

THE PLATEAU EXPERIENCE: A. H. MASLOW AND OTHERS

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The Second Interdisciplinary Conference on the Voluntary Control of Internal States was held at Council Grove, Kansas, April 13-17, 1970. A. H. Maslow was among the participants and, on April 16, engaged in a lengthy discussion concerning transpersonal psychology which was tape recorded. The content of that discussion is printed here for the first time.

A. H. Maslow: There are two matters to bring up. One of them is something I'm interested in, and the other is something I have less interest in, but would like to bring up anyway. The second matter concerns a preface to a new edition of a little book that I did some time ago called *Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences*. In it, I make various warnings about misinterpretations of my thesis. In the first edition of the book I had warned about the dangers in overemphasizing the legalistic, organizational, institutional, and traditional aspects of religion. In the preface to the new edition, I speak of the dangers of overemphasizing the mystical aspects of religion; some people run the danger of turning away from the world and from other people to search for anything that will trigger peak experiences. This type of person represents the mystic gone wild.

To this preface, I added a footnote in which I speak about astrology, the *I Ching*, numerology, Tarot cards, and fortune-telling, which--so far as I know--have no empirical support at all. In the footnote, I use these approaches to illustrate the point I make that a person with a truly scientific attitude can even be open--although skeptical--regarding them. I have never examined any of these, my attitude being one of benevolent disinterest. But I do have friends I respect who do take these things seriously.

*two kinds of
religious
overemphasis*

*Maslow's attitude toward the
occult*

What I say to my friends and my readers in the footnote is not that these things are necessarily wrong or false, but that I just don't know about them because there is no evidence. I also ask them, if they have the hunch that there is something to numerology, Tarot cards, etc., why don't they put it to the test?

"degrees of knowledge"

However, I began to reconsider this footnote during our conversation this morning when Stan Krippner mentioned that there were personal experiences involving the 1 *Ching* which had not been published. I would hold that some of these experiences, if written down and verified, might be part of the literature of science. You see, my conception of evidence is very inclusive. I write about "degrees of knowledge," and would say that one person whom I trusted, telling me that he has had an unusual private experience, would constitute evidence for me. True, it is a little teeny bit of evidence; even so, it is above zero. In these instances, I would not insist on the experimental model with all the usual controls.

So what I am asking you is whether or not I should include this footnote in my book. Is there any evidence, even in the realm of private experience, to support the claims of astrology and these other approaches? If some evidence does exist, I am not justified in stating that these approaches have no empirical support at all.

a study in astrology

James Fadiman: There was a recent study which eliminated my disbelief in astrology. It was done with Stanford University freshmen, using Strong Vocational Interest Blank data. There were significant correlations among certain astrological signs and certain vocational interest scales. As for some of the other areas Abe mentioned, I have had a number of personal experiences I have found to be convincing.

Maslow: I would take some of these personal testimonials rather seriously.

evidence for ESP

Charles T. Tart: There is another type of evidence that should be mentioned, and that is the laboratory work on extrasensory perception or ESP. Sometimes people seem to receive information through channels totally unknown to us at the present time. The evidence for ESP is overwhelming.

Maslow: I agree with you and wasn't even talking about laboratory ESP in my footnote.

Fadiman: This is an important distinction because there is something unique about astrology and palmistry that isn't

accounted for by the assumption of ESP phenomena. You could explain the astrology experiment by claiming that ESP influenced the experimenters to select just the right Stanford students so that their vocational interest scores would correlate with the astrological signs. But the data seem to go beyond that possibility.

Maslow: Stan, are there other examples of this type of research?

Stanley Krippner: There is some evidence from a study dealing with several thousand people over two generations. Jonas, a European investigator, found that the ability of a woman to conceive tends to occur under exactly that phase of the moon which prevailed when she was born. Furthermore, the time of a woman's maximum fertility in each lunar month was at the point at which the moon reached exactly the same relationship with the sun, in degrees and minutes, as it had at the time of her own birth. Jonas noted that the two days previous to this point would be the times when sexual intercourse would be most likely to result in conception. He has applied his data to the areas of birth control, selection of the unborn child's sex, and the prevention of birth defects.

fertility and astrology

Tart: There are also the studies people have made of the relationship between months of the year in which people have been born and the eminence they attain. There appear to be certain months of the year that are more closely related to future eminence than others. Presumably this involves being carried in the womb during that time of the year when the mother is most likely to be in good health.

correlations of eminence and dates of birth

Krippner: A French husband and wife team, Michel and Françoise Gauquelin, reported a relationship between 576 members of the French Academy of Medicine and their dates of birth. In another study of 25,000 professional workers, they found statistically significant results when they compared types of profession to the "rising" and "culminating" position of the moon and certain planets. For example, there was a significant association between the births of writers and politicians after the "rise" and "culmination" of the moon. They suspect that there is some force produced by the moon or planet which affects the embryo.

other correlations

Tart: There is a very interesting book on environmental influences, although nobody reads it any more. It is *Main-*

springs of Civilization by Ellsworth Huntington and has an especially worthwhile section on ionization of the air.

Andrew Weil: I think that all of these influences from the environment might tie in with astrology. Has anybody here read the book by Goodavage called *Astrology: The Space Age Science*?

Krippner: Yes, I have.

*prediction of
solar flares*

Weil: Goodavage claims that RCA uses astrology to predict solar flares. It has something to do with the position of the center of gravity of our solar system. For example, when Mercury, being close to the center of gravity, moves toward the sun's surface, there are quite often huge flares. Robert Becker, in the Veterans Administration Hospital at Syracuse, became interested in this and began to study the relationship between the body's electric potentials and illness. He found that the voltages from head to toe change as a person gets ill. He later discovered that small voltage changes impressed on a person would change that person's mood. This got him to thinking that there might be a relationship between solar flares and the rates of admittance into mental hospitals. He checked this out at several New York hospitals and found a striking association between the two events.

*solar flares and
hospitalization*

Maslow: All of these data indicate that man is a part of his environment-which I think is more miraculous than the astrological system.

Krippner: This is the point of view taken by Michel Gauquelin in his book *The Cosmic Clocks*. in which he takes a skeptical point of view on astrology as it is traditionally conceived. However, Gauquelin does present evidence that man is related to what happens in his environment, even to events on the sun, the moon, and the planets.

*phenomena
and alternative
explanatory systems*

Maslow: Could I suggest something? Some of us have learned the hard way that there is no necessary relationship between phenomena and systems which try to explain the phenomena. For example) I have no doubt that ESP exists and I have read about 42 different attempts to explain it. All 42 systems look equally good, or equally lousy. As for astrology, it's quite conceivable that these relationships occur because there are more negative ions or sun spots or whatever, when somebody is born in April than when someone else is born in May. In the meantime, the world is being flooded with crap about astrology, Tarot cards, and the rest of this stuff.

It's certainly 99 percent crap, if not more. If you are interested in it, then I would like to make a suggestion. Why don't you do some research on it?

Weil: I think that is a very basic question. I believe in astrology and in Tarot, but have no intention of doing research on them. And I want to tell you why. I think: there is a basic difference in outlook as to whether you require proof in advance of believing in something or whether you believe in something because you rely on your own intuition and on personal evidence. Now I'll give you a personal testimonial. I am a very profound skeptic and I also rely entirely on private experience. The fact that a scientific journal has printed an article about what astrological predictions were confirmed on Stanford students is a low quality of evidence for me. If the predictions were confirmed or were not confirmed, it would not make much difference to me in terms of my own interest in astrology. The way that I became interested in these things was with the Tarot cards. Tarot is a system of organizing one's experiences. Since the Tarot was based on astrology, I began to take an interest in astrology. In the past two years, I have found that my experiences have been sorting themselves out along the lines suggested by Tarot and astrology. In my day-to-day life, I'm able to make more sense of phenomena that I encounter than I ever did before. With Tarot, I've been able to make more deductions and inferences about human health and disease-and to test and confirm them in everyday experience-than according to any system I was ever given in my formal medical training.

*Weir's reliance
on personal
experience*

This is what has happened in every field that I've looked into, when I've systematized the field according to the arrangements given in Tarot. These systems have two very important aspects, the exoteric and the esoteric. Exoteric astrology means very little as it is mechanistic and is concerned with the external connections between the signs and the personality. However, most of what one sees in the media is basically exoteric astrology. I use esoteric astrology as a system because it is internally consistent, it's available to anyone, and it includes the infinite. Any system which meets these criteria can be used as a system for organizing most of our perceptions. Tarot is a similar system that is internally consistent, highly ordered, interesting, and beautiful. It explains the meaning of every incident. In other words, it works. These systems work better than any other system that I've seen. So that's my personal testimony.

*exoteric and
esoteric aspects
of astrology*

Maslow: And you're not interested in research?

Well: I'm not interested in research. I don't need to be convinced. I'm aware now that these systems are right, that they work, and that any research I do would confirm them.

Maslow: You know, if we had a transcript of this conversation, and if I changed the words from "Tarot cards" to "Roman Catholicism," you wouldn't have had to change another word. In the meantime, it is apparent that we have our own ways of organizing material.

Well: We should always be on the lookout for better ways of organizing reality.

*comments on
traditional and
new models of
science*

Maslow: Yes, that is true. But in the meantime, our discussion demonstrates how the traditional model of science irritates some people. During the last few days, I've heard science being attacked-and that makes me bristle a little bit. The science that has been attacked is crappy science, but there's a whole new model of science which is available. I would certainly urge you to read Michael Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge*.

*a major lack
in traditional
science*

Fadiman: One problem with science and one reason that people who look beyond science are suspicious of it is that it has not very well taken account of the infinite. Therefore, it's inherently less of a system than some of these other systems.

Maslow: But science is beginning to do that.

Krippner: How does our discussion affect your footnote for the book?

*aging process
and peak experi-
ences*

Maslow: Well, I am still skeptical about astrology and these other things, but I am neutral, so I won't make any attack on them. I'll probably drop the footnote. At the beginning of our discussion, I said that there were two matters I wanted to talk about. One of these was my footnote. The other is the experience of transcendence. I found that as I got older, my peak experiences became less intense and also became less frequent. In discussing this matter with other people who are getting older, I received this same sort of reaction. My impression is that this may have to do with the aging process. It makes sense because to some extent, I've learned that I've become somewhat afraid of peak experiences because I wonder if my body can stand them. A peak experi-

ence can produce great turmoil in the autonomic nervous system; it may be that a decrease in peak experiences is nature's way of protecting the body.

Also, I've discovered that there is a difference between me and other people who are growing older. For me, part of the loss of peak experiences was the loss of newness and novelty. Last night, we were listening to music. When I discovered music, I had kind of a love affair with each new piece and I could remember them very vividly. I had that experience the first time I heard Stravinsky's "Flrebird," for example. You know, it's like the first kiss, the first sexual experience, the first writing of poetry, or something like that. What's happened to me now is that the whole standard repertory is gone. I mean, I don't get the shaking and the tears any more. I can get great pleasure only from music that I haven't heard too often. By now, I've heard the standard repertory six million times. I am not a professional musician, but I have been told by professionals that a peak can continue, that you can get the same pleasures from an old war horse like Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" over and over again. Perhaps a professional musician can do this, but I can't. So there is a difference between people in this regard.

*loss of newness
and novelty*

*possible individual
differences*

As these poignant and emotional discharges died down in me, something else happened which has come into my consciousness which is a very precious thing. A sort of precipitation occurred of what might be called the sedimentation or the fallout from illuminations, insights, and other life experiences that were very important-tragic experiences included. The result has been a kind of unitive consciousness which has certain advantages and certain disadvantages over the peak experiences. I can define this unitive consciousness very simply for me as the simultaneous perception of the sacred and the ordinary, or the miraculous and the ordinary, or the miraculous and the rather constant or easy-without-effort sort of thing.

*a definition of
unitive consciousness:
simultaneous
perception of
miraculous and
ordinary*

I now perceive under the aspect of eternity and become mythic, poetic, and symbolic about ordinary things. This is the Zen experience, you know. There is nothing excepted and nothing special, but one lives in a world of miracles all the time. There is a paradox because it is miraculous and yet it doesn't produce an autonomic burst.

This type of consciousness has certain elements in common with peak experience-s-awe, mystery, surprise, and esthetic shock. These elements are present, but are constant rather than climactic. It certainly is a temptation to use as kind of a model, a paradigm for the peaking experience, the sexual

*peak experience
and "high
plateau" expe-
rience*

orgasm, which is a mounting up to a peak and a climax, and then a drop in the completion and its ending. Well, this other type of experience must have another model. The words that I would use to describe this kind of experience would be "a high plateau." It is to live at a constantly high level in the sense of illumination or awakening or in Zen, in the easy or miraculous, in the nothing special. It is to take rather casually the poignancy and the preciousness and *the* beauty of things, but not to make a big deal out of it because it's happening every hour, you know, all the time.

*comparison of
peak experience
and plateau
experience*

This type of experience has the advantage, in the first place, that it's more voluntary than peak experience. For example, to enter deeply into this type of consciousness, I can go to an art museum or a meadow rather than into a subway. In the plateau experiences, you're not as surprised because they are more volitional than peak experiences. Further, I think you can teach plateau experiences; you could hold classes in miraculousness.

Another aspect I have noticed is that it's possible to sit and look at something miraculous for an hour and enjoy every second of it. On the other hand, you can't have an hour-long orgasm. In this sense, the plateau type of experience is better. It has a great advantage, so to speak, over the climactic, the orgasm, the peak. The ascending to a great height sort of implies the descending into a valley, and living on the high plateau doesn't imply this. It is much more casual.

*serenity and
emotionality*

There are some other aspects of this experience. There tends to be more serenity rather than an emotionality. Our tendency is to regard the emotional person as an explosive type. However, calmness must also be brought into one's psychology. We need the serene as well as the poignantly emotional.

*possibility of
measuring pla-
teau experience*

My guess is that the plateau experience one day will be observed on psychophysiological instruments. I believe that peak experiences have something to do with automatic discharge, which we should be able to catch easily enough if the instrumentation is available. Brain wave measurement techniques and biofeedback sound very much like a possibility for measuring, detecting, and teaching serenity and calmness and peacefulness. If so, we should be able to work with it, which means that we may be able to teach serenity to our children and pass it on.

Oh yes, the big thing, for me anyhow, is that the peak experience seemed, when I first worked with it, to be a type of

cognition. For example, I wrote a paper called "Cognition of Being in a Peak-Experience." And then slowly I learned that this was not always the case. There were peak experiences which seemed to be empty of cognitive content. They were just emotional bursts, very happy and ecstatic, but passive. My attention was called to this partly by the fact that if you witness heaven in a peak experience, why the hell isn't everybody getting better all the time? We should soon turn into a race of angels. Well, very obviously I was able to get reports of peak experiences from extremely sick people and from sons-of-bitches. So this peak experience is not an exclusive possession of "nice guys."

*cognitive and
non-cognitive
peak experiences*

Let's say that certainly there is something you can call angelic in everybody. There is also something devilish, in varying proportions and different mixes. For example, everybody that I've been able to dig into deeply enough can be vengeful and cruel. Also, everybody that I've been able to dig into very deeply can be very generous and kind and affectionate. The nastiest people I've ever been able to find do have peak experiences, but they are generally few in number and lack cognitive content.

The important point that emerges from these plateau experiences is that they're essentially cognitive. As a matter of fact, almost by definition, they represent a witnessing of the world. The plateau experience is a witnessing of reality. It involves seeing the symbolic, or the mythic, the poetic, the transcendent, the miraculous, the unbelievable, all of which I think are part of the real world instead of existing only in the eyes of the beholder.

plateau experience as witnessing of reality

There is a sense of certainty about plateau experience. It feels very, very good to be able to see the world as miraculous and not merely in the concrete, not reduced only to the behavioral, not limited only to the here and now. You know, if you get stuck in the here and now, that's a reduction.

Well, it's very easy to get sloppy with your words and you can go on about the beauty of the world, but the fact is that these plateau experiences are described quite well in many literatures. This is not the standard description of the acute mystical experience, but the way in which the world looks if the mystic experience really takes. If your mystical experience changes your life, you go about your business as the great mystics did. For example, the great saints could have mystical revelations, but also could run a monastery. You can run a grocery store and pay the bills, but still carry on this sense of witnessing the world in the way you did in

the great moments of mystic perception. Again, this implies a cognitive experience, and it feels like a witnessing of something that's there rather than something that you produce yourself. Therefore, you have a feeling of reality and can make a claim about the nature of reality.

Tart: Could you elaborate slightly on the way you are using the phrase "Witnessing the world"?

Maslow: You just see things, but you can see them well. I had a vision once at Brandeis University. It was Commencement. I had ducked Commencement for years, but this one I couldn't duck. I was corralled and I felt there was something sort of stupid about these processions and these idiotic and medieval caps and gowns. I really felt ridiculous. Well, this time as the faculty stood waiting for the procession to begin, for some reason, and I don't know why—there was suddenly this vision. It wasn't an hallucination. It was as if I could imagine very vividly a long academic procession. It went way the hell into the future, into some kind of a misty, cloudy thing. The procession contained all my colleagues, all the people I like, you know—Erasmus, Socrates, etc. In fact, Socrates was at the head of the procession. Then, behind me the procession extended into a dim cloud in which were all sorts of people, not yet born—and these were also my colleagues. I felt very brotherly towards them, these future ones. Well, you can do that all the time when you attain the plateau experience. It's the transcending of time and space which becomes quite normal, so to speak.

plateau experience and transcendence of time and space

Padiman: Like the shadow of the archetypal that's always just on the fringe of your vision or just around the corner.

Krippner: You can do that all the time?

Maslow: Whenever I wish.

Richard Katz: How about other people? You talk about peak experiences very frequently which you had in the past, and now that you're getting older, not as much. How about all the people who have never had peak experiences? Or plateau experiences?

Maslow: My impression is that whenever I talk with anybody about them, they see what I'm talking about.

Katz: It's probably a developmental process. In my work with the African Bushmen, as well as in my own experiences,

there's a continuous sort of return to peak experiences, like a recharging of the batteries. The issue is not so much attaining the bursts, but what you do with them once you've gotten them. I'm not sure in the model you're presenting whether there is this kind of developmental stage, or is it recurring?

*continuous
return to peak
experiences*

Maslow: I don't know. All I can do is report one life experience. My impression is that it involves a compression of a thousand experiences. It also involves the books I've read, all the compositions I've heard, so that it is possible for me to have a walk on the prairie and see the huffalo and the Indians and the pioneers. These wagon tracks that we were walking along out here in Kansas inspire these impressions. So does the surf you see when walking along the ocean.

Another aspect of the experience is the confrontation with mortality—this whole death business. The death experience makes life much more precious and poignant and more vivid, and you're required to appreciate it and you hang on to it. With surf, you sense a contrast between your own temporary nature and the surf's eternity—the fact that it will be there always, was there always, and that you are witnessing something that's a million years old and will be there a million years from now. I pass, and my own reaction to that is one of sadness on the one hand, and of great appreciation on the other hand. It seems to me that the surf is more beautiful to me now than it used to be, and more touching. That would be perhaps an example of the simultaneous perception of the temporal and the eternal which, in that sense of witnessing, is apocryphal. In thinking of the surf, I realize that I am mortal, and the surf is not. This makes a strong contrast.

*confrontation
with mortality*

Katz: Each time you relate a description I hear duality and also a kind of synthesis of that duality. It sounds as if the plateau experience is taking what is ordinarily polarized and synthesizing it into a single unity.

*plateau experience: synthesis
of polarity*

Maslow: Well, it can be very deep. It can be very, very touching. This whole business of witnessing eternity means you are mortal and your mortality produces a fear of the witnessing. It is happy and also sad. It's a mixture, and very beautiful.

Walter Pahnke: One of the most important things that you're

*plateau
ence and growth
of individual*

saying is that the plateau experience perhaps has more to do with the growth of the individual, while the peak experience could serve, like an LSD experience, as an opener.

*Maslow:*The whole relationship of peak experience to death fascinates me. The peak experience is frequently reported as a death, you know, as a death and rebirth. So many people say, "I'm so happy, I could die:'

*coping with
the problem of
death*

*Pahnke:*I got the feeling when you were describing some of your plateau experiences that you really have to be in a sense unconcerned about whether you're going to live the next minute or die the next minute in order to let them happen that way. You were stepping out of personal identity, in a way, and just letting go. I was thinking of an old folks' home I visited; the people were all coping with the problem of death. I think the people in this room have, by and large, chosen to handle that situation by widening their focus, widening the scope of their consciousness, whereas a lot of other people cope with it by narrowing their focus, and keeping out other dimensions of life.

*Maslow:*But as a consequence, they lead a pretty drab life.

*Pahnke:*Yes. Yes.

*Maslow:*I wonder if it would be of any help to people in that stage of life, to be more alive and enjoy music more.

*Pauline McCrirlck:*I think that's a different point. For instance, I have a patient who is an extremely obsessive woman. She can't seem to feel anything. And in this sense, of course, I've thought about the LSD experience. With such people, it seems to me, if you can have one good breakthrough, that this in itself might be sufficient to open up the ability to feel. There are extreme obsessional people who just can't feel anything.

*Maslow:*I understand it's less likely that they will have a response to LSD. It's very difficult for obsessionals to get a peak experience, to melt in ecstasy.

Weil: Is there an alteration in sexual behavior during the plateau experience?

*Maslow:*It seems to me that it's possible that the aging process makes sex less imperative. You can take it or leave it, and that this uncovers something which is precious. I can

report that women look better to me now than they did when I was young because when I was young, sex was demanding. It was ego; I could be attracted to women that I despised, and then feel not good about myself. Now it seems to be possible to admire only women whom I like, which feels good. It feels cleaner and purer.

plateau experience in relation to sex

Some older people push too hard for a revival of sexual interest. They obtain a wild stimulation only to give a feeble response.

The plateau experience is paradoxical because of the mixture of permanence and mortality, you see. You feel sorry for yourself and sad over the passingness of things, while at the very same moment you're more poignantly enjoying the things that other people ignore. This is an easy thing to grasp when you're working with dying people, and I've speculated if it were possible to give an experience of death and then a reprieve that people might enjoy life more. My heart attack brought about a real confrontation with death. Ever since then, I've been living what I've been calling to myself "the post-mortem life." I've already gone through the process of dying, so everything from then on is gravy.

paradoxes in plateau experience

If you've gone through this experience, you can be more in the here and now than with all the spiritual exercises that there are. It's just a kind of spontaneous exercise in hanging on to the moment, because the moment is precious. Competition and life planning disappear. The dominance hierarchy, the competition, the competitiveness and glory, certainly become foolish. There is certainly a shifting of values about what's basic and what's not basic, what's important and what's not important. I think if it were possible for us to die and be resurrected, it might then be possible for more people to have this post-mortem life.

consequences of confrontation with death

Also, if you want to read a very good description of it, look at Arthur Koestler's autobiography. He had a confrontation with death. It was in Spain during the Civil War. He had been caught and was going to be executed before a firing squad the next morning. He was imprisoned, and so he fell asleep. He woke up in an ecstasy, partly because of the fact he was to be executed. He saw for the first time how blue the sky was.

Walter Clark: We spoke about how little some people make of their experience, whether under LSD or otherwise. I deplore the way young people use LSD because I believe it maximizes the dangers and minimizes the values. I think the most tragic aspect of it isn't so much that it maximizes

misuse of peak experiences by young people (under LSD or otherwise)

the dangers, but it minimizes the great benefits. That is, these young people are wasting something that is precious beyond words and half the time they have no idea of it. That judgment does not hold true for all of them because some young people recognize the values. I'm thinking of a student who came up to me after I'd spoken at his college. He had taken LSD perhaps a hundred times, and is just now beginning to realize how valuable this was and how much he might have made out of it. And now he wants to develop the religious aspects of it and maybe he will, but the time to make the most of it would have been in the first few trips when it is still fresh and still novel. I'm very pessimistic about his being able to get a small fraction of what he might have gotten if he had gone into it with the right guide and the right setting and the right attitude.

responsibility for misuse

Maslow: Well, I feel we're partly to blame for the misuse of LSD. I feel that my work has been misinterpreted by youngsters sometimes. Also, this peak experience stuff can be misused, especially by youngsters. They think that's the only kind of life. The ordinary life becomes devalued altogether. The whole history of psychoanalysis is a good testimonial to this. Freud stressed both insight and "working through." Decade by decade, the psychoanalysts came to emphasize more insight and less "working through" the implications of the insight. It's a struggle.

"insight" and "working through"

Clark: So often just because a person has one of these LSD experiences, he thinks he has it made. One of my subjects in an LSD experiment put it to me. He said, "I thought that when I got through with this experiment that it would be over. But now from the perspective of the year, I can see that once I got through the experiment, it was just beginning."

Maslow: It happens that frequently in looking for the high, a young man and a young woman meet and they have a very good sexual experience. It's a party atmosphere, you know, a high. It's wonderful. And then they say they fall in love. The first time she gets a cold and her nose dribbles, the whole thing is lost, because they expected the relationship to stay at that high.

Too many young people delude themselves with the "Big Bang" theory of self-actualization. One of our tasks is to communicate better with young people and give them a greater appreciation of patience and for the miraculous elements in ordinary existence.