

A 10. THE BASIC HUMAN PROBLEM

Our basic problem is that we can't live and live well without others, but we haven't learned how to live as well with others as we could.

If someone did not take care of us after birth and for some subsequent years we would not live at all.

And even adults could not live well if each of us had to make everything we needed by ourselves. We depend very heavily upon others to meet most of our physical and even our psychological needs.

Although we are all individualistic, we are a species of social animals. Everyone needs at least one congenial friend or relative in order to be psychologically healthy. More friends are usually better, and best of all is also to have someone one really loves and is loved by.

But at the interpersonal level, as well as in the relations of the individuals to groups, and at the inter-group level, humans often develop many conflicting relationships, sometimes even violent ones, rather than developing mutuality and equity.

Yet in all human interrelationships equitable mutuality is potentially possible as well as conflict, and could benefit all concerned rather than being at the expense of some or all. Either not enough humans have learned that, or have not yet learned how to organize their societies very well accordingly.

Human nature is such that, although we have conflicting impulses, experience can teach us that empathy, friendship, love, cooperation and equity enhance the quality of human life and their opposites degrade life.

Why do we sometimes not learn better from such experience to harmonize our impulses better within ourselves, then harmonize our creativities well with others individually and within groups.

Why does it seem to be so hard to develop social orders so that every human is given fair and ample opportunities to develop those fine potentialities that we all have?

And why are the potentialities for equitable mutuality instead of conflict so poorly developed in inter-group relationships, and conflict and even violence between groups so common?

Why do humans cause so much unnecessary suffering rather than develop societies that promote human well-being strongly and that harmonize with, rather than ignore & threaten, the life-support system nature provides.

Is it that we do not have brains enough to see the possibilities, even though we have brains enough to develop ever better other technologies?

Or is there an emotional blockage to applying intelligence to the improvement of human relations, inter-group & environmental relations? If so, could some leaders overcome it sufficiently in themselves and get enough followers to make any improvements? Let us hope so, for the need is great.

