

THE CODE OF HONOR

A lecture given on
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Integrity

What are morals and ethics?

Well, morals are a codification of things which man has discovered to be bad for himself and for others at some time in his history, and having discovered that these things were inhibitive to his own survival, he then made a law about them. It was an arbitrary law: He found out that every time somebody went and stood under a jub-jub tree they broke out all over with blisters. And he couldn't figure out what this had to do with jub-jub trees or why the fellow became blistered, and he had no explanation for it at all. But he had observed this several times, so he knew that standing under a jub-jub tree was inhibitive to survival, so therefore he made a law about it.

Now, when you lack a good and adequate police force; you can play upon a person's superstitions. And a witch doctor, actually, was the moralist, the code-maker, for man up to, well, the last hundred years or so. He dealt with spirits, he piloted you through to the other world, he tried to deal with your illnesses and so forth. He was really a jack-of-all-trades. Medicine got more efficient in killing people, by bleeding them and so forth, and so the witch doctor to some degree lost out.

By the way, the success of psychiatry is measured by the incidence of witch doctors. Do you know that there was an approximate ratio of one to fifty — one witch doctor for every fifty in the tribe? Approximate ratio through most primitive races runs about that. Lots of witch doctors — lots of them. And if you were to go into one of these tribes, you would find they ate well and their headdress and so forth wasn't very moldy — it was pretty brightly painted — and the place where they lived was well kept and there were probably lots of people that waited on them walking around there. In other words, it was a pretty nice position, witch doctor — good affluence. And there was about one to fifty. Now, there is about one psychiatrist for (I think) something like, oh, every five hundred thousand or every four hundred thousand people or something like that. So the profession has declined.

When you talk, then, about morals, you are actually talking about something which was bad for the race once upon a time and which was made into a law. Now, when it became a law and went onto the statute books and was made effective by force of billy clubs and judges, it was a law and sat on the statute books. But when it was enforced by superstition or just belief that it ought to be or a person is good when he . . . or something like that, it was a moral.

Morals and ethics are entirely separate subjects. They are not even interrelated. Of course, in this decadent age you go to a dictionary, you open the dictionary and it says ethics. And in a big learned statement, terrifically learned dissertation — one word sitting there and it says morals. So you say, "Well, let's find out about this." So you go over it real fast, turn to m-o — morals. And then this terrifically learned dissertation there, it says ethics. If you want to play around with dictionaries, you will find that when two words are being defined one against the other and then back again and so on, you can pretty well conclude that nobody has ever figured them out. Well, it is that case with morals and ethics.

The moral is not based upon reason, honesty, codification, good behavior or anything else. It is based upon the fact that something some time or other in the history of a race has been inhibitive to survival, and the powers that be at that time and their successors adjudicated the fact that it ought to be impressed upon people that they shouldn't do this.

So they say, "If you do this, something bad will happen to you." And they don't even explain what is bad about it; they just say, "Don't do it. It's immoral!" And that ends the whole argument, because if you do something immoral, then the gods are going to get you or something is going to happen, bad.

The whole taboo system is simply that. If you want to go into any moral code, you can trace it down to its reason, its cause — the reason why this moral became a taboo, why it came into existence. You will find exactly how this action inhibited survival. There was more pain in it than there was pleasure, and therefore it is immoral — anything whereby this action may be apparently pleasurable but experience has taught that this apparently pleasurable action actually contains much more pain and destructiveness than it does pleasure. Therefore it is immoral. And you can trace down the track of any moral code and you will find that this reasoning was at its basis.

People once upon a time — unlike now — were ignorant. Well, that's true — I mean, that we live in an enlightened age: twentieth century. We cast out the demons and devils from this society; our government operates on a completely rational basis; the way we treat people in hospitals, insane asylums and so on is with the greatest efficiency imaginable; and every rule that we have in this society is actually based upon the most solid reason . . . !

Now, something which is ethical is a reasonable or a reasoning action or a reasoning behavior which promotes the maximum survival on all dynamics — that is to say, for everyone concerned in it. Ethics. Ethics are concerned intimately with survival. If this action means survival on, let's say, the first dynamic, the future, for the group, it is also ethical — unless, all of a sudden, it means the destruction of the rest of mankind, at which moment it becomes unethical, because, you see, that is more affected.

The Constitution has a statement to this effect; it is for the greater good of the greater number of people, something to that effect. That is ethics — has nothing to do with codes, it is what is reasonable, what reasonably means the major amount of survival for the maximum number concerned in the problem. Now, something ethical might actually mean the destruction of one or two people, if it meant the survival of hundreds or thousands of people, you see?

Capital punishment is neither ethical nor unethical. It happens to be a law, a code. It has to do with a wild, unreasoning effort to protect society, and a great deal of experience has demonstrated that it does not protect society. And all of this evidence to the contrary demonstrates, then, that capital punishment is not the stuff. It doesn't work. So therefore it's unethical conduct, actually, but it is lawful conduct on the part of a state to administer capital punishment.

Robbing — thieving — is of course completely unethical as well as unlawful, as well as immoral, because stealing something very seldom enhances anybody's survival, even one's own. The funny part of it is, most of the things men steal they could go out and have if they asked for them. So it isn't acquisition of MEST; that isn't the reason men steal. It is purely aberration.

Now, if you separate, in other words, ethics, morals, you begin to see some reason.

Your poor, befuddled teenager grows up in the high schools of this country; nobody tells him anything about ethics; nobody tells him anything about his own survival or his responsibility to the race or himself or anything else.

Somebody comes along and tells him that something is "immoral," and he "mustn't do it because it's wicked!"

And he says, "Gee, I'll have to find out. Is it?"

They don't give him any reason. They say, "This is against the law," or they say, "This is immoral," and that is the end of it. So he flounders around through his teens. (Teenage produces the maximum number of crimes of America, and very close to the maximum number of automotive deaths. Insurance companies now — your insurance is not valid if a teenager is driving your car at the time it bends a fender or something.) As a result, he doesn't have any definition, so he can't think about this. Nobody is asking him to think about it: they are just telling him that "this is immoral and it's wicked and bad." And then they tell him something very strange that he probably can't believe. They probably say, "You'll go to hell if you do this."

And he says, "I wonder where hell is? How do you get there?" In other words, he is completely unimpressed. And by being enforced upon without reason, he becomes unreasonable himself. He is being restrained by something he cannot understand.

Fully 80 percent of existing moral codes today are defunct, and yet they are still in force. They have lost any reason for being, but they are still in force. And people recognize that these are no longer valid rules of conduct, and recognizing they are not valid rules of conduct, they say, "Why should we have anything to do with them?" But the second they say this, somebody has been along telling them that something awful will happen to them and that they are now immoral, that they are beyond the pale and that society will have nothing to do with them whatsoever because they have broken 80 percent of this moral code, or something of the sort. Nonsense! But it actually makes people bad. The end result of an arbitrary code is to make people bad, make them antisocial and put them beyond the pale.

I can give you some very interesting data, for instance, upon sexual morality. It might be a little strong for your tender ears, but sexual morality came about only secondarily to safeguard parentage or to keep inviolate the home, and other nonsense. It came about because one of the seven plagues of Egypt was venereal disease and a lot of people, when they got out of Egypt, were pretty bad off. And they didn't have anybody down the street with a penicillin gun to help them out. There was no cure, except abstinence.

So the fathers of the tribes said, "Sex is wicked. No more sex. Women have to be virgins at marriage." In other words, "How did you handle venereal disease?" didn't have a reasonable answer, so we will just give a lot of prohibition. And God help us, three thousand years later — with penicillin, Aureomycin, sulfanilamide and sulfathiazole and all the rest of it — we still have sexual morality.

Nobody is arguing in favor of sexual immorality or promiscuity, but to tell some young girl that she is forevermore lost to mankind because somebody seduced her is being just a little bit too nice. And you go into your high schools — the high schools of this great, thriving country of ours — you just start picking up the girls, one after the other, and questioning them on the subject of sex: You will find out that most of them consider themselves utterly lost, bad, with something horrible they have to hide for the rest of their lives — which puts them out of communication with the rest of the race

And all you have to do to make a bad human being is to convince them that they no longer have sufficient personal pride to be good, because they have to have personal pride to be good. And if you can convince them that they are bad, they lose their personal pride. And the only reason there is anybody up here in Lansing or Leavenworth is because they have lost their pride. You can trace any criminal that you pick up to a moment when he became convinced, of his own volition, that he was worthless and no good. He decided it himself.

One day he is running down the street and he suddenly sees somebody with a dime or something of the sort — and it is just one of those crazy kid incidents. So he knocks this little kid down in taking the dime. He is just going to play with him. Then the little kid antagonizes him in some way or another, and it all of a sudden comes over this guy, he must be pretty bad to be taking a dime away from some little kid — just like that. He may even give the dime back, but he will go on walking down the street.

What have you got? There is some kind of an old incident; there is some facsimile of great pain that has suddenly keyed in at that moment, actually — some facsimile which said he was no good. And he suddenly has apparently demonstrated it to himself that he is no good.

And is his course from there on never to take money away from small children? No, it is not. He is absolutely no good; he cannot trust himself anymore. He is worthless, and it is useless for this individual, now, to further be concerned about his own honesty. And when you get the individual in that position, he is thereafter criminal. Now, isn't that funny? All he loses is his pride. But that is all you have got to lose, is your pride and belief in your own being. When that is lost completely, an individual is done.

So, it so happens that the reverse effect of most of this cant about morality is to make criminals. If people would just lay off that just a little bit, you would probably have man settling back to battery and being in pretty good condition with regard to his fellow man.

It is just as though some of the moral codes which we have inherited today were tailor-made to damn individual men, just as viciously as though somebody had sat down and figured out how to PDH somebody.

By the way, this is no slam at religion, because religion doesn't happen to be much the source of it. It is the third dynamic that has created morality and immorality. It just happens that it is easily enforced on the religious line. But it was created in the MEST-universe line of the tribe, the group. Morality was an effort to first make the group survive and then later on became an effort to control the group, to inhibit them and to restrain them.

And the funny part of it is, the harder you restrain a man and the more you convince him he is no good, the more no-good he becomes. He does the dreadful thing of agreeing with you.

So, morality as a system to make men good has not kept man from making an atom bomb and indulging in war.

Ethics, on the other hand, can make man good, because it tells a man that he has a responsibility to himself and to others, and it is the responsibility of encouraging the survival of himself and others, and that ethical conduct is not simply that poor word, undefined word honest. That is another nook and cranny over here someplace. Ethical is reasonable. What is reasonable survival? And whatever is reasonable survival is ethical.

For instance, it is very non survival for bank tellers to stick bank notes in their pockets while they are at work. It is non survival: it is non survival for the bank and it is non survival for the teller. In the long run, he will lose more time than he is buying with the money he is stealing. I mean, it just works that way. It isn't that it is against the law, because you can go out there and write all the laws you want to in statute books and it doesn't make them laws. You can hire all the police you want to, and you cannot enforce an unjust or unreasonable law. Making a law has nothing whatsoever to do with ethics. It actually has very little to do with keeping a society in good order, in spite of the stress put on it.

Now, this leads up to an interesting therapy, and this is a therapy all by itself, this one. (There are lots of little package therapies that you could take all by themselves; and you could just work an individual on that one therapy and he would wind up at the other end feeling wonderful.) What is self determinism's actual intent — the actual unalloyed intent of an individual?

The basic intent of an individual is in the direction of a code. It is a code which really doesn't need to be written because it is inherent in the individual. The unaberrated individual follows this code instinctively. And the test of this code is that it is a therapy, because every time and every place it has been violated is a lock or an aberration on the individual.

You can take this code and use it for Straightwire. And you can just take clause one, clause two, clause three, clause four, and find out every time that this person broke this code. And if you find every time he broke the code on each one of these points, he will come up at the other end very high in tone, because you will have knocked these things out. The more he breaks this code, the less self-determined he is. And the less self-determined he is, the more he will break the code, becoming even more unself-determined. And it is the dwindling spiral of dishonesty, but it is more than that: it is the dwindling spiral of aberration, it is the dwindling spiral of ill health.

The knights, when they were galloping around the countryside rescuing fair maidens and everyone was in flower (I often wondered how they did that? Did the sprouts come out of their head, or where?) — these individuals had codes by which they lived. They took vows to follow these codes. Well, that is certainly putting guilt paint on lilies, because the code is there natively.

Here is an individual who isn't living by this code — he is pretty badly aberrated — and all of a sudden you educate him to live by this code. Maybe you can raise his tone. But the trick is to unaberrate him so that he will follow this code automatically.

And as I say, this code is a therapy: You can take each point of it, one right after the other, and you will find that by Straightwire or Lock Scanning you can pick up all the times in an individual's life when he has violated this clause. And you will find each one of them is aberrative and that he has worried about it since and he has been upset about it since — not because somebody is going to punish him, but because it was untrue to his own self-determinism .

I will read this relatively rapidly, but I think perhaps, maybe some of you can pick up points in this, just for subjective phenomena.

Never desert a comrade in need, in danger or in trouble.

Just never do that. It is not only non survival for comrades, it is very non survival for you in an unaberrated state.

Never withdraw allegiance once granted.

That comes under Postulate Processing. If you grant allegiance, you make a postulate that you are going to have allegiance to this group or this entity or this god. And immediately afterwards, perhaps, you say, "Well, I'm not going to." You see, it is ten times as bad to be a backslider as never to have been, because the person who never was and never did make the postulate, of course, isn't trying to overcome a postulate. But the person who says "I am now a true son of the church," who, a few years later all of a sudden discovers that he is not a true son of the church and he doesn't want to have anything to do with the church anymore, he really goes to the devil. The only thing that is making him go to the devil is that he postulated that he was. You see? So it is much worse to be a backslider than never to have been at all. That is good Catholic doctrine, by the way.

Never desert a group to which you owe your support.

To which you owe your support: a person sometimes has to differentiate what group he is supposed to support and how wide that support is and what these elements are. But a person who deserts a group will show up on a psychogalvanometer all the way down the line. You apply this testing to the psychogalvanometer and you find the most interesting reactions of the needle. You will find out that an individual who has deserted a group he was supposed to protect, for instance, will show up — even if it was a thousand years ago.

Never disparage yourself or minimize your strength or power.

Never disparage yourself or minimize your strength or power, no matter how much other people would like you to believe that this is the way to be polite, how to win friends and influence people. I can guarantee you that minimization of yourself, your strength, your power, is the fastest way in the world to make enemies and to be torn limb from limb, because it says “I’m weak; go ahead and attack me.” It says, “I’m a 1.1. Come on, boys.” It says “Go ahead, knock me flat; I’m nobody.”

And you will find in the most decadent societies and the oldest and most tired societies that the minimization of one’s strength and power is the order of the day. The Japanese says (inhaling sharply), “I withhold my foul breath from your face.” And then he says, “This unworthy one would like to say to glorious you that in his humble and ignorant opinion . . .” This is the chatter. And where are those people on the tone scale? Boy, they are almost dead! When one race in particular, the German race, was really in its power — a long time ago, back before Christ — if you were to ask a German knight “Now, come on, admit it: you aren’t the strongest knight in five tribes around; you know that,” he would probably have taken his battle ax to you. You would have insulted him.

By the way, the tribes were almost unaberrated. They had terrific, high self-determinism — very powerful-minded people. And the Romans were strung along the Rhine and trying to hold them down and so on, and they would get into a battle with them and some German knight would ride back and forth and he would announce that he was the strongest and he was the most powerful and he was the best and he was worth any 180 Romans, and would they send out 180 Romans so he could eat them up. So they would send out 180 Romans and he would eat them up. Very discouraging.

Those tribes suffered when they suffered at all because of their tremendous individualism. They would not hang together as political entities to fight Rome. And Rome could be way down tone scale, but it still had its legions in good organized marching formation and, as a result, they could hit a solid blow into these thin, individualistic tribe coalitions. As a result, the German nation never did much fighting. I mean, it never came out beyond the Rhine — except, of course, to capture Rome, North Africa, to every couple of generations wreck all of Europe for the last twenty-five hundred years. And it seems right now to be getting into a position where it is going to do it again.

You know, nobody is going to convince those people. But if you want to lick the German nation, the way to lick the German nation is to get in there and make it the vogue to negate self, to say that this is the polite way to live: “that this unworthy one . . .”; not to blow hard about what one can do, not to be egotistical and so on, that these are all bad; never to talk about what you can do, always listen to the other fellow say what he can do, and so on. Now, if you could do that, you would fix the German nation so we would never have any more trouble with them at any time ever.

Fortunately nobody is trying to teach America how to win friends and influence people, because that would put us so far down the tone scale we would probably lose. And I am glad to say that nobody does teach them anything about how to win friends and influence people, regardless of a book out on that subject.

By the way, an actual clinical check-back on the practices of how to win friends and influence people shows that this particular attitude toward life is the surest way to make an individual sick and hated. Low ARC. It says go into ARC with everybody you meet, regardless of where he is on the tone scale. That is a great trick. How sick do you want to be? And God, you might meet a Republican or something!

Now, this will be a tough part of this code. And I stress again that this code I’m talking to you about is actually a natural code. This is a natural purpose of self-determinism. This is native. This is basic.

Never need praise or approval.

Never need praise or approval; of course, never need sympathy, but never need praise or approval.

Gosh, people would have an awful hard time trying to figure that out, until all of a sudden they found out why they had to have praise and approval — because praise and approval are licenses to survive, and an individual would have to be down tone scale and non-self-determined indeed to have to go around and ask other individuals “Can I survive?”

Never compromise with your own reality.

If you think it is real, it is real. Don't ever compromise with it. Somebody else comes along and says, “Well, it's not real. Actually, it's on page sixty-four of Professor Wittebump's ‘Cranium Depository System,’ which came over from Germany — oh, pardon me, Bavaria or the Balkans at such and such a time, and it says on there that actually they are hallucinations and illusions which are on the left side of their right side but aren't under because they aren't up and submarines have fear.”

And you say, “Anybody who could be that confused must be right.” Well, that would be having your own reality compromised with.

Now, it is a mighty tough thing to tell somebody who would be very circuit-determined instead of self-determined that any time he considers something right, it is right for him, and he had better not change his mind about it — unless he picks up the postulate that made him think it was right, and then he can change his mind. Because accepting other realities than your own, against your own assessments, is a certain way to go down tone scale. You will get sick!

Never permit your affinity to be alloyed.

In other words, never permit a feeling of affection you have to be tampered with by somebody else. You can tamper with it if you want to, but don't let somebody else come along and tell you that the reason why you shouldn't like Jones is because . . . , and tell you a lot of things about Jones.

And don't let anybody come along and tell you you have to like Mrs. Smith, like they used to when you were a little kid, you know? You remember? “Yes, you have to like Aunt Bessie. Yes. You know, she has a lot of money.” (They don't tell you that; they probably lease it to you.) “But you have to like her. Now, it makes her feel so bad when you don't run in the room and kiss her when she comes in. You must run in and say hello, you know, and say . . .” That is the way to handle Aunt Bessie. Yes, but that is the way to kill yourself.

If you don't like Aunt Bessie, you will get lots further with Aunt Bessie, by the way, by saying “I don't like you! “ She will immediately get confused and say, “Why, dear?” This will worry her.

“Well, I don't like your nose. I don't like the way you're wearing glasses. And I don't like those clammy kisses you give me.” Aunt Bessie would probably put on Act 624 for you and say, “(sniff, sniff) You are very cruel to me.”

“Well, I don't mean to be cruel; I just want to tell you the truth.”

The first thing you know, Aunt Bessie would only be interested in one person in that family. That is the boy who would say those things to her. Fascinating!

When I was very young and in my prime, I used to have a very nasty habit of handling people who criticized my stories or writings. They would criticize my stories or writings, and instead of saying “Well, your opinion is really greatly appreciated,” just so they would shut up, or something like that, I used to say, “Who the hell are you?” I would say, “It isn't as if you can

write! “ In other words, I handled it delicately, with finesse! And there wasn’t a writer in New York City who would dare go to an editor and say “Hubbard’s stuff is off,” or anything. “Oh, Hubbard’s a great guy,” they would all say.

After the war, I was limping around and I had gotten into ARC by associating with doctors or something, and I was being polite to people. And I swear, these guys started to tear me limb from limb, going around telling the editors this and that and so forth.

So I got up tone scale again, and one day there was a whole flock of them sitting around picking apart one of my stories. So I picked apart all of their stories, only I did it at 2.2 and they were doing theirs at 1.1, and I won, and after that I didn’t have any trouble with them again. So I taught myself that lesson.

The very terrible trouble that all this can get you into when you avoid it — I mean, it is just ad infinitum.

Rapidly, the rest of these are:

Do not give or receive communication unless you yourself desire it.

Your self-determinism and your honor are more important than your immediate life.

Your integrity to yourself is more important than your body.

Never regret yesterday. Life is in you today and tomorrow is made for you.

Never fear to hurt another in a just cause.

If you want to have a fellow managing who is going to do a terrible job of it, get somebody who is afraid to hurt people, and you will have a lousy operation. You want somebody that can tear people to pieces any time that it is indicated, and you will have a good, smooth-running organization — not because it is force that is required, but honesty. Because the individual who is afraid to hurt people is going to be dishonest to those people. He is afraid to hurt them, you see, so he will wind up by hurting them a hundred times worse.

And, again, a repeat on an early one, particularly in management. Don’t desire to be liked or admired. Don’t give a damn. Because if you start giving a damn, you won’t be liked or admired. The only way to really be liked and admired is not to care whether you are liked or admired and to act most any way you please. And you will be surprised how many people will like and admire you, but that isn’t why you act the way you please. You act the way you please and as you should because it is honest to. See, it is kind of a lie to be one thing and act like another just because it is polite.

Be your own advisor, keep your own counsel and select your own decisions.

And that is a heck of a thing, isn’t it? You are educated from childhood to listen to the opinions of others. To you they are worth nothing, because only you have data enough to evaluate you and your actions. Only you have data enough. You can sit down and communicate for days, weeks, months, to a person and not even then give him all the data you have about you. So go around and get advice if you want to. It is not going to be good advice because it is not based on all the facts. Only you have those facts about you. So you only get along well if you are your own advisor. If you take counsel with yourself about what is right and what is wrong, you can take counsel with others in order to find out if your data agrees with theirs, or what between you can you pool as data which makes a new conclusion.

Be true to your own goals.

To cause things, one must be cause. And the primary requisite of cause is a statement of intention and goal.

The primary requisite to be cause is a clear statement of what you are trying to do. Only when you clearly state it can you avoid being yourself an eventual effect.

What am I trying to do? If you can't answer that you will foul up!

So even though it is a poor goal, it is better than none. You can put that down as a beautiful maxim. It sounds like one of those horrible truisms, but boy, it will fish you out of more holes than you can possibly imagine you can get yourself into. A poor goal is better than none.

You will find yourself, very often, spinning around. You don't know which way you are going or which way is up, because you decided all the goals you could put your eyes on were too vague or too poor or too unwanted to try to attain. And that itself is a bad aberration and shows a misdirection on your part and a misestimation on your own part and a lack of understanding on your own part of what you are doing.

There is no goal vast enough to absorb your total capabilities, because your total capabilities are so vast that they make goals. You are yourself cause. So how on earth can you set it up so cause can be anything else but cause? Unless you come down scale a little. But a goal, any kind of goal, is better than none.