

The title of a popular musical come into my mind: 'How to succeed in business without really trying'. I tell him and we laugh about it; and then we explore how the words might be meaningful for him. I suggest that he stop 'trying' and allow himself the hitherto unthought of luxury of letting his life flow as it will - for a while, at any rate, but making sure that he takes care of his basic requirements.

We are on the way to an autonomy. *contract*. Succeed and stop trying to succeed; allow yourself to be you and not what you believe others want or don't want you to be. You *can* effect a compromise between Compliant Child and Rebel Child; you don't have to see life only in terms of extremes, polarities. At the same time meet the needs of the Free Child. There are no miracles, Bernard. Use the old formulae: take small steps; take small risks; and programme your days with small *real* pleasures.

Gradually increase the dose.....

David Porter

Three Gay Scripts

Whilst gay people continue to be oppressed many will adopt banal scripts which interfere with their capacities for intimacy, spontaneity, and awareness. Gay scripts are, in this author's opinion, determined not so much by the gay person's parents but more by oppressive social conditions such as ghettoism, ageism, sexism and so forth, as well as by banal sex-role scripting. Here are three gay scripts which I have found to be common amongst male homosexuals in western society.

'BEAU BRUMMELL'

Life Course: Beau Brummell is the modern dandy. Like 'plastic Woman', he is a fancy dresser and places considerable emphasis upon appearance and youthful looks. He is well-experienced in social etiquette, and believes himself to have power in his success in climbing the social ladder. He identifies with his oppressors by adopting the life-style of an upper-class 'man-about-town', so that his time is structured with parties, theatre outings, and elaborate affairs. Later in life he becomes an eccentric, and finds that others begin to mock him for his weird and unusual behaviour. He feels persecuted, gets depressed, and finally takes to alcohol or drugs in an attempt to relieve his loneliness and to find some kind of personal fulfilment in life.

Counterscript: He meets another Beau Brummell, falls in love, and enjoys a brief period of contentment. But because of society's injunctions against intimacy between

persons of the same sex the relationship is short-lived and once again he feels unloved and unappreciated for himself.

Injunction and Attributions: Don't grow old (be afraid of age)
Don't be yourself
Don't think
Be clever (witty, fashionable, etc)
Try hard

Decision: In adolescence, he decides to be a 'pretty boy' - a doll-like character rather than a real human being. He also decides that the only way in which he can get what he thinks he wants in life is to manipulate others by means of his good looks and charm.

Mythical Hero: Beau Brummell, Errol Flynn, Valentino.

Somatic Component: He is careful to keep his body healthy and athletic-looking. He is fussy about food, and knows a lot about wines. He tends to worry about minor ailments and facial blemishes.

Pastimes: 'Wardrobe', 'Do You Know' and 'Ever Been'.

Games: 'Alcoholic', 'Debtor' and other life games.

Gallows Transaction: Others admire him for his charm, his 'plastic beauty', and his skill in climbing the social ladder.

Therapist's Role in the Script: The therapist prescribes tranquillisers for his 'depression', thus reinforcing the injunction 'don't think'. He also plays Patsy by ignoring the ways in which gays are oppressed, and how such oppression can be internalised to give rise to such scripts as 'Beau Brummell'.

Antithesis: He starts demanding strokes for qualities that are admirable in him other than charm, good looks, and fancy dressing. He joins an awareness group so that he can learn not only about self-oppression but also about how he can liberate fellow gays. He applies his Adult to dealing with the realities of gay oppression. He also gives himself time and space to relax and to be himself.

'DESPERATE DAN'

Life Course: Dan is the ardent 'cruiser', eager to obtain more and better sex partners by means of aggressive delinquent behaviour such as prostitution and picking people up in public places. For him, sexuality is a sport, a game of skill in outwitting the forces of law and order. Like the 'Cops and Robbers' player, he gets additional pleasure from the thrill of the chase. He internalises male oppression to the extent that, although gay, he is as competitive, aggressive, and non-feeling as many straight

men. He takes pains to not let out his natural Child and his nurturing Parent in order to avoid appearing effeminate, sensitive or caring. He adopts stereotyped male postures and gestures, voice and vocabulary.

Counterscript: He meets someone who overwhelms him romantically. His Child and Parent emerge from the shadows to his surprise, but he feels insecure and quickly falls back into old patterns of behaviour. He may persecute his lover for undermining his self-confidence (i.e. his 'machismo'). The whole counterscript may take the form of a game of 'Gee, You're Wonderful, Professor', with Dan in the role of Victim-come-Persecutor, and his partner in the role of Rescuer-come-Victim.

Injunction and Attributions: Don't feel
Don't love yourself or others
Don't admit weakness
Be strong

Decision: As a teenager, he learns that being homosexual means being 'sissy' or 'womanish'. He decides to be a 'real man' and to avoid behaviour which endangers him in being labelled effeminate. His decision is carried out by means of sarcasm, aggressiveness, and 'gay male chauvinism'. His script may not bring him lasting happiness but at least he can prove that he is as good as the next man.

Mythical Hero: Desperate Dan (a comic-strip character who is always getting into scrapes), The Lone Ranger, Don Juan.

Somatic Component: His body is tense and ready for fight or flight. Internalised oppression as both a man and a gay has made his face ugly and taut. He is stout and over-weight thorough years of going to pubs and clubs.

Pastimes: 'Escape' and 'It's the Society We Live In'.

Games: The Victim roles in 'Cops and Robbers', 'Agent Provocateur' and 'The Stocking Game'.

Gallows Transaction' Others laugh with him at his ability to outwit the law, and his skills in obtaining more and better sex partners.

Therapist's Role in the Script: The therapist may smile at Dan's success in his sexual exploits, or he may sympathise with him in times of trouble by indulging in such pastimes as 'Ain't It Awful'. Both therapist and client may get hooked into a game of 'Psychiatry' in which the client is always 'making progress' though nothing is ever achieved. Alternatively, the therapist may play 'Blemish' or 'Critique' or some similar fault-finding game which reinforces the client's powerlessness.

Antithesis: Dan begins to recognise the extent to which he is following a second-hand life course and that the freedom he thinks he has is really an illusion. He makes a

contract to 'put a better show on the road' and starts thinking about what he really wants to achieve in life. He learns how to give, ask for, accept and reject strokes. He gives himself Permission to be in touch with his natural Child and to let out his nurturing Parent, both upon himself and upon those he cares for. He participates in a caring community so that he can get Protection when his Child gets scared and wants to play 'It's Too Soon to Terminate'. He uses his Adult skills to figure out effective ways of dealing with gay oppression.

'TRANSEXUAL'

Life Course: At some point in his adult years, Jack is overwhelmed by a desire to change sex. He calls himself Jackie or Jacqueline, dons a woman's dress and make-up, and settles down to await 'The Operation' (in England, transexuals must wait five years before they can be operated upon). Jack ardently wants to be a woman, and believes himself to be inferior and out-of-step with society whilst he continues to be a man. He does not think too seriously about the future, and does not know what sort of material or sexual life he expects to have after 'The Operation'. All he knows is that he must have surgery to change sex, the sooner the better. He is contemptuous of psychiatrists since he expects them to persecute him or to misunderstand him. He prefers to seek out Rescuers, Patsies and others who will help him to unfold his particular script.

Counterscript: He undergoes 'The Operation' and temporarily feels at peace with himself. Alternatively, he meets a man or woman with whom he has a romantic involvement because that person exercises a mysterious power over him; perhaps that person has a 'Guerrilla Witch' script. However, the nostalgia of his script and its injunction against intimacy soon draw him back into powerlessness and non-acceptance of himself as he is.

Injunction and Attributions: Don't be yourself
Don't love yourself as you are
Try hard
Be unusual

Decision: As a child, Jack decides that being male is not O.K. Perhaps he is a very feeling person but in his family men are not supposed to have feelings. He begins to identify with girls and women so that he can share some of their power. As an adolescent, Jack's decision may be reinforced by experiences of sex and of sex-roles and relationships. Such comments as 'all homosexuals are pansies' and 'men who care for children are pederasts' may have a profound effect upon him. Playing 'Effeminate and Proud', for example, may provide him with many benefits such as avoiding the need to prove his masculinity by means of physical strength, brute force, alcoholism and other currencies which are factors in men's oppression.

Mythical Heroine: Calamity Jane, Marlene Dietrich, Christine Jorgensen.

Somatic Component: Jack's body may lack the tension and hardness of 'Desperate Dan', but his body may be just as script-bound as is evident from the unreasonable emphasis upon anatomical change.

Pastimes: 'Ain't It Awful' and its variants such as 'Polysurgery'.

Games: 'Do Me Something', 'Stupid', 'Why Don't You - Yes But', and 'Self-Blemish'.

Gallows Transaction: He gets both positive and negative strokes for his chosen life-plan. Perhaps the sheer oddity of his script brings other benefits, particularly in a sex-role conscious society. Perhaps by becoming transexual Jack is getting back his revenge upon the society that oppresses him.

Therapist's Role in the Script: The therapist may play Patsy or Rescuer by going along with the client's script, or he may play Connection by providing the client with the means to further his script, such as a course of hormone treatment or a psychiatric report which will increase his chances of obtaining surgery. Or he may play Persecutor either by not providing the client with Per-mission to critically examine his script or by shutting him up by means of tranquillisers and electro-shock treatment.

Antithesis: Antithesis is difficult without the client's Co-operation. The best approach appears to be to provide the client with Adult information concerning the realities of transexuality, whilst cathecting one's own and the client's own nurturing Parents in order to enable him to reject the script and to start living in the real world. Another antithesis might be to say to the client 'do you really want to alter and mutilate a healthy human body?'

David Porter is the founder of the London Transactional Analysis Study Group. He was the first editor of the 'British Transactional Analysis Bulletin'. He is also active in the gay rights movement in the south of England.

A NEW GROWTH CENTRE

After a short spell in the Wilderness, Newcastle will once again have an active growth centre. On Saturday, October 8th Donna Brandes, Lin Harwood and Ralph Blundell will have an Open House from one o'clock onwards. They will also be having open evenings Mondays 7.30 p.m. from October 10th onwards and an introductory evening on Wednesday, October 12th. A regular on-going group will be starting on Thursday, October 20th, using Gestalt, Psycho-drama and encounter techniques and they plan to have residential weekend groups using encounter, Gestalt, bioenergetics, drama, dance music etc...

They will hope to serve the caring professions and any members of the community who could find the Centre useful both for personal growth and a skilled development standpoint. They aim to provide work both in groups, for couples and in individual counselling situations. They will also be interested to hear from other leaders who would like to work in the North-east. They can be reached at 54 St. Georges Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.
