

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Bro. Richard Zimny, F.S.C.

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NEW VISION SERIES



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HUMAN BEHAVIOR**



NEW VISION SERIES

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN BEHAVIOR

REV. CHARLES F. HAMEL, C. S. C.
NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL
13645 RIVERSIDE DRIVE
SHERMAN OAKS, CALIF. 91403

by Brother Richard Zimny, F.S.C.

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About the Author

Brother Richard Zimny of the Brothers of the Christian Schools (F.S.C.) teaches management and social economics courses at Lewis College, Lockport, Illinois. He holds B.S.S. and M.A. degrees from St. Mary's College, Winona, Minnesota, and an M.A. from the University of Minnesota.

The New Vision Series

This excellent new series has been prepared and edited by Ronald Wilkins, Director of Teacher Training for the Chicago Archdiocesan Confraternity of Christian Doctrine for ten years. Co-author of the popular TO LIVE IS CHRIST high school religion series, he has also written TEACHING IN THE C.C.D. HIGH SCHOOL and TRAINING LAY TEACHERS FOR THE PARISH HIGH SCHOOL OF RELIGION.

PART I

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MOTIVATION

INTRODUCTION

Why do people do things? A good question. Why I do some things and avoid others is an even better one. Why do I impute motives for acting to other people and readily excuse myself for my own actions?

Because there is much curiosity about why people act as they do, let's look at the question of motivation and see whether we can arrive at some easily classifiable, basic reasons for people's actions. Our purpose will be to gain a better understanding of ourselves, our children and everyone with whom we come in contact. It will help us to know human nature better, to accept ourselves and others' actions more calmly, and to adjust ourselves—and help others to adjust—to the varying factors, both human and divine, which affect our lives.

This kind of knowledge is especially necessary for parents and teachers and, in fact, for anyone interested in his own and others' human and religious development.

Tested by Experience

What we shall be examining is the psychology of motivation, only one part of the total field of psy-

chology, and we shall try to arrive at some of our conclusions by testing them against our own experience. Not all psychologists, of course, will agree with what we say here, but you can judge for yourself whether it is reasonable. You don't have to be a medical doctor to tell if someone is healthy or sick (exactly what's wrong is another matter); even so, you can take the ideas we give and see if they fit life. If the ideas make sense to you, then you've acquired another tool for understanding people. If you don't agree with them, then ask yourself why you disagree, and the final result for you is still a clearer way of considering why people act as they do.

People Must Act

We take it for granted that people will act: you become bored to death if you just lie in bed day after day. Even television won't be enough for you, possibly, after a week or two. People do want to do things. And people's actions, the "things" they want to do, usually have some purpose. You may work in order to feed your family, but a life of non-work after retirement is feared by many men. So, work can't be *only* to feed your family. Kids don't just lie on the beach doing nothing—they walk around to show off their muscles (if any), their tan, their swimming suit (or relative lack of it). The kids also talk, endlessly; they surf (where possible); they may even swim. Kids on a beach are doing things, but possibly not the things their parents might want them to do, like studying or working.

Both the man at work and kids on a beach have very good reasons for what they're doing. The fact that they themselves might not be aware of them doesn't eliminate that fact. (You can go to bed at a very early hour for you without having to know [or having to admit to yourself] that three hours of washing walls was really too much for you.) For our purpose, then, we assume that people will do what is good for them at certain times of life (or of development) without bothering—or possibly even wanting—to know the underlying reasons why they act as they do.

Probing the Reasons

In our treatment, we will consider these underlying reasons. We shall concentrate on four motivational forces or stages through which, as a general rule, most people move. These are called by psychology the stages of survival, belonging, self-esteem, and self-development. The theory is that people begin life with the primary motivation of keeping alive, physically, mentally and emotionally. As they grow and mature, they feel (and strive to fulfill) the needs for belonging, self-esteem and self-development. We shall describe this process in detail.

The Christian Dimension

But what, you might ask, have these *natural* motivational forces to do with our lives as Christians?

Parents and teachers especially need to be aware of the natural motivational forces at work in people. As Christians we are pretty much aware (or have been told often enough) of the dimension that our faith should give to our choices. Our life-

style, our cultural directions, our major choices, our child-raising, our instruction, our final goal was, is, and will be influenced by the fact that we are Christians. The degree to which our choices are affected by our Christianity will, of course, depend on the level of our understanding of our faith and on the firmness of our personal commitment to the Christian message.

But we are not often aware of the significance of our natural motivations—the same motivations which affect everyone, Christian or atheist. Each day every one of us is faced with literally hundreds of choices: relatively insignificant ones, such as, what time to get up or what to buy if we are going shopping, or potentially important ones, such as, what phone call to make, or what to say to our boss. Have you ever stopped to ask yourself why you have done thus and so rather than this or that? The question is important.

The more you understand of yourself (and your children or pupils) the more will you be able to make the Christ-event meaningful and real to yourself and to them. It is eminently true that grace builds upon nature; that is, the divine is integrally dependent on the human. Man's human nature is the only one he has with which to face the challenges which Christianity poses. It is with *this* human nature, always changing, always groping, always striving, that each person faces the world in which he lives. Christianity does not replace human nature—it transforms it.

You, then, as a Christian parent or teacher, should always take into account the natural motivations as well as the effect that the Christian cul-

ture—and your particular “brand” of Christianity, especially—has on society, your home, and on those with whom you deal, either intimately or casually. A Christian is moved through the same stages of motivation as the non-Christian, but his faith commitment (if he is truly Christian) affects his choices in a radically different way from the choices of a non-Christian. In raising your children or teaching your pupils, you should try to make them conscious of their Christian dimension—conscious in such a way that it becomes a live, dynamic force in their choices, not an unpleasant sin-ridden, negative force. Let’s keep this in mind as we proceed.

THE MOTIVATIONAL STAGES

When someone motivates you, what is meant is that they are causing you to do something. A beer ad on TV is meant to cause you to want a frosty, cooling glass of beer—their brand of beer. The “big noise” when the new model of Paris fashions comes out is intended to make you want the new style of clothes. But life isn’t only beer and clothes. Most of the rest of the things you do, you do because you want to. But why do you want to do these things? And why do you no longer want to do some of the things that once seemed so important for you to do?

The reason for wanting to do certain things at certain times of your life is that you go through stages in which new sets of motivation cause you to *want* to do things suitable for the stage you’re in. Once you’ve gotten a firm hold on one stage—

for example, when all your survival needs are taken care of—you *may* no longer be interested in the motivations of that stage. You can be much like the child who can't live without a train set; get the set for him, and after a while (longer or shorter) the odds are that he'll tire of the set and he'll find something else he can't live without—like a car. Life being as complicated as it is, it's very possible that a person won't get through all the stages; he can get "hung up" at any one stage. But remember: the motivations of any stage, when that stage is safely tucked under the belt, no longer *impel* a person to want to do things of that stage. Generally, too, normal people will want to advance to another stage or phase in their lives. If they do wish to advance, they will find the challenges of the next stage will motivate them to achieve, and under normal circumstances, will motivate them to excel at that stage also.

The four stages through which people move and which play a great part in their actions, are: 1. Survival, 2. Belonging, 3. Self-esteem, and 4. Self-development. Because we single out these four stages, however, does not mean that other reasons may not be valid or that other theories for motivation are not tenable. Nor does it imply that prior training, environmental influences, education, or genetic potentialities do not enter into motivation. It merely means that this set seems to apply to everyone at various stages in their lives, although it takes time and experience to get through all the stages and many people do not get beyond the first three).

THE FIRST STAGE: SURVIVAL

A starving person can think only of food. A worker who is barely getting by will be constantly concerned over his family's welfare. Hence, before a person can worry about other things, basic human needs must be satisfied. Besides food, clothing and shelter, a person also needs some love and affection. In our society, a job is the means by which you acquire the money to take care of material needs; the family is the logical source of love and affection for a child, and for the husband and wife.

In some underdeveloped nations, small family farms are still the common way most people take care of their survival needs. In a highly socialistic economy, the government of a nation would undertake to provide the needs of its population. So, besides the individual's efforts, the level of an economy and the amount of government aid to a population has to be taken into account when thinking about the survival needs of a person.

In this day and age in the United States, material survival needs are fairly well taken for granted; the love and affection needs of children are still firmly rooted in the family. You could be disturbed by your level of survival but then you're really dealing with status and not with true survival.

It might be practical to note here that it's possible that true survival worry could occur later in a person's work-life when retirement is creeping up and the weekly pay check won't be coming in any

more. However, Social Security, pension plans, and programs like Medicare should be easing many fears, so that the actual worry will be over loss of the old standard of living people were use to; status-loss, in other words, is the real cause of worry.

Thus, until a person can feel assured that he and his family will be alive in the immediate future, his actions will be totally given to survival concerns. A child, until it is confident of its parents' love and affection, will constantly be "testing" his parents to gain assurance of their love and affection (irritating as it may be when a child climbs onto your lap when you just want to rest for a minute—and he knows you want to rest).

But with the assurance of continued life (and love and affection), most children take those things for granted and the second set of motives—belonging—takes over.

Teaching Implications

As a teacher or parent, it falls to you, when the time and circumstances are right, to make sure that your children understand, first the basic survival need in themselves in terms of the need for love and affection, and of the necessity to *give* love in order to receive it. (You do not have to dwell on the terms of the need for food and lodging, because, as we have said, the *mere* survival level for American children, generally, is not an experienced need.)

Secondly, it is important that they understand that over half of the world population is still striving for basic bodily needs (millions in India, for

example, exist on a less than subsistence level while over a million die each year of starvation), and the Christian imperative “demands” that they (the children or pupils) do something, materially, to alleviate this gross need when they are in a position to do so. They should be asked to contribute to programs designed to relieve survival-level needs in persons struggling to sustain life.

Finally, they should be taught sympathy and respect for others who do not have what they have, and to understand the patterns of action adopted by those who are economically deprived to secure life’s necessities.

THE SECOND STAGE: BELONGING

The child who is well fed and much loved at home isn’t satisfied just to stay home. There is also a desire to be with other children of his or her own age group (or older if possible). And adults are not different from children in this regard. The very evident desire is to be accepted as “one of the crowd” by the crowd. In this case, because of feeling secure in survival needs, there is a desire to test your self-worth by getting accepted as a person by others of your own general age group. This desire will motivate a person to do those things necessary to have others accept him or her.

The most obvious age for a desire of belonging is the “gang age” of teen-agers. During this age, teen-agers finally become less attached to the home. To belong to their own age group they have to go along with their age group’s ideas of dress, music, and hair style. The teen-age group will identify

itself by slang, appearance, or actions. So, some otherwise docile teen-ager may well risk big arguments about, say, clothes with his parents (who he's *sure* love him) in order to get the current fad clothes that will act as an admittance ticket to his own age group. If his own age group—represented by those of his age in the neighborhood or school—will accept him, then the teen-ager will gain confidence that others think he's an “all-right” person.

Teaching Implications

Parents and teachers need to remind themselves constantly of this psychological urge to belong, to follow the crowd, to be somebody, which is a vital part of the human condition, and they must be prepared to accept the reality of teen conformity to styles of living they themselves are not prepared to adopt.

The educative process in the home or the school does *not* consist in repression, punishment or ridicule. It consists in helping the teen-ager to evaluate conformity, and to accept life-styles best suited to the goals of the teen and reject those that are not. Of course, understanding the psychology of human behavior and accepting fluctuation in customs and modes does not mean that parents or teachers must capitulate to every whim or selfish desire of their children. Parents and teachers alike must have values and goals which meet with their style of life and by their conduct exemplify their life-style and personal self-dignity. Young adolescents and middle-year teens expect their parents and teachers to be the adult ideal they are striving to become.

Any adult who is working with children or teens should strive to channel the drives and desires of the young to useful goals and meaningful activities. In making choices or giving directions to the young to exploit their desires to belong, adults should evaluate the activities proffered for adolescent outlets and encourage them to participate in those which not only enable them to belong but which capture their idealism and innate desire to serve others.

Adolescent Motivation and Religion

What about religion? As a parent or teacher, especially of early and middle adolescents (11 years of age to 16 years of age), you should be familiar with the motivational stages which your children are going through so that your religious education will reach them and not be on the irrelevant level so often "tuned out" by today's young people.

At this adolescent age, young people are uncommitted religiously. They are neither "for" nor "against" God—or rather religion as it appears to them. They are, generally, indifferent because they are moving from a period of acceptance because of familial or cultural environmental influences (the "Sister says so" stage) to a period of questioning, of examination, not only of religion but of all childhood values and experiences. Such an examination is part of becoming an adult.

However, even though the adolescent is in a stage of almost complete ambivalence on the conscious level of motivation, he is still motivated to act—and generally will act—by the forces of the belonging or self-esteem stages, unless his condi-

tion is such that he is struggling on the survival level for his very life, be it physical, emotional, psychological or cultural.

An important influencing factor at this stage of growth in the adolescent is his previous religious experience, or lack thereof, because of the type, kind, dimension and depth of this experience as he is growing to the period of decision making. Whatever the external motivational factors may be for any action, there is no doubt that previous religious experience has great intellectual and emotional overtones in the life of an adolescent. It is wise for both teachers and parents to remember this in dealing with adolescents, especially in the area of religious development and religious education.

A young girl, for example, though apparently rebelling against a strict religious atmosphere in her home, will act differently in a given set of circumstances from a girl of similar age from a home where religious influence is minimal or non-existent. A boy whose religious upbringing has been characterized by a relaxed, favorable atmosphere will have values influencing his behavior that a boy from a home that is overly permissive or rigidly old-fashioned will not have.

Belonging and Adults

As we have noted, belonging is an important phase for adolescents. But teen-agers aren't the only ones desiring acceptance. Almost any major new situation in life involves for everyone a period of adjustment, and people usually adapt themselves (within limits as they get older and wiser) to what is "ex-

pected." Young married couples "go along" with the current house furnishing styles; young businessmen very carefully dress so as to be recognized as part of the business world; some work fields may have a tradition of fairly crude language—and a person getting a job in that work field will usually follow the local level of swearwords so that he fits into the group.

The "older and wiser" person mentioned above will most probably be the person who, from past experience, knows that he is "acceptable" or can be accepted if he wishes to make the effort. This person, then, is sure that he has value as a person since he has been accepted often enough by others of his own age or work group. Thus, the time, money, and worry devoted to having others (outside of the family) like you, finally pay off by freeing you from the desire to do what others decide you should do. You don't have to follow fads unless you freely wish to continue going along with the group. But, by your own confidence of your success in belonging, you now are able, if you wish, to be less concerned about what the group thinks. Since belonging desires may no longer cause a person to do things, someone who is still growing as a person will find that self-esteem desires cause more actions than do belonging desires.

THE THIRD STAGE: SELF-ESTEEM

Being one of the crowd is no longer enough for the continuously maturing person. Those who aren't content with being "one" of the crowd want to prove to themselves that they are something special

as persons. So, effort will now be used to prove that they are different—but favorably different. A person can produce more or less on the job, depending on whether the other workers regard “getting ahead” or “getting away with something” as the better thing. The sports fan can memorize scores, trades, averages; in any discussion his statements are listened to with the respect due to authority. If income is the local measure of achievement, then the person at this stage will want to “get ahead,” meaning he wants to be noticed as potentially successful. Any measurable or noticeable areas to which the person attaches importance now get his attention. A desire to do well in chosen areas so that it is obvious to others furnishes the drive or motivation which causes action.

The self-esteem that’s desired can be looked for either within the old social and work groups or in new groups “beyond” the old groups. Within the work group, a person can be noted for insubordination, profanity, wit, job-ability, fairness, wisdom, and so on. A wage earner who is recognized as “special” by others speaks first or last on an issue; he has *his* parking space in the lot, *his* seat in the smoker or cafeteria. A person in management may have a private office (growing larger as he rises), secretary, rug, and other special signs, including his home address.

People at this stage work hard in the areas in which they desire to find self-esteem. American society in general is wealthy enough to provide survival, is friendly enough to easily provide belongingness. But the acquisition of self-esteem demands

that the person make a real individual effort to succeed at this level. The student has to study to get on the honor roll; the sports fan has to memorize the baseball statistics; the management man has to hustle to get the promotion; the socially concerned may have to go into debt to get the fancy address; and so on.

What you're really trying to do at this level is to prove yourself to yourself. The recognition that other people give to your achievements provides you with an increased sense of self-worth. You not only feel *accepted* (which you take for granted), but deferred to. If your chosen areas are given general social recognition—as car, education, home address, clothes—then you'll be thought of as being successful by even casual contacts. But if your chosen areas are highly thought of by only a small group—for example, for rose-growing, car-theft, fish-catching—then the passing world might write you off as unsuccessful or unimportant; but at least some group will recognize your special worth.

But if no one respects you as being exceptional in any way, then it would be very hard for you to say that the rest of the world is wrong and you only are right about your value as a person. You'd never feel successful in this self-esteem stage; actually you would have to settle for the belonging satisfaction of a member of the group. Hopefully, however, people will make the effort to become successful in some area or areas in which they can take reasonable pride in their achievements.

Teaching Implications

If you are a parent or teacher with a reasonable

amount of self-esteem, you are conscious of your worth as a person. It has probably taken you some few years to arrive at this stage of development in the motivational ladder, and you must not lose sight of the fact that you went through the stages of survival and belonging as do other people. This is especially true if you are dealing with young people who are now in the agonizing state of searching for their real selves.

For all their bravado, teens, especially middle teens, suffer periods of loneliness, self-doubt and mild despair. They are forever comparing themselves—and for the most part unfavorably—with others in their peer group, and because they are, they say and do things which will attract attention to themselves. Their words and actions are nothing more than visible signs of their need for recognition and their desire to be esteemed by *anybody*. Whether they are striving to be outstanding in sports, in the arts, in social activities (or in anti-social behavior), the goal is the same: recognition of self for self.

Parents and teachers need to be aware of this need for self-realization, self-understanding, and should provide the means for realistic self-esteem in all young people. This is especially true of young persons who are less gifted, less advantaged, less confident because these persons are subject to failure more often than their companions, and the harsh word, the unjust criticism, the hasty accusation, or the epithet hurled in a moment of frustration or anger may wound the child or create a series of motivations in the adolescent which could very

well lead to delinquency or apathy.

The more a person experiences failure, the more encouragement he needs to esteem himself. Often this esteem can come only from a smile, a word of recognition or encouragement, or a compliment delivered by an older person. Adults must keep in mind that they themselves feel humiliated or embarrassed if their mistakes or shortcomings are dwelt on. Teen-agers, unused to the posturing of an experienced adult, are more easily hurt by others dwelling on their weakness than are adults. Hence they need—and at times desperately—the help that an understanding, sympathetic adult can give.

THE FOURTH STAGE: SELF-DEVELOPMENT

When a person has sufficient acceptance of his own self-esteem, another set of drives begins to furnish reasons for continuing to act. But this time the motivation is directed toward personal satisfaction in the final stage—self-development.

A person who reaches this motivational level is, in many ways, a freed man. The person is freed from worry about survival and basic love; he's freed from worry about his acceptability to other men; he's freed from worry about his self-worth. Without these worries, his drives change from efforts to clear up fears of less-than-desired self-worth to efforts aimed at best developing his accepted abilities and interests. It would be possible to say that only people reaching the self-development stage are

really mature. (Note that the description reads "really mature"; "perfectly mature" wasn't used since perfection is very rare.) Thus, a person at the self-development stage, while mature, is still a person with common weaknesses and imperfections. The major difference between a person at this stage and any person at the lower stages lies in the life-objectives of each. A person at some lower stage is still "proving" himself (to society, to other men, or to himself), which means that such a person will necessarily have to be fairly self-centered. He isn't sufficiently confident of his success in all of the lower stages to be able to be interested in self-development drives.

The person at the self-development stage, with accepted success in the three previous stages, can afford to be much less self-centered. Since he no longer feels a need to get other people's opinions of himself (so he can form his own opinion), the self-developing person can finally look at people as individuals, instead of regarding other people as mirrors which reflect back some eagerly desired image of himself. The person at this final stage, because he doesn't need people, can be more truly and personally concerned with people.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

1. Can you ever be sure that you definitely know the true motive for any action a person does?
2. Why are the motives of the very young and the very old more obvious than the actions of the other age groups?
3. Would a reasonably correct understanding of your motives for acting help or hinder you in day-by-day living?
4. Why would a person wish to hide his own motives for acting from himself?
5. Can one motive be the dominant factor throughout someone's life? *If* your answer is "yes," could you name a motive for some historical personages?
6. Why would dominant motives change over a period of time?
7. What is the great importance of the fact that a motivational force that has been satisfied may no longer cause action?
8. Why could old age cause a regression of motives from self-development to survival?
9. Why could you say that there is no such thing as "progressing" or "regressing" along the four motivational levels?
10. What effect does—should—religious faith have on a person's choices? Give some specific examples.

PART II

APPLICATION: SOME EXAMPLES

Introduction

In this section, we will take the material covered in Part I and apply it to examples of people who have progressed through the various stages of motivation and reached a certain amount of maturity as manifested by their self-development interests. Some pitfalls will be observed along the way as we see the application made to groups of individuals as characterized by: a teen-ager, a wage earner, a man in management, a housewife, and an old person. A one-person example for each group will be given, but the principles are generally applicable.

THE TEEN-AGER

We'll presume that the teen-ager feels physically secure and accepts the fact that his parents love him. The belonging stage is the source of worry for the teen-ager. Friends of his (her) sex are being met outside the neighborhood for the first time. So there are logical questions as to how relative strangers of his own age will regard him. To add to the confusion, there is the recognition of the opposite sex as a different class of people. Simultaneously, the teen-ager has two major belonging problems to settle. The easy (possibly the only) answer is to wholly accept the local norms for how teen-agers act within their own sex group and toward the opposite sex. This acceptance can very well be a total and unquestioning acceptance. Until the teen-ager can be sure he or she belongs, there's not too much peace of mind possible unless there's

a clinging to the house at the parental affection level. Once the teen feels a part of the crowd, however, then other values and questions about the worth of the local teen norms can begin. But a teen who isn't accepted can't really be sure that others of his own age group believe he's a person worth knowing; parental encouragement as to his value won't help very much. After all, he figures, "They *have* to love me; but others not obligated to love me will have to be won over by me, whatever the terms they establish." (If you can't beat 'em, join 'em.)

For a teen, the self-esteem and self-development stages aren't really possible. The reason is that the teens are not really part of the adult mainstream where most of life is spent. A teen can certainly acquire some self-esteem through sports, study, popularity and so on—but whether these will be of lifelong satisfaction can't be known to the teenager. The successes help him to gain self-confidence, but future tests await him in the adult world. The teenager is really only practicing for adult living, and the most practical practice area lies in the belonging stage. The teenager shouldn't be pitied for his extreme desire to get accepted but he should be recognized as developing an interest in joining his level of the human race outside of the family. Parents may worry (possibly with good reason) over what the local teen norms are, but a failure to understand just why belonging is so important to a teen won't help a strained home atmosphere. Both parents and teachers should realize that the teen isn't rejecting his parents but he is tempo-

rarily ignoring their love of him in order to make sure that non-family people accept him as a person.

THE WAGE EARNER

We'll presume that the wage earner (someone not a professional man or an office worker) has a job which enables the man and his family to live at a satisfactory level. We'll also assume that the wage earner's belonging desires are satisfied by a good husband-wife relationship and by his having a good set of friends. The self-esteem stage will have to have been adequately passed through by sufficient achievement in areas important enough to him. So we have a person who is at the self-development level of living. A wage earner at this point will find self-development possibilities in his family, in his work, in his outside interests, or in increasing his personal abilities.

Regarding the family, a person can consciously act in the best interests of the husband-wife relationship, thus deepening both their lives. He can be deliberately considerate, kind, companionable—usually by thinking more about his wife's interest than he did when he was following belonging and self-esteem drives. His relationship with his wife will be a deepening one since his worry about "what the boys would think" is over. Since he no longer has to worry about what others think, he can worry more about what his wife is thinking. As far as the children are concerned, this person will be deeply interested in their happiness and success. His interest in his children is not that they'll take care

of him in his old age; or that they are his friends (besides being his children) or that their success or failure reflects on him as a parent. Rather, he works for and with his children so that they will become happy and mature individuals (like himself).

At work, the wage earner at the self-development stage is noticeable. He isn't identified as a "do-gooder," but he does stand out as a confident, capable worker who is willing to help others if they ask. He is in total contrast to perpetually complaining co-workers. He may become a union steward because even the bosses think well of him. He's not a blindly loyal company man or union man. He doesn't bow to any men nor does he need to "put down" others to prove some point of superiority. It's even possible that he's unnoticed at work; he may quietly do his job and let it go at that, not getting involved in the various cliques and "in" and "out" groups.

If family life and work are both going along well, then "extra" time and energy might be used in working with youth groups like the little league, in serving as an informal "adviser" to troubled neighbors, in working for the political party he believes in, and so on. A desire to do something constructive for his neighborhood, city, or nation would be operating. Some people join the Peace Corps to do their bit for nations less favored than the U.S. Television watching and attendance at spectator sports would tend to be fairly selective, involving only those areas in which a fairly intense interest exists.

The increase of personal abilities might appear self-centered, but it is more correctly self-satisfying—a subtle but real difference. The wage earner who plays in a band, reads a lot, closely follows politics, is deepening his own knowledge and enjoyment of personally chosen areas. He is, therefore, becoming a better man for the effort he puts into those activities. The popularity of discussion groups, night school classes, and city-sponsored recreation training courses shows that there are many people who have self-development interests.

THE SALARIED MAN

The salaried person (an office worker, salesman, or professional man) considered here is regarded as someone in an office or in a management position. Again, we'll presume that survival and belonging drives have been acceptably met. (It's very possible that the salaried person had a harder time getting through the self-esteem stage than did the wage earner. There are more obvious successes to measure himself against and there are also more levels of prestige and income around than is the case for the wage earner.)

Like the wage earner, the salaried man's new, activity-causing interests in the self-development stage can be centered on his family, his work, outside interests, or the increasing of personal abilities.

Both the family and personal ability aspects are the same for the salaried person and the wage earner. Family life is deepened and personal interests and abilities are indulged in and enjoyed.

But there are real differences in the salaried person's opportunities for self-development at work and in outside interests.

The salaried person has a better chance of being in a job where he can help bring about significant changes in the company or in part of the total economy. The higher up in the company this person is the more important are the improvements or desirable changes he can make. Nicer working conditions, more considerate handling of employees with problems, better hiring policies so less later firings occur, methods of easing the impact of change, all of these and other possibilities exist. Someone who had known this person when his efforts were motivated by self-esteem drives would presume that this person's latest efforts were being made simply to acquire more status in the company, in a new direction. But the person himself would be acting out of a sincere unselfish desire to achieve some good which he hadn't previously even thought of, having formerly been occupied with himself rather than with others' welfare.

It's worth noting that the improvement activities listed above *can* be done for self-esteem reasons, but the self-esteem motive is related to how these actions reflect on the doer; at the self-development stage these same actions are done in a basically dis-self-interested manner. So the example of a previously self-concerned person becoming a reformer can be a case of personal progress and not the hypocrisy that some of his acquaintances might rashly judge his actions to be.

Outside interests also hold more opportunities

for the salaried person than for the wage earner. This is not because either is a better man as an individual. But the salaried man usually has an educational background which is fairly well regarded by the community. The income level of one who has passed through the self-esteem stage is usually fairly good—although not necessarily large. The combination of education, adequate income, and work position held makes a self-developing salary worker a desired addition to service clubs, political parties, school boards, and the like. Time spent on community affairs can yield fairly rapid and obvious returns in the form of getting things done. Interests in music, art, reading, and travel can be extended due to the general educational background in which there is exposure to the fine arts. A necessary consideration for student-age people, then, lies in the fact that continued education has a later value in self-development besides being a useful income (and self-esteem) factor in earlier work years.

THE HOUSEWIFE

Up to now, most of the examples discussed have dealt directly with the problems of males living in a rather job-centered world. When we look at the specifically feminine situation, therefore, we will review the earlier motivational levels in order to note how the woman's motivational environment is different from the man's.

Survival

The survival stage for the housewife is a non-active one; that is, the husband earns the money which

the wife then spends. The wife's contribution at this stage is the *wise* spending of money so that a given amount of dollars goes as far as possible. Necessity may force spending-wisdom (enough to keep a job) upon a husband.

The wife's role of wise spender is equally significant to the survival level as is the husband's role of money earner. But a wife probably receives little credit from the husband who figures that earning is hard but spending is easy (since his spending, being for his personal needs only, often is easy and enjoyable).

Belonging

The belonging stage for a housewife is probably most satisfied in the "clubs" (friendly card-playing get-togethers of the "girls"). The husband-wife relationship is undoubtedly very important for this stage. In the wife's view of the husband-wife relationship, the critical belonging-stage issue is whether the wife is *another* part of the man's life or whether the wife is the major person in the man's life. Admittedly, a great interest in work is an excellent thing for a man; but a husband whose preoccupation with his job causes the wife to be "left out" will leave the wife without the male support she would expect from marriage. A wife who is left out, then, essentially is lacking, in a belonging sense, in contact with the whole masculine world. To get into a speculative area, it would appear that a wife's poor belonging relationship to a husband would cause a feeling of inadequacy as far as a belonging sense with all men. A sense of rejection in this basic male-female relationship would lead

either to reliance on belonging relations with other women or to an attempt to feel that a belonging sense with the masculine side of the world is unnecessary, undesirable, or unwomanly.

A wife insufficiently appreciated by her husband, therefore, can find sympathy and belonging in the club or in neighborhood coffee-katches. The necessity of being around the house to watch and care for the children and to take care of the house means that a wife's belonging stage will have to be of a different, shorter, and more fragmented nature than is true for the husband. The children can't furnish belonging satisfaction since, by definition, the acceptance must be by equals; anyway, children are expected to accept their mother (and, oh how unthankfully they do!). But with some social contact with equals, and with the equals' regard for the housewife as "one with them," the belonging stage can become satisfied.

Self-Esteem

The self-esteem stage is a difficult one for a housewife to pass through successfully. This stage can easily tie up men who have more means open to attain self-esteem and recognition in the eyes of others. If men, who can actively operate to acquire self-esteem, have problems at this level, then the housewife will have even more problems since her role in life is of an essentially home-tied, passive nature. It has to be recalled that self-esteem, a sense of self-worth, is the issue here. Therefore, basking in the reflected glory of a husband's achievements will not be good enough to satisfy the housewife's drives on this motivational level.

Thus, dressing in mink (when possible), vacations to fancy resorts, having the best-equipped home on the block, or dining out frequently will not necessarily yield a sense of self-esteem—*especially* if the husband often gives the impression to his wife that all of these things are due solely to *his* hard work and the woman should feel continually grateful that she was lucky enough to get a real winner like him. Such a husband needs his wife's constant gratitude to prove to himself that he really is accomplishing something. The husband's overly deep involvement with his own troubles in getting through *his* self-esteem stage prevents him from being aware of his wife's own motivational needs. But a woman, with her personal destiny so closely tied to her husband, can achieve a valid sense of self-importance by knowingly giving her husband the admiration he needs.

Besides the husband-wife relationship, other avenues of self-esteem acquisition are available to the housewife. Some women can go outside of the home by getting a job and thus can receive recognition of worth. Women who have too many home responsibilities can join non-demanding service clubs where whatever the housewife can contribute in time or service is appreciated. Women can also take pleasure in dressing up periodically and internally revel in the obvious pleasure men take in looking at them. Women who have a deeply felt disesteem for their husbands may look for temporary relationships with other men who will, for a while at least, furnish the women with ego-satisfying attention (and prove that they're still desirable in

cases where a husband's neglect has shaken their self-confidence). The constricting circumstances, seen earlier, of being tied down fairly completely by time demands of house, children, and husband make this self-esteem stage a difficult one for many housewives to get through. The self-esteem drives are there; the opportunities for a self- (and society) satisfied completion of the drives are somewhat less easily discovered. But, if a woman wishes, she can satisfy the drives that this motivational level forces on her; and satisfaction can be achieved without moral transgressions or neglect of family.

Self-Development

Interestingly, once a housewife gets past the self-esteem motivational level, her opportunities for self-development are more easily capable of satisfaction. Many of the drives of this self-development stage are human-related, inner-centered, and time-demanding, and it is evident that the housewife has been deeply involved in this type of activity all of her housewifely life. Her contacts with children have been of a very close personal nature; her contacts with equals over coffee or at club have been more truly interpersonal than the husband's job contacts in which a certain real level of bread-and-butter defensiveness has had to be exercised. So, the woman's contacts with children and equals can gradually deepen in real concern over others as fellow human beings. The inner centeredness, or self-sufficiency, of women develops over the long periods in which they are essentially alone: when caring for the house, when caring for uncommunicating small children, when sitting around in the

evening with a too-tired-to-communicate husband. Thus, the woman is thrown early and often upon her own internal resources. She can avoid this demanding solitude by working, by seeking radio and television distractions, or by constant coffee-klatching or telephoning. In this latter evasion-situation, she is little different from her husband whose work provides justifiable distractions from demanding living-within-self.

But a woman at the self-development stage will welcome chances for solitude as being periods when she can organize her thoughts about people, life, herself, or whatever subjects she is interested in. The time-demands that self-development requires can be fully met only by a man after retirement. But a woman is in a situation in which, once the children are all of school age or have effectively flown the nest, she has much more free time than she was previously used to. Thus she can, without neglecting duties, engage in service-club work out of a desire to do more good, take flower arrangement or ceramics courses, or do more reading. A woman's efforts, with the feeling of enjoyably using otherwise "dead" time, and with the catering to her "feminine" regard for beauty or the beautiful, will make the added time she has seem to be a blessing instead of added periods of dreaded emptiness.

In the later years of marriage, as the husband approaches retirement, a self-developing wife will be able to furnish strength to her husband who will soon be undergoing a somewhat traumatic separation from the womb of a controlled work environ-

ment. Early widowhood (say in her 50's) can provide—if there is economic security—an atmosphere in which self-development for the woman can grow undisturbed by the problems that retirement will impose on even a self-developing husband (not to mention a self-esteem level husband who may be forced to admit that his company can get along without him—and, if he returns to visit, finds that he's not only not missed but that his visit is an obvious interruption in the schedule of his former co-workers).

OLDER PEOPLE

Nowadays, it is difficult to determine the age at which one could be called "old." For our purposes, post-retirement age is as good a separating point as any. By this time in life, a man or woman should have reached whatever motivational level he or she could get to. In societies less concerned with older people, there would be a real possibility of worry over actual physical survival causing a man or woman to go back to the survival concerns of early adult life. However, governmental concern over the older people, together with pension plans, largely remove such worry in present society.

Someone at the self-development stage should not fear a somewhat lowered standard of living since self-esteem drives are essentially not action-causing forces in his or her life anyway. The extra free time retirement would provide could be well used by a self-developing man or woman. An older man at the belonging stage would be able to be with friends constantly. The men or women at the

self-esteem stage, however, could very easily suffer considerably if retirement meant a lowered income with a consequential lowered standard of living.

Thus, the motivational aspects for older people are very much related to the effects of the retirement from work (seen earlier) and income on the level achieved by the time of retirement.

SOME RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE MOTIVATIONAL LEVELS

At every motivational stage, God can be an excluded factor (for the atheist, communist, etc.) or a somewhat considered factor (for those who feel that God has a "place" in their lives, but not a major place) or an important factor (for those who have a deeper religious outlook regarding life). In each case, the degree of religious impact upon the motivated actions of a person would be different.

Some non-religious authors say that a concern about God is only a survival-level holdover. It is true that crises do cause people to "go back to God." But more deeply religious people have a more psychologically healthy relationship with God than a mere child-parent dependency.

The *belonging*-stage religious expression depends somewhat upon the group to which you belong or are trying to belong. Thus, the fact that the older teen-agers have a resistance to authority can cause an otherwise basically religious youth to skip church, swear, etc., so as to be one of the crowd. Societies where only the women go to church will see belonging-stage men staying away from church. But a more deeply religious person can feel a be-

longing satisfaction from being one of the "People of God," that is, from a sense that he is in a real, but not physically close, association with the other good (moral) people in the world.

The *self-esteem* stage carries with it both concern over others' evaluations of you and your own personal self-attitude. In most cases—excluding the society of the sharp operator, criminals and the like—morally better actions gain others' esteem. Thus a person inclined to do that which is helpful to others can do so and can expect to gain their esteem and increase his own sense of self-worth. (The feeling here is that few people enjoy doing evil, although some socially or mentally warped people may get enjoyment out of doing evil.) Catholics have wealthier parishes and poorer parishes. Low-level self-esteem may be acquired by the physical setting of a wealthier parish; higher-level self-esteem would be derived from the satisfaction found in leading a life better measuring up to one's personal ideal of that which is pleasing to God and helpful to neighbor and society. The priesthood or religious life in the middle ages—and possibly even now in places—was a rapid path to social advancement for those of the lower classes; that is, a self-esteem move for some.

A *self-developing* person does not psychologically "need" the help, company, or worth-opinion of other people. But, because of this freedom from depending on others, the self-developer can have a more true interest in others. This truer interest will be called "humanitarianism" by the non-religious person and by the somewhat religious, and "Chris-

tian charity" by those with a more deeply Christian outlook. A basically religious person at the self-developing stage will be able to relate more perfectly with God since this person will possess some sense of God's ability to love for the sake of the person loved instead of for what the person loved can do for God. A non-religious person, excluding God automatically from his consideration, may have the same type of dis-self-interested concern over people without any wish to bring God into the matter. Thus, a non-religious self-developer could easily be more "Christian"—in the sense of truly loving his neighbor—than a professed Christian who is at the lower belonging stage.

CHRISTIAN MOTIVATION

The message of the Gospels is precisely this mature concern for others. Christ brought a new dimension to human relations, a dimension He preached that was to go beyond selfish interest whether this interest stemmed from self-gain, fear, conformity, or future reward.

Although love of neighbor was a very integral part of the Jewish Law (cf. Deuteronomy and Leviticus), Judaism at the time of Christ had so enmeshed itself in the legalisms of rabbinical interpretations that neighbor-interest had been obscured by conformity to minor interpretations of the law. Christ came not only to bring the divine into the creation of His Father, but to rectify the understanding of the means to salvation. His famous outcry against the legalism which permitted a

“good Jew” to take his domestic animals from a pit into which they may have fallen but denied him the right to help a fellow human being on the Sabbath is a classic example of the effect that belonging or self-esteem motivational levels in religious practice can have.

Christ’s cry for maturity, disinterestedness, person-concerned religion was nothing more, really, than the cry for development of self to such a level that a person no longer worried about survival level (fear of hell), belonging (going to Mass because others go) or self-esteem (performing works of charity to be admired by others), but moved into the motivational level of self-development where real charity can operate.

Thus a mature Christian observes the two directives (commandments) of the Old Law which best express the philosophy of the New because he is mature enough to worship God, not through fear of punishment if he does not, but because his acts of worship best express his relationship with God, a relationship based upon his understanding of God’s creative activity in his own life. The mature Christian, likewise, loves his neighbor *as himself*; that is, as a person who is motivated by the necessity of becoming a better person so that he can enable others to be better persons. Is not this “growing to perfection,” this reaching the full potentiality of person, the plan of God for His creation?

A Christian is thus motivated by his religious understanding of the world situation. He takes Christ seriously when he acts and operates on a

level of maturity which is motivated not only by the psychological dynamisms implanted in his nature by his Creator, but by the spiritual dynamisms of a God who became man precisely to make man aware of the direction and goal He had in mind when He began the creative process many millenia ago.

Thus we see that a Christian operates not only on the human level, but on the divine level also. He realizes that mankind is called to be truly human, and knows that only when the divine is a real part of his motivational life can he truly be called human.

CAUTION AND CONCLUSION

The four motivational levels or stages we have discussed will rarely be found in anyone in pure form. A man can most often identify, in himself, various drives motivating him at different times. A self-developing man who is in the middle of serious fighting will operate at that time at the survival level. A self-esteem level man may well be frequently motivated by belonging drives. The motivation levels given should be a way of looking at people and their actions. To point to someone and say that that individual is at one level or another would be to assign motives to a man which that man might not have.

For yourself, the thinking over why you act as you do could be useful for your own self-satisfaction. Life being as complicated and demanding as it is, most people will not be in a situation in which

reaching the self-development stage, or even the self-esteem stage, could be possible. But a knowledge of motivation can be of much value in providing an understanding of what generally causes people to act as they do. To understand all does not necessarily mean to forgive all. But understanding can provide a basis for a more sympathetic realization of others' concerns.

It is hoped that this presentation of the four levels of motivation will be useful in increasing your understanding of your own and others' reasons for acting. People do not usually act in a consistent manner over long periods of time. Young people particularly are often confused at the variety of reactions in themselves and in other people. These four motivational levels furnish a simple-to-grasp, but still solid-in-principle, way of regarding motivation and men.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

1. What percentage of people do you believe reach the self-development stage?
2. Why would only self-development level people be able to love, in the fullest sense of the word?
3. What should adults remember when they are dealing with teen-agers and their preoccupations in the belonging stage? What often seems to be happening to the teen-ager's "religion" during this stage? (recall the matter in Part I.)
4. Discuss the difference between a man's and a woman's approach to, and success in attaining, the desired goals of the motivational stages in life. Also, the differences between the married and the single in this respect.
5. Discuss the religious impact on motivated actions that should be evident in the life of today's Catholics, especially in terms of Vatican II's *Constitution on the Church in the Modern World*.
6. Do you think that many Christians are simply "belonging" Christians?

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