

It is a truism in contemporary psychology that one's image of himself lies at the root of most human conduct. What is more difficult to accept is that the image each of us has of himself is really the product of what other people, rightly or wrongly, have told us that we are. If one imagines himself to be effeminate or inadequate, it will show in his conduct. He will attempt nothing of challenge and will consider safety as that which must be sought above and before all. He will somehow attempt to hide his shame or inadequacy under a veil of anonymity. The one thing he cannot do - and it is the one thing every human being must do to be fully alive - is accept himself as he really is.

The whole theory of Carl Rogers is based on the need for self-acceptance. Dr. Rogers maintains that the basic challenge of every human life is that of self-understanding and self-acceptance. He further postulates that no one can understand and accept himself as he is until another has first understood and accepted him for what he is. Finally, Rogers maintains that, once we have been accepted as we are and loved for what we are, the symptomatic problems with which most of us struggle in life will yield to this self knowledge and acceptance.

Consequently, Rogers suggests that the role of a counselor (and this certainly can be applied to the role of a friend) is largely to listen as the client describes his problems and ultimately himself. He must convey a sense of acceptance to his counselee, without yielding to the impulse of saddling him with gems of advice and direction. To be successful at this type of counseling or friendship, one must make an act of faith that the great human need is to know and accept oneself as he is. We are too often tempted to think that putting another in his place, or taking him down a peg, or forcing him to face reality is the pathway to solution. In fact, harsh criticism that hits at the person rather than the deed, only deepens the problem because it makes self-acceptance more difficult.

In his book, PSYCHO-CYBERNETICS, Dr. Maltz depicts the ugly self-image as the radical cause of most human inertia, failure and unhappiness. The importance of one's self-image is aptly illustrated in the fairy tale, RAPUNZEL. It is the story, as you no doubt remember, of a young girl, imprisoned in a tower with an old witch. The young girl is in fact very beautiful, but the old witch insistently tells her that she is ugly. It is of course, a strategem of the witch to keep the girl in the tower with herself! The moment of Rapunzel's liberation occurs one day when she is gazing from the window of the tower. At the base of the tower stands her Prince Charming. She throws her hair, long and beautiful golden tresses, out of the window (the root-ends, of course, remain attached to her head), and he braids the hair into a ladder and climbs up to rescue her. Rapunzel's imprisonment is really not that of the tower but the fear of her own ugliness which the witch has described so often and so effectively. However, when Rapunzel sees in the mirroring eyes of her lover that she is beautiful, she is freed from the real tyranny of her own imagined ugliness.

This is true not only in the case of Rapunzel but with all of us. We desperately need to see in the mirror of another's eyes our own goodness and beauty, if we are to be truly free. Until this moment, we, too, will remain locked inside the prison towers of our-selves. And, if the thrust of love requires us to be outside of our-selves and to be preoccupied with the happiness and fulfillment of others, we will not love very much until we have had this vision.

Report of Recreation Chairman, Gil Estrada and report of General Chairman, Bob Felletier, on the date of Gay Liberation's Gay-In. Those interested in attending THE SOCIETY OF DAVID programs are asked to please contact Bob for further information: Phone: 469 3898

CORRECTION: in the meeting of July 25th, it was written in error that there will be three open meetings held a year; this has been corrected to read: open meetings are to be held quarterly.

NEW BUSINESS: a motion was made, seconded and passed to have the Sec-Treasurer to reimburse Fr. Pat for mailing and newsletter expenses.

October meeting to be held Saturday, the 24th - please keep this date open; location to be announced in next newsletter.

SEPTEMBER MEETING: Sept 26th 7:30 - **OPEN MEETING** - Hall beneath rectory of St. Brendan's Church; 310 S. Van Ness Ave. Map enclosed.

SEPT '70

CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

For many Gay people God is a first aid kit, with emergency remedies; but when the "vacation" goes well, there is no need to open it. The parachute-God: to be opened only at the last minute, but let's hope we don't get into that state. The fire-extinguisher-God: "In case of fire, break glass" - and after the fire is over - to be put back into its place with a brand-new glass. We want God comfortably in the background.

Well, after all if the purpose of God is to mend us, to protect us, if He is the agent and the instrument of our moral build-up, He naturally becomes useless the moment the structure has been built. Isn't this the unexpressed hope of many of our prayers: "Just give me what I want, God, and then I'll leave you alone." "Give me my share of the good life and I'll never bug You."

A perfect example of this is our approach to confession. When most Gay people go to confession, they confess mainly in order not to have to go to confession again. The reasoning goes this way: either confession serves no purpose whatever, in which case I can excuse myself from it, or else it serves some real purpose, in which case I ought not to sin again. "Although I pray, although I go to confession, I still keep committing the same old sins, it is useless. So I stop praying... or stop going to confession.

But God, of course, never promised that we should sin no longer. God has promised always to forgive us. Go, tell that your sins are forgiven: these are the good tidings; our sins are not suppressed, we don't have to spill them out on a psychologist's couch, we don't have to bury them - they ARE FORGIVEN. We are still going to commit many sins but much will be forgiven us, and in being continually forgiven, we will learn much love. He who is forgiven little, loves little. The prime purpose of confession is not to ensure our moral infallibility! It reveals to us the love and the generosity of the Father in forgiving us. The essential thing is not no longer to sin, but to love; to have learnt His love. The most insidious enemy of God is the wish to do without Him; the worst sin against God is perhaps the wish to sin no longer so as to have no need to have recourse to Him. That is pride. Pride does not consist in having too good an idea of ourselves - that is a tame and harmless form of vanity. Pride means refusing to be dependent on another, sheltering in a desperate wish to be self-sufficient and relying on our strength alone.

To go to confession means surrendering ourselves to God. It means saying to God: work on me, I'm putting my trust in You, I'm putting myself in Your hands. Adam was unable to show such trust. He wanted to control; he wanted to have his hands on the controls, and he thought this was freedom. We go to God in confession not to be satisfied, but to be sacrificed, and sacrificed means to be made sacred. It matters little whether it bores us or we find it a pain in the neck. We do it because it is one little way we show God that we love Him, and a big way that He shows His love for us.