

RISE ABOVE INFERIOR FEELINGS

UNDERSTANDING THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX

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PREFACE

This e-book is a wonderful resource – at once providing the reader with awareness, understanding, and resources for improvement. That there is a healthy education in general psychology along the way makes for an interesting read indeed. Carefully collated from the rare and private writings of a highly grounded and successful psychiatrist, this valuable work presents that rarest of works: applied and relevant psychology blessed with great human insight. That these words are not available to the general public is a double-edged sword. Whilst many will never know of their clear and immediate wisdom, I am grateful that those fortunate enough to stumble upon them will be that much more enlightened. Whilst it may tend towards religious aspects, this does not detract from the psychological core, nor can these occurrences not be substituted with the readers own beliefs as relating to religion, energy, or Infinite Intelligence. Accordingly the prose has been updated where necessary, but for the most is left intact to preserve the original charm of the era in which it was written. Of course, whilst this makes for atmospheric reading, the meaning and importance of the work is where the value lies. And it is more relevant in today's world than ever.

W.Williams, Editor.

PART 1

UNDERSTANDING THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX

THE NATURE OF A COMPLEX

The word 'complex' as relating to psychology is frequently, but not always accurately, used. The briefest definition, perhaps, is that a complex is a system of emotionally toned ideas, surrounding around some central idea, remembering that the emotion has a potential energy. Those who see things most easily in pictures may imagine the ideas as the fingers and thumb of a hand, held together by the palm - that is, by one central idea to which all others are related - and then imagine the hand as clenched into a fist, tense with potential energy. We should particularly distinguish a complex from a repressed complex. Some psychological writers tend to confuse the reader by speaking of a complex when they mean a repressed complex. A repressed complex - and here we must leave the figure of the hand - is a system of emotionally toned ideas which becomes *pushed down* into the unconscious part of the mind, because its presence in the conscious mind is distasteful to the personality. Instead it functions in the unconscious, producing all kinds of morbid results which we shall notice later. To say of another, "He has a complex," is not really to make a very profound or strikingly intelligent remark. Everybody has complexes. If I take two people on separate occasions for a ride in a car they will react according to their complexes. One may have what we will call for the moment a "photography complex." He will watch the scenery and look at landscapes as possible photographs. The other may have what we may call a "motoring complex." He will watch my driving, observe how and when I change gear, watch cross-roads, children and hens, in quite a different way from the photographer. It is thus seen that a complex will modify behavior. If, indeed, I knew all my friend's complexes and their relative strength, I should be able to predict with some success his behavior in any given situation. Nor does this deny his free-will, since he has been at least partly responsible, by his past

choices and refusals, for the building up of his complexes and the determining of their strength. Every mind is full of complexes, systems of ideas with a strong emotional tone about them. An inferiority complex is a group of ideas, the central one of which is *disbelief in oneself*, in one's values to the community, and in one's abilities in this or that direction, with a strong charge or feeling of helplessness and fear at the heart of the complex, which drives one from this or that situation, makes one dislike going into the company of others, fear meeting a stranger, shrink from attempting the difficult, or anything that may be criticized, and so on.

THE INSTINCT FOR SELF-REALIZATION

We may well ask ourselves why an inferiority complex worries us. Many other complexes do not do so. Why does this? Why is it spoken about so much? It is because it militates against self-realization. We must all realize that to wish for power and perfect self-expression and self-realization, for the harmonious functioning of every possibility within us, is a legitimate and good thing. It is not acquired. To wish for power and self-expression is innate and instinctive. It can be directed, but it cannot possibly be eradicated, and it cannot be thwarted without grave consequences to the personality. We must further realize that self-realization depends on believing in oneself, but is not to be interpreted as supposing that we are in every respect as good as other people. This would be delusion. It depends on believing in ourselves as personalities to whom the infinite intelligence has entrusted certain gifts, and who have a contribution to make to society which no one else can make; a contribution of real value which can enrich the community, and in the giving of which we can find harmony and life.

INNER CONFLICT

Now if a man has an inferiority complex, then because he also has a wish for power he has two forces in the same mind going in opposite directions. His wish for power is saying "I can." His inferiority complex is saying "I can't." Two rivers are flowing in opposite ways causing tumult and futility. An inferiority complex is thus a fruitful cause of breakdown.

To rob a grown-up person of legitimate belief in himself is to do him a grievous wrong. In many cases the suicide would never have taken his own life if his belief in himself had not received a death-blow. To rob a little child of belief in himself before his possibilities have

been explored or discovered, is a crime. We are robbing him of the greatest asset to character, and if we succeed to any extent, then the child's wish for power, denied its natural vent, will break out in unpleasant ways. Cruelty to smaller children or to flies or animals is an illustration. Thieving, the getting of things that will give a sense of power, is another. Lying is another, due often immediately to the same fear which has made the complex, and sometimes to a child making a phantasy in which he *can* be somebody. Grumbling at his environment is another, and what is commonly known as "cynicism," or "negativism," is another. One boy complains that he is always unlucky, another develops a false humility, another becomes vastly conceited about nothing, another develops morbid fear, another cannot face up to life. In all such cases we are ready enough to blame, and in cases of theft and cruelty ready enough to punish, but rarely ready or skilful enough to diagnose the case accurately as one of false compensation for a sense of inferiority. Such compensation often manifests the fact that the complex has become repressed. That is to say, the child does not think of himself consciously as inferior. His feelings of inferiority have become pushed deep down into his mind, but the complex *is still functioning*, a fact which is proved by his becoming a bully, a thief, or a coward. If his personality had been given expression, the very energies which have made him a delinquent would have made him an asset to any community.

A BELIEF IN FAILURE

Look briefly at this actual case. Here is a man in the forties, who has had one job after another, only to lose each successively. He is sent up to London to apply for a job, and when the manager comes to interview him he trembles violently, stammers and stutters, says "Yes" when he means "No," and gives such a poor account of himself that he is turned down. He goes to another city in search of another job. As soon as the manager comes in, the patient puts his head between his hands and sobs like a child. He can give no reason. There *is* no conscious reason. The reason for this inferiority goes right back to childhood. He came at the end of a long family. He was unwanted. He learned from his own parents' lips that his birth was an accident. No particular interest is taken in his education. Other brothers and sisters are praised continually in his presence. Praise rarely or never comes to him. His father says to him, "Well, I don't know what *you* expect to make out of life. There isn't a single thing you can do well. Who do you think is going to employ you?" One night they found him sobbing in an attic, and they said to him, not unkindly, "What is the matter with you?"

“No one wants me,” he said, and it was the truth. No one did. Small wonder, then, that, no one believing in him, he has no belief in himself. No one valuing him, he has ceased to value himself. Faced by any task or responsibility, his mental attitude is, “I can't do it. I am no good.” Life asked him the relentless question it asks us all sooner or later: “What have you of value to give to the community?” In his heart he replies, “Nothing!” And he adds, with a passion few would guess: “O God, why was I born at all?” Whereas everyone knows, surely, that you never do anything worth doing in this world unless you start with some belief in your own capability. If you really think you can do a thing, you have at any rate taken the first step to ensure success. If you *really* think you cannot -for a good many people say to others that they cannot, but to themselves they say the opposite - you have taken the first step to ensure failure.

Modern life is so full of cases of men and women who break down at the tremendous tasks and strains which it imposes, that all of us who have anything to do with children ought to do all that we can, so to strengthen their personality as to help them to face a life which will become even more exhausting as the years go on. This is the real need, even though some parents with inferiority complexes want to know what help the psychologist can give them to assist them to face the strain of being brought up by their children!

CAUSES IN CHILDHOOD

I propose, therefore, to indicate the chief causes in childhood which account for the inferiority complexes, especially those which become repressed complexes in later years. For inferiority is frequently *caused* in childhood, though the complex may not give trouble until adult years are reached. We need not spend much time over them, especially the first, which is *organic disability*. If a child has a club-foot or a weak heart, parents ought to be especially careful that activities are found him through which he can express his nature. They must steer him between the Scylla of allowing him to be the petted, spoilt and conceited invalid, and the Charybdis of the child cursed with the inferiority which develops from his inability to run and play like other boys. They must find something he can do well. We all know cases of children who are utterly spoilt and conceited because they are semi-invalids. What has happened is that, conscious of their organic disability, and not having found a normal outlet for their powers, they have developed what the psychologist calls an over-compensation. They have put on “side,” to cover their sense of inferiority. In this way a child often covers

his sensitiveness with a conceit which becomes habitual and unconscious. Under this heading of organic disability we must include the very small child who is petted and fussed because he is small, or the overgrown child being constantly snapped at for being clumsy and boisterous, and made to feel ungainly.

Another cause of inferiority in childhood is the *relation of children in a family to one another*. I have seen a family in which there were two boys and two girls. In each case the younger looked up to the older, but when, in each case the older arrived at the age of puberty, the younger developed something akin to envy, and, at the same time, a strong sense of inferiority. The little girl felt that she was “only a girl,” while her sister’s developing figure proclaimed the woman; and the little boy felt that he was “only a boy,” while his brother’s downy upper lip and deepening voice proclaimed the man. In such a family, to say to the younger, “Don’t be so stupid,” may produce an unpleasing inferiority complex. The situation is one that needs to be handled with sympathy and insight: the accepting of a certain amount of unrest and dissatisfaction in the younger, so that the younger children can find their way, without psychological problem, into adult life.

Far more serious than these causes are the causes which arise from the *wrong attitude of parents to children*. A child, it should hardly be necessary to say, should never be allowed to feel that he is unwanted. A boy should never be allowed to over-hear that his parents are disappointed that he is not a girl, or vice versa. Two other words may be added in passing. If a child is adopted by parents, he should be told this at the earliest age possible, certainly before he is five. He can then absorb the fact with far less shock than if he finds out, or has got to adult years before he is told. I have recently had to deal with a case of breakdown, where the origin of the trouble was at length found to be the discovery by a girl, at eighteen, that she was not the child of those whom she had called parents. This set up in her a most terrible sense of inferiority, particularly in relation to her supposed cousins. “I feel,” she said bitterly, “as though I had been living all these years on false pretences.” The second word that may be said in passing is that if a child is born outside marriage, and his parents subsequently marry, the former fact should be withheld from him completely. I had one case of a person who was thrust into a most grievous condition of mental distress by the discovery of a marriage certificate which proved that her parents were married only two months before she was born.

These are not the most common or the worst causes of inferiority in a child. A common cause is that similar to a family I know, in which the second child was extremely attractive. The first child was a lovable little chap, but certainly less charming than his little brother. When the younger was wheeled out in his pram, people would turn and say, "What a beautiful baby!" Fond relations would fuss him beyond measure and admire his pretty ways. The day came when the baby began to crawl, and this marked a development which was hailed with enthusiastic rapture by his parents. His mother happened to ask the older boy to go out of the room for something, and to her amazement he crawled across the carpet. His horror-stricken parents then realized what an awful blunder they had unconsciously made. The older boy was crawling because crawling in his younger brother had brought forth praise. He was hungry for praise, and an inferiority complex was already developing. It took nearly two years of very carefully revised treatment before it could truly be said that this little chap regained his belief in himself through a renewed confidence of the belief of others in him. This, of course, was not done by pretending that qualities existed which did not exist, but by praising such qualities as existed in such a way as to call them forth into fuller development.

A very common cause of inferiority in a child is the case in which one parent, or worse, both, has what may be called *a dominating personality*. A friend of mine completely broke down during the first term at a theological college, and was persuaded to consult a psychologist, and, to his amazement, part of the treatment indicated by the psychologist was that the patient should destroy all the photographs he had of his father. Amazing though it may seem, this student had photographs of his father, not only in his study, but also in his bedroom, where students commonly have other photographs. It was shown to him how all his life he had depended far too much on his father, accepted his father's opinion as final, was terrified of his father's displeasure, carried away entirely by his father's judgment on all kinds of questions. One of his constantly recurring dreams was that of a castle, beside which was a broken-down shack. The patient saw himself wringing his hands over the wreck of the shack. The meaning of the dream is obvious. Further investigation showed that in his father's study, to which he was summoned as a child for some fearsome interviews, there hung a picture of a castle with a high tower, a low round tower, and, near by, the ruins of a former part of the castle, supported by the castle wall. As a child he had thought, as children do, of the biggest as "Father," the lesser as "Mother," -his mother certainly is rather low and

very round! - with only one left with which to identify himself. He was the ruin. The picture fitted his case only too well. His father was a very moral and excellent man, but the patient's ruin was his dependence. He was propped up by the castle.

To change the figure, it was the case of an oak tree with a sapling growing too near it. The sapling is overshadowed by the oak, feels of no importance beside it, cannot see the sky above, is not strengthened by the winds that blow, and is not living its own normal life. If then the giant oak is removed, the sapling goes down in the first storm. Again and again, one has had to advise people to go right away from home, to live their own life, and to break away from the chains which bind them to their parents. To take one illustration. It is certain that the reason why hundreds of people of my generation do not come to church is because they were forced to go to church three times a day by their parents, with, perhaps, an "after meeting" thrown in after the evening service. Now, at last, they cast off the chains, without ever having discovered what there is, or is not, of value in religion. They cast off religion because, in their minds, it is part of the bondage and tyranny of the past. Only a week or so ago a lady was telling me of a family of five sons. She told me that as soon as their father came into the room with a kind of "let us pray" expression on his face, all the boys assumed the demeanor of whipped curs. After their father died, the whole family broke up in moral ruin. If one of the parents is of a strong personality, he should take special pains to stand away at times to give room for little lives to grow, and he should seek to encourage them in their own thoughts, and to make their own decisions and judgments, or the children will be driven into inferiority.

Another cause, which has special reference to the case of wealthy people, is the over-fussing by a parent. A child in a poor home, allowed, in the very nature of the case, to have all kinds of untended tumbles, and to face the rough edges of life without protection, is not nearly so liable to develop inferiority as the child who is fussed over by a devoted mother, expected to be perfect, always nicely dressed, always taken out by the hand and amused by her elders, who is taught to be terrified of a cold in the head, not to go near dirty children, never allowed to spend her pocket money without oversight, or do anything by herself. Such a child is likely to develop into a colorless non-entity and to lose all sense of values, and when she does make her contact with the world, and has no one near to hold her hand and see that her vests are aired, she will feel the inferior baby which other people have made her.

On the other hand, inferiority may also be induced if the parents rub into a child's mind its disadvantages of society, education, dress and culture, which, if left alone, children rightly do not feel to be disadvantages, though in the case of girls, particularly, the question of dress needs to be watched. I know at the moment a woman of over sixty who is abnormally obsessed with problems of dress, quite unduly worried as to what she should wear on this and that occasion, and who has most poignant memories, as a young girl in her teens, of being sent to a party in a black dress which she was forced to wear when she was serving in her father's shop. But inferiority is not only caused in the badly dressed child. I have seen another child shrink with a sense of inferiority through being dressed in a silk frock with flounces, when other little girls all wore simple linen frocks.

There is one last cause of inferiority in a child which must be touched upon. It is due to the wrong kind of school teacher. Let me say, at once, that I believe that the majority of members of this great profession have emerged from adherence to the type so caricatured by Dickens. At the same time, a large number of teachers have still hanging over them the scorn with which their profession is regarded by very many who ought to know better. Public opinion has still to cleanse its mind from the picture of the school teacher with a cane in his hand who knows no better method of imparting knowledge than that of holding over the child fear of punishment, fear of humiliation, and, worst of all, *fear of sarcasm*. It is because of the tendency of all our minds more or less to acquiesce in that caricature of modern teaching, that many teachers *themselves* have a very deep inferiority complex. Therefore they pass that complex on to the children they teach. To put it popularly, if you are criticized, you tend to get up by criticizing somebody else, and so often the teacher is downed partly by public opinion and partly because so often he is himself criticized to the point of being bullied by officials, managers and inspectors. Teachers are unaware of their own complexes, and of how, unconsciously, even the best of them are projecting their own feelings of inferiority on to their pupils. The teacher seeks to degrade the child because he himself feels degraded, and because he has so many masters dictating to him, he seeks, in turn, to dictate to the child. There was nothing romantic or admirable about the desiccated scholar with his birch terrorizing unwilling morsels of humanity into reluctant book-learning. The man who earns his living by hitting the small and helpless cannot be a popular hero. He is a figure of fun. A woman in the same position is an even more repulsive personage. As the years have gone on the practice of teaching through terror has, to a great extent, died out,

but the tradition that a teacher is one whose business it is to make children miserable dies very slowly.

To parents and teachers, teachers in schools, and religious people of influence, modern psychology brings a tremendous and urgent message and appeal. Because that message has not sufficiently been heard, the lives of hundreds of people have been spoilt, and every one of us could truly give many instances of personalities disabled by the inferiority complex. Education should surely help to find expression for our true personalities. Each little personality is a thing of greater delicacy and sensitiveness than we realize even yet. If we take upon ourselves to lead or train or guide, let us have respect for those personalities. Let us treat them with dignity and courtesy and kindness, with firmness which is really leadership, and the humor to which children so readily respond and which makes so many rough places plain. And let us be ourselves what we would wish them to be.

PART 2

RECOGNIZING THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX

All of us are familiar with the man who struts, rather than walks, with his toes pointing at ten minutes to two and his mouth at twenty past eight, who is dogmatic, imperious in temper, self-assertive, conceited, very critical of others, disagreeable and fussy. It is easy to criticize him. None of us likes him, but from a psychological point of view he is ill. There is a psychological disharmony which needs treatment rather than rebuke. To leave him alone and avoid him, which is what most of us tend to do because he really is so hard to live with, is, in a way, just as cruel as to avoid a man because he has got some physical disease. We push him into a loneliness which is very often hard to bear, and he tends to become bitter. The religion of an older generation would have been content to instruct him to seek the Christian grace of humility. This would be to treat the symptom instead of the cause of the symptom. Modern religion, enlightened by a knowledge of modern psychology, often recognizes what are called faults as symptoms of a deep psychological disharmony which must be attacked at its roots.

Let us ask what has happened to our little man. All his life he has been under-sized. In his school days he was nicknamed "Shortie". He begins to discover that because he IS small he IS looked down on. Before he gets to manhood our patient finds himself looked down upon psychologically because he is looked down upon literally. He is never shown how to make a true compensation, so he makes an over-compensation. He buries his sense of inferiority underground, as it were, and you have a repressed inferiority complex. That is to say, you have his Ideas about his inferiority held together by strong feelings of resentment and fear - the fear of being thought to be inferior - pushed down into the depths of his mind, below the level of consciousness. There the complex functions, and it is - to refer to a former illustration - as a hidden abscess in the body which produces symptoms such as blotches on the skin which would not readily seem to be related to the abscess. So our patient shows symptoms which do not seem related to inferiority, rather the opposite; symptoms of

intolerance, conceit bumptiousness and the like, which are all symptoms of the repressed complex functioning in the unconscious parts of the mind.

It is important to emphasize its unconsciousness. He does not *know* that he is conceited, and intolerant, and hot-tempered. Many such a person is, in moments of self-examination, utterly bewildered to know why It is he so easily flies into a temper and so easily gets his feelings hurt. On the other hand, some people do not realize that they *are* conceited, but they are, and the reason is that in the unconscious part of the mind a false compensation for their buried inferiority is being made. The curious thing about many such people is that the more assertive they are, the more they are making it plain to anyone who has read any psychology that in their soul of souls is the fear of being thought inferior to others.

I have diagnosed, at some length, this case of what we called above, organic inferiority, because it is an obvious and illustrative type; but the same kind of thing might be done for all cases which manifest the inferiority complex. Look briefly at other typical cases characteristic of the complex and illustrating the kind of compensation made, and then we will pass on to classify the false compensations, and finally show the true way out.

OVERCOMPENSATION

Here is a man who was once a member of a fellowship group which I conducted some years ago. The group was largely composed of University students. This man, who was a very worthy and intelligent man, had not had the advantages of a good education. Whenever he spoke in the fellowship he quoted some learned writer instead of contributing his own views. He would begin like this: "You will remember that Benjamin Kidd says in his book, "The Science of Power," so and so, and so and so. Sir Oliver Lodge says in "The Survival of Man," so and so, and so and so." Why did he do this? Partly from a sense of inferiority, which said to him, "Don't express your own views. Give the views of experts." But much more potently than this, his unconscious mind was saying to him: "Prove to the fellowship that you are not as inferior as they suppose, since you have read these highbrow books." I emphasize again how unconscious the victim of the complex was of its functioning, since, if he had been conscious of it, he would have seen what a fool he made of himself by his manner.

A good friend of mine, who has always been weak in his Greek, always left a Greek Testament, and generally an open one, on his desk, presumably so that if anyone came into his room when he was away they would be impressed with his learning.

I know a high-brow business man with a doctorate, also very well qualified in matters of business who covers a vast ignorance with a pompous style that deceives many. Once at a meeting he did what it is his habit to do. Instead of coming in with the other speakers, he came in late. This creates a splendid impression. When the others come in, people say, "Where is Dr. X?" That is one point gained. Further, the solitary entrance brings the "Dr." a glory undimmed by having it shared by others. Frequently in audiences readily deceived by show, it brings him a round of applause all to himself. On this occasion, as the dramatic entry was made, a little girl watched the pompous figure pass with an assumed unselfconsciousness which completely deceived her. She turned to her brother, a theological student, and in an awed whisper, said, "Who is that?" In a similar whisper, but this time assumed, came the answer: "Sh! That is God's eldest brother." I should think the angels in heaven chuckled with holy glee. Such pomposity is *always* a cloak which covers a terrible fear; the fear of *being found out to be the very ordinary person one is*.

Now, if one goes into the presence of a real scholar, he never makes one feel uncomfortable by his display of learning. I remember some interviews I was privileged to have with the late Dr. Peake. You could not find anywhere a more humble-minded man. He would discuss things with you, and ask your opinion in a way that was embarrassing when you realized what a great scholar he was. But his interest in another's opinion was not assumed. It was entirely genuine and sincere, and the real scholar does not display in any truculent way his learning. *He does not need to*. Whereas the man who, to cover his inferiority, wishes to make you think he is a scholar, takes every precaution to impress you because he needs to, not having the real thing itself. His over-compensation, assumed to cover inferiority - gives him away.

In the same way, here is a woman of ordinary standing, who has set herself to climb the social ladder with the help of quickly-made money. She does things in the big style, wears loud clothes, boasts of the number of maids she has, refers to the "under-gardener" so that you may realize that there are two, and brings as many important people as possible in to her conversation. "Lady So-and-So said to me the other day, as we were chatting in her garden ...". She deceives herself into supposing that this is an effective way of telling you two things:

(1) that she knows Lady So-and-So, and (2) that she has been invited to Lady So-and-So's garden. Such a person would not let you know for the world that her mother used to serve fish and chips in a little shop in a back street. To anyone with psychological insight, she is making herself ridiculous. It is an over-compensation which is a false compensation, and her carefully-developed drawl, and the aspirates so carefully sounded, do not cover up the fact that underneath is a deep sense of inferiority. To be humbly born should not, and need not, give any sense of inferiority. The fact remains that amongst unadjusted people it does.

I heard of a man, recently, who was engaged to a girl who was a missionary candidate. Neither had any money, but both seemed in love. The girl belonged to the best type of modern, athletic, University girl. Then suddenly the man jilted the girl, and became engaged to a very wealthy widow, whose husband had not been dead many months. The new husband lives in a gorgeous house, and runs three cars with her money. He was heard recently inviting someone "to my little place on the south coast." It was a gift to his wife from her former husband. With great amusement his friends watch him trying to play the new part as if he were used to it. The butler who stands behind his chair at dinner terrifies him. His dress tie is a sight to see. He takes his friends, who are now carefully selected, into the drawing-room and explains to them how much each picture is worth. This, to him, is its main interest. His marital predecessor was an Oxford Blue. At some pains to himself (and his wife), he is developing quite an Oxford drawl, sometimes rather lessened in its effect by a slip of grammar, and sometimes rather spoilt by a direct question as to which was his college. The girl to whom he was first engaged wasted a few tears in secret, and then became a first-rate missionary in India. The worm whom she would have made a man still covers a mean, small, vulgar, cowardly little soul with the wealth which, like a cloak, he hugs so tightly round him. Only in his case it is not just a cloak; it is a shroud.

The girl who buys her complexion over the counter and plasters on the lip-stick is unconsciously over-compensating for repressed inferiority. She is really saying, "I know I haven't got much of a face, but I'm making the best of it." To which some may feel led to reply, "Well, go on with your efforts. After all, we have to look at you." But the really beautiful woman doesn't overdo cosmetics. She has no need to. She has no inferiority to hide.

We need to come from the contemplation of such cases to remember that nearly all

exaggerated conduct - the over-painted girl, for instance is a compensation for inferiority, and for that fear-feeling which is at the heart of every inferiority complex. Frank recognition of inferiority does not matter. It is the emotional tone of the complex. It is the fear of being thought or discovered to be inferior. It is this emotional tone which brings the passion into the loud voice and strident tone, which nearly always mean fear. They reveal the fear and the coward. The barrister with the loudest voice has generally got the weakest case. The teacher who slaps his desk and says, "I am not going to have any nonsense," or who resorts to violence, reveals to anyone with psychological insight that underneath there is a sense of inferiority and inability to keep order. The good teacher has no need to adopt such a device as over assertion. The foreman who shouts at his men, the forewoman who loses her temper, both give themselves away to the psychologist as knowing, in their soul of souls, that they suffer from a sense of inferiority, and know themselves inefficient in their job. It is curious, really, that such methods are still so plausible, even with adults. One may comfort oneself by realizing that as the knowledge of psychology becomes the possession of more people, folk will cease to be imposed upon by the dogmatic temper and the imperious manner of voice and bearing. Noise and violence are old dodges, and go back to the monkey-stage of human development. They are the remains among us of those methods of trying to keep one's own courage up and to impress the opposing tribe by the raucous cry and the bared fang.

Let us classify some of the false compensations under which the mind tries to hide its sense of inferiority.

The first we may call that of *over-assertion*, such as is illustrated by the little man, or the uneducated man, or the woman with social ambitions whom we have described. It is an over-assertion of the self as a compensation for a sense of the inferiority of the self, and we may note that there is all the difference between the blusterer who boasts of his self-confidence and the man who is really quietly confident.

The second classification we may call that of *under-assertion*. It is a very difficult type to deal with, because the victim asserts his own inferiority and uses it as a kind of foil. You have the person with a deep inferiority complex, generally partly repressed, who uses his very sense of inferiority to get for himself the gratification for which his inmost soul is craving.

Here is Dora, only daughter in a home where many visitors are coming and going. Dora has

no gifts of beauty or culture. She cannot entertain the visitors on the piano or with her voice. She feels inferior to the vivacious and entertaining women who come to her home. Some can sing. Some can play. Some are beautiful and attractive. Some can talk brilliantly and wittily. What does Dora do? She is found to be bashful, retiring and self-effacing in a noticeable way. She is found to be drooping in a corner in a not ungraceful pose. Her conversation is mostly self-disparagement. She is compensating for inferiority by under-assertion. There is such a thing as modesty. But this is not it. There is such a thing as humility. But humility is not thinking less than the truth about yourself. It is not thinking about yourself at all in that constantly comparative way. Dora has made herself a perfect coat of armor against all criticism. It is to accept it. For indeed it only says what she says. She takes all the wind out of her critics' sails by eagerly asserting what they say. But what she lives for is that someone may say to her father, preferably in her hearing, "How unselfish Dora is! How self-effacing." That indeed would be a rich reward. For Dora is as conceited about her alleged humility as some girls are conceited about their pretty faces and some men about their brains. Yet, knowing what she does, there is still repression. Dora doesn't know the real causative factor in her inferiority complex. Her under-assertion is not just conscious knowledge of inferiority. The latter would be healthy enough to drive her to make good somehow in *some* kind of activity. Everyone can do that. Her under-assertion is a symptom of repression.

The third type of false compensation is that of *infantile regression*. By regression we mean that the mind, unable to face life on the adult level, slips back or regresses to a childhood level. During the War a lieutenant in the Navy, known to me, found the strain of life on a battleship too much for him. On one occasion, after a dreary and nerve-racking search for submarines over the grey waters of the North Sea, he was found in his cabin playing with a teddy bear. The condition was, of course, border-line, and more serious than the ordinary observer will find in everyday life. But modern life will furnish instances of the tendency.

Horace and Gladys get married. Horace is a good fellow, but of the type known in Yorkshire as a "gormless mut". He gets on all right with women, but men, especially he-men, look down on him and have little use for him. Unfortunately they have no children. Gladys, having a strong maternal impulse, mothers her husband. I nearly wrote "smothers" her husband. Horace loves it. It is the only time he ever feels a man. Gladys gets up in the morning and lights the fire and cooks the breakfast for her lord. He stalks down, appropriates the paper

and eats his meal. The jolly fellowship of the breakfast meal is wrecked of course, but all important people should know the news as early as possible. He tucks the paper under his arm and sallies off to join the throng of the world's workers. If you rang him up at 11, he would be out for a coffee. Ring up at 12.30, he is out for lunch. Ring up at 2, and he isn't back from lunch. Ring up at 4, he's away to his tea. Rang up at 6.15, and he has "just left." On his arrival back he expects Gladys - who meantime has done as much hard work in a day at home as he does in a week at the office - to be beautifully gowned and to have a meal nicely cooked for her *man*, with his slippers warming in the fender. Horace leaves his pipe in one place, his matches in another, his papers somewhere else and his shoes anywhere. Gladys tidies up after him, saying out loud, "Oh these men, these men" "*Men!*", "What a lovely thought" Horace is inwardly purring. But Gladys ought to say, "Now, baby dear, pick up your things and go to bed." Horace is regressing. Unable to face life through a repressed inferiority, he is dropping to a childish level where he gets mothered. He has merely regressed to the point where a child leaves his toys about on the floor, and loves the sense of importance which he gets by finding an adult like his mother picking them up for him. Gladys will never make her husband a man in that way. It is a false way out.

A fourth kind of false compensation is that of *sensation*, and it is this false compensation which results in a good deal of misconduct and crime. The tendency towards it you may detect in the man who says, "Oh, life is too boring for anything. I shall go and get drunk, or assault a policeman, or something." One is not really surprised that a man with something about him (in whose life there has been continual thwarting of purposes which he knows *might*, under proper conditions, bring him to self-realization) should turn to gambling or drunkenness or crime. If he gambles and wins he becomes a winner and gets the appreciation which all minds need. To be able to put away liquor is to pile up credit with those who honor the man who can "put it away." A vast amount of so-called crime is pathological in its origin. Society sins against men by pushing them into inferiority through unemployment, and then punishes them because the compensations they make are anti-social. How much crime, I wonder, is psychological illness with an unpleasant symptom?

Think for a moment of the result of continuous unemployment on the mind of a real man. Society is saying to him, "You have nothing to give the community which it really needs". The dole is even thought of, by some, as a reluctant charity paid to men who are rather a

nuisance to the State. This is intolerable when one remembers that should war break out the State would call all these men heroes, praise what they could give, and demand a sacrifice even unto death. The dole must be thought of as a retaining fee, gladly paid to retain the services of men whom each has something to give the community, if only the community life were organized to receive it, and who are no more responsible for the rotten condition of society than we are. It should be remembered that inferiority complexes mean reduced morale, and the psychological morale of a nation is as important as its physical fitness.

So two brothers go to the same school - not always a wise procedure. Smith Major is good at games and good at lessons. Smith Minor is good at neither. Therefore he suffers from a sense of inferiority. What does he do? He learns more swear words than any other boy in his form. His swearing is a false compensation for a repressed inferiority. He makes a sensation and gets notoriety, the drug - if not appreciation, the food - of the mind. Perhaps some such motive was underneath the younger brother in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The younger of them said to his father, "Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me", and in all the superiority of suddenly acquired wealth, he went forth, determined no longer to suffer the intolerable inferiority which came through the relationship of his elder brother, who, at best, seems to have been a kind of snob.

The fifth type of false compensation is that of phantasy. It is the type illustrated by Cinderella, who, feeling inferior to her sisters, dreams that the Prince himself claims her as his partner. So the boy Joseph, feeling inferior to his brothers, who "had a down on him", as we say, dreamed that their sheaves were bowing down to his. It is the phantasy of the servant maid in the kitchen, feeling "kitcheny" and inferior, with the four-penny novelette on her knee, in which the story is told of another servant maid who marries a millionaire. She stares into the fire and makes her little phantasy of what might happen to her.

"Why shouldn't she?" you say. The answer is that that little servant maid making that kind of phantasy before the kitchen fire is not reading her novelette as an adjusted person would read it. *She is identifying herself with the heroine.* And by identifying herself with phantasy she is becoming less and less adjusted to reality. *She is the heroine waiting for the millionaire.* The consequence is that if some blackguard comes along and tempts her, she will be swept away, and all her resistance to temptation will have gone, for she will make him fit into the story too. And these stories don't end with a lovely house on the Riviera. Some of them end in

Bow Street police court. You can see young girls standing there weeping at least one morning every week. When phantasy is more real than reality it is time to stop dreaming. Adjustment is needed until the mind no longer feels inferior because of the work she happens to do. Unfortunately that adjustment is not too easy to bring about. More is needed than radio in the kitchen, another easy-chair and an extra night out! It is by phantasy that the weakling boy compensates for his inferiority. The more the weakling the more he dwells on the exploits of a Tarzan or a Buffalo Bill.

The ancient Jews were a nation with an inferiority complex brought about because they couldn't fight. The Jews never have been successful warriors. They never will be. Palestine has been conquered again and again. So the Jews made up a lovely phantasy which the Psalms and Prophecies reveal. "God will come down with the armies of the sky", they said: "He will smite our enemies and come and save us". Jesus did His best to break their phantasy and show them the true way out. They should have seen what they *could* do and have stuck to that. They were a nation of spiritual geniuses. That was their greatest strength. But no, they clung to the phantasy. And in 70 A.D. reality in the shape of 'Titus' army smashed them and their phantasy too.

Here is a girl of fifteen dreaming of being a missionary. Let her dream her dreams. They are of God. Yes, but let her realize that no missionary society today wants an unqualified person, however well-meaning. If, therefore, the next step is matriculation, let her not hide her scholastic inferiority under dreams, but stick to her Latin grammar, lest reality, in the shape of her matriculation examination, smash her dreams to atoms.

The danger of phantasy, especially when indulged in as an escape from inferiority, is that we should completely live in a phantasy-world, lose our touch with the world of reality, and become introvertive and neurotic.

The sixth type of false compensation is that of a definite neurosis or "nervous breakdown". You may have a person whose body is functioning perfectly, and who, subsequently, without organic cause, becomes paralyzed from the waist downwards or shows physical symptoms which are disabling, when at the bottom of the illness there is merely a very big repressed inferiority complex, with enough energy in it to inhibit the proper functioning of the legs or organs. It is as though the unconscious said to its victim: "Here is a way to hide your

inferiority, end your conflict and bask in a limelight of pity, sympathy and interest”.

There are some people who do this at first consciously, but there are many in whom all this is unconscious, and therefore I want to utter a word of warning against any words of criticism. It is as unfair to blame the neurotic as to blame a person for having the measles. Many men during the War developed war-shock, but though there may have been a few cowards, the majority were really psychologically ill. It was their unconscious mind that suggested to them this false way out. They developed physical symptoms to save them from the awful strain of the war and the sense of inferiority born of inability to face it.

I had one case of an undergraduate who broke down in his second year at university. He had lost all interest in his work; had definite neurasthenic symptoms. I found that at the public school he attended he had come out dux. When I began to explore his school life, I soon found that his work had been motivated by the desire for recognition, and not any real interest in the subjects in which he had done so well. Going back farther still, I found that he was the only offspring of a late second marriage, and had been held up as a little paragon to the much older children of the first wife. He could not bear to take any place in the class but the first, and that is not easy at a university; and he broke down under the strain. As we drew from memory, with free association, incidents and motives which dominated his childhood and schooldays, we were able to see them in their true perspective, and he steadily regained interest and health; and today is doing as well as his ability will allow him.

Here is a case which I saw, and was asked to treat, but the distance of the patient's home made treatment impossible and she died some years ago. The patient was a highly-sexed, attractive girl in her late twenties. We will call her Mabel. She and her younger and prettier sister, Ethel, went for a picnic one day on the Cornish moors with a young man, Tom. Probably both girls were in love with Tom. Having chosen the site for a meal, Ethel and Tom went off together, leaving Mabel alone preparing the meal. They were away for nearly two hours. Mabel was annoyed and vexed beyond description. She was jealous, and not a little frightened. At last Ethel and Tom returned, and the meal was eaten. Mabel maintained a frigid silence, sitting with one leg under her. When the time came to go home, it was found that Mabel could hardly rise for the pain in her leg. Tom gallantly, gave her his arm, and Mabel maintained her grip of his arm long after it was necessary, so that she might keep near him and thwart the supposed intentions of Ethel on his affections. They reached home and

the occasion passed. Tom possessed a motor-bike and side-car. At a subsequent picnic it was suggested that a bigger party should be made up. The question arose as to who should ride in the side-car, and Tom suggested Ethel. On the morning of the picnic Mabel developed a pain in her leg, which grew so bad that obviously she could not go at all unless Tom would take her instead of taking Ethel. So she went, and the pain continued, thus affording an excuse for the continued attentions of Tom.

With less and less frequent intervals the pain continued, though neither doctor nor X-rays could detect a physical origin. Mabel became more and more lame. Being lame, many excuses were made. She was not allowed to do house work, and this served her well, for she hated it. She was taken out in cars and side-cars, and this she loved. She gave herself sexually on many occasions to various men, always excusing herself that, as she was lame and couldn't be married, "it didn't matter". Thus her lameness quietened her conscience. She was offered, and accepted, from a philanthropic manager of a motor-works, the work of answering his telephone at a high salary. If she had recovered from her lameness, this work would probably have been extended or removed. Thus, in a sense, her lameness was her livelihood. When I saw her she could not walk across a room, but would walk round it with a stick in one hand and her other hand on wall or furniture. Yet when I hypnotised her she walked across a bedroom floor from bed to window without a stick or any other support. It is true that she faltered and staggered, but one must remember the disused state of her muscles. I am quite sure that she could have been cured, but distance was a difficulty, no psychologist could be found near her, and another trouble supervened, from which she died.

Some will blame her and call her deceitful. In the first stages she was, but who amongst us is entirely free from occasional deceptions? The later permanent lameness was the result not of conscious but of unconscious processes for which no one can be blamed. It began in a sense of inferiority compared with her sister, which was repressed into unconsciousness, and which functioned there, producing a lameness as a false compensation and a method of getting the love for which her nature was hungry. In this way scores of people are "ill". They need neither physician nor surgeon. Bromides have no effect on the unconscious mind, nor can the keenest knife dissect it. They need the psychologist who can help them face reality and adjust themselves to it who will not analyze only, but synthesize and get the patient into tune with the Infinite. And in the subsequent synthesis and readjustment I do not know anything that

has the value and potency of the Christian religion, with its gospel for the wounded spirit, however deep the wound and in whatever way it may have been caused.

The true compensation for the inferiority complex is the way of achievement, and about this we must speak in the next section. It is Illustrated by Demosthenes, who overcame his stammer, and the sense of inferiority due to it, by becoming an orator. Roosevelt and Sandow were both delicate children, but overcame inferiority due to it in ways that are known to all. "Live dangerously," says Nietzsche. How much of the tone of this philosopher is due to the fact that he was an invalid we cannot gauge. Napoleon's progress was partly due to the fact that he was little and deformed, and determined to compensate for it. Thus many a man who was once a mother's darling became a reckless airman or a brave bomber during the War.

The whole question of inferiority and the true way out of it becomes, in my view, a question of belief and personal meaning. Nature has planted within the personality of every man certain possibilities. It is for him to find out what these possibilities are, not to waste those tremendous energies in making false compensations which deceive himself more than they deceive the world. There are methods by which we can expend all our energy in making our personality count for its true worth.

PART 3

CURING THE INFERIORITY COMPLEX

It is not sufficient, dimly to perceive that one has an inferiority complex and to say to oneself, “Well, I’ll try and get over it”. To get over it often means turning away from it, trying to forget it and pretending it isn’t there. This is not so sound as to face up to it, and thus to get through it. Nor is it the ideal method of cure merely to repeat to oneself twenty times every night, “I am getting better and better” Such a method, in that it is, in this case, unscientific and does not go to the roots of the matter, may result in overcompensation, which we have already described. It may change a shy man into an arrogant man, who is just as shy underneath.

The cure of the complex depends on two things:

- (1) Self-knowledge;
- (2) Self-adjustment.

Perhaps the best advice for attaining mental harmony is contained in these two words, knowledge and adjustment. We need to know ourselves as completely and relentlessly as possible, to be absolutely sincere with ourselves, and then to adjust ourselves to circumstances, to man and to Infinite Energy.

The question is how to know oneself.

If the inferiority complex is repressed, then this self-knowledge may be impossible without the help of a psychologist. Our own resistances, camouflages, self-deceptions have gone on for so long that we have deceived ourselves. Or, indeed, we may be the victim of some mishandling in our child life, and the whole result may be a complex beginning early in the unconscious, and never having been completely conscious.

An inferiority complex can be so repressed in the unconscious, that the victim cannot understand the cause of the curious symptoms, nor can he thoroughly cure himself. It would need

patience and skilled analytical inquiry to recover to consciousness those repressed factors which have built up the complex. This abnormality, if very extreme, and especially where there is a streak of mental instability in the family history, may lead to the kind of insanity which is called paranoia, in which the victim, in some moments, believes himself to be a king or prince. It is an exaggerated and pathological form of the overcompensation. But such cases of abnormality are rare and, in any case, outside our orbit and survey. Such a case is one for the specialist in mental disease.

Most of us could know ourselves much better, and face up to our inferiority complex before it becomes repressed, if we were willing to be utterly sincere with ourselves; and to achieve this I suggest the following methods.

- I. If you suspect that you possess an inferiority complex, sit down quietly for an hour at a time for as many days as necessary and go over your past history (exercises that may assist you in this matter are detailed at the end of this book – Ed). Some people find it a help to begin with the earliest thing they can remember and to go quietly and slowly forward, especially looking for those causes of the complex which I have mentioned in the first section of this chapter. Then it would be of value, while doing this, to decide which, if any, of the types mentioned in the section is the type or classification under which you come. To discover the cause and the type is to have taken a big step towards cure, because you are beginning to understand yourself; though care must be taken not to push your case under any ready-made classification.
- II. It is invaluable if you have a friend, particularly a friend with any psychological insight, to whom you can go and talk quite frankly; to whom, for instance, you could say, “I am conscious that I need readjustment. Do you mind telling me, quite frankly, where my life seems to you to lack in strength and grace?” I suggest a game which is to be strongly recommended, especially where a number of people live together in a house and do not always get on well with one another. The game consists in writing down two things you like and one thing you do not like in those with whom you live, and get them to do the same thing for you. Thus a husband writes concerning his wife: “I love the way you look after the house and the kiddies, and slave for them. I love the way you invite the lonely, rather than the social leading lights of the neighborhood to the house, but I do not like the way you are always changing the furniture about”. In

the same way a wife writes down: "I like the way you delight in giving me pretty clothes and good holidays. I like the way you won't stoop to shabby tricks in business, but I don't like the way you leave the kiddies, their education and discipline and training all to me". We can all stand being told a thing that is wrong with us if we are told two things that are right with us. Let there be jam and we will eat our sandwich.

- III. A third way of knowing oneself which has been suggested to me is that of looking into a mirror and talking to oneself. I have heard of a man who did this for some minutes, and then said out loud, "You dirty little cad!" And after that he began life over again!

I would suggest, instead of this, that we stand face to face, in an act of imaginative faith, with Christ. If you are not religious it can be just as powerful to acknowledge that there is an Infinite Energy that far surpasses any of man's doings. To do this is self-revealing in a way which is terrible but cleansing. Moreover, the presence of Jesus, unlike the imagined presence of other great men, does not drive us into inferiority. We feel that He so believes in us, so sees beneath the worst to the best, that we begin to believe in ourselves because we cannot deny His faith in us. His presence has the power of calling forth everything splendid in us. Faint, dull embers blaze forth again. Hope is quickened and life renewed. We are reinforced within and He has the power of mobilizing all we ever hoped to be and drafting it into front-line service. His knowledge of us, neither better nor worse than the truth, and piercing to the motive; His sympathy and the knowledge that all He asks is that we should be our very best selves, and not an imitation of another - these things are the best cure of the inferiority complex I know.

We must try to realize that sincerity with oneself demands candid realization of what we *can* do as well as what we cannot do. If you know you can do a thing, admit it thankfully. If you know you are pretty, be thankful and admit it. A friend of mine wrote half a dozen books on theology, and then tried to answer a criticism in a paper by opening with the sentence:

"I do not pretend to be a theologian". That is falsely-assumed inferiority and a kind of unconscious insincerity. A person who does not pretend to be a theologian does not write half a dozen books on theology. We must not put our limitations nearer to ourselves than God has put them; for to do this is not only having no faith in ourselves, but having no faith in God. There is all the difference in the world between abominable conceit and the man who quietly

says to himself, "I know I can do this". Egotism is the anesthetic which God allows us to take, in order to deaden the pain of feeling inferior fools; but the sooner we begin to do without the anesthetic, and can bear the truth, the sooner we waken to the joy of real living and true adjustment. I think it is wise not to compare ourselves with others, either pretending we are like them on the one hand, or, on the other hand, depreciating ourselves, as someone did a little while ago in my hearing, who said, "After I heard her play the piano I decided I would never play again". If you are in a job, and think you can express your personality better in another job, get into that other as soon as may be, but if this is impossible, then be as efficient a person in the job you are in as you can be. Let every power in your personality be mobilized. God only asks of you that you should be the best "you" that you can be.

The great need really is utter sincerity with yourself. Never pretend to yourself motives that are not true motives. Don't lie to yourself, or you will make such a liar of your memory that ultimately you will credit your own lie.

"To thine own self be true,
And it shall follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

A deeper problem is not only to ask how we may know ourselves, but also how we may adjust ourselves. Personal meaning and religion comes in here also.

What has the Christian religion to say to the man who has a sense of inferiority? It has many things to say. The first thing is that all service ranks the same with God. It is not what your daily work is, but the spirit in which you are doing it. God asks from us all that we should discover all the resources of our personality, mobilize them into activity and dedicate them to His service. If a crossing-sweeper does this, he is serving God, and pleasing God as much as the archbishop who does this, and more than the archbishop who does not. If, for some reason or other, he cannot mobilize his resources and direct them and dedicate them, he must use them as well as he can, knowing that at some point in life, whether in this world or in another, God, who has given him his talents, and who regards them jealously as among the assets and treasures of the Kingdom, will require them at his hands.

So fear not, lowly toiler in the job you don't much like. God has not forgotten you. You may be selling clothes to difficult customers, looking after someone else's children, and so hungry to have your own home. You may be doing what some ignorant people call menial work. You may long for recognition and find it not. You may nurse sick, irritable people, or pack butter into boxes, or teach grubby schoolboys. You are to try to see your job as service to the community and service to God. Do *your* job as well as it can be done by you. It is only required in stewards that they be found *faithful*.

But there is more to be said. If Christianity be true, it means that Christ is the reality of all our dreams of what God meant human life to be; that far too much emphasis is put amongst us on human achievement in things scholastic, in the collection of this world's goods, and in what is called social position, popularity and fame, whereas the supreme thing to God is whether His spirit is being manifested through the life.

A very great friend of mine said to me on one occasion: "I feel such a sense of inferiority in such and such circumstances because Mr. A. has got a B.A. degree, and I am only a shop assistant". What better answer can there be than that Jesus was a shop assistant; an assistant to Joseph in a little carpenter's shop for years? And yet His Name is above every name. It is the extent of his moral character that matters. The other matters not at all. As the dying novelist, Scott, said to Lockhart: "Be a good man, Lockhart: you cannot help the world better than by being a good man". And we simply must, as religious men and women, get this sense of values into our head and heart, and get right out of both, that false sense of values which longs to paganism.

Otherwise we shall be like the shop-walker who looks down on the porter even as the bank clerk looks down on him, or the shop girl who looks down on the servant girl even as the society girl looks down on her. Both the looking up and the looking down are wrong. We shall be victims bound entirely by a false sense of values. It is utterly unchristian, and contrary to the interest of our own peace of mind and inward harmony, to look down on some people because we are pleased to think that their job is lower in the scale, or that they have not so many friends or so much money; and it is equally wrong to look up to some people *merely* because they have more money or more friends or more brains, or what is called in this pagan civilization a higher social position. What-ever we think of one another, God does not think less of a man who drops stitches, eats peas off a knife or whose breath smells of onions. Nor

does He think more of a woman who visits the hairdresser every week, whose stockings are silk all the way up, or whose dress is in the latest Paris fashion. What does matter is whether we have been kind to others, and honest and sincere with ourselves. To the Christian who really has the spirit of Christ there is only one test of values, and that is of moral character. We must keep our eyes on Christ, who alone can help us to keep our sense of values in the right place.

And this brings us to our last thought. We are not to try to cure our sense of inferiority by a false kind of self-assertion, and we are not to continue stooping to less than our own height. The Christian has a way out from the inferiority complex. He asks God that he may have his vision clear to see, himself first of all; and he is ready to look fearlessly, relentlessly, inexorably at himself, using, perhaps, the help of others, and sometimes even the psychological specialist, that he may see himself. So he attains self-knowledge. "To be frank and honest in all relations, but *especially in all relations with oneself*, is the first principle of mental hygiene."

Then the Christian asks that his sight may be clear that he may see Christ. When he does that, adjustment follows. For in Christ he realizes that moral values are the only values that count, and that strange miracle happens to which we have referred. When you stand near Christ, though your own littleness is apparent, His great-ness is not the kind that pulls you down. It is the kind that stimulates you, stirs you, and calls you to higher things, because His presence has the amazing power of making you believe in yourself. It makes you utterly humbled, and yet it makes you tremendously proud. You are lowered to the dust, but you are exalted to the stars. It is as though the incarnate Christ said to you, "This is what God meant human life to be. Come, my brother, and tread the way with Me". And at last we realize that there is something within the reach of all of us, greater than wealth, greater than fame, greater than culture. It is the greatest thing that any man could do, and the marvel is that any can do it. It is so to express Christ that others may see Him in us. This is the cure of the complex. And nothing will produce a greater happiness. Nothing will give such a sense of well-being. Nothing will bring a deeper peace. For there is no wealth which a man can amass, no intellectual superiority he can attain, no power he can gather, which in God's sight sets him above the humble life which to its very utmost shines out in a dark world with the love of Christ, revealing day by day His spirit and His nature. And here alone, as we shall discover one day,

lies man's true *raison d' etre*. The vindication of our existence will lie there. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Sometimes it must seem to many who live thwarted and frustrated lives as though men's lives were bits of toys thrown down by some irresponsible baby upon a nursery floor. But the bits are pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. They all fit. Each needs the other. God cannot put the picture together without each one. So you, with your rough edges and strange angles, have as important a place as anyone else. His picture is a universe of souls. A *universe*.

And Christ, that great lover of souls, that great believer in human values, will never sit down upon His throne in the consummation of the ages when the universe is rolled up, with *one* life left out, with one piece of the puzzle missing. So they shall come-these lonely, humble folk who find it hard to get rid of their feelings of inferiority and who can hardly believe that *their* life counts for much-they shall come from the north and the south and the east and the west, and they shall sit down *together* in their Father's kingdom.

APPENDIX

TO KNOW ONESELF & ADJUST

The exercises that follow are based on working methods of self hypnosis, hypnotherapy and relaxation, and are designed to support the two main methods by which to cure the inferiority complex: Self-knowledge & Self-adjustment.

You may find it of benefit to listen to a Binaural Beat CD whilst doing these exercises. Binaural Beats contain a landscape of digital pulses and tones which entrain the brain towards natural states of relaxation. The purpose of this is to allow greater access to your subconscious, which is where the roots of the complex lie. Binaural Beat CDs are available at low cost through the website.

It helps if you read through the exercises a few times beforehand, so that you can remember them. Relax, breath deeply, enjoy the whole process and be guided by your own intuition and subconscious.

If any exercises seem to resonate more with you than others, then start with them, and move onto others later. It's up to you how long you spend with each exercise, and how many times you perform them. You won't be able to cram in all of the exercises into a single session, as about 5 minutes should ideally be spent on each.

A quick warning before you begin. You may feel like casually flipping through the exercises, listening to any accompanying Binaural Beat CD once, and then not bothering again. You may even invent some flippant reasons as to why. But remember this: your subconscious may try *everything* it can to go *against* you. Afterall, the complex has repressed to protect itself, so it may continue to do so until you become more aware of it. You just need to think of two things in spite of everything else: You want to gain greater awareness of yourself, and this is a useful way to adjust. There isn't any good reason why you wouldn't work through these exercises, other than to protect your inferiority complex and to stay exactly where you are.

1) The present.

Think about your situation as it is now, laden with as much detail as possible about the disadvantages of your feelings of inferiority and what they prevent you from doing or enjoying. Think about your own inconveniences. The reactions of others. The things you can't do as well. All the feelings associated with inferiority, anger, fear or jealousy. Spend a few minutes really getting into this, until you really begin to feel how much you don't want to stay where you are. It can also be liberating, as these awarenesses will go some way to flushing out the feelings.

2) The not-to-distant future.

Think about how you would behave, think and feel without feelings of inferiority. Think about how you would look. How you would feel. How friends and family will react. New opportunities or realisations. New motivations. What would you now be able to do? Can you imagine doing those things? How different could the world look? Try and get to a good level of detail about it, as if you are there right now. Again, spend a few minutes doing this, until you begin to feel a strong sense of excitement and desire about being rid of inferior feelings.

3) Meet the new you.

Take the last exercise to a new level. See yourself as if looking into a mirror, except you see yourself exactly how you want to be. Notice all of the details about how you feel, and see things. Ask yourself how you get to be like that, and listen to the answer. Don't just rush through this, really listen to the answer, and wait to see what else emerges. You may surprise yourself. Then slowly step inside of the new you, like putting on a new set of clothes. Feel the new you from within, and how refreshing it feels, looking at things a lot more optimistically. When you think of people you know, you can do so with hope and acceptance, feeling only how you want to express yourself and not concerning yourself with the actions of others. Notice the responses of others. Spend as long as you like in this exercise, visualising everything and missing nothing. Feel it, live it, realise the difference. As you do this, your mind will be actually making changes to your self-image. Whilst inside of this new you, if you come across the old you again, give yourself a special message about what you need to realise.

4) Secondary gain.

Think about your life as it is now again, and what would change when you get rid of inferior feelings. Don't just think about the social changes or differences. Spend some time thinking about the subtle negative changes, such as the envious responses of others, and any attempts to undermine your new energy and confidence. See if you can realise some of the benefits of your current situation. It may be that a family member is similar, and you don't want to leave them behind. It may be to protect you from being hurt in some way. You may receive more sympathy and attention from others with feelings of inferiority. Keep thinking through as many situations as you can, until you find any possible reasons that may support the repression and protection of the inferiority complex.

5) Reframe.

Consider each of the possible benefits of staying with inferior feelings, one by one. For each one, think and feel your way to the bottom of it, realising what the function of it is. Strip the function to its raw, pure nature (e.g. 'protection' from being hurt, 'comfort' in similarity, 'safety' from lack of self-responsibility etc). Then go inside yourself and find new ways to serve those same functions (e.g. for protection from being undermined, being more aware of the inferior needs of others). Find a new way to serve that function, and accept it as a new way. Feel this change, and visualise it as much as you can. You can then reorganise the way your mind operates, to allow inferiority to dissolve.

6) Habits.

Think about any habits that reinforce your feeling of inferiority (e.g. avoiding the neighbours, allowing someone else to answer the phone, finding amusement at the expense of another, shouting or swearing). Visualise the habit, at its earliest stage during an occurrence. Quickly change the image to the 'new you' image, looking exactly how you want to be. Feel the change in motivation. Feel the strength of commitment. Do this about ten times for *every* habit you can think of. After enough times, you should have difficulty thinking of the habit without automatically reverting to the change of decision. This helps with adjustment, and eroding the habits that fuel our subconscious drives.

7) Memory.

Go back through your life, allowing any feelings, pictures sounds or sensations to visit you whilst relaxing deeply. Allow free association to occur, so one idea automatically triggers another, again and again as you spiral down through your history. Notice any memories that stick out as being relevant to your feelings of inferiority. Relive the memory in a different way – as if you were already the ‘new you’. See how the memory plays out in a new way. Feel how you feel. See and feel how others respond. Do this for as many memories as you can. Think around the memories, understanding them and how they may have shaped you, how you could have learned something different from each situation. You will be changing the response of your mind and body to those memories.

8) Creative visualisation.

By now, all this thought should allow you to enter a wonderfully relaxed and creative state (particularly so if listening to Binaural Beats). Use this to your advantage. Feel yourself go on creative journey, visualising and imagining any metaphors you can to losing inferior feelings, and finding new ways to express your true energies and personality. Be as creative as you like in allowing any realisations about yourself, things you want, things you have enjoyed in the past, who you would be if nothing was in the way.

9) Timeline.

Imagine floating above your timeline. Your timeline is a line that represents your life. It could be a straight line, a curl, a spiral, whatever feels natural to you when you close your eyes and imagine it. Float above the now, and float towards the future date when you have lost feelings of inferiority and are expressing yourself freely. Step into the new perceptions and attitudes again, feel the differences. Then when you feel satisfied, float up, and back along to the present. Notice all the little changes and memories along the way. Enjoy them. Embrace them.

RISE ABOVE INFERIOR FEELINGS

It would help to re-read these exercises again. Have them fresh in your mind. After a couple of sessions, you will get good at remembering them.

Throughout these exercises, you will be changing the subconscious motives and structures that influence your everyday behaviour. Soon you will notice small differences in your everyday life. You won't need to think about them, they will come from within, from the subconscious, from the same place that the inferior feelings came from. *You may surprise yourself.* You may feel like doing different things, or expressing yourself in new ways. You may think differently about particular issues.

I hope you have found these words informative and useful.

I wish you well on your unique, personal journey towards self awareness and self adjustment.