

My Self and Society

To express myself in 500 words is an exercise in concise communication. There is little space for explanation or strokes to the reader's ego. Please read slowly.

My working life has been as a business consultant, acting in an executive rather than advisory capacity. My ability is the analysis of new and complex situations, the development of a plan or model to achieve specific results and the gaining of co-operation from the individuals and interests concerned. I have been involved with the 'movement' for five years. It has enriched my personal life immensely but created problems in my professional life. For example being 'human' and saying I didn't know in a position where I was expected to either have all the answers or at least behave as though I did. This created insecurity for others.

I am currently having a pause in my life, a time for re-evaluation and renewal. This process has, in the last few months, been very painful. Much insecurity and confusion. Slowly the wild extremes and whirling patterns of thought have reached a balance. I do not know whether I am enlightened or even actualised, nor do I care. I can see, have an independent mind and will say if the king is not wearing clothes.

Society is complex and competitive. There is much stupidity and even more hypocrisy. Fear and conventional thinking limit progress. Many groups are acting without concern for others. Pessimism is rife and violence increasing. Yet there are signs of sense such as the employment of criminal offenders in community work.

My views on the 'movement' are focussed on its relation to conventional society. I accept fully the right of an individual or group to experiment upon themselves in any way. In relation to society I see two main aims. Firstly to provide individuals with help so that they can lead fuller and more contented lives. And as most individuals lead lives in conventional systems care is needed to avoid creating expectations that cannot be met. Secondly to influence social systems to be more open to individuality and humanistic concerns. To achieve this influence a socio-economic justification is almost a must.

In the 'movement' there is a blind spot at the moment. A lack of human concern for unaware newcomers. In any undertaking there is a possibility of success or failure. To someone leading an alternative life style a failure is just another experience, a chance

to grow. To a more conventional person the experience might seem like shrinking rather than growing. I do not think this is deliberate: it is merely the failure to see the other in his world.

An example of this occurred in the April issue. John Rowan, the chairman of the Association for Humanistic Psychology suggested taking L.S.D. to achieve a 'great awakening'. There was no mention of the importance of mood or environment let alone the other considerations. This is gross and thoughtless irresponsibility both to unaware readers and the movement as a whole.

I think we are very lucky to have this magazine as a forum for debate and would be interested to hear others' views on this issue.

Mark Matthews

FEEDBACK

This movement is all about people getting in touch with their inner feelings and experiencing them and being open about them. We thought it would be nice to ask people we know if they would let us know just where they are at. The first one is Mark Matthews who has been a Committee Member for some time and who was U.K. correspondent with the International Association for Humanistic Psychology.

We think communication is important which come to think of it is why we started this journal in the first place— and we'd like to hear from you and get in touch with you. Why not let us know where *you're* at in about 500 words?

Vivian Milroy