



# The Graduate Review



JULY 1977



## The Grip of Agreement

Plain talk about the ways in which agreed-upon "reality" shapes individual lives and entire cultures.

You don't often see college textbooks excerpted in magazines or newspapers. It happens, however, that Earl Babbie—professor of sociology at the University of Hawaii and a member of the est Advisory Board—has written one so pertinent that we want to share some of it with you. The book is *Society by Agreement: An Introduction to Sociology*, published this year by Wadsworth.

With Earl's approval, Wendy Kavanaugh

Wendy Kavanaugh has been articles editor of *Learning* magazine and has worked on projects for The est Foundation, for Werner's office, and this one for us.

extracted a number of separate passages from various parts of the book and assembled them into a discussion that serves as a plain-spoken reminder about our social "reality." Wendy then talked with Earl about the direction his next book will take, and in the process they addressed a question that arose for her during the editing. Their conversation begins on page 5.

You are living in a veritable sea of agreements.

The fact that you wear clothes when you go out of the house (as well as the kinds of clothes you wear), the fact that you say "hello" to people and ask them

how they are even if you don't really care how they are—such things make up the culture you share with those around you. Many of those agreements seem so natural, so "right," that you probably don't even think about them.

If you reflect, you'll see that there's no obvious reason for the existence of many of the agreements that make up your culture. Why do men wear ties when they dress up, for example? It doesn't make any sense at all if you think about it. To find out how real that agreement is, though, try getting into a fancy restaurant without a tie, if you're a man, that is. If you're a woman, you don't need a tie, of course. Of course?

## The Graduate Review

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Why? What sense does *that* make?

Young children frequently regale the adults around them and add to the store of "family stories" by asking "why" about things that adults find obvious and don't question. Why can't the family dog eat dinner at the table with the rest of the family? Why can't you tell someone he or she has a funny-looking nose? Why can't you take all your clothes off when it's hot?

Every generation of children in a society draws attention to the discrepancies between the world of direct experience and the agreement reality that has become reified — made concrete — in the society. We laugh at children, however, and they soon learn they can't "belong" until they participate in the agreement reality shared by everyone else. Generation after generation, children give in and take for granted what "everybody knows."

Actually, it is difficult to distinguish experiential reality from agreement reality, because they both "feel" real. Yet one is based on your own direct, experience of things and the other is based on the agreements you share.

Suppose you are visiting in someone's home and your host offers you a chocolate candy after dinner. You try one and find it tastes "really" good. You eat five or six of them. Then your hosts tell you that you've been eating chocolate-covered *worms*. The feeling in your stomach would be very real, yet it should be clear that it stems from the agreement you share with others in our society that eating worms is awful. Realize also that people living in other societies around the world have agreements that eating bugs, worms, and grubs is okay, in some cases, more than okay. The creatures are a delicacy.

Several decades ago, Muzafer Sherif conducted a set of experiments that should cause you to take everything you experience and believe with a grain of salt. Sherif studied the development of group norms in regard to what are called "autokinetic effects."

In Sherif's experiments, a group of people was placed in a totally darkened room. Mounted on a far wall was a small, stationary point of light. I've emphasized that the light was stationary because if you were to sit in a totally darkened room, with no visible walls, floor, or ceiling to serve as a frame of reference, you'd eventually get the feeling that the point of light was moving around. That's what Sherif's subjects experienced.

In addition to signaling the experimenter whenever they saw the light move, the subjects were also asked to

estimate the distance that it moved. Since the light was stationary throughout all the experiments, it's not surprising that estimates of how far it moved varied greatly. More surprising, however, was the discovery that whenever a group of subjects viewed the light together, they quickly reached an agreement as to the distance it moved, even though the initial estimates of different members of a given group disagreed greatly. By the end of each observation session, all members of the group were experiencing the same amount of movement. (Different groups, incidentally, arrived at quite different agreements.)

When people go into the country for a picnic, they often leave litter behind them on the landscape. The empty soft-drink bottles and cans, the paper wrappers, cigarette butts, and garbage provide a record of their picnic — and constitute a part of the environment that later visitors experience.

When people interact with one another, they create agreements that remain long after the interaction is over. Like picnic litter, the agreements constitute a part of the environment that later "interactors" experience.

Different kinds of picnic litter, however, have differing degrees of persistence. Apple cores are rather quickly biodegraded; aluminum and plastic stay around much longer. The same is true of the agreements created through interaction. Some disappear immediately: You and I agree to have lunch together, we have lunch, and the agreement disappears. Others — like the one against incest — seem to last forever. The sets of persistent agreements about general aspects of social life are called "institutions."

Consider the apple cores. When they biodegrade, they decay and become an integral part of the soil upon which they were thrown. We tend to think they've disappeared, but, in fact, they have become a part of the foundation of life itself. Rather than disappearing, they have been transformed in such a way that they can never be picked up and carted away.

Something similar happens to many agreements and institutions. They become so totally ingrained in society that we can lose sight of their existence as agreements. They are no longer recognizable as "litter," having become an indistinguishable part of the social landscape itself. They become a part of the social reality — given, unquestioned, and immutable — that defines the limits of human social interactions and relationships.

"Many agreements . . .  
no longer recognizable as  
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### Agreements: A Balance Sheet

Every time you make an agreement with someone else, you both win and lose. Every benefit comes at a cost, and every cost has some benefit attached to it. This is true even in cases that appear at first glance to be one-sided.

The balance is unequal, however. You don't make agreements unless the gain at least equals the loss and preferably exceeds it. No one makes agreements in which they know they will lose more than they gain. To understand this, you need to realize the variety of "gains" that people get from agreements.

The gains we realize in agreements extend well beyond such obvious commodities as money, food, physical pleasures, and the like. Prestige, love, respect, obligations due to us, the inner glow of charity and altruism, thoughts of divine reward, the cessation of pain or its threat, and countless other immeasurable rewards and anticipated rewards tip the balance in favor of this agreement or that.

All this applies to the agreements that you and I make with each other.

But what about all those agreements that other people made before you and I got here? Nobody ever asked my opinion about wearing clothes during the hottest day of the summer. I don't recall agreeing to that, and I don't imagine you do either. You maintain agreements like that through your actions, and so do I — even when we don't think in terms of agreements.

We simply can't have a society — we can't live together in groups — without agreements. All of us benefit individually from the presence of agreements that make it possible for us to live together with a degree of protection against the intentional or inadvertent evils we might work on one another. This does not mean, however, that all the specific agreements in force at a particular time are beneficial to all or even most individuals.

Institutionalized agreements persist outside of any conscious, rational process in which we seek to create the greatest benefit for ourselves as individuals. Some persistent agreements provide benefits to a few individuals while being disadvantageous to the many. In other cases, it isn't clear if any individuals derive particular value from agreements, yet they persist anyway.

As we look at the process through which agreements are perpetuated, it will become clear that we've set up society in such a way that our agreements persist whether you and I get any personal value out of them or not.

For example, when the American founding fathers forged an alliance among the several colonies, they

created an electoral college through which representatives of the new states could meet and select a president. It was a reasonable agreement, reflecting the nature of the initial alliance.

The electoral college became firmly institutionalized. It was written into the Constitution, and — at least equally important — subsequent generations of Americans ratified the agreement by electing their presidents through the electoral college system.

Many Americans argue today that the electoral college is outdated, that it is no longer appropriate or functional. We are no longer an alliance of semi-autonomous states, they point out. We are a nation and should elect the president directly. It is further noted that the present system could result in one person's being elected president over an opponent who had actually received more votes. Yet the electoral college system persists.

Other agreements become institutionalized by habit and custom even when they have no apparent reason or function at the outset. When Handel's great *Messiah* was first performed in the mid-eighteenth century in London, the king of England was in attendance. As the rousing "Hallelujah Chorus" began, the king rose to his feet and remained standing throughout the chorus. Nobody has ever figured out why. Evidently, no one thought to ask him, but in eighteenth-century England you didn't remain seated when

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“... the die is cast. Who would consider changing truth or reality?

... Agreements don't work unless we keep them ...”

the king stood up. Everyone in the audience rose and remained standing throughout the “Hallelujah Chorus,” and two centuries later people who've never heard that story jump to their feet as soon as the chorus begins.

Institutionalized agreements offer a degree of predictability and security in the face of what might otherwise be chaotic and uncertain group existence. Group participation in such agreements, moreover, enhances the warm

most active supporters of its continuation. People who hold political power in a society support the maintenance of the political system that gives them power. Legislatures, for example, seldom if ever vote to reduce the numbers of their legislators.

### Socialization

For an institution to function, people must know and keep its agreements. Each institution is thus structured to serve the function of socialization, which is the teaching and learning of agreements.

Socialization is most effective when agreements are internalized, that is, when people take agreements inside themselves and make them a part of their personal feelings and sentiments.

Internalization is most effective when the agreements are reified, when people lose sight of them as merely agreements and regard them as representing reality and truth.

Once the agreements making up an institution have become reified, the die is cast. Who would consider changing truth or reality? Those who have reified and internalized the agreements during their own socialization within an

institution become the socializers of the next generation, and the institution persists.

Agreements don't work unless we keep them, and we are most likely to keep them if they are reified and internalized during socialization. In the process, however, we can lose sight of the fact that they are only agreements; we can begin thinking they have a truth and reality of their own.

On December 1, 1955, Rosa Parks, a

Montgomery seamstress, was riding the city bus home after a hard day's work. In Alabama at that time, there was an agreement that blacks sat in a special section in the back of the bus, and that's what Parks was doing. As the bus became more crowded and the “white” section was filled, the bus driver ordered Parks and three other blacks to give up their seats to whites just getting on the bus.

Rosa Parks chose not to be controlled by the agreements that December day, and in so doing she sparked a revolution in black-white relations in America, a revolution that is still continuing. Parks' refusal and her immediate arrest drew national attention to the situation prevailing in Alabama, showing other blacks that agreements were only agreements and that it was possible not to be run by them.

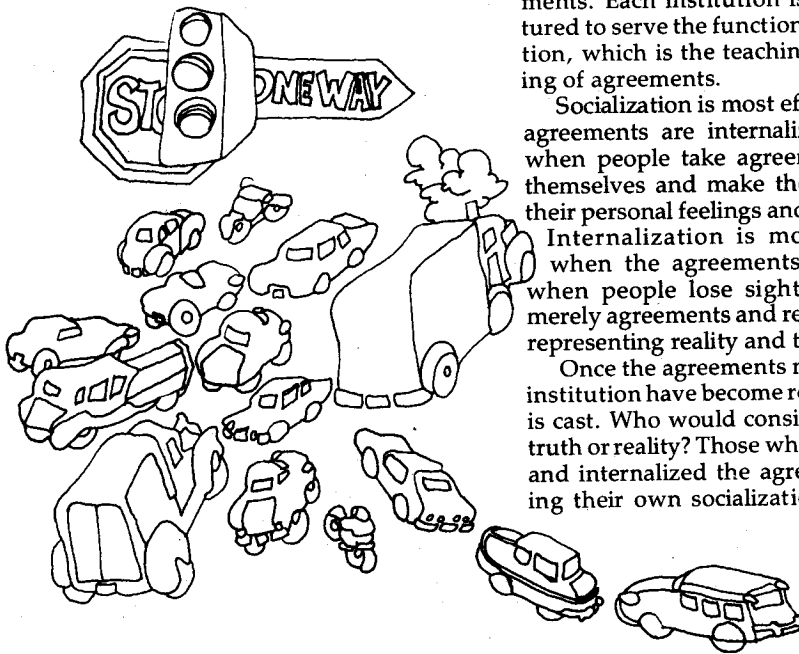
Through the processes of reification and internalization we become the effect of our agreements instead of their cause. It's as though you and I built a house and locked ourselves inside. Later, when we became uncomfortable with the house, we had forgotten that we had the keys to unlock the door, and the house became a jail. If we could remember that we built the house and that we had the keys to it, we could go outside and build another house, more to our liking.

Two centuries ago, Jean-Jacques Rousseau wrote: “No man has any natural authority over his fellow-man, and might makes no-right. We have nothing left save agreements, then, as a basis for all legitimate authority among men.”

We can't live together without agreements. If we are to take charge of our agreements, creating and perpetuating only those that have value for us, we must first recognize that agreements are only agreements, and we must understand how they function.

As the many diverse peoples of the world come into closer and more frequent contact with one another, the variety of agreements that I discuss throughout *Society by Agreement* will come into confrontation as never before. If we are to survive that confrontation, it is essential that we understand what agreements are, how they are formed, and how they operate. Only then will people be able to construct institutions that will both promote group survival and enhance individual satisfaction.

*Excerpts from Society by Agreement by Earl R. Babbie, ©1977 by Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc., Belmont, California 94002, are reprinted with the permission of the author and publisher.*



feelings of belonging and identity. You may have experienced this if you were ever in an audience standing for the “Hallelujah Chorus,” and you've probably had other experiences of it.

Comfort and security of habit are not the only reasons why institutionalized agreements persist, however. Vested interests exert pressure also. Those who profit most from a particular economic system — whether capitalist, socialist, or other — are the

# Am I Stuck with It?

A conversation with Earl Babbie about ways to go beyond agreement.



Steve Bartlett

**WENDY KAVANAUGH:** As you say, we do seem to have locked ourselves inside a house of agreements. All those agreements we forgot we made—they look like the walls of a cell. How do we get out?

**EARL BABBIE:** I think right now we're sort of between two stages of history, coming out of the stage of *unconscious* agreement and going into a stage, let's say, of *conscious* agreement.

The main problem in the stage of conscious agreement is that when people see that something is only an agreement, they tend to emphasize the *only*. "Well," they say, "you don't have to keep it, then."

I think the way to get out of where we are right now is to take responsibility for the agreements, recognizing that we've set life up in such a way that we have to operate on agreements.

You see, as I looked at this, Wendy, I've gotten clearer and clearer that the agreements are really an interim thing. We are stuck with a whole system of agreements now. That's how we've structured the world. Well, the way to get off that is to take responsibility for the agreements, keep the agreements, see them as only agreements, and re-view and revise the agreements and make them more satisfying and nurturing to people. That is a process for getting out of the system of agreements altogether and getting back into the experience of alignment.

**WENDY:** Is that something you're working on for your next book?

**EARL:** Yes. By the way—before we go on, I want to add a word of caution. Since I use some terms that Werner uses in the training, and because I've acknowledged Werner and our relationship in *Society by Agreement*, some readers might assume that what I have to say represents Werner's view or represents an "official *est* sociology." It doesn't.

I couldn't begin to measure Werner's contribution to all aspects of

my life, including my writing and my sociology. And while my own experience of society was transformed by my experience of the training, you should bear in mind that it was *my* experience in both cases. What I've written and what I'm going to say now are only *my* experience of how you and I operate our societies, how we make agreements and sometimes experience alignment with one another. I don't want to stick Werner with what I have to say, or mislead people into thinking they can learn about Werner's view from me.

The book that I'm working on now is an introductory text for the study of social problems. It also deals with social agreements, which just moves the question of agreement to a bigger context. In the course of that, I've noticed that each of us experiences a direct, personal responsibility for a lot of private things but not necessarily for public things. By public things, I mean things like public buildings, open spaces, group goals, things that we deal with in common or together. By private things I mean getting home each day alive, for example.

Imagine that you and I are in a sinking rowboat with sharks all around us. If you started bailing and I refused, you would just bail harder and harder because you'd be totally committed to saving your ass. You might be unhappy that I wasn't bailing, but rather than give up and say, "It's his fault..."

**WENDY:** Or take time to argue...

**EARL:** ...you'd just do it. What I notice is that we don't experience that kind of ownership and responsibility for public things very often.

**WENDY:** Yes, someone else can do it.

**EARL:** So I've been looking at all that in the context of a distinction between

agreement and alignment. I'm finding that it is useful to distinguish between the two in the following way:

An *agreement* is the mode we have of structuring relationships among the "statuses" we occupy. If I'm going to be a professor and you're going to be a student, for example, then we have a particular way of interacting with each other. We have agreements linking husbands and wives, parents and children, and so forth. That's the way we tend to organize our relationships.

On the other hand, I know we have an experience of who we are that lies in back of, or lies outside of, those statuses that we occupy.

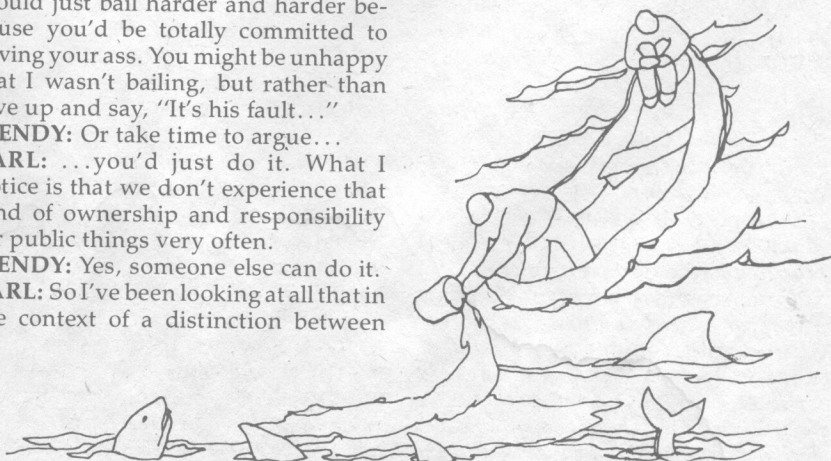
I want to use the term *alignment* in reference to that experience. I find as I look at this and talk with people about it that we experience alignment with each other very often. You meet somebody new and you just click. Or you work with somebody on a project, and the two of you just do it. You don't even talk too much about it. Each is there supporting the other.

What interests me is what we do with an experience like that. First of all it's satisfying, and what we tend to want is to either continue it or repeat it. When we try to do that, we get in trouble, I think.

Let's say you and I run into each other after work some Friday and on the spur of the moment we just go out for a beer and a pizza. We didn't plan it, we just do it. We have one of the most satisfying times we ever had. And it seemed spontaneous.

What we do is to look for the form that we think gave us that satisfaction. We say, "Well, it must be something about going out for the pizza at the end of the work week. It's a chance to relax." Or, "The place we went to was simply great." Or whatever. Then we

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"They saw that . . . they would get to choose whether they would come back to prison or not."

tend to make an agreement to keep that form; we'll agree that every Friday night we're going to get together for a beer and a pizza.

A number of things happen when we do that. First of all, our experience of alignment that first time was something inside us. Internal. It just naturally came out. When we make an agreement about it, we create something external to us, and it's something that controls us now. "Next Friday I'm going to have to go out for a pizza."

What happens when we make it external like that? Suddenly, we can resist it. Then what seems to happen is that our agreements don't work—they aren't satisfying to us, and the next Friday it just doesn't seem right.

We do a number of things with agreements when they aren't working and aren't satisfying. One thing we do is break the agreement. I just won't come. Or I'll call you up at the last minute and say I can't make it. Or, if it isn't satisfying on the Friday when we do get together, we're going to blame each other for it not working.

We're going to look for reasons for it not working. Then, to solve the problem, we'll probably make up new agreements. They sort of patch up and piece together the old agreements, and we just keep digging ourselves deeper and deeper into it.

As we do that, we're experiencing our agreements more and more as something outside of us, controlling us, and in the process of that, we get farther and farther away from owning the relationship and owning the experience and being responsible for having it work. The more agreement we get, the more we can simply say, "Well, I did what I was supposed to." That's a long way from bumping into each other and having beer and pizza.

I've been talking about two people in the example, but that's exactly what happens in larger groups. It's simply more complicated and disastrous.

**WENDY:** So what kills the experience of alignment most often is the agree-

ments that we make.

**EARL:** And our holding life in the form of agreements. The irony is that that's what's so right now. We make the agreements and that's how we get by. And we recognize that they kill the satisfaction of our relationships, so what we do is resist and break the agreements. What I'm suggesting is that the only way to get *beyond* agreements is to take responsibility for them and keep them.

**WENDY:** It's hard, though, when you come from a position of being in a minority, or you're one of those people who didn't have the money to get a particular lawyer and wound up in the pen for something a lot of other people got away with. It's hard to swallow that there's a structure of agreements out there that works against you, and you have to own it.

**EARL:** Yet when I interviewed people at San Quentin Prison, for example, and at the Lompoc Federal Prison, I felt that that's where they were coming from. The people there who had taken the *est* training saw how they had set it up in prison and they saw that when they got back on the street, they would get to choose whether they would come back to prison or not.

What we've talked about a lot in my classes here is public facilities. People find that pretty real. Public restrooms, which tend to be messy, right? In this system of agreements, we assign responsibility for things to people who occupy certain statuses. It's the janitors who are responsible for cleaning it up. And they never can get it clean enough. It's always messy. I talk to students a lot about that, and I notice a change in myself. I've noticed that when I go into a restroom and there are papers scattered on the floor, what would normally run through my mind is, "What kind of a sloppy person would do that?" As one result of our discussions about it, I started picking the stuff up.

In a case like that, I then get to have a clean restroom, which is what I want.

It takes much less time and energy than placing the blame on somebody else. I've noticed that students really get that. They really see how you can take responsibility for something like that even though you're not being paid to do it, even though you didn't make it messy.

One thing that fascinates me, Wendy, is the extent to which I find that that's the way people want it to be. People even want to own the public things. They *want* to be able to talk about their experiences of alignment and of things working out.

What has happened is that people set things up in such a way that it's not safe to do that. It's normally not safe to talk about a class that really inspired you and stimulated you intellectually. It's ironic that officially we approve of things like inspiration and stimulation. We talk about good citizenship, and in the process of it we make it sound naive and weird.

I've spent much of my life, and perhaps you have also, trying to push people to do the things that I thought were right. And it hasn't been necessary for me to push them in that direction. What seems to work is simply to clear away some of the beliefs we have about it not being safe the way we want it to be, and just let people know that it *is* safe. I find that people want to do that, they move into that very quickly.

I guess the other piece of the difference between agreement and alignment is, in large part, how you experience a particular thing, either as agreement or as alignment.

Let's say you called me early one morning and said, "My car won't start, can you give me a lift down to work?"

I can experience that two ways. I can get out of bed and feel lousy about it, say, "Well, she's my friend, I've got to do it," and clearly hold it as a matter of agreement. Or I can say, "Well, of course I will," and it's just obvious to me that that's what I want to do. I'm looking at your getting to work as one of my goals, so of course I'll go.

I think that very often, the difference between agreement and alignment really is our experience of it. And in that context, I have the sense that if we could really own our agreements and be responsible for them, keep the ones we have and continually review and revise them, moving toward a society that nurtures people, at some point we'd simply be experiencing them from a place of alignment.

We would have moved out of a system of agreements into a system of alignment. ■

# Bulletin Board

## More About the 6-Day Course for Families

in the Sierra Mountains

In reading about the 6-Day "Presentations" Courses for *est* Graduates (*The Graduate Review*, May, 1977), you might have noticed that one of the Courses scheduled for this summer is intended specifically for families.

Since enrollment in the August 21st-27th Course is oriented toward families, preference is being given to graduate parents who want to attend with their teenage sons or daughters. Landon Carter, the trainer who is conducting the 6-Day Courses this summer on the East and West Coasts, said:

"We intend that sharing the experience of the 6-Day Course with members of one's own family not only makes a contribution to the individuals themselves, but also to the family as an entity."

This first 6-Day Family Course is scheduled for August 21st-27th in the mountains near South Lake Tahoe, California. Its content will be the same as that of all 6-Day "Presentations" Courses, and its cost is also the same: \$650. If you would like to know more about it, please contact the San Francisco *est* Center (see address information on page two).

## A Look at Education in *est*

A recent survey of *est* staff members turned up an interesting bit of information: Among 170 members of the staff, 50 (29%) have been teachers.

They have taught from 3 months as substitute teacher to 22 years as full-time instructor, at levels ranging from nursery school to post-graduate studies, in places including major public and private universities, private schools for the handicapped, adult education classes and foreign schools.

Also, 10 staff members hold doctoral degrees in philosophy, medicine, business, and law. Their work in *est* includes conducting the training, consulting, research, writing, and administration.

## A Look at *est* in Education

...Like the students, the parents had been given a chance to express their resentments and considerations about IPS (*Innovative Program School*), the influence of *est* on IPS, and the academic program. The students entered, clapping, and soon had the floor. One by one, the students began to speak publicly to their parents: "I'm so glad you came."

"I want everyone to know you are the most wonderful people in the world." "I want you to know I love you."

As one woman put it, "We've had some hard times. Our family hasn't been close. And I'm afraid of this closeness that's welling 'up over there.'" She pointed to the other side of the room where the students, including her son, were gathered. Her son came running across the room and gave his mother a big hug. Then he reached toward his stepfather and said, "You're not so bad either." Many parents in the room wept.

## A Look At *est* in Education by Robert W. Fuller and Zara Wallace

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**\$2.50 paperback available at your *est* Center**

The excerpt above comes from a book in which Bob Fuller (former President of Oberlin College and now Executive Director of The *est* Foundation) and Zara Wallace (former Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Oberlin College) report on the ways in which *est* has contributed to a variety of learning situations. Much of the book consists of vivid sharing by teachers, parents, and students who have taken the *est* training, in one form or another, into their own schools. If you would like to have a book mailed to you, send a check for \$2.75 (includes \$.25 for postage) to any *est* Center. (For addresses see page two.)

## Next Available Trainings

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August 27/28, September 3/4

### Boston

July 30/31, August 6/7

### Chicago

July 16/17, 23/24

### Denver

July 16/17, 23/24

### Hawaii

September 17/18, 24/25

### Houston

July 9/10, 16/17

### Los Angeles

July 'B' 23/24, 30/31

### Miami/Fort Lauderdale

September 10/11, 17/18

### Minneapolis/St. Paul

August 6/7, 13/14

### Newport Beach

August 20/21, 27/28

### New York

July 23/24, 30/31

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September 17/18, 24/25

### Phoenix

July 2/3, 9/10

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### College Trainings

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For more information about the availability of trainings, please call the *est* Center nearest you.

# Bulletin Board

## More About the 6-Day Course for Families

in the Sierra Mountains

In reading about the 6-Day "Presentations" Courses for *est* Graduates (*The Graduate Review*, May, 1977), you might have noticed that one of the Courses scheduled for this summer is intended specifically for families.

Since enrollment in the August 21st-27th Course is oriented toward families, preference is being given to graduate parents who want to attend with their teenage sons or daughters. Landon Carter, the trainer who is conducting the 6-Day Courses this summer on the East and West Coasts, said:

"We intend that sharing the experience of the 6-Day Course with members of one's own family not only makes a contribution to the individuals themselves, but also to the family as an entity."

This first 6-Day Family Course is scheduled for August 21st-27th in the mountains near South Lake Tahoe, California. Its content will be the same as that of all 6-Day "Presentations" Courses, and its cost is also the same: \$650. If you would like to know more about it, please contact the San Francisco *est* Center (see address information on page two).

## A Look at Education in *est*

A recent survey of *est* staff members turned up an interesting bit of information: Among 170 members of the staff, 50 (29%) have been teachers.

They have taught from 3 months as substitute teacher to 22 years as full-time instructor, at levels ranging from nursery school to post-graduate studies, in places including major public and private universities, private schools for the handicapped, adult education classes and foreign schools.

Also, 10 staff members hold doctoral degrees in philosophy, medicine, business, and law. Their work in *est* includes conducting the training, consulting, research, writing, and administration.

## A Look at *est* in Education

...Like the students, the parents had been given a chance to express their resentments and considerations about *IPS* (*Innovative Program School*), the influence of *est* on *IPS*, and the academic program. The students entered, clapping, and soon had the floor. One by one, the students began to speak publicly to their parents: "I'm so glad you came."

"I want everyone to know you are the most wonderful people in the world." "I want you to know I love you."

As one woman put it, "We've had some hard times. Our family hasn't been close. And I'm afraid of this closeness that's welling up over there." She pointed to the other side of the room where the students, including her son, were gathered. Her son came running across the room and gave his mother a big hug. Then he reached toward his stepfather and said, "You're not so bad either." Many parents in the room wept.

### A Look At *est* in Education by Robert W. Fuller and Zara Wallace

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**\$2.50 paperback**

available at your *est* Center

The excerpt above comes from a book in which Bob Fuller (former President of Oberlin College and now Executive Director of The *est* Foundation) and Zara Wallace (former Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Oberlin College) report on the ways in which *est* has contributed to a variety of learning situations. Much of the book consists of vivid sharing by teachers, parents, and students who have taken the *est* training, in one form or another, into their own schools. If you would like to have a book mailed to you, send a check for \$2.75 (includes \$.25 for postage) to any *est* Center. (For addresses see page two.)

## Next Available Trainings

### Berkeley/Oakland

August 27/28, September 3/4

### Boston

July 30/31, August 6/7

### Chicago

July 16/17, 23/24

### Denver

July 16/17, 23/24

### Hawaii

September 17/18, 24/25

### Houston

July 9/10, 16/17

### Los Angeles

July 'B' 23/24, 30/31

### Miami/Fort Lauderdale

September 10/11, 17/18

### Minneapolis/St. Paul

August 6/7, 13/14

### Newport Beach

August 20/21, 27/28

### New York

July 23/24, 30/31

### Philadelphia

September 17/18, 24/25

### Phoenix

July 2/3, 9/10

### Pittsburgh

July 9/10, 16/17

### Portland

August 20/21, 27/28

### Sacramento

October 22/23, 29/30

### Salt Lake City

August 13/14, 20/21

### San Diego

July 30/31, August 6/7

### San Francisco

August 6/7, 13/14

### San Jose

August 6/7, 13/14

### Santa Barbara

July 9/10, 16/17

### Santa Cruz

July 2/3, 9/10

### Seattle

July 30/31, August 6/7

### Washington, D.C.

July 23/24, 30/31

### College Trainings

#### San Francisco

July 9/10, 16/17

### Children's Training

#### Denver

August 2, 3, 4, 5

For more information about the availability of trainings, please call the *est* Center nearest you.



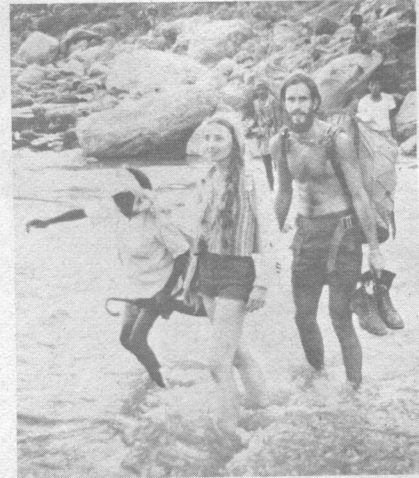
# On Foot Through the Himalayas with *est* in My Sole

by Dianne Skafta

*Once in a while someone sends us a story that expresses an experience so perfectly that all we can say is, "Yes." This is one of them.*

*Dianne Skafta works as a family therapist in Dallas, Texas. She and her husband, Peter, who teaches anthropology at the University of Texas, took a group of students in late 1976 to eastern Nepal, where she had the experience she describes here.*

*Being the channel for such a sharing is intensely satisfying for everyone at The Graduate Review. In addition, Dianne's contribution gives us this opportunity to remind you that The Graduate Review welcomes contributions from all graduates. Participation and sharing are what we're all about.*



Peter Skafta

**B**egging pardon, please," the Nepalese guide said, running up behind me. "Look please on your leg."

On the back of my ankle was a leech, snugly attached. I swore to myself and pulled it off, flinging it away before it latched onto my thumb. Then I swore again because my sock was getting soaking red where the bite was.

This wasn't at all like my fantasy of being in the Himalayas. That lovely fantasy had been with me for years, I realized now as I trudged over the rocky trail. When I felt things were crummy in my life I would take it out of its keeping place and unwrap it like a jewel: me in the Himalayas. The deep silence of the mountain in my soul. And perhaps, in a high remote village I would find him, the Master who would at last teach me all I need to know. Well, here I was in the Himalayas, sweating and cursing and wishing I had a Coke.

Ahead on the trail a small group of Nepalese travelers headed toward us. When they spotted us they stopped dead in their tracks as though someone had shouted, "Freeze!" As we drew nearer, the old woman among them began to giggle. One by one they began to smile and then to chuckle. The younger woman tried to cover her mouth politely, but began laughing so hard that she dropped her

basket and had to lean against a tree for support. I started to feel painfully self-conscious. I know that these people were not intending to ridicule me in the least, and that I was overreacting. But the experience became so intense that I wanted to flee. Then I recalled feeling exactly that way another time. I was standing on a stage, limply, gracelessly, and a thousand eyes were penetrating me. Ted's voice loomed out of the darkness: "Feel how it is to stand there without your act to hide behind." I certainly had no act to offer these strangers with gold rings in their noses and ears. I couldn't be smooth or talk about myself or probe their intentions. "So we will just have to leave it as it is," I thought to myself, "with me standing here looking, and them standing there laughing." Suddenly I felt better. I put my hands together in the traditional Eastern greeting and said "Namaste," the Nepali word that means hello, goodbye, okay, and have a nice day.

When we were farther down the path, I approached our Sherpa interpreter. "Mr. Nawang," I said, "I've noticed that people on the trail usually laugh when they see us. I know that very few Westerners trek in this part of Nepal, so I imagine that they must find us interesting. But why do they laugh

like that?"

"They think you look funny!" Mr. Nawang said with a grin and hurried down the trail.

A village called Num had been on my mind for several days. I and a few others would stay there for two weeks while the rest of the group followed a difficult route to the base camp of Mt. Makalu. I was looking forward to stopping for a while and collecting my thoughts. Also, I had doubts about my ability to handle a difficult climb. As I walked it was pleasant to think about Num, nestled high in the peaks. No one knew much about it, but I knew I would enjoy wandering around the village, smiling at children, and sitting until dusk with the women at the noisy bazaar.

We reached a high flat bluff after having hiked up a very steep gradient all morning. The porters dropped their loads to the ground and the Sherpas began setting up camp. "Why are we stopping?" I asked.

"We are here," answered Mr. Nawang.

"I know, but what is the name of this place?" I said.

"Num," he answered, turning away to adjust a tent pole. I moved around in front of him. "I didn't realize we would be camping outside of the village. Which direction is the village?"



Peter Skafte

(Far left) Dianne Skafte crosses "that river we saw yesterday"—the Arun—with other members of the party. (Left) Three Sherpa women whom the group met in Nepal.

"The village?" he asked.

"Num. The village of Num. Houses, the bazaar, the people . . ." I heard the tenseness in my voice. Mr. Nawang swept his hand in a broad gesture.

"This is Num," he said.

The others were leaving. They were checking their gear and laughing about seeing a Yeti—an abominable snowman—on their climb. I hung around in the background, too sad to speak. Everyone was hugging. "Goodbye! Goodbye!" they were saying. I stood up on a boulder and watched them for a long time until their tiny line disappeared in the direction of Tibet.

I walked back to the tents to find the remainder of the group sitting slumped on the ground like the tattered rear guard who had been abandoned by the rest of the troops. I sank to the ground beside them. Then a curious fragment of conversation went through my mind. It was Werner's voice as I had heard it at the "Transformation of *est*" lecture. "You can sit around and wait to be entertained," I recalled him saying in that steady way of his when he is about to put it to you, "or you can take responsibility to make all of this your own. You bring the boredom to this, you bring the excitement to this, you bring the relevance."

I sat up straight and looked at the group. "You know," I said, addressing myself as well as the others, "Num isn't what we expected. There is no village, as the map led us to believe, just a mud hut and a lot of wind. But the fact is that we will be here for two weeks. The way I see it, we can sit around like this and wish that we were being entertained, or we can take responsibility to make all of this our own." You don't mind my lifting a few phrases from you, do you, Werner? I thought. "Our days here can be empty and boring or they can be full of meaning and excitement; it's up to us."

"Well, I'd like to hike back down to that river we saw yesterday," one person ventured.

"Maybe we can scout around to see if anyone lives on that ridge below," another added.

"Anyone for bridge?" came a comment.

That evening, a great moon rose, bathing the mountain slopes in liquid silver. We sat in silence, filled with the peace of that ancient place. Then, out of the shadows came other shadows, tall and short, drifting toward us. When they came near the fire we saw that there were about eight persons, men, women and children. Mr. Nawang got up to speak to them in Nepali. Then he said to us, "These

people have walked here from their houses along the mountainside. Some live far away. They ask if they can sit with you. They will sing for you."

I gazed at the young girl who had come to sit down beside me. Her smooth oval face was golden in the firelight. Her dark almond-shaped eyes studied me with wonder. Then, with a shy smile, she slipped her hand into mine. Tears came into my eyes. How perfect it all was. How complete and perfect, just exactly as it was. Meanwhile, I had been going around feeling that the world had failed me because it had not lived up to my fantasies about it. But now I saw that I had it backwards. The Himalayas, it turned out, had been nothing like I imagined; they had been more vast, more incredible. The *est* training had been nothing like I expected; it had been immeasurably richer, touching parts of me that even now I cannot fathom. And Num, that high windy bluff with no bazaar, was giving me all I wanted and more, once I gave it space by opening myself to it.

The moon was a small disk of light floating high above in an ocean of clouds. With that warm hand still in mine, I stayed there half the night, letting those sweet chanting voices pour over me like a healing tide. ■

# From Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Another Look at Werner's Aphorisms

Courtesy of Shree Rajneesh Ashram



**Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh is an enlightened man whose extensive background in philosophy contributes to a penetrating way of looking at life from practically any point of view, Eastern or Western. During one of the morning discourses that he gives at his ashram in Poona, India, Bhagwan was asked to comment on the aphorisms in Werner's small book, *If God Had Meant Man to Fly, He Would Have Given Him Wings*. His response was tape-recorded, and a transcript is now included in the book, *Tao: The Three Treasures, Volume 2*. With the kind permission of the publisher, the Rajneesh Foundation, Poona, India, we would like to share some of Bhagwan's comments with you.**

The sutras are beautiful.  
The first sutra:

*The truth doesn't mean anything.  
It just is.*

It is like a flower.  
It does not mean anything.  
What does a flower mean? It just is.  
Meaning is something of the mind,  
meaning is something imposed  
by the mind.  
Truth is not something of the mind.  
When the mind is no more, truth is.  
So how can the truth mean anything?  
It just is.

*If you experience it, it is the truth.  
The same thing believed is a lie.*  
Yes, absolutely true.  
If you experience it, only then  
it is truth,  
because truth is an experiencing,  
it is not believing.  
Belief means you don't know, you have  
a borrowed knowledge.  
You know something about it,  
but not it.  
Something about it is something very  
far away. It is a lie.  
All things said about truth are lies.  
Only truth is true.  
The truth cannot be said; it can only  
be experienced.  
So what do masters go on doing?  
They lead you from one lie to another

which is nearer to the truth.  
Then they lead you from that lie to  
another lie  
which is again nearer to the truth.  
But all lies are lies;  
nearer or not nearer does not  
make any difference.  
When you take a jump from all the lies,  
it is from the mind, the liar.  
When you take a jump out of the mind,  
the truth is, it simply is,  
and only then it is truth.

*Happiness is a function of accepting  
what is.*

Beautiful.  
. . . If you accept what is, there is  
no possibility of your being unhappy.  
I have been observing thousands  
of people,  
seekers, non-seekers, this-worldly,  
that-worldly, and every day  
I come across the phenomenon  
that I don't see that people are really  
interested in being happy.  
Nobody seems to be interested  
in being happy  
because they are ready to sacrifice  
happiness for any nonsense:  
for jealousy, for possessiveness, for  
anger, for hate—  
for any nonsense they are ready to  
sacrifice happiness.  
But they are not ready  
to sacrifice anger, possessiveness,

jealousy, for happiness.  
So how can I say that people are  
interested in being happy?  
. . . Happiness is a simple  
phenomenon, nothing is needed  
to do it.  
One just needs to be there  
and be happy.

*Health is a function of participation.*

The more you participate in existence,  
the more healthy you will be;  
the more you remain standing on the  
bank uncommitted,  
non-participating, just a spectator,  
the more unhealthy you will be.  
To be healthy is to be whole,  
to be with the whole, to participate.

*Self-expression is a function of  
responsibility.*

Ordinarily people misunderstand  
self-expression for ego-expression.  
Ego-expression is irresponsible,  
self-expression is responsible.  
Self-expression is responsible  
for the whole  
because you understand you are part  
of it, you participate in it;  
whatsoever you do, the whole will be  
affected.  
The ego never worries about the other  
or the whole . . . .

*There are no hidden meanings.  
All that mystical stuff is just what's so.  
A master is one who found out.*

Perfectly true.  
There are no hidden meanings.  
And you become enlightened when  
you have found  
that there are no meanings in life.  
In fact when you have found that there  
is nothing to be achieved,  
you have become enlightened.  
When you have come to realize that  
there is nowhere to go,  
you have arrived.

*A master is one who found out.*

A master is not one who has achieved  
anything,  
a master is one who has found out  
that there is nothing to achieve.  
This will be very, very difficult for you  
because you are all achievers.  
Even if you are here with me,  
you are here to achieve something,  
some spiritual nonsense.  
And I am here to by and by seduce  
you to become a non-achiever—  
because then you are enlightened.

Two clergymen write about  
an awakening of religious experience

## Making Religion Real

The June Graduate Review contained a letter in which Rabbi Steven Reuben spoke of expansions that est has enabled him to see in his relationships and his religious experience. To continue that line of thought, we asked two Protestant clergymen about their experience.

Stu Fitch is rector of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Lompoc, California. As a licensed marriage, family, and child counsellor, he is also director of the St. Mary's Community Services and Counseling Center. His congregation, which feels "like a family" to him, hasn't covered the windows of the church with stained glass—"so we can look out and see what's going on in the world."

I can't remember a time when I wasn't aware of my relationship to God. I learned to center in when I was six or seven years old—to just say, "Okay, Lord, what do you want to tell me?" and be still, and see what came. Although I didn't know it at the time, it was like getting into a process.

I've found that the only way I can really function is from that rootedness, or centeredness—that I act freely when I am tuned in and centered in God, who is "the beyond within."

I don't subscribe to a God-out-in-the-sky kind of idea. Perhaps the Christian doctrine of the incarnation would be the best explanation I could give—God in the flesh, bringing that potential not just to one man, Jesus, but to every man. For me, Jesus has shown in his human flesh how one can live with unconditional love, and oneness, and serving. I look at the example of Jesus, and I realize that's my possibility. So the Christ I try to tap is the Christ within me, rather than the one projected out onto somebody else. I really think that was what was opened to us by Jesus. I don't think he'd want us all to look at him and adore him and magnify him, but rather, to look and discover that power within ourselves.

The est notion of human beings as perfect is exactly what the religious scheme has been saying: that we are created in the image and likeness of God. And running our patterns, playing our games, and having our acts prevent us from living out the fullness of who we are.

One of my favorite stories is about Rabbi Zuscha, who was asked on his deathbed what he thought it would be like in the Kingdom of God. He thought for a while, and finally he said, "Well, I don't know. But one thing I do know: When I get there, they aren't going to ask me, 'Why weren't you Moses?' or 'Why weren't you Solomon?' They are going to ask me, 'Why weren't you Zuscha?'"

I see that the task of the church, and my ministry, is to assist people in finding themselves in the image and likeness of God. We are asked to live out the fullness of who we are.

I'm sure that much of organized religion has failed a lot of people. Valid experiences have given rise to belief systems, which are often passed on without experience, and then delineate what kind of experiences are "valid" in the future. Many of us have experienced a certain facet of the truth, and then we've gotten locked into that, and we're not open to the total possibility of what might be next. We think our survival is to stay over there with that element of truth that we've been taught or gotten hold of. But that's just an illusion of survival—in fact it's a trap.

It's interesting that a lot of the churches that are growing now are the ones that are arbitrary, doctrinaire, disciplinary—right down the line. It says to me that many people are really not wanting to take responsibility. They would much rather project the responsibility on God, the Devil, the Church, others.

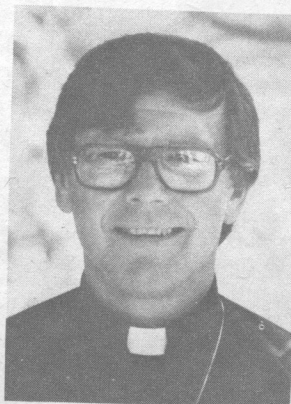
Ever since Adam and Eve got the knowledge of the difference between good and evil, we've been labeling things good or bad, categorizing everything, judging everything. Jesus was talking about that original sin of mankind when he said, "Judge not." He was saying, "Hey, look, here is freedom. If you judge, you're going to be bound by it, whether you're judging another person or yourself. And I've come to give you life, and freedom, and fullness."

Part of getting that freedom is to take responsibility for our judging. And churches are famous for judging, even though Jesus said, "Judge not." It's something I've had to struggle with, myself.

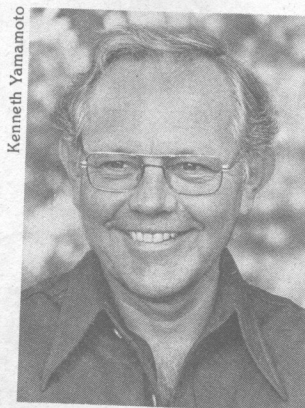
One of the dramatic experiences for me, as a result of the est training, was learning to be responsible as compared to

(Please turn to page 14)

"I am asked  
to live out the  
fullness of  
who I am"



Mal Anderson



Kenneth Yamamoto

"Prayer has  
become  
a series of  
completions"

by the  
Rev. Stuart G. Fitch

by the  
Rev. David C.  
Jacobsen

## Making Religion Real

playing the game of being responsible. The game shuts others up and out. Actually taking responsibility has opened the space to include people's different points of view and give them the freedom to be.

I saw that I had been creating a lot of the climate of divisiveness in my church. Since I've stopped *playing* responsible and have taken responsibility for that, my church has expanded. People are more active, more alive. There's a lot of spirit flowing. It's much less what I am presenting to *them* and much more what we're all doing together. When I take responsibility, other people take responsibility, too, for what they are creating, our lives together, the church.

When I worked in the *est* office one day doing telephoning, I kept calling and didn't get any results. My daughter was there and challenged me: "Why are you creating that?" I had to stop and think, "How am I creating that?"

Then when I really got that all I needed to do was to share my own aliveness, I really took off on calling all these people and saying, "Hi, I'm Stu from *est*. Do you have a minute to talk?" How much fun it was to be assisting in that way! Right then, I started getting results.

We were right in the middle of an every-member canvass at church. Everybody was dragging their feet. So I went back, and I said, "Okay, now, all I want you to do is to go out there and share the aliveness you're experiencing in St. Mary's Parish, and invite people to participate." They had *fun*. They really enjoyed it. It took all the drag out of the thing.

You know, there are an awful lot of religious fanatics, just as there can be *est* fanatics, who can really turn people off. There's a sort of in-between space, not being a fanatic, and not being indifferent, either. Just putting it out there.

As a Christian witness, I can only share with you where I'm at. I can invite you to participate, and if you don't, that's perfect. Our Lord let the rich young ruler walk away. That's hard to do, but it's creative when we can just let people go. They don't *have* to come! They don't *have* to participate. They're perfect just as they are. They're right where they need to be. And the invitation is always open. . .

### "Prayer has become a series of completions"

*Dave Jacobsen loves working with his wife, Helen, in the Prayer Renewal Workshops which they conduct throughout the United States. He is a counselor practicing in Mill Valley, California, is an emeritus member of the est Advisory Board, and has been pastor of several congregations as well as professor at two theological schools.*

For more than 20 years I was a competent pastor, leader, teacher, and practicing Christian. My faith sustained me in crisis, kept my purpose in reasonable focus and served as a guide in vocation, family and personal life. I experienced value in my commitment and a degree of genuine fulfillment and success.

The *est* training came for me in October of 1971. It began a whole new series of movements toward completion in my experience of faith and commitment.

The most exciting completion has been the renewal of prayer in my life. Prayer had been stuck in reasonableness for

me. I had been taught that I should pray only for the things I had come to know were really God's will for me, and the same teachers told me that it was not possible to know the will of God.

It was a double bind, and I was paralyzed for many years. I had experienced offering communication to God, but had no awareness of the return cycle of communication. I am sure that God was answering, but my reasonableness and paralysis made it difficult to hear the answer.

An incredible notion was born in me after the *est* training—that there was no profit in censoring my prayers. I began to tell the truth. It was not the cosmic truth, but *my own truth*. When I began to simply communicate to God "from where I am at the moment" I began to experience clarity in the response to my prayers.

There has been a steady growth for me in the opening and closing of that cycle of communication. I do not wish to imply that I have "arrived" spiritually. But the journey is real for me now.

More and more, prayer has become a series of completions for me. There has been a completion in my relationship with my wife and children, and in the experience of family. A great deal of the past is being completed. Old grudges and resentments are in the process of being confronted and resolved. This has been, for me, the natural consequence of taking responsibility for my life. It has to do with the admonition of Jesus to "go and be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift." The *est* training gave me a capacity to make this experience real for myself.

It is my sense that we all experience incompleteness about our religious heritage. We have not studied its data, and we have not experienced the discipline of our religious community. We have lost spontaneity with God because of our reactive responses and our survival machinery. Sometimes we live with the illusion that God does not love us, or is remote from us. We do not experience the completeness which God has created for us.

A way to take responsibility for creating the experience of completion is to do what we always intended to do—to study and pray.

If you have not read the scriptures of your religious heritage since your *est* training, you may be in for a surprise. When I reread the New Testament for the first time after my training, it was as though the book had become alive and was speaking to me. A great deal of what it said was new. The Bible has always nurtured me. Now it speaks with more clarity.

Werner has never asked me to believe anything. He has invited me to test my beliefs about God against my own experience. When I have done this, the results have been remarkable. The elements of belief which do not stand the test of experience tend to lose power. The result has been movement toward the completion of the religious faith which has always been real for me.

Whatever your religious heritage, you have a belief system attached to that heritage. That belief system is made up of concepts, which are a way of describing abstractions in verbal shorthand in order to share an experience—that is, a symbolic means of communication.

Many of the concepts which we call theology no longer function in the appropriate way, as a means by which we share. To fall into arguing or fighting about the concepts of our religious heritage is totally off purpose and destructive. The concepts are there to be filled out and completed in your experience.

Whatever your religious heritage is—Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, or other—I urge you to complete it. When you have completed it in experience, you will find joy in sharing it. ■



# Letters from Graduates

These letters are printed with the permission of the people who wrote them. The experiences or points of view are the writers' own.

## Playing the game

Dear Werner,

I have been assisting for some time now and have had those moments of awareness or satisfaction that have resulted in joy and well-being for myself and those around me.

Last week while doing guest phoning a new level of experience occurred and I want to share it with you.

I had completed enrollment cards for two brothers for the May college training in New York. I was strangely happy. A new feeling—a moment of transformation—I really had been of service. Not a case of how good a job of phone enrollment I had done, but rather the joy of experiencing, even if anticipated, what it will mean for those two brothers to be transformed.

At that same moment, my professional life came before me. By my doing a "good job" in my periodontal practice I had succeeded in the logistics of life. Doing the "good job," even though my patients had clinically benefited and I felt delighted about my clinical abilities, still centered around what I had performed—not around service. I was not having the experience of service, of truly contributing to the patients' well-being.

My days since that moment have been filled with the joy of service, participation, contribution.

More than ever I want the medical and dental professions to participate in *est*. I want to share with them my transformation and let them spread this new sense of health to the planet.

Love,

*Mitchell*

Mitchell Cantor  
Melville, New York

## Double checking

Dear *Graduate Review*,

On page 13 of the April issue you say peace obtained in the world between 1953 and 1960. In fact, (a) the French-Indochina War culminated in May 1954 with the Battle of Dien Bien

Phu; (b) Israel, England and France briefly invaded Egypt in 1956, the same year in which Soviet forces put down the Hungarian revolt in Budapest.

In the map of page 4 of that issue, you make two errors with regard to the territory you term "East Pakistan." (a) It is actually now no longer part of Pakistan, but an independent nation named Bangla Desh, the product of an extraordinarily bloody sequence of events . . . (b) You award much territory to "East Pakistan" that is actually part of India. In fact, India comes around Bangla Desh (as it did the former East Pakistan) and leaves it only a rather short border with Burma as Bangla Desh's only border with a country other than India . . .

Yours truly,

*Ken*

Ken Wahl  
Hempstead, New York

*It is our intention that The Graduate Review be accurate and reflect the integrity of est. Thank you for contributing to its accuracy. The dates you mention illustrate that periods of "peace" have indeed been fragile, as the "Acknowledgment of Peace" in the April issue said—and they underscore, as that item also said, that news of even a limited peace is too important to go unrecognized. —Ed.*

## Personals

Dear *est* Graduate Records:

Last October in making the address change to my records when I moved to my current address, *est* also provided me with a roommate. His name is Dick Donovan. And *est* continues to send Dick Donovan's mail (only *Graduate Review*) to my address.

I have sent several messages to staff in NYC and even a phone call or two; but since I apparently have not taken total responsibility for making the corrections, I now do so by this letter.

As a roommate Dick Donovan is lacking in the extreme. He's never here when I want him (or need him). He doesn't seem to care about me one way

or the other. He never even shares with me! And by now I'm really pissed at him and I don't give a damn if he ever stops by here, ever.

Would *The Graduate Review* please consciously delete Dick Donovan's name from my mailing address? And if *est* consciously would send me a roommate who is caring, loving, groovy, into his feelings, into sharing, and a hunk—I could get that.

Thanks a bunch and love to all,

*Mary J*

Mary-J Donovan  
New York, New York

## Letting it work

Dear Editor:

After reading through the May *Graduate Review*, I'm back with Landon Carter on Being when this comes along:

I'm a nothing.

What does that mean?

It means I'm not achieving as I think I should or as I want to.

I think my life isn't working!

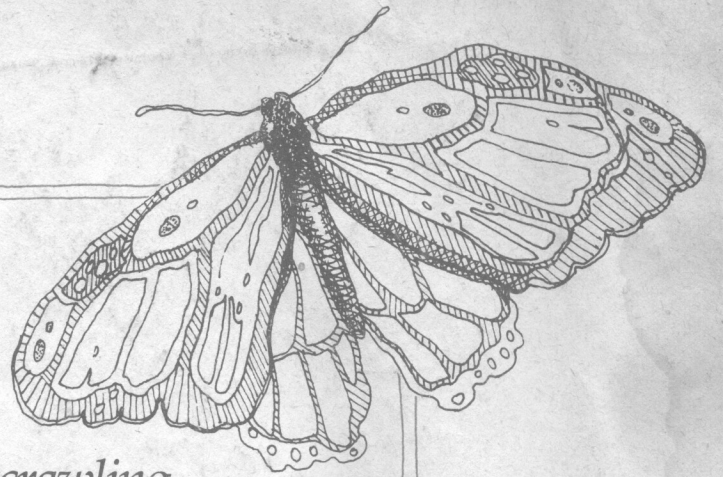
Yet my life is working. I'm writing this, and complaining, and building a treasure-hunting boat, and waiting on oil properties, and waiting for Dolores, and working at *est*, and growing \$ poorer, and doing little about the \$'s, and enjoying my life more, and groping around between False Cause and Cause, and getting it, and not letting it work, AND, I am supporting *est* which supports me in the experience of Causing it all.

I didn't realize till now—this moment—that this is what *est* is supporting me in.

Jeezus!

*Wally*

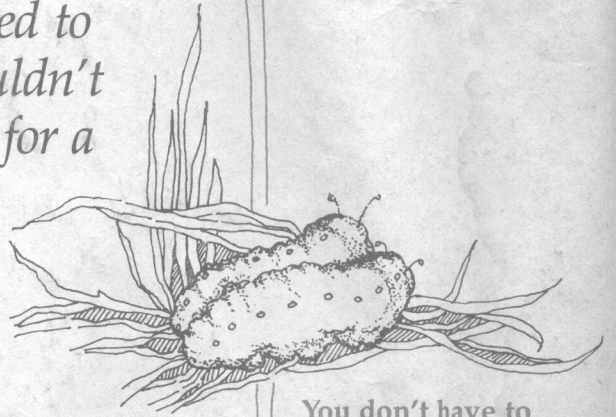
Wally White  
San Pedro, California



Dear Werner,

Two caterpillars were crawling casually across the grass when they noticed a beautiful butterfly fluttering gently about just above them. They watched, wide-eyed, for a long moment. Then, finally, one turned to the other and whispered, "You couldn't get me up in one of those things for a million bucks."

With love,  
Kay Mickel



You don't have to go looking for wings when they're where you come from

Illustration by Ellen Goldberg

### Moving?

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