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1. We saw on Friday

- a notion of the self as the totality of personality and character
- how personality & character are notionally distinct but not really distinct, how they inter-relate
- how the self is a system on the move, either in development or decline
- and how self-transcendence is the key to development or decline:

The developing subject is the subject harmoniously reaching beyond the self it is toward the self as it is to be;

The declining subject is the subject either

- disharmoniously reaching beyond the self it is toward a further self
- unable to transcend itself
- unwilling to " " "
- or both unable and unwilling to transcend itself.

2. We saw also the difference between neurosis and sin.

Neurosis is the inability to take the steps needed to grow as a human being.

Sin is the refusal to take these steps.

Therapy is a healing of the inability,

conversion a shift from unwillingness to willingness.

Conversion is frequently needed for therapy,
for the inability to grow as a human being
can easily become an unwillingness to grow.

I.e., personality difficulties
and character flaws
are frequently inter-related.

Pure therapy is a healing of personality difficulties,
of the inability to grow because of
failures in the process of differentiation
and integration
that constitute personality.

Conversion is a change in character orientation,
from unwillingness for self-transcendence
to willingness for self-transcendence.

F.

2.

Obviously, then,

development of personality cannot take place
w/o self-transcendence,

and thus w/o character,

which is essentially the willingness

to take the steps that must be taken

for genuine human development to take place;
the willingness to transcend the self as it is
for the sake of the self as it could be.

Character
= the devel-
opmental
process

Only if the person is willing to do what must be done
for a fuller self to emerge
will development occur.

Character, then, adds a further dimension
to the differentiation - integration
inter-relationship that we saw in the first part of the course.
It is character that keeps this inter-relationship going,
character that keeps the self on the move forward,
character that is responsible for the development of the person.

3. What we have to do today

is to see if we can make more precise
the notion of character.

Character, essentially, is the willingness to take appropriate steps
in transcending the self as it is,
^{in the process}
steps that will move toward a fuller, richer,
more differentiated and more integrated self.

G. Genuine
development

But in what do these appropriate steps consist? What is genuine development?

Our definition of character is still quite ~~imprecise~~ abstract
until we specify in what the appropriate steps consist.

That is what we must try to do today.

1. Questions

And to do so, I suggest that we contrast again

the development of the infant in the world of immediacy
with the development of the adult in the world mediated by
meaning.

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Development in the world of immediacy
is all that human development that doesn't depend on language.

Thus the infant differentiates various bodily skills
such as crawling, walking, moving one's limbs,
playing with various toys in a satisfactory manner, etc.

In this way, he or she comes to feel more at home
in an immediate environment,
one that is purely here and now,
one that he can move around in physically
with greater ease.

An ego is developing,
but one can hardly speak of character.

Also, the context of Pers. No. 2 is developing,
one's feelings,

but again one can hardly speak of character.

One is developing a basic trust or mistrust in reality,
dependent largely on the parents,

but one is not developing character as such.

The basic trust or mistrust will have a lot to do
with the ease with which one later will develop character,
but in itself it is more the development of personality
than of character -- at this stage.

Before character as such can begin to develop,
one must have entered into the world mediated by
meaning.

Then one's differentiations occur
not only by the development of physical skills
but also by asking questions and finding answers
to those questions that are every bit as satisfying

on the successful differentiation of physical skills.
Raising and answering questions is ^{often essential to development}
Questions are asked, obviously,

only when language has been achieved. once one has entered the world mediated by meaning. ;)

In fact, one's first questions
are probably questions about the use of language itself.

(cf. Helen Keller) The discovery that things have names is
exciting.

And it is language that introduces us into the world
mediated by meaning.

Language makes present what is not part of your
immediate environment,
what is not here and now.

Language, ^{also} focuses our consciousness
on whatever aspects

of the world mediated by meaning

~~that~~ the words have made available to us.

There seem to be basically three kinds of questions
built into the structure of our subjectivity.

There are questions for intelligence: what? why? how? what for?
how often?

There are questions for judgment: is it so?

And there are questions for decision: is it worth while?

2. The kind
of questions
4.

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Development is always a matter of moving beyond
the self as it is
to a self as it is to be,
and of doing so in the direction of a more differentiated
and integrated
self.

This means, however,

once one has entered the world mediated by meaning,
that one's development in that world occurs through
raising and answering questions.

Only this kind of development is properly named
self-transcending development.

Dev. in the world of immediacy is far more automatic,
far more dependent on external circumstances.

But this dev. in the world mediated by meaning
depends on inner circumstances,

on the presence of a spirit of inquiry
that keeps raising further questions.

Through this spirit of inquiry,

the self is continually transcending itself
and so developing.

W/o this spirit of inquiry,

the self is in decline.

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Children are naturally inquisitive,
but the questioning spirit can be stifled
by lack of encouragement,
poor educational techniques
(e.g., insistence on memory s. th. understanding).

To the extent that the questioning spirit
has been stifled,
to that extent one will cease to be self-transcending.

To the extent that people in a culture
have ceased to question their experience,
to that extent the culture is on the decline.

Why does self-transcendence,
in the sense of the self moving beyond the self that it is
to a fuller self,
occur through questioning?

Because questions themselves are self-transcending.

Let us look at each of the three kinds of questions
to see the self-transcending aspect in them.

First, then, we ask questions for intelligence:
what? why? how? what for?

These questions indicate that we are not satisfied
with immediate experience.

When we answer these questions, we are constructing a
world that is larger than the world of immediate experience.

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This larger world transcends the world of immediate exp.,
and the self in this larger world
transcends the self in the world of immediate exp.

By reaching for existence in a larger world,
the self is reaching for self-transcendence.

Secondly, we ask questions for judgment: is it so?

We ask such questions because we are not satisfied
with just any construction of the world.

We want our constructions to coincide with the world as it is.

To the extent that our constructions of intelligence
coincide with the world as it is,

we are right.

And we want to be right,

we feel it is somehow better

to have hit things off right
than to be in error,

or illusion,

to be deceived,

to be wrong.

We find that others have constructed the world by intelligence
in a manner different from us,

and so we are puzzled.

Who is right?

If we are wrong,

we want to change our construction.

If we are right,

we want to build on that knowledge.

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The important point is to catch
the further aspect of self-transcendence
in the questions for judgment,
beyond the aspect found
in the questions for intelligence.

For when we say, Yes, this really is so,
we do not mean that this is what appears,
or what seems to be so,
or what we would like to be so,
or what we think is so,
or what we imagine,
or what we would be inclined to say.

When we seriously affirm that something
really and truly is so,
we are claiming that we have got beyond ourselves,
transcended ourselves,
in some absolute fashion,
that we have gotten hold of something independent of ourselves,
that we have constructed the world as it really is.

There is an absolute self-transcendence
to a true judgment.

In it, we are claiming:

This is the way the world is,
independently of the fact

that I have constructed it this way.

We are claiming, not only that we have understood,
but that we have understood correctly.

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Thirdly, there are questions for deliberation, decision, action.

What am I going to do about it?

Is this object or course of action
really worth while?

Is it good?

Is it not just good for me,
but good?

Is it a response to value
or just a ~~response~~^{means} to satisfaction?

What effect will it have on others?

What will it do to me? To me as a person?

These are the questions of conscience.

If the questions I ask at this level

are concerned only with my own advantage,
with what serves my interests,
with what yields a maximum of pleasure
and a minimum of pain,

decisions and
then the actions that flow from these questions
will not be self-transcending.

But if the questions I ask here

are concerned with values -- vital, social, cultural, personal,
religious --

then I am self-transcending in the decisions and
actions that flow from these questions.

And I will be self-transcending in a further way than I am
in my questions for intelligence & judgment.

I will be self-transcending not only in my knowledge,
but also in my actions, my contribution to making the world.

Values are
distinct from
satisfaction by
reason of act. They
sometimes will coincide
but it is not the satis-
faction that makes for
value.

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Questions, then, promote the development of the self
from what it is
to what it could be,
because questions themselves are self-transcending.

5. Questions for deliberation, decision, and action
are the most important questions
in the emergence of character.

I can ask questions for intelligence
and for judgment
in the interests of my own advantage and gain.

But what determines whether I do so
is the way I have handled questions for deliberation.
Have I opted for value
or for satisfaction?

If I have opted for value,
there will be an orientation
to my other questions
that will be disinterested, detached, objective.

If I have opted for satisfaction,
there will be an orientation to my other questions
that will be selfish, biased,
that will cut off further relevant questions
where they begin to become uncomfortable,
challenging,
threatening.

The way I handle questions for deliberation, then,
will determine my willingness to transcend myself, my character.

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Character, then, emerges in the kind of consciousness
that deliberates, decides, acts.

This is why scholastic philosophy made so much
of the first moral act a person performs.

In the first moral decision of a person's life,
one necessarily not only chooses between this & that,
but sets a course,

a direction,

an orientation,

makes a fundamental option

for self-transcendence

or for self-absorption.

An ~~that~~ ^{or} orientation ^{to A.M.} will change, it too will develop,
but as long as it endures,
one's course is set

as a person who is ~~either~~

raising the questions that promote
self-transcendence.

~~or failing to raise these questions.~~

An orientation to self-absorption

can be changed, too, but only

by conversion, and on Wed.

we will begin to ask,

What is conversion?