

## **Addendum 1**

### **Confucius and the Cultivation of Social Judgment**

by J. Peter Kulka\*

"The Great Learning," which could be Confucius's testament, states that the ability to make wise choices is rooted in self-knowledge based on observation of one's inner realities. To attain enlightenment, one must go back to the origin of a problem and define one's reaction to it. Categorizing the inarticulate influences (emotions, attitudes, intuitions, etc.) permits one to bring them into balance by self-discipline and conscience. Having brought order into one's inner world, one can then make a sound decision consonant with one's responsibilities to the outer world. Confucius also noted that the process leading to enlightened judgement is enhanced by watching with affection how people grow.

A realistic awareness of inarticulate influences on one's thinking is difficult to attain. Mankind is prone to self-deceptions that serve to maintain self-esteem during the prolonged dependence of childhood. Such defenses tend to become ingrained and habitual, particularly if they continue to fulfill inner needs, and it requires prolonged effort to give them up. Positive experiences are always helpful since they reduce dependency on false premises to sustain positive attitudes toward life. In addition, various ancillary methods have proved useful in facilitating the process of surmounting irrational thinking. Honest exchange with trusted individuals is particularly helpful, but special techniques, such as meditation, may be decisive in effecting remedial transformation. The handicap of unrealistic thinking might be ameliorated by optimal mother-infant security and by incorporating the advancement of emotional intelligence into the educational system.

From a biologic point of view, we are slowly beginning to understand the cerebral dynamics underlying self-deception and self-realization. Of particular significance is the evolutionary disparity between the lifestyle to which the human mind has become genetically adapted over millions of years and the radically different conditions of life that increasingly rapid cultural change has brought about over the past ten thousand years. Now that we have become our own worst enemies, we must find the discipline to govern ourselves or the survival of the human race will remain in jeopardy. We must learn to live up to the social heritage that has allowed our species to dominate the earth and practice the principle of mutuality, helping to strengthen others and thereby strengthening ourselves.

\*This is unfortunately the last contribution by Peter Kulka to the Triglav Circle. Peter passed away in August of 2002.