

FIFTH
PSYCHOSYNTHESIS MEETING

Saturday, March 21, 1964 - Manhattan College, New York

The "Who am I?" Technique

presented by Fabian Rouke, Ph.D.

Participants:

John Adkins, Ph.D.	E.D. Kotsos, M.D.*
Jerry Cashman, M.A.	Patrick F. Mullahy, M.A.
Jack Cooper, M.D.	Fabian Rouke, Ph.D.
Ted Gilbert, M.A.	Brother Aquinas Thomas*
Frank Hilton, F.C.I.I.	

*new participants:

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Chairman, Jack Cooper:

To follow up on our last meeting I haven't heard from Mrs. Swartley, but I don't think she was too traumatically disturbed by the last session. And the patient I presented earlier (Fran) is still out of the hospital, functioning fairly well in an apartment setting, but she still does not have a job.

Today our subject may bring some clarification of the question of self-identification or dis-identification.

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Rouke: What I have in mind to present today is not the whole question of the self-identification, or dis-identification, but one aspect of it which intrigued me when I became aware of it; one which I felt would be most helpful in therapy in enabling patients to grasp the question of their own identity.

You may recall, a few meetings ago, (see transcript*of second meeting,p. 15) I outlined a program that I usually attempt to use, pointing out to patients the fact that they have had a negative concept of themselves, that they have covered it with defenses, but that ultimately in order to find themselves in what we might call a free condition, they would have to break down the defenses, go through the negative concept of self and find the core of value which each human being has. As I see most patients only once a week, I hit upon the idea of expanding the technique of "who am I?", and instead of having them answer the question in the therapeutic session, I had them write an answer to "Who am I?", and mail it to me each day.

I asked them, if possible, to write^{at} approximately the same time each day - any time convenient for them. I wanted it mailed in because I felt that it would give them the idea "this is done with!"; so that when they started the next answer there wouldn't be an attempt to criticize or comment on the previous one, and they would be able to start afresh.

This was not presented as any hard and fast rule; it was a suggestion. Some of the patients wrote almost daily, some would write once or twice a week; and each would choose how frequently he or she would write.

I have had about ten patients or more working with this, but I've picked out five cases to discuss briefly this afternoon. One is a 51 year-old woman, married, who is on the far side of an involuntional depression, referred to me by her physician. The second is a 28 year-old, single man, with two years of college, of very high intelligence (his last semester at college he earned a 3-4 index) and yet he has never been able to do anything constructive or hold a job for any period of time. The third one is a 56 year-old cloistered nun who was having hysterical outbursts in the form of temper tantrums, but fortunately she is able to confine her outbursts to some bizarre physical activity, stamping her feet and hollering and slamming her fists at things. But she does this in the privacy of a part of the convent where no others are present; and she hasn't taken out any hostility against any person. The fourth is a homo-sexual, who is now 40; sent to me by his confessor. The last one is a married girl, 35, who came in a state of acute anxiety, feeling that she was so upset and sick that she didn't know whether she should come to see me or voluntarily commit herself to a mental hospital. She was crying, shaking, incoherent at times, and without any feeling that she was competent to deal with the daily workings of her life.

So let's consider the case of the 51 year-old married woman who was referred by her physician. She was born in the midwest, was the child of rigidly strict German parents. After graduation from high school she studied nursing and as luck would have it, the nurse training situation in which she found herself was also one that was very rigid and strict. She married in 1935, had a daughter. Her husband died in February 1937. After the husband's death she and her sister moved to California. She remarried in June of 1938. The second marriage has one child, a son, who is now in the navy. This woman had - and still has - a tremendously deflated concept of herself. The second husband turned out to be a man who had not even finished high school and yet was highly intelligent. Probably as a result of this, he himself developed severe neurotic patterns of living. He had for a while, in the late thirties, worked in radio and movies and then later he worked intermittently in television. He has never been able to accept a non-glamorized job. He has the capability to work steadily, during World War II he was on a defense job for two or three years making over \$100 a week, but since then he has drifted from one type of thing to another, always waiting for something glamorous that would pay him several hundred dollars a week. At present he thinks he is settling down into a real estate business; he is a partner in it, but his total income probably runs between \$2,500 and \$3,500 a year. And the wife, who is a registered nurse, has to support the family by steadily working. She just doesn't want to keep it up.

Her first note on "Who am I?" (I won't read all of these notes - just the ones that I feel are of significance) was written on February 6th, this year. "Who am I? A completely exhausted individual, imposed on by many individuals, knowing I'll do what they ask." Then on Saturday, Feb. 8th: "Who am I? I am

a person who is embarrassed at receiving compliments; I feel I have to explain when I am criticized. I go out of my way to say I am sorry, instead of saying 'so what'; when no one was hurt by it. I am a fool for letting people walk all over me and for not getting help a long time ago. I should tell people how they can help, instead of doing everything myself because they don't offer to do so. I am a human being with my own amount of rights." We had been discussing the question of identity and she is trying to intellectualize her identity.

On Sunday, Feb. 9th: "I am a very confused individual. I do not want to be a martyr; it makes it seem that I want things unattainable. I am a woman who went through two red lights on the way to work thinking about 'who am I?'" On the 13th of February: "Who am I? - I feel more like a separate individual since my talk today. I was fine until I left the hospital, got home and then went back to my quiet self." On the 14th: "I am an individual trying to solve my problems but still reverting back to my old self. I have been extremely quiet for almost a week. I guess the cause is that R (the husband) told me to shut up, because I told him we could understand what he said if he didn't talk with his mouth full. I am an individual trying to find myself but in doing so I feel I concentrate too much on myself. When I push a point, I am afraid I am domineering."

On the 15th of February: "I am a separate individual that depends too much on the approval of others. I should depend on my own feelings to carry me through." On the 16th: "I am a separate individual who awakened at 4 a.m. feeling that I was free, that I might be able to solve some of the problems facing me. I also made a decision, and R for once didn't over-rule it. I am a separate individual who is just realizing how insecure he is ('he' refers to the husband)." On the 21st of February: "I am a separate individual who is trying to get over being upset so easily and trying to change my way of thinking that I am to blame for everything ^{about} that goes wrpng. I must express what I think without getting on the defensive ^{about} things." And the following day again an excerpt: "I am a separate individual who for a short time felt I couldn't contend with any more, but when R got in at 12:30 I decided to heck with everything. I didn't blow up or nag or cry - to my satisfaction."

The husband has been out a great deal evenings; there isn't any suspicion of infidelity here; he gets himself involved in various types of club activity. He belongs to the Elks, is in the local "Goldwater for President" campaign, gets himself involved in a great deal of activity which keeps him away in the evening. She feels left alone, because she is at work all day, then comes home, does the shopping, gets supper, and right after supper he is out again and doesn't come back until about midnight.

On the following day she wrote: "I have been awake since five o'clock thinking and getting more mixed up all the time. Is it self-pity or am I to expect this treatment the rest of my life?" You'll notice here, as you will in all of them, what we all know as a hallmark of therapy: that you don't have a smooth flow in any direction - like climbing an icy hill; up a few steps, back a few steps, up and back, up and back. But in all, the overall progress with this patient is up. With her there are limited goals; her personality pattern has been too fixed; the actual situation is not a healthy one, and we can't expect to accomplish much more than to get her feeling better about herself.

On Friday the 28th: "Who am I? A separate individual who was thinking about the possibility of a marriage breaking up and looking at it without falling

apart - even though marriage is a very sacred thing to me; but thinking most of the fact that without faith, trust and companionship, love alone cannot hold things together. R went out last night, it didn't bother me at all. I went to sleep and was barely conscious of his return." On the 1st of March: "I am a separate individual who drove down to New York to visit my daughter all by myself without getting lost."

This was the first time she has ever done anything like that; and the following paragraph is from the same note: "I am a separate individual who was seeing through a lot of things that were very plain to others. I hope I can cope with things later."

Now what has happened here - on a situational level - is this: the son, who is the son of the present husband, married a year ago August, enlisted in the navy and is stationed over in the Mediterranean. His wife is pregnant and came to live with her in-laws while she was waiting to have her baby. After a few weeks there, observing the inconsistency and immaturity of the husband's behavior - seeing the way that he treated his wife - the girl got concerned because the son resembled the father a great deal; and on occasions she would write - to ask him to send a little money for this or that - and he would ignore the request. As a result, just within the past two weeks, she had a talk with her parents, came back and announced that she was going to Spain to tell the husband that the marriage is over; she was carrying legal papers for him to sign and she was going to leave him - this on the prospect of him being a duplicate of his father!

Would any of you want to comment on this - perhaps it will be easier case by case rather than try to remember them towards the end of the period.

Thomas: I would like to ask a question re her continuous use of the expression "I am a separate individual." Does that stem, perhaps, from your use of that statement?

Rouke: With her it definitely did. I was trying to get her to consider that she was a person in her own right, and this is the phrase she seized upon. She is a good nurse, I tried to let her see that if she is a good nurse, and appreciated around the hospital, that this in itself should indicate some worth to her. And she began to see it from that aspect. Other than that, she is, I would say, not much above average intelligence, poorly educated and not expressive with words. It is very difficult for her to talk at length, although not from lack of sincerity but just from this tremendous feeling of inadequacy.

Mullahy: I would like to ask about her husband.

Rouke: I have seen him twice, and I have seen them once together; but he has so little insight, that I had to work with her first, and get her to feel she could cope with the situation, difficult as it is. After this is accomplished, I am going to try to see if I can break through and let him gain some insight. Now depending on what the daughter-in-law or son writes back from Spain, I may be able to use it as a bit of shock presentation to the husband, to wake him up to see what his behavior has actually done to his child. I am afraid that he will be too blind to see it.

Gilbart: Did you combine this with that dis-identification technique of "I am not my body, etc."?

- Rouke: I have tried that with her too, but it didn't seem too meaningful to her. This seemed to be something that she could follow through a little better.
- Adkins: I was going to ask you a similar question. Could you give us a brief idea of what you actually do with the patient in the therapy session?
- Rouke: I discuss whatever problem she brings up on a particular day and try to get her (we've been seeing her for several weeks) away from the discussion of current problems, such as "the night before last he was only home for two hours, and the night before that he didn't come home until 7 o'clock and supper was waiting!" I try to get her to avoid discussion of those things; to work on the discovery of her own importance, indicating to her that when she feels strength internally, she will be able to cope with these other problems.
- Cooper: It is a kind of ego-strenghtening. Rouke: That's it. Adkins: Is it largely round this concept of self-identity? (Rouke: Yes) And in using the technique in the Manual, you use it in such a way as to help her to get what she wants out of it. You are using the idea of her self as the captain of her soul or - as the technique says - the captain of her body, her emotions, her intellect, and so on?
- Thomas: As you diminish this tone of suffering, I can see occurring a type of mounting hostility. She is going to take off against her husband, like the daughter-in-law! (Rouke: Well this may be so; and this for her, I think, might be necessary.) I don't mean that she might ask for separation but she might become rather hostile.
- Rouke: She has been hostile for years, but has shown it indirectly by nagging and whining and crying - this type of thing. If she came out directly with the hostility and faced him with it and became strong enough to have a chance to argue this thing out in the open then she would have a chance to adjust to a decent life with him.
- Cooper: As I see it now, this is a case where you used it at one certain level and the other cases you present will be at different levels? (Rouke: Yes)
- Adkins: I would think that as she does get more of a sense of herself, she will be able to determine the inner action in her life rather than be hostile. Sometimes we mistake determination for hostility. She may be determined that she is not going to put up with what she has put up with before; but she might be able to do it in a less hostile way which as she said, at one point, she did something "to my great satisfaction."
- Cooper: These awakenings during the night in which she seemed to get some insight and understanding; did she amplify that in any way?
- Rouke: She talked about it a little - she said how wonderful it felt; and I tried to let her see that this was merely a small sample of the way life should be, when she will be quite free. She has said from time to time that she has had little sparks of that feeling again, even during the waking day.

This second case is the 28 year-old unmarried male; and I have seen him on and off over a long period of time without ever having any consistent therapeutic success. There would be times when he would improve, but then always a regression. On the reality side of the situation, there were several instances of external problems which helped to throw him back. One instance: he has a big

problem of detaching himself from the mother. He was about ready to move out, he had hired a room and was going to begin living independently. And just at that time the mother was indicted and tried for some chicanery in her job - she ran a workroom for sewing machine operators; had made out a payroll and distributed it when she didn't have funds to cover the checks. The funds were there 48 hours later, but this is apparently a severe federal offense and since it wasn't the first time she had been caught in somewhat shady business deals, she was found guilty and fined \$4,000.

Now in order to keep her out of jail this fellow mortgaged everything he had and managed to get the \$4,000 to pay her fine; and this, of course, put him way back in debt. This ultimately resulted in a tremendous resurgence of resentment against the mother, and he is just now working out of that.

Only recently I asked him to start writing; the first note was on the 14th of February: "Who am I? - A man 29 years old, a human being who possesses intelligence, a mother's son, an aspiring musician, an Italian-American born and raised by Italian people, a clerk who does clerical duties and jobs, a man with above average intelligence, an emotionally disturbed person who needs a psychologist. A man educated through two years of college." You see it is almost a litany of descriptive attributes rather than any personal feeling coming through. Two days later: "Who am I? - A student of the guitar. A man with above average intelligence, an unemployed person. A man who has not developed any special skill or ability, an unskilled person. A man who does not seem able to use the ability he has, a dreamer, one who is running away from reality. A man who will be a very good musician in time. A human being made by God with the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. A pretty good driver and chauffeur." (Cooper: There is a little feeling coming into it.) Yes, it is beginning to get a little personal.

On the 20th of February: "Who am I? - A failure. A man who has had a hard time holding a job, who dislikes working for anyone. A man who would like to play and teach music for a living now. A man who is having a hard time finding a job, who has trouble sleeping at night. A lonely man with no social life. A relatively poor man. A human being, an individual, a man who is developing his talent late in life, a man who can't stand having people look down at him. Doc, we can call this a neurosis sheet; that's the way it came out of my mind today. What I really wanted to say is to remind me in the session to discuss the relation of my associations and experiences with my father in terms of my reactions to my various bosses, trying to understand the erratic job pattern. However I still don't like working for anyone." (I will come back to this question of the father in a minute.)

"Who am I? (this on the 24th) - A bad person, a man, a bum, a masturbator, an unhappy person. A person who always feels unexplainably guilty about something. A person who has always felt rejected. A person with ability and intelligence, a psychologically crippled person. A person who does not want to succeed deep down. A person who holds himself back from doing things, from seeking pleasures as others do, a man who is deliberately punishing himself. Why do I deliberately fail in everything I do? One, because of a feeling of complete self-worthlessness; two, guilt, punishment for some hidden guilt I harbor; it has been me who has been wrong in our discussions up to this time, I feel that I must have done something in my early childhood that's making me feel very guilty. Is it my mother's martyrdom or is it a hatred of the parents?"

In the several years I have seen him off and on he had never discussed his father. Every time the father was brought up he would always dismiss the subject; he said, "Well he left when I was too small to remember him." Following this week of writing he said, "Look, Doc, something is wrong: my father didn't leave the house till I was 8 years old. I must have remembered him." So he went back and talked to his mother about the father and it came out that the picture was very significant. The father was a tremendously brutal man, he would beat up the son for almost anything, if the son was riding through the house on his little tricycle, the father would knock him off the tricycle and on one occasion stamped the bike into a twisted mass of metal. And this is the picture that he recalled of the father. For the first time he began to see what the mother may have had to put up with, and looked upon her as a defender of his safety. She would step in to protect him from the father; and again we can see why he was so dependent on her.

There was another situation earlier in life where he had, as a three year old, been taken into a clinic for an examination for some reason, by his mother. The examining physician discovered, very near the rectal opening, a small malignant growth, and not wanting to waste any time he called in three nurses; they held the child down on the table; they didn't give him any anesthetic, he just excised. Now, again there he was torn out of his mother's arms to put him on the table and he didn't find any comfort until he was back in her arms. Interestingly enough, he is a chronic masturbator with elaborate fantasies of tying women down, spread eagled. Usually then, by some form of tickling, he would irritate them and make them upset and then ultimately approach them for intercourse. Originally, we felt that this was almost all symbolizing his getting even with the nurses--almost reversing the position. But then as he talked more about the father and the father's tremendous preference for his sister, who was 3 years younger than he was, he recalled that once--when his sister was 8 years old-- he tried this with her. He didn't try any sexual assault on her, but when he had her tied down to the bed, having talked her into letting him do this, he went into the bathroom and masturbated. (Adkins: How old was he then?) He was about 11, the sister was about 8.

The more interesting thing, at this point, is that since this week of writing, he has completely changed his attitude; he had been out of work for about 2½ months having been fired from his last job for inadequate attendance. Just last week he started to look seriously, and he got two job offers in one day. The one he chose is a job that will require relocation, after a period of training in the New York area. I think he has finally found a way out of his difficulty of being unable to leave mother.

This third case is a 56 year old cloistered nun with periodic outbursts of tantrum behavior. She is talented enough; she runs a printing operation in the convent - they print very beautiful Christmas and Easter cards and things like that. Before she entered, she had spent three years at Cooper Union Art School, taken courses in art at Columbia, courses in journalism at N.Y. University. She was born in 1908 and entered the convent in January of 1938. Her father was a chauffeur on an estate and as a youngster she grew up in a cottage on this estate. She recalls her mother as extremely non-demonstrative and only remembers being kissed by her mother three times in her life; and her whole life in the convent has been one of needing the approval of whoever happened to be the mother superior, and always trying to be the favorite daughter, as it were. Now because of the religious situation, I worked with her more directly on the idea of her equality with all humans in the eyes of God, to give her a sense of worth; but it boomeranged a bit. She didn't like the idea of being equal; she was special! And you'll hear that in a couple of these notes.

The first one is strictly intellectual and very brief: "Who am I? - I am an individual human being, as good as any other human being, nor better than any other human being. Yet individual." Then about a week later: "I have always thought that I was someone special with God. The doctor says God loves all people equally, I can see that now. Still God can like me better than some others. Christ liked some of his apostles more than others, he showed a preference for the company of Peter, James and John. Christ is God; therefore God can like some people more than others. If this is not true, that God somehow likes me specially, then all the props are knocked out from under my way of thinking and my relationship with God. May be if I didn't think myself so special with Him, my relationship with my neighbor might be humbler and less frustrating, but it would call for a revolution in my make-up. I have always hated the idea of being one of a crowd, doing things because everybody else did it, and that sort of thing. A priest who knew me before I entered the convent once said: 'M..., you'll never be a leader' and I answered rather flippantly, 'then I'll be a follower'; though I had no intention of being one. He said, 'no, you won't be a follower either, you will never be led.' Someone interrupted him at that point and I never managed to find out what he meant."

Now, in another long note, from which I'll just read excerpts, she wrote: "I am the person, with additions and subtractions, that I was when I was conceived some 56 years ago. Since my beginning is so essential to what I now am, this is what I know of it." (and she talks about various things) "I seem to have been quite a chatterer but did not walk until late; three or four doctors told my mother I never would walk. She heard of a brilliant doctor, but one who had lost all his practice because he drank. My mother mentioned the fact that she was going to take me to him. The family was up in arms - my father's womenfolk; and mom sneaked out with me under the pretense of taking a daily stroll in the carriage. She went to the doctor. I had rheumatism in my legs; I have a conscious remembrance of being in a walker, a wooden hoop around my waist, and a larger wooden hoop near the floor with casters on it, and I scooted around our New York apartment. That must have been the Fall following the summer visit to the doctor on the Jersey shore where we spent the summer."

Now this is one time when she was told that she would never walk.
(Adkins: You mean that the doctor who drank, told her that she would never walk?)
No, the doctor who drank was the one who got her walking.

"My mother had cured my father of drinking when he acquired the habit when I was an infant. She laid me on a pillow on the floor by his chair and placed the bottle on the table in front of him, and told him to take his choice. He gave up the bottle."

There is another instance of a physical problem here: "When I was 13 I had spinal meningitis, the doctors said if I lived I would never walk again. Well, I lived, and I have done a lot of walking since. I am not criticizing the doctors but I am thinking what I am not supposed to think, that God loves me specially."

So you can see here where she had two recoveries which were medically non-indicated; she has built up a feeling that she is someone special, and in her mind has twice had miraculous intervention. (Cooper: Three times; the 3rd was when the father gave up drinking. That's important.) Sure, and she is beginning to get it. (Adkins: She was special with the mother all the time.) Now, the note following the long one, written on March 17th, doesn't say much: "Who am I? - I am to God in direct proportion what the neighbor is to me, as I

have done unto you so you do also unto others." But now, on March the 18th, which is the last one I have she says this: "Who am I? - I am a priceless object, purchased at an infinite price, the death of the Son of God. The world is full of equally priceless objects, the world is very rich." So she is on her way for this is definitely 'other-centered', not ego-centered.

Cooper: The first tip was the passage about "my neighbor." Did she report an experience at any time, in which this insight came to her?

Rouke: I have not had a chance to discuss this with her. Another unusual aspect of this case is that it is the first time I have ever done therapy through the grate. The mother superior arranged for me to be admitted to the cloister and my first few sessions were in an office within the cloister, but it seemed the mother superior was quite anxious about this; the time of day I was able to go there co-incided with their supper hour and several nuns would be walking back and forth in the corridors and the presence of the unknown male was upsetting, I think, and so she asked if I could try to talk through the grate. So far it is working and I think that this nun is now on the way up.

Cooper: I have worked in the past through interpreters, but I have never had the opportunity of working through the "grate."

Rouke: Yes, in the cloister - either a monastery or a convent - these people are not allowed any direct communion with the outside world, so that even when their family visits them they never contact one another directly, such as sitting next to one another. There is always a screen of some type, but you can see each other. This particular one I have called the "grate" because it is a wrought iron grating. It is the maintenance of the strictness of the cloister, but it is something which I think we shall see diminishing with this new Ecu-
menical approach. However that is another question which we cannot go into here.

Cooper: We have to go into it - but not right now.

Rouke: Now here is the case of the homo-sexual. He came to me a little over a year ago, recommended by his confessor. He and his confessor had been working on the problem for some period of time - the question of whether or not there was moral responsibility; was this an obsessive type of activity or was it free? Regardless of that, the confessor suggested that he should try to get some professional help. He came in rather challengingly - rather offensively, actually - and said that he had thought it over and he had made his decision that he was "willing to invest a year of his time and his money to see what would happen"; and if nothing happened in a year then he figured that that would relieve him of any further responsibility and he could live the life that he wanted.

(Cooper: How many hours would he devote?) An hour a week - approximately 52 hours. Now this boy had started his homosexual experience with a young cousin before he was a teenager. He was active all through his life and like so many homosexuals he was an executive in the Boy Scouts, an executive in the Knights of Columbus; he is a school teacher - and a good one; and at the present time he is 40 years of age. He never indulged in a pick-up pattern of behavior, but participated with a "steady." For the last year or so there was another boy in the town where he lives, and they had been going together quite regularly; their behavior pretty well ran the gamut of everything from mutual masturbation to anal intercourse and both men played both active and passive roles from time to time.

The first writing that he did was towards the end of January, when his year was not quite up - incidentally, when he started therapy a year ago, in

February, he showed excellent improvement for a while. For several months he seemed to be doing quite well; the spacing of the homosexual incidents were on the basis of may be one every three or four weeks. Then, last Fall, there was a pretty complete regression, and between Thanksgiving and Christmas, he became even more active than he had been.

I had better explain that just before I had asked him to write he came in one day to talk about the possibility of this friend moving into his apartment. The other fellow's lease was going to be up at the end of March, and he gave all sorts of rationalizations as to why it would be a better idea for him to move in. At that time I thought that a little shock therapy would be in order, and I didn't say anything against the move but I steered the discussion around to the question of homosexual panic, which he had never heard of and I began to talk about the number of murders that result from homo-sexual panic, things of that type; the message got through in a few hours, not while he was in my office but not long after he got home.

I will use the initial T to indicate his friend; and he writes "affectionately" about him; he does not start to answer "Who am I?" right away. He started: "Dear Fabe: I know that there is only one answer to give T - 'no!' My own problem is how to tell him without making him feel rejected." (All through this you can see some magnificent rationalization.) "I don't want to hurt him; basically he is as good a guy as I am, maybe even better. I pray God he will find someone who can help him to make the right decisions in this life. His drinking and sex offenses have always been the result of rejection by his family. His sister once told me that his mother referred to him in his younger days as 'the thing.' But I am so lonesome, I want someone to need me and love me the way I feel he does. I can't help it when he puts his arms around me, nothing else matters. Right now I want to run to him to be comforted by him; to hear him say he understands and everything is okay. There is so little love in this world; why must mine be so wrong?"

"Who am I? - Lonesome, alone, forced by my own conscience and moral training to admit there is no right with T. Why do we even believe in God? If there was no religion it would be so easy to live as I feel. I am not afraid of society; I can say to hell with the world; we owe each other nothing; but I can't justify it to God. He loves me; I felt it in a monastery, in church, I know His peace, the calm, the comfort, the feeling of nothingness in His presence. There is a stillness, a feeling of fullness and fulfillment in His Presence. This must be my imagination, because I feel the same peace and fullness when T holds me tight. It is the comfort of a mother's caress, the knowledge of a father's concern. I don't even remember ^{call} feeling this before. I wanted to run to T on the way home but he said he would ^{call} me later in the week for my answer. I guess he knows me by now. He knows that if the answer is 'yes,' I'll run right up. If the answer is 'no' I won't be eager to tell him. He is really not so bad, because he insisted I talk it over with you first. If we did ^{work} together he would soon put me in the category of his boss; may be he has already. But the only interest he has in his boss is their former sex relationship." (The boss and T had also been actively homosexual. He is a clerk in a store.) "We could probably make out for a while and then we would drift apart and I would be just another fagot that he once knew. Is it just an old motive that I feel? I must say 'no', to keep our friendship and maybe help him to see the way to help. Will I say 'no' tomorrow on Wednesday?" (I was with him on Tuesday.)

"Who am I? - I am a lonely old man, I am a cock-sucker who finds a certain amount of satisfaction in giving satisfaction to others. I am a guy so

strongly used to male love I cannot even imagine the possibility of female love. I am successful, arrogant; I am a guy who gets up each morning, works all day and comes home each night tired and lonely. I guess tonight I am not much of anything. I remember the catechism explanation: I am a creature composed of body and soul made in the image and likeness of God. Or am I more in the likeness of God the Son, Who lived His life in male companionship, with only the scant mention of the Marys and the Marthas? I keep wanting to say I am me, but who is 'me'? I guess a product of my environment, friends and enemies. P.S. - T and I are going to live in our separate apartments, and continue our friendship from a distance. I guess I really knew this would be the eventual decision anyway. But I did want it together. Last night was too much for me, I didn't go to the Kiwanis Club; I just sat here and cried in my soup; no, I didn't even eat supper. Then T called; I drove over and the world was all right again. Tonight I am going to bed early, alone."

On Thursday: "Today I am not sure, I feel different but don't know how. Perhaps it's just the day. One of our teachers died yesterday and the students held a memorial program today. Also I got an upset stomach. I just feel I am not me. Who am I?" (and this was written at six o'clock on Friday P.M.); "As I have said many times I am afraid of another world"(he saw me on Tuesday afternoon); "I know myself and my people; women have no place in my life. So I am a man fighting to keep his identity, the only one I know; I am a homosexual; though I shouldn't want to be, I do want to be. There is no guarantee of love and acceptance if I change. Now I have both. Some day I will change; I know I must, but I don't feel like I can let it happen yet. Like St. Augustine I seem to pray 'Lord, make me good, but not just yet'. Just let me enjoy the love I feel and have for a short time more. Tonight I am confused; my head is muddled; I don't even want to think."

Then he called me late that night, he called the office, the service called me, about 10 o'clock and I called him back. It's very rare that patients call me after hours, but when I talked with him he was in a state of tremendous crisis. I could feel it, and fortunately the next day I didn't have any commitments, though I don't often have hours on Saturday, I told him to come; it looked like an extra session might help at this point. So I saw him that Saturday afternoon, and he brought the following note and said: "This is what I wrote at 6:30 P.M." After he had written it he fell apart completely, and that's when he called me. He was crying and going through a real crisis.

"Tonight I am angry with T. He made me see how foolish our relationship is. He loves me for sex and I want sex. There is no other reason I could possibly want him for. He needs help so bad and I doubt if I can let him see it. Last night he teased me and loved me, but I knew, even as I put my lips on his cock, I loved it and would be back for more. I did not bring him to climax. We sat in each other's arms feeling very much in love. I took his cock into my mouth more as a kiss, or as a caress or promise of fidelity. My conflict is not with my desires and my habits but with society and its arbitrary moral code. I know I will stop seeing T, but will I stop wanting homosexual love? If I could be sure I would no longer need homosexual love, I could leave him and he would not feel bad because he wants me to get well. At the moment I wish he wasn't expecting me tonight. I don't want to go." (They were planning a real orgy, this particular night; actually he didn't go. That's when he called me.) "T doesn't need me for sex; he has many other chances but will not accept them, he accepts only me. He must love me very much. It is odd that I loved him for so long and now that he accepts me I will have to be leaving him."

That Saturday afternoon we had an excellent session. He unburdened himself tremendously and had a real catharsis, and went away feeling quite differently. On Monday evening he wrote this: "Who am I? - I am a man, full grown; it is time I stop playing with myself as a child. I should hate homosexuality and begin to grow up in a positive manner. I don't seem to fear the future so much; with God's grace I shall be able to bear what is to come."

That was on the 27th of January; four days after that he and T had a few drinks and there was mutual masturbation. That's the last activity up to the present. He has gone out on heterosexual dates, at least twice a week since, hasn't made any physical approaches to any of these dates yet, but takes them out to dinner and takes them downtown to a show or for a ride or something like that. He still sees T occasionally but although T made a couple of passes at him, he's been able to say "No," and T has turned around and has already had a couple of alternate partners. So I think the technique actually opened him up and reached him as I hadn't been able to reach him in a whole year. I feel that it made a critical difference and that this man is now on the way to a reasonably good recovery. I feel that the whole homosexual pattern had been a defense, that he was fearing the responsibilities of marriage; his own mother and father had a miserable marriage and he just couldn't see marriage as an acceptable way of life.

Cooper: It's interesting that it is written in red ink. Rouke: Yes, well, that's not even ink that is crayon.

Rouke: The next case presents as well as anything I have ever seen, the subjective view of the progress of therapy. This is a 35 year old girl, married with four children, who had been under the complete domination of her mother. Every morning soon after the children left for School the mother would come; she had a key to their home; she didn't even bother to ring the bell. Anytime, day or night, the mother would just walk in: "You are not doing this right, you are not doing that right, the children should have this, the children should have that!" etc., and the amazing thing was that this girl had no insight into the fact that her mother was a problem. (Cooper: Or had a problem!) She knew her mother had a problem because the mother had been in mental hospitals on three occasions. The first was shortly after the daughter's birth. I suppose some people had said, "Well, when you were born you caused your mother to get sick." She was a model child through grade school but then came a little healthy, adolescent rebellion; she began to argue back at her mother and fight with her. What happened? Her mother took her next trip to Wingdale. And even now, the father will say, "What are you trying to do to your mother, you and that crazy, stupid bastard that you go to in Bronxville; what are you trying to do - the two of you? Are you trying to put your mother back in the hospital?" So this is the way her parents are still putting pressure on her.

Adkins: The stupid bastard is her husband?

Rouke: No, that's me! This is what you call a colorful patient! She is very intelligent and I first saw both husband and wife together. Dr. Summo had referred them, he had done a complete psychological examination of this girl and gave me the clue to the fact that the mother's relationship was the main problem; also that there was a pretty severe sexual block. The girl, at that time, wasn't interested in sex; she said she thought, "Who needs it, why bother with anything like this?" So naturally this would begin to cause a little friction between herself and her husband; but he was a remarkable man, understanding and patient, realized that she was sick, and didn't put excess pressure on her.

During their early visit I had described the idea of the self-concept, the value of the self, and on the 18th of February she started to write. She's written a series of letters here which are worth hearing. You will notice at first they are almost all intellectual.

On the 18th of February: "I know who I am supposed to be, me, autonomous, individual, unique, important because I am unique. But this 'me' is buried under a great pile of hostility tonight, hostility against mom and pop for the lousy upbringing they gave me. Negativism, no support, so much discipline, too much criticism of everything, from politics right on down. Nothing was ever right with the world, everything was always better in the good old days. It seems to me this must have reflected a great unhappiness with the present, to be always looking back at the past. How the hell can you give kids any confidence with this attitude? I guess it was because they had no confidence themselves, you can't give what you haven't got already. Poor souls! But still this doesn't make me any less resentful right now. I was given a raw deal by my parents, I must see that the same doesn't happen to my own children. I grew up to think that fighting and bickering were a normal part of marriage. They needn't be, I know now. P and I seldom fight. We used to, it was usually me trying to have my own (mama's) way.

Who am I? - Tonight I am a big bundle of hostilities with a damn good husband and a great deal of hope. I feel if I can get it out of my system, things will start to look up. Sometimes I think it would be a burden lifted if mom and pop were both dead. However I just can't arrange all these things to suit myself. The Lord will have to have his finger in that pie. Goodnight. P.S. - Right now I really hate them and I am shaking all over because I am admitting it to myself."

Half the time she writes like this. Then on the next day, February 19th: "The feeling of being me is still difficult to grasp. Now it's a fleeting thing at best, it's too vague to really hang on to. Perhaps if I could push aside the pile of anxieties and complexes and hostilities I would discover 'me.' I have the notion that this discovery would be exactly like a breath of fresh, sweet country air, which I dearly love, by the way. I crave this freedom."

An excerpt from the Feb. 20th one: "Really not sure of who I am, can better describe what I am. But this is only a litany of fears, troubles, hopes, etc., it does not get down to the fundamental worth of me. I am still struggling to answer the first question satisfactorily. I know there is more, I cannot quite reach it. My identity, my dignity, my worth, perhaps 'unique' is the word."

February 21st: "Who am I? Very tired, can't think, full of confusion, ambivalent - is that the right word? I know there is more stuff yet to come to the surface, I can feel it waiting for release. Oh well patience. Goodnight. P.S. - Also full of wine."

Saturday, Feb. 22nd: "Who am I? Much of the turmoil over the past few days is calmed. I feel more self-confidence and consequently the sense of 'me' has returned. Once I feel sure of my place as wife, mother, etc., this feeling of 'me' will be permanent, I have watched it come and go with the fluctuation of self-confidence. Hostilities, confusion are what apparently killed the self-confidence. Get rid of them and the problems are over. Or is it not that simple? We shall see."

On Sunday, February 23rd: "Who am I? - the signal is coming in fits and starts. Still only grasped the feeling of 'me' now and then. I know there is more upheaval to come, more hostility to get rid of; what direction will it take? P.S. - I am conscious of trying to find a real me, this business of my identity is becoming a real thing."

"Who am I?"(this is the next day, Feb. 24th) "I am an individual who can make decisions, whose decisions can influence others for good or bad, I have a good mind and am able to use it to carry on my own life, and the lives of those about me, especially my husband and children. I can undertake and carry to a successful conclusion anything that I set my mind to. Sometimes I am afraid to take the first step towards new experiences, but at least I am believing myself capable of making intelligent decisions without consulting anyone else. This is a big step for me. The confusion and hatred, fear, etc., of the past weeks abated somewhat, but some remains. So does the feeling of much more emotional upheaval to come. I feel as if all the work of these past weeks is coming to a climax of some kind. I am apprehensive a bit. I guess that's to be expected. It will take more work to make up my feeling of identity a real part of me, but I think I have made a beginning. I have a stronger feeling of hope than I have ever had before. This is good. Also more confidence about a successful ending to this therapy. Don't know when it will be; time doesn't seem as important as it used to."

Now the following letter, a couple of days later, on Tuesday, Feb. 25; and again this is after a session: "This thought of my identity as being something above my emotions, fears, physical needs, etc., is most wonderful, it gives a whole new dimension to the question of 'who am I?' It is like discovering a new and wonderful power, to look at me as being in control of the attributes of which I am composed. Instead of being controlled by emotions, or physical needs, I can control them, so they do not consume me. This is a new strength, just as I am able to control sexual desires, I should be able to control the hostilities and fears that have plagued me in the past. Seen this way none of my problems are insurmountable, and none of my future trouble should be either. The fact of me is somewhat more important than any fears which are passing and changeable. My identity does not change, it can govern a situation no matter what the circumstances. The question remains how to make these ideas really a part of me so that I can make them work for me. How to put these principles into action, how to feel able to control myself? My essential dignity as a human being makes me as good as the next person. Why be afraid? He is as good as I, but more important for me, I am no less than he. I am discovering a great new power, the ability to control my life, I can stand on my own decisions, good or bad, and not need someone else to control things for me. It makes me feel like a little dictator in my own sphere which I truly should be. This whole aspect of learning to control myself needs much practice, but I think it's beginning to come. This is the real freedom of which we have spoken, no? This needs to jell a bit more, my thoughts are somewhat disjointed; and so to bed. There is more to this. but I cannot quite put my finger on it yet. I feel as if more of the pieces will begin to fit into place; the light is dawning; and now to bed." (Cooper: With the wine?)

Rouke: No wine. This is a continuation of the same writing: "I am not nervous or hostile; this hostility and nervousness is trying to drown me. I am able to control them so that they do not. Lesson well learned; now to really make it work. When I am able to, life will be a ball. Do you think P is still waiting for me?" (P. is her husband)

February 26th: "Who am I? Tonight I am tired, somewhat discouraged, that core of fear keeps threatening me; it holds me back from doing the things I want to do and yet I am beginning to feel that this fear is something outside of the intrinsic me. It is not my whole being, somehow there is a battle being waged between me and this fear and hostility. If I am able to develop and strengthen the feeling of my identity, I should be able to control the fear and thus solve the problem. How does one strengthen the real deep feeling of 'me'? Does my basic security lie in the discovery of my identity, or elsewhere? In God? If I can find true security, then this fear would no longer threaten me; I would have it under control. I think that there is some relationship between finding my identity, that is, truly feeling it, and finding this security in life. Are they one and the same? Or is this only part of the answer? I am only beginning to see suggestions of an answer to the original question; more reflection is needed. There is a certain exhilaration in stretching my powers of mind to seek out these very important answers to myself. I finally see the whole concept, that in itself will be a real victory for me. The answers cannot be given to me, I have to find myself; otherwise they will have no validity for me. I am still afraid to be free, the little girl still does not want to let go of mama's hand, and yet I know that without freedom I shall never be really happy; it's a vicious circle, and the way out must lie in finding a strength within me. The answer still appears to be reached by discovering who 'me' really is. What makes me tick. Enough for tonight, I am beginning to repeat myself, my mind is still cloudy, the light will come after a while."

February 27th: "Who am I? The core of fear is becoming divorced from a basic me. It is as if I am becoming able to put this fear on the table in front of me, as I was able to put my hostility towards my Aunt Emily on the table, it seems as if this ability to examine the fear will enable me to eventually control it. Somehow the feeling of my identity is becoming more distinct from the fears and apprehensions, I can foresee the identity as becoming larger and stronger than the fear. When the balance tips in this direction then I shall be out of the woods. Am I grasping the development of this feeling of me? It seems to be a gradual awakening."

And on Saturday, February 29th: "Who am I? Can't even say tonight, the world seems crashing over my ears, all the old symptoms are with me: fear, scruples, nerves, the whole lot. Things between P and me are strained, can't really figure out what's bugging me. Sometimes I think it's hostility against P. and again I wonder if I am building up things that are not really valid. Do I really love him? Or is it just a terrible dependence on him right now? Perhaps I resent this dependence. How can I not love him? He is really so lovable and good, and that's the truth. I don't even want to think about all of this, I want to sit down and have a good cry. Oh well, this will pass. The trouble is I am afraid to say anything to P about my feelings; it would hurt him too much; he is too sensitive about the possibility of my not caring for him. He needs me just as I need him. Is this love? Hells bells, when am I going to be able to answer some of my own questions with any real conviction?"

On Sunday, March 1st: "Who am I? A mass of hostility again. This time it's against the church. You were right, Fabe; I am angry with the church because its rules are killing my love life. I want sex and can't have it and I am seething. I never thought that I would reach the point where this little item would come out on the table. What an ass I have been. The girl who thought that she didn't even need sex is now wild because she can't have it when she wants it. So where do I go from here? I am finally facing the real need, and a real hostility against the church, which appears to be frustrating that need. I suppose the answer again is control, recognize the desire for what it is, and

then keep it under control. In some ways this is more difficult to solve than the problem of me and pa. At least I could put them out of the house! The anger and frustration are too great tonight to allow me to answer any of these questions. My identity is overwhelmed by the hostility. Get rid of all the hostilities and then the 'me' in me will have a chance to grow. Thank God that I am finally able to recognize those hostilities without their usual disguises. Although I am shaking and raging inside, I do know that I have again been able to make another important step forward. Perhaps it's not too far until I am out of the woods. Just as I needed to get out from under the parental thumb I must do the same thing with the rest of my hostility. Things are really bursting out all around me. I do hope that P can weather the storm."

And the next day, March 2nd: "Who am I? More confidence today - must be because of my facing some further conflicts; after the shivering and shaking and sobbing I seem to come back with a better grip of my identity. I begin to feel me again. The pressures seem to be coming to the surface and as I begin to release them the confidence in me takes their place. Am I right or just kidding myself? It's almost like that, that law that two things cannot occupy the same place, at the same time. Repressed hostility and a true feeling of identity cannot exist together. Am I making it too simple?"

She saw me on March 3rd and we discussed the hostility, which for hrr arose from the question of birth control. Her periods are irregular, and rhythm is not a sure way to avoid pregnancy for her; she wants to have more children but she figures that right now wouldn't be the time to have another baby.

"Who am I? I am bright and capable, I am able to run my own life and make decisions as I see best. I know that these decisions will be intelligent because I am an intelligent girl who is well able to evaluate a situation. I have also an intelligent husband and between us we are able to guide the children and the household. No advice, suggestions, etc., are needed from mama, as a matter of fact, I am beginning to feel as if I shall soon not need you any more, Fabe, and this, of course, has been the whole object of therapy. I can see that these qualities and abilities of mine have always been there, they have just been suppressed by a large mass of hostilities and fears. I shall make mistakes, but all human beings make mistakes. There is no reason to doubt my ability to govern my own life, mistakes should not shake my self-confidence. I also realize that the feeling of confidence and freedom that I have today is going to leave me on some other day, but I know that it will steadily grow stronger, despite some faltering along the way. Eventually that freedom will be with me all of the time and the bad things will be few and manageable. My hold on this self-confidence is somewhat tenuous, but it's nonetheless real. I feel like a cripple who is just beginning to walk alone, I am not quite sure of myself and yet I am delighted with an exhilarating sense of spring and freedom and happiness. Besides being intelligent I am also a great deal of fun, I am really a most extraordinary girl."

Adkins: Bit of transference there!

Rouke: That was the only one she wrote that week; the following week, March 10th, she wrote this. It is headed differently; she has the word "autonomous" with a dictionary definition written next to it: "Autonomous - self-governing, without outside control, independent in government."

She writes: "Autonomy is what I am seeking, the ability to control myself. This is the ability of the 'I' in me to control my emotions, actions, decisions, comings and goings. Every time that I make a decision without

outside help I am strengthening myself, becoming somewhat more autonomous. I know that I already have the intelligence for making a decision, what I need is the courage to act, and this courage is beginning to show itself. I am beginning to acquire faith in myself, I am acquiring the ability to say a definite 'yes', or 'no.' I must learn to say 'no' more definitely where mother is concerned. I must control her relationship with me and not let her have the upper hand. Instead of always seeking an outside prop upon which to lean emotionally - mama, P, the church, the children - I have just discovered the possibility that I can learn to lean upon myself, me. Somehow a certain strength is beginning to seep into my emotions. Perhaps what I am doing is simply starting to uncover 'me' underneath the outer layers of fear, hostility and the rest. The answer to the question 'Who am I?' is beginning to emerge not as a definition in words but as an emotional awareness. It is something I shall feel, and is not just a verbal formula. More and more an awareness of me is dawning, each time in a somewhat different aspect. The light is still rather feeble, but I find it showing itself more frequently. The whole process is just one stone upon another; it's painful, but hope keeps entering more and more, and not only hope but sight. P.S. - I am actually as strong and able to make my own decisions as those to whom I run for reassurance and the answers. My ego is just as good as theirs, so I can really stop running."

And on March 11th: "Who am I? I can't seem to think too clearly on this now, but I do feel that my identity is just beginning to assert itself. When the fears threaten to overwhelm me I find myself calling upon 'I' to do battle. I am beginning to realize that there is an alternative to panic, namely my own strength. Sometimes the panic appears greater than my identity, but at least I can see that panic must not necessarily win out. I think that it won't be too long before my identity will be the greater of the two. The conflicts with ma and sex, and the church, are still quite evident. Once I am able to resolve these, the strength of my identity will grow very rapidly. How do I get these angers out of my system? Realizing that here again I am in control of this anger, it need not consume me. Emotionally the anger is justifiable. However I must come to accept facts as they are. Ma and pa did not deliberately set out to wreck my life, my problems on that score are the result of illness which they could not control. The rules of the church are a matter of obedience. This is sufficient. It isn't easy."

And on March 13th: "I feel as if I am struggling to break out of a cage or some dark place. Already small chinks of light are appearing but some great surge of enlightenment seems needed before I shall really be free. I am afraid of physical circumstances that seem to trap me, because in reality my identity is trapped underneath the hostilities and feelings of guilt. I hate, so I feel guilty; and the feelings of guilt make me tremble and fearful. When will the guilt of hatred stop? When will I see that I have no more need to hate? I must not be guilty for hating. Do these emotions simply exhaust themselves and cease to be? Or can I eliminate them or control them by an act of my will? I still want approval from ma and pa, and I hate them because I continue to seek that which I shall never get. Does not a human being need some approval? From where? P? Or would a strong sense of identity be sufficient? I am filled with much questioning, much hostility, a great many shakes, and not too strong a sense of 'me.' It is coming, I know. It hides its face now and then and the guilt of hostility takes over. It is a battle of advance and retreat. I wish that I could relax, but I seem to have to fight every inch; I am very tired. I do have some feeling of my own worth and I cling to this. It helps me over the rough places, I wish it would grow. Some morning I dream of awakening to a real sense of freedom, like some great burst of sunshine and spring. I think it is possible, the struggle must go on. I must not quit now; I am so tired of it all."

Then a week ago today, March 14th: "Who am I? Today I am more sure of myself. I am discovering that once I begin to grasp my own identity I am starting to see other people for what they really are, and not only for their relation to me. When you are uncertain of your own value, you see others only in so far as they affect you, either as threatening or as supports. Actually when I am able to support and love myself I shall only then be able to love others and God, for themselves alone. When my own sense of identity is firmly established I will not need such support, nor will others be a threat to my security. I find myself thinking of my children as people, not as chores that I must cope with. I am more interested in what they think and feel and accomplish. I am just beginning to love them for their individual selves. With P it's the same, but more difficult in coming. My relationship to him has been a selfish one in many ways; I was always looking to him for support, what he could do for me. I think that I am only now for the first time considering his problems in the light of how they affect him, and not to how they might threaten my security. I find myself doing things for him because I want to, and not because I feel I should. There is a world of difference here; I want to please him because it makes him happy. This must be a sign of emotional maturity on my part. When I begin to strengthen my own identity I find that I no longer need to always have my will in things, in order to support a neurotic personality. Once I am free I shall be able to freely accept another's wishes without losing anything myself. How wonderful to see people as people, and not only in their relation to me. When I am really strong and free I think that I shall truly be able to love others and to give to them. The neurotic really has no strength for himself or for others; he is unable to really love."

So that is the development of this girl; and, as well as she writes and as literate as she is, I don't think I have ever come across a subjective statement of progress in therapy that matches it.

Cooper: My thought in listening to this was that it is a shame she is a housewife!

Mullahy: I have a question about her troubles with sex and the church.

Rouke: Well, you see before she started to come to me, sex was no problem to her because she had no sexual needs as far as she was concerned. She had four children, but that was just more or less casual and incidental. She wasn't anti-sexual; she didn't actively reject her husband, but never would there be any real warm participation. She used to consider that sex was sort of a waste of time and effort, and "why bother?" Well, very early in the treatment, before she started to write these notes, a change occurred there and she came in one day - it's too bad she wasn't writing at that time - because I can only remember the expression she used: "It was wonderful in itself, and also symbolically." Apparently she discovered that sex was enjoyable and she had changed into being very responsive, and at times aggressively initiating sexual activity with her husband. She said, "You know, I don't know how he is going to stand up under it. I told him the other night, you had better watch out I am going to wear you down to a little nub!" She added that P didn't seem to mind too much. But then, what happened? She is very irregular in her menstrual cycle, so rhythm for her doesn't work. Right now she is a little concerned about a possible pregnancy. The thing that brought up the sexual problem originally was her inability to stay at Mass on Sunday. She claimed it was due to claustrophobia. But whenever you have Catholic patients who are married and who get claustrophobia at Mass on Sunday, always look for birth control as a problem. Because what is happening is that the hostility against the religion is displaced and turns into this symptom of not being able to accept the ritual of the church; the patients are usually not aware of this at the time, but later on they see it.

Gilbart: Is it significant that she states so often that she is looking at "me" instead of "I"? It seems to me that she progressed to a point, to a last outer cover, before you get to the center of pure consciousness. And it seems as if she is rooted on that last shell.

Rouke: Well, I do not know; but I have wondered whether it was something specifically significant or just some grammatical variation. It is pretty difficult to say "I am in control of I"; and then she gets to use "I am in control of me" and then uses "me" all the way through. Have you found any significance in this change, Jack?

Cooper: Well, the same thing that Ted pointed out. She is getting glimpses of this inner reality; but there is still a covering of hostility. She needs to continue her writing. Now I use this a little differently; I ask them to write just their conscious thoughts - with no direction, such as you are using here. Your method has given me some ideas, and I am glad that you brought it up. Ordinarily I do not ask to see their writing. In the case of this girl I got the feeling that there is something that she really wants to get off her chest; and she cannot now, because she has this transference with you. If she wrote freely and you saw it, then you might destroy this relationship. Now if she can be free to write as she wants to - using the four letter words, and so on - and then tear up the letters so that no one will see them, the chances are that she will be able to take the next step in uncovering - which will then allow her to get out feelings which she is not able even to let her favorite therapist see.

Rouke: Well one thing - on these four letter words. It hasn't happened very often in therapy, but this girl has been able to use them, for - and this happened before she started writing - at the end of a session at the office, in which I had given her rather a rough time in making her face things, as she was going out she said "I will see you next week" and after going through the door she walked back and said "S... on you for what you did to me today!"

Cooper: Yes, she is at the stage where she has uncovered a lot of material; and I have no idea what she needs to uncover next, but I have the feeling that as she goes on - not only is there resentment against the church - there may be incestuous relationships with her father or something which may come out. But there is something deep that is there, ready to explode. She gets glimpses of the inner reality but, as Ted points out, there is still a shell there.

You presented the cases in a most interesting order: one woman getting just a little conception of her true self - just enough to pull her over her immediate humps; and then each one of the cases a little more so. There is one thing, I would like to ask, Dr. Rouke; would you do me a favor of reviewing each case, writing down the dates on which each one of the notes was written; and then give, say, three symbols, signifying that "this was progress; this was standing still; this was regressing"; so that you could chart the progress of therapy. If you could let me have this material I would be grateful because I am doing a little experiment on the side. We can see in these cases a kind of stair; with steps going up; and the thing that is stopping this last woman from going ahead and living in this reality is some hostility and resentment which is still there.

Adkins: I am interested in this point, of the possibility of the patient writing for herself alone and not even the therapist seeing it. This is something like what came out two sessions ago, where you take the patient in the waking dream

to the conflictual situation, but then when you find that the patient does not want to reveal herself you let her back away; then you take her somewhere else to another situation where, in a sense, she can integrate that - for instance, meeting "the wise old man" (discussed in the last session Ed.). In all this you are very much respecting her privacy, and this seems to be a very significant kind of an attitude.

Cooper: I think it is extremely significant, because no matter how careful we are, how objective we are, we do get in the way. We are still "a person", and we still have objective values, and the patient feels this relationship quite strongly - enough to come back and cuss you out. There is still the presence of another person there. Now some people work this differently. I remember one psychological report where they took excerpts from the data and handed them to the patients in sealed envelopes and asked the patients to open them in the privacy of their rooms. Each envelope had a "bomb" in it - the bomb being picked out of the psychological material. The patients were left alone with themselves, the therapist not being present. I think we have to think more and more about the fact that we stand in the way at times - whether we like it or not - of allowing a patient to let loose material which they won't even think about.

Adkins: But then, that has to be integrated with the fact of the therapist being there to help the patient to get over the rough spots.

Cooper: Yes, but you are there. In this instance you are not physically present. Whatever Fabe is doing in his office, he is as near as the telephone; he is as near as it is possible to be on a once a week basis. He is there and he isn't, do you see?

Adkins: Yes; I cannot see that any harm would come out of it if the patient wrote alone and then destroyed the writing, but when you let a person be alone to get the results of a psychological test I should think that you would need to be there afterwards.

Cooper: But you are there all the time, you see. You get the material and then the next week they come in to see you, and if they want to discuss it with you, fine!

Adkins: I see, even at a week's interval? Cooper: Yes, or every three days, whichever you want. I have a current patient, a homosexual man with whom we have had good results with this same kind of thing we have been talking about - although I did not use it in terms of the "Who am I?" question. I was using it in the self-identification process in another way; and he was able to bring up - just as we have here - memory patterns. When he worked by himself he was able to bring up something that happened to him way back in early childhood, in which suddenly all the parts fitted together. He was a lawyer by profession. He had reams of material on this conscious level, but at a stage where he would not let me see it or have anything to do with it, other than what he wanted me to see. And now he is going along fine.

Rouke: I think there is another important point here, and that is that we are trying to get them to be independent; and in the system that you use you are leaving everything in their own lap, and they will be able to use this material to solve their own problem. (Cooper: When they gain the strength.) Yes, with us still backing them up and providing the safety factor, if need be; but to leave them as much on their own as you can.

Cooper: Yes, and to stay out of it as much as you can. You watch the therapeutic process go along and 'play' with it. I have done this in clinics where I was seeing patients for only 8 or 10 minutes each; and I watched the therapeutic process go right along. And they do homework, which they are going to do anyway, whether you see them an hour a day or five days a week; the patients are still going to be working in their home setting. This just speeds it up a little. So the next step here, with this patient (of Dr. Rouke) will be the uncovering of four letter words. And when I explain this stage to patients I usually tell them that I bet that they will not misspell one of them. And they don't!

Gilbart: Is there anything in this for the person who is overly introspective? (Cooper: This is a dangerous technique.) Is there any danger in them concentrating on this at home, away from the therapist? Is there the possibility of dissociation?

Cooper: I think you have to sort out your patients pretty carefully. You would not use it with lots of patients. This type, with hostility towards the church, towards sex, towards parents; it all fits a psychological pattern of hostility. This is ventilation; and you can learn more about this through working with children. David Levy, in what he called his "release therapy", uses a playbox - with dolls and a house and so on. He lets the child set up the various people (dolls) and then lets them tear it all to pieces in their release of hostility. Now this is along the same line of release, but as to using it in the case of depression or a schizophrenic, I question it. I do have one paranoid schizophrenic with whom I am using it with good results, but I am reaching the critical point right now where I have the feeling that I am sitting on a powder keg - I always have the feeling of sitting on a powder keg with schizophrenics - because this man is beginning to ruminate along the line of "I wonder whether my father is really responsible for my illness!"; so I increased the Stelazine and am sitting tight! Are there other comments on this?

Adkins: I think it is very important to estimate the strength of a patient. This patient (of Dr. Rouke's) has a lot of strength. She has assets as well as liabilities (Cooper: Patient #1 was not so strong, but has been made stronger by this technique.); and it seems to me that she (the 5th patient) originally had a lot of strength. Certain types of patients will come out of a home background that seems very uncondusive to developing strength, but I think it is easy for someone looking from the outside to misunderstand. So there are actually strengths in the homelife and I think if you find a patient like this - I am assuming that she did have the strength underlying all along - there must have been assets in the home life itself. The father and mother, as we can see, were quite difficult people.

Rouke: May I interrupt here? I think her positive aspects of development came from things outside the home. She happens to be a very intelligent girl, so the school experience was quite a favorable one - in school she was popular, she got very good grades - as good as she wanted to work for; it wasn't all a grind, and although she did not get all 90s she never had any trouble passing and went right through to get her bachelor's degree. And she married very soon after she graduated.

Adkins: Well, my orientation would be that that would help her with the original strength that must have come from the very early setting. And with patients like this I would be interested in trying to get a glimpse of what were these strengths in this family. When patients eventually get a stronger sense of

identity, very often they will realize and see for themselves "Well my dad did this, my mother did this, and it was very, very difficult," but also they are able to see places where their father and mother gave them something, some strength. Sometimes it is along the lines of an ethical insight that comes, even from a very domineering person.

Cooper: Let me tackle that for a moment, for it is my feeling from working with this idea of psychosynthesis and the self and the inner self, that the strength actually is in the inner self. And what is happening is that the hostility, the anger, the emotions, cover it, they do not allow this strength to come out. What is happening is that, figuratively, they have built a Frankenstein monster; and the monster does the talking. One of the conceptions here is something like this: personality - persona actually means mask - and when we do personality testing we are only testing these things that we talk about as displacement, rationalization and all the various psychological mechanisms - there are 13 or so of them which we know. We do not see the real person behind this mask; we do not see the self; and as we uncover this true self, which is an individuation, then this mask can be dropped, or it can be used more effectively. They have the choice. I have one very interesting alcoholic who was quite depressed; she wanted to go home but also she didn't, and so she became really depressed, said, "There is nothing at home" etc., etc. And I happened to hit upon this concept of masks in talking to her, and it struck home with her immediately. She began to see herself playing roles. Then she began to see that she was something else - that she was not the role, not the mask, not the emotion, not the feeling; each was just a role that was part of her life. The real strength comes when people begin to recognize this; then at the end of the day you can say to yourself "Well, how was I as Hamlet?", "How did I perform today as a husband?" or whatever role you happen to have been playing. So you can see, how she (Dr. Rouke's last patient) is beginning to get this; likewise the homosexual man - as he began to realize that all of this homosexual side was only role playing. It is just an outer manifestation, and to the self means nothing. The strength which is in them, which is the guiding force of their life - this they can learn to depend on more and more, as we have been seen with this girl. She is falling back more and more on this true self - which Dr. Assagioli emphasizes so strongly. Psychosynthesis is based on the theory of the self.

Adkins: Then what I think of here is that the parents also have this same thing - they have their defenses, but there is also the real self (Rouke: Oh yes, it is in every human being.) Sometimes you find a family where the behavior - looking on from the outside - is simply awful, but yet somehow behind those defenses there is a real self that comes through. I like the old Turkish proverb - "There is a road from soul to soul"; and sometimes it comes through all the masks. This little self or this little soul coming in this big world somehow is contacted and somehow begins to experiment with life and has some identity, but it is all encrusted with these defenses; and then when you help her to see through that, then maybe later on, feeling her own self, she may be even able to see through these awful defenses of the parents.

Cooper: Yes, to "see" them; and then to communicate at a different level, and no longer have to worry about what the masks are doing. You go to the Greek theater for instance, and the actors are behind masks, but you never know the one inside. And if the patient gathers this conception of the personality, and of personalities in their interaction, he then becomes an interested observer and not necessarily a participant in it. I do not care at what level you go in the study of the mind, you can always find that some little portion of it can "fold back over," so to speak, and be able to observe the rest of it and even make notes.

Even with people who are supposedly unconscious, in some instances we find they have been able to observe themselves even when the brain was ostensibly unconscious. So there is always, at every level, this little bit or some portion of the mind being the observer. We call this, of course, the self; and as we emphasize it, it grows.

Rouke: That is what I think is so wonderful about the psychosynthetic theory, basically. This is the one school that recognizes there is worth in everybody - just by reason of their existence. It does not depend upon the behavioristic or the dynamic development of the various masks and roles - for underneath it all is the core. This is there in every man, and it is up to us to help these people bring it out, feel it, become aware. (Cooper: and to realize it - self-realization) Yes, that's it.

Thomas: I have a question about the homosexual man. What are you trying to do with him? I wondered whether you would be able to break that homosexual pattern with a man of that age.

Rouke: Yes, I think we can; because now he has discovered just what Dr. Cooper was talking about - that these are a series of roles that he has been playing; and the reason that they developed was that they were defenses to keep him safely out of the "miserable state of marriage." It is a tremendous pity that there are so many people who do not know what a happy marriage means. Many of my patients say that they have never seen anyone who has had a happy marriage. (Cooper: Yes, that is right.) Now this is pathetic. So if they feel that way about it, why should they enter into it. And what is the best defense against it? Don't get involved with a female!

Mullahy: I would like to ask Dr. Cooper a question. What you say sounds much like some of Fromm's theories about the inner core. But I am wondering how you would interpret its origin. Is it something that develops gradually through childhood?

Cooper: That is a good question! Where does the inner self originate? I would like to have a whole session discussing it. (Adkins: This is the ontological question.) (Rouke: Could we discuss it at the next meeting?) The empirical experience of the self. I would like us to tackle this from several different directions - I would like to see it approached also from a religious angle and from the philosophical.

Rouke: Maybe we could get one of the philosophers.

Cooper: Now we are getting down to something which is of considerable importance. We know of the existence of the self; and this gets us into the philosophical and the theological as well as the psychological! We know that we are finding it; and we would like to know something about it. I can't answer your question, Pat, but we can go into it.

Rouke: I think that where this goes beyond Eric Fromm is that Fromm goes up to the point of a spiritual self but he cannot quite include it completely because he is not sure of a belief in God. (Mullahy: Yes, I agree with that. I am vague about the origin.)

Cooper: Frankl does the same thing. He goes right up to this level and then he quits; he does not go beyond it - that being in the realm of the preachers.

Rouke: Yes, but man is also in the realm of the preacher, so we have to go into the whole thing.

Cooper: Well, we should bring them in and see what we can learn from them. We see it; it is a strength, an inner strength; I don't know where it comes from.

Rouke: The man I would like to have here for that is the Rev. Dr. Eamon O'Doherty who is the head of the Psychology Department of the University of Dublin - a combination of a philosopher, psychologist and theologian.

Cooper: I think it is wonderful that psychologists have discovered it, and the strength that is in it.

Rouke: Ted Gilbert said that Father Murray, the head of the Dept. of Psychology at St. John's is very interested in coming over, but today he was detained with something else.

Cooper: Could you invite him? At the next meeting I would like us very much to go into the ontology of the self. I remember that in Houston, Dr. Kahn who was a student of Krapelin, began to give sessions on this from the psychiatric standpoint; in which he took "psyche" and "soul" and then began to equate the two. He may have written something about it, and if I can find it I will bring it along. I will see what I can dig up in the psychiatric field, and you see what you can dig up in the psychological; and then let's see if we can get somebody to give us the philosophical and then the religious approach.

Hilton: We have been working towards this question of the self right from the first session; I wonder if Fromm, Jung and others have refused to speak or write their real views on this for fear of having a label put on them. For we are moving straight into this region of religion and philosophy, and when you try to express it, if people don't grasp it, they will just smack on some sort of label rather than probe into the reality of this self that we are talking about.

Rouke: Pat Mullahy, would you be able to give us a synopsis of the analytical approaches to this? You probably know more about them than the rest of us, judging from what you have written.

Mullahy: I could do something, I suppose. In addition I would like to mention that as far as I know it, there are two generic views: 1. the traditional philosophical view, that the ego is transcendental and is something that you never know by experience; and I was wondering if you had something like that in mind. And then, of course, there is the conventional psychoanalytic psychological point of view, the empirical one, which professes to have nothing to do with anything that cannot be discovered from experience.

Adkins: Well, isn't the problem this: that very often people who have an ontological concept - of say God or the soul - have this as a speculation; then they try to fit the empirical data into their ideas instead of starting from the empirical data and then making a hypothesis from that?

Mullahy: Well that brings in the question of philosophy and theology. It would not be, I suspect, just a matter of starting from the empirical.

Rouke: Suppose they start from both sides and end up in the same place!

Adkins: You have a theologian like F.R. Tennant who has been bypassed by theologians and by psychologists, but he comes out very definitely with an empirical base for your speculations. So that science itself is in fact controlled speculation, and

scientific knowledge is nothing other than fact controlled speculation; so why can't you make fact controlled speculation in any realm, for we are not limited to the realm of process. The general conviction today is that you cannot make a hypothesis in any realm that does not have predictable sequences; and we are dealing here with a realm, maybe, where we have predictable sequences. In other words the self may not be predictable except to the self.

Mullahy: There are those who say that the self is more predictable than anything else.

Adkins: Yes, the current psychological doctrine.

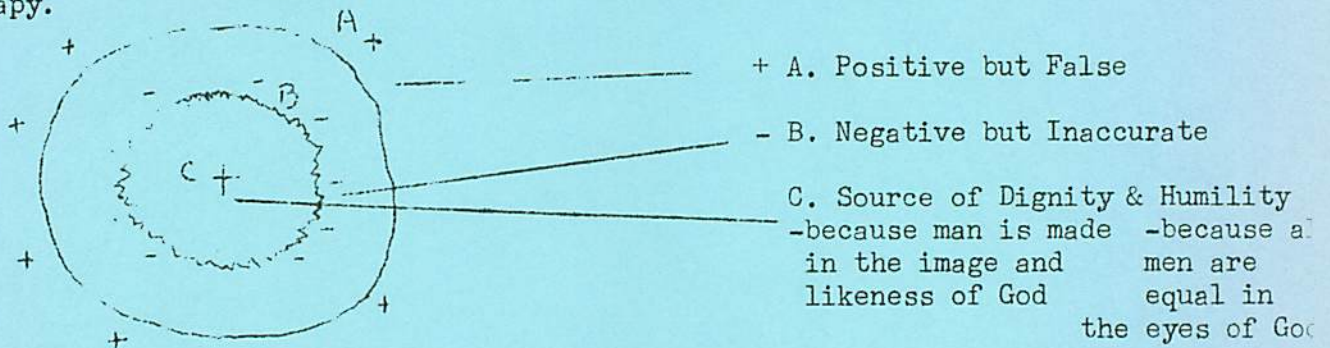
Mullahy: In fact, Sullivan said that.

Cooper: Very well then, we have the theme for our next meeting - "The Ontology of the Self."

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Dr. Fabian Rouke: What I had in mind to present today is not the whole question of self-identification, or dis-identification, but one aspect of it which intrigued me when I became aware of it; one which I felt would be most helpful in therapy in enabling patients to grasp the question of their own identity.

As I mentioned at a previous meeting, I have a diagrammatic way of presenting my ideas on the self, developed many years ago in teaching the development of personality and self; and it works so well that I also use it very often in therapy.



After you meet new patients there is often a first initial period of enthusiasm; they then meet resistance and discouragement and start to slump. When that happens, I revert to the role of teacher for a while; and although I know they are not going to grasp it completely at this stage of therapy I spend maybe most of an hour discussing it, knowing that later on they will grasp it more fully. I talk about their feelings of inadequacy and the things that they are feeling very uncomfortable about, and illustrate to them that their concept of themselves is a totally negative one because of criticism in childhood, because of parents that they could not please, because of any one of a number of reasons. And to defend against this negative self-concept--which they cannot live with--they throw up the defense wall (A on the diagram). And this, of course, appears to be positive; deceiving themselves and deceiving others.

Then I let them know that this defense (A) is positive, but it is phony; while the hidden self-concept (B on diagram) is negative but is inaccurate. I say, "When we started to break down the defenses, you were faced with this negative concept (B); and this nobody can live with, it's uncomfortable. But we are not going to stop here, we are going to break this down and get through to the core itself (+C on diagram), to something that you haven't recognized for a long time. And this is the essential worth of you, because you are a human being, because you are a human person, the finest thing in creation!"

Then I talk about what it means to be a human person; that it is the pinnacle of creation; and this is going to give the patient a very solid sense of dignity, one that will not be conceit because there are millions of others that have exactly the same thing, in the eyes of God. The sense of this basic equality of man and the sense of a dependence on the Infinite gives dignity and humility, and with these twin cornerstones we can build anything.

So that briefly is the program I usually attempt to use: pointing out to patients the fact that they have had a negative concept of themselves, that they have covered it with defenses, but that ultimately in order to find themselves in what we might call a free condition, they would have to break down the defenses, go through the negative concept of self and find the core of value which each human being has.