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Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization as illustrated in the life of Jesus

Peter Minh Quang Chu
University of the Pacific

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ABRAHAM MASLOW'S CONCEPT OF SELF ACTUALIZATION
AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE LIFE OF JESUS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
University of the Pacific

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts

by
Peter Minh Quang Chu
August 1978

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Importance of the Problem

How to be authentic to the self is possibly the main goal of all human efforts. Self-actualization is an urgent and important problem because it is the last stage in shaping a man's personality. In self-actualization, a person becomes more fully developed, more fully mature, indeed, a more complete person by fully actualizing his potentialities. In self-actualization, the person lives what he potentially and really is.

Statement of the Problem

The writer will investigate the concept of self-actualization as described by Abraham Maslow; J.F.T. Bugental's concept of authenticity will also be used to clarify what Abraham Maslow understands by self-actualization. The reason that the writer refers importantly to Bugental lies in the fact that this author, in his book The Search for Authenticity, gives an extended summary of Abraham Maslow's concept of the nature of self-actualization before he presents his own observations about "Ontologic freedom: Actualization and transcendence" (Bugental's terms). A host of other authors' writings will be quoted and explored, for the purpose of better explaining Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization.

The second purpose of this thesis is finding whether Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization fits the historical Jesus as

depicted in the Gospels. Since the figure of the historical Jesus has been scrutinized by many biblical scholars, the writer will phrase, cite, study, and refer to their writings in order to point out to what extent the historical Jesus corresponds to Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization.

Delimitations

Only Abraham Maslow's concept of self-actualization will be studied. Other aspects of humanistic psychology will be ignored.

The new quest for the historical Jesus will not be a concern of this thesis. Jesus will be studied specifically as an illustration of Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization. Anything that does not relate to this concept will be put aside. To facilitate the analysis, the Synoptics will be used to investigate Jesus. Moreover, facts, events, narrations, etc., recorded in the Synoptics are taken herein as historical.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study the following definitions are set forth to indicate the meaning ascribed to the terms used.

Self-actualization: This term implies a process in which a person moves, changes or is transformed. It is a dynamic rather than a static concept.

A self-actualizing person: He is a person who actualizes his potentialities, his self; he is mature, authentic to himself, motivated by his inner growth or his own being, rather than by his deficiency.

A self actualizer: This term may be seen as identical to the term a "self actualizing person;" it inclines, however, to present the fact

that a person is already actualized, rather than that he is in the process of attaining his self actualization.

Basic needs: These are needs which can be found in every human being; without sufficiently gratifying them, a person can hardly develop his potentialities.

The hierarchy of basic needs: This term is a value scale. Needs more important to bodily life will be classified first; needs, however, less important to the survival of the body are usually more important to psychological life. To put this classification in another way, what is first in "soma" will be last in "psyche," and vice versa.

Method and Technique

The method employed in this thesis will be expository and analytical. The thesis will examine or explain the concept of self actualization as formulated by Abraham Maslow. It will then analyze the historical Jesus as presented in the Synoptics; this analysis will present Jesus as an illustration of Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization.

Three chapters follow this introduction. Chapter two will consider the definition of self actualization, the hierarchy of basic needs their role in building self actualization, and most of all, the nature of self actualization concerning the self, others, and nature. Chapter three will offer some subdivisions: the concept of self actualization when applied to the life of Jesus; Jesus and conditions of becoming self actualized, and the nature of self actualization with regard to the life of Jesus. Chapter four is basically a summary; it will also offer suggestions for further investigations.

Chapter 2

ABRAHAM MASLOW'S CONCEPT OF SELF ACTUALIZATION

In order to better understand Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization, we shall discuss several conditions and the nature of self actualization, then conclude the chapter with comparisons between this self actualization and some other psychological phenomena.

Basic Needs and other Conditions of Self Actualization

Before investigating Abraham Maslow's ideas regarding self actualization in general, the writer will present the hierarchy of basic needs and their characteristics in the process of self actualization.

Hierarchy of Basic Needs

Self actualization is a psychological state or need in which a person is regarded as fully developing his potentialities. This is considered as final in a process of becoming mature. Prior to reaching that last stage or need, a person must satisfy earlier or lower needs. These lower needs are called basic and hierarchical because some of them are comparatively more important than others and "their deprivation makes the person sicken and wither, or stunts his growth. . . . Gratifying them is therapeutic, curing the deficiency-

illness."¹ Being basic, these needs are certainly necessary but not sufficient. Without basic conditions such as food, water, etc., a person cannot survive. But with only these conditions, a person cannot attain his whole maturity. Abraham Maslow enumerates five basic needs as follows: the psychological needs, the safety needs, the belongingness and love needs, the esteem needs, and the need for self actualization. Additionally, Maslow notes there is a cognitive hierarchy and some indication of aesthetic needs as basic. The desires to know and to understand as well as the need for beauty have their own importance in shaping a person's personality. Nevertheless, in his book Motivation and Personality, which is used as a key book for this thesis, Abraham Maslow says little about them because, generally speaking, they may not be considered as crucial for a person's normalcy; the writer, therefore, will not discuss them in this thesis.

The physiological needs. Physiological needs rank at the base of the hierarchy of needs because they are vital to a person. "If all the needs are unsatisfied, and the organism is then dominated by the physiological needs, all other needs may become simply non-existent or be pushed into the background."² Maslow analyses these needs into two subdivisions: first, the development of the concept

¹ Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Value (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1959), p. 123.

² Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970), p. 37.

of homeostasis; and second, the relationship between appetites (preferential choices among foods) and the actual needs or lacks in the body.

According to Hans Selye, "Homeostasis is organic stability, or the maintenance of steadiness in every respect."³ Maslow, though phrasing the idea differently, comes to the same thought when he asserts that the term is used to describe the body's automatic efforts to keep a normal, constant state of the blood stream. Maslow quotes approvingly from the same source as Selye does⁴ to point out that homeostasis is a process for

(1) the water content of the blood, (2) salt content, (3) sugar content, (4) protein content, (5) fat content, (6) calcium content, (7) oxygen content, (8) constant hydrogen-ion level (acid-base balance), and (9) constant temperature of the blood. Obviously this list could be extended to include other minerals, the hormones, vitamins, etc.⁵

Maslow believes that appetites are a fairly efficient indication of actual needs or lacks in the body. "If the body lacks some chemical, the individual will tend (in an imperfect way) to develop a specific appetite or partial hunger for that missing food element."⁶ In other words, appetites are a corollary of homeostasis.

The physiological needs, as they are ranked first in the hierarchy of basic needs, may change the whole philosophy of a person's

³Hans Selye, The Stress of Life (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976), p. 13.

⁴W.G. Cannon, The Wisdom of the Body (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1932). Cited by Abraham Maslow (without indicating the page number), Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 35.

⁵Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 35.

⁶Ibid.

future if they are not sufficiently gratified. "For our chronically and extremely hungry man, Utopia can be defined simply as a place where there is plenty of food."⁷

Generally speaking, in order to become self actualized, one's bodily needs must be gratified for personality, in part, depends upon such gratification. Maslow's concept may be seen as different from the ancient authors. Plato, for example, in his Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Symposium. and the Republic, is concerned with what is beyond and outside of rather than within a person's body. His main concern is "a well-ordered individual,"⁸ "The Idea of the Good,"⁹ "The just and wise man as ruler over himself and therefore the happiest."¹⁰ In a similar line of thought, Confucius taught that a person's needs are psychic rather than bodily, because a "Great Man applies himself to the fundamentals, for once the fundamentals are there System comes into being."¹¹ Plato's well-ordered individual, Confucius' Great Man, or Maslow's self actualizing person are only different terms used in different times and places to express the same human goal, the aspiration of becoming fulfilled and complete. The method and technique, however, are different. While the ancients ignored bodily needs, Maslow asserts that they are basic to self fulfillment and self actualization.

⁷Ibid., p. 37.

⁸Louise Ropes Laomis, Plato (New York: Walter J. Black, Inc., 1942) p. 306.

⁹Ibid., p. 368.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 460.

¹¹James R. Ware, The Sayings of Confucius (New Jersey: A Mentor Book, The New American Library, Inc., 1955), p. 21.

Once physiological needs are sufficiently gratified, "other and higher needs emerge and these, rather than physiological hungers, dominate the organism."¹²

The safety needs. Abraham Maslow posits that once the physiological needs are comparatively well gratified, a new set of needs then arise, which he calls "the safety needs." This new set of needs comprises "stability, security, protection, dependency, freedom from anxiety, from fear and chaos; need for order, structure, law, limits; strength in the protector; and so on."¹³

Because of the importance of the safety needs in enabling a person to become normal, mature, and hence, self-actualized, Maslow insists that in psychotherapy one of the main foci is how to increase the patient's feelings of security. The patient's "fear of catastrophic breakdown must be replaced by a positive evaluation of his strength."¹⁴ Safety, security play a "sine quo non" role in shaping a mature person, a role which is so crucial that if these needs are not well gratified, the person may easily become neurotic. This neurosis, according to Maslow, is one in which the sick person wants to get rid of every feeling of insecurity. It is a compulsive-obsessive neurosis. Such patients try to organize their world so that everything may be predicted, unchangeable, stabilized. "They hedge themselves about with all sorts of ceremonials, rules, and formulas so that

¹²Ibid., p. 38.

¹³Ibid., p. 39.

¹⁴Abraham Maslow & Bela Mittelmann, M.D., Principles of Abnormal Psychology (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1941), p. 276.

every possible contingency may be provided for and so that no new contingencies may appear."¹⁵ Since safety needs, once sufficiently gratified, help very much in creating a sound society, one of the main tasks of a good government is to keep the country in safety.

Insecurity in a person's life, generally speaking, carries him to anxiety. Living in anxiety, a person may, according to Eugental, "begin to distort the actuality of the threatening object or his own authenticity so that the perception of threat is modified and the anxiety is reduced. This process of distortion is the root and substance of the resistance."¹⁶ In this kind of resistance "a person distorts his awareness to avoid becoming conscious of unsupportable threat to his being."¹⁷

Safety needs are so "basic" that people may, according to Abraham Maslow, sacrifice all higher needs for the sake of their security.

This tends to be true for all human beings, including healthy ones, since they too will tend to respond to danger with realistic regression to the safety need level, and will prepare to defend themselves. But it seems to be most true of people who are living near the safety line. They are particularly disturbed by threats to authority, to legality, and to the representatives of the law.¹⁸

Security is necessary because it is one of important elements which help a person grow, attain his mature personality. A healthy person, once being sufficiently granted security and other needs,

¹⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 42.

¹⁶ J.P.T. Eugental, The Search for Authenticity (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967), pp. 94-95.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 93.

¹⁸ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 43.

may be growth-motivated or being-motivated (B-motivated) rather than deficiency-motivated (D-motivated). These "B" and "D" notions are very important in Abraham Maslow's thoughts; the writer, therefore, will present them in detail later in this thesis.

If both physiological and safety needs are fairly well gratified, then to become congruent to his inner self, a person needs something more.

The belongingness and love needs. Love and belongingness are indispensable elements which give a person a healthy life. It is the reason why Pitirim A. Sorokin maintains that love is a factor which seems to increase the duration of life. Studies of suicide show that so-called egotistic suicide is caused mainly by loneliness and the psychosocial isolation of an individual. "Deficiency of the vitamin of love is also responsible for many mental disorders."¹⁹ Love is basic to a person. He cannot live without love, care, belongingness. Love, according to Rollo May, "had been assumed to be a motivating force, a power which could be relied upon to push us onward in life."²⁰

Once a person has enough food and safety, he "will feel sharply the pangs of loneliness, of ostracism, of rejection, of friendlessness, of rootlessness."²¹

Because love and belongingness play such an important role in a self actualizing person, the result is disastrous when

¹⁹ Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Value, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

²⁰ Rollo May, Love and Will (New York: A Lane Edition, 1974), p. 14.

²¹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 43.

people, especially children, have to be torn from their homes and family, friends and neighbors, to live as transient newcomers rather than as natives. It is quite true for a number of Vietnamese refugees who now live in the United States. Though having enough food and material conveniences, and having no fear of dreadful enemies as when they still lived in Vietnam before 1975, they now feel infinitely lonely and lack a motive for their lives. A former Vietnamese captain who is a refugee and lived in Stockton for a while, now is in a mental hospital in Long Beach, California. His wife, children, and all his relatives, friends, etc., are still in Vietnam. Because of his lack of love and belongingness, he feels his life to be aimless. Last year, he drove a car recklessly and was in a terrible accident in which he broke his two legs and backbone. In his unconscious state of mind at the time of the accident he called desperately for his wife and children. If Descartes says, "I think, therefore I am," Emmanuel Mounier asserts, "I love, therefore I am."²² A person lives when he loves. He is a human being as long as he can love and be loved. Love, as herein spoken of, is not necessarily related or identical to sex, because a person may love without sex, or may have sex without love, though these two aspects usually go together.

The esteem needs. Self esteem, according to Abraham Maslow, can be classified into two subsidiary sets. The first set is that in which a person's desires are "for strength, for achievements, for

²² Emmanuel Mounier, Personalism (New York: The Grove Press, 1952), p. 23.

adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom."²³ In the second set, his desires are "for reputation or prestige (defining these terms as respect or esteem from other people), status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity, or appreciation."²⁴ A person, if sufficiently gratified with food, safety and love, wants eagerly to expand his own self in space and time; he wants others to be aware of his deeds, hence admiring and respecting him. The satisfaction of esteem needs leads to a feeling of strength, adequacy, capability, and importance in the world. Thwarting of these needs, on the contrary, produces the abnormal psychology, called self-devaluation, whose symptoms may be enumerated as a "feeling and expectation of helplessness, loss of self esteem, moral worthlessness and guilt, inability to give love, loss of capability, . . . disturbances of the evaluation of the world."²⁵ People who underestimate themselves, or anticipate catastrophic loss of self-esteem, are convinced that "they fall utterly below their ideals and would fail in the most dismal and humiliating fashion if they attempted to live up to them or if their true nature were revealed to other individuals and to themselves."²⁶

The last point which catches Abraham Maslow's attention is the danger of basing self esteem on opinions of others rather than on

²³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 45.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Abraham Maslow, Principles of Abnormal Psychology, op. cit., pp. 146-147.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 147.

competence or capacity of the self. A person, if being mature enough, esteems himself not because the others respect and esteem him, but most of all, because he sees that he intrinsically possesses qualities which are worthy of being respected, esteemed. Estimating the self according to one's "real self" means that one sees inward rather than outward when one performs, or evaluates his deeds; "The most stable and therefore most healthy self-esteem is based on deserved respect from others rather than on external fame or celebrity and unwarranted adulation."²⁷

The need for self actualization. When understood in its literal meaning, self actualization means actualizing the self, making real what is potential, positive and actual what is negative and passive, when a person desires becoming "everything that one is capable of becoming."²⁸ There is a dynamic change in the process of self actualization; change, not destruction occurs, therefore the person is not divided; rather, he is unified, integrated. Because of this change, Maslow maintains that self actualization varies from person to person. In one individual, it may take the form of the desire to become an ideal teacher; in another it may be expressed artistically, in a third, it may be seen in the act of helping others or in producing more good products. On the peak of self actualization, each person is his own world and differs greatly from one another.

If a person is psychologically different from others, one can say that he possesses his independence or his freedom. To satisfy

²⁷ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁸ Ibid.

one's needs, hence to become more self actualized, Maslow affirms that a person must be granted freedom to speak, to do what he wants so far as no harm occurs to others; with freedom to manifest oneself, to search for information; with freedom to defend oneself and to enjoy justice, orderliness as well as fairness, honesty, etc. Maslow concludes,

Thwarting in these freedoms will be reacted to with a threat or emergency response. . . . Any danger to them (i.e., the cognitive capacities to satisfy one's basic needs), any deprivation or blocking of their free use, must be threatening to the basic needs themselves. Such a statement is a partial solution of the general problems of curiosity, the search for knowledge, truth, and wisdom, and the ever-persistent urge to solve the cosmic mysteries. Secrecy, censorship, dishonesty, blocking of communication threaten all the basic needs."²⁹

Summing up, physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self actualization are considered as basic because a person can die if these needs are not sufficiently gratified. The lack of their gratification can lead to a disaster as seen in the following true story. The writer taught French in the academic year 1973-74 to an Eleventh grade class when a girl was a student. During nearly all the school year she kept silent and showed herself afraid of everything. Toward the end of the year, she had to enter a mental hospital for several weeks. One evening, she crossed the highway when the red light flashed. A car hit her and cut her in two. After her death, it was learned that she grew up in an extremely insecure area because of the war. Her brother was killed in a battle. A couple of years later, her family moved some-

²⁹Ibid., p. 47.

where close to Saigon. Unfortunately, her mother then died because of high blood pressure. Her father, after a while, remarried and her step-mother wanted her to marry an American. How can one find a reasonable answer for the girl's death? Could she have saved her life and become self actualized if she had a good chance to satisfy her basic needs?

Characteristics of Basic Needs in Self Actualization

Abraham Maslow describes further characteristics of basic needs³⁰ which may be seen and illustrated as follows:

The degree of fixity in the hierarchy of basic needs. This hierarchy is not so rigid that it couldnot change, because it directly describes the way a person is. In some people, self esteem seems to be more important than love, yet in most cases, people seek self-esteem for the sake of love rather than for the sake of self esteem itself. In others, their creativeness seems to be more predominant than any other counter-determinant.

If a person has been starved for love in the earliest months of his life, he may lose forever the desire and the ability to give and to receive affection. On the contrary, if a person has been granted everything necessary to satisfy a certain need, he may underestimate its importance. Thus, he could give up his job rather than lose his self respect. But if he starves for six months, let us say,

³⁰Ibid., pp. 51-58.

then he may be very willing to take his job back even at the price of losing his self-respect. Another cause of apparent reversal in the hierarchy is that there are many determinants of behavior other than the needs and desires. Looking, therefore, only at behavior we may get a wrong impression of people. Perhaps more important are exceptions that comprise ideals, high social standards, high values, etc. People may give up everything for the sake of a particular ideal.

Degrees of relative satisfaction. Most people are partially satisfied as well as unsatisfied in their basic needs. A more realistic description of the hierarchy would be in terms of decreasing percentages of satisfaction as we go up the hierarchy of prepotency. The emergence, moreover, of a new need after satisfaction of the prepotent need is gradual, rising by slow degrees from nothingness. For instance, if the prepotent need of food is satisfied only 10 percent (such as the "boat people" who recently escaped from Vietnam), their needs of love, of self esteem, or of self actualization may not be visible at all. However, as their need of food becomes satisfied 25 percent (when the refugees were in a refugee camp in Thailand), then these needs may emerge 5 percent. When the need of food becomes satisfied 75 percent or more (as the refugees were already welcomed to the United States), their needs of love or of self actualization may emerge 50 percent, etc.

Unconscious character and cultural specificity and generality of needs. The basic needs are often largely unconscious for most people although they may become conscious with suitable techniques and with more educated people. A married man may not be aware of his love needs and the way his wife gratifies them. He may come to such an awareness if she dies; on the other hand he may not. Thus he may then go on to marry the first woman who comes along. For the cultural specificity and generality of needs, people, even in different societies, are much alike. The more we know them, the more we find out their commonness. We then recognize the most startling differences to be superficial rather than basic, e.g., differences in clothes, style of hairdress, tastes in food, etc. Behavior or desires vary from one culture to another while basic needs are relatively universal.

Multiple motivations and determinants of behavior. Most behavior is multimotivated or overdetermined. Drinking may be done partially for satiating thirst and partially for comfort, for showing love or hate. Preparing to become a doctor in medicine may be a way to satisfy one's physiological needs, safety needs, esteem needs, or the need for self actualization, or just to win the love of a certain girl. As for determinants of behavior, basic needs are not unique stimuli which shape behavior. According to Abraham Maslow, besides basic needs, behavior can be determined by the so-called external field, or by specific, isolated, external stimuli. As an example, he points out that in association of ideas, if a person hears the stimulus word "table," he may immediately perceive a memory of a table or he may

think of a chair. Maslow does not see any relationship between this association of ideas and his concept of basic needs.³¹

Deficiency motivations and Being motivations. Abraham Maslow asserts that his self actualizing people were living a value-enjoying, self-perfecting life, that is, they were living a growth-motivation or being-motivation rather than a deficiency motivation life. Self actualization is closer to growth and maturation than it is to habit formation via reward, that is, it is an unfolding from within of what is already there.³² It is not acquired from without. Basic needs, if not sufficiently gratified, can keep a person all the time seeking to satisfy them. The more they are sufficiently gratified, the more likely growth-motivated or being-motivated a person will be, the less he is pushed by deficiency motivations (D-motivations). Being motivations (B-motivations) are characteristics in which a self actualizer can consider status, honors, rewards, popularity, etc., less important than self development and inner growth. A self actualizer is a person who transforms his D-motivations into B-motivations in a creative way. He is functionally autonomous from his earlier needs.³³

Abraham Maslow continues his research and finds out that "the perfectly healthy, normal, fortunate man has no sex needs or hunger needs, or needs for safety, or for love, or for prestige, or self esteem,

³¹Ibid., p. 55.

³²Ibid., p. 233.

³³cf. Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1968), pp. 23, 25.

except in stray moments of quickly passing threat."³⁴ He does not have these needs because they are already sufficiently gratified; otherwise, he "may fairly be envisaged simply as sick man or at least less than fully man."³⁵ To say it in another way, he is deficiency-motivated. "A healthy man is primarily motivated by his needs to develop and actualize his fullest potentialities and capacities."³⁶ A self actualizer is a being-motivated person, that is, his basic needs are considered as adequately gratified and they no longer keep him backward; rather, they become a source of his joy. He may be "more independent than average with regard to safety, belongingness and love gratification. . . . Which is to say that these aspects of the person have become functionally autonomous, i.e., independent of the very gratifications that create them."³⁷

If a person sufficiently gratifies his basic needs, is he asked to satisfy any other conditions so that he can become self actualized?

Other Conditions of Self Actualization

Conditions relating to basic needs. Abraham Maslow, when talking about a "healthy personality," "new knowledge in human value," or about "principles of abnormal psychology," presents directly or indirectly conditions which supplement the basic needs or give more

³⁴ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 57.
³⁵ Ibid. ³⁶ Ibid.
³⁷ Ibid., p. 58.

emphasis on their roles in actualizing a self.

- Homeostasis and health. "The wisdom of the body," in Abraham Maslow's term, is the body's capacity to regulate its organism so that the whole body stays stable in the midst of change. To keep itself stable, the body must use its "wisdom" to select, to choose time "of diet, of wearing, amount of sleep, time of toilet training, need for activity, and a lot else."³⁸

Though homeostasis and health are not apparently known as predominant in the process of self actualization, they, like broken stones in a foundation of a monument, have their own importance; the body, with its specific "wisdom," may unconsciously know how to gratify them, how to keep itself "in good condition" though the outer environment may be less appropriate for a person's growth. It is noticeable that there are persons who show themselves mature, mentally healthy while their bodies seem frail, unstable. They grow psychologically while they may be sick physically. Generally speaking, homeostasis, choice, and health are conditions for a person becoming physically and mentally strong, that is, self actualized. Without these, usually he may not keep himself alive in a normal condition.

- Rootedness and identity. Abraham Maslow does not use the term "rootedness" to describe ties which bind a person to the place where he was born, to the people who gave him birth. But as presented

³⁸ Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., p. 121.

elsewhere, he classifies as basic needs the need for belongingness, for love,³⁹ for interpersonal relations,⁴⁰ for interrelatedness,⁴¹ etc. All these characteristics can be understood as different aspects of rootedness. Rootedness, to Erich Fromm, is very important; he asserts that a person could not stand alone without a home, without roots; he could not bear the isolation and helplessness of this position. He would become insane.⁴² What Fromm thinks is very close to what Maslow writes, "we know. . . the destructive effects on children of moving too often, of disorientation, . . . of being without roots, or of despising one's roots."⁴³ As for Bugental, he conceives that "the person who has achieved rootedness shows in his being an awareness of his kinship to all experience, to all life, to all men."⁴⁴ Rootedness is a primordial given which has been granted to a being as a-person-in-the-world. In so far as he can see the navel on his abdomen, he also can see that he has a root. To fulfil his potentialities, to become fully what he potentially is, is to live in his roots rather than to deny them.

Living in one's roots is not identical to living in blind dependency. Rootedness means relatedness in separatedness. A sense of identity is needed to become a person in the way he really is. "Man, being torn away from nature," writes Erich Fromm, "being endowed with reason and imagination, needs to form a concept of himself,

³⁹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 43.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 166. ⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 319-320.

⁴² Cited by Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values (New York: Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1959), pp. 154-155.

⁴³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 43.

⁴⁴ J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 103.

needs to say and feel: "I am I."⁴⁵

To Abraham Maslow, identity, creativity and productivity seem to be the ultimate goal of the process of self actualization, since he concedes "peak experiences as acute identity-experiences," while peak experiences are not conditions but rather results of such a process. He, however, sees identity as an obvious importance for a person to become self actualized. Without identity he cannot be what he is. "Since my feeling is that people in peak experiences are most their identities. . . it would seem that this is an especially important source of clean and uncontaminated data."⁴⁶ Because of its importance in shaping a person's maturity, authors describe it in a number of works. Among these are counted: Erik Erikson, in Childhood and Society (1950); Rollo May, in Love and Will (1974), and Man's Search for Himself (1953); Allen Wheelis, in The Quest for Identity (1958); Emmanuel Mounier, in The Character of Man in 1956, etc.

Identity and other conditions, as listed above, are only "basic." To become self actualized, a person needs to satisfy further conditions.

Dropping resistance. How to eliminate resistance is a crucial problem and is one of important factors in becoming self actualized.

In Abraham Maslow's writings, resistance can be understood as

⁴⁵ Edited by Abraham Maslow in New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., p. 157.

⁴⁶ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 103.

working against authority,⁴⁷ against enculturation,⁴⁸ or against being rubricized.⁴⁹ so that a person can enjoy his inner freedom, can become who and what he potentially and actually is. As for Eugental, resistance can be seen as "the general defensive wall the patient puts between himself and the threats that he finds linked to being authentic. Resistance is anti-authenticity."⁵⁰ Though Abraham Maslow does not employ the term "resistance" when he presents "Some Dangers of Being-Cognition," what he writes is indeed close to what Eugental affirms. Maslow writes, "I could describe self-actualization as a development of personality which frees the person from the deficiency problems of youth, and from the neurotic (or infantile, or fantasy, or unnecessary, or "unreal") problems of life."⁵¹ Abraham Maslow also edits his colleagues' works in which Walter A. Weisskopf asserts that "resistance consciousness and individuation develops because they cause anxiety. This leads to regression and to union downwards;"⁵² Kurt Goldstein thinks that "after certain time even the severely sick individual reveals a more ordered behavior and is no longer so stricken by catastrophe and anxiety."⁵³

⁴⁷ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 14, 19.

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 171-174.

⁴⁹ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 126ff.

⁵⁰ J.F.T. Eugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 103.

⁵¹ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 115.

⁵² Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Value, op. cit., p. 111.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 181.

If a person is self actualized, he knows how to drop down "the general wall," to solve himself "the neurotic problems," as well as how "to resist against consciousness and individuation." Without dropping resistance, a person may be kept backward, remaining infantile; he is immature, not fully developed or self actualized.

Awareness and value recognition. Abraham Maslow talks about cognitive needs,⁵⁴ cognitive capacity,⁵⁵ as well as about cognitive therapy.⁵⁶ Cognition or thinking⁵⁷ plays a significant role in shaping a person's self actualization. When desiring "to know and to understand" the outer world, the person should know and understand the inner world, the world within himself. This combination of knowledge and understanding, according to Bugental, can be called awareness. He writes that awareness "is an integral process, which for heuristic purposes, we may describe as having aspects of meaning, feeling, and action potential, but awareness always has these aspects and is not simply one or the other."⁵⁸

To know, to be aware of something, moreover, implies an ability to judge its importance with regard to one's self, the others, and nature. Value recognition is a condition as well as a significant characteristic of self actualization. The notion of value can reside in whatever a person thinks of or does. Abraham Maslow, therefore, describes value

⁵⁴ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 14-15.
⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 47. ⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 49, 262.
⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 286. ⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 182-3.
⁵⁹ J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 286.

in many circumstances, under a number of angles, such as "values and needs,"⁶⁰ "values and self actualization,"⁶¹ "psychological data and value theory,"⁶² etc. He writes, "Science is based on human values. . . . Human emotional, cognitive, expressive, and aesthetic needs give science its origins and its goals. The gratification of any such need is a value."⁶³ If a person does not apprehend some scale of value, he is then not normal, because he does not follow any rule, any "norm." Norm is value. "Normal" is a primordial condition for a person becoming self-actualized. Basic needs are basic to everybody who lives in the past, the present and the future because they are shared values.

Abraham Maslow's Concept of Self Actualization

Abraham Maslow sees self actualizing people attaining "the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, etc. Such people seem to be fulfilling themselves and to be doing the best that they are capable of doing."⁶⁴ A self actualizing person is he about whom one can say "what a man can be, he must be. He must be true to his own nature. . . . to become everything that one is capable of becoming."⁶⁵ "To become everything," in this case, is to realize "self fulfillment of the idiosyncratic and species-wide potentialities of the individual person."⁶⁶ Maslow also writes, "self actualization or health must

⁶⁰ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 6.

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 163-164; 176-178.

⁶² Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., pp. 119ff.

⁶³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 60.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 150. ⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

ultimately be defined as the coming to pass of the fullest humanness, or as the "Being" of the person."⁶⁷ These "species-wide potentialities" will become real or actual in the process of self actualization. A self actualizing person makes "real" what he potentially is. "A central task here is to become aware of what one is, biologically, temperamentally, constitutionally as a member of a particular species."⁶⁸ A person "is" when he does not exclude his basic needs; rather, he satisfies them, transforms them from deficiency motivation to being or growth motivation. Abraham Maslow, therefore, writes, "Thus they were being themselves, developing, growing, and maturing, not going anywhere (in the sense, e.g., of social climbing), not striving in the ordinary sense of straining and trying for a state of affairs other than that in which they were."⁶⁹

On the whole, Abraham Maslow defines self actualization "as ongoing actualization of potentials, capacities and talents, as fulfillment of mission (or call, fate, destiny, or vocation)."⁷⁰

If Maslow's descriptions of self actualization are carefully analyzed, some remarks on them can be made as follows:

(1) Self actualization is "the full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities, etc." In other words, though Maslow does not expressly mention it, self actualization accepts a priori existential givens, that is, "talents, capacities, potentialities, etc." All these human characteristics are already there.

⁶⁷ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 145.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 95.

⁶⁹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 233.

⁷⁰ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 25.

They are the person himself. The person is his talents, capacities, potentialities, etc. But as they are potentialities, etc., they become real, actualized only when these potentialities are used, exploited.

(2) A self actualizing person "must be true to his own nature," that is he must be true to what is already within himself. He must live his inner rather than his outer life. He resists against everything that keeps him back, everything that estranges him. What urges him to be "everything that he is capable of becoming" does not reside outside, rather inside his own self. This is his nature. The more he is congruent to his nature, the more he becomes self actualizing.

(3) "To become aware of what one is. . . [is to be] a member of a particular species," that is, a self actualizing person lives as one of its members. "No man is an island." Moreover, self actualization is applied to a "particular species," this means that it has its limits, concrete and noticeable. Self actualization can be seen not only as an abstract notion but also as a practical and practicable way of life. This way of life, within its limits, can help a "member of a particular species" attain their full development, their full maturity.

(4) Self actualizing people "were being themselves. . . ." In this assumption, it seems that Abraham Maslow accepts the process of self actualization as innate to everybody. The problem, therefore, is not how to create such a process in each person but how to create an appropriate atmosphere for his growth so that he can fully develop all his potentialities and capacities.

After presenting the conditions and the meanings of self actualization, the writer goes on to present the nature of this psychological phenomenon.

Nature of Self Actualization

Abraham Maslow points out a number of important characteristics of the self actualizing person. J.F.T. Bugental, after enumerating all these aspects, adds some others. Once becoming self actualized, a person can be seen as living in following manner.

Self Acceptance; Decline of the Goal of Happiness, and the Need for Privacy

Abraham Maslow describes the nature of self acceptance in an interesting way: "Our healthy individuals find it possible to accept themselves and their own nature without chagrin or complaint or, for that matter, even without thinking about the matter very much."⁷¹ Healthy people do not think "about the matter very much" because they accept themselves as human beings, that is, they can accept not only their good qualities but also their "frailities and sins, weakness, and evils of human nature."⁷² Thus self acceptance may be seen as a transparent mirror in which the self actualizing person reflects himself. The degree of a person's self actualization can be measured by the degree of his self acceptance. Abraham Maslow's concept of self acceptance is somewhat close to Bugental's concept of

⁷¹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 155-157.

⁷² Ibid., p. 155.

decline of the goal of happiness. A person who feels "self-satisfied" (in Abraham Maslow's writing) may be identified as a person who can drop away "happiness as a goal in itself,"⁷³ (in J.F.T. Eugental's writing). A "happy person" is not one who is exempted from guilt, sadness, anxiety, etc.; rather he is happy just because he can accept his "existential guilt;"⁷⁴ he is busy with what he has chosen to commit his life to rather than with what he has been pushed to do by outside influences, eg., material advantages.

Once people accept themselves as the way they are, they enjoy their inner happiness. They then feel a strong need for privacy. Privacy or detachment may coexist with self acceptance. Living in their detachment, self actualizing people can be more problem centered than ego centered, more independent from the influence of outer surroundings; they can become "solitary without harm to themselves and without discomfort."⁷⁵

As a result of their detachment, self actualizing people, according to Abraham Maslow, are self disciplined. They "make up their own minds come to their own decisions, are self-starters, responsible for themselves and their own destinies."⁷⁶ They do this, protest that, or agree with some persons or arguments, not because these persons or things touch their emotion, their heart, but most of all,

⁷³J.F.T. Eugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 272.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 158.

⁷⁵Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 160-161.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 161-162.

because these persons or things objectively deserve to be agreed or disagreed with. Salesmen, advertisers, parents, newspapers, etc., occasionally pose problems but are not ultimate determinants in their decision making process.

Self actualizers can be busy with what they have chosen to commit their life to, are responsible for themselves and their own destinies; that is, they do not deviate from their ultimate goal; identity or unity is the nature of their whole life.

Discrimination between Means and Ends, Good and Evil;
and the Freeing Subject-Object Split

Abraham Maslow observes that self actualizing people "are fixed on ends rather than on means, and means are quite definitely subordinated to these ends. . . . Our subjects make the situation more complex by often regarding as ends in themselves many experiences and activities that are, for other people, only means."⁷⁷

Love, let us say, is not identified with a gift or a present. The present has its value only when it stands for the person who truly loves his beloved. The loved one, in turn, is self actualized only when he receives a present, not as an end in the present itself, but as a means to prove the love of the person who loves him. What he appreciates is not the price of the present but the love of the person who sent him the present.

Self actualizing people "have definite moral standards, they do right and do not do wrong. Needless to say, their notions of

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 169.

right and wrong, of good and evil are often not the conventional one."⁷⁸ Right and wrong in this case are not determined by others, the public media, etc., yet self actualizing people listen to and respect all this information. When they judge, however, an action as good or wrong, their judgements are not solely based on these outside suggestions, rather on their inner power. Outside suggestions enrich but are not a substitute for this inner power. Self actualizing people "intrincically" discriminate between means and ends, good and evil, right and wrong, etc., because they are what they existentially are, not what the others want them to be.

Because they are "what they are," they free themselves from subject-object split. A person who attains his ontologic freedom, his actualization, "no longer feels the split within himself. The Me or Self is recognized for what it is, a scrapbook of the past, interesting, personal, but static and not binding upon the liberated I that lives in this minute."⁷⁹ In self actualizing people, according to Abraham Maslow, "the polarities disappeared and many oppositions thought to be intrinsic merged and coalesced with each other to form unities. . . . In these people, desires are in excellent accord with reason."⁸⁰ If St. Augustine says "Love God and do what you will," Abraham Maslow translates it into "Be healthy and then you may trust your impulses."⁸¹

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 168.

⁷⁹J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 275.

⁸⁰Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 178.

⁸¹Ibid., p. 179.

There are similarities between Maslow's concept and that of Karl Marx. The latter writes,

Communism as positive overcoming of private property as human self-alienation, and thus as the actual appropriation of the human essence through and for man; therefore as the complete and conscious restoration of man to himself within the total wealth of previous development, the restoration of man as a social, that is, human being. . . . It is the genuine resolution of the antagonism between man and nature and between man and man; it is the true resolution of the conflict between existence and essence, objectification and self-affirmation, freedom and necessity individual and species.⁸²

Putting aside the different means used to attain the same ends, what Karl Marx affirms seemingly coincides with what is repeated later by Abraham Maslow. What Maslow longs for is how to solve "dichotomies between concreteness and abstractness, self and society, acceptance and rebellion, etc;" while Marx wants to know how to get rid of "conflict between existence and essence, freedom and necessity, individual and species, etc." To say it differently, these thinkers are talking similarly about nature of a mature, self actualizing person. This nature is suggestively named "existential unitiveness."

Selective Commitment; Will, Active Agents; and the Imperfections of Self Actualizing People

A self actualizing person is content with himself, with what he is doing in each place and in each period of time. He knows well that if he wants everything in one time he will lose everything. This is the reason why Bugental writes, "Selective commitment is the acceptance of one's limitedness in the midst of possibilities. . . ."

⁸²Lloyd D. Easton and Kurt H. Guddat, Writings of the Young Marx on Philosophy and Society (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1967), p. 304.

To say no to any possibility is to admit one is finite. This is severely anxiety-evoking for some people."⁸³

Selective commitment then can be identified with self control in the sense that the person knows how to act aptly in each situation, with each person. He becomes more and more actualized through all events happening in his life. "Control" in this case means that the healthy person "must have," as Abraham Maslow points out, "the ability to control himself, to delay his pleasures, to be polite, to avoid hurting, to keep his mouth shut, and to rein his impulses."⁸⁴ Carl Rogers employs another term, self direction. Talking about "To Be that Self Which One Truly Is," he asserts that the person who reaches his self direction "becomes responsible for himself. He decides what activities and ways of behaving have meaning for him, and what do not."⁸⁵

Though phrasing their ideas differently, Bugental, Maslow, and Rogers, in this respect, affirm that a self actualizing person is he who can select what he does. He possesses the ability of controlling his self and enjoys his autonomy, his freedom in choosing within human limitedness.

As for a self actualizer's will, autonomy, as well as his imperfections, Abraham Maslow describes them pointedly as follows:

⁸³J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 270.

⁸⁴Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 137.

⁸⁵Carl L. Rogers, On Becoming a Person (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1961), p. 171.

Self actualizing people are not dependent for their main satisfactions on the real world, or other people or culture or means to ends or, in general, on extrinsic satisfactions. Rather they are dependent for their own development and continued growth on their own potentialities and latent resources. Just as the tree needs sunshine and water and food, so do most people need love, safety, and the other basic need gratifications that can come only from without. But once these external satisfiers are obtained, once these inner deficiencies are satiated by outside satisfiers, the true problem of individual human development begins, e.g., self actualization.⁸⁶

Self actualizing people need, of course, what others need, because they cannot survive if their basic needs are not sufficiently gratified. Once gratified, however, these factors push a person toward higher steps leading him to self actualization. "Higher steps" does not mean that the person becomes powerful, perfect or without any mistake. Rather, he still remains imperfect, because he can become self actualized as and within the conditions of a human being, not as and within the conditions of a godlike being. The nature of human being, as observable in everyday life, is imperfect. If Thomas Merton can say, "no man is an island," so we may say no person is completely independent or entirely spotless. Abraham Maslow admits that his "subjects show many of the lesser human failings. They too are equipped with silly, wasteful, or thoughtless habits. . . . Our subjects are occasionally capable of an extraordinary and unexpected ruthlessness."⁸⁷ He then, concludes, "To avoid disillusionment with human nature, we must first give up our illusions about it."⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 162.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 175.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 176.

Actualizing one's self is fulfilling one's nature which may always remain as potentialities if this nature is not sufficiently fostered and developed.

Acceptance of the Others; the Flavor of the Feeling for Mankind; and Interpersonal Relation

Even though Jean Paul Sartre shouts desperately, "Hell is the others," self actualizing person can sing cheerfully, "Heaven is other human beings." As Nietzsche observes, "We are afraid of the animosity of our neighbor, because we are apprehensive that he may thereby discover our secrets."⁸⁹ Stating as above, Nietzsche further observes, "I sought for great men, but all I found were apes of their ideal."⁹⁰

As for Abraham Maslow, self actualizing people "see human nature as it is and not as they would prefer to be. Their eyes see what is before them without being strained through spectacles of various sorts to distort or shape or color the reality."⁹¹ In other words, as Sigmund Freud says, they look at others with a "free floating association." They accept others with their unique features. It is the way Maslow watches, admires, and "accepts" a child, "You can like a child just it is, with no impulse to change it or to improve it, in the same way that I can love my little grand-

⁸⁹Geoffrey Clive, The Philosophy of Nietzsche (New Jersey: The New American Library, Inc., 1965), pp. 603-604.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 639.

⁹¹Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 156.

daughter, who is so perfect. . . . You accept it."⁹²

"You accept it." This acceptance does not necessarily mean what is accepted is coincident with what the acceptor longs for. The acceptor accepts "it" just because "it" is intrinsically worthy of being accepted. Acceptance of others may also be understood as a way of respecting them, of recognizing their being-in-the-world, of approving their equal rights and equal dignity in social relationship and communication. Acceptance with respect or reverence creates a state in which self actualizing people "do not cling to each other or have hooks or anchors of any kind. One has the definite feeling that they enjoy each other tremendously but would take philosophically a long separation or death, that is, would remain strong."⁹³

This exquisite acceptance of others, though expressing the strong character of self actualizing people, brings them to "the flavor of the feelings for mankind expressed by self actualizing subjects."⁹⁴ These people, once their potentialities become real or actual, can have a genuine tendency to help everybody without selection to satisfy their own desires. Quite contrary to Maslow, Nietzsche, presenting his superman, seems to put everything up side down. "Great men" are not those who are concerned with others "as if they were all members of a single family,"⁹⁵ but those in whom "tremendous energy has been ac-

⁹² Abraham Maslow, A Memorial Volume (Monterey: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., 1972), pp. 43-44.

⁹³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 199.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 165.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

cumulated."⁹⁶ They are great not because of their acceptance of the others but because of their capacity "of expending themselves."⁹⁷ It might be said that, to become self actualized, to become a superman, one must have "reverence for oneself, love for oneself, unconditional freedom with respect to oneself. . . . One must be superior to mankind in force, in loftiness of soul - in contempt."⁹⁸ To Abraham Maslow, the self actualizing person knows that he is "very different from other people in thought, impulse, behavior, emotion, . . . he nevertheless feels a basic underlying kinship with these creature."⁹⁹ Living with his "flavor for mankind," a self actualizing person is aware of what he really is. Instead of expressing "contempt" for others, he demonstrates "condescension" toward everybody, he treats all mankind as belonging to "a single family." "The flavor for mankind" leads self actualizing people to an exceptional interpersonal relationship. On the one hand, they are capable of greater love, more fusion, but on the other, they have especially deep ties with comparatively few persons. Abraham Maslow gives an excellent description when he writes: "The ones that they love profoundly are few in number. Partly this is for the reason that being very close to someone in this self actualizing style seems to require a good deal of time. Devotion is not a matter of a moment."¹⁰⁰ Though self actualizing people cannot profoundly love everybody, they "tend to be kind or at least patient to almost everyone. They have

⁹⁶Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols (Maryland: Penguin Books, 1975), p. 97.

⁹⁷Ibid., p. 98.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 114.

⁹⁹Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 165-166.

¹⁰⁰Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 166.

an especially tender love for children and are easily touched by them."¹⁰¹

"Being kind to almost everyone" does not contradict the fact that "the ones that they love profoundly are few in number." The reason for this can be found in what J.F.T. Bugental calls "existential givens," namely "finiteness." Using an illustration to clarify his viewpoint, he suggests that if a person watches a portion of a broad river, he can know many things about the river, but there are still many things he cannot or cannot yet know about. "Thus I am aware but, being aware, know that there is much more of which I might be aware. . . . So man discovers a first ontologic given of his awareness: that it is finite, limited, incomplete."¹⁰² Being aware of finiteness, self actualizing people are "happy" with their small circle of real friends though they want "love or rather have compassion for all mankind."¹⁰³

The Democratic Character Structure; Problem Centering;
and Philosophical, Unhostile Sense of Humor

The nature of a "sane society" "is not ownership of the means of production," according to Erich Fromm, "but participation in management and decision making."¹⁰⁴ To say it differently, a society is sane, mature, actualized, when it is democratic. The democratic character structure is without question observable in any society as well as in any of its members when they reach the state in which they make real what they potentially are. Regarding this democratic character

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 167.

¹⁰² J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 36.

¹⁰³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 167.

¹⁰⁴ Erich Fromm, The Sane Society (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 323.

structure, Abraham Maslow's position is made plain in his following writing:

These people have all the obvious or superficial democratic characteristics. They can be and are friendly with anyone of suitable character regardless of class, education, political belief, race, or color. As a matter of fact it often seems as if they are not even aware of these differences, which are for the average person so obvious and so important.

They have not only this most obvious quality but their democratic feeling goes deeper as well. For instance they find it possible to learn from anybody who has something to teach them, no matter what other characteristics he may have.¹⁰⁵

The democratic character structure herein discussed, however, does not exclude cognition of differentiations between persons, qualities, and things. Self actualizing people are comparatively few in society and usually are fully aware of their elite situation. Though not discriminating between blood, race, family, name, youth, age, sex, they do distinguish each individual based on his own capacity, talent, or his own intrinsic quality.

Self actualizing people live in a democratic character structure, hence make distinctions without discrimination and become outstanding in their problem centering. They act "as if being not aware of differences, "they do not waste their time, their mind, or their energy in trivial things, in insignificant dispute, that is, they can concentrate themselves on the main problem of their life."¹⁰⁶ The scope of their activities are generally large, beyond the need of their own selves, then they are frequently gifted with a "philosophical, unhostile sense

¹⁰⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 168.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 159.

of humor." It is Abraham Maslow's term to indicate the life style of people who "do not laugh at hostile humor (making people laugh by hurting someone) or superiority humor (laughing at someone else's inferiority) or authority - rebellion humor (the unfunny, Oedipal, or smutty joke)"¹⁰⁷ What they consider humor has a philosophical aspect. It relates to human beings in general as "when they are foolish, or forget their place in the universe, or try to be big when they are actually small."¹⁰⁸

Such a sense of humor appears very close to "insight and humor" described by Gordon Allport. To this psychologist, true humor is "the ability to laugh at the things one loves (including of course oneself and all that pertains to oneself), and still to love them. The real humorist perceives behind some solemn event, himself for instance, the contrast between pretention and performance."¹⁰⁹ Humor in self actualizing people becomes a specific expression of their objective understanding about nature, the others, and their own selves. In order to help his readers better understand this sense of humor, Allport recalls a legend in which, at a performance of Aristophanes' Clouds, Socrates stood up "in order that the amused audience might better compare his face with the mask that was intended to ridicule him."¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷Ibid., p. 169.

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹Gordon W. Allport, Personality a Psychological Interpretation (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1937), p. 223.

¹¹⁰Ibid., p. 222.

Simplicity; Love; and Intensification of Participation

The self actualizing person behaves with simplicity, spontaneity and naturalness. He has no wish to hurt, to fight against people who live around him. "He will go," observes Abraham Maslow, "through the ceremonies and rituals of convention with a good-humored shrug and with the best possible grace."¹¹¹ Convention or un-convention is not his main concern. What he pays attention to in his private life as well as in his relationship with others is his inner motivation, the right conditions for the personal growth of his self and of the whole humanity. Simplicity, in Maslow's thought, does not mean foolish naiveté or a lack of discretion. It is a term indicating a habit of behavior which is natural, spontaneous, and more autonomous, hence unconventional rather than conventional.¹¹²

Living in simplicity, with unconventional behavior, self actualizing people, regarding the problem of love, show themselves dropping their defenses and their role playing and their trying and striving in the relationship. They can accept the others with genuine respect. Abraham Maslow quotes Menninger (Love Against Hate, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1942, p. 22) to point out that "Love is impaired less by the feeling that we are not appreciated than by a dread, more or less dimly felt by everyone, lest others see through our masks, the masks of repression that have been forced upon us by convention and culture."¹¹³

¹¹¹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 157.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 158.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 185.

When people get rid of all that can obstruct their "natural" love, "they now love and are loved. . . . They have the power to love and the ability to be loved. . . . They at least know how to love, and can do so freely and easily and naturally and without getting wound up in conflict or threats or inhibitions."¹¹⁴ Love does not necessarily mean sex, though sex may usually come into a love relationship between opposite sexes. Maslow writes, "Self actualizing men and women tend on the whole not to seek sex for its own sake. . . . I have a fair number of instances in which for the time being at least sex was given up or rejected because it came without love or affection."¹¹⁵ Even in the sexual act, self actualizing people have their own manners, "They did not assume that the female was passive and the male active. . . . They could be both active and passive lovers."¹¹⁶ Being so, they are conscientious of their responsibility, care, and "the pooling of needs"¹¹⁷ in their love relationship. They enjoy fun and gaiety as well as they admire each other in their love because "love may make it possible to see qualities in the loved person."¹¹⁸

Regarding this important relationship, it seems valuable to quote Abraham Maslow's writings somewhat further, "The more mature they [Maslow's subjects] become, the less attracted they were by such characteristics as handsome, good-looking, good dancer, nice breasts, physically strong. . . and the more they spoke of compatibility, goodness, decency, good companionship."¹¹⁹ What Maslow observes seems

¹¹⁴Ibid., p. 186.

¹¹⁵Ibid., p. 187.

¹¹⁶Ibid., p. 189.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 192.

¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 200.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 201.

soundly fit to what Rollo May also conceives. He observes, "Love and will are united as a task and an achievement. For human beings, the more powerful need is not for sex per se but for relationship, intimacy, acceptance, and affirmation."¹²⁰

Intimacy, however, does not blind a self actualizing person. His intensification of participation shows his balanced character. On one hand, as J.F.T. Bugental stresses, he participates with much more wholehearted involvement in those matters to which he does choose to devote himself. On the other, "the actualizing person," writes Bugental, "retains his own being and is not made the object of that in which he chooses to participate."¹²¹ Self actualizing people are loving in their relationship, wholehearted in their participation; they do not only possess but also live their simplicity, their balanced will and love as well.

More Efficient Perception of Reality, and the Appreciation of Suchness

The first form of this perception recognized in self actualizing people, according to Abraham Maslow, is "as an unusual ability to detect the spurious, the fake, and the dishonest in personality, and in general to judge people correctly and efficiently."¹²² In an informal experiment with a group of college students, Abraham Maslow recognizes that the more secure or the more healthy judge their professors more accurately than the less secure students. It seems apt

¹²⁰ Rollo May, Love and Will, op. cit., p. 307.

¹²¹ J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 271.

¹²² Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 153.

to say that the former group of students is operated by Being or Growth motivation while the later by Deficiency motivation. These B-motivated or self actualizing people know how to exempt themselves from what happens to many other people as described by Ernest G. Schachtel, "Nature may no longer be seen as the mother of all living creatures including man, but may be become an enemy to be conquered or a mere object to be exploited and used."¹²³ The self actualizing person as conceived by Abraham Maslow is not thus alienated, he therefore enjoys a superiority in the perception of reality which "eventuates in a superior ability to reason, to perceive the truth, to come to conclusions, to be logical and to be cognitively efficient, in general."¹²⁴ Such a "superior ability in perception" does not dissolve all difficulty regarding his contact with the world, or nature. Rather, the more efficient perception of reality helps him accept reality, nature as it is, not as the way he thinks it should be. He "does not complain about water because it is wet, or about rocks because they are hard, or about trees because they are green."¹²⁵ He accepts the known and the unknown as well. The unknown does not frighten him because he can be passionately attracted by it. Abraham Maslow quotes Einstein to support his argument, "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all art and science."¹²⁶ The self actualizing person is comfortable with the unknown, the mysterious, not because, to him, the unknown can

¹²³ Hung-Min Chiang & Abraham H. Maslow, The Healthy Personality (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1969), p. 138.

¹²⁴ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 154.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 156.

¹²⁶ Ibid., p. 154.

become known or because the mysterious can be easily examined. On the contrary, he will act in the way that Erich Fromm describes his "New Man," "Sensing one's oneness with all life, hence giving up the aim of conquering nature, subduing it, exploiting it, raping it, destroying it, but trying, rather, to understand and cooperate with nature."¹²⁷

Such a concept of perception of reality is probably very close to what Bugental calls "Appreciation of Suchness and Aesthetic Living." To the self actualizing person, nature is no longer his enemy. He needs not to destroy it; rather he accepts it although it may still be unknown to him. He does not exploit it; rather he explores it so that he can know nature as it really and actually is. In other words, a self actualizing person feels happy when he recognizes the suchness of nature. Bugental writes, "It is the experience of 'Aha!' when the puzzle is satisfyingly solved, the mathematical proposition elegantly demonstrated, the philosophical issue cleanly developed."¹²⁸ Living in such a state, the self actualizing person, to Bugental, frequently has a certain artistic quality. "Often this quality is not externally obvious, but to intimates it is apparent. Such esthetic living uses the participation in suchness as one of its ingredients."¹²⁹

A self actualizing person is one who is able to tolerate uncertainty, who is curious about the unknown; all these attributes become a source of his superior ability to reason, to perceive the truth.

¹²⁷Erich Fromm, To Have or to Be (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1976), pp. 171-172.

¹²⁸J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 272.

¹²⁹Ibid., p. 273.

Continued Freshness of Appreciation and Creativeness

"Self actualizing people have a wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure, wonder, and even ecstasy, however stale these experiences may have come to others."¹³⁰ The reason why these people have such an accurate and fresh appreciation can be found in the fact that they are growth or being motivated rather than deficiency motivated. Once being motivated by their growth or their own being, they do not seek the basic goods of life just because they lack these goods; rather, these goods are already sufficiently gratified. For the moment, the goods are appreciated not as some means to reach some outside ends, but as ends in themselves. Abraham Maslow takes this freshness of appreciation as one of the most outstanding characteristics to be seen in any self actualizing person. Such a person continues his freshness in appreciation and he can develop in his life a surprising unity which binds the first contact to the last one, and binds mankind together. "The healthier people are, the more their capacities are interrelated."¹³¹ Abraham Maslow's thoughts seem to be close to what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin conceives, "The human units. . . shall draw closer together, not merely under the pressure of external forces, or solely by the performance of material acts, but directly, centre to centre, through internal attraction."¹³² In Maslow's term, "the resolution of dichotomies is definitely solved;"¹³³ or as Gordon Allport puts it,

¹³⁰ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 163.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 282.

¹³² Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Future of Man (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1969), p. 123.

¹³³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., 178.

the self actualizer is a normal, not an abnormal person, because he knows how to live his own "unifying philosophy of life."¹³⁴ Different persons, also according to Abraham Maslow, have different subject choices in their freshness of appreciation. "Some subjects go primarily to nature. For others it is primarily children, and for a few subjects it has been primarily great music; but it may certainly be said that they derive ecstasy, inspiration, and strength from the basic experiences of life."¹³⁵ He goes on to observe that none of his subjects has such a reaction from being granted more money or from going to a night club or from enjoying a good time at some party. To complete the list of different types of freshness, Abraham Maslow points out that for several of his subjects "the sexual pleasures and particularly the orgasm provided not passing pleasure alone, but some kind of basic strengthening and revivifying that some people derive from music or nature."¹³⁶ In Chapter 13, under the headline, "Cognition of the Individual and of the Generic," Abraham Maslow describes freshness in appreciation by emphasizing the fact that the self actualizing person rejects being rubricized, so as he can keep the freshness in his attention,¹³⁷ in his perception,¹³⁸ in his learning,¹³⁹ and finally, in his thinking.¹⁴⁰

Freshness in appreciation tends naturally to creativeness. This characteristic of a sound personalistic psychology is seen by

¹³⁴Chiang & Maslow, The Healthy Personality, op. cit., p. 9.

¹³⁵Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 163.

¹³⁶Ibid. ¹³⁷Ibid., p. 205.

¹³⁸Ibid., p. 209. ¹³⁹Ibid., p. 211

¹⁴⁰Ibid., p. 218.

Gordon Allport as one of the five fundamental elements upon which a healthy personality is built:

Another argument stresses the creative properties of the person or self. . . . A prior act of volition is responsible for the austere limits they place upon their own speculation. We all build our scientific world from the symbols taken from our own personalities. Which then is prior fact, the creative person or creed he creates?¹⁴¹

What Allport perceives as "prior fact," Maslow calls "a universal characteristic of all the people studied or observed. There is no exception."¹⁴² Coming to more detailed description, Maslow recognizes creativeness in his subjects not only in sophisticated works as writing books, producing artistic objects, or composing music but also in a number of humble jobs. So conceiving, one can talk of the creativeness of a clerk, a carpenter, or of a shoemaker.

Creativeness in such a sense brings a meaningfulness to what one pursues. To J.F.T. Bugental, "Those who proclaim the absurd flee from meaninglessness rather than confront it. Thereby, they miss the existential fulfillment of creativity. . . . Only the transformation of nothingness into somethingness may be termed creativity."¹⁴³ A person cannot be creative if he cannot find meaningfulness for his life. He gains, however, this meaningfulness if he is propelled by the innate tendency of growth. This growth is inseparably linked to freshness, penetration and efficiency of perception. All these qualities are, however, those of creativeness.

¹⁴¹Gordon W. Allport, The Person in Psychology (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), p. 351.

¹⁴²Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 170.

¹⁴³J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 28.

When a person is outstanding in his freshness of appreciation and in the creative meaningfulness in his life, he is also remarkable for his resistance to enculturation and for his high value recognition.

The Transcendence of any Particular Culture,
and the Ability for Evaluation

Self actualizing people, according to Abraham Maslow, "resist enculturation and maintain a certain inner detachment from the culture in which they are immersed."¹⁴⁴ They "resist" the social culture with which they have relation because they can maintain a healthy autonomy in the midst of change. They transcend their local culture and enjoy what can be termed the flavor of all humanity; they are Being-motivated in their relationship. Abraham Maslow cites four components as follows:

- A self actualizing person can easily accept some apparent conventionality in choice of food, of clothes, or of language, because he considers these things as unimportant. He accepts them not because he approves all these, but only because he wants to be tolerant to harmless folk-ways so that he may show his kindness to others, or may save his energy and invest it in some other areas which are more important to him.

- When he feels discontent with a culture, he does not fall easily into impatience. He is resigned to the slowness of social change because he knows that optimism about quick change is unwarranted. What he settles down to as a group is "an accepting, calm, good-humored everyday effort to improve the culture, usually from within, rather than to reject it wholly and fight it from without."¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 172.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 173.

- He is calm because what he really approves or rejects in culture is not influenced by his uncontrolled fantasy but only by its own value. He selects in each culture what is good to be maintained. Before making his own decision about any culture, he weights it, assays it, and tastes it. In a word he can be considered as a creative person rather than a blind follower.

- Nevertheless, he knows how to respect the culture in which he was born, but he is not unreasonably subjected to it. Differently stated, he is not a member of only one race, one country. Rather he belongs to a large community, that of the whole humanity.

When the self actualizing person evaluates a culture or another person as good or bad, he accepts a value system. "What he approves of, disapproves of, is loyal to, opposes or proposes, what pleases him or displeases him can often be understood as surface derivations of this source trait of acceptance [of a value system]."¹⁴⁶

This ability for evaluation is furnished to the self actualizing person by his own philosophic acceptance of the nature of his self and of social life of all human nature. He is less involved in what is influenced by a sick-man-created environment, such as "card-playing, dancing, wearing short dresses, exposing the head (in some churches) or not exposing the head (in others)."¹⁴⁷ Once a person admits what he really is, he may make great progress in being authentic to himself, in attaining the state of a healthy person.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., p. 176.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 177.

Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization has been studied in its conditions, especially in its basic needs and in its nature. This chapter, before coming to its end, continues with a comparison between self actualization and some other aspects of psychological life.

Comparison between Self Actualization and some
Other Psychological Phenomena

To conclude this chapter, the writer is going to make comparisons between self actualization and mystic experiences, peak experiences, ecstasy, and finally, transcendence.

Mystic Experiences

Mystic experiences, to William James, are always characterized with four marks.¹⁴⁸ First, ineffability; because of this mark, the subject of mystic experiences says that no adequate words can be used to report their contents. The only way to understand them, is to experience them directly. They cannot be fully transferred to others. Second, their poetic quality; mystic experiences are great insight which enables people go into the depth of truth. They are revelations, illuminations which carry with them a curious sense of authority for the afterwards. Third, transiency which needs no explanation. Fourth, passivity; William James sees that a mystical state may be facilitated by preliminary voluntary operations, "yet when the characteristic sort of consciousness once has set in, the mystic feels as if his own will

¹⁴⁸ William James, The Varieties of Religious Experiences (New Jersey: The New American Library, Inc., 1958), p. 292f.

were in abeyance and indeed sometimes as if he were grasped and held by a superior power."¹⁴⁹

Mystic Experiences, as described above, have an interesting relationship with self actualization, as Abraham Maslow notices, "Those subjective expressions [mystic and peak experiences] that have been called the mystic experience and described so well by William James are fairly common experiences for our subjects though not for all."¹⁵⁰

If a self actualizer is a creative person, that is a person who can objectify what he observes as well as go "beyond his self,"¹⁵¹ then a person in mystic experiences, or in his mysticism, can live what Pierre Teilhard de Chardin calls "An escape from the planet, not in space or outwardly, but spiritually and inwardly. . . . It is in harmony with the growing importance which leading thinkers of all denominations are beginning to attach to the phenomenon of mysticism."¹⁵² A person who has mystic experiences may be a self actualizing person; if the latter can "transcend any particular culture,"¹⁵³ attaining dynamic evolution of humanity as a whole, then the former, if he is an authentic mystic experiencer, must possess what is called by Sorokin "the supreme enlightenment," in which he is not only in harmony with this or that person or with such and such situation, but most of all, he lives in "mystic union with the Absolute."¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 293.

¹⁵⁰ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 164.

¹⁵¹ Gordon W. Allport, The Person in Psychology, op. cit., p. 351.

¹⁵² Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, The Future of Man (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964), p. 127.

¹⁵³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 171.

¹⁵⁴ Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., p. 228.

Peak Experiences

It seems that Abraham Maslow does not make a sharp distinction between peak experiences and mystic experiences. They may be considered as interchangeable and far more common in Maslow's thoughts.¹⁵⁵ Peak experiences occur when the peaking self actualizer or the peaker feels that the whole universe is an integrated and unified whole. Self actualizers can experience

the same feelings of limitless horizons opening up to the vision, the feeling of being simultaneously more powerful and also more helpless than one ever was before, the feeling of great ecstasy and wonder and awe, the loss of placing in time and space with, finally, the conviction that something extremely important and valuable had happened, so that the subject is to some extent transformed and strengthened even in his daily life by such experiences.¹⁵⁶

Peak experiences, generally speaking, transform the whole person into a more unified self. The peak experiencer usually possesses a broader view on others as well as on nature because they live in identity. "Their invention of identity is reduced to a minimum and their discovery increased to a maximum."¹⁵⁷ In Toward a Psychology of Being, Abraham Maslow describes identity in peak experiences with a number of predominant aspects which can be summarized as follows:¹⁵⁸

The person in peak experiences feels (1) more integrated (unified, whole, all-of-a-piece) than at other times; (2) being more able to fuse with the world, with what was formerly not-self; (3) using all his capacities at the best and fullest; (4) his fully-functioning being seemingly effortless and easy to be functioned; (5) more than at other times, being the active, responsible creating center of his activities

¹⁵⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 164-165.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 164.

¹⁵⁷ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 103.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., pp. 104-114.

and his perceptions; (6) free of blocks, fears, doubts, reservations, self-criticism, etc.; (7) more spontaneous, more innocently behaving, more natural, more freely flowing outward; (8) more creative; (9) roles dropping away and men becoming least interchangeable; (10) most free of the past and of the future, most "all there;" (11) becoming more a psyche and less a thing-of-the-world living; (12) being non-striving, non-needing, because he feels he is gratified with all things; (13) becoming more poetic, mythical; (14) the outer and inner world being to some extent isomorphic and dialectically related; (15) transcending hostility of any kind; (16) lucky, fortunate, graced. For the last aspect, Abraham Maslow sees its common consequence as "a feeling of gratitude, in religious persons to their God, in others to Fate, to Nature, to people, to the past, to parents. . . . to anything that helped to make this wonder possible."¹⁵⁹

In Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences, Maslow depicts 25 characteristics in an appendix entitled "Religious Aspects of Peak-Experiences;"¹⁶⁰ in general, they are close in contents to the sixteen aspects previously summarized. The main point in all these aspects is identity. A person in peak experiences is most of all a person who feels the whole universe as "an integrated and unified whole"¹⁶¹ and he feels himself as "all-of-a-piece."

¹⁵⁹ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 113.

¹⁶⁰ Abraham Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), pp. 59-68.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 59.

In Motivation and Personality, Maslow counts mystic experiences and peak experiences among "the most important and useful whole characteristics of self actualization people."¹⁶² Accordingly, these psychological phenomena are related to self actualization because they are among its own marks.

Ecstasy

If the writer understands correctly, Abraham Maslow views ecstasy very close to peak experiences, because he writes about it when he describes peak experiences. In Toward a Psychology of Being, and Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences, and in Motivation and Personality as well, Abraham Maslow does not reserve any special chapter or headline to depict ecstasy separately. This psychological characteristic is scattered amidst aspects of peak experiences. When a person has peak experiences, among a variety of feelings, he usually has also the feeling of "great ecstasy."¹⁶³

Ecstasy, to Marghanita Laski, is characterized by "feelings of purification and renewal of life and the world transformed and of loving-kindness to all."¹⁶⁴ It is a type of experience in which the person can feel that he is in "union with some one or something else."¹⁶⁵

Characteristics in Laski's ecstasy seem close to those in Maslow's peak experiences. To point out similarities between these two authors, some examples are herein given: "Feeling of purification

¹⁶² Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 153.

¹⁶³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 164.

¹⁶⁴ Marghanita Laski, Ecstasy (New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1968), p. 369.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

and renewal of life" is comparable to "a tendency to more more closely to a perfect identity or uniqueness;"¹⁶⁶ "Feeling of loving-kindness," to the state in which "the peak experiencer becomes more loving and more accepting;"¹⁶⁷ "Feeling of union with some one or something else," to "a sense of the sacred,"¹⁶⁸ to "a feeling of gratitude to God;"¹⁶⁹ For the duration of an ecstasy, Marghanita Laski notes that "this is usually said to be a moment."¹⁷⁰ Among Abraham Maslow's characteristics of peak experiences, there is also an aspect which occurs "in and through the particular instance of the momentary."¹⁷¹ Ecstasy, though not being specifically emphasized, is not unfamiliar to Abraham Maslow's writings. It is what can occur to a self actualizer.

Transcendence

As for the concept of transcendence, besides "The Transcendence of any Particular Culture," Abraham Maslow says comparatively little about it in Motivation and Personality. Transcendence, however, can be understood as transcendence of the self, "Apparently the acute mystic or peak experience is a tremendous intensification of any of the experiences in which there is loss of self or transcendence of it, e.g., problem centering, . . . self forgetfulness, and intense enjoyment of music or art."¹⁷² Walter A. Weisskopf, when talking about differences

¹⁶⁶ Abraham Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences, op. cit., p. 67.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid. ¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁶⁹ Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 113.

¹⁷⁰ Marghanita Laski, Ecstasy, op. cit., p. 57.

¹⁷¹ Abraham Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences, op. cit., p. 68.

¹⁷² Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 165.

between humanists and naturalists in their way dealing with values, thinks that these two types of researchers differ from each other "in the way they view the human situation; their point of view resembles that of the ontologists because they include elements of transcendence in their image of human existence."¹⁷³ Four pages later, Weisskopf explains what he understands by "transcendence": "Man is a centered entity with self-awareness and the ability to transcend his environment and himself. In his person, man at the same time includes the given situation and transcends the given situation."¹⁷⁴ For Hora's conceptualization, "Transcendence is seen from a psychotherapeutic standpoint and defined as a broadened state of consciousness enabling man to cognize reality in dimensions which are above and beyond dualities and multiplicities."¹⁷⁵

Transcendence, thus conceived by these previous writers, may be seen as psychological phenomenon in which a person transcends the narrowness of his daily environment, his local culture. As in peak experiences, mystic experiences, and ecstasy, in transcendence, the person may feel "the loss of self,"¹⁷⁶ that is, he may transform his perception from a narrow scope of dealing with the world to a larger one.

It is likely to say that in mystic experiences, peak experiences, ecstasy, and transcendence, a person is motivated by his growth, his

¹⁷³ Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., p. 210.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 214.

¹⁷⁵ J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 277.

¹⁷⁶ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 165.

being development rather than by his deficiency, his lower needs. He is experiencing the phenomena of expanded horizons and of the interrelatedness of all things.

Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization has just been studied in its conditions and nature. A self actualizer can be described as a person who attains a "full use and exploitation of talents, capacities, potentialities."¹⁷⁷ He is thus conceptualized because he has been seen not as an isolated, discrete individual, rather as a whole, dynamic human being, with interrelation with others and nature. The self actualizer is a unified person because he actualizes his potentialities. "He just is."¹⁷⁸ His whole being is dynamically oriented toward an end in which his personality attains its full development.

Keeping in mind Abraham Maslow's picture of an ideal self actualizer, can we apply the modern research of humanistic psychology to the life of Jesus? Does the life of historical Jesus illustrate Maslow's concept of self actualization? The writer tries to answer these questions in the next chapter.

¹⁷⁷Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁷⁸Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 110.

Chapter 3

JESUS AND SELF ACTUALIZATION

In this chapter, the writer will examine the question whether or not Jesus, as depicted in the Synoptics, fits the concept of self actualization as conceived by Abraham Maslow. The outline of this chapter, therefore, will be similar to that of the previous chapter; that is, it will comprise studies relating to Jesus and conditions of self actualization, the nature of self actualization, and finally, comparisons between Jesus' self actualization and some other psychological phenomena.

Jesus and Conditions of Self Actualization

Jesus will be investigated first with regard to basic needs, then other conditions of self actualization will be examined, as they can be discovered in the Synoptics.

Jesus and Basic Needs

A person's needs are, as Abraham Maslow conceives, classified in a hierarchy and the "satisfaction of higher needs is closer to self actualization."¹ Jesus, humanly speaking, has needs and if these were not sufficiently gratified, Jesus could not survive. Following the steps traced by Abraham Maslow, the writer will study Jesus' basic

¹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 100.

needs from their physical to their psychological importance.

Jesus and the physiological needs. Nobody can live without food, water, etc. Jesus, as man, could not escape this natural condition. Difficulty in exploring the way Jesus met these needs arises from the fact that it is in the very young or early years that many of the physiological needs are critical and the biblical materials give next to no information on these years. Daniel-Rops writes, "Jesus depended largely on hospitality for food and shelter. The Twelve certainly had a common purse."² It is seemingly the reason why some biblical writers assert that Jesus needed food, shelters, clothes; "We must eat before discussing any philosophy," as says an old French adage (*Il faut manger avant de philosopher*). Basing his arguments on the Jewish social custom in Jesus' time, Daniel-Rops continues to write, "His clothing can hardly differ much from that still worn by the Palestinian peasant, the head covered with a piece of cloth. . . . He would wear a linen tunic in all weathers."³ It is easy to understand that Jesus himself, experiencing tiredness caused by deprivation of food, he was sympathetically moved to feed a multitude.⁴

The physiological needs, nevertheless, in a self actualizing person can be transformed into a source of joy or ignored for the sake of other causes. We can read in the Synoptics passages in which Jesus

²Ibid., p. 309. ³Ibid., p. 308.

⁴Mt. 14: 13-21; 15: 32-38; Mk. 6: 32-44; 8: 1-10; Lk. 9: 10-17.
 Note: All biblical materials used in this study are quoted from The New American Bible, published by Thomas Nelson Inc., 1971.

was not preoccupied with food, shelter, or clothes. He did not continuously worry about them. It may be considered as the reason why he warned his followers, "Stop worrying over questions like, 'What are we to eat, or what are we to drink, or what are we to wear?'" (Mt. 6:31). If a conclusion must be reached regarding Jesus' physiological needs, it is reasonable to assert that he needed what was necessary for any person to survive but that he was not dependent upon these needs because he was guided by his search for the Kingdom of God (Mt. 6:33).

Jesus and safety needs. Safety needs are needs for stability, security, protection, freedom from anxiety, fear and chaos.⁵ Were these needs present in Jesus' life? Reading the Synoptics, we know that shortly after his birth, Jesus was taken to Egypt because "Herod will be looking for the child to kill him" (Mt. 2:13). Commenting on this biblical passage, Connick writes, "Herod's initial impulse had been to kill Mary's child only."⁶ Protected by Joseph and Mary, Jesus enjoyed relative safety in the early stage of his life. Thanks to this security, this protection, Jesus seemed to have a better opportunity for his growth, physical and psychological as well; we may recognize this in the Synoptics, "He was full of wisdom, and God's blessings were with him" (Lk. 2:40). In his public life, Jesus also acted in a way that he could preserve his "freedom from fear and anxiety." One day, for example, Jesus went to the

⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 39.

⁶ C. Milo Connick, Jesus the Man, the Mission, and the Message (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1974), p. 123.

temple. The chief priests and the teachers of the Law heard of this, they began looking for some way to kill Jesus. After narrating the fact, Mark continued the story, "when evening came, Jesus and his disciples left the city."⁷ This can be seen as a way Jesus escaped trouble to ensure his safety.

Living in stability, in security, does not mean that a person is dependent upon these needs. Psychologically speaking, he can be secure amidst an apparently insecure atmosphere or, on the contrary, insecure amidst an apparently secure atmosphere. When facing people who wanted to kill him, Jesus could be disturbed, threatened; his bodily security was in danger. Nevertheless, whether he feared his opponents, that is, whether he was psychologically insecure is another problem.

It seems that safety was not an end in Jesus' life because he did not fear to lose it, and he taught his followers to challenge it if it was necessary for their growth, their ideal or faith, "What I am doing is sending you out like sheep among wolves. . . . They will hale you into court, they will flog you in their synagogues. . . . Do not fear those who deprive the body of life but cannot destroy the soul" (Mt. 10:16, 17, 23). To say it in another way, safety or security needs were not motives which could keep Jesus backward; he was being motivated rather than deficiency motivated.

Jesus and the belongingness and love needs. Love in a self actualizer magnetizes Abraham Maslow so much that he writes about it

⁷Mk. 11: 15-19; Mt. 21: 12-17; Lk. 19: 45-48.

on a number of occasions. In his book used as a key guide for this study, Motivation and Personality, Maslow dedicates a whole chapter to discussing "Love in Self Actualizing People." For Jesus, his whole life and teachings focused on love and charity, mutual understanding and mutual forgiveness. The influence of love and belongingness in Jesus' teachings are so great, so powerful, that Western culture and civilization, since twenty centuries, have been strongly rooted in them.

When a person has enough food and security, "he will hunger for affectionate relation,"⁸ observes Maslow. Jesus, as all other people do, belonged to a certain family, had a certain place to live, and was surrounded by people who loved him and he also whole-heartedly loved them. We can read this in Matthew (2: 23), in Luke (2: 39). Daniel-Rops, commenting these passages of the Synoptics, writes, "According to St. Matthew and St. Luke, it was to Nazareth in Galilee that the holy family returned after the stay in Egypt. St. Matthew adds that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the prophet, he shall be called a nazarene."⁹ Jesus, as examined, experienced belongingness and love. Rudolf Bultman, in this respect, observes, "The requirement for conduct toward others may then be epitomized in the commandment of love (Mt. 5: 43-48; Lk. 6: 27-36)."¹⁰ No biblical scholars deny that Jesus had his own belongingness, his love, that is, he had a family, at least in early

⁸ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 43.

⁹ Daniel-Rops, Jesus and His Time (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1954), p. 140.

¹⁰ Rudolf Bultmann, Jesus and the World (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 110.

years of his life, to live in, a number of relatives and friends to dialogue with; Jesus loved others and others also loved him.¹¹

The question posed here is not only whether Jesus had belongingness and love needs, but also whether he was dependent upon them. Did these psychological characteristics push him forward or hold him back? Abraham Maslow asserts that the thwarting of belongingness and love needs "is the most commonly found core in cases of maladjustment and more severe pathology."¹² Jesus, as described in the Synoptics, possessed an excellent adjustment rather than lived in a disastrous maladjustment because he knew how to deal with each circumstance, each type of personality. Many biblical materials can be cited to support this observation. In the midst of children, Jesus knew how to behave so that they could be close to him, express their simplicity, their naturalness to him, and want him showing his affection to them.¹³ On the contrary, when facing people who planned to trap him in speech, Jesus revealed himself a wise man by giving them answers which quieted them and, because of such answers, "they went off and left him."¹⁴ If a person is "hung up" on his belongingness and love needs, according to Abraham Maslow, he is easily prone to be maladjusted, deficiency-motivated. In the case of Jesus, he had his belongingness and love needs but he was, as demonstrated previously, well adjusted, not controlled by these needs; he could be seen, therefore, as growth or being motivated.

¹¹Mt. 12: 15-21; Mk. 3: 7-12.

¹²Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 44.

¹³Mt. 19: 13-15; Mk. 10: 13-16.

¹⁴Mt. 22: 15-22; Mk. 12: 13-17; Lk. 20: 20-26.

Jesus and the esteem needs. Esteem needs are understood as desires "for strength," in Abraham Maslow's terms, "for achievements, for adequacy, for mastery and competence, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom."¹⁵ Thus comprehended, self esteem can be seen as an important condition in forming Jesus' maturity or self actualization. It is important in the sense that Jesus possessed "adequacy, mastery and competence, independence and freedom." Because of these qualities, Jesus was concerned with true problems, real factors which gave meaningfulness to whatever a person performs, not with blind observances of the Law. This could be seen as reasons which explained Jesus' attitude when the Pharisees protested him, "See here! Your disciples are doing what is not permitted on the sabbath;"¹⁶ when he demanded his followers entering the kingdom of God through the narrow gate.¹⁷ Jesus possessed independence, freedom because he changed, transformed people, not people changed, transformed him. This can be recognized in the passage in which Jesus said, "You have heard the commandment, . . . But what I say unto you is. . . ." (Mt. 5: 21-48). Though Daniel-Rops does not talk directly about Jesus' esteem needs, what he describes in the following passage emerges close to what the writer is trying to describe herein,

Anyone who is willing to examine without prejudice the figure of Christ in the Gospels will find not a dissociated or chaotic

¹⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 45.

¹⁶ Mt. 12: 1-8; Mk. 2: 23-28; Lk. 6: 1-5.

¹⁷ Mt. 7: 13; Lk. 13:24.

personality but one which is extremely solid and coherent, built up on unshakable foundations. Self-deception which we all commit in trying to put forward the best aspect of ourselves was utterly foreign to him. The famous parable of the mote and the beam (Luke vi, 42) is not intended merely as a lesson in humility but as a warning against the danger of trying to make an impression of failing to see ourselves exactly as we are. . . . The personality of Jesus is not only manifestly sincere, it is unshakeable.¹⁸

Jesus did not fall into the "danger of trying to take an impression of failing to see himself exactly as he is;" it can be said that he satisfied his esteem needs in an admirable way. Bornkamm, Knox, Morton, Fulton Sheen, Daniel-Rops, and even Bultmann, as the writer understands them, do not find in Jesus the figure that is results from thwarting the esteem needs. Abraham Maslow calls this thwarting a disastrous aspect of "self devaluation;" its symptoms are counted as a "feeling and expectation of helplessness, loss of self-esteem, moral worthlessness and guilt, inability to give love, loss of strength, loss of capability."¹⁹ Contrary to this dark picture, Jesus showed himself to possess satisfying esteem needs as when he answered before the Sanhedrin, "Once again the high priest interrogated him: 'Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?' Then Jesus answered: I am'" (Mk. 14: 61-62); when he helped others to find their own sense of self esteem as sons of God, "Blest are the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God" (Mt. 5: 9).

Jesus and the need for self actualization. Since Jesus and self actualization is the main theme of this chapter, the writer thinks that

¹⁸ Daniel-Rops, Jesus and His Time, op. cit., pp. 313-14.

¹⁹ Abraham Maslow, Principles of Abnormal Psychology, op. cit., p. 146.

it is not necessary to say much about it in this section. For the moment, the writer conceives that Jesus had also the need for self actualization because, as a man, he was to develop his personality to its full gradually. Gunther Bornkamm affirms that "we find in Jesus no trace of the influence of Greek philosophy, of the Greek manner of living;"²⁰ this does not mean that Jesus did not go to any school "to exploit his talents, capacities, and potentialities" which characterize a self actualizing person. With regard to Jesus' education, Connick writes, "Joseph provided Jesus with his early education. . . . Whether at home or in school, Jesus learned the first century Palestian equivalent of the "three R's" in Aramaic."²¹ Connick's remark tends to indicate that Jesus was not exempted from developing gradually his self to its full.

Abraham Maslow understands self actualization "as ongoing actualization of potentials, capacities, . . . as an unceasing trend toward unity, integration or synergy within the person."²² In the Synoptics, we read that Jesus wanted his followers to "treat others the way you would have them treat you" (Mt. 7:12), that is, how to become unified in one's life was his concern; his golden rule "sums up the law and the prophets." Jesus was absorbed in his work, in the development of what he longed for rather than dependent upon his basic needs. We can see this in the Lord's prayer, "Your kingdom come, your

²⁰ Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1960), p. 54.

²¹ C. Milo Connick, Jesus the Man, the Mission, and the Message, op. cit., p. 132.

²² Abraham Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, op. cit., p. 25.

will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6: 10). Thus doing, Jesus was growth-motivated, hence, self actualized since "self actualization is growth-motivated rather than deficiency-motivated."²³

Jesus regarding Characteristics
of Basic Needs

How do basic needs influence Jesus' life? Do they require an absolute satisfaction in shaping Jesus' personality? Between "D-motivation" and "B-motivation," what type is dominant in his attitude and actions? Or to put the question in another way, how do basic needs characterize Jesus' way of life?

Jesus and the degree of fixity of the hierarchy of basic needs.

Abraham Maslow asserts that there are many determinants of behavior other than the needs and desires; the hierarchy of basic needs "actually is not so rigid as we may have implied. . . . There have been a number of exceptions."²⁴ The flexibility of this hierarchy may be easily observed in the life of Jesus. In the beginning of his public life, Jesus was led into the desert; there, "he fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterward was hungry."²⁵ If the degree of fixity of the hierarchy of basic needs was rigid in Jesus, his being hungry would correspond to what Maslow describes, "For our chronically and extremely hungry man, Utopia can be defined simply as a place where there is plenty of food."²⁶ That

²³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 135.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

²⁵ Mt. 4: 1-2; Mk. 1: 12-13; Lk. 4: 1-2.

²⁶ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 37.

was not the case with Jesus. Like any other person, Jesus could need stability for his body, yet he was not dependent upon this stability, "Not on bread alone is man to live but on every utterance that comes from the mouth of God."²⁷ Thus declaring, Jesus likely proved that basic needs did not control the way he lived and pursued his aim. In the case of conflict, Jesus preferred to lose his physiological homeostasis. He was firm in his purpose, even at the cost of his life. What occurred in the garden of Gethsemani corresponded to what is being pointed out: as a human being, Jesus needed survival first; he therefore prayed in his agony, "Father, you have the power to do all things. Take this cup away from me."²⁸ Thus addressing, as inspired by another cause, Jesus seemed not to be threatened by the loss of his life, he added, "but let it be as you would have it, not I."²⁹ Matthew stressed this change in Jesus' psychology by repeating the same prayer the second time, more clearly and intensely than the first one, "My Father, if this cannot pass me be without my drinking it, your will be done" (Mt. 26: 42). To state it differently, Jesus gave up his physiological needs, his safety needs, for the needs of fulfilling his aim, his mission. This fact may be seen as a proof to show that the hierarchy of basic needs was not rigid in the case of Jesus.

Relative satisfaction of basic needs in the life of Jesus.

Abraham Maslow writes, "Most members of our society who are normal are

²⁷ Mt. 4: 4; Lk. 4: 4.

²⁸ Mk. 14; 36a; Mt. 26: 39a; Lk. 22: 42a.

²⁹ Mk. 14: 36b; Mt. 26: 39b; Lk. 22: 42b.

partially satisfied in all their basic needs and partially unsatisfied in all their basic needs at the same time."³⁰ Applied to Jesus, this observation seems to be "partially true and partially untrue." The satisfaction of basic needs can be understood as physical satisfaction (as to have enough food to eat, to be exempted from bodily killing), or as psychological satisfaction (as to be content or "happy" with what one achieved, to feel becoming mature even at the expense of one's fortune, one's life). It seemed that in the case of Jesus, the lower degree in the hierarchy of basic needs appeared to be less psychologically satisfied while the higher degree showed itself being more satisfied. Everybody, for example, who reads the Bible can apprehend Jesus' bodily insecurity. The high priests and scribes "plotted to arrest Jesus by trick and kill him."³¹ He faced circumstances in which his opponents shouted with a savage blood thirst, "Crucify him! Crucify him!", "Let his blood be on us and on our children" (Mt. 27: 25). Tortured, insulted, Jesus still satisfied his ultimate need, the need of fulfilling his mission, completing his redemptive work. He totally satisfied this mission when he was hung on the cross. At that moment he could say to every person as the same way as he said to one of the criminals hanging in crucifixion near him, "I tell you: this day you will be with me in the paradise" (Lk. 23: 43).

Summing up, it may be apt to say that Jesus did not totally gratify his physiological needs, his bodily safety, but he satisfied

³⁰ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 53.

³¹ Mt. 26: 4; Mk. 14: 2; Lk. 22: 2.

his love needs, his psychological or inner security, his self actualization, his mission.

Jesus with regard to unconscious character, cultural specificity and generality of needs. Concerning the unconscious character of basic needs, Jesus seemingly did not pay much attention to the process of these needs in himself. It is hard to find out such an attention in the Synoptics, especially for bodily needs (water, food). As for higher needs (love, self actualization), John Knox writes, "who could read, for example, the teachings of Jesus about sincerity and humility without realizing that he himself was amazingly free from all deceit and pride and that truth was for him the very breath of life."³² Similarly said, it is hard to imagine that Jesus taught about love, about how to love and to be loved while he was unaware or unconscious himself about his love for others or others' love for him.

The generality of needs certainly existed in Jesus' life and teachings. Regarding the matter of Jesus' love need, for example, the same John Knox asserts that one of the most important elements in the humanity of Jesus is "his exceptional capacity for love. This is the other side of his lovableness, and here again we are on altogether firm historical ground."³³ When Jesus taught, "Love your enemies, pray for your persecutors," he implied a certain generality in his need for love. He continued his talk to give an illustration, "This will prove that you are sons of your

³²John Knox, Jesus Lord and Christ (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1958), p. 26.

³³Ibid., p. 29.

Father, for his sun rises on the bad and the good, he rains on the just and the unjust" (Mt. 5: 44-45). Love, and other needs as well, are common or universal in every part of the world. If everybody, once born in the world as a normal human being, can enjoy rain or sunshine, then he can have the same need to show love to others, or to be loved by others; behaviors and attitudes, nevertheless, to express one's love need may be different from person to person, culture to culture.

Jesus with regard to deficiency motivation and being motivation.

Self actualizers, according to Abraham Maslow, have no serious deficiencies to make up. They are not, for instance, love-deprived people; these love-deprived people fall in love because they crave it, lack it. As for self actualizers, "they love because they are loving persons."³⁴ They are looked upon as freed for growth, maturation.

In the case of Jesus, how did he feel when he needed food, love, or action? Did he talk, act, or move from place to place because he was motivated by some deficiency in his body, in his mind? Reading the Synoptics, we can catch ideas like, "None of those who cry out 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of God but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Mt. 7: 21), or "The slave who knew his master's wishes but did not prepare to fulfill them will get a severe beating" (Lk. 12: 47). Can we say that, thus thinking, Jesus was deficiency-motivated because he depended on his Father's will? Continuing to read the Synoptics, we can also find out ideas which are the opposite to the

³⁴ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 198.

above-mentioned thoughts, "What does this mean? A completely new teaching in a spirit of authority! He gives orders to unclean spirits and they obey!"³⁵

or in another place, "Anyone who does not take up his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple."³⁶ As a human being, a person can be motivated by his deficiency first, then by his being or his growth later, or these two motivations can coexist in a certain phase of his life.

In Jesus, it is seemingly reasonable to see that his Father's will or the kingdom of God was the goal, the end of his talk and action. When his disciples asked him how to address to God, Jesus taught them praying, "Your kingdom come; your will be done" (Mt. 6:10). It is hard to think that Jesus taught others do what he did not put in practice himself. He was also the master of himself, of the sabbath (Mk. 2:28), that is, in Abraham Maslow's terms, Jesus can be seen as growth or being motivated rather than as deficiency motivated. Growth-motivation is characteristic of a self actualizing person; Jesus, once again, is regarded as grown up, matured, or self actualized.

Jesus and other Conditions of Self Actualization

Besides basic needs, there are other conditions without which a person can hardly grow or become mature, self actualized.

- Conditions relating to basic needs. These conditions can be seen as corollaries of basic needs because if the later occur, the

³⁵Mk. 1: 27; Lk. 4: 36.

³⁶Lk. 14: 27; Mt. 10: 38; Mk. 8: 34.

former follow them automatically.

- Homeostasis and health. As conditions completing the basic needs, homeostasis and health are also seen as basic, as urgent, without these, a person will die. One cannot survive without health and homeostasis. Jesus, as man, could not escape this fundamental condition of a human-being-in-the-world.

To Abraham Maslow, a person can become stronger, more dominant, if he knows how to regulate "the wisdom of the body."³⁷ This wisdom is a bodily capacity to maintain stability for the whole organism in the midst of change. Did Jesus possess this wisdom and did it play any importance in framing Jesus' self actualization? Before proposing an answer to the question, the writer would like to turn to Daniel-Rops' comment, "David Strauss, not himself a believer, has said that anyone who pretends to write of Christ with the same "scientific detachment" which one would apply to any other historical personage must be 'smitten with stupidity'."³⁸ Admitting such a stream of thought, the writer thinks that Jesus had that "wisdom of the body" as a human condition for the development of his "super-personality," or his self-actualization. First of all, Rudolf Bultmann sees "Jesus as a part of the history in which we have our being."³⁹ In other words, disregarding for this moment the divine and seeing just the human in Jesus, the writer is inclined to say that Jesus is man in the same way that anybody is. He

³⁷ Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., p. 121.

³⁸ Daniel-Rops, Jesus and His Time, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

³⁹ Rudolf Karl Bultmann, Jesus and the World, op. cit., pp. 3-4.

is man in the sense that man existentially is. He is holistic and dynamic.⁴⁰ "Jesus appears to us," concludes Bundy after a long investigation of Jesus' psychic health, "in the Synoptics as congenial, yet commanding, as unconventional, yet uncompromising in the affairs pertaining to the kingdom of God. None of these traits in Jesus' character necessitate or even suggest a psychopathic diagnosis."⁴¹

Most persons who are dynamic, commanding, uncompromising, etc., are also healthy, homeostatic, or possess some "wisdom of the body." Homeostasis and health are elements contributing to Jesus' maturity, though in his public life and in his teaching he did not reveal these attributes.

Rootedness and identity. The qualities of interrelatedness, belongingness, or interpersonal relations in Abraham Maslow's thought, indicate that a person, in the process of his self actualization, needs a standpoint, a starting-point, such as a birthplace, a family; without these, a person, instead of moving forward to his maturity, "would become insane."⁴²

It is obvious that Jesus had a birthplace and a family in which his father was Joseph and his mother, Mary; his relatives were also mentioned in the Synoptics.⁴³ Interrelatedness, rootedness were not strange to Jesus. Did they, however, characterize his personality? It seems that the answer depends on the way one looks at these facts and

⁴⁰ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 299ff.

⁴¹ Walter E. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1922), p. 199.

⁴² Abraham Maslow, New Knowledge in Human Values, op. cit., p. 115.

⁴³ Mt. 2:1-16; Lk. 2:4-15; Mt. 13:54-55; Mk. 6:1-6; Lk. 4:16-30.

at Jesus himself. Jesus had rootedness if this term is understood as Jesus' birthplace, family, relatives.

Once born in the world, however, Jesus demonstrated himself to be a great independent person. He influenced others rather than others influencing him. Connick writes, "Jesus possessed a unique sense of authority. . . . He spoke of himself as a prophet. He was the es- chatological prophet. Men who confessed him had their salvation guaranteed."⁴⁴ Others depended upon him. He did not depend upon them. Yet, his independence did not serve himself. Rather, it seems correctly to say that Jesus was mature, self actualized because he was independent in order to best serve others, "The Son of Man has not come to be served but to serve, to give his life in ransom for the many."⁴⁵ If there are conditions which relate to basic needs, there are also conditions which stand for themselves, which are necessary for self actualization because they have their own importance.

Dropping resistance. Resistance is viewed as "the general defensive wall the patient puts between himself and the threats that he finds linked to being authentic. Resistance is anti-authenticity."⁴⁶ If Jesus were a mental patient, if he pathologically put a defensive wall between himself and the threats of being authentic, he then could need to drop down this wall, this resistance.

Julius Baumann, as Bundy quotes him, maintains that Jesus was a case of religious paranoia. He finds two of the indications of this

⁴⁴C. Milo Connick, Jesus the Man, The Mission, and the Message, op. cit., p. 311.

⁴⁵Mk. 10:45; Mt. 20:28; Lk. 22:27.

⁴⁶J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 103.

disease in Jesus, namely, "the concentration of mind on certain ideas and the thereby aggravated imagination. Jesus' family regarded him as beside himself; that is what we would term inflicted with religious paranoia."⁴⁷ If Jesus was inflicted with such a religious paranoia, he could not become a healthy person, an effective helper or savior unless he ought to "repent" himself, to change, to cast aside his own neurotic wall.

Walter Bundy, when presenting "The Personality of Jesus from the Pathogenetic Point of View," notes some circumstances in which Jesus' conduct could be seen as motiveless. He writes, "The motives or reasons for Jesus' decision to go to Jerusalem (Mk. 10:1ff; Mt. 19:1ff; Lk. 9:51ff) are no better known to us than those for his northern journey, etc."⁴⁸ Three pages later, Bundy sees reasons motivating Jesus' actions "His itinerary and peregrinations manifest nothing of the fretful restlessness and senseless vagabondage of those cases of morbid mentality who are forever dissatisfied and discontented with their present surrounding."⁴⁹ In another paragraph, Bundy strongly affirms, "Nothing pathological is to be found in Jesus' retreats to solitude except from the viewpoint of consequent medical materialism, which sees in all religious devotion and piety only a sign of mental malady or degeneration."⁵⁰

If what Walter Bundy has carefully observed is true, Jesus did not need to drop resistance in the process of his self actualization.

⁴⁷ Walter E. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, op. cit., p. 108.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 185. ⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 188.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 190.

He was healthy, physically as well as mentally. He needed not to apply to himself what he instructed others to do, "Remove the plank from your own eye first, then you will see clearly to take the speck from your brother's eye" (Mt. 7:5).

Awareness and value recognition. Awareness, as a condition of becoming self actualized, is described as "having aspects of meaning, feeling, and action potential."⁵¹

Applied to Jesus, awareness is not to be understood as his capacity or quality to better understand himself. It is difficult to find in the Synoptics trustworthy facts about Jesus' awareness of his own self. He was not an object for his own investigation. Saying this, the writer thinks that the historical Jesus as depicted in the Synoptics did not speak about himself. "The evangelists seem," writes Walter Bundy, "to feel a greater obligation to tell us when, where, and to whom Jesus says certain things than they do to tell us why Jesus does certain things that he does or takes certain steps that he takes."⁵² How can a person act purposefully and successfully if he is not aware of his own capacity and potentialities? of his own position in regarding to his actions? or differently stated, of his own self? John Knox affirms that Jesus "was not seeking to state what man can do, but what God asks. . . . God's perfect will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven! God's love will soon be full manifest! The kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news!"⁵³

⁵¹J.F.T. Eugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 220.

⁵²Walter E. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, op. cit., p. 132.

⁵³John Knox, Jesus Lord and Christ, op. cit., pp. 19-20.

In order to attain his maturity, to achieve his mission, Jesus needed to be aware of what he was doing. His awareness, however, was aimed toward "the kingdom of God," toward what God desired. He was aware of himself in terms of the kingdom of God.

To be aware of some person or something is to appreciate his or its presence and importance, to recognize his or its qualities and values. Value recognition is a condition for a person's normalcy and mental health. This quality is indeed noticeable in the Synoptic Gospels, but of course one is unable to take into account all of Jesus' teachings and actions regarding his value recognition. The Sermon on the Mount⁵⁴ is singled out as an illustration in which Jesus' value recognition can be implicitly recognized and definitely embedded.

With regard to the Sermon, Dwight Beck remarks:

The Sermon can be divided into three main parts: (1) the happiness and the influence of Jesus' disciples in the Kingdom (Mt. 5:1-16); (2) examples of the Law of Moses as fulfilled in the true law of Jesus (5:17-6:18); (3) various warnings and commandments about right and wrong conduct (6:19-7:29). The first two sections are clearly defined topics; the third is a miscellany in which Matthew has gathered a fund of valuable teachings. Each main section has numerous well-marked subdivisions⁵⁵ (Italics mine).

Through the above resumé of the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' value recognition can be perceived in a variety of details: (1) In the first part of the Sermon, Jesus taught about "the happiness and the influence, etc.," the writer tends to question: How could Jesus teach these qualities if he didn't recognize them as worthy of being

⁵⁴Mt. 5-7; Lk. 6:20-49, 11:1-4, 9-13, 33-36, 12:22-34, 13:22-30, 16:16-18.

⁵⁵Dwight Marion Beck, Through the Gospels to Jesus (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1954), pp. 167-168.

taught? Or asking the question in another way, if Jesus wasn't aware of their value, why would he have listed these special qualities or attributes? (2) Jesus demonstrated that the Law of Moses was fulfilled when he said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have come not to abolish them, but to fulfill them" (Mt. 5:17). Thus teaching and doing, Jesus knew the meaning of "the law and the prophets" as well as what he did to "fulfill them." It is assumed that he recognized the importance and the value of each law, of each prophet and of each action he performed to fulfill them; (3) Regarding the kingdom of God, Dwight Beck well expresses what the writer notes: It is "the greatest good and goal which God gives man." Jesus could only proclaim "the greatest good" if he himself recognized its value as "the good."

Being aware of one's self, recognizing the value of what is done or longed for, etc., these psychological factors can be seen as necessary for a person to become balanced, mature. If Jesus fit these conditions, he can be thought of as a self actualized person in the modern meaning of the term.

Jesus and nature of Self Actualization

If conditions of becoming a self actualizing person are considered as noticeable in Jesus, how did he act and live? What is the nature of his self actualization as it can be seen in the Synoptics? The writer will try to answer these similar questions in the following section.

Jesus' Self Acceptance, and his
Needs for Privacy

Abraham Maslow asserts that "healthy individuals find it possible to accept themselves and their own nature without chagrin or complaint or, for that matter, even without thinking about the matter very much."⁵⁶ Applied to Jesus, it seems that these observations are true. He accepted whatever occurred to him, "The foxes have lairs, the birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."⁵⁷

The self actualizing person, according to Abraham Maslow, knows how to be self satisfied, that is, how to develop his self even when he is deprived of love, safety, honor, etc. For Jesus, he accepted the journey to Jerusalem, his suffering and dying on the cross. The fact of Jesus' suffering and death is trustworthy. Bornkamm affirms, "The Gospels seem more likely to be historically correct when they report that success and failure, popularity and enmity, had been part and parcel of Jesus' life from the start."⁵⁸ Jesus' self acceptance led him to dreadful pain and an awful lack of consolations of all kinds before the hour of his death. Abraham Maslow, nevertheless, describes a type of suffering quite opposite to that of Jesus. He writes, "We are being confronted by a new possibility of pathology of psychological affluence; that is, of suffering from the consequences (apparently) of being loved and cared for devotedly, of being adored, admired."⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 155.

⁵⁷ Mt. 8:20; Lk. 9:58.

⁵⁸ Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, op. cit., p. 153.

⁵⁹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 71.

Jesus, on the contrary, suffered not because of his "being loved and cared for devotedly," or of his "being adored, admired." He suffered because people did not listen to his message, to his call for repentance, for reform (Mt. 11:20-24); they cried for his death, "Crucify him" (Mk. 15:14). Jesus also suffered because he was apparently abandoned by whom he dearly loved and served, his Father, "My God! My God! Why hast thou forsaken me?"⁶⁰

If Jesus accepted whatever occurred to him, if he was perfectly willing to suffer, then it is understandable that he needed his privacy. Privacy or detachment, according to Abraham Maslow, is a characteristic which allows the person to be capable of living in solitude without discomfort, without harm to himself. It helps the self actualizer becoming more problem centered than ego centered. Looking at Jesus, we can say without doubt that he was not ego centered because he did not act for his own sake. What he wanted was the coming of the kingdom of God (Mt. 6:10). He can be seen as a problem centered person. With regard to the matter of "living in solitude without discomfort, without harm to himself," Jesus started his public life with his retreat in the desert;⁶¹ during his three years of proclaiming the kingdom of God, many times he went alone to the mountain;⁶² before his arrest, his suffering and his death, he also detached himself from daily disturbances and went to the garden of Gethsemani. All in all, Jesus accepted whatever happened to

⁶⁰Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34.

⁶¹Mt. 4:1-14; Mk. 1:12-13; Lk. 4:1-13.

⁶²Mk. 6:46; Mt. 14:23; Lk. 9:18.

him; he did not fear to be alone, to live in detachment, if these factors could carry him to fulfill his mission, his work.

Jesus with regard to Discrimination between Means and Ends,
Good and Evil; and the Freeing Subject-Object Split

Discrimination between means and ends, good and evil, unification of the self in an I-process, etc., are active, positive characteristics of a mature person, of a self actualizer. There are many examples of these aspects in the life of Jesus. The Pharisees and scribes failed to discriminate between contents and the form of law, between means and ends to serve the commandments of God; they therefore approached Jesus with the question: "Why do your disciples act contrary to the tradition of our ancestors? They do not wash their hands for example, before eating a meal?"⁶³ Because Jesus' "notions of right and wrong, of good and evil are not the conventional ones,"⁶⁴ he said to them in reply, "Why do you for your part act contrary to the commandments of God for the sake of your tradition?"⁶⁵ What concerned Jesus were not what apparently was good but what brought human beings to their "I-process," that is to their unification, their inner growth, their genuine purity: "It is not what goes into man's mouth that makes him impure; it is what comes out of his mouth." A moment later Jesus explained it to his disciples, "From the mind stem evil designs—murder, adulterous conduct, fornication, stealing, false witness, blasphemy—These are the things that

⁶³Mt. 15:2; Mk. 7:5; Lk. 11:38.

⁶⁴Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 168.

⁶⁵Mt. 15:3; Mk. 7:8; cf. Lk. 11:39.

make a man impure. As for eating with unwashed hands, that makes no man impure."⁶⁶

It seems to the writer that a similar explanation can be applied to other biblical materials; for example: Jesus and his disciples did not observe the sabbath rest;⁶⁷ Jesus and his family;⁶⁸ Jesus' reply to those who criticize him expelling demons with the help of Beelzebul⁶⁹ in which we see Jesus' unification, "If I expel demons with Beelzebul's help, by whose help do your people expel them? . . . But if it is by the Spirit of God that I expel demons, then the reign of God has overtaken you." It is seemingly noteworthy that Jesus' "Nature of Concern," his "Good" and his "Ends," his "I-process," all converge to this "Spirit of God," this "Reign of God," or "Kingdom of God."

Jesus' Selective Commitment; his Will and Active Agents;
his Imperfection as a Human Being

Talking about Jesus' selective commitment is talking about his limitedness in the midst of possibilities,⁷⁰ his freedom to choose by rejecting many of the social games and formalities, his self control,⁷¹ and his responsibility for what he did and how he behaved. Dwight M. Beck comments on the relationship between Jesus and his family and villagers as follows:

Jesus went home followed by disciples and remained for teaching on the Sabbath when many heard him with astonishment. But the wonder of his neighbors turned into questioning his wisdom and mighty works. The sad outcome was offense at him. Jesus recognized that no prophet was honored in his own country,

⁶⁶Mt. 15:19f; Mk. 7:18ff. ⁶⁷Mk. 2:23-28; Mt. 12:18; Lk. 6:1-6.

⁶⁸Mt. 12:46-50; Mk. 3:31-35; Lk. 8:19ff.

⁶⁹Mt. 12:22-37; Mk. 3:23-27; Lk. 11:17-22.

⁷⁰J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 270.

⁷¹Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 137.

among relatives or in his own home. Matthew states that he could do few mighty works there.⁷²

Jesus experienced the "sad outcome" because Jesus, as man, was not all powerful, not exempt from limitedness. He shared the fate of people who had followed the same career as he. If "no prophet was honored in his own country," Jesus, as a prophet, had no way staying away from the rejection of others, even of his own kindred. Jesus endured a bitter experience because he voluntarily accepted his selective commitment. He did not live in a daydream, expecting great admiration from his villagers when he healed a few ailing folks.

Jesus "made plows and yokes and taught both by signs of righteousness and by a life of energy. . . . The fame of Jesus reached the ruler of his region. The tetrarch, Herod Antipas, shared the speculations about Jesus and his powers."⁷³ Stated differently, Jesus was admired not because he was exempted from human condition; rather, because he accepted it, transformed it by performing in his life signs of righteousness. This righteousness, however, did not change the human nature in Jesus. He still experienced human imperfection. This merely means that he was a human being as every other man is. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen develops the concept of "the Son of Man" as follows:

Though 'the Son of Man' expressed His federation with humanity, He was very careful to note that He was like man in all things save sin. But the consequences of sin were all His as 'the Son of Man.' Hence the prayer to let the chalice pass; His endurance of hunger and thirst. . . . His endurance of worry, anxiety, rear, pain, mental anguish, fever, hunger, thirst. Nothing that

⁷² Dwight M. Beck, Through the Gospel to Jesus (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1954), p. 212.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 215.

was human was foreign to Him. . . . No single human affliction which befalls man as the result of sin escaped His oneness with it.⁷⁴

Jesus attained his self actualization in fulfilling what other persons do even in their human imperfection.

Jesus' Flavor of the Feelings for Mankind; and his Interpersonal Relations

The flavor of the feelings for mankind may be conceived as a mental state in which the person not only recognizes his fellow people as they are⁷⁵ but also admires them as creatures who are granted equal rights and dignity in all social relation and communication. What Abraham Maslow conceives is fitly applied to Jesus, [though the self actualizer is] "very different from other people in thought, impulse, behavior, emotion, . . . he nevertheless feels a basic underlying kinship with these creatures."⁷⁶ Jesus' feelings for mankind may be well seen in his "Golden Rule."⁷⁷ This is interpreted by Milo Connick as follows:

The Sermon reaches its summit at this point. The teaching is found in a variety of forms and in widely divergent places, Jewish and Gentile, prior to Jesus and after him. 'What thou hatest, do to no man' (Tobit 4:15). When Hillel was asked to summarize the Law, he quoted Tobit 4:15 and added, 'this is the whole law and the rest is commentary.' . . . The uniqueness of Jesus' saying lies not in its content but in its context. Jesus based his thought on the character and conduct of God Himself: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."⁷⁸

The "Golden Rule," as seen above, wonderfully expresses what Abraham Maslow characterizes in "the flavor of the feelings for mankind"

⁷⁴Fulton J. Sheen, Life of Christ (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1958), pp. 222-23.

⁷⁵Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 156.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 165-166. ⁷⁷Mt. 7:12; Lk. 6:31.

⁷⁸C. Milo Connick, Jesus the Man, the Mission and the Message, op. cit., p. 258.

or in interpersonal relations, "benevolence, affection, and friendliness. These people tend to be kind or at least patient to almost everyone."⁷⁹ A number of biblical passages in the Synoptics can be quoted to reinforce the statement: Benevolence to him who is not a friend (the parable of the Good Samaritan: Lk. 10:29-37); forgiveness to everybody;⁸⁰ genuine love for children.⁸¹

For interpersonal relations, Abraham Maslow understands it as being kind to almost everyone.⁸² The fact, however, is that Jesus could not show a deep tie to every person. Once becoming man, Jesus was conditioned in space and time. He was limited, finite because he was not only the divine, but also the human. If one of Abraham Maslow's subjects declares, "I haven't got time for many friends. Nobody has, that is, if they are to be real friends."⁸³ Jesus declared somewhat the same idea, not in his words, but in his actions: though Jesus loved everybody, he selected only twelve intimate friends to be his disciples;⁸⁴ it seems that he contacted the mother of James and John much more than other women.⁸⁵

Abraham Maslow's self actualizers "show their opposition when they think it deserved, or for the good of the person attacked or for

⁷⁹ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 166-167.

⁸⁰ Mt. 6:14; Mk. 11:25; Lk. 17:3f.

⁸¹ Mt. 19:13-15; Mk. 10:13-16; Lk. 18:15-17.

⁸² Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 167.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 166.

⁸⁴ Mt. 10:1-4; Mk. 3:13-19; Lk. 6:12-16.

⁸⁵ Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 10:35-45.

someone else's good."⁸⁶ Similarly Jesus opposed "the Pharesees because they were hypocritical, heartless."⁸⁷ Jesus, though calling himself "gentle and humble of heart" (Mt. 11:29), could not avoid many "woes" about which Connick concludes, "The 'woes' in Matthew and Luke are barbed and brutal."⁸⁸

Jesus and the Democratic Character Structure; his Problem Centering, and his Philosophical, Unhostile Sense of Humor

"You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, with your whole soul. . . . This is the greatest and first commandment. The second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'⁸⁹ Commenting on this statement, Bornkamm writes,

Although the love of God does not simply emerge with the love of our neighbour, Jesus does not on the other hand remove the confrontation with another person involved in our love of our neighbour. He does not simply make it into a means to the love of God. A love which is in this sense does not really love the other person for his own sake but only for the sake of God is not real love.⁹⁰

Abraham Maslow understands the democratic character structure as being "friendly with anyone of suitable character regardless of class, education, political belief, race, or color;" as "humility of a certain type;" and as being "aware of one's elite situation."⁹¹ Analogically viewed, the "love for our neighbour" depicted in the Synoptics and commented on by Bornkamm is one among other democratic characteristics in Jesus' attitude. Jesus could meet any person who needed his help.

⁸⁶ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 167.

⁸⁷ C. Milo Connick, Jesus the Man, the Mission, and the Message, op. cit., p. 341.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 345.

⁸⁹ Mt. 22:37-40; Mk. 12:28-34; Lk. 10:25-28.

⁹⁰ Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, op. cit., p. 110.

⁹¹ cf. Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 167-168.

He did not reject people because of their class, their education. This evidently happened when he called Matthew. As a tax collector, Matthew was considered by his fellow men as a sinner. Yet Jesus chose him to be his "disciple." Because of this friendship or this "democratic character structure regardless of class, race, or color, etc.," Jesus was severely criticized by his opponents, "What reason can the Teacher have for eating with tax collectors and those who disregard the law?" (Mt. 9:11). Jesus was democratic and was also aware of his elite situation. Fulton J. Sheen writes "Wherever there is suffering, death, or even humiliation mentioned, there is always the counterpoint of glory. . . . If He humbled himself as a sinner to receive the baptism of John, there was a Voice from Heaven to proclaim the glory of the Eternal, Son who needed no purification, etc."⁹² Jesus lived in what Abraham Maslow describes as the "democratic character structure;" the spirit of democracy dwelt in the life of Jesus.

In problem centering, the self actualizer does not waste his time, his mind, or his energy in trivial things, in insignificant dispute; that is, he can concentrate himself on the main problem of his life. This can be powerfully proved in Matthew 12:46-50:

He was still addressing the crowds when his mother and his brothers appeared outside to speak with him. Someone said to him, 'Your mother and your brothers are standing out there and they wish to talk to you.' He said to the one who had told him, 'Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?' Then, extending his hand toward his disciples, he said, 'There are my mother and my brothers. Whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is brother and sister and mother to me'. (The same thought is also expressed in Mk. 3:31-35; Lk. 8:19-21).

⁹²Fulton J. Sheen, Life of Christ, op. cit., p. 105.

Jesus certainly had some task, some problem outside himself which enlisted much of his energy. "In general these tasks are non-personal or unselfish, concerned rather with the good of mankind in general, etc."⁹³ Later on, Jesus entrusted that task, that mission to his disciples, "Go and make disciples of all the nations. . . . Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you."⁹⁴

As for Jesus' humor, it is impossible, upon the writer's investigation, to find in the Synoptics talks or actions in which Jesus behaved in "hostile humor (making people laugh by hurting someone) or superiority humor (laughing at someone else's inferiority) or authority-rebellion humor (the unfunny, Oedipal, or smutty joke)."⁹⁵ For a "philosophical, unhostile sense of humor," understood as moments in which people "forget their place in the universe, or try to be big when they are actually small, etc.,"⁹⁶ we may see this in the way Jesus employed parables to talk about the "human situation, human pride, seriousness, busyness, bustle, ambition, etc." A remark is herein noteworthy: A certain closeness between a self actualizer's humor and Jesus' parables is seemingly noticeable in the Synoptics. This does not mean that the purpose of these parables is humorous. Rather, humor may be considered as Jesus' characteristics expressed through parables.

⁹³ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 159-160.

⁹⁴ Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15f.; Lk. 24:47.

⁹⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 169.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

He used this individual quality to help people become aware of their own infirmity and finiteness so that they can become more fully what they potentially are. We may "laugh" when we read parables such as that of the Good Samaritan (Lk. 10:30-37), the Merciless Official (Mt. 18:23-35), the Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31). We can perceive the same sense of humor when Jesus answered spies who wanted to trap him in speech by questioning him about tribute to Caesar;⁹⁷ when he turns his opponents' trick into a "funny" situation: "If I cast out devils by Bulzebul, by whom do your people cast them out?"⁹⁸

Jesus' Simplicity, Love; and his Intensification
of Participation

The self actualizer, once living his simplicity, "will go through the ceremonies and rituals of convention with a good-humored shrug."⁹⁹ We may apply "blindly" this observation of Abraham Maslow to many circumstances in Jesus' life, especially in his breaking the Sabbath. According to Fulton Sheen, "Seven times in all, the Pharesees accused Him of breaking the Sabbath."¹⁰⁰ It seems clear that Jesus acts with spontaneity and naturalness in his indifference to a number of rabbinic laws,—For example, the washing one's hands before taking a meal (Mk. 7:2), cleaning only the outside of the dish (Mt. 23:26)— Doing so, instead of being guided by outside forces, Jesus was guided by his own inner motivation. This was his love for the whole of humanity.

⁹⁷Mt. 22:15-22; Mk. 12:13-17; Lk. 20:20-26.

⁹⁸Mt. 12:22-29; Mk. 3:22-27; Lk. 11:14-23.

⁹⁹Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 157.

¹⁰⁰Fulton J. Sheen, Life of Christ, op. cit., p. 280.

Living in love, self actualizers are characterized by their dropping of defenses, of roles, of trying and striving in human relationship. Putting aside "I call you friends" in John 15:15, we can also perceive Jesus' dropping of roles in the Synoptics: "Let the greater among you be as the junior, the leader as the servant. . . . I am in your midst as the one who serves you."¹⁰¹

Since Christology can be viewed as an investigation of Jesus' love for humanity, the history of atonement is a historical event in which a real "love story" was related. It seems, therefore, impossible to present all aspects of Jesus' love to those who loved him,¹⁰² who hated him, or who were sinners,¹⁰³ those who received his special affection;¹⁰⁴ all these aspects are directly or indirectly related to characteristics of self actualizing people. It is, however, certain that Jesus had "the power to love and the ability to be loved."¹⁰⁵ Because of this love, Jesus performed miracles to heal a number of the sick, such as he cured a leper and was "moved with pity;"¹⁰⁶ his being "moved with pity" reveals Jesus' emotion and tender love for people, for mankind, in many different situations. We read in Matthew 14:14, "When he disembarked and saw the vast throng, his heart was moved with pity;" in Mark 6:34, "upon disembarking Jesus saw a vast crowd; he pitied them, for they

¹⁰¹ Lk. 22:26-27; Mt. 20:26-28; Mk. 10:43-45.

¹⁰² Mt. 14:14; Mk. 6:34; cf. Lk. 9:11.

¹⁰³ Lk. 23:34, 15:2-7; Mt. 9:10-13.

¹⁰⁴ Mk. 10:13-16; Mt. 19:13-15; Lk. 18:15-17.

¹⁰⁵ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 186.

¹⁰⁶ Mk. 2:40-44; Mt. 8:2ff.; Lk. 5:12ff.

were like sheep without a shepherd;" in Luke 7:12-13, "As he approached the gate of the town [Nain], a dead man was being carried out, the only son of a widowed mother. . . . The Lord was moved with pity upon seeing her." Besides being concerned with people's bodily welfare, Jesus concentrated much more affection and love in healing their mental or spiritual deviations so that they can attain their normalcy by doing repentance, dropping their sins: "The healthy do not need a doctor, sick people do. I have not come to invite the self-righteous to a change of heart, but sinners."¹⁰⁷

Jesus had the power to love; he also had "the ability to be loved." After a successful Sabbath in Capernaum "every one" was searching for him (Mk. 1:37). Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, at your side I am prepared to face imprisonment and death itself." (Lk. 22:33) In another passage, we read, "As Jesus went, the crowd almost crashed him."¹⁰⁸ Jesus greatly loved children and they also loved him.¹⁰⁹ One day, on the way to Jerusalem, people rushed to see him; without any conventional ceremony, they welcomed him as a king and changed his trip to a "Triumphal Entry" in which

many people spread their cloaks on the road, while others spread reeds which they had cut in the field. Those preceding him as well as those who followed cried out:

Hosanna!
Blessed is he who comes in the name
of the Lord!
Blessed is the reign of our father David
to come!
Hosanna in the highest!¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷Lk. 5:31-32; Mt. 9:12-13. ¹⁰⁸Lk. 8:42; Mk. 5:30-31.
¹⁰⁹Mk. 10:13-16; Mt. 19:13-15; Lk. 18:15-17.
¹¹⁰Mk. 11:8-10; Mt. 21:8-10; Lk. 19:37-38.

Jesus' love led him to his intensification of participation. He participated with "much more wholehearted involvement in those matters to which he did choose to devote himself."¹¹¹ This is the way Jesus proved his love to his Father, to all mankind. Edward Bauman writes about "the uniqueness of Jesus" as follows:

No other life even approaches the wholeness, vividness, and influence of the divine revelation that occurred through the life of Jesus. . . . Jesus emphasized the will of God in his teaching, at the same time fully and joyfully accepting it for his own life. From beginning to the end, through temptation, suffering, and the agony of Gethsemane, this was his dominant desire: 'Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.' He demonstrated, further, how obedience to the will of God often spells itself out in terms of creative, redemptive, unselfish love for others¹¹² (*Italics mine*).

Though Jesus showed such a great intensification of participation, he also showed himself balanced and reserved. This caution is seen in what Jesus said and did. When curing a paralytic in Capernaum, Jesus did not say "I forgive your sins;" he said, "Your sins are forgiven."¹¹³ Jesus loved greatly but not blindly. Because he was not blind, he could cure those who are blind, physically and mentally. After ending a busy day he showed his disciple the way to come to an out-of-the-way place and to rest a little;¹¹⁴ on another occasion, "when he had taken leave of them, he went off to the mountain to pray."¹¹⁵

¹¹¹ J.F.T. Eugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 271.

¹¹² Edward N. Bauman, The Life and Teaching of Jesus (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952), pp. 219-220.

¹¹³ Mk. 2:5; cf. Mk. 10:52; Mk. 2:9; Mt. 20:25-26, etc.

¹¹⁴ Mk. 6:31; Mt. 14:13; Lk. 9:10.

¹¹⁵ Mk. 6:46; Mt. 14:23.

Jesus accepted others wholeheartedly but reservedly because he loved them unselfishly. His love satisfied what was good for the people's sake.

Jesus and the Efficiency of Perception; his
Quality of Appreciating Suchness

The efficiency of perception "eventuates in a superior ability to reason, to perceive the truth, to come to conclusions, to be logical, and to be cognitively efficient."¹¹⁶ The way Jesus perceived and accepted nature may be seen in many of his parables: The birds of the air who neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; the wild flowers of the field so beautiful who neither work nor spin and yet are far more splendid than Solomon in his magnificent glory;¹¹⁷ the fig-tree puts forth its leaves and "you know that summer is near."¹¹⁸ Bornkamm observes, "Everybody knows the direct, the natural, and the memorable way in which Jesus points the hearer to the creation, how he makes it speak and preach about God. The parables show this, and many other words confirm it."¹¹⁹ Jesus recognized things, so to speak, as the way they objectively or existentially were, rather than the way he wanted them to be. Acting in this way, Jesus could hardly be regarded as neurotic or alienated from reality. He who is neurotic does not perceive the real world so accurately or so efficiently as does the healthy person. As a person

¹¹⁶ Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 154.

¹¹⁷ Mt. 6:26ff.; cf. Lk. 12:24ff.

¹¹⁸ Mk. 13:28; Mt. 24:32; Lk. 21:30.

¹¹⁹ Mt. 6:26; Mk. 12:24.

physically and mentally healthy, Jesus knew how to accept nature, not to destroy it. He perceived it with all its best qualities; in other words, he possessed a high ability of appreciating suchness in nature, of penetrating the existence of nature as it objectively is. This is the way Jesus experienced nature and put it in many of his parables. Henry Kendall Booth remarks, "most of the parables of Jesus were drawn from nature and from life about him. The parable of the Good Samaritan is so true to the experience of all travelers to Jericho even today as to suggest some recent event as the possible source of the parable."¹²⁰ If one of characteristics of the self actualizing person is his ability to recognize the suchness of nature, to contemplate the beauty and grandeur of the universe, Jesus, as just revealed, certainly possessed such an ability. This ability is not influenced or altered by outer circumstances. He was not confused in his perception when he faced people who wanted to entrap him in his talking or doing. Besides his famous saying, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's" (Mk. 12:17), we can also find other illustrations in the Synoptics. After curing, for example, a possessed man who was blind and mute, Jesus was accused by the Pharesees as a wicked man who expelled demons with the help of Beelzebul, the prince of demons. Jesus perceived immediately their bad thoughts, broke their arguments by using the same theme as they did, that is, by "kicking the ball back to them." He said in reply, "If Satan is expelling Satan,

¹²⁰ Henry Kendall Booth, The World of Jesus (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1939), p. 158.

he must be torn by dissension. How, then, can his dominion last?" (Mt. 12:26). On another occasion, when trying to play a trick on Jesus' opinion of the problem of resurrection, some Sadducees gave him a puzzling case to solve. Instead of being enwrapped in the cobweb of the problem of husband and wife, death and resurrection in the way as they were posed to him, Jesus changed the matter to another direction and said,

When people rise from the dead, they neither marry nor are given in marriage but live like angels in heaven. As to the raising of the dead, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God told him,

'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob'?

He is the God of the living, not of the dead. You are very much mistaken.¹²¹

Jesus and the Continuation of Freshness in
Appreciation; his Creativeness

"Self actualizing people," writes Abraham Maslow, "have a wonderful capacity to appreciate again and again, freshly and naively, the basic goods of life, with awe, pleasure, wonder, and even ecstasy."¹²² Though not applied word for word to Jesus, this freshness of appreciation can be seen in many circumstances in his talk and action. With regard to children, it is probably impossible to discover any occasion in which Jesus rebuked them. Instead, he "laid his hands on their heads" (Mt. 19:15); the story is clearer in Mark, "he embraced them and blessed

¹²¹ Mk. 12:18-27; Mt. 22:23-33; Lk. 20:27-40.

¹²² Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 163.

them, placing his hands on them" (10:16). What is more striking is the fact that Jesus did not only love children, but he appreciated them so greatly that he put them as an edifying example to everybody, "Let the little children come to me. Do not shut them off. The reign of God belongs to such as these. Trust me when I tell you that whoever does not accept the kingdom of God as a child will not enter to it."¹²³

Loving children, seeing the freshness in children, putting forth the qualities of children as lesson to be learned by the grown up: this was Jesus' attitude; this was Jesus' maturity or self actualization.

The freshness of appreciation regarding a sunset, flowers, that is, regarding nature, can be unveiled in Jesus' parables. As presented previously, most of Jesus' parables were taken from real life, from the framework of nature. In the Synoptics, no matter where we read, we can recognize some traits relating to nature. Nature is always "fresh" to Jesus. It is an inexhaustible source for his teachings: the seed which grows and ripens till the harvest comes;¹²⁴ sun and rain (Mt. 5:45); sunset and the wouth wind (Lk. 12:55); the flash of the lightning (Mt. 24:27); etc.

Freshness of appreciation led Jesus to creativeness. Abraham Maslow undertands creativeness to be "fresh and naive, a direct way of looking at life. . . . Santanya called this the 'second naiveté'."¹²⁵

¹²³Lk. 18:16-17; Mt. 20:14; Mk. 10:14.

¹²⁴Mk. 4:3ff; 26ff; Mt. 13:24ff.

¹²⁵Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., p. 171.

This "direct way of looking at life" can "transform nothingness into somethingness."¹²⁶ Jesus showed his striking creativeness in the way he used poetry and parable. For the first glance, there is no relationship between dogs and God, between swine and pearls. In Jesus's view, all these ideas connected delightfully with each other and created something new, fresh and "naive," in the form of poetry:

- Give not that which is holy unto the dogs,
- Neither cast your pearls before swine,
- Lest haply they trample them under their feet,
- And turn and rend you. (Mt. 7:6)

or:

- Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth,
- Where moth and rust doth corrupt,
- And where thieves break through and steal;
- But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,
- Where neither moth nor rust doth consume,
- And where thieves do not break through and steal.
- For where your treasure is,
- There will your heart be also (Mt. 6:19-21; cf. Lk. 12:33).¹²⁷

Once again, an element which revealed Jesus' talented creativeness was his skillful handling of parables. What concerns the writer is to what extent these parables express and how they create something fresh and meaningful. According to Jeremias, Jesus' parables cover eight major themes:

The assurance of the approach of the reign of God; the present arrival of the new age; the mercy of God for sinners; the imminence of judgment; the necessity of an immediate personal response; the conditions of discipleship; the passion; the consummation.¹²⁸

The outstanding significance in Jesus' parables is seen by Henry

¹²⁶ J.F.T. Bugental, The Search for Authenticity, op. cit., p. 28.

¹²⁷ Henry Kendall Booth, The World of Jesus, op. cit., pp. 140ff.

¹²⁸ Cited by John L. McKenzie, S.J., Dictionary of the Bible (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1974), p. 636.

Booth as follows: "The way in which he used them is his own, and upon them rests the stamp of his own personality. . . . They have a simplicity and a naturalness, a musical cadence and poetic form that makes them matchless."¹²⁹ Because of Jesus' "second naiveté," the way in which he used parables is "his own," he created a new spirit and quality, "a rich and inexhaustible meaning" which can be never be out of date and stale.

We can also call in mind creative answers given by Jesus to problems posed. The state of the filiation of the Messiah is one among these interesting answers. The scribes claimed that the Messiah had to be a son of the king David. Using a biblical passage which was well known as David's own word, Jesus proved that the king himself called the Messiah his 'Lord;' continuing his creative thought and passing the problem back to those who questioned him, Jesus asked, "If David himself addresses him as 'Lord,' in what sense can he be his son?"¹³⁰

Jesus and the Transcendence of any Particular Culture;
his Ability for Evaluation

Robert Orpinela observes, "Maslow writes of maturity under the rubric of self actualization. Concerning self actualizing persons he finds that they are relatively independent of their culture and environment."¹³¹ In the Synoptics, Jesus appeared in many instances as he who concentrated all his energy to destroy, to protest the culture in which he grew up and was fed. Jesus was undeniably against the Sabbath in Matthew (12:1-15), in Mark (3:1-7), as well as in Luke (6:1-11).

¹²⁹Henry Kendall Booth, The World of Jesus, op. cit., p. 159.

¹³⁰Mk. 12:35-37; Mt. 22:41-45; Lk. 20:41-44.

¹³¹Robert R. Orpinela, "Conscience and Theological Construction," (Diss. Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California, 1970), p. 163.

Jesus' transcendence of rabbinical culture sometimes became bitter and put him in full challenge to his opponents, "I assure you, there is something greater than the Temple here. . . . The Son of Man is indeed Lord of the Sabbath" (Mt. 12:6,8); in other words, Jesus was fully aware of what are means and what are ends in his culture. He transcended culture because sometimes it become stale, useless, keeping man backward, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath" (Mk. 2:27). To Jesus, Jewish traditions or culture must be reviewed: the Temple, the Sabbath, the Law, etc. These habits and customs must serve man's spiritual and material welfare. If they entrap people into futility and frustration, they must be destroyed, replaced. What is important to Jesus was plain in his saying, "It is mercy I desire and not sacrifice" (Mt. 12:7). Justice, faithfulness, peace, mercy, etc., these are values Jesus adhered to, not the restricted culture practiced in Palestine in his time. Thus living, Jesus was of not merely Jewish, but also of a greater community, that of the human species.¹³² Every custom, every way of life, every culture which separated Jesus or his followers from their purpose, that is, from the kingdom of God which "is the central theme of Jesus' teaching,"¹³³ from mutual understanding and love (Lk. 10:27), from sincere forgiveness (Lk. 13:1-5), all these man-made-practices needed to be reformed. Reform, repentance, or change, that is, "transcendence from one's frustrating culture" was not only what Jesus practiced in his life but it was also the condition for whoever wanted

¹³²cf. Abraham Maslow, Motivation and Personality, op. cit., pp. 173-174.

¹³³C. Milo Connick, Jesus the Man, the Mission, and the Message, op. cit., p. 168.

to follow him: "whoever puts his hand to the plow but keeps looking back is unfit for the reign of God" (Lk. 9:62).

Jesus transcended his particular culture when the culture was against his mission. When it was meaningful or encouraged people to attain their fulfillment, instead of rejecting it, Jesus showed a deep concern with it and kept it with an upright heart, though it reminded him of what was deadly painful to him, "I have greatly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer" (Lk. 22:15).

Jesus could appreciate one aspect and reject another in a culture. This shows that he was endowed with the capacity for evaluating. An ability for evaluation is an eminent character of self-actualizing people.

Writing with little reserve, the writer asserts with confidence that the whole teaching of Jesus was that of evaluating life, society, and most of all, the kingdom of God. Jesus distinguished clearly the self of the person who acts from his appearance, his way of life, his food and drink, etc. He did not evaluate anybody basing his judgment just on outer elements alone. Jesus' ability for evaluation took him to the essence of a self, "Do not be concerned for your life, what you are eat, or for your body, what you are to wear. Life is more important than food and the body more than clothing."¹³⁴ In Luke 12:16-21, the rich man appeared to be close to the "desperate man" of Maslow. These two men are neurotic in their perceptions, in the way they evaluate materials, facts, the relationship between man and life, life and its intrinsic value. The rich man became ridiculous in his argument, "I will pull down my

¹³⁴Lk. 12:23; Mt. 6:25.

grain bins and build larger ones. All my grain and my goods will go there. Then I will say to myself: you have blessings in reserve for years to come. Relax! Eat heartily, drink well. Enjoy yourself." Jesus concluded his parable by pointing out the rich man's lack of sound evaluation, "You fool! This very night your life shall be required of you. To whom will all this piled-up wealth of yours go?"

Because of his ability to evaluate, Jesus entered the culminating point of his mission, the proclamation of the kingdom of God. Everything else which is opposed to this proclamation must be rejected. "Jesus forbids divorce," writes Bornkamm, "although the law of Moses permits the possibility of a legal settlement (Deut. xxiv). . . . The freedom of Jesus over against the law. . . is without parallel as far as a rabbi is concerned."¹³⁵

Jesus possessed "freedom over against the law" as well as against all obstacles blocking the way to the ultimate goal of life. Acting so, Jesus evaluated everything in terms of the kingdom of God, "If your hand is your difficulty, cut it off! Better for you to enter life maimed than to keep both hands and enter Gehenna. . . . If your eye is your downfall, tear it out! Better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to be thrown with both eyes into Gehenna."¹³⁶

Jesus, as seen through the Synoptics, exercised in his life what is called the nature of a mature person, a self actualizer. In this sense, he can be regarded as an excellent illustration of Abraham Maslow's concept

¹³⁵ Gunther Bornkamm, Jesus of Nazareth, op. cit., p. 99.

¹³⁶ Mk. 9:43-50; cf. Mt. 18:6-9; Lk. 14:34f.

of self actualization.

Before ending this chapter, the writer will attempt to draw out some comparisons which can help to better understand self actualization as seen in Jesus.

Self Actualization, Mystic. Peak Experiences,
Ecstasy, and Transcendence

As we saw in the last chapter,¹³⁷ these terms are interchangeable in Abraham Maslow's writings. He appreciates William James¹³⁸ who maintains four marks in mystic experiences: ineffability; great insight (or great ability to go into the depth of the truth); transiency; and finally, passivity. Reading the Synoptics, the writer recognizes in some instances experiences in Jesus' life that might reflect peak experiences.

The evangelists narrated historically the Baptism, the Temptation as events marking the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. These events report highly unusual experiences. One might speak of them as overpowering identity experiences. Later during his ministry, Jesus also experienced what was uncommon in his Transfiguration.

About Jesus' Baptism, Matthew narrated that after being baptized, he came directly from the water; suddenly the sky opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descend like a dove and hover over him and a voice from the heaven said, "This is my beloved Son. My favor rests on him!"¹³⁹

¹³⁷ Supra, p. 53.

¹³⁸ William James, The Varieties of Religious Experiences, op. cit., pp. 292-293.

¹³⁹ Mt. 3:13-17; cf. Mk. 1:9-11; Lk. 3:21-22.

As for Jesus' Temptation, Matthew and Mark said that he was led into desert by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil; when the devil left him, "angels came and waited on him."¹⁴⁰

On the account of Jesus' Transfiguration, the evangelists narrated that when he went up to a mountain with some of his disciples, he met with extraordinary experience; his face became dazzling as the sun, and his clothes as radiant as light; at that moment, Elijah appeared to him with Moses. A cloud came, overshadowing them, and out of the cloud a voice was heard, "This is my Son, my beloved. Listen to him."¹⁴¹

The key feature that comes through in all of the reports of these experiences is that Jesus experienced himself as one who was called to a larger sense of identity than that of the ordinary person. The experiences report him as especially singled out by God.

If these events are factual, historically trustworthy, and if they actually happened to Jesus, he then experienced occurrences that are unusual and uncommon to the average individual. The evangelists mentioned these experiences but did not give too much detail. These occurrences may be considered as similar to what Abraham Maslow means by peak experiences, especially when he thinks of them as acute identity experiences.¹⁴² It is possibly right to say that Jesus experienced these psychological phenomena in his life.

Self actualizing people are regarded as healthy, mature,

¹⁴⁰Mt. 4:1-11; Mk. 1:12-13.

¹⁴¹Mk. 9:2-8; Mt. 17:1-8; Lk. 9:28-36.

¹⁴²Supra, p. 53.

congruent, or authentic people. Jesus portrayed in the Synoptics, as just analyzed, satisfied conditions and characteristics of an excellent self actualized person. He, therefore, can be seen as an illustration of Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization and may have has peak experiences.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

It has been the purpose of this thesis to present Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization and to analyze the historical Jesus as depicted in the Synoptics as an illustration of this concept. Suggestions for further study will also be included in this final chapter.

Abraham Maslow's Concept of Self Actualization

Conditions and nature of self actualization are investigated; then comparisons between self actualization and some other psychological phenomena will close this exposition.

Conditions

Without materials a person cannot build a house; similarly, without certain conditions, a person cannot actualize himself. Some of these conditions are basic; some, though not basic, are important in the process of self actualization. Basic needs are physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love needs, esteem needs, and the need for self actualization itself. These conditions are "needs;" they are basic, because if a person does not satisfy them at least to a minimum degree, he may die or at best hardly grow. They are classified in a hierarchy. The more prepotent the need, the lower the position it occupies on the scale of the hierarchy. The higher the need is in

the hierarchy, the more significance it has for full psychological development.

Other conditions of self actualization are seen as dropping resistance, awareness, and value recognition. Dropping resistance is regarded as an effort through which the person frees himself from the deficiency problem of youth and the neurotic problems of life. Thus he is able to face, endure, and grapple with the "real" problems of life (the intrinsically and ultimately human problem, the unvoidable, the "existential" problem to which there is no perfect solution). Awareness and value recognition, choice and responsibility play an important role in self actualization. When all these conditions are sufficiently met, a person may become self actualized.

Nature of Self Actualization

Once self actualized, the person feels that he can accept his own human nature in the stoic style, with all its shortcomings. His goal of happiness will change; instead of seeking outer happiness, he feels happy because he is busy with what he has chosen to commit his life to.

He is a self disciplined person who frees himself from the subject-object split, who is relatively unified even in his discrimination between means and ends, good and evil; though he cannot escape from all human imperfection, he still exercises a good selective commitment which enables him a greater freedom to choose. Thus he rejects many of the social games and formalities that are recognized as shallow, festering, malignant, symbiotic relations.

The self actualizing person also sees each human being as they are, not as he would prefer them to be. He accepts others because they are intrinsically worthy of acceptance. He experiences the flavor of the feelings for mankind; he has a genuine wish and tendency to help everybody without concern to satisfy his own desires. The self actualizing person is kind to everyone though the ones he loves profoundly are few in number. He is democratic or friendly with all those of suitable character regardless of class, education, race. Also he does not waste his time and his mind on trivial things; rather he concentrates on the main problems of his life. His humor is a philosophical, unhostile one, because his sense of humor is related to human human beings in general. In such a way, he lives in simplicity and love with an intensification of participation. He participates wholeheartedly because he is motivated by his growth, his being rather than by his deficiency.

The self actualizing person does not complain about nature because it is not the way he thinks it should be; he accepts nature as it is. Nature appears to him fresh, exciting, and attractive; every sunset is as beautiful as the first one. The thousandth baby he sees is just as miraculous a product as the first one he saw. In that way, the self actualizing person tends naturally to creativeness. This helps him to transform nothingness (stale, meaningless events in life) into somethingness. Creativeness is a term used to characterize meaningfulness in one's attitude, in one's activities. The self actualizing person can also transcend his particular culture in order to become part of a larger community, of all humanity. Mystic experiences, peak experiences, ecstasy, and transcendence are terms indicating states in which the self actualized

person can experience insights or knowledge which were unknown to him in the past, or are unknown to the majority of common people. The unknown and the impossible may, in a way, become known and possible to him who is granted peak experiences. All in all, self actualization is a process in which the person becomes authentic, congruent, or mature.

Jesus and Self Actualization

Jesus is seen in this thesis as an illustration of Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization; the author will present in a similar manner to that of the previous section.

Jesus and Conditions of Self Actualization

As man, Jesus needed food, water or safety, belongingness, love. Without having gratified these needs, a person may remain backward, immature. Jesus, as described in the Synoptics, showed himself a balanced person. This can be seen as a fact to prove that Jesus' needs were sufficiently gratified. Most of all, as depicted in the Synoptics, Jesus was driven by his mission, his inner life rather than by the outer or social environment. In Abraham Maslow's terms, Jesus operated by "Being motivation" rather than by "Deficiency motivation," "Not on bread alone is man to live but on every utterance that comes from the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4). Self esteem, seen as a condition of self actualization, is also recognized in Jesus; he knew how to act, how to evaluate his deeds, "You will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with clouds of heaven" (Mk. 14:61-62; Mt. 42:30; Lk. 22:70). To become self actualized is to actualize one's potentialities,

to live one's functionally unified ideal. To attain his aim, his ideal, Jesus challenges all obstacles even at the expense of his life.

In the Synoptics, Jesus is described as not greatly dependent on his bodily needs; in other words, the hierarchy of needs was flexible in Jesus. Because his main concern was the kingdom of God, Jesus' behavior and attitude were ultimately motivated by only one goal which was his work of atonement or the transformation of humanity into a kingdom in which love was the supreme law (Mt. 22:34-40; Mk. 12:28-34; Lk. 10:25-28).

Jesus and Nature of Self Actualization

Jesus accepted whatever happened to him, "the foxes have lairs, the birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." His self acceptance led him to suffering, but by suffering he fulfilled his mission. Jesus suffered not because of "the consequences of being cared for devotedly" but because people did not listen to his message.¹ Jesus detached himself from earthly attraction; he was therefore capable of living in privacy, in solitude as described in Mt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46; Lk. 9:18; etc. In the Synoptics, Jesus appeared always as a normal, healthy person; he was mature; accordingly he did not need to change his own behavior but rather he helped others to change theirs, "Remove the plank from your own eye first. . . ." Jesus knew his goal and the means to attain it as well as to what extent a thing was good or bad. "It is not what goes into man's mouth that makes him impure; it is what comes out of his mouth." All his life,

¹Supra, p. 81.

Jesus acted for the kingdom of God. In a sense, this kingdom may be seen as residing in the reform and the salvation of mankind. To create this kingdom, Jesus accepted whoever came to him: People who were physically ill, mentally sick or obsessed by "unclean spirits," and morally condemned. Jesus can be said to have lived in a "democratic character structure" as exemplified by his gentleness and humility of heart, as well as by his commandment of love, "Love your neighbour as yourself." It is also possible to state that Jesus' unselfish love enabled him to reach an unhostile sense of humor. This trait is found in a number of the biblical passages, including the Good Samaritan, the Merciless Official, and the Rich Man and Lazarus. It seems clear that Jesus acted spontaneously and naturally in his indifference to a number of sabbath laws, for example, the sabbath rest, the washing of hands before eating, the cleaning of only the outside of the dish. Jesus invited people to become healthy, "normal" by demanding repentance or transformation, "I have not come to invite the self righteous to a change of heart, but sinners."

Because of his unselfish love, Jesus possessed a sharp power of perception and observation. He used nature in his analogies, i.e., lilies, sunsets, rain, birds in the sky. Nature was always fresh and attractive to him. His sharp observation contributed to his creativeness as illustrated in his daily speech which was resplendent with symbols, parables, metaphors, and rhythm.

Jesus transcended his own culture and evaluated everything in the light of his ultimate goal which was the kingdom of God. Living in such a state, Jesus experienced mystic and peak experiences, ecstasy

and transcendence as illustrated in the account of his baptism, temptation and transfiguration.

On the basis of all of these conclusions, one can assert that Jesus, as portrayed in the Synoptics, satisfied all the conditions and characteristics of a fully self actualized person. He can be seen as an excellent illustration of Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization.

Suggestions for further Study

This thesis was limited to a study of Abraham Maslow's concept of self actualization as illustrated in the life of Jesus. To better understand the relationship between Jesus and psychology, further study might investigate Jesus' life as an illustration of other concepts and their relation to man:

- (1) Self actualization, Jesus, and the Pastoral Epistles;
- (2) Jesus, the Old Testament, and self actualization;
- (3) Karl Marx's concept of man and Jesus;
- (4) Jesus and the concept of man in Buddhism.

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