

Chapter 2 The Complexity and Diversity within an Individual.
The Internal Contrast.

A man may be a genius in one respect and at the same time far below average in many other respects. You number among your friends those who are especially clever with their hands. They paint well, or cook well, or are unusually adept at working with wood. Yet these same friends may seem slow or stupid to you because they do not appear good at giving oral reports in a speech class or in their math courses. Since everyone has his limitations, you can never do justice to a person if you look only at his limitations. If you did, there would be no good people at all in the whole world. On the other hand it is just as bad for you to believe that a particular person has no faults.

Mahatma Gandhi's life is a very instructive example of the eternal diversity within man, the ubiquitous inner contrast. Gandhi was one of the most significant men of the 20th century. As the liberator of India and a pioneer in passive resistance, he became the leader of a new movement of great spiritual strength. Gandhi's staunch, highminded loyalty to his cause in obedience to a higher moral law together with his personal courage deserve infinite respect from his compatriots and all mankind. These are evidences of his genius. Nevertheless, we cannot help observing his mistakes. For some of Gandhi's teachings may produce more social lag and a relapse toward superstition unless his followers are alert to the errors. For example, Gandhi, in his belief in the sacredness of cattle, would not permit his seriously ill wife to have beef ~~broth~~ bouillon while she was hospitalized. Even this brilliant and truly venerable man was below average in some respects and prejudiced in others.

Another well-known example is that of Thomas Edison whose teachers felt he was addled and not competent enough to profit by education. Even he himself began to feel that he was incapable of learning and had it not been for his mother, a former school teacher, he might have become too discouraged to learn. A few decades later he was a world famous man, even the prototype of the successful inventor and one of the pioneers of new technology.

This diversity and complexity within human beings is not only detectable in men's talents and his mental capabilities but also in his moral qualities. Man, because of this inner contrast illustrated by the example of Edison, may be clever in one and at