

# BEING AND BECOMING ALL THAT WE CAN BE

Rem B. Edwards

For many years, the United States Army used as its recruiting slogan "Be all that you can be"; join the Army. This was replaced at the beginning of 2001 with "An Army of One," the current recruiting slogan, which leaves a lot to be desired unless, of course, it is intended to express and emphasize the unique intrinsic value of every soldier, each of whom should still aspire toward full self-development. But critics now suggest that the Army no longer expects its recruits to be all that they can be, and that their new slogan should be "Join the army and underachieve."

I must say that I like the "Be all that you can be" idea, whether associated with military life or not; and I have no doubt that in a world of so much unjustified aggression, many young men and women can best become all that they can be by serving honorably in the military. Having said that, I also want to say that we must always pray and strive for peace so that our service-men and -women will never have to make the extreme sacrifices that they are prepared to make for us.

I want us to think today about the idea of being and becoming all that we can be, no matter whether we have been or ever will be associated with military life. The Mexican thinker José Romano Muñoz expressed the idea on a much broader philosophical level when he wrote that "*Our being is a being able to which strives to be more*, a will, an aspiration to be all it *can be* in the full realization of its immanent possibility."<sup>(1)</sup> Jesus gave a religious expression to this idea when he suggested that we could and should live more abundantly. I believe that all of us can, do, and should want to live more abundantly, to be all that we can be. This ideal has universal human appeal. The trouble is, most of us do not know what living abundantly means, much less how to achieve it, and that is what I want to think with you about today.

One of the really attractive features of Robert S. Hartman's axiology is that it can tell us very clearly what an abundant life is; it can tell us how to be and become all that we can be. But every coin has two sides. Aristotle said that the same knowledge that enables a physician to cure us also enables him to harm us or make us ill if that is his intention. Saint Paul well understood that the same norms or ideals that direct us can also condemn us when we fail to live up to them. This is just as much true when these norms are derived from philosophical reflection as when they come from religious sources. In showing us what it is like to be as good as we can be, axiology also shows us what it is like to be less than the best, what it is like to underachieve. By fulfilling certain standards, we can live better and thus more abundant lives; by failing to fulfill the appropriate norms, we become axiological underachievers. Axiology can show us how to meet and how to fail to fulfill the standards that give meaning to the very idea of being the best individual persons that we can be.

Believe me, there are many ways to fail! In the past few years, my presentations at the fall meetings of the Institute have focused largely on types of persons who fail to live most abundantly. In my recently published book on *Religious Values and Valuations*, I concentrate primarily on worldliness and ideology as ways of falling short and living valuationally impoverished lives. Worldlings live primarily for *things* and *social status*; but in gaining the world, they lose their moral and spiritual souls. Ideologists live almost entirely in the ivory towers of their minds, but they do not really have a life, and they can be a serious menace to others who do not fit neatly into their ideological schemes and prejudices.

Today, I want to focus primarily on axiology's positive message. Early in 2001, in an e-mail message, my friend Gilberto Carrasco asked me, "What can we do to get our total human development?" This is the question that I want to address today. The answer is that (1) we must first have a clear concept of "our total human development," and (2) then we must identify and execute effective strategies for achieving it.

## 1. A Plausible Concept of "All that We Can Be"

I said earlier that most of us do not know what it means to live most abundantly; we do not have a concept of

"our total human development;" but without such a concept, we cannot take steps to fulfill it.

Let us think first about the notion of "development." This is a dynamic, temporalistic concept; it is relevant to our situation because we are dynamic, temporalistic realities with a future before us. As the American Pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce observed, "reference to the future is an essential element of personality. Were the ends of a person already explicit, there would be no room for development, for growth, for life; and consequently there would be no personality."<sup>(2)</sup>

*Being* all that we can be is far too static a notion; we must also consider *becoming* all that we can be. Many philosophers and many non-philosophers emphasize our relatively static spatial properties, our physical extension, our materiality; and they are persuaded that all of us are primarily if not entirely material beings. By contrast, process philosophers move one giant step away from metaphysical and practical materialism by emphasizing our temporality, our becoming. We are *unfinished* individualities in need of development and largely constituted by our becoming, not static beings who cannot and do not need to change. Our human reality is primarily that of dynamic becoming, not static being. Much of what we *are* at the present moment is simply given to us by our heredity and environment, though some of what we are has resulted from partly self-creative decisions that we have made in the past. At the present moment, what we will *be* in the future depends on what and how we now decide to *become*, for we create who we will be through the choices that we make as life and time march along. I really like José Romano Muñoz's emphasis on *dynamic self-development* in his expression of the ideal of being all that we can be. Consider again how he put it: "*Our being is a being able to which strives to be more, a will, an aspiration to be all it can be in the full realization of its immanent possibility.*" Our being is our becoming, our "being able," our striving, willing, aspiring, and the actualizing of our possibilities.

As our actuality increases in being--partly through our personal striving, willing and aspiring--our lives achieve definiteness; and some of our real potentialities decrease, while others increase. Choosing both cuts off possibilities and opens up new ones. If each of us marries one woman (or man, as the case might be), we cannot marry the others, but we open up new possibilities for living concretely, intensely, intimately, and devotedly with her (or him); if we take one job, we cannot take the others, but we open up new possibilities for fulfilling ourselves distinctively in the work before us; if we choose to do the moral thing, we cut off all the immoral possibilities that were open to us, but we find new and ultimately fulfilling possibilities for righteous, Godly, and abundant being and becoming.

Let us turn now to the value and valuational features of "our total human development." In this discussion, I will be doing mostly applied axiology, not axiological theory; but what I say will presuppose Robert S. Hartman's formal axiology and his own application of it in what he called the "hierarchy of values." Perhaps we will need a little bit of theory just to get us started.

Hartman's theory, applied to human values, says that our ideas or concepts are not the most important things in the world, but they are very important because with them we can and do create standards of value that can be fulfilled and used to measure degrees of fulfillment or non-fulfillment, *i.e.*, degrees of worth. This process can be applied to almost anything, including "our total human development" which I take to be equivalent to "the very best life we can possibly live" and to "a truly abundant life." None of us will ever live a perfect life, but we want to live as abundantly as we can.

Good things fulfill the standards that we apply to them; bad things do not measure up. So-so, average, and fair things measure up by degrees. Some things are better or more valuable than others, depending on (1) the degree to which they exemplify the good-making properties expressed in our standards or concepts of value, and (2) on the value-richness of the standards themselves.

Some valuable things can be better than others; some can be the best of the lot that is available to us; and axiology can tell us what these ideas mean. It can tell us what it means to be and to become the very best person that we can be. The very concept of "value" can be applied to instances of itself, to kinds of value. *Some kinds of value are richer both in quantity and quality of good-making properties than others. Value-entities or -*

*objects* are the realities that exemplify good-making properties; *value-standards* are sets of conceptual predicates by which we measure the goodness of value-entities. Some value-objects are richer in good-making properties than others; and some value-standards are richer than others in quantity and/or quality of good-making predicates and fall into a hierarchy of value dimensions.

Within a comprehensive axiological system, some *kinds* of value are better than others. This is where Hartman's threefold hierarchy of value comes in. "Better than," defined formally as "having more good-making properties than" is the key to understanding and applying the hierarchy of values. Yes, some kinds of value really are richer in good-making properties than others. Things are richer than mere ideas; and people are richer than both things and ideas in both quantity and quality of good-making properties.

Valuable *systemic thoughts or ideas* are *simplified tokens or substitutes for realities*, and (unless they just are the realities for which they stand--as in the case of pure systemic constructs), they are less valuable than, they have fewer good-making properties than, those other realities. Our concepts of value tell us that many things are more valuable than mere concepts. Valuable *Extrinsic material or physical beings, processes, and activities* are always richer in good-making properties than the systemic ideas we have of them, so extrinsic realities are better than systemic concepts. Almost everyone except Plato would rather have a real peach than the mere idea of a peach, a real vacation instead of the mere idea of a vacation, a real trip to Mexico instead of a mere flight of fantasy!

Finally, individual human persons like us are composed of and constituted by (A) our good-making thoughts, (B) our exceedingly valuable physical and social processes and activities, and so much more, (C) our inner souls--our unique dynamic, active, temporally-ordered consciousness. As *unique holistic, inclusive persons*, we contain *all* these kinds or dimensions of value within ourselves; so we are much more valuable than any one particular kind of value in isolation. As unique individual persons, inclusive of all other values, and thus richer in good-making properties than all other valuable entities on this earth, we belong at the top of the hierarchy of value. Unique persons are immensely more valuable than mere things and/or mere ideas; that is the essence of Hartman's hierarchy of value. Although ideas are good, the things, social roles, and social positions that they represent are even more valuable, and people are intrinsically more valuable than systemic ideas and/or extrinsic things. With respect to our own personal worth, our thoughts are good; our physical and social realities are good; but our bodies and social functions are better than our thoughts about them; and our total intrinsic reality, which includes our unique consciousness as well as our thoughts, bodies, and social functions, is best of all. To be the most valuable persons we can be, we must actualize within ourselves as much as possible of all kinds of value in balanced proportions.

We can use Robert S. Hartman's hierarchy of value to come to know who we are as unique individual persons, to appreciate and positively value who we are, and to express who we are and who we choose to become in the way that we live. Axiology says that *as unique persons, we are the sum of all our properties, both good-making and bad-making*. As *good* persons we are the sum of all our good-making properties, the fulfillment of our normative self-concepts; but *what are our good-making properties, and how can we understand and actualize our good-making potentials?*

In being and becoming all that we can be, we must come to know, to cherish, to create, and to express ourselves as fully and as positively as we can in all three dimensions of value without seriously neglecting any of them. We must *both conceive of and develop* ourselves systemically, extrinsically, and intrinsically as fully as possible. If we do not, we will be weak and impoverished persons; we will not live as abundantly as we can. By failing to develop ourselves in, or to assign due worth to, any one or more value dimensions, we will be less than the best that we can be; so let us consider three-dimensional self-development a bit more carefully.

## **2. Achieving Three-Dimensional Self-Development**

To truly live abundantly, we must fully develop and adequately appreciate our systemic selves, our extrinsic selves, and our intrinsic selves--all of them in proper balance. What does this entail? What strategies for living

abundantly are available to us?

A. *Our systemic selves.* Although our cognitive capacities, our capacities for having thoughts, ideas, and ideals, belongs on the bottom of the hierarchy of value, we should not underestimate their significance. We should neither overestimate nor underestimate the value of anything. To be and become all that we can be, we must develop and use our minds, our cognitive capacities--all of them, or at least as many as practically possible, since our finitude mandates selectivity. Expressed axiologically, we must develop our systemic selves. Since minds and brains are intimately, integrally, and inseparably connected, this thought can be reexpressed in popular terminology as: "We must develop and use our brains" (or at least the cognitive parts of our brains, since we are now discussing the systemic). It is commonplace knowledge that most people use only about a tenth of their brain-capacity for conceptual thinking and knowing--and for everything else. What we know conceptually is an integral part of what and who we are, and to the extent that we fail to develop and "use our brains," we thereby fail to live as abundantly as we can in the realm of systemic values. Learning is a lifelong project; what we can learn if we try is practically inexhaustible, though not infinite. We cannot afford to be "brain dead at age 30" if we really want to be and to become all that we can be. Education--continuing education--enriches our existence; it fills us with good-making properties; and failure to educate ourselves throughout our lives is self-improvement.

To live abundantly in the systemic dimension, we must cultivate both systemically valuable objects (ideas) *and* our capacities for systemic valuation. Value-objects are *what* we value; valuation is *how* we value. Both are integral to every dimension of value. So what exactly is our capacity for *systemic valuation*? It is our capacity for valuing objectively, fairly, disinterestedly, quite apart from considerations of personal, material, or social gain or profit. It is our capacity for seeking the truth objectively, *i.e.*, without bias, prejudice, or pre-judgment, even if the quest for truth requires us to give up some of our most cherished personal convictions, even if the outcome of inquiry and learning is unpleasant and distasteful, even if knowing and affirming the truth costs us a great deal in terms of personal, material, or social gain or profit.

Disinterested systemic valuation is not the same as uninterested valuation. It is not the total absence of all desires and feelings; but it minimizes those particular appetites and emotions that interfere with intellectual honesty and integrity. It is a willingness to be fair-minded in dealing with ideas, theories, doctrines, dogmas, and ideals, even axiological ideals. It is a willingness to engage in honest discussions and to follow arguments and new thoughts wherever they may lead, even if they lead us into uncharted or disagreeable territory. It is a willingness to think in black or white categories, but only when the issues are so simple that they really are black or white; correspondingly, it is a willingness to abandon systemic "all or nothing" oversimplifications when issues are truly more complex or clouded. Most of us are underdeveloped with respect to our capacities for systemic valuation, but if we really want to live more abundantly, we must develop and use our capacities for conceptual or cognitive learning and fair-mindedness; we cannot neglect our systemic selves.

B. *Our extrinsic selves.* To be all that we can be, we must also develop, use, and properly appreciate our bodies and the physical and social processes, roles, and responsibilities that constitute our extrinsic reality, our reality in public space-time. Worldly-minded individuals for whom extrinsic realities are paramount goods tend to overvalue their bodies, all bodies--what they own, how they look, how physically and socially competitive and competent they are, how they win, how well they fulfill self-aggrandizing social roles (while shirking many of their social and moral duties), how they dominate others in the rat race for wealth and social status. Systemic-minded ideologists (most "absent minded" philosophers and college professors?) for whom ideas and ideals are paramount goods tend to undervalue their bodies and the social dimensions of their lives. They live primarily in the world of ideas, retreat almost entirely into "ivory towers" of their own construction, and are "*absent*" as *much as possible* from the physical and social realities, processes, and responsibilities from which ultimately there is no total escape.

To live truly abundantly, we must neither overvalue nor undervalue our bodies and/or our social roles, stations, responsibilities, and status--our physical and our social being and becoming; instead, we must learn to value them properly--not too much and not too little--and to live accordingly. "Objectively," *i.e.*, within the hierarchy

of value, our extrinsic selves are immensely valuable; they are more valuable than our systemic selves but less valuable than our total intrinsic selves. We should learn to attach great worth to physical and social realities, including our own personal physical and social reality, while not forgetting that our *total intrinsic selves* have even greater worth than, *i.e.*, manifest immensely more good-making properties than, our systemic and extrinsic selves. To live abundantly, we may and must attach immense significance to the physical and social worlds in which we live and to the physical and social aspects of our own total reality. We are far more than our thoughts and our inner consciousness; we are *embodied* souls who become fully human and fully individual only in *physical* and *social* environments.

In conceiving of survival after death, Christianity emphasizes *the resurrection of the body* and *the communion of the saints*, and thereby it rejects for both this world and the next the idea that we can or should exist and live abundantly as disembodied souls, or in complete social isolation. Our extrinsic reality is integral to our total reality. Our bodies are not evil things that we must aspire to escape; they are good things, God-given things, that we must take good care of and never abuse. Religiously understood, they are the temples of God, and we should never desecrate sacred temples. Alternatively, God is an omnipresent, all-pervasive reality, which means that God is everywhere, including in our own bodies; so whatever we do to our bodies, we do to God. Similarly, our social roles, our social involvements with other people, are not bad things from which we must flee into some ivory tower or monastic hermitage of social isolation. They are good things, divine things-- religiously considered--that constitute a very large part of living abundant lives and being all that we can be. We cannot be or become all that we can be without our bodies and without other people, without these temples of God and the communion of the saints; but I have already digressed into the realm of intrinsic valuation of the extrinsic, and we have not yet considered extrinsic valuation.

We must take care not to rank them higher than intrinsic values, but to live abundantly we need *extrinsic values*--healthy bodies, adequate (but not extravagant) material resources, and a supportive physical and social environment. However, we must also develop our capacities for *extrinsic valuation*. What does that involve? Extrinsic valuation includes (1) *establishing, assessing, and refining standards or concepts of excellence or goodness* in relation to our everyday needs, interests, desires, and feelings, (2) *measuring the values* of perceived objects and processes against conceived standards of excellence, (3) *comparing value-objects* in our common world of perceived space-time with respect to their degrees of goodness, (4) *identifying effective means* to our rationally chosen ends, whether they be our own personal behaviors or natural and social processes, and (5) *choosing and actively pursuing* what is practically the best.

Extrinsic valuation is ordinary, everyday, pragmatic valuation and practical living, as Hartman emphasized; and a grasp of axiology can help us all to become better pragmatists, to be more competent in our practical skills. To do so, we must reflect carefully upon both conventional and relatively novel *standards or concepts* of practical goodness that we receive from society, from trend-setting celebrities, or that we have invented for ourselves. We must thoughtfully either accept, or amend, or replace the good-making standards received from others and from our past selves. Without clear concepts or standards, we cannot value effectively in *any* dimension of value, including the extrinsic dimension. Without clear standards, we do not know where or how to begin to identify a good car, a good house or apartment, a good book, a good meal, a good shirt, a good cactus, a good song, a good toothpaste, a good education, a good politician, a good teacher, a good priest, a good employee, a good employer, or a good anything.

To be effective pragmatists, proficient men and women of the world, we must also be and become good observers, *careful perceivers and comparers*. We must learn to use our senses, to note carefully the presence or absence of good-making properties in all things, processes, and social activities and relations that have interest and worth for us, and to judge that some of these have more good-making properties than others. When we go shopping, we must be sure that the objects we buy are laden with good-making properties, and we must compare and select among many possibilities. When we manufacture consumer products or offer consumer services, we must also be sure that the products and services that we have to offer are laden with good-making properties, and that good observers among our customers will not find them falling short of the mark and select even better products and services, those richer in good-making properties, offered by our competitors. When we

hire carpenters, mechanics, and college presidents or professors, or when we promote or reassign employees, we must know them well enough to be sure that they can and will function effectively in those occupational roles, that they exemplify the good-making properties of those roles, and that by comparison with other candidates, they are the best person(s) for their job(s). Experience and careful comparison differentiates between things and people that measure up and those that don't, so we must become good at experiencing and comparing in order to be good at judging practical worth. In practice, of course, we must often rely on the experiences of others to inform our judgments, so we will need trustworthy references when dealing with people, and to select the best consumer products and services we will need genuine expertise like that offered by consumer magazines or capable consultants. Even for saints, a great deal of worldly wisdom is required for effective and abundant living!

To be proficient extrinsic valuers, perceiving, conceiving, and comparing are not enough. We must *choose and act* in accord with the practical rational knowledge that axiology makes available to us. We have to be doers of the word and not thinkers only. Another kind of rational knowledge comes into play for effective acting: *we must know about causes, effects, and probabilities*. We must be able to identify those courses of action, as well as those natural and social processes, that are likely to bring about the results that we judge to be best. We must know how to distinguish between effective, less effective, and ineffective *means to our ends*, and we must act on that knowledge. We must know what is likely to cause what in the world and act accordingly. One thing is certain; if we are competent perceivers, conceivers, comparers, and doers, we are much more likely to have richer and more abundant lives. This point should be so obvious to us that it needs little further elaboration, so let us now move on to the realm of the intrinsic.

*C. Our Inner and Total Intrinsic Selves.* Finally, and most importantly of all, if we wish to live as abundantly as we can, we must fill our lives as completely as we can with intrinsic values and valuations. We cannot be or become all that we can be as long as we are stuck in the systemic or extrinsic value dimensions, though many people, sadly, are stuck there. We must develop and actualize our intrinsic potentials. We must bring as many intrinsic value-objects, and as much intrinsic valuation, into our conscious awareness as we possibly can.

Robert S. Hartman maintained that *intrinsic value-objects* are unique individual persons. If we want to extend the notion beyond the human realm, we could say "unique conscious centers of experiencing, feeling, conceiving, acting." For short, let's just say "individuated consciousness." I must confess that I did not always agree with him, but that when I finally saw his point, my whole outlook on life was revolutionized. Like most other philosophers, for years I sought the answer to the question of "What things are intrinsically good" *in abstractions* like pleasure--both qualitative and quantitative, or desire-fulfillment, knowledge, truth, beauty, freedom, creativity, love, conscientiousness, moral and religious virtues and actions, and the like. I now realize that these abstract good-making qualities have no awareness of their own; they can exist and have worth only within individuated consciousness; they cannot exist or have worth in isolation; we cannot even assess their worth *merely* "in themselves"; their true significance is that they enrich individuated consciousness with good-making qualities. These abstractions are *intrinsic-value-enhancers*; and *real intrinsic values*, in my view, are a *synthesis* of these intrinsic-value-enhancers with the concrete individuated centers of conscious experience, feeling, thought, activity, and valuation who are enriched by them. Intrinsically valuable entities are unique, *unrepeatable* conscious individuals exemplifying within themselves such *repeatable* value-enhancing universals. Neither individuals nor intrinsic-value-enriching universals in complete isolation from one another have intrinsic worth.

So, to live the richest lives that we can, we must make a large place for intrinsic value-enhancing qualities or properties. Quality as well as quantity of life is important. To be all that we can be, we must consciously cultivate and nurture our capacities for happiness or enjoyment, for appetitive/affective fulfillment, for knowledge, beauty, freedom, creativity--including self-creativity, a sensitive conscience, for moral and religious virtues and actions like self-control, justice, courage, temperance, wisdom, gratitude, forgiveness, faith, hope, love, and our talents for intrinsic valuation, especially our capacities for compassion, empathy, and loving. Through such virtues at their best, we are able to become thoroughly one with the objects that we value through them.

Most important of all, if real intrinsic values are value-enhanced, concretely existing, conscious individuals (people, perhaps God, and many if not all animals), then to live a life that is as rich as possible in goodness, especially intrinsic goodness, we must somehow find ways to include the value of other concretely existing conscious individuals within ourselves--and the more the better. We must somehow learn *to make their value our value*, but how can we do this? This brings us to *intrinsic valuation*, where the intrinsic value of our own existence merges with the intrinsic value of other concretely existing conscious individuals. Intrinsic valuation may ultimately spill over into all dimensions of value whatsoever, for, as Hartman noted, everything can be valued in every dimension. In intrinsic valuation, the valuer and the entities he or she values become experientially and axiologically one, but what does this mean conceptually, and what is its "cash value," as William James might say, in concrete experiencing and living?

To be and become all that we can be, *we must become competent intrinsic valuers*. Conceptually, intrinsic valuation involves *measuring ourselves by and living up to our self-concepts or self-ideals*; and the richer our self-ideals, the better. But it is more than that. We also have the fascinating capacity, too often neglected and underused, *to identify ourselves fully with value-objects*, to become axiologically and psychologically united with, one with, objects of value. Robert S. Hartman thought that our capacities for systemic, extrinsic, and intrinsic valuation exist on a continuum. In systemic valuation, we are only minimally involved with value-objects; in extrinsic valuation, we have what, for want of a better term, we might call an "everyday interestedness" level of involvement with value-objects; but in intrinsic valuation, we identify ourselves so completely with value-objects that the differences between us and them cease to matter, even though they do not cease to exist. Intrinsic valuation occurs in what Abraham Maslow called the "peak experiences" of life when, amazingly enough, we find ourselves by losing ourselves, by giving ourselves over completely to, and fully identifying ourselves with, that with which we are intensely involved. Empathetic intrinsic valuation is the ultimate solution to the paradox of finding ourselves by losing ourselves.

In concrete human experience, peak experiences of total-self-identification-with-a-value-object can occur in many circumstances--like intimate interpersonal relations, experiences of creativity in all fields of human endeavor, delight in natural and artistic beauty, moral endeavor, and the ecstasy of many-splendored religious experience. It happens most conspicuously and most commonly for most of us in loving relations with those who are closest to us in life--our wife or husband, our parents, our children, our brothers and sisters, our closest friends, our neighbors.

This interpersonal intrinsic intimacy *can* also happen in our relations with all human beings--our neighbors, brothers, and sisters, and children in all of humankind. Of course, the words "neighbors," "brothers," and "sisters," and "children" are here used metaphorically rather than literally. Hartman was convinced that metaphor, poetry, is the language of intrinsic valuation, that metaphors both express and greatly facilitate the process of intrinsic self-identification with others. So, if we are to live truly abundantly, we must have a great deal of metaphor, of poetry, in our lives and in our souls! And the more souls, the more intrinsically good beings, we take into and unite with our own souls, the richer our own lives become. Loving others unselfishly as ourselves does not impoverish us, as philosophical egoists might fear; it enriches us! Their good becomes our good, but not in a selfish way. Their good-making properties become our good-making properties when we take them into ourselves through the intense psychological self-identification-with-x of intrinsic valuation. To live the best lives that we can possibly live, we must learn to broaden the scope of the class of those individuals who we are prepared to love and with whom we fully empathize and identify ourselves--beyond kin and tribe, beyond race and nation, even beyond species--to all things that have breath or life. Ultimately, in religious experience, we identify ourselves with all things that have being and becoming, for, as St. Augustine, said, "Whatever is, is good." Only by giving ourselves away can we truly find ourselves and be the best for all, ourselves included, that we can be.

### **C. Hartman's Own "How to Develop Our Self"**

While thinking about writing this presentation, I discovered in an unpublished monograph titled *The Individual in Management*, that Robert Hartman himself addressed the question of "How to Develop Our Self." I would

now like to give you *his* answer to our questions about self-development and self-enrichment. "How do we do it?" Hartman asked; and he answered, "There are, as far as I can see, [a number of ] ways in which we can develop."

I. The first is through *Crisis*. In crisis, as in a deep sickness, the loss of a beloved, or a horrible experience like a concentration camp, we are forced to delve into the depth of ourselves and there find our strength. This is a pretty rough way to self-development. It cannot be voluntarily brought about. And when a crisis strikes we may just as well go under than triumph. It may break us rather than make us. One of the greatest examples of self-development through crisis is the ordeal of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the thirty-four months from the day he was stricken with infantile paralysis at Campobello, on August 10, 1921, to the day, June 26, 1924, when on the platform of Madison Square Garden, he nominated Al Smith as the Presidential Candidate for the Democratic Party--standing on his two legs, holding the podium with his left hand, and waving with his right hand to the screaming and cheering crowd--a man triumphantly and almost miraculously emerged from the depth of despair to a new life.

II. The second way is through conscious effort, the always continued sensitizing of our Conscience, the continuous refinement of our sensibilities. Our conscience is the organ of the self. It is, so to speak, the barometer of the soul, the measure of its spiritual pressure. In the degree that we register normal sensitivity, especially compassion, our conscience is sensitive; in the degree that we do not, it is insensitive and undeveloped. We have to register in our conscience all the twenty properties of the self-test, check ourselves almost every moment as to how we measure up.

Hartman had earlier identified the "twenty properties of the self-test" mentioned here in his contrast between "Intrinsic Faith" and "Intrinsic Fear." As we consider this contrast, let us note that the qualities of "Intrinsic Faith" positively enrich us, and those of "Intrinsic Fear" diminish us. Of course, we can increase the *number* of our properties either way, and this shows that intrinsic value is partly a matter of *qualitative* richness, not merely *quantitative*.

INTRINSIC FAITH	INTRINSIC FEAR
<i>Trust in the World, Being Well Born</i>	<i>Suspicion, Insecurity, World-Wariness</i>
1. Humility	1. Defiance, Spitefulness, Superiority
2. Serenity	2. Aggressiveness, Defensiveness, Combat- liveness
3. Cooperation	3. Competitiveness
4. Expansiveness	4. Restrictiveness, Narrowness
5. Humaneness	5. Cynicism
6. Magnanimity	6. Sanctimoniousness, Holier-than-thou Attitude
7. Generosity	7. Greed
8. Unpretentiousness	8. Vanity
9. Not Easily Hurt, Equanimity	9. Easily Hurt, Touchy
10. Boldness, Courage	10. Cowardice

11. Forgivingness	11. Vengefulness
12. Light Touch	12. Heavy Touch
13. Uncomplicated, Purity, Innocence, Common Sense	13. Complicated, Lack of Common Sense
14. Relevance, Sense of Proportion	14. Irrelevance, No Sense of Proportion
15. Rationality	15. Irrationality
16. Spontaneity, Flexibility	16. Systemicness, Rigidity
17. Relaxed Dynamic	17. Tense, or Frantic, Business
18. Perseverance, Patience	18. Inconstancy, Hesitation, Impatience
19. Awareness, Vision, Warmth, Wisdom	19. Non-awareness, Myopia, Dullness, Coldness, Trifling Acuteness, Fastidiousness
20. Compassion	20. Indifference <sup>(3)</sup>

Certainly, persons who are all that they ideally can be will have the twenty virtues of "Intrinsic Faith" and avoid the twenty vices of "Intrinsic Fear." But let us return now to Hartman's account of "How to Develop Our Self."

III. The third way of improving ourselves morally is to follow the Example of Sensitive Persons, especially our wives. A wife who loves is usually more mature than a man. Women, having to deal with the creation of life, are usually more sensitive to the true values than men. Men are often lured by their intellectual and social power to insensitivity and disregard of the moral. To women both the intellectual and--if they are true women-- the social play a relatively small role, and love and compassion play the main role.

IV. However, women value intuitively and do not articulate their value pattern consciously. If we can do this we may be able to use our intellectual power to develop ourselves morally. This is the fourth way to self-development. One can develop himself [or herself] morally by intellectually learning about the Self and growing in step with one's knowledge. This is the way it happened to me, although it must be said that I was helped by a previous experience of crisis which expanded my awareness at one almost shattering stroke. Yet, it was my life-long endeavor to find a rational account for this experience, and I did find it eventually in the precision of formal axiology. In the same way the learning of axiology has helped others who have steeped themselves in this new science...We can change our lives by consciously applying our knowledge of value, either in existing situations or abroad--in concerts and church, museums and lecture halls, in reading a book or walking through the woods.

V. This leads us to the fifth way of self-development: through the conscious pursuit of *Peak Experiences*. Peak experiences, in the terminology of Abraham Maslow who has studied these experiences experimentally, are experiences in which we feel ourselves at the peak of life, in the fullness of our powers and the maximum depth and width of our awareness--as in love, in musical and other aesthetic experiences, in experiences of creation and inspiration, and of religious insight and rapture. People who are able to make their whole life into a peak experience are called by Maslow "self-actualizing" people. Such people live in the depth and width of their consciousness, and throughout their lives strive to deepen and expand their awareness. They work at their *Being*,

and not primarily at their doing, their awareness rather than their activities. Their cognition gradually becomes sharper for the things that matter and weaker for the things that do not. They fulfill the prayer that Kierkegaard put as motto to his book *The Sickness unto Death*: "Lord! Give us weak eyes for things that matter nothing, and eyes of clarity for all thy truth."<sup>(4)</sup>

At this point, Hartman describes Peak Experiences in some detail, following Maslow, but I will not go into that any further.

I hope that you have heard enough at this point to have a clearer concept of "our total human development," and a better understanding of *your* own personal total human development and what you must do to achieve it. I will close this discussion by emphasizing one final point. To be and become all that you can be, *you must be willing to be and become what only you can be*. You must not only develop your systemic self, your extrinsic self, and your intrinsic self all that you can; you must also intrinsically value, develop, and express your own uniqueness. You must fulfill your own unique self-concept or self-ideal and fully know and identify yourself with your given being and your own personal ideals of becoming. No one else since the creation of the universe has been *you*, and no one else ever will. You have your own unique right to exist, to have your own totally unprecedented perspective on the universe, to have and develop your own personal interests and talents, to assume your own special moral commitments and responsibilities, to fulfill your own self-ideal, to be true to yourself, and to become yourself. Being and becoming *fully* ourselves isn't easy. As the actress Tallulah Bankhead once said, "No one can be exactly like me, and sometimes even I have trouble doing it!"<sup>(5)</sup> But you can better understand who you are and choose who you want to become if you understand your own reality and your own values in three dimensions, as identified by Robert S. Hartman. Hartman correctly discerned that our values are the real keys to our personalities. They are also the keys to being and becoming all that we can and should be.

### Notes

1. -Quoted in Robert S. Hartman, *The Knowledge of Good: Critique of Axiological Reason*, edited by Arthur R. Ellis and Rem B. Edwards (Amsterdam - New York: Editions Rodopi, 2002), p.216.
2. Quoted in Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese, eds., *Philosophers Speak of God* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 261.
3. Robert S. Hartman, *The Individual in Management* (Unpublished manuscript, available in the Hartman archives of the Special Collections Library at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN), pp. 49-50. This is now available for reading on the website of the Robert S. Hartman Institute, [www.hartmaninstitute.org](http://www.hartmaninstitute.org) under the "Research Topics" button.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-58. Hartman also identified "A sixth way of moral development," bringing about "peak experiences" by *Psycho-drugs*, (pp. 61-66) but I do not wish to deal with it, partly because I know so little about it, partly because I do not wish to encourage it, and partly because the drugs he mentioned (LSD, mescaline, and psilocybin from "the sacred Mexican mushroom") are probably much more dangerous to our bodies and brains, and, through them, to our souls than Hartman realized in the late 1960s.
5. Quoted in Rem B. Edwards, *Religious Values and Valuations* (Chattanooga, TN: Paidia Press, 2000), p. 30.