and canonize their mythic origins. Repeating the rites of the golden age of the religion preserves for future generations the miracles and myths of the movement's genesis.

And here is where the problem lies. Once a movement or religion is codified and sacralized as a holy, venerable relic, it stagnates, and in fact regresses, instead of progresses.

For example, the canonization of the secular religion of American patriotism will never see the democracy it claims as its own, because the very nation which was founded upon the golden age of the American "revolution" was made by and for landed, white males with money. After more than two hundred years of patriotism, we are no closer to authentic democracy. What we actually have is an ostensible government of the people, which purports to be the beacon of democracy. As a matter of fact, the more we subscribe to the patriotism of our founding fathers, the more removed we will perpetually be from real democracy, because the secular faith in the American way is based far more on the old boy network of the landed gentry than in anything which would move us toward legitimate enlightenment. The patriotism which was sanctified under the American "revolution", which is still touted today as the bastion of human freedom and dignity, is ironically, a secular religion of domination and exploitation. Howard Zinn convincingly shows this in *A People's History of the United States*.

But, in explaining movements in general, I have digressed in my examination of the Human Potential Movement. As I was saying, the movement has been sanctified and canonized to perpetuate the faith as it evolved through the sixties and seventies. And the boom generation, which came of age then, will live and die with this faith, along with the other movements endemic to the generation. Like any other faith, whether of a secular or religious variety, the Human Potential Movement can not be expected to change, to progress, and to embrace ideas beyond what has already been codified. Furthermore, the movement can not be expected to embrace younger generations of forward thinking individuals, for the canonization of the movement's golden age has already passed, which means its legends and myths are now considered holy, untouchable or impregnable to onslaughts of new ideas or new blood from younger generations.

It's like the Theosophical Movement, the New Thought Movement, or the Rosicrucian Movement. Whether religious or secular, new faiths come on the scene with a flash of fiery verve, then eventually turn into old folks' centers perpetuating the ideas and memories of bygone ages, which never even transcended the limitations of their own eras. The only young people within New Thought are the ones too unquestioning to realize they have adopted their grandparents' group pathology of denial and selfishness.

Many of the ideals of the sixties never came to fruition for the same reason most religions never usher in enlightenment. The members of such movements are far too conformed to the groupmind to recognize the flaws within the movement, and they are therefore, too unaware of what needs to be seen and changed to make a difference. And like the adherents of all such movements, the boomers of the Human Potential Movement, likewise, subscribe far too tenaciously to the faith, much of which, like the ideologies of most other religions, is pathological.

The generation which largely populates the HPM have mostly settled into mainstream, conformist lifestyles based on surviving economically and emotionally in an unstable world. After all, the majority of all generations are not world changers and revolutionaries. By the time most persons have reached middle age, they have been so battered and bruised by life's incessant blows, they try not to rock the boat, lest the little comfort they have attained be taken away from them.

Besides seeing the normal desire to fit in and live a comfortable lifestyle, I saw something quite disturbing during that strange weekend I had at Esalen. I saw some extreme examples of baby boom immaturity. I saw what appeared to be a predominance of adult childishness and selfishness carried out in rather abusive ways. I saw what seemed like a rash of middle-aged children throwing tantrums and whining incessantly when they didn't get their way. And I wondered if perhaps there was a correlation between this symptomology and the movement to which they are attached.

Part of the problem with the children of the sixties is that many of them never grew up. While many of them have searched widely for spiritual and philosophical elucidation, most have either stagnated or regressed into selfish lifestyles. Many have given up experimental drugs for prescription drugs. They have given up resistance for financial security. They have given up questioning for pre-packaged answers. They have given up promiscuity for serial monogamy. They have given up honesty for compromised lifestyles. They have given up a reverence for nature for job security. While these hyperbolic statements certainly do not reflect the lives of all baby boomers, it certainly is an accurate picture of thousands of them; I would go so far as to say, the majority. One need only to observe the voting, buying and relational habits of the majority to get a read on their real interests.

The Human Potential Movement is an appropriate seeming fix for this generation of aging boomers. Like the movement of New Thought, the HPM offers empowerment for the self, it offers promises of strength for the insecure egos battered and bruised by a world ruled by corporate tyrants and environmental monsters. But instead of being empowered with tools to fight the dragons of mass destruction, these selfish boomers are mainly interested in empowering themselves for their own economic and emotional survival.

What the HPM, New Thought, and every generationally specific movement lacks is a vision to propagate not only personal empowerment, but planetary empowerment. We don't need more mentalities which empower the one. We need philosophies and practices which empower the many. For unless a movement claiming to offer human potentiality lifts up the dignity of all humanity and nature as its prime priority, it falls far short of being what it purports to be.

THE ROOTS OF THE MOVEMENT

So, we know the movement is largely populated by baby boomers. But it was started by, and initially led by persons of previous generations.

It should be mentioned at this point, that the Human Potential Movement, which is practically synonymous with Humanistic Psychology, is a major school of thought. Humanistic Psychology is, as Abraham Maslow liked to call it, Third Force Psychology, the first being Psychoanalysis, and the second being Behaviorism. So, to its credit, the HPM is a movement which has attracted the allegiance of millions of persons throughout the world. But, as with Freudianism or Skinnerianism, just because millions of souls subscribe to its ideologies makes it no more credible nor valuable than any other *ism*.

Of course, Humanistic Psychology did not begin with Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Rollo May, Frederick Pearls or Esalen Institute. It's roots are in humanism, which go back thousands of years, with many variants, as seen in the ideas of Socrates, St. Thomas Aquinas and other defenders of human dignity. There have always been rebels against humanly degrading establishments. The most significant Western rebirthing of humanism was the artistic and intellectual flowering during the Renaissance and Enlightenment. The *Oration on the Dignity of Man*, by Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola, of 1487, was a bold attempt to proclaim human potentiality as a breath of fresh air after 1000 years of repressive Augustinian thought.

The empowerment or potentiality of humanity has gone through several ups and downs over the last few hundred years, with low points found in totalitarian regimes and Behaviorism, where sentient beings are reduced to social machines to be manipulated for the benefit of the masters, all in the name of alleged social science.

As to the roots of the humanistic psychological style, they are traceable to the ancient, tribal story circle, where a small tribe would sit around the campfire and tell stories for the enlightenment of the clan.

Throughout most of Western tradition, teaching took place in an atmosphere where a leader or teacher would stand or sit in front of a group of students, who would passively listen to his knowledge.

Occasionally, someone would come along and break tradition by allowing more freedom of expression from the class. Carl Jung, for example, began conducting weekend seminars wherein he encouraged group interaction through long question and answer periods. Thus, he was really a forerunner of the marathon group therapy sessions, and of group encounter weekends.

J.L. Moreno introduced drama into the psychotherapeutic process with the creation of psychodrama. This paved the way for encounter sessions which became the staple of interaction within the HPM.

The philosophical roots of the HPM are connected with the long tradition of humanism mentioned previously. There was a growing movement of humanism a generation before the HPM. And its presence no doubt had a strong influence on the HPM.

In 1933, a group of 34 liberal humanists, including John Dewey, signed the first *Humanist Manifesto*. Some of the statements from that document would seem to be foundational tenets of the Human Potential Movement. For example, the following maxim from the Manifesto could have been written by Frederick Perls:

Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now.

Predating the HPM's strong emphasis on human experience, the Manifesto stated, "the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life..."

This sounds very much like the experiential tenet of the HPM, where the participants' personal experiences are held to be practically sacred, and are synonymous with the highest form of human endeavor.

Stating unequivocally a strong belief in human potentiality, the 1933 Manifesto stated,

Man is at last becoming aware that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, that he has within himself the power for its achievement.

Sounds very much like the language of human potentiality, which blossomed in the 1960s. But it also sounds very much like the theology of New Thought, which evolved out of the Transcendentalist Movement around 1900. (I examine New Thought elsewhere, wherein I make a correlation between the superman theory of German philosophy and Mind Science of American, pathological, religious denial.) In actuality, Humanism, New Thought and the HPM are philosophical cousins, wherein they all deify humanity. The common threads are that they are all strongly rebelling against the patriarchal tradition of human indignity, they all deify the human experience and they all unequivocally declare the supreme potentiality of humanity. They all have different leaders, slightly different theologies, and different styles, but all of them are essentially religions of human deification. And predictably, when any principle is uplifted with such grandiose praise, at the exclusion of that from which it is reacting, there is sure to be a certain ironic joke to follow. As I point out in an essay on New Thought, the more that movement proclaims human divinity through mind science, the more castrated becomes the mind.

For Humanism, the more it angrily denounces the deities of old, and the more it places humanity on the throne of divinity, the more pathetic becomes its own self-coronated divinity. For example, in several places of the Humanist Manifestos I and II, there are strong references to an ultimate reliance on science and technology, such as this one found in the first Manifesto:

Religion must formulate its hopes and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

This was published in 1933, after the technological decimation of Europe of World War I, but before its further destruction of World War II. When the scientific spirit and method is uplifted to such exalted heights, the ultimate social extension of the philosophy is the "scientific"

social control of humanity. And this is exactly what we witnessed shortly thereafter with National German Socialism, and under various communist and fascist totalitarian regimes throughout the world.

When the scientific spirit and method are allowed free reign to give us "better living through chemistry", massive environmental destruction on a worldwide scale is the inevitable result.

When the HPM uplifts human experience as the *sine qua non* of ultimate existence, in their act of exalting wants, needs and feelings, they believe they are freeing humanity to higher states of existence. In reality, there is an ironic and inevitable plunge down to lower levels of human behavior, as I'll examine more in depth later. So, whether it is Superman Theory, Scientism, New Thought, Humanism or the HPM, any time an ideology or movement overcompensates and uplifts humanity to a state of divinity, while denying the race's animality, the animality will ultimately reign in irony. In other words, the greater the exaltation, the greater the debasement.

But, I have digressed again. I'll analyze the HPM more specifically later. I started talking about the *Humanist Manifesto* of 1933, which was actually a precursive statement of faith for the HPM.

Besides philosophical antecedents to the HPM, there have also been numerous experiments with alternative learning centers. Aldous Huxley attempted such a venture called Trabuco College in the 1940s. But the idea was no doubt ahead of its time, and it did not have much success.

In 1951, Frederick Perls published *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality*, which influenced therapists and forward thinkers rather widely and profoundly. Both Aldous Huxley and Alan Watts recommended the book heartily. Some of the major ideas of this book became foundational tenets of the HPM. For example, he said, "The relationship of past and present must continuously be re-examined in the present." Actually, Thus, the emphasis on the here and now, which was also a major tenet of Humanism, eventually became a major part of the HPM.

In 1954, Aldous Huxley published *The Doors of Perception*, which was a seminal work in the literature of alternative consciousness, further preparing the road for the movement which was about to be born. Coincidentally, L. Ron Hubbard founded the Church of American Science (later called the Church of Scientology) in the same year.

In 1960 Aldous Huxley began lecturing on "human potentialities", actually helping usher in the new psychological faith which was gaining more momentum by that time.

In 1961 the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* was first published, as an organ for the brand new American Association for Humanistic Psychology. By this time, the movement had already officially begun, and had already attracted an enthusiastic following.

Just in time to capture and propagate some of the ideas which were then brewing, Michael Murphy and Richard Price founded Esalen Institute in 1962, which was dedicated, as their current catalogue states, "to the exploration of unrealized human capacities."

In that same year, Abraham Maslow published *Toward a Psychology of Being*, which laid an impressive theoretical foundation for the new movement. He was no doubt one of the most significant thinkers of the school of thought which he helped found.

While the first *Humanist Manifesto* of 1933 might not be recognized by many as a significant influence on the HPM, the second *Humanist Manifesto*, of 1973, was a more overt parallel vision of what was simultaneously happening within the burgeoning HPM.

Using the concept of human potentiality in its extreme, the *Humanist Manifesto II* of 1973 declared boldly,

Using technology wisely, we can control our environment, conquer poverty, markedly reduce disease, extend our life-span, significantly modify our behavior, alter the course of human evolution and cultural development, unlock vast new powers, and provide humankind with unparalleled opportunity for achieving an abundant and meaningful life.

If this sounds far-fetched, it is actually a declaration of a new faith, not the old faith of our fathers, of religion, of spirituality, but, rather, the faith in human potentiality to use technology toward evolutionary progress.

None of the foundational mentors of the HPM were signatories of the *Humanist Manifesto II*, but the correlation between the two schools of thought is quite revealing. This is nothing new, however. Anytime there is an open window to clear out the old cobwebs of old time religion, the voices of resistance speak loudly and simultaneously for the new declarations of human freedom and dignity, from various corners simultaneously. The problem with such declarations, however, as I'll explore more in depth later, is that if they are too skewed in any one direction, if they are too imbalanced, too lacking some important ingredients, they tend to stifle or prevent real growth from taking place.

It is no mere coincidence that the *Humanist Manifesto II* was published at the height of the HPM. While the two movements are really two separate tribes, they both came of age at a time when it was ripe to question the established order. The problem was, they didn't ask the right questions or make the appropriate declarations.

While the HPM was declaring the importance of human needs and experience, the humanists also did so with relish:

We believe, however, that traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species. Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence, in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not do so.

Besides declaring the value of human needs and experience, the humanists went further and practically deified the scientific method. This might seem like a reactionary step beyond what the HPM did, but in reality, the HPM was also a new "science". It was a technology of human psychological potentiality designed to bring humanity closer to its version of enlightenment.

The following statement from the *Humanist Manifesto II* sounds like a rallying cry from the HPM:

But we reject those features of traditional religious morality that deny humans a full appreciation of their own potentialities and responsibilities. Traditional religions often offer solace to humans, but, as often, they inhibit humans from helping themselves or experiencing their full potentialities.

Again, another statement from the same document seems straight out of the HPM:

We affirm that moral values derive their source from human experience.

Furthermore,

Ethics stem from human need and interest.

And,

We strive for the good life, here and now.

In support of the faith of science and technology, the *Humanist Manifesto II* declares:

Reason and intelligence are the most effective instruments that humankind possesses. There is no substitute: neither faith nor passion suffices in itself. The controlled use of scientific methods, which have transformed the natural and social sciences since the Renaissance, must be extended further in the solution of the human problems.

And,

Technology is a vital key to human progress and development.

The signatories of the second manifesto included Isaac Asimov, Albert Ellis, Andre Sakharov, B.F. Skinner, Betty Friedan and Sir Julian Huxley, but no prominent members of the HPM.

B.F. Skinner would certainly not be considered in the camp of Third Force, of Humanistic Psychology. In fact, many members of Third Force Psychology have reacted strongly against Skinner's technocratic worldview. The mechanistic attitude of Skinner and others of his ilk was actually one of the reasons Third Force Psychology came into existence. Many were fed up with the cold technocratic view of the universe found so prevalently in Behaviorism.

But ironically, Third Force Psychology has created its own technology, it's own mechanism of operation, found largely in gestalt, encounter, experientialism and body work. In fact, one of the founding fathers, Abraham Maslow, suggested that the movement *is* a science:

And to others of good will, who want to help make a better world, I recommend strongly that they consider science - humanistic science - as a way of doing this, a very good and necessary way, perhaps even the best way of all. (Maslow, v)

The problem with psychology in general, not just Humanistic Psychology, is that it has always thought of itself as a science. And while there is a certain legitimacy to experimental psychology, the practical application of psychology has generally been far from scientific in its approach. Nonetheless, the various modes of therapy have certainly been a technology of the mind. And the ironies here go in two directions. Firstly, Humanistic Psychology reacts against the mechanistic mindset of Behaviorism, and tries to establish itself as a more humane approach to psychology. Then, it attempts to set itself up as a science itself. Then, its "science" degenerates into a technology of emotions, of experientialism, of whining and irrelevant encounter confrontation with inappropriate emotional outbursts, all in the name of human potentiality.

I pointed out previously that New Thought, Scientific Socialism, Humanism and the Human Potential Movement are all philosophical cousins. That should not be surprising. After all, like the hundredth monkey principle, when an idea gains a foothold in society, it is easily adopted by numerous factions of the culture simultaneously. Each participating tribe, so to speak, assimilates the philosophy to meet its own needs, with its own style.

New Thought was largely founded by very shrewd, but intellectually inept spiritual leaders who turned the idea of human divinity into a religion of positive thinking.

Scientific Socialism, whether in its fascist or communist mode, turned the idea of human power into an extremely exclusivistic, totalitarian technology of mass control.

Humanism took the idea of "God is Dead" to mean that humanity must be exalted to godhood through the power of the intellect, meaning the practical application of technology.

The Human Potential Movement took the idea of human potentiality and turned it into a psychology of being.

So, whether the deification of humanity is done through the naive spiritual technology of New Thought, the militaristic technology of Scientific Socialism, the academic technology of Humanism, or the psychological technology of the HPM, they are all essentially different tribes manifesting the same faith with a different face. Whether we realize it or not, these are all variant versions of a secular religion. They are all variants of the new faith in the empowerment of humanity.

The problem is, none of them have brought us significantly closer to legitimate enlightenment, because they are all imbalanced in one way or the other in their theologies. But such is the history of religion. New upstart religions have always debunked the faith of the

fathers only to fall into the very same traps as their predecessors.

While I am obviously categorizing the HPM with some extremely unhealthy, or even destructive movements, because it has the same philosophical base, I must say that it is certainly the healthiest of this family of movements. This is so, I'm sure, because most of its leaders have been genuinely caring and intelligent souls trying to do some good.

Initially, the movement began as a theoretical society of humanistically oriented thinkers. But, like all of its philosophical cousins, the intellectual musings of its genesis soon gave way to a vigorous, emotional, practical application of the faith. And this is where it primarily had its downfall. And this is also precisely where its ideological relatives fell short.

Karl Marx had some quite accurate observations of, and some healthy prescriptions for the disease of human exploitation and degradation. But the persons who applied his ideas the most seriously twisted them and turned them into an extreme form of oppression and destruction, far worse than the abuse Marx opposed.

At least one or more of the founders of New Thought warned that their movement should not leave its philosophical moorings. But the warnings were sounded too late. The seeds of pathological denial were already too severely entrenched within the mentality of the movement's members.

Contemporary Humanism was doomed from the outset. In spite of the fact that dozens of the world's seemingly brightest intellectuals signed their names on the Manifestos, the ideas themselves spell the demise of the movement, and the inevitable environmental destruction which resulted from its ideology of technocracy.

Better than its philosophical cousins, the HPM began with much brighter, more logical, more philosophically sound ideas. But, like its humanity-deified relatives, an over-emphasis on certain ideas and practices doomed the movement to its own ingrown dysfunction.

HISTORY OF ESALEN

At the center of this new secular religion has been Esalen Institute. There, probably more than any other place, the theories of the HPM have been developed and put into practical application. An excellent history of Esalen was written by Walter Truett Anderson, called, *The Upstart Spring: Esalen and the American Awakening*.

Long before Michael Murphy and Richard Price turned the Murphy property into a growth center, the neighboring town, Big Sur, on the California coast, was a haven for artists, notably Henry Miller and some of his friends in the 1940s.

After graduating from Stanford, Michael Murphy wanted to get a Ph.D. in philosophy, but he was detoured from that plan, according to Anderson, because Stanford University's program emphasized analytical philosophy, which, of course, is a very dry, mathematical approach to philosophy. Instead of pursuing that path, he went to an ashram in India of a well known, intelligent guru, named Aurobindo.

The ideas propagated there no doubt had an influence on Murphy. Aurobindo believed in the synthesis of opposites, such as body and mind. Other important polarities which Aurobindo attempted to unite were inner growth and species evolution; and mysticism and political action. The guru was not just a reclusive mystic. He was a professor of English and a political revolutionary. Murphy carried these ideas of integration into his founding of Esalen Institute. In fact, Murphy and Price decided early on that their new learning and growth center would emphasize a synthesis of East and West, ancient and modern, science and religion, and scholarship and art.

Those were all excellent ideas, and certainly, those principles have been practiced in many of the workshops over the years. But unfortunately, a few prominent ideas from Humanistic Psychology and Frederick Perls predominated and determined the future of the center, of which I'll explain more.

In the beginning at Esalen, things were very hopeful. There was much philosophical discussion, and great enthusiasm for big cultural changes which were envisioned by the participants. Many within the movement believed that perhaps Esalen and the movement at large could help usher in a major paradigm shift, which was called the Great Evolutionary Leap. Aldous Huxley referred to it in his Human Potentialities Lectures in the early days of the center. But sadly, we have never seen that leap.

Even many of the early workshops had a broad, global vision, and there was much theoretical and intellectual interaction. Then, eventually, the "Apollonian" phase gave way to the experiential wave, which has persisted to this day.

The first series of programs offered at Esalen was on The Human Potentiality. And all that sounds fine. The problem is, too many of the teachers and workshop participants focused on personal potentiality, and it seems there was never a strong drive toward greater human potentiality, in terms of making the world outside of the self a better place. While the initial ideas and visions of the center were noble and commendable, the ideals of the macrocosmic vision were quickly superseded by a more microcosmic, individualistic practice. That is, instead of emphasizing the human potentiality of reconciling polarities of the world at large, the style and practice of Esalen quickly centered around more personal, human needs and desires, through the employment of the Esalen staples: encounter, gestalt, body work and experientialism.

To this day, Esalen's current catalogue promises "experiential" workshops, to continue the long-standing tradition of personal, emotional experiences. The concept of experience has been a prevalent one since the sixties. It became a major component of pop culture. In fact, one of the generation's pop icons and his band exploited the idea through music. The Jimi Hendrix Experience immortalized the words, "Are You Experienced?" for generations to come. But what many actually had in mind when they used the phrase, was of course, an altered state of consciousness, which was most often done through mind altering drugs. And, of course, the idea was profoundly reinforced through the preachings of Timothy Leary and many others, who literally believed there was indeed better living through chemistry.

The theoretical maxims within the movement effected pop culture, and pop culture in turn effected the movement. An entire generation was looking for a new reality through personal experiences. To be expected, the intellect became increasingly suspect. Analysis, critical thinking and theoretical musings were looked upon as rather bourgeois and academic flashbacks of previous generations. This was the generation of personal experience. The way to reality was not found through the mind, but rather, through the emotions. And the way toward ecstasy was more quickly realized through the body than the spirit.

One of the greatest ironies of the movement is found in the extreme contradiction between its initial ideology and the resultant application. For example, I think one of the most profound and insightful ideas which came out of Humanistic Psychology was Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where he starts with humanity's basic needs at a very low, base level of survival. Then, the higher one climbs toward self-actualization, the more noble and altruistic are one's needs. The irony is that while these lofty ideals were lifted up as regal virtues to be pursued, the needs at the bottom of the scale were the ones most heartily embraced. After all, what is a generation to do when one of the main rallying cries was "Tune in, turn on, and drop out"?

CRITICISM OF THE MOVEMENT

The proof of a movement's validity and viability are usually found in its ability to respond favorably to criticism. Over the years, there has been much criticism lodged against the HPM in general, and at Esalen in particular.

The following are criticisms of the movement, some of which have been lodged by others, and some of which are my own.

INFANTILISM

The extreme exhibitions of whininess which I observed within several participants at Esalen, and the numerous complaints I heard about such common behavior at Esalen, seems to be perpetuated within the movement. When a particular negative trait exhibits itself as endemic to a movement, often it is an indication of two things: those possessing the particular malady are attracted to the movement; and the movement itself perpetuates the disorder. This seems to be the case with the trait of infantilism common within the HPM. And this is where many other symptoms of psycho-social pathology are grounded and perpetuated. What I'm referring to here, of course, is an extreme form of immaturity. Some persons exhibiting this symptomology can be diagnosed with borderline personality, or, some of the symptoms of infantilism can be manifestations of certain infantile modes of multiple personalities.

My theory as to why this seems to be a common occurrence within the movement is because of such a heavy emphasis on play therapy, encounter, gestalt, psychodrama and experientialism. If a movement puts tremendous emphasis on intense forms of play-acting, in its various therapeutic forms, for many years, it will tend to reinforce the pathology of the participants. It will keep them coming back perpetually to feel more of the intense experiences related to their pathology, and it will attract more persons seeking the same emotional experiences related to similar pathologies. In other words, if a movement creates an intense psycho-social atmosphere where severe forms of immaturity are encouraged to be acted out with groups of like-minded persons, the pathology seems to intensify rather than disappear.

What happens is that the negative traits associated with the infantile behavior are rewarded with intense feelings, group encouragement, and positive affirmation that such infantile expressions are valuable and worthy of being expressed often and intensely. The problem is, such behavior is not generally rewarded outside of these exclusive circles of encounter, and the persons exhibiting such behavior must resort to continual reinforcement of their infantile behavior in the closed circles where such outrageous expressions are allowed and encouraged.

The problem with the movement's various forms of therapeutic process is that the participants are rarely, if ever, told that immaturity is not a healthy trait. Instead, participants are encouraged to express themselves in extremely immature ways to their own detriment. They don't grow beyond their sickness. Instead of being ushered into the world of maturity, into a world of responsible, accountable, adult communication, they are conditioned to remain forever in extremely regressive and socially retarded modes of existence. It's like creating an atmosphere of a therapeutic playpen where groups of grownups are encouraged to remain in negative, destructive forms of play. If play has any therapeutic value, it is not in playing out immaturity, it is in practicing the principles of maturity.

The infantile mode of operation among those addicted to experientialism is practically the same as that exhibited by drug addicts. Those who have used even a seemingly mild drug like hemp, daily, for years, almost always manifest serious emotional retardation. Their psychological growth is severely hindered by their addiction. They exhibit severe forms of selfishness, immaturity, and other infantile modes of interpersonal relating. The ones I've known whine and throw tantrums when they don't get their way, showing extreme forms of emotional regression and retardation.

Many persons addicted to intense emotional experiences, likewise, exhibit exactly these same tendencies. This brings up questions about whether experiential institutions like Esalen attract addictive personalities, or whether such institutions foster addiction to experiences. I suspect both happen. I'm convinced that when an atmosphere is created which puts an extreme emphasis on experience over understanding, that atmosphere will inevitably create and encourage infantile selfishness.

NARCISSISM

One of the diagnoses which I'm sure is capably represented within the culture of experientialism is the malady of narcissism. A narcissist is a classic exemplar of selfishness. This person doesn't so much understand nor care for the needs of others as much as expressing the immediate wants and needs of the self. It was no accident that Tom Wolfe dubbed the 1970s the me-decade. It was the culmination of the boomers' lust to fulfill their selfish wants and needs. It was the result of a generation believing in the sixties' philosophy of humanism filtered through the HPM.

Theodore Roszak assesses the situation thusly:

The techniques and theories of Gestalt, Encounter, Transactional, Psychodrama, Transpersonal differ in many ways, but all the schools are united in asserting the essential health and innocence of human nature. They are the therapies of a narcissistic culture, and unapologetically so. (Roszak, 275)

When the wants and needs of humanity are exalted beyond the ability to handle the deification, a massive state of narcissism is inevitable. As I pointed out earlier, the irony of such a misguided exaltation of human nature results in a debasing of the very humanity that is supposedly exalted. The attempt to compliment humanity by reinforcing selfishness creates more selfishness. It's like rewarding a child for expressing tantrums in an attempt to honor the child's humanity. And this is where the HPM differs from its philosophical cousins of human deification.

New Thought deifies humanity by denying our animality, whereas the HPM deifies humanity by exalting our animality.

Humanism deifies humanity by pretending that humanity is a divine scientist, with the inherent knowledge to correct social ills through technology.

Scientific Socialism is a mechanistic, methodical means of deifying humanity through manipulation and control. There, it is done by disallowing, or, at least harnessing the animalistic powers of the masses, while denying that those same animal powers exist within the elite. The irony is that the exalted elite become the most animalistic, by manipulating and using the animalistic tendencies of the controlled masses to attain their own selfish wants.

The problem with all of these related schools of thought is that none of them have effectively thought through the tripartite essences of humanity. We have three main parts of our nature: the animal, the human and the divine. The problem is emphasizing one area at the exclusion of the others.

We are not merely animals whose craving wants must be fulfilled at all costs. Neither are we strictly divine beings devoid of an animal nature. We are both animalistic and divine, each essence of which constantly pulls our humanity in each respective direction. The problem with our new secular faiths is that they have not properly balanced the equilibrium of this tripart being, the result of which is a massive social infection of narcissism. But that should be no surprise. After all, many leaders of most of these movements have exhibited narcissistic tendencies in their own personalities.

Within the HPM, the likes of Timothy Leary, Fritz Pearls and Will Schutz were allowed to dominate the atmosphere, thus guaranteeing that an environment of narcissism would prevail. With years of conditioning, many members of the movement have come to expect that their immediate wants and needs should not wait. Many get the misdirected message that human potentiality means empowering oneself through demanding that one's wants are met immediately. I point out elsewhere that the very same message is broadcasted through New Thought, which results in a massive disease of denial and selfishness.

FEEL-GOOD EXPERIENTIALISM

The perpetual expression of wants and needs is conditioned by rewarding infantilism through emotionally charged experiences via group process. The various forms of group encounter allows and encourages the participants to regress into selfish and irresponsible modes of expression. While in that mode, they are rewarded with what seems like love, unconditional acceptance and applause for expressing themselves. This results in intense, emotional, feel-good experiences. This is the therapeutic high felt by most members of the movement, and it is primarily why they continue to come back for more of this high year after year. This is the addictive experientialism which is one of the major foundations and draws of the movement. After all, since the movement consists largely of the first generation to experiment *en masse* with altered states of consciousness, this same generation is highly susceptible to seeking emotional highs, even if those experiences are found within intensely regressive modes of group interaction.

The reinforcement of experientialism is found not only within the group leaders and participants, but it is a well-established tenet of this secular faith. This heavy emphasis on experientialism is not just the critics' exaggeration of the movement. Esalen's catalogue itself upholds experientialism as a foundational bastion of their entire philosophy.

On more than two or three occasions, when speaking with the director of programming at Esalen, I was told emphatically, that my proposed workshops MUST be experiential. The message was very clear. Since I am dealing with the psychedelic generation, I must design my workshops with more emphasis on emotions over intellect, with greater priority of intense experiences over understanding, with more energy given to the participants' need for an altered state of consciousness than their need to grow to more mature states of awareness and behavior. When workshop leaders are told emphatically and repeatedly that they must put great emphasis on experientialism, this guarantees that the same old pattern will repeat itself over and over again within the system designed with and built for intense emotional highs.

Actually, the boomer generation, no matter where they ended up in their respective spiritual paths, landed squarely in the camp of experientialism. For those who gravitated to the Jesus Movement of the late sixties and early seventies, most ended up in pentecostal or charismatic churches which emphasize the "gifts of the spirit", which means glossolalia, prophecy, healing, and other emotionally charged spiritual experiences.

For those who ended up in the New Age Movement, it was no different. What initially promised to be a revival of mysticism turned into a commercial supermarket of feel-good technologies, where there is more emphasis on UFOs, auras and enemas than substance. It is a mark of the generation that its spiritual seekers are eternally addicted to various emotional highs. This is not to discount the age-old tradition of ecstatic experiences which are integrally connected to mysticism and shamanism. The difference between traditional mysticism and these relatively new brands of ecstatic experiences is that the new faiths are largely devoid of authentic growth.

For various reasons, the *puer aeternus* has upstaged the *senex*. In other words, the regressive, eternal youth has whined louder than the wise, progressive voice of the old sage. In traditional schools of mysticism, there was always a literal or spiritual soul guide, leading the spiritual pilgrim toward greater states of awareness, toward higher levels of maturity and responsibility. Unfortunately, amongst the experientialism of the HPM, the New Age Movement, and Fundamentalism Christianity, there is a dearth of sagacity, a poverty of maturity, and a scarcity of strong, wise, eternally connected leadership. While there are certainly intelligent persons leading and participating in the movement, when the overt directive of experientialism comes straight from the center of the movement, any foreign, outside modes of leadership are effectively quashed. The message comes though loudly and clearly: give the people what they want! (that is, experiences).

INGROWN, INCESTUOUS INBREEDING

Every school of thought has a danger of becoming ingrown, of perpetuating the most unhealthy aspects of itself, and of developing an incestuous relationship with its own kind, exclusive of outside influence. This actually happens with all movements which create a creed, a statement of faith and a theology. In fact, the more that's written to sacralize the ideology of a movement, the greater the chances of it becoming incestuously inbred.

You find the same problem in the world of jurisprudence. The more laws that are written, and the more complex they are, the more it perpetuates a need to write more laws, the more it creates a need for attorneys, the more it inspires litigation, and the more ironic chaos is created in the attempt to create order.

Or, you can find the same problem in the film industry, which becomes increasingly ingrown by giving the people what they want, that is, by making more action-adventure block-busters, so the people then demand that which fuels the need to make more, which creates more demand, which creates more of the same, and which perpetuates an endless stream of empty, meaningless stories of destruction.

The HPM, like New Thought, Humanism and Scientific Socialism, has long ago become incestuously ingrown. The creed of the faith has already been written. The perpetuation of the same old ingrown patterns have long repeated themselves so ecstatically and so ritually, it has become an integral part of the faith.

DENIAL

When a movement is truncated in its realization of humanity, it is inevitable that a rampant form of denial will exist. I argue elsewhere that one of the major tenets of New Thought and Scientific Socialism is denial. This is the inevitable result of either over-emphasizing or de-emphasizing one or more of the aspects of humanity's tripart essences.

Like New Thought, the HPM has traditionally been big on emphasizing positivity, at the exclusion of the dark side of life. Maslow criticized European Existentialists for the "exclusive harping on dread, anguish, despair, and the like." Instead, he tended to uplift "joy, ecstasy, or even normal happiness." Sartre and his philosophical colleagues were considered by Maslow, "non-peakers, people who just don't experience joy."

Such labeling of realists by optimists is typical of those whose feet are not touching the ground. Post-war existentialism was inevitable for legitimate thinkers after the massive bloodshed and destruction in Europe. It was a predictable philosophical reaction considering that Hitler pushed the superman theory to its most horrific and pathological extreme. As I mentioned previously, Hitler's National Socialism was based on a severe form of denial. It was a massive pretension that scientific socialism could create a perfect world. The only problem was, millions of undesirables had to be denied their right to live to clear the way for the new world.

The existentialists were merely trying to rebalance an extremely imbalanced social philosophy which plunged their world into the hell of denial. But for the apostles of New Thought, Humanism and the HPM, especially those not directly effected by the horrors of war, they clung to their naive hope in the perfectibility of humanity, thus denying the shadow and animalistic nature of our existence.

According to Maslow,

...self-actualizing people enjoy life in general and in practically all its aspects, while most other people enjoy only stray moments of triumph, or achievement or of climax or peak experience. (Maslow, 31)

This philosophy is one of the most naive and misguided thoughts of human existence I can think of. This pathetically illogical proclamation of positivity flies in the face of reality. Any seasoned veteran of a well-lived life will testify that one will never enter Heaven until one has

walked through Hell. Sages of all spiritual disciplines have taught throughout the ages that the harsh labyrinths of life's journey are the only way toward enlightenment and maturity. Yet, the disciples of denial cling tenaciously to their naive beliefs that a smiling, happy life is the indicator of authentic living. I argue that instead of joy and happiness, the more authentic indicators of a well-lived life are authenticity, integrity, accountability, responsibility, and other psycho-social virtues which make a person a mature, reliable, loving, sentient being. And reality proves that instead of achieving happiness and joy, the pilgrim on the road toward authenticity is more likely to encounter hardships, misunderstanding, ostracism, and alienation, which tends to make one depressed, lonely, anxious and morbid.

This isn't to say that truly self-actualized persons are always more morose than others. Many times they are, but they put a far greater priority on fulfillment over happiness. In other words, they can be philosophically and spiritually fulfilled, knowing they have authenticated themselves, yet they may not be very emotionally happy, considering that their authenticity pushes them outside the circle of conformity. The difference between a truly authenticated person and one who subscribes to the group mind is that the conformer loses his capability of recognizing the malady of denial.

Once a person has fallen into this trap, she is capable of believing all manner of fallacies and lies, no matter how illogical or destructive.

LIVING IN THE PAST

The proof of a movement's stagnation is its inability to grow beyond its origins, to accept fresh, new ideas, and to expand its horizons of understanding. Unfortunately, most movements lock themselves into unmovable positions of ideology, preventing any progressive movement toward growth. This is why most movements are restricted to one generation, for they can rarely accept the ideas and practices beyond their own limited age.

Each movement has a particular message for its time, but rarely can it speak with credibility or substance to subsequent generations or times. It is rather pathetic to see new generations of New Thought aficionados embracing their grandparents' naïveté of thought. And while younger generations will invariably be drawn into older movements, the direction of idea is always one-way. Once a movement becomes an institution, ideas only go from the nucleus to the periphery of the membership; rarely or never the other way.

The sad thing about our reverence for movements and institutions is that we exalt their importance far beyond what they deserve, for various reasons, including the fame and popularity of the movement, the air of sacredness surrounding the faith, and a fear of alienation should we question the authority of the faith.

Furthermore, once a movement becomes an institution, fear prevents questioning. Rarely will a true believer question his faith, for fear of excommunication.

What's strange about the HPM is that one of the tenets of faith is questioning authority, but one would never question the authority which demands that authority be questioned. The problem is not questioning authority. If that were truly a trait of the HPM, the membership would see through the fraud of the system. The problem is that what passes as questioning authority is not a legitimate act of rebellion or resistance. The style of questioning authority endemic to the HPM consists mainly of whining and bitching to parental figures for no logical reason other than to express one's own infantile wishes, and to throw mud in the faces of the maligned parents.

The rebellion against leaders in encounter groups doesn't usually accomplish anything significant other than perpetuating an atmosphere of antagonism and immaturity. Thus, not only is the movement itself stuck in the sixties of the encounter movement, but the participants also get stuck in their own maturational retardation. Confrontation becomes a promiscuous barrage of insult to the nearest, undeserving targets of undisciplined infantilism. Rather than confronting the

introjected harsh parents within one's own soul, the HPM whiner falls into the sadistic trap of lashing out his vitriol to random recipients of abuse. The victims of this abuse too often tolerate the "encounter" or reward the infantilism through praise of "self expression". It works like a dysfunctional family, perpetually acting out their anger and pathology onto one another, never growing beyond their pathological needs to insult and inflict pain.

The participants never seem to realize that if there were any meaningful messages within the movement, they were meant largely for a time and place which needed them at the time. For example, the sixties generation needed to hear the message that authority should be questioned. Many never learned, however, that random, promiscuous insulting of authority figures doesn't accomplish anything other than regressing and retarding the practitioners into the past. No one seems to have ever told them that the real enemies are not the random leaders and members of encounter groups, but, rather, the real beasts who commit the truly destructive acts of economic, social and environmental degradation.

Freudian psychoanalysis had its usefulness for its time. The obvious message was that one can and should question and analyze oneself apart from what our fathers' religions have said about us. The message was certainly nothing new, however. Sages throughout the history of civilization have been saying the same thing. As Socrates said so eloquently, the unexamined life is not worth living. The value of Freud's message is far more in the importance of self reflection than in his theories. A couple of generations beyond Freud gives us enough hindsight to hopefully realize he was a partially correct prophet for his age rather than a beacon of light for all ages.

Behaviorism gave us a message that behavior can be conditioned, or repeated, or eliminated with rewards and punishment. If anything, the message of Behaviorism is that people can be manipulated and controlled. And if we listen to the gospel of Skinner, human evolution leads us "beyond freedom and dignity" straight toward Scientific Socialism. In my opinion, Skinner's ultimate philosophy was not even valid for his own age, nor any other age, when considered in light of human dignity.

Like its predecessors, Humanistic Psychology offered some good ideas at an age when humanity needed dignity. But its vision and methods of operation are severely limited to a narrow philosophy of humanity. To expect that the faith will guide humanity beyond its initial experiments with experientialism is unrealistic. And to expect that it will have much to offer beyond a generation of feeling-seeking boomers is also unrealistic.

LIGHTWEIGHT AND OVERLY OPTIMISTIC

According to Walter Truett Anderson,

Of all the criticisms that came to be leveled at Esalen, the one that troubled Murphy the most was the charge that its content was lightweight and overly optimistic, lacking in a recognition of reality. This was the criticism that Rollo May made on several occasions, and it touched a theme about which Murphy was exquisitely sensitive. (Anderson, 189)

ANTI-INTELLECTUALISM

If, indeed, the content of Esalen, and the rest of the HPM was lightweight and overly optimistic, it would be rather predictable that the movement would have an anti-intellectual flavor. Actually, most social and religious movements are very anti-intellectual. They have to be. This is how they maintain power. The more exclusivistic and the more emotionally laden the movement, the more afraid the leaders are of legitimate thought, and thinkers who think legitimately.

Besides the fact that I was personally warned not to be intellectual, but to be experiential, I

was also rudely chastised by the director of programming at Esalen because I submitted more than 1 or 2 proposals at a time. It so happens that I have lectured on over 100 topics, and I have written on more than that. Being a man of wide interests, I do not usually narrow my available topics to just one or two. I was coldly challenged by this director of programming with the unreasonable question: "How can you possibly be passionate about many different subjects?" Her inability to understand the practice of wide-spectrum thinking and creating is typical of administrators of anti-intellectual institutions, and it is typical of individuals who do not understand critical thought, or the persons who practice it.

Ironically, Humanistic Psychology started out as an intellectual movement. It's original founders were theorists who had envisioned creating an intelligent movement of thoughtful psychology. Unfortunately, when some of the original ideas are skewed in unreasonable directions, it opens up the doors for illogical practices to come through. It quickly became the norm within the early years of the movement to denigrate those who think, question or analyze too much. This is a movement of feeling, where enlightenment is thought to be had through bodily sensations. And while it seemed a welcome relief to a technocratic age of scientism, sabotaging the intellect is, and has always been, an immature and dangerous response to those who think. When proponents of experientialism degrade the intellect, it shows the true colors of a movement which has fallen into the ironic trap of self-debasement. A movement caught up in redemption through sensory experience can not tolerate those who think. Just like their cousins in the related movements, the intellect is suspect. It is a threat to those who feel their way through life.

We all know where intellectuals end up under Scientific Socialism. If they don't conform to the system of fraudulent science, they are sent off to prison camps, or they are exterminated.

Most members of New Thought are so allergic to anything resembling intelligent discourse, they consider critical questioning as morbid obsessing on negativity.

For the academicians of Humanism, however, while they certainly boast about a reliance on human intelligence, their overly inflated appraisal of the intellect ironically castrates any potential power of the mind.

As with the lack of understanding of our animal nature, the members of the movement, and its philosophical cousins in their respective movements, also do not understand the intellect. Just as with our sensate, or animal nature, to either deny or deify the mind is a dangerous thing. To deify it, as the humanists do, ironically robs it of power. To deny the intellect, as the HPM does, ironically empowers those outside the movement and depowers those within the circle of experientialism. One way or the other, the intellect either denied or deified results in some rather pathetic excuses for thought.

In spite of the fact that most persons consider themselves intelligent, the reality of most social groups is that the majority is almost always allergic to the most intelligent thought. Those who are the most threatened by it, influence others to act against it. This is the history of the crowd in relation to legitimate thinkers. Once the crowd is converted to the ideology of anti-thought, there is a pernicious and wide-spread evangelism toward groupthought, which, besides the fact that it is the disease of conformity, is also the disease of the most common thought, to which the majority are obliged to conform.

CONFLICT BETWEEN MASLOW AND PEARLS, BRAINS VS. EMOTIONS

If there was a battle over the direction of the movement, it centered around the conflict between two men: Abraham Maslow and Frederick (Fritz) Perls. Both men had spent considerable time at Esalen, and both were severely at odds with each other. Maslow was the prophet of the intellect, standing as a perpetual reminder that the movement must not veer from it's philosophical moorings. He tried to encourage more reading, research and writing about the

psychology of the movement. Perls, on the other hand, derided intellectualism. He was fond of saying, "Lose your mind and come to your senses". And he was the perfect example of that philosophy put into practice. He chastised workshop participants viciously if they didn't follow his directions to focus on their emotional and bodily wants in the here and now. He lived an aggressively sexual, predatory lifestyle on the Esalen grounds, seemingly having an obsessional need to proposition young women and to touch their genitals.

While Maslow encouraged people to think, Perls forced them to feel. It was a war between the mind and emotions. While Maslow stood firm as a proponent of rational thought, Perls slithered through the grounds looking for his next sexual conquest. There have certainly been many who have come through the movement on an intellectual quest, but since this was primarily a movement of the boomer generation, where altered states of consciousness prevailed over intellectual growth, the forces of Perls, the emotions and the body won the war over the soul.

What remains is the ghost of Fritz Perls lingering naked around the grounds of Esalen, haunting the atmosphere with the perpetual sixties-style reminder that experience is the key to nirvana.

OVEREMPHASIS ON THE ANIMAL NATURE

Since Perls won the battle of the emotions over intellect, of matter over mind, of body over brain, it set a precedent for the entire movement to put far greater emphasis on the animal nature over the higher nature. And since there was such a strong emphasis on the body and emotions, our earthy nature is also the part of us which should solve problems, according to the practical application of the philosophy.

This is exactly why participants in encounter groups are encouraged to rely heavily on their emotions and body to confront others in the group, as well as persons in their lives outside the group.

I've seen groups which endlessly encourage participants to beat a chair tirelessly with a bataka, yelling, screaming and cussing vicariously at their parents or other abusers, as if the louder the screams and the more poisonous the invectives cursed, the more liberation is to be had in the process.

I've been in groups whose prominent message is that redemption is found through the body. Through various methods of play-acting, participants are forced to act out their problems through violence. The message is loud and clear: if you have been oppressed, abused, mistreated, misunderstood, or robbed of your dignity, the answer is to get revenge in the same way which you were abused.

In the minds of some of these participants, especially those who have cultivated their higher natures, that is, their minds and spirits, healing through violence is repulsive to them. And if such a participant in such a circle dares to resist the directive of revenge, if he dares to talk about the problem, to protest the bodily method of therapy, or to avoid confrontation through violence, he is scolded that he is in his head, that he is thinking or talking too much, that he needs to stand up, be a man, and fight the battle through vicious anger through the body. When the majority of the group have conformed to the animal instincts canonized by the movement, the voices of protesters are effectively quashed, with physical restraints, ostracism, and ridicule.

As long as the PLO, the IRA, and other groups representing oppressed peoples rely solely on violence to solve their problems, they heap more violence upon themselves. But when they begin to rely more on their intellect, on their communicational skills, on their ability to use the media, on their talents for using the arts and humanities, on their abilities to persuade the masses, the greater the chances they will see their goals achieved.

Likewise, on a personal level, dignity is never attained by robbing another of dignity through vengeance. It is only found through dignified means.

After a generation of such barbaric tactics of so-called healing and human potentiality, the message and practice has spread far beyond the therapeutic community into popular culture at large. It has infiltrated the minds of the masses wherein millions of Americans willingly rallied behind the call to war, during the Gulf Massacre of Iraq in 1991.

The talk show format grew out of the encounter movement, wherein it began as an allegedly socially therapeutic television genre, wherein previously taboo topics were brought out for the world to see on television. Now the genre has degenerated into what essentially amounts to working-class-pathology-as-entertainment. The Jerry Springer Show is the epitome of the HPM's pathology delivered to the masses. There we witness the pathetic and tragic displays of extremely pathological people solving their problems through their base, animalistic natures.

And since they can't show the most barbaric out-takes on television, they sell videos of the most severe forms of violence for the voyeuristic viewers addicted to such vicious violence. Jerry Springer is a postmodern voyeuristic heir of Fritz Perls. This decadent display of human degradation as entertainment is encounter group pathology for the people. It is the Human Potential Movement translated into trailer park sado-masochism.

The tragedy and gross failure of the Human Potential Movement is that it allowed humanity's most primitive nature to dominate the more evolved, higher nature. An equal mistake would be to pretend, as I mentioned earlier, that we don't have an animal nature. This is precisely what New Thought does, and predictably, it brings out the worst of our animal nature, in irony.

The solutions are to be found, not in over-emphasizing one part of humanity at the exclusion of the other parts. Rather, a balanced integration of all parts will lead to wholeness and healing.

POLITICALLY AND SOCIALLY IRRELEVANT

Beginning in the 1960s, critics charged the HPM with abandoning the political and social causes which were so prominently debated all around it at the time. Instead of focusing energy outwardly on changing the world, a lion's share of the movement's energy has been directed inwardly toward the immediate wants of the participants. This tragic egeneration is exactly what Abraham Maslow preached against. After all, his self-actualized persons were supposed to be more outer-directed. He wrote about noble characters who were possessed with an evolved sense of altruism, and with a righteous sense of social justice, these beings of whom are far more developed than those who merely want to fulfill their own base instincts.

For a movement with a prophetic voice of evolution and self-actualized enlightenment, it is rather tragic to see the lower nature prevail.

Part of the idea of encounter groups is brutal honesty. Participants are encouraged to express exactly what is on their mind to whomever they wish, no matter what cultural rules of protocol might exist.

Will Schutz, one of the staple leaders of Esalen, allowed anger to be released in physical combat. So while many of the generation were protesting war outside the movement, those within were encouraged to make war amongst themselves.

A real human potential movement would be very concerned about the destruction of the soul and the environment, and it would rise up to do something about it. The confrontational attitude common within encounter groups is entirely misdirected. That anger should be directed either at the persons who have personally offended them, like an abusive father, or an ex-girlfriend, or at the corporations and governmental leaders who are working toward the world's destruction. Instead, participants very often direct their pent-up anger toward the very leaders who are trying to show them the way.

While the participants vent their invective on one another, and while their survivalist and sexual needs are expressed, the Human Potential Movement is being overshadowed by the corporate potential movement. And here, the philosophy of the tribe comes full circle, for the idea of human potentiality in its selfish form is actually nothing new at all. It is the same old

management philosophy which has always been used by tyrants throughout the history of civilization. In the olden days the idea of human potentiality was applied in similar ways by the rulers of all tyrannical regimes. And while Western civilization seems to have moved beyond such selfish means of social concourse, the philosophy has merely shifted from bloodthirsty monarchs to money-hungry corporate CEOs.

If the ideology of the HPM has had a major impact on the world, its influence no doubt has been seen within the potentiality of corporate executives to reach their fullest potential of growth and financial success.

UPPER MIDDLE CLASS ESCAPISM

And this brings us to the next criticism, that the movement is rife with upper middle class escapism and irresponsibility. The leaders have encouraged the followers to express their wants and complaints as honestly as they can. The participants do so. The heightened sense of emotional experientialism within the group process locks this attitude into the minds of the participants. By experiencing altered states of consciousness associated with selfishness, the participants gain a sense of empowerment which they feel they greatly need in a world filled with selfish people. And instead of evolving into the mature, altruistic, self-actualized persons written about by Maslow, they gain justification for greater degrees of bourgeois selfishness.

WERNER ERHARD, EST, and SCIENTOLOGY

If the philosophy of selfism took a decidedly perverse turn, it did so through a side branch, via Werner Erhard and his est seminars. When religions exist long enough they usually sprout progeny, offshoots, divisions and rival factions. And secular faiths are no different. The heyday of the HPM happened to exist in an age rampant with new religious sects, cults and assorted mind control groups, all competing for the souls and assets of the experiential generation. In response to the massive quest of the times, countless communes, cults and even supposedly scientific growth groups sprang up offering remedies for what ails you.

There was the infamous Children of God, or Family of Love, of which I've written a comprehensive psychohistory of its founder, David Berg. There was the Alamos, The Hare Krishnas, Synanon and Scientology, among hundreds of others.

Synanon was actually founded as a therapeutic growth group by a recovering alcoholic, Charles Dietrich, in the late 1950s. Self-reliance, another way of saying human potentiality, was at the center of his ideology. But it quickly turned into a totalitarian regime of mind control. Its roots were in Alcoholics Anonymous, its foundation was New Thought, while some of its practices were borrowed from Humanistic Psychology.

Scientology was founded by L.Ron Hubbard in 1954, supposedly as a science of being, based on his rather unscientific book *Dianetics*. Similar to mind science, this new religion is far more dark and controlling of its members.

While each of these cults had a particular religious ideology, these allegedly secular sects had their roots in New Thought.

These groups are worth considering in our examination of the HPM, because they took the ideas of the related movements to an extreme, and they therefore show the pathology of the basic faith when carried out to its logical extensions.

Erhard's est was actually very closely related to the HPM. It is the resultant offspring of the HPM, whether the founders want to claim it as their own or not. Actually, Michael Murphy at one time told reporters that he saw est as a valuable contribution to the HPM. But to his credit, he eventually distanced himself from Erhard and est.

Will Schutz, one of the main facilitators at Esalen, was greatly influenced by est, seeing it as

a high form of human potentiality.

But if est was a close relative, even an off-branch of the HPM, with whom Esalen leaders were not originally embarrassed to be associated, the far darker relative was Scientology. Erhard was deeply involved in Scientology before he started his own seminar business; and Michael Murphy also delved into it for several months before rejecting it as something unhealthy.

Examining a movement in relation to its relatives gives us a realization of how particular thoughts can lead to extreme pathology, depending on who is leading the movement, and how the destructive thoughts are put into practice.

Erhard's est was seriously influenced by New Thought, positive thinking, Dale Carnegie, Alan Watts, Fritz Perls, Abe Maslow, and L. Ron Hubbard. The books which had the most profound impact on him were Napoleon Hill's *Think and Grow Rich* and Maxwell Maltz's *Psycho-Cybernetics*. He took courses at Esalen and Scientology before launching his own brand of human potentiality. And here, we see the logical extension of the HPM.

est was dedicated to empowering the individual through a myriad of influences which Erhard brought to his new secular faith. Without a college education, and having gone through careers in car sales, Great Books sales and sales training, Erhard struck out on the road to success and became probably the HPM's most successful graduate. Even though the founders and leaders of the HPM would no doubt not take credit or blame for it, Erhard is the epitome of Humanism, New Thought and the Human Potential Movement all rolled into one. He took the most potentially powerful elements of each strain of the philosophy and turned it into a multi-million dollar business of empowering others to follow his example. Erhard showed that the religion of self-help could be turned into an enterprise of great financial reward.

But, like the ideology of New Thought, the message was that if a disciple of the practice failed at getting "it", it was his own fault, whereas, if success was achieved, it was due to the principles of est.

Early on, critics of est saw it in a similar light as New Thought. The message was that human empowerment could lift one above the poverty and degradation of the surrounding world. Furthermore, one is responsible for her own fate in life. Illogically, the idea doesn't take into account the fact that millions of people throughout the history of the world have suffered enormously through no fault of their own.

WHAT IS LACKING / WHAT IS NEEDED

As I mentioned earlier, every social movement is limited by its own time. Some movements, like Transcendentalism, offer some guidance and enlightenment for their respective eras, and even beyond their eras. Others, like New Thought, offer promises of enlightenment, but deliver something far less. Some, like the Human Potential Movement, offer grand promises, and some positive, healthy things happen along with some rather destructive things.

I see the same trends of the movement continuing for quite some time, as long as there are people of the experientialist persuasion seeking ecstasy through the animal nature. But it appears that the unhealthy traits of the movement have been so over-emphasized at the exclusion of the healthier traits which have been pushed aside, that the movement will slowly degenerate into more unhealthy social phenomena.

We could have another 30 years of encounter groups, but I doubt if it will actually create the kind of maturity that is needed to move our culture in a healthier direction.

Sure we need honesty and forthrightness, but we also need politeness, respect for others, dignified human interaction and a vision for higher thought.

Confrontation and body oriented therapy, if that's as far as some get, keep people stuck at those levels - the body and the expression of pent-up rage.

At some point, there needs to be signposts pointing to higher states of being, to the kind of authentic self-actualization of which Maslow spoke.

Sex is not the answer. Neither is the use of synthetic drugs, nor infantile experiences, nor brutal honesty.

How do we ever expect to achieve enlightenment if we perpetuate the principles which keep us operating at the bodily, animalistic level, at the exclusion of the spiritually, intellectually and socially conscious levels?

There needs to be more emphasis on an awareness of the environment, politics, social justice, and while we're at it, what ever happened to critical thought, metaphysics and philosophy? And instead of merely expressing our immediate sexual needs, we need to learn how to develop serious, committed relationships. We need to learn the secrets of inner sight and elucidation without chemicals. And we need to learn to cope with pain without chemicals.

THE FUTURE

If we are truly to have the best of the West and East, the masculine and feminine, the intellect and emotions, we need to embrace some of that which we have left behind, as well as that which is at the edge of the future.

Rather than remain merely in the experiential mode, we need to emphasize some ideals of the past. For example, some of the Enlightenment's principles of the dignity of humanity would be helpful, if the principles can be applied with true social equanimity.

Some of the ideals of Romanticism and Transcendentalism are valuable for connecting us to nature. Anything from the past which still has legitimate truths for authentic human progress are to be applied in generous portions for the healing of our planet and our collective soul.

But looking toward the future, we also need to explore some of the experiments of the younger generation. And this is where most movements bog down. They usually get stuck in their own addictive time warp, and they fail to understand the questions or struggles of younger generations. But this is precisely where any self-respecting movement needs to find its bearings. If it loses relevance or connection to younger generations, it has proved itself irrelevant to the future.

It so happens that each generation following a transcendental generation, like generation X following the boomers, usually looks up to their elders, respects their spiritual quests, and expects enlightenment from them. I'm afraid, however, the boomer generation has let down their younger brethren. Gen X has been left on their own to search out new ways of understanding their world. The boomer generation could learn from them, and the HPM could adopt some of their interests and practices, if they truly want to progress beyond the sixties, and if they ever expect to attract younger people.

Rather than focusing on the feel-good experiences of the era, the leaders could consider the practices of the youth. For example, there are new, adventurous paths in the works of cyber anarchy, adbusting, pranksterism, culture jamming, pirate micro-broadcasting, alternative media, and shamanic raves. The younger generation, at least those of the generation who are interested in change, is not so much drawn toward the faith of its fathers as much as reading technology as the voices of competing ideologies.

Certainly, many of them have been influenced by the selfism of New Thought and the HPM, and they have sold out to the commercial materialist mindset. They have bought into the technological age as a means to achieve personal financial success, like their mentors in the boomer set.

But for the dissidents of gen X, for those seditious ones who have been brave enough to see what is truly happening, they see a war within the realm of technology. They see that technology has been largely created by and dominated by the corporate world which leads to the decimation of the planet and the human soul. For these rebels of technocracy, they see that technology must be used by the underground to fight the misuse of technology by institutions.

And while the MTV generation communicates more through music, styles and technology

than through articulating philosophies, they at least generally understand the degenerating influence of technocracy. This is something which the founders of contemporary Humanism grossly failed to see.

For all the hackers, the radio pirates, the pranksters and culture jammers who are wise enough and brave enough to subvert the technocracy, they have created their own underground networks of resistance. And this is done usually not through organized social movements, nor through secularized creeds of faith, but rather, through loosely connected, but spiritually alive cells of anarchistic subversives whose goals are not so much motivated by personal greed and ambition, but rather in a human potentiality of a different nature. The rebels of this generation support groups like Food Not Bombs, the pirate free radio movement, and the struggle for the empowerment of oppressed peoples like the Zapatistas of Chiapas, Mexico.

This generation, and the others following it, don't need an old tired method to become selfish or irresponsibly rageful. They need to find their own way toward enlightenment, the precious slivers of which pass through each generation like rays of hope from a fading sunset.

ENLIGHTENMENT

Ultimately, this elusive bird we call enlightenment is what is usually missing in most movements. But this is precisely what is needed to bring humanity away from the brink of destruction.

The last time I proposed a workshop for Esalen, I mentioned to the director of programming that I'd like to do a workshop about seeing. Her immediate reaction was that they have too many workshops on that topic. Yet, upon reading through Esalen's current catalogue at the time this writing, there is not one course about seeing in the entire catalogue. But there are numerous workshops on gestalt, body work, massage, and assorted emotionally experiential fora. Actually, the type of seeing I was proposing had not only to do with the seeing of seers in the traditional shamanic sense, but also seeing what's wrong with society, with movements in society, and ideologies of movements which hinder the sight of those trying to see. Besides the fact that I was told that Esalen is overloaded with workshops on seeing, which is patently not the case, I was insultingly asked why I think I'm qualified to teach on the subject. But I suppose that is the history of those who believe they can see and think. When they offer to help others see and think, they are forthrightly prevented from doing so.

Of course, enlightenment connotes spreading light so others can see. Unfortunately, religions, by their very nature, promise light, but hide it from seekers.

If I may be so bold as to shed some light on the subject, I must say that certain things are always seen by true seekers of enlightenment, which always include altruistic, noble desires to lift humanity to more compassionate levels of existence. If we are ever going to help our world closer to the doors of enlightenment, it will only be when we emphasize things which will help usher in enlightenment, such as authentic justice, poetic license, prophetic creativity, and human and environmental dignity. Some of the tools used to usher in this enlightenment are eco-warriorism, performance art, massive resistance, underground networking, alternative media, alternative politics and economics, and an authenticated, powerful use of the arts and humanities.

What is necessary for authentic human potentiality to come about is the complete embracing of a non-compromised lifestyle, where the principles of enlightenment can flourish instead of being drowned out in a sea of conformity and mediocrity.

The problem with most so-called technologies of enlightenment is that the more specific the techniques, and the more intricate the methodology, the more impossible the application.

It's the same problem with the technology of law, as I previously mentioned. The more laws we write, the longer they are, and the more complex the language, the more laws are required to properly interpret them. It is a vicious circle of exponentially multiplying educated idiocy all in

the name of human intelligence and justice, supposedly designed to free humanity from animality. In reality, it makes for tyranny of the animal in humanity. The technology of so-called enlightenment breaks down because practitioners of the techniques invariably get sidetracked with the technology, and they lose sight of the original philosophy. We forget that the spirit of the law is profoundly more important than the letter of the law.

Likewise, we forget that human potentiality is more than the attainment of one's personal wants. Furthermore, when one subscribes to another's philosophy and technique, instead of thinking through the questions on one's own, the subscription subverts one's own ability to authenticate oneself, and thus, prevents enlightenment.

If we stop listening to the selfish and immature voices overseeing the herd and begin listening to the authentic words of seers and of the earth, we could see the light which would guide humanity for generations to come toward authentic enlightenment.

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