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# Personality Development and Religion of Maturity

## 1. Historical Note

Many are the ways in which religion could be subjected to a scientific study. Together with the discipline of the Philosophy of Religion, religion is studied from historical, anthropological, sociological and cultural points of view. Again with the *Comparative Methodology* (1856) of Max Müller, the discipline of Comparative Study of Religions also began to develop. Contemporaneous with these attempts, Psychology also focussed its attention on religion. The last two decades of the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth were marked by a special determination to apply the modern critical and empirical methods to the study of religion. During this period vigorous attempts have been made to use the resources of Scientific Psychology in the investigation of religion. Under the title "Psychology of Religion" a number of studies have been conducted, using psychological and psychoanalytic insights, to understand and interpret religious behaviour or experience in general and religious beliefs, symbols and practices in particular. On the other hand 'Religious Psychology' addressed itself to the task of discovering the place of religion in the life-economy of the individual.

There is certainly a shift of emphasis in relation to Psychology and Religion in the studies known as Psychology of Religion and Religious Psychology, the former being an attempt to understand religion, making use of the scientific tools of modern psychology, and the latter an introspective endeavour to perceive the role of religious beliefs in the making of an adult personality, revealing the religious stance of the psychologist.

The precursors of Psychology of Religion can be found even prior to the nineteenth century pioneers. David Hume in *The Natural History of Religion* (1755) viewed religion as arising out of man's nature. August Comte emphasized the sociological origin and nature of religion. Kant found in moral obligation the foundation for the knowledge of God's existence. Schleiermacher suggested that the domain of religion is intuition and feeling of utter dependence rather than thinking or behaviour. Psychologists who were caught up in the circle of the philosophers of religion wanted to move out of it and study the facts of religion from the outside as natural sciences do. The question whether religion has to be studied from the outside rather than from the inside, is a methodological problem, and it raises a very fundamental issue which we will encounter in the course of this discussion. In the Psychology of Religion in its present form American scholars were the pioneers. G. Stanley Hall who founded Clark University introduced *The Journal of Religious Psychology* in 1904, the first American Journal in the field. J.H. Leuba (1868-1946) and E.D. Starbuck (1866-1947), the two students of Hall, took up real pioneering empirical studies before the appearance of William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902) which laid the foundation and established the framework for the study of religion as set by the personality sciences. Speaking about the *Zeitgeist*, Beit-Hallahmi writes: "Philosophy has always dealt with questions of belief and religion. Psychology as a legitimate heir and descendant of philosophy, took upon itself the chore of objectively studying subjects that formerly belonged to philosophy. The pioneers of the empirical-experimental approach to human behaviour saw religion as a subject fit to study, and eagerly wanted to prove that even this area of study can be studied scientifically. . . . Together with the faith in the scientific spirit, there was also a profound respect for religion as a human and social enterprise."<sup>1</sup>

But after the rapid growth for half a century, the movement began to decline leading to its final extinction. The decline is attributed to the internal weakness of the movement as well as external pressures. Some of the weaknesses Strunk points out are: "(1) Theological interest in the field introduced speculative and apologetic tendencies,

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1. H. Newton Malony (ed), *Current Perspectives in the Psychology of Religion* (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1977), p. 20.

which hampered advancement. (2) Psychoanalytic approaches to the study of religion attracted more attention and efforts since they seemed more promising."<sup>2</sup> Though the movement in its initial form died out, the humanistic spirit promoted by William James revived in the contemporary humanistic psychology.

Some of its main concerns are: a centering of attentions on the experiencing person, and thus on experience as the primary phenomenon in the study of man; an emphasis on distinctively human qualities; an allegiance to meaningfulness in the selection of problems for study. These are meant to help one to discover his own being and to relate to other persons and social groups.<sup>3</sup>

This humanistic psychology of religion makes a fresh attempt to take hold of that which is existentially valid, namely, *the subjective meaning of life*. This enlargement of the field of interest widens the scope of the Psychology of Religion. This humanistic thrust also forced a restructuring of the discipline itself. Gordon Allport calls for a "broadening of perspective." "A narrowly conceived science can never do business with a narrowly conceived religion. Only when both parties broaden their perspective will the way to understanding and co-operation open."<sup>4</sup> In line with this principle Allport proposes to study "the place of subjective religion in the structure of personality."<sup>5</sup>

A third phase in the development of the Psychology of Religion, is the interest evinced by personality sciences in determining the role religion plays in shaping interests, attitudes, values, goals, behaviour and relationships. Here the goal of Psychology of Religion merges with that of Religious Psychology. The interrelation between religion and personality development became a fruitful area of investigation for humanistic psychology. We can proceed in our studies on the assumption that both "personality and religion have the same roots", namely, the life principle; "discovering the obscure aspects of one will lead to greater insights into the other. Our understanding of both personality and religion will be enhanced by the study of their relation-

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2. *Ibid.*, p. 22.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 31.

4. G. W. Allport, *The Individual and His Religion* (London: Macmillan, 1950), p. X.

5. *Ibid.*, p. XI.

ship.”<sup>6</sup> Opposition to a healthy relationship between religion and personality sciences arises mostly from the attempts to reduce or identify one with some one aspect of the other. The aim of humanistic psychology is to attain a fully developed and integrated personality, and when it makes the metaphysical claim that religions have no other aim than this wholeness of personality, the psychologists are asserting more than their scientific methodology and premises warrant. The problem we are interested to tackle is whether, admitting the genuineness of religious personality, the humanistic psychology could help one to attain a religion of maturity, or a religion that would help one to grow into personal maturity. Here there is no question of substituting psychology for religion, but rather of accepting the role of religion in the maturing process of a person and thus achieving a religious personality. “Religious personality refers to a personality in which the religious mode of existence is the most central mode of being and which integrates and permeates all other ways of being in the world.”<sup>7</sup> It is also possible to think of some other mode of existence as central to a personality. Hence the question of the role and value of a religion in determining the modality of a personality becomes very crucial in the contemporary humanistic psychology.

## 2. The Poles of Differentiation and Integration

A dependable account of the development of human personality is a covetous goal of any form of empirical psychology. The attempts to understand human existence from certain abnormal situations in which unfortunately it is found caught up have become so sweeping that the question about the characteristics of a moral or healthy personality itself is relegated to the field of philosophy. Philosophy assumes that reality has its own self-nature or identity and in the case of man it is termed as person. The interest of the Empirical Psychology is not in this ontic foundation of man, but in its expression known as personality, a reality which is in constant becoming and making from the moment of its birth. It implies an epigenetic principle which states that anything that grows has a ground plan, and that out of this ground

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6. William A. Sadler, Jr., (ed), *Personality and Religion* (New York : Harper & Row Pub., 1970), p. 2.

7. Adrian Van Kaam, *Religion and Personality* (New York : Image Books, 1968), p. 58.

plan the parts arise, each part having its time of special ascendancy until all parts have arisen to form a functioning whole.

In the development of human being we can distinguish two polar movements, namely, of differentiation and integration. These two movements complement each other, both being simultaneously present in our lives. In the movement of differentiation man discovers his identity in his presence with other beings. It calls him to face his world of experience. The experience of love, hate, scientific curiosity, fear, ecstatic admiration, joy, grief and such other feelings would determine the modality of his personality.<sup>8</sup>

This process of differentiation would discourage man and throw him out of focus if it is not complemented by the other movement which leads to an integration of all that come in the experiential field of man. "Integration leads to unity just as differentiation leads to diversity. Integration unifies and makes whole, whereas differentiation initially breaks up this wholeness."<sup>9</sup> Differentiation has an empirical datum, whereas integration has to be effected in the conscious self. A dynamic life of a personality will always manifest both these movements. What is to be desired is a well-balanced totality of his existence as a whole.

Attainment of this wholeness is sometimes conceived as the sole aim of human existence. A fully integrated personality attains this ideal of wholeness. This integration, however, is not a frozen, settled state or thing but rather a movement, an activity. This can go on only as long as there is an ongoing differentiation of our existence. Innumerable are the blocks, internal as well as external, that can arrest this process destined for attaining greater and fuller integration. In fact we are born free, that is, with the ability to become what we can naturally be. But we are conditioned by the circumstances in which we are born. These are beyond the control of an individual. Hence the vision of attaining an integrated personality remains almost a dream in man's life. If our psychological sciences, religion and philosophy could help us to meet our needs for growth and make us internally free, nothing could be a greater service to us than this.

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8. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

What is the nature of this wholeness in question? Is it the development of all the natural powers of man the humanistic psychology recounts? William James is of the opinion that "no psychology can claim to have achieved a whole picture of personality unless it considers religion and those personal phenomena which often play an important role in it."<sup>10</sup> One of the issues in which some of the contemporary theologians take the personality scientists to task is the question of attainment of a wholeness through a process of integration independent of a religion. In other words, the suspicion is whether the humanistic, psychology is substituting a cult of self or wholeness of personality in the place of holiness envisaged by religions.<sup>11</sup>

Mutual suspicion and hostility can create only more heat than light. The only healthy and sensible way open to a convinced believer in religious values is to see how he can make use of the services of a psychologist of religion in understanding the role of subjective religion in the structuring and maturing of personality. In the context of such a study the question of the metaphysical or objective truth of the beliefs of the world religions do not arise. One of the salutary effects of this study would be to help each one examine whether his subjective religion is a religion of maturity while he himself is undergoing a process of integration and maturity.

### 3. Theologians vs. Psychology of Religion

a) **Theological Problems:** One of the problems theologians raise is with regard to methodology. The psychologist proposes to study religion as a fact of experience: Whether that experience has any corresponding objective reality is not a question that affects, according to these scientists, the genuineness, authenticity and validity of these experiences. It is this methodological stand that the theologians question. "In the first place we cannot as Christians allow the assumption of the metaphysical independence of the self-consciousness of man in general and of the religious consciousness in particular that under-

10. Willam A. Sadler, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

11. Paul C. Vitz, *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship* (Michigan: Eerdmans Pub., 1979).

Cornelius Van Til, *Psychology of Religion* (Volume IV of the series, in defence of Biblical Christianity, Philadelphia: 1976).

lies the whole of the modern psychology of religion."<sup>12</sup> Similarly, some writers object to the practice of approaching Christian and non-Christian religions from the common standpoint of religious experience. They also question the assumption of the independence of self-consciousness of man in general, and of his religious consciousness in particular, in the psychological study of religion.<sup>13</sup>

What is being criticized in this method is that the personality sciences attempt to study religion from the inside. Religious experience or consciousness as a psychological reality is taken as subjective. There is a philosophical proclivity to identify the subjective with the false. Though to the extent something is merely subjective, we may agree that it is not as true as some subjective experience which has objective reference, and therefore it is false, it is hardly possible to agree that being subjective is the mark of falsehood. Even the most true objective experience is subjective, a modality being brought into the subject through a process known as knowing. Hence a subjective experience is as real as an objective experience from the point of view of empirical psychology. Other sciences, it is true, can fix their differing values from their own point of view. This need not or should not rob psychology of its object of study.

Another matter of dispute between the theologians and the psychologists of religion arises because the latter equate the integral growth of personality or the wholeness of personality with religion. As a matter of fact, a mature personality fully developed in all its potentialities is the ultimate goal both of religion and psychology. Is this the explicit position of contemporary therapists and counsellors whose writings are criticized in this connection? Paul C. Vitz, in the work mentioned earlier (see note 11) makes a vigorous criticism of modern psychology. A short analysis of some of the theories criticized by the theologians will be of great help to throw some light on this dispute. The point of criticism here is that today psychology has become a religion, or more precisely a form of secular humanism based on the worship of the self.

b) **Psychological Issues:** The centrality given to the all-round development of the self can be shown from the writings of a few self.

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12. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 2, 3, 7.

theorists themselves. "I shall attempt to show that the character structure of the mature and integrated personality, the productive character, constitutes the source and basis of 'virtue', and that 'vice', in the last analysis, is indifference to one's own self and self-mutilation. Not self-renunciation nor selfishness but the affirmation of his truly human self, are the supreme values of humanistic ethics. If man is to have confidence in values, he must know himself and the capacity of his nature for goodness and productiveness."<sup>14</sup> Carl Rogers (1902) interprets therapy as a process of the changing and growing self. The culmination of this therapy is in the seventh and highest stage in which the self becomes an integrated process of changingness. He writes, "The process moves from a point of fixity, where all the elements and threads described are separately discernible and separately understandable, to the following peak moments of therapy in which all these threads become inseparably woven together . . . . Thus, as the process reaches this point, the person becomes a unity of flow, or motion. He has changed, but what seems most significant, he has become an integrated process of changingness."<sup>15</sup>

According to Abraham Maslow (1908) there is a hierarchy of human needs, starting with basic physiological and safety needs reaching the highest need, the need for self-realization, or self-actualization. Man in the process of self-actualization will have peak-experiences. "Peak-experiences, as I have defined them for this analysis, are secularized religious or mystical or transcendent experiences; or more precisely, peak-experiences are the raw materials out of which not only religions can be built but also philosophies of any kind: educational, political, aesthetic etc . . . . Religion becomes then not one social institution among others, but rather a state of mind achievable in almost any activity of life, if this activity is raised to a suitable level of perfection."<sup>16</sup>

The ideas of the "affirmation of truly human self" (Fromm), "integrated process of changingness" (Rogers), "Self-actualized or

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14. Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself*, 1947, quoted from Paul C. Vitz, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

15. Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Man*, 1961, p. 158; quoted from Paul C. Vitz, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

16. William A. Sadler, Jr., (ed), *op. cit.*, "Religious aspect of Peak-experiences", p. 170.



self-realized Person" (Maslow), and such other ideas of modern psychologists and therapists are feared to have the danger of substituting psychology for religion establishing a cult of self-worship. But the fact is, the endeavour to achieve a fully integrated, developed and as far as possible actualized personality can in no way be opposed to a genuine religion, and so the need of the hour is, our religions also must grow to a maturity to aid the achievement of this self-actualization.

#### 4. Religious Consciousness and Psychology

A thorough study of religious experience can certainly throw much light on the unknown aspects of religious behaviour of a person and personality. William James, one of the pioneers in the psychological study of religion, focussed his attention on consciousness which he neither reduced to processes in the brain or nervous system, nor separated it from bodily functions. This study brought to light the dynamic aspect of consciousness, namely, that it is an "ongoing stream of consciousness", together with instincts, feelings, emotions and the will. The religious issues James raises in his *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, are very relevant even today. First of all the whole work is an attempt to answer the question: How does a human being achieve his highest potentialities? Some of the highest potentialities can be brought to life only through a return to experience. He argues that the avenue to truth has to be found by returning to experience. It includes our non-intellectual nature also. Even the most precise logical categories emerge in conjunction with man's desires, wishes and interests. It is said that "the desire for a certain kind of truth . . . brings about that special truth's existence."<sup>17</sup> Following this line of thought it is essential that one exercises one's right to believe in one's own experiences, especially in one's feelings, intuition, and personal insights. "Only in this way can an individual reach a fuller understanding of the potentialities of his own self."<sup>18</sup>

This insistence on experience born of intellectual and non-intellectual elements called for a new understanding of religion. "What keeps religion going is something else than abstract definitions and systems of concatenated adjectives, and something different from faculties of

17. Quoted from William A. Sadler, Jr., *op. cit.*, p.6 (James, "Essays in Pragmatism" pp. 104-5).

18. *Ibid.*, p.6.

theology and their professors. All these things are after-effects, secondary accretions upon those phenomena of vital conversation with the unseen divine . . . in the lives of humble private men."<sup>19</sup> This severe criticism of theology may be unfair to a certain extent, but the new approach to the study of religion which James initiated has the special merit of setting this study in the living context of experience rather than in a linguistic context of definition and assertions.<sup>20</sup>

James goes further and describes religion in terms of personal experience of religion. Sadler summarizes James' position as follows: "The primary fact about religion, as he saw it, was not some divine being but a changed attitude toward life and a new appreciation of it: Not God, but life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life is, in the last analysis, the end of religion. The love of life, at any and every level of development, is the religious impulse." "From this perspective, what matters most in religion is not theological content or a prescribed course of action, but what effects a religion has upon an individual personality. He encouraged individuals to search for the religion which was best for them to be true to it."<sup>21</sup>

Thus, in short, James was advocating for a religion which would enable one to discover and appropriate the highest values of which he was aware and help one to integrate his impulses and his interests with integrity. Since James, many humanistic psychologists and some theologians like Paul Tillich and other existential theologians have followed James' approach to religion and held the view that religious words are secondary to the primary datum of religious experience.

Opposition to the sociological and institutional aspects of religions, indifference to the objective study of truths of the subjective religious experiences, conception of religion as "a changed attitude toward life", are positions unacceptable from a traditional theological point of view. But James claims that religion produces a larger, expansive self and that in genuinely mature religious personalities, some of the highest potentialities of human existence are realized. It is certainly encouraging to note that from the meeting of mature personali-

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19. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, (New York : 1914), p. 437.

20. *Ibid.*, p. 497.

21. William A. Sadler, Jr., (ed), *op. cit.*, p. 11.

ties and mature religion, higher potentialities of human existence can come into actualization. Even if on no other score the Psychology of Religion is acceptable, this single achievement alone should favourably dispose us to study its claims more seriously.

### **5. Maturing in Religious Belief and Personality Growth**

The maturing process involved in the relationship between religious belief or experience and personality growth become a very central issue in the circle of humanistic psychologists. We could also say that this is one of the most useful and fruitful fields of investigation to bring about increased happiness in our life.

Though the terms, religious beliefs and personality growth need further specification, for the purpose of this discussion they are taken in a popular, non-technical sense. Any belief that motivates a man to conduct his life in view of achieving a fuller life in God or hereafter is taken to be equivalent to a religion. The question whether this belief is objective or true is beyond the methodology of empirical sciences. Similarly, the criterion of maturity or growth is also left undefined. Yet a situation in which one feels as well as one is actually free from internal and external irrational constraints in the development of personality in one's own judgement and in the judgement of others, is regarded as a state of maturity. These specifications are meant to focus our attention on certain types of religious values which will help attain a better integration in our personality, resulting in increased joy in life.<sup>22</sup>

That in the process of growth man enters into different modes of presence or existence is an empirically experienced fact. We cannot pray, study, enjoy music and paint pictures all at the same time. One or the other have to be chosen according to the need or demands of our personality. A mature, grown-up personality brings in a certain order or hierarchy in our modes of existence. For example, a religious person will believe that to love God and to keep his commandments is the most central mode of his existence and he will consequently adapt and subordinate all his actions to this belief. From the point

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22. Cf. Van Kaam, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

of view of personality development, a wholesome human life is attained through a harmonious integration of different modes of existence. Life is an existential project. A wholesome person steadily grows in insight into his own personality within his own situation, and accepts his personal life with all its possible and actual modes of existence.

In a religious person, a religious mode of existence could be more central, more primary, more influential, than all others. "Religious personality refers to a personality in which the religious mode of existence is the most central mode of being and which integrates and permeates all other ways of being in the world."<sup>23</sup> It is claimed that a religious personality incorporates all the characteristics of what we may call authentic personality.

We cannot certainly expect that we can evolve a single view about the characteristic features of authentic personality. Yet, subject to improvement and correction, we can enumerate a few. The expression authentic or mature personality stands for desirable and highly estimable characteristics of man. First of all, from one's own perspective an authentic personality has a self-awareness which is broad, rich and well-developed in the sense that it knows that it is not meant to be a copy of anyone else, that he has a unique existential project to be accomplished. It also includes the awareness of one's unity. C.G.Jung postulates two autonomous centres of psyche, namely the self, the ordering and unifying centre of the total psyche (conscious and unconscious) and the ego, the centre of conscious personality. The latter is the seat of subjective identity while the former is the seat of objective identity. The self is born, but the ego is made; and in the beginning all is self. "The self is most simply described as the inner empirical deity and is identical with *imago Dei*."<sup>24</sup> In terms of Christian belief "a Christian personality is a new and special manifestation of Christ that did not exist before him and will not repeat after him," that is, "being a religious personality is being most truly Christ and most truly oneself."<sup>25</sup> The born self and created ego dichotomy is very well exemplified here. In the self or the *imago Dei*, or symbolic images or *mandalas*, or Christ

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 41 & 58.

24. Edward F. Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), pp. 3 & 7.

25. Van Kaam, *op.cit.*, p. 59.

figure or cross the ego finds its centre of gravity, or discovers its unifying force. The unitive religious experience is preceded by 'a dark night of the soul' (St. John of the Cross) or 'despair' (Kierkegaard) or 'defeat of the ego' (Jung), or in other words 'a death' or merging of the ego in the unifying centre. This explains the need for the alienation experience as a prelude to the numinous or religious experience. It brings purpose and unity in the life of those who have failed to find them. Jung says that he has never seen a patient past the age of thirty-five who was cured without finding a religious attitude towards life.<sup>26</sup> The core of this religious attitude consists in accepting a transcendent unique centre in one's psyche.

Another characteristic feature of an authentic personality is the awareness of its limitations, a necessary counterpart of the awareness of uniqueness and unity. This consciousness helps him to recognize his need for others who went before him, who are with him and who will be after him. Another genuine personality trait is the experience of self-acceptance. It includes the awareness of one's assets and liabilities and a self-respect. Again a genuine person is conscious that he realizes his concrete potentialities within the life situation in which he is called to function. The feeling and awareness that one determines his life himself is another characteristic note of an authentic personality. Here he experiences that he himself is deciding what his life should be. The experience of freedom is another aspect. The freedom a true personality experiences is not a freedom from obligations, responsibilities, and natural limitations arising from human situations but a freedom to commit oneself deliberately to the service of a great, satisfying and fulfilling cause. And looking from outside, a genuine personality is one which has personalized the treasures of tradition. This personal process of assimilation reveals the originality of a personality. There is a wholeness or a structured totality of one's different modes of existence in a mature person.<sup>27</sup>

The list of the characteristic feature of an authentic personality can be lengthened in respect of dynamic tendencies in man such as his will, emotionality, intelligence and in relation to his body, life situation

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26. Cf. Edward F. Edinger, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

27. & 28. Van Kaam, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-66 & 67-88.

and stability in the undertakings and the soundness of his relation with other persons, society and its culture and the emergence of values.<sup>28</sup>

## 6. Religion of Maturity

It is hard to believe that a conscious religious personality could be deliberately opposed to anything that is genuinely human or anything that is defined as a characteristic feature of an authentic personality. An enlightened religious man may even admit that the end of great religions is to make men genuine personalities. This is in a way equal to admitting that religion and psychology can aim at a common end, namely, the attainment of wholeness of personality. If any religious belief comes in the way of attaining this wholeness, it means it has not grown into a religion of maturity.

Religion cannot attain its declared end, namely, union with some great one beyond or greater than oneself, doing violence to wholeness of personality, though in no way the latter can be substituted as the end of religion. "A man's religion is the audacious bid he makes to bind himself to creation and to the creator. It is his ultimate attempt to enlarge and to complete his own personality by finding the supreme context in which he rightly belongs."<sup>29</sup> Each one's belief is his 'subjective religion.' It is possible for an empirical science like psychology to study what place these subjective beliefs have in the structure of a personality. It is, of course, beyond the methodology of this science to say anything about the objective validity or truth of these subjective beliefs. One thing we can certainly assert is that the subjective religion has a strangle hold on the development of a personality. Hence, what is required of a genuine religious personality is to see whether his religious beliefs are growth-aiding or life-stifling. We can identify three primary avenues of development open to any human being in the course of his growth: "The avenue of widening interests (the expanding self), the avenue of detachment and insight (the ability to objectify oneself), and the avenue of integration (some unifying philosophy of life)".<sup>30</sup> When a religious sentiment comes in the way of this develop-

29. Gordon W. Allport, *The Individual and His Religion*, (London: Macmillan Comp., 1950), p. back cover.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 61.

ment, it is life impeding. It is possible to prove through empirical studies that the religious beliefs affect one's perception of events and judgements. This will easily lead one to prejudices mostly based on ignorance, either casual or deliberately maintained. In such a context a believer may refuse to relate believers in other religions, thus giving rise to fanaticism.

Van Kaam identifies four stages in the development of religious consciousness corresponding to the four levels of existence: the bio-sensual, the functional, the romantic and the existential. The bio-sensual existence is dominated by bio-sensual needs which seek things and people to alleviate bodily needs and desires. The religious mode of existence corresponding to this stage can be found in the religiosity of children and primitive tribes. The functional level of existence is the ego level, the level of mastery, control, organization, techniques of having and possessing. The religious mode of existence lived at this stage would be characterized by pragmatic concerns with numerous religious practices, prayers for favours and hair-splitting attention to the details of the moral code. When personality is fixated at this level it may lead to moral fanaticism, witch-hunting, a holier-than-thou attitude. The romantic religious mode of existence manifests itself in religious fascination, exaltation, rapture, and extremely affectionate prayer. Here religion may become a self-deceptive cultivation of religious moods and feelings. It will confine himself within a self-centred universe of artificially maintained affections. At the existential level, a man is disposed to a deeper mode of religious existence which is truly an existential commitment. It manifests itself as an overwhelming appeal to escape self-centredness in order to centre one's existence in Being as it reveals itself.<sup>31</sup>

Inability to go higher from a level of developmental need not only results in the formation of unauthentic personality but also in unhealthy and immature religious behaviour. One way to meet this situation is to make use of all the avenues open to the personality for its development. For example, in the field of religious belief one can create a curiosity or interest in the religious beliefs of other people. This is the first step in acquiring an inter-religious attitude. When the intake

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31. Van Kaam, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-60.

of information about other religions or about the realities of human person assumes sizable proportions, the intolerance will give way to a spirit of accommodation and encounter. A well-established encounter will generate a desire for further inquiry into the beliefs of one's partner in dialogue. This will eventually soften and modify one's views about other religions and other people so as to start an interpersonal relationship leading to the formation of a much more refined, religious and developed personality.

Religions claim to be heuristic, namely, that they help the believer open his eyes wide for a deeper and fuller perception of reality. The stress of the modern humanistic sciences on this heuristic character of mature religion and on personal achievement and development helps an individual to attain the wholeness possible to him through a proper integration of all his powers and a believer to transform his belief-system into a religion of maturity. Hence there need not exist a clash between psychology and religion. They can enrich each other in the course of their co-operation and co-existence.