Our Children

A HANDBOOK FOR PARENTS

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG

Editors

Prepared and Sponsored by

THE CHILD STUDY ASSOCIATION

OF AMERICA, inc.

MCMXXXII

THE VIKING PRESS · NEW YORK
Contents

INTRODUCTION

I AN "OLD TIMER" SPEAKS
DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER
President, American Association for Adult Education; author of The Deepening Stream, Basque People, and many others

II WHAT IS PARENT EDUCATION ALL ABOUT?
SIDONIE MATSNER GRUENBERG
Director, Child Study Association of America; Lecturer on Parent Education, Teachers College, Columbia University

SECTION ONE: THE CHILD'S GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

III THE CHILD AS AN ORGANISM
ARNOLD GESSELL, M.D.
Director, Yale Clinic of Child Development

IV WHAT A CHILD IS BORN WITH
PAUL POPENEO
Secretary, Human Betterment Foundation; Director, The Institute of Family Relations, Pasadena

V THE CHEMISTRY OF GROWTH
E. V. MCCOLLUM
Department of Biochemistry, Johns Hopkins University

VI CHANGING GOALS OF POSITIVE HEALTH
I. NEWTON KUGELMASS, M.D.
Consultant Pediatrician to the French Hospital, Monmouth Memorial, Lynn Memorial, Northwoods, N. V. A. Sanatorium; Pediatrician to the Fifth Avenue Hospital, Heckscher Institute, Hospital for Ruptured and Crippled, New York

VII HEALTHY ATTITUDES TOWARD HEALTH
WILLIAM PALMER LUCAS, M.D.
Professor of Pediatrics, University of California; Clinical Professor, University of California Medical School

SECTION TWO: THE CHILD AT HOME

VIII PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS IN HABIT FORMATION
JOHN E. ANDERSON
Director, Institute of Child Welfare, University of Minnesota
Contents

IX LAWS TO BE BROKEN 92
Anna W. M. Wolf
Consultation Service, Child Study Association of America

Ruth Brickner, M.D.
Consultation Service, Child Study Association of America

X THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE NURSERY SCHOOL TO THE HOME 103
Ada Hart Arlitt
Professor and Head of the Department of Child Care and Training, School of Household Administration, University of Cincinnati

XI DISCIPLINE—OLD AND NEW 111
Marion M. Miller
Associate Director, Child Study Association of America; Editor, Child Training Department of Delineator

XII INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES 120
Jeanette Regensburg
Instructor, New York School of Social Work

XIII ANGER AND FEAR AS ASSETS 130
William E. Blatz
Director, St. George’s School for Child Study, Toronto

XIV WHAT IS SEX EDUCATION? 140
Benjamin C. Gruenberg
Educational Editor, The Viking Press; Committee on the Costs of Medical Care, Washington, D. C.

XV THE MEANING OF MATURITY 155
Adolf Meyer
Psychiatrist-in-Chief, Johns Hopkins Hospital; Henry Phipps Professor of Psychiatry, Johns Hopkins University

XVI THE FAMILY DRAMA 169
Bernard Glueck, M.D.
Psychiatrist; Physician in Charge of Stony Lodge, Ossining; Psychiatrist to Montefiore Hospital, New York

SECTION THREE: THE CHILD AT SCHOOL

XVII RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AND CURRENT TRENDS IN EDUCATION 185
William H. Kilpatrick
Professor of Education, Teachers College, Columbia University

XVIII A CHALLENGE TO SCHOOLS 195
Edwin R. Embree
President, Julius Rosenwald Fund, Chicago
Contents

XIX MEASURING CHILDREN'S CAPACITIES 204
FRANK N. FREEMAN
Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Chicago

XX EDUCATING THE VERY YOUNG CHILD 214
GEORGE D. STODDARD
Director, Iowa Child Welfare Research Station, Iowa City

XXI HIGH SCHOOLS—FOR WHAT AND FOR WHOM? 226
V. T. THAYER
Educational Director, Ethical Culture School, New York

XXII CHARACTER IN ADOLESCENCE 237
THOMAS J. McCOMACK
Superintendent, La Salle-Peru Township High School; Director, La Salle-Peru-Oglesby Junior College, La Salle, Illinois

XXIII THE PROBLEM OF GOING TO COLLEGE 245
MAX McCONN
Dean, Lehigh University

SECTION FOUR: THE CHILD IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD

XXIV LOOSENING FAMILY TIES 257
ERNEST R. GROVES
Research Professor of Sociology, University of North Carolina

XXV VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE IN PRACTICE TODAY 268
HENRY C. LINK
Head of the Psychological Service Center, New York

XXVI CHILDREN—AS MEMBERS OF SOCIETY 282
E. C. LINDEMAN
Professor of Social Philosophy, New York School of Social Work; Consultant, National Council of Parent Education, New York

XXVII IN QUEST OF LIFE VALUES IN THE MACHINE AGE 293
LAWRENCE K. FRANK
Formerly with the Spelman Fund of New York

XXVIII RELIGION AND THE CHILD'S LIFE 307
ADELAIDE TEAGUE CASE
Professor of Religious Education, Teachers College, Columbia University

XXIX QUO VADIMUS? 318
CÉCILE PILPEL
Director of Study Groups, Child Study Association of America

BIBLIOGRAPHY 327
INDEX 335
CHAPTER XXVII

In Quest of Life Values for the Machine Age

LAWRENCE K. FRANK

Recent studies have given us new insight into the old truth that “as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” Out of these studies is coming evidence that the most significant factor in life is the inner picture of himself and of the rôle he would like to play in life, which each of us begins building in early childhood. In the face of the speed and pressure of mechanized living, youth needs, as never before, to shape an ideal for himself, which is both worthy of effort and, in some satisfying measure, attainable. As the psychiatrist, more especially the analyst, expresses it, this ego ideal represents the synthesis of aspirations which the child has taken over from the cultural tradition around him together with his own most poignant hopes.

While no one factor in the life of youth can be separated out from the whole, too much emphasis cannot be laid upon the need of developing such an ideal as the sign and symbol of what the individual holds of worth and value. We all know how, from experiences with older persons, especially his father, and from the characters he admires in books and plays, a young boy or girl constructs this ideal self. By identifying himself with the model of those attributes that seem to him most admirable, he seeks to express the kind of person he would like to be. In early childhood, these aspirations are fairly simple reflections of childish, wondering admiration for those who wield visible power—the policeman, locomotive engineer, bus driver, or soldier. But often these early ambitions only thinly cloak more deep-seated desires growing out of the child’s fundamental relations to the world he knows—desires which in adolescence, as he feels himself coming to grips with this world, become driving forces of utmost
The Child in the Outside World

urgency. How many of the burning ambitions of early manhood take
their source in these earlier years as a response to poverty, to un-
sympathetic adult standards, or to heartaches at being ignored or
hurt? We can all recall some desolate moment when anguish was
allayed by rosy dreams of how we would become famous and make
our elders ashamed of their treatment. In those wistful yearnings may
be born the seeds of futile day-dreaming or of driving ambition.

Especially during adolescence are the youth and maiden preoc-
cupied with these questions of their future conduct, for they see
so many problems suddenly looming up in the uncertain light which
is all the adult world gives them as guidance. Then are conceived those
flaming visions of achievement which justify the old saying that
“youth has all the vocations.” The fumbling attempts and ephemeral
projects of the adolescent are the outward expression of these inner
longings and shifting plans.

PASSING OF THE GOOD OLD DAYS

When we lived in smaller communities, young men could look
forward to making a living for their families in well-established oc-
cupations, and the home offered to girls a well-beaten path to womanly
virtue; this question of ideals and ambitions was then at least rela-
tively simple. But today, in the midst of economic turmoil and social
confusion, it has become exceedingly difficult for the youth and
maiden to discover what is worth doing, what values really hold in
life. We all realize that this sense of values, of purpose and goal
in living, is more difficult of attainment today than at any time in the
recent past. And we are accustomed to lay the blame for this difficulty
upon our developing machine industry and technology, in response
to which we have gradually been shifting our ways of living toward
city dwelling, toward employments and operations based on money,
wages and “credit” with the countless alterations these make—in the
kind of work we do, the food we eat, the use of our increasing
leisure time, and all the most personal details of our daily lives. With-
out attempting to describe or define these changes, we may remind
ourselves that our social and economic life is on the move. There
is nothing fixed, stable, or permanent in our culture; and between
the lives and occupations of our grandparents and of our children
there will be a difference so great that generations of historians will be busy tracing out the changes in their multitudinous ramifications. Yet these physical changes present little real difficulty in adjustment in and of themselves. There are, to be sure, innumerable points where frictions and difficulties arise directly from them. These I do not wish to appear to ignore or neglect, but I believe that most changes of this kind in themselves present little difficulty or perplexity. The perplexities arise after we have adopted these new ways of living.

In other words, the sheer change in practices and activities does not create acute problems of human adjustment. Every day in factories, in offices, in homes, new tools and processes are introduced, adopted, and used with little or no conflict. Very frequently some resistance is displayed to new methods, but on the whole the shift takes place quickly and easily. We accustom ourselves almost without knowing it to canned or otherwise prepared food, "store" clothes, mechanical refrigerators, public utility services such as gas, electricity, and telephone, to rapid transit, and even to public health and modern medicine. Indeed, one might say that part of our present difficulty arises from the very facility with which we have adopted these new practices and methods, since we have thereby drifted almost unconsciously from our former ways of living.

WITH ALL THE MODERN CONVENIENCES—WHAT NEXT?

The very absence of effort in these shifts in the physical aspect of life has blinded us to what has really been taking place on the personal and emotional side. It is after we have become urbanized wage-earners, dependent upon conveniences, services, utilities, and protections of various kinds, that crises in our personal lives assail us. It is then we discover, as today we are all discovering, that we are cast suddenly adrift in a precarious and ambiguous world where few, if any, of our ideas and beliefs, standards and patterns have any real meaning in terms of the lives we are called upon to live.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in that large segment of human activity which we describe as work. Whereas formerly the family made a living by producing goods and services largely for its own use, today we are all, even the farmers, engaged in earning a living by gaining a money income. We must sell our services or our
goods, thereby obtaining money in order to buy food, clothing, shelter, public services, and the other necessities and luxuries of life. Every child is aware from an early age of the importance of money, and his ideal self usually has an economic side of fairly definite character. The family attitude toward money is probably the most potent influence upon the child's conception of money income and the use of money. In the early days of his allowance he begins to form ideas and beliefs of what money is for and how important it is in the scheme of things. If the family conversation stresses the money theme and points to persons of wealth as admirable, per se, the child will take his cue accordingly and begin to see people and their activities in a distinctly pecuniary light. More important, he will be influenced toward a career of money-making if his family points that way.

It is essential, to be sure, that we recognize money as one of the dominant factors in the relationships of present-day life; but it is still more essential to learn how to use money for living. Formerly, a young man could decide what scale of "social life" he wished for his family and then choose a kind of work in which, according to his ability, he could obtain the necessary income. But today the very choice of a career dictates the scale of living he must adopt, in order to be recognized. The doctor must live in a certain way; the lawyer, banker, or broker, each has his housing, recreation, social life, and friends indicated by the very pattern of his profession.

The changing economic life of women is at least equally important, and frequently arouses even more bitter family conflicts. Earning a money wage or salary is an economic necessity for more and more women. For many girls who are under no necessity of earning money, holding a wage-earning job is still important as a symbol of independence and competence now that girls are emerging from the protection of the home to meet the new age-group standards of achievement. This may prove of immense significance to the future of society. Can we see in our own daughters, going out to a job, meeting fatigue, discouragement, often disillusionment, the gallant figure of youth in whose achievements the world has ever moved forward? Can we see them as just as courageous and valiant as their grandmothers or great-grandmothers who went to the frontier as pioneers of a new land and country? In retrospect we see romance, daring, high adventure, and forget the drudgery, the monotony, the loss of security
Life Values for the Machine Age

and comfort which these girls of former generations endured. We forget how many of them were scolded, criticized, and taunted for their recklessness in courting the unknown. Parents, both today and yesterday, have been irritated by youth's determination to leave comfortable homes for new adventure—whether it lies in a pioneer's cabin or in a skyscraper.

WHY WORK?

If we are to clear the path for our own children we must look at our traditional concept of "work" with a fresh eye. "Work" has occupied a place among the virtues in America which has never been so uncritically accorded it in older societies. Partly because the new settlers were likely to be of the restless and energetic type, partly because pioneer conditions made toil with one's hands the price of sheer survival, work came to be glorified as an end in itself. The conditions which gave this ideal its vitality have changed; how far the conservative-minded may still be blind to. But the swing of the pendulum has brought into being a whole negative philosophy growing out of the seamy side of industrialism, a growing feeling of the futility of industriousness, characterized by such slang cynicisms as "getting yours," or "only saps work."

In our working lives we can see most clearly how, as already pointed out, we have accepted the "modern improvements" of technology without being in the least prepared to accept their impact upon our sense of values. "Work" seems to have lost its old nobility in a world where on one side great fortunes are amassed by other and quite different means, and where on the other, there is not enough work available for all to earn a livelihood.

In this industrialized society, marked by business cycles of considerable magnitude, ranging from the extraordinary prosperity of 1929 to the depression beginning in 1930, one of the outstanding aspects of the situation is the helplessness of the common man. Without warning he suddenly finds himself without a job or with his earnings considerably reduced. In addition to the menace of these alternating cycles of employment, young people today find themselves preparing to enter a world where they are faced with an extraordinary rapidity of change in the technology of industry so that,
almost overnight, a hard-won skill and ability may be outmoded. A change in the process of manufacture may throw a skill, developed over a period of years, on the scrap heap. An upheaval in international affairs may throw whole industries completely out of employment.

Now the human race has often faced droughts, famines, and other vagaries of nature necessitating short rations, endurance, patience, dogged persistence, and determination to go on. But today's crises of unemployment—both those resulting from the replacement of men by machines in a particular industry and those resulting from worldwide depression of all industry—are presenting an unprecedented situation in which the kinds of courage, perseverance, and endurance that have carried man through past difficulties are relatively inefficacious. There is little that an able-bodied man can do against such large general spectres as technological unemployment or overproduction; accordingly we find him developing acute anxieties and apprehensions for which the philosophy and religion of the past offer small comfort. Man is being compelled to change from a producer who matches his strength and ability with a reluctant nature into a wage-earner with all the differences, not only in the world without, but also in his inner life, which working for a wage implies.

Over and above these large-scale economic conditions, the individual faces a society in which his efforts and ambitions are being increasingly restricted, on the one hand, by the development of trade unions, occupational associations, and the like, which determine for the individual what shall be his wages, his hours, and his output, and, on the other hand, by the rise of large industrial and business organizations which are progressively closing the avenues of individual enterprise and initiative, as expressed in small shops, stores and other small-scale activities. Entering into a large corporation, youth must face the prospects of a long, steady grind, with slow promotion and restricted opportunities to show what he, as an individual, can do.

WHERE PAST EXPERIENCE FAILS THE PRESENT

Now all of these conditions are of exceeding importance to the boys and girls who must seek somehow to adjust their own lives between the demands of past ideals and present needs. If our homes and schools cannot interpret cultural traditions in terms of present-
day realities, if they continue to hold up only the old patterns of competence for youth to emulate, they are, without doubt, sowing the seeds of anxiety and strain which will reach far beyond the life of the marketplace and factory.

But even those adults who think there are values in work (though perhaps not the traditional pioneer virtues) find themselves put to it to give boys and girls the experience and opportunity for experiment through which alone they can learn. The old order had the enormous advantage of being “all of a piece.” The chores done by children in and around the house were different only in amount and difficulty from the labor of adults, and they clearly fell under the same categories—the boy who at six picked up chips, at fourteen was splitting kindling, and at twenty-one might be clearing the timber off his own “claim.” Even the far less remote “small town” chores of tending the furnace, mowing the lawn, and shoveling snow are a part of everyday experience for fewer and fewer boys; and “domestic duties” are offering fewer, or at least very different, opportunities to girls.

What is the alternative? “Getting a job”—assuming that it is possible—does not ordinarily give the adolescent any notion of the satisfactions of work, because most of the jobs open to him in industry are of the unskilled, dull, repetitive variety which are responsible for so much of our present lack of adjustment. Without going into details of how it is to be achieved, we may set up this need of work experience, with people and things, as one of youth’s challenges to school and home today.

It is not possible to think of work entirely objectively. It cannot be measured simply in terms of a useful skill or a certain handiness. It permeates all our attitudes and shapes itself into our philosophy of life. To many, especially among our immediate forbears, it has seemed an end in itself rather than a means to an end; to many, especially among our contemporaries, it has been a means of escape from a life that lacked meaning elsewhere. Yet there have been, in every generation and in every time, those who found in work fulfillment both as an opportunity for self-expression and as a means of serving their fellow men.

As long as young men and women come to maturity trying to reconcile the ideals, the ambitions, the social and personal codes of
the 1890's with the desires and practices of the 1930's, they must bear an extraordinarily difficult burden which may compromise not only economic success, but will almost inevitably create strain and friction and conflict in all their efforts at adult living. In married life, for instance, it is not at all fantastic to suggest that not a little of the conflict so frequent today is generated by these obsolete patterns and ideals which the two sexes bring to marriage, ignorant or forgetful of the social and economic changes which impose upon the man and woman of today the necessity for a fairly radical alteration in their relations and their individual behavior.

Perhaps the most important problem of economic life today is the challenge to help our children to achieve a well-rounded way of life to which their economic activities minister, rather than leaving them to accept passively a meager way of life dictated wholly by economic necessity. It is not possible today thus to put money in its place, but if the youth of today is given the impetus, in the years to come he may make this concept of work a reality.

THE URGE TO COMPETITION

The question of competitive activity is inextricably involved in our ideals of work. But it also reaches deep within to the very well-springs of emotional security. The fact that it has played a larger and larger part in our conventional estimate of life values is a commentary on our ideals which until recently we have chosen, perhaps unconsciously, to ignore. For while we are accustomed to think of competition as the great stimulus to achievement, this inner significance of its motivation is often forgotten.

To compete with others involves a feeling of rivalry, usually with a strong uncertainty of one's ability to meet the achievements of another. If one surpasses others in a trial of ability there may be gained a real sense of security, of confidence to meet the tests of life. Competition on this score offers a means to relief from doubt or anxiety over one's prowess.

But where the feeling of uncertainty comes from is often as important as its cure through successful rivalry. For a boy or girl, for instance, who has developed a feeling of insecurity and of anxiety over his place or status from the way he has been treated by parents,
Life Values for the Machine Age  301

or from the conflict between home patterns and social pressure, successful defeat of a rival may initiate a reaction to life which leads to ever more rivalry and competition. This habitual defense becomes as much of an obsession as a habit-forming drug—and has as little efficacy to still the hunger which engenders it.

AN IDEAL TO BE CHALLENGED

Yet individual initiative and free competition are the two basic dogmas of our present-day society, and the rugged individualism they foster has been given approval in law and in the pronouncements of political leaders. The issue of individualism versus a more socialized philosophy of life may seem very remote from the task of child nurture, but in essence the question is being decided more surely in the homes than in the legislature. In so far as parents themselves create or foster in their children the feeling of inadequacy, uncertainty, and desire for competitive rivalry in studies, in games, in clothes, in social contacts, in the daily give-and-take of life, they are voting for the continuance of a competitive society as surely as if they were legislators. Those dispositions will remain to mold the lives of their children and grandchildren. For, once that feeling of insecurity is created and the use of competitive rivalry is fixed, it is almost impossible to change it, except through the bitterest experience, such as perhaps is now challenging our social and economic standards.

The interesting and really significant characteristic of competition is that after those first early experiences, which may prove very helpful to a timid child, the desire to win by downing those who are in the way or who oppose success increases; but its satisfaction does not. Indeed, if one reflects upon the lives of those who have been most successful, from a competitive point of view, especially in business life, one is struck by the poignant yearning that they bear, unappeased by their acquisitions or position. No single goal—as many careers familiar to us all testify—will allay this insecurity; the much-sought acquisition of wealth or position, when reached, is repeatedly found insufficient and so is replaced by ever more remote goals that lead the individual in a treadmill of blind striving.

Here we must recognize that a person's security is relative; it rests in large part upon the goals which he has set for himself, and any-
thing which blocks their attainment or threatens the individual while he strives thereto must create insecurity. The only real source of security is the elimination of that inner feeling of inadequacy which has forced men to seek these ascending goals as anodynes for anxiety and incertitude.

RIVALRY IN CHILD TRAINING

The emphasis placed by parents upon competitive rivalry, and particularly the premium placed by precept and example upon achieving success, is of immense importance to the future life of their children. Here we see changes in emphasis and value reflected in the preoccupation of parents with such familiar topics as obedience, discipline, and the use of money, expressive of their concern over behavior by which their children appear to challenge the very foundations of their own morality and ethics.*

Their lives may become in turn so organized upon that pattern, that not only in economic life, but in friendships, marriage, and the rearing of children it distorts whatever other values life may yield. What this competitive, often destructive, attitude does to human relations we are beginning to understand as we see more clearly in business and industry, in politics and government, and in the family and school how human life is embittered and ruined by its motivation. Like a match to tinder, the competitive urge in an individual, especially if he is uncertain and insecure, may start a flame nothing will quench. In inciting their children to competition, or exposing them, unguided by a sure sense of values, to the fiercely competitive economic life of today, parents may be wrecking their chances of present and future happiness. What may happen in a world where even a few more people have learned from early childhood to set store by other, less unstable values is a matter of conjecture; but to many the possibilities seem at least worthy of trial.

HOME STANDARDS WEIGHED AGAINST MODERN VALUES

Conflict between youth and age is as old as human history. But without undue commiseration, we might as well admit that the

* See Miller, Chapter IX; and Glueck, Chapter XVI.
Life Values for the Machine Age

circumstances of our own lives have made this conflict particularly acute without bringing it to a decisive conclusion.

On one side is the force of the family patterns and standards, and on the other, the call of the contemporary life as expressed by the boys and girls of the same age whose acceptance and approval are essential. It must never be forgotten that youth must follow its own group, for it is within this group that mating, social life, and economic status must be achieved. When this is blocked or prevented by parental control, devastating conflicts are often set up.

Here the issue is not between parent and child, but rather between the parent's values and the world's standards, since the conduct of the child will, in the long run, be colored by the intrinsic merits of his parent's standards. Parental confidence is justified when it is placed not on its own power of discipline and control, but on the sheer force of the child's own personality. In no relation of life is the real impress of the parent's life upon that of his child so clearly shown as in the manner of the child's reaction to the conduct of his or her own age and sex group. But the issue is not to be judged in a day or month. It is a question of years of experiment and "muddling through" before the outcome is made clear.

No young person can or should be asked or compelled to flout his contemporaries. When a boy or girl shows no interest in his age companions, no concern for their judgment, there is indeed reason to be worried lest he or she is failing to make the social adjustments necessary to a sane, wholesome maturity. But the importance of conformity to contemporary life does not imply any necessity for slavish obedience to the standards of the gang. Whether a young person apes the dress, manners, and conduct of the neighborhood, high school, or college group, depends in large measure upon his need of reassurance and approval.

IN SEARCH OF SECURITY

Here we catch a glimpse of values in the process of formation and begin to see again how the ideals of the individual emerge from his own inner life and its fate under the impact of both family and friends. While generalizations may be premature, there is good evidence for the view that the individual is driven, often against his own
The Child in the Outside World
desires and liking, to conduct that he hates, because the feeling of insecurity, of doubt of his status or standing has compelled conformity. What part in causing this insecurity and uncertainty the parents play thus becomes an all-important question. If the parents of a boy or girl have tampered with his self-confidence, destroyed his feeling of security as a well-liked, approved member of the family and, thereby, driven him to seek excessive approbation from age and sex mates, they cannot be held blameless when the youth seems to have lost his bearing and his grip on the helm. Indeed the self-defeating treatment of adolescents by parents is probably one of the most frequent causes for the familiar teens age steering without a course or goal.

We must not forget for a moment that what the individual does in most situations is a response to his personality needs, especially his need of security and of intimacy to be fulfilled only by reassurance and affection from those he considers important. If a boy or girl pursues a path disapproved by the parents, the first question to ask is, “In what way have the parents failed him in reassurance and affection?”

This is no light responsibility, in a world where even the adults cannot always be secure. Parents are no less human than their children, and oftentimes hardly less confused by complexities for which their own early training had not prepared them. They, too, have their lives outside the home with which they must come to terms. Frequently we hear the expression that something has gone out of life, some of the zest, some of the incentive, and parents are prone to sigh for the good old days when the whole duty of a man and woman was fairly clearly and unequivocally established. There are many indeed who are convinced that we must go back to the good old days. They are sure that if only we can persuade our sons and daughters to dedicate themselves anew to the standards which our parents cherished, an effective answer will be found to our present questionings. It must be clear, however, that not only do the changed social and economic conditions around us render such a return impracticable, but, what is perhaps more important, that once we have begun to question the standards and the sanctions of life, it is impossible to revive a feeling of conviction, of surety that alone gives those standards any vitality and effectiveness.
If we were to take each item in this traditional code of behavior that we still hold up to our young men and women as standards and against it note the actual living conditions to which they will have to conform, I think we would begin to see rather clearly how impossible it is for them to look forward to accepting these as their own standards—and if we are fair-minded, how undesirable it would be if they did. A much more difficult task would be to inventory the new responsibilities and duties. This would call for a high order of imagination and insight, because we may assume that the fundamental needs of men and women for intimacy, for affection, for mating, their desire for reassurance and security, for the personality satisfactions that come from the bearing and rearing of children are continuing—and will continue for our children. The trouble is that opportunities for their satisfaction are not being adequately provided, either in present-day living conditions or the code of behavior brought down from yesterday for their guidance. No one has pointed out for most of them just where they are likely to go astray in terms of these present-day conditions, while most of the warnings and admonitions addressed to them are so obviously outmoded and inappropriate, as to excite either amusement or contempt.

THE CHALLENGE OF SELF-REALIZATION

Yet honest parents may well ask, "Must I surrender all my own standards and values and watch my son and daughter pursue a path which violates all I hold dear? What can I do to give them the values, the goals and the security that will carry them through the confusing, high speed life pressing in upon them today?"

Probably the most important contribution we can make to their preparation for meeting that life is the conviction that "values" are few and profoundly simple but that the means of expressing and achieving them are as changing and as varied as social living itself. Can we contrive to make our sons and daughters realize that whatever is valuable and worthy in life must be interpreted anew by each generation in its own terms? Out of our own experience we shall then be able to assure them that in their human relations of mating,
of parenthood, of friendship, they will discover the one means to security which is effective, because it gives them ideals and goals within their power to achieve. Just that realization—that upon them, not upon their parents, rests this responsibility—would create the attitude needed so sorely today by youth, confused and baffled by parental admonitions, contemporary fashions, and an inner feeling of frustration. That which endures is never changeless. Our present necessity to re-examine these values which the human race, through the long slow growth of years, has found worthy of preservation, is the measure of their continued validity.