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Relieve Social Pressure

cont'd from last week

by John Barrow
 Most people's anxiety in social situations are concerned with being judged and evaluated by others. This kind of evaluative anxiety has been divided into two components. The first of these is emotionality which includes physical reactions like muscles becoming tense, throat becoming dry, heart rate increasing, and perspiration. The second component, worry, involves a self-defeating preoccupation with thoughts regarding the adequacy of one's performance and the impression one makes upon others. How can you get enough control of evaluative anxiety so that you can react more spontaneously to others? The following strategies may be helpful to some of you. First, identify early signs that you are becoming anxious. Be becoming acquainted with the kinds of circumstances that bring on these feelings, you will know to be vigilant whenever you enter a potentially troublesome situation. Specify the first things you notice when you start getting anxious. You can learn to treat early signs of anxiety by instituting efforts to stop the spiral of anxious thoughts and feelings.

One possibility for combating the anxiety is to engage in a very relaxing activity, yoga and transendental meditation have been helpful in this way. At the Counselling Centre, we teach several relaxation exercises which can be useful. One of the simplest things you can do is to take several deep breaths - filling your lungs, holding your breath to the count of 5, and letting the air out very

slowly. Try to clear your mind and focus your attention solely on the breathing and the pleasant sensations as you exhale. Something as simple as this can help take enough of the edge off your anxiety to allow you to concentrate more on the particular situation.

Another possibility for controlling your discomfort is to attack the worry component of anxiety. First, identify the things you are telling yourself when you are anxious in social situations. Typically, these self-statements are centered internally on oneself rather than on the external situation - what others are saying and doing. They tend to become self-fulfilling in that they increase one's level of tension rather than reduce it.

3. Accuracy of self-evaluation

This last consideration may seem trivial, but it is quite important. Some of you are probably not as deficient as you think you are. It is hard for someone to gauge what the norm is with something like social skills. There is a tendency for a person to compare himself/herself with the few who excel at social skills rather than the many who do not. The people who stick out in your mind at a party are those who appear quite

outgoing and self-assured; you forget about all those who stay more in the background. It is obvious that people develop at different rates in their physical attributes. The same holds true for social development. The important thing is that you continue to develop your skills and self-confidence, not that you meet some imagined standard for your age group.

A final point to keep in mind is that there is room for many different kinds of people. A university environment often seems made to order for the extroverted type of person, who likes large, loud group activities and can mingle easily with others. However, there should be room for the more reflective person, who enjoys getting to know others on a more individual level in quieter surroundings.

The Counselling Centre offers counselling and therapy for those with social concerns. Also, the following programs which are offered on a group basis might be relevant to some of you: Social Skills and Confidence-building, Couples Communication, Project Date, Public Speaking Anxiety, and Anxiety Management.

The Centre is located on the 4th floor of the Student Union Building, Phone 424-2081.

Law students strike in Montreal

MONTREAL (CUP) - More than 1,200 law students marched on the Palais de Justice in Montreal this week protesting, "the indifference of authorities concerning the quality of professional legal training in Quebec."

It was the first time in recent years that law students from all over the province joined together in a protest.

The students went on strike to protest a "breach of contract" by the law deans and the Ministry of Education in the long-demanded revising of the professional training program which gives lawyers training in the more practical aspects of law.

In March of 1974, after years of discussion, the Bar and the law deans agreed to establish a new program that would take professional training away from the Bar, where it is currently taught, and place it back in the university milieu.

The Bar agreed to this only on the condition that law students be required to follow a uniform curriculum which would prepare them for the Bar exam.

Although this curriculum inhibits a student's ability to concentrate in areas of special interest, the students accepted the proposal and began taking the required courses. The new program was set to begin in September 1975.

But recently the authorities have indicated that the new program will not be ready for next year because the Ministry of Education

needs more time to consider the budgetary factors. This delay leaves students concerned that they will have to tolerate the poorly-regarded current program of the Bar or, even worse, that they might have nowhere to turn at all when the Bar cuts off funds.

The law students insist that they kept their part of the bargain and that the delay is due to bureaucratic incompetence.

"If they work together, they could have the program ready in time," said Jean-Rene Ranger, president of the Law Undergraduate Society. "They're just passing the responsibility back and forth."

The Junta that refreshes

NEW YORK (CUP-ENS) -- The J. Walter Thompson Advertising Agency has quietly terminated its \$8,000-a-month contract with the Chilean military junta.

The agency had been selected to mount a massive media campaign to improve the dictatorial junta's badly tarnished image in the United States.

However, smarting from adverse publicity regarding the agency's previous employment of Watergate defendants H.R. Haldeman, Ron Zeigler and Dwight Chapin, as well as threats of violence against some of the company's European offices, the agency has decided to opt out of the deal.



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