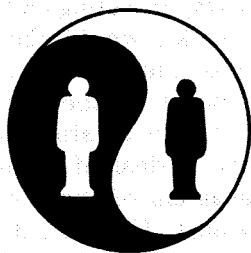


# II

## Zen Behaviorism: When the Zen Master Meets the Grand Conditioner



As we saw in Chapter 1, the Zen Master and the East teach us to be free—free *from* bondage to words, intellect, constructs, analysis, attachment to our “I”; and free *to* experience nature, others, ourselves. As we learned in Chapter 2, the Grand Conditioner and the West also teach us to be free—free *from* past conditioning patterns and habits; free *to* change our thoughts, actions, images; and free to choose a new way of acting and being in the world.

In this part of the book I would like to show ways in which the theory\* and practice of the two schools—Zen Buddhism and social learning theory (behavior therapy)—may be combined. Because this has never before been attempted, and because we are going to be covering a great deal of material in a short space, I would like to offer an anagram of chapter headings which may be useful in guiding us through Chapters 3 through 7—CREATE. Although this anagram is admittedly a device, it is certainly a fitting word in terms of our discussion. Both Eastern and Western schools of thought are optimistic about our possibilities for personal growth; both acknowledge that people *do* change, that we can assume a greater degree of control and responsibility over our own lives, that we can re-*create* ourselves in terms of a new vision,

\*We must make an important distinction between science and religion. Both operate on the basis of belief systems (theories about human nature). However, in science, empirical findings either confirm or deny the theory and cause the theory to be altered accordingly. In religion, the data does not alter the belief, and information that does not confirm merely serves to buttress the need for “stronger belief.” This, of course, is merely a theory about how science is supposed to work.

and that we can gain a greater measure of personal freedom and dignity.

Yet both schools also acknowledge that most of us are not initially free, and that some kind of crisis, whether large or small, is often necessary to make us aware of how illusory our sense of freedom is. In Chapter 3 we discuss the nature of the Crisis and some of the events that may cause it. In Chapter 4 we show how the crisis provides an opportunity for taking Responsibility for, and for making an Evaluation of, our lifestyles and values. This evaluation and responsibility, in turn, give us the opportunity to develop a new awareness, and make an affirmation and commitment to a new alternative. In Chapter 5 we discuss this new Alternative: an integrated East-West vision. In Chapter 6 Techniques for achieving this new alternative are illustrated; and in Chapter 7, Education, we summarize the information covered in Part II, including step-by-step "how to" instructions for using this book as an owner's manual.