Self and Others, by R. D. Laing

a. Quotes:
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b. General Notes:
   - Chapter 1 - Phantasy and Experience (pg. 17)
     - "The psychoanalytic thesis can be stated thus: i**t is not possible to prove the existence of unconscious phantasy to the person who is immersed in it. Unconscious phantasy can be known to be phantasy only after the person's own emergence from it**. This way of putting it is riddled with difficulties, and so is every other way. The situation is not assisted by the fact that the concept of unconscious phantasy has received very little scrutiny from an existential and phenomenological perspective. And yet no comprehensive account of human relations can ignore it. A paper by Susan Isaacs (1952) on 'The nature and function of Phantasy' provides a convenient starting-point. I choose to begin with this version of the psychoanalytic theory of phantasy because it remains an influential study that has not been superseded and because Isaacs seems to regard phantasy as, among other things, a mode of experience. Isaacs states that she is 'mostly concerned with the definition of "phantasy"; that is to say, with describing the series of facts which the use of the term helps us to identify, to organize and to relate to other significant facts' (p. 67). She summarizes her argument as follows: (1) The concept of phantasy has gradually widened in psychoanalytic thought. It now requires clarification and explicit expansion in order to integrate all the relevant facts. (2) On the views here developed: (a) Phantasies are the primary content of unconscious mental processes. (b) Unconscious phantasies are primarily about bodies, and represent instinctual aims towards objects. (c) These phantasies are, in the first instance, the psychic representatives of libidinal and destructive instincts. Early in development they also become elaborated into defences as well as wish-fulfilments and anxiety contents. (d) Freud's postulated 'hallucinatory wish-fulfilment' and his 'primary identification', 'introjection', and 'projection' are the basis of the phantasy life. (e) Through external experience, phantasies become elaborated and capable of expression, but they do not depend upon such experience for their existence. (f) Phantasies are not dependent upon words, although they may under certain conditions be capable of expression in words. (g) The earliest phantasies are experienced as sensations: later they take the form of plastic images and dramatic representations. (h) Phantasies have both psychic and bodily effects, e.g. in conversion symptoms, bodily qualities, character and personality, neurotic symptoms, inhibitions and sublimations. (i) Unconscious phantasies form the operative link between instincts and mechanism. When studied in detail, every variety of ego-mechanism can be seen to arise from specific sorts of phantasy, which in the last resort have their origin in instinctual impulses. "The ego is a differentiated part of the id.' A 'mechanism' is an abstract general term describing certain mental processes which are experienced by the subject as unconscious phantasies. (j) Adaptation to reality and reality-thinking require the support of concurrent unconscious phantasies. Observation of the ways in which knowledge of the external world develops shows how the child's phantasy contributes to his learning. (k) Unconscious phantasies exert a continuous influence throughout life, both in normal and neurotic people, the differences lying in the specific character of the dominant phantasies, the desire or anxiety associated with them and their interplay with each other and with external reality (PP. III-12). The term phantasy is intended to point to a series of facts." (pg. 17-19)
     - "In my experience, **self does not experience the experience of other directly**" (pg. 19)
       - "To be consistent, we appear to have no option but to maintain that self's knowledge of other's experience, of any kind, conscious or unconscious, is based at any age of self or other entirely upon inference, as Isaacs states firmly in the second sentence above about unconscious phantasy. Since to Isaacs phantasies are 'inner', 'mental' events, only one's own phantasies are directly available to self. They can only be inferred by the other. 'The idea that 'the mind', 'the unconscious', or 'phantasy' is located inside a person and, in that sense, is inaccessible to the other, has far-reaching effects on the whole of psychoanalytic theory and method. Isaacs, in referring not simply to imagination, daydreams, or reveries, but to 'unconscious phantasy, is making two types of inference from her position as the own person, namely: she is inferring something about the other's experience, and she is inferring that this is something of which the other is unaware. This seems to mean that there is a whole type of experience, as well as specific 'content' of experience, of which the other who 'has' the imputed experience knows, or may know, nothing. From her premises, corroboration of her self's inferences by explicit testimony from the other is not necessary to confirm these particular inferences." (pg. 20)
     - "Let us distinguish two usages of 'unconscious'. First, the term 'unconscious' may refer to dynamic structures, functions, mechanisms, processes that are meant to explain a person's actions or experiences. Such structures, functions, mechanisms, or processes are outside experience but are used to 'explain' experience, whether called conscious or unconscious. These concepts lie outside experience, but start from inferences about experience. If these inferences are incorrect, everything built upon them is completely wrong. In the second place, 'unconscious' may signify that the user of the term is claiming that he or the other is unaware of part of his own experience, despite the apparent absurdity of this claim." (pg. 21)
     - "The 'unconscious' is what we do not communicate, to ourselves or to one another." (pg. 32)
       - **I disagree entirely. The unconscious is located in language, and is discoverable through its analysis.*
   - Chapter 2 - Phantasy and Communication (pg. 33)
     - "All groups operate by means of phantasy" (pg. 39)
       - "A false social sense of reality entails…phantasy unrecognized as such" (pg. 40)
         - "The greater need there is to get out of an untenable position, the less chance there is of doing so. The more untenable a position is, the more difficult it is to get out of it. This tautology is worth pondering upon. By untenable, I mean that it is impossible to leave and impossible to stay. In an alienated untenable position one does not realize this. Hence it is impossible to get out." (pg. 41)
           - "[W]ithin the phantasy of the nexus, to leave is an act of ingratitude, or cruelty, or suicide, or murder. First steps have to be taken still within the phantasy, before it can be apperceived as such. Herein is the risk of defeat and madness." (pg. 43)
   - Chapter 3 - Pretence and Elusion (pg. 44)
     - "**Elusion is a way of getting round conflict without direct confrontation, or its resolution.** It eludes conflict by playing off one modality of experience against another. She imagines she is not married and then imagines she is. Elusive spirals go on and on. Some people pretend for years that they have had gratifying sexual relations. Their lives become so based on pretence that they lose the distinction between what is really gratifying or frustrating and what they are pretending is gratifying or frustrating." (pg. 47)
     - "The self of the other is eluded when the other is related to as the embodiment of phantasy. One pretends to accept the other 'as he is', but when one most thinks one is doing so, one most treats the other as embodied phantom 'as if' he or she were another person, and at the same time as if a private possession. In Winnicott's (I958) term, the other is treated as a transitional object'. This is yet another pretence. Self recognizes in one sense, or on one level, the other as other, as a 'person', not as a 'part-object' or as a thing, but counterfeits the full acceptance of this. It is helpful to this end if the other will collude with one's elusion and illusions. Characteristically one becomes frightened and angry to discover the other not to be the embodiment of one's phantasy prototype of the other. Living in this way, one may not lack frequent illusionment, but is likely to be subject to frequent disillusions. Each other person encountered may be seen as an oasis in the desert of one's actual life, only to turn into a mirage on getting closer. The dilution of what is, with what is not, in this elusive confusion, has the effect not of potentiating either but of diluting each, and entails some degree of depersonalization and derealization, only partly recognized. In this case one lives in a peculiar limbo. In one's flights from and towards satisfaction one may have formed 'inner' bonds with others through their imagined presence to oneself, undreamed of by more easily satisfied people. But discontent with 'mere' imagination may make one dependent on others in the hope that they will embody one's imagination and help one to elude the frightening and sinister aspects of one's phantasy. The need to seek actual others rather than imaginary others to embody one's phantasy may cause one intense involvement with people and

phantasy. The need to seek actual others rather than imaginary others to embody one's phantasy may cause one intense involvement with people and things outside oneself. One searches in actual others for the satisfaction that eludes one in imagination, and imagines all the time the satisfactions lacking in 'reality'." (pg. 48-49)

- "**[T]he schizophrenic** does not take for granted his own person (and other persons) as being an adequately embodied, alive, real, substantial, and continuous being, who is at one place at one time and at a different place at a different time, remaining the 'same' throughout. In the absence of this 'base' he **lacks the usual sense of personal unity, a sense of himself as the agent of his own actions rather than as a robot, a machine, a thing, and of being the author of his own perceptions, but rather feels that someone else is using his eyes, his ears, etc.** Man is always between being and non-being, but nonbeing is not necessarily experienced as personal disintegration. The insecurity attendant upon a precariously established personal unity is one form of ontological insecurity, if this term is used to denote the insecurity inescapably within the heart of man's finite being." (pg. 51)
  - "The hysteric, Winnicott has suggested, is 'trying to get to a madness'. Elusion is self-generated. Madness may be sought as a way out. But although one may succeed in getting a certificate of insanity, it remains a counterfeit. The counterfeit can engulf one's life as much as the 'real thing'. But 'real' madness can be as elusive as 'real' sanity. Not all who would can be psychotic." (pg. 53)
- Chapter 4 - The Counterpoint to Experience (pg. 54)
  - See text
- Chapter 5 - The Coldness of Death (pg. 68)
  - "**Our habitual sense of being related to others, of being ourselves 'connected', of being real and alive, is often supported by a phantasy modality of which we are unaware.** Phantasy is not usually experienced as unreal. 'Real' and alive, in contrast to 'unreal' and dead, are more qualities of phantasy than of imagination. Being in love may be an experience largely "in' phantasy, and nothing may be more real or alive." (pg. 75)
- Chapter 6 - Complementary Identity (pg. 81)
  - "[**W]e cannot give an undistorted account of ' a person' without giving an account of his relation with others.** Even an account of one person cannot afford to forget that **each person is always acting upon others and acted upon by others**. The others are there also. No one acts or experiences in a vacuum. The person whom we describe, and over whom we theorize, is not the only agent in his world'. How he perceives and acts towards the others, how they perceive and act towards him, how he perceives them as perceiving him, how they perceive him as perceiving them, are all aspects of 'the situation'. They are all pertinent to understanding one person's participation in it." (pg. 81-82)
    - "In phantasy, one destroys what one hates, and hates what one cannot have since one has destroyed it. The unresponsive or impervious other induces a sense of emptiness and impotence in self. Destruction in phantasy of the other sets off a vicious circle. Self receives and gives. Other is needed to give and to receive. The more self receives, the more self needs to give. The more other cannot receive, the more self needs to destroy. The more self destroys other, the more empty self becomes. The more empty the more envious, the more envious the more destructive." (pg. 84)
  - "**Every relationship implies a definition of self by other and other by self**. This complementarity can be central or peripheral, have greater or less dynamic significance at different periods of one's life. At some point a child rebels against the nexus of bonds which bind him to these parents and siblings whom he has not chosen; he does not wish to be defined and identified as his father's son, or sister's brother. These people may seem strangers to him. Surely, he has affinities with parents who are finer, wiser, more exalted. Yet, this nexus of complementary bonds is an anchor that others long for. Orphans and adopted children sometimes develop a tremendously strong desire to find out 'who they are', by tracing the father and mother who conceived them. They feel incomplete for want of a father or mother, whose absence leaves their concept of self incomplete. Something tangible, even a plaque on a tombstone, may be enough. It seems to allow "closure'. A person's 'own' identity cannot be completely abstracted from his identity-for-others. His identity-for-himself; the identity others ascribe to him; the identities he attributes to them; the identity or identities he thinks they attribute to him; what he thinks they think he thinks they think…'**Identity**' is that whereby one feels one is the same, in this place, this time as at that time and at that place, past or future; it **is that by which one is identified**. I have the impression that most people tend to come to feel that they are the same continuous beings through womb, to tomb. And that this 'identity', the more it is phantasy, is the more intensely defended. An 'identity' sometimes becomes an 'object' that a person has or feels he has lost, and starts to search for. Many primitive phantasies axe attached to identity and 'its' objectification and reification. The frequently described modern search for' identity' becomes another phantasy scenario. Intense frustration arises from failure to find that other required to establish a satisfactory 'identity'. Other people become a sort of identity kit, whereby one can piece together a picture of oneself. One recognizes oneself in that old smile of recognition from that old friend. Shame, rather than guilt, appears to arise when a person finds himself condemned to an identity as the complement of another he wishes to repudiate, but cannot. It is difficult to establish a consistent identity for oneself - that is, to see oneself consistently in the same way - if definitions of oneself by others are inconsistent or mutually exclusive. The other may define self simultaneously in incompatible ways. Two or more others may identify self simultaneously in compatible ways. To 'fit in with' them all or to repudiate them all may be impossible. Hence mystification, confusion, and conflict." (pg. 86-87)
  - "It is difficult to predict what identity a man will embrace. It might be called pivotal, when his whole hierarchy of intentions and projects, whom and what he loves, hates, and fears, his sense of success or failure, pivot around it. It may only be through some apparently insignificant event that its pivoted character comes to light. Something happens that is incompatible with this pivotal identity, perhaps hidden, that determines his whole system of meaning. A linch-pin is removed that had been holding a whole world together. The whole meaning of reality crumbles. It 'takes the ground from under his feet'. Participation in the world, such terms as 'contact with' and 'sense of reality, are empty sounds. A desperate crisis indeed. Either one restructures one's whole 'real' view of others and the world and redefines one's 'real' self; or one annuls the chasm between what is the case and what one knows to be the case, by taking one's stand on what one knows. There is nothing more real and indubitable than pure phantasy; nothing more obvious; nothing less necessary and more easy to prove. **One's self-identity is the story one tells one's self of who one is. One's need to believe this story often seems to be one's desire to discount another story**, that is more primitive and more terrible. The need to pivot one's life around a complementary identity (i.e. I am my father's son, husband's wife betokens a dread of phantasy and hatred of what is." (pg. 93)
  - "[**O]ne's first social identity is conferred on one. We learn to be whom we are told we are**" (pg. 95)
- Chapter 7 - Confirmation and Disconfirmation (pg. 98)
  - "Many families have now been studied (not only those in which one person has come to be regarded as psychotic where there is little genuine confirmation of the parents by each other and of the child by each parent, separately or together, but this may not be obvious, though it can be studied objectively. One finds interactions marked by pseudo-confirmation, by acts which masquerade as confirming but are counterfeit. Pretences at confirmation go through the appearances of confirmation. The absence of genuine confirmation, or pseudo-confirmation, may take the form of confirming a fiction the child is taken to be, without the actual child receiving recognition. The characteristic family pattern that has emerged from the studies of the families of schizophrenics does not so much involve a child who is subject to outright neglect or even to obvious trauma, but a child who has been subjected to subtle but persistent disconfirmation, usually unwittingly. **For many years lack of genuine confirmation takes the form of actively confirming a false self, so that the person whose false self is confirmed and real self disconfirmed is placed in a false position. Someone in a false position feels guilt, shame, or anxiety at not being false**. Confirmation of a false self goes on without anyone in the family being aware that this is the state of affairs. The schizogenic potential of the situation seems to reside largely in the fact that it is not recognized by anyone; or if the mother or father or some other member or friend of the family is aware of this state of affairs, it is not brought into the open and no effort is made to intervene - if such intervention were only to state the truth of the matter. Here we shall look at some acts of confirmation or disconfirmation, without prejudgements as to whether or to what extent they are schizogenic. There may be a failure to recognize a person as agent.

The attribution of agency to human beings is one way we distinguish people from things set in motion by agents external to themselves. In some childhoods this quality of being human, whereby one can come to feel that one is an agent in one's own right, is not confirmed by the original significant others. It is illuminating to match observations on the way a child is treated by his parents with the 'delusions' the psychotic child or adult expresses." (pg. 100-101)

- "**Some people are more sensitive than others to not being recognized as human beings. If someone is very sensitive in this respect, they stand a good chance of being diagnosed as schizophrenic.**" (pg. 106)

- Chapter 8 - Collusion (pg. 108)
  - "The term 'collusion' has kinship with de-lusion, il-lusion, and e-lusion. Lusion comes from the verb ludere, whose meaning varies in classical and late Latin. It can mean to play, to play at, or to make a sport of, to mock, to deceive. Delusion implies total self-deception. Illusion, as frequently used psychoanalytically, implies a capacity to deceive oneself under a strong wish, but does not involve self-deception as total as delusion. Collusion has resonances of playing at and of deception. It is a game played by two or more people whereby they deceive themselves. The game is the game of mutual self-deception. Whereas delusion and elusion and illusion can be applied to one person, collusion is necessarily a two-or-more-person game. Each plays the other's game, though he may not necessarily be fully aware of doing so. An essential feature of this game is not admitting that it is a game. When the one person is predominantly the passive 'victim' (one can be victimized for not playing 'victim') of a trick or manoeuvre or manipulation, the relationship will not be called collusive. It will be difficult in practice to determine whether or to what extent a relationship is collusive. But the distinction is still worth making in theory. A slave may collude with his master in being a slave to save his life, even to the point of carrying out orders that are self-destructive. Two people in relation may confirm each other or genuinely complement each other. Still, to disclose oneself to the other is hard without confidence in oneself and trust in the other. Desire for confirmation from each is present in both, but each is caught between trust and mistrust, confidence and despair, and both settle for counterfeit acts of confirmation on the basis of pretence. To do so both must play the game of collusion." (pg. 108-109)
  - "This is something other than what is meant by **the psychoanalytic term 'projection'. The one person does not use the other merely as a hook to hang projections on. He strives to find in the other, or to induce the other to become, the very embodiment of projection**. **The other person's collusion is required to "complement' the identity self feels impelled to sustain.** One can experience a peculiar form of guilt, specific, I think, to this disjunction. If one refuses collusion, one feels guilt for not being or not becoming the embodiment of the complement demanded by the other for his identity. However if one does succumb, if one is seduced, one becomes estranged from one's self and is guilty thereby of self-betrayal. If one does not take fright at experiencing oneself as engulfed by the other, resent being 'used', or in some way rebel against collusion, then under pressure from a false guilt one may become, as one may feel, the unwilling accomplice or victim of the other, although being 'the victim' may be also an act of collusion. But the other may induce self to assume that false self that hankers to be and that he may embody only too gladly, especially if other reciprocates by embodying a fiction that self desires. We shall leave for a moment more detailed considerations of forms and techniques of open or concealed, consistent or incompatible, appeals or coercions that one person can make to another, and the widely different ways that other may experience and react to them. Collusion is always clinched when self finds in other that other who will 'confirm' self in the false self that is trying to make real, and vice versa. The ground is then set for prolonged mutual evasion of truth and true fulfilment. Each has found an other to endorse his own false notion of himself and to give this appearance a semblance of reality." (pg. 110-111)
  - "It is worth examining the 'place' of the therapist in such a group, and the 'place' the persons in the group feel themselves to have in relation to him. **One basic function of genuinely analytical or existential therapy is the provision of a setting in which as little as possible impedes each person's capacity to discover his own self.** Without beginning to enter into a full discussion of this, one can comment on one aspect of the therapist's position. The therapist's intention is not to allow himself to collude with the patients in adopting a position in their phantasy-system: and, alternatively, not to use the patients to embody any phantasy of his own. The group was frequently dominated by a phantasy, expressed in the issue of whether I had the answer to their problems. Their problem was to decide if I had or had not 'the answer'; and if I had, how to extract it from me. My function was not to collude in either the group's illusionment or its disillusionment, and to try to articulate the underlying phantasy-systems. A large part of the art of therapy is in the tact and lucidity with which the analyst points out the ways in which collusion maintains illusions or disguises delusions. The dominant phantasy in a group may be that the therapist has ' the answer, and that if they had 'the answer' they would not suffer. The therapist's task is then like the Zen Master's, to point out that suffering is not due to not getting 'the answer', but is the very state of desire that assumes the existence of that kind of answer, and the frustration of never getting it. As Burtt (1955) says of the teachings of Hsi Yun, the Zen Master of about A.D. 840, his intention was to make the questioner aware "that the real difficulty is not so much in his questions being unanswerable as in his continuing in the state of mind that leads him to ask them' (p. 195). Illusionment or disillusionment may equally be based on the same phantasy. There is 'an answer' somewhere; or there is 'no answer' anywhere. The same issue either way. Therapy without collusion cannot help but frustrate desires generated by phantasy." (pg. 123-124)

- Chapter 9 - False and Untenable Positions (pg. 125)
  - "**To be 'authentic' is to be true to oneself, to be what one is, to be 'genuine'. To be 'inauthentic' is to not be oneself, to be false to oneself: to be not as one appears to be, to be counterfeit. We tend to link the categories of truth and reality by saying that a genuine act is real, but that a person who habitually uses action as a masquerade is not real.** In everyday speech, and in more systematic theory which, to adapt a remark of William James, is but an unduly obstinate attempt to think clearly, 'authentic' action or "inauthentic' action can be viewed from many angles: from each angle different features come to the fore. The intensification of the being of the agent through self-disclosure, through making patent the latent self, is the meaning of Nietzsche's 'will to power'. It is the 'weak' man who, in lieu of potentiating himself genuinely, counterfeits his impotence by dominating and controlling others, by idealizing physical strength or sexual potency, in the restricted sense of the capacity to have erections and to ejaculate. **The act that is genuine, revealing, and potentiating is felt by me as fulfilling. This is the only actual fulfillment of which I can properly speak. It is an act that is me: in this action I am myself. I put myself 'in' it.** In so far as I put myself "into' what I do, I become myself through this doing. I know also that the converse is true, when I feel 'empty", or am haunted by futility. In the light of such impressions of myself, I am compelled to see the other. I suspect 'frantic' activity in another. I sense that be senses in his actions a lack of intrinsic meaning: that in clinging to external formulas and dogmas he senses his emptiness. I expect that such a person will envy and resent others. If, from my impression of myself, I see him as not fulfilling himself by not putting himself into his own future, I am alert to various ways in which he will try to fill his emptiness. One fills oneself with others (introjective identification) or lives vicariously by living through the lives of others (projective identification). One's 'own' life comes to a stop. One goes round in a circle, in a whirl, going everywhere and getting nowhere. **An existential phenomenology of action is concerned with the movements, the twists and turns, of the person as one who puts himself, in different ways, more or less, into what he does**. It is concerned to elucidate on what one bases such judgements or attributions, whether about self or other. The psychiatrist may base a diagnosis of schizophrenia as much on what he considers the patient's relation to his actions to be, as on the acts themselves viewed as 'behaviour' pure and simple. If the psychiatrist or psychopathologist under the illusion that he sees the other person in a purely 'objective' way, fails to subject his diagnosis by 'signs' and 'symptoms' to a critical examination, he is condemned by these "clinical' categories to an impoverished and twisted view of the other. Such 'clinical' categories as schizoid, autistic, 'impoverished' affect, ' withdrawal', all presuppose that there are reliable, valid impersonal criteria for making attributions about the other person's relation to his actions. There are no such reliable or valid criteria. It is no simple oversight that such is the case, and the situation is unlikely to be remedied by someone setting up 'reliability' studies. The estrangement of our own theory from our own actions goes deep into our historical situation." (pg. 127-128)
  - "When a man's words, gestures, acts, disclose his real intentions, one says they are genuine and not counterfeit as coin is genuine and not counterfeit. His frown of disapproval, his word of encouragement, his smile of pleasure, are the true and genuine currency of himself. Actions may

counterfeit. His frown of disapproval, his word of encouragement, his smile of pleasure, are the true and genuine currency of himself. Actions may be attributed, by self to self or self to other, as revealing or concealing, 'strong' or 'weak', 'fulfilling' or 'emptying'; making 'real' the being of the doer, making him more 'unreal' , more creative, or more destructive. The man who does not reveal himself or is not 'seen' by the others when he does, may turn, in partial despair, to other modes of self-disclosure. The exhibitionist shows off his body, or a part of his body, or some highly prized function or skill trying to overcome that haunting isolation and loneliness of one who feels his 'real' or 'true' self has never been disclosed to and confirmed by others. The man who compulsively exhibits his penis substitutes disclosure through this 'thing' rather than through living. Analysis of such a person can show that it is not just this thing that he would have others gasp at, but himself, whose actions are "weak', 'phoney', 'unreal", and impress no one. He wishes to put his would-be 'true' self into his penis. But instead of making patent his latent self and thereby "intensifying' his being, he holds himself in (inhibits himself) and holds out (exhibits) his penis. The person in a false position may not be aware of being 'in' such a position. Only to the extent that he is not completely 'in' this position, that he is not totally estranged from his 'own' experience and actions, can he experience his position as false. Perhaps without his realizing it his 'life' comes to a stop. With no real future of his own, he may be in that supreme despair which is, as Kierkegaard says, not to know he is in despair. He is in despair because he has lost 'his own' future, and so can have no genuine hope or trust in any future. The person in a false position has lost a starting-point of his own from which to throw or thrust himself, that is, to project himself, forward. He has lost the place. He does not know where he is or where he is going. He cannot get anywhere however hard he tries. In despair, just as one place is the same as another, so one time is the same as another. The future is the resultant of the present, the present is the resultant of the past, and past is unalterable. Such realizations may break through in dreams. We stated above that no matter how hectically a person may move about in space or engage in business or affairs, if all this is 'false', 'he', existentially considered, is not getting anywhere. He remains "in a whirl', 'going round in circles'. No matter how hard he runs he is never moving from the same spot." (pg. 130-131)

- "**Every human being, whether child or adult, seems to require significance, that is, place in another person's world.** Adults and children seek 'position' in the eyes of others, a position that offers room to move. It is difficult to imagine many who would choose unlimited freedom within a nexus of personal relations, if anything they did had no significance for anyone else. Would anyone choose freedom if nothing he did mattered to anyone? It seems to be a universal human desire to wish to occupy a place in the world of at least one other person. Perhaps the greatest solace in religion is the sense that one lives in the Presence of an Other. Most people at some time in their lives seek the experience, whether or not they have found it in early life, of occupying first place, if not the only significant place, in at least one other person's world." (pg. 136)
  - "What constantly preoccupies and torments the paranoid is usually the precise opposite of what at first is most apparent. He is persecuted by being the centre of everyone else's world, yet he is preoccupied with the thought that he never occupies first place in anyone's affection. He is often prone to obsessive jealousy - that cold jealousy Minkowski (1933) has described in the paranoid - a jealousy without love, occurring within a profoundly different 'lived' space from the usual. Unable to experience himself as significant for another, he develops a delusionally significant place for himself in the world of others. Others see him as living in a world of his own. Ironically this is true and not true. For there is also a sense that he lives not so much in his own world, but in the empty place he supposes he does not occupy in the others' world. He appears to be profoundly self-centred, but the more self-centred he appears, the more he is trying to convince himself that he is the centre of their world. Peter (Laing, 1960) was a young man who was preoccupied with guilt because he occupied a place in the world, even in a physical sense. He could not realize, make real to himself, that he had the right to have any presence for others. Unable to realize his actual presence, he filled in this gap in his realization of himself by phantasy experience that tended to become more and more delusional. A peculiar aspect of his childhood was that his presence in the world was largely ignored. No weight was given to the fact that he was in the same room while his parents had inter-course. He had been physically cared for in that he had been well fed and kept warm, and underwent no physical separation from his parents during his earlier years. Yet he had been consistently treated as though he did not 'really' exist. **Perhaps worse than the experience of physical separation was to be in the same room as his parents and ignored, not malevolently, but through sheer indifference**. For as long as he could rem-ember, he had felt uneasily guilty simply at having presence for others, or at wanting to be present for others. Instead of realizing a sense of his own presence for others, he developed a delusional sense of his presence for others. He believed that to make his presence felt he would have to go to such extremes that no one would want to have anything to do with him, and thus he came to make the central enterprise of his life to be nobody. This man's primal-scene memories and his consequent phantasy prototype of triadic situations were characterized not so much by jealousy and anger on his part, and subsequent guilt and anxiety, as by shame and despair that he did not seem able to make any difference to his parents in any way. He felt himself to be only an additional part of the furniture of their lives which they cared for as they cared for their other material possessions." (pg. 136-138)
- "**In an untenable position, no matter how he feels or how he acts, or what meaning the situation has, his feelings are denuded of validity, his acts are stripped of their motives, intentions, and consequences, the situation is robbed of its meaning**. This may be done unintentionally, as a by-product of each person's self-deception. **Those who deceive themselves are obliged to deceive others**. It is impossible for me to maintain a false picture of myself unless I falsify your picture of yourself and of me. I must disparage you if you are genuine, accuse you of being a phoney when you comply with what I want, say you are selfish if you go your own way, ridicule you for being immature if you try to be unselfish, and so on. The person caught within such a muddle does not know whether he is coming or going. In these circumstances what we call psychosis may be a desperate effort to hold on to something." (pg. 143)

- Chapter 10 - Attributes and Injunctions (pg. 151)
  - "In the area of disjunction between the person's 'own' intentions and those attributed to him by other, issues of secrecy, deception of the other or deception of oneself, equivocation, lying, or telling the truth come into play. Much guilt and shame have to be understood in terms of such discrepancies, over such matters as being a fake, being a phoney. True guilt is guilt at the obligation one owes to oneself to be oneself, to actualize oneself. False guilt is guilt felt at not being what other people feel one ought to be or assume that one is. **It is an achievement to realize one is not necessarily who others take one to be. Such awareness of discrepancy between self-identity, being-for-oneself, and being-for-others, is painful.** There is a strong tendency to feel guilt, anxiety, anger, or doubt if self-attributions are disjunctive with attributions made about self by other, particularly when attributions are taken as injunctions." (pg. 152)
- Appendix (pg. 174)
  - "**Only if two people carry out reciprocally 'successful' acts of attribution can any genuine relationship between them begin. Interpersonal life is conducted in a nexus of persons, in which each person is guessing, assuming, inferring, believing, trusting, or suspecting, generally being happy or tormented by his phantasy of the others' experience, motives, and intentions.** And one has phantasies not only about what the other himself experiences and intends, but also about his phantasies about one's own experience and intentions, and about his phantasies about one's phantasies about his phantasies about one's experience, etc. There could be no greater mistake than to suppose that these issues are mere 'theoretical' complexities, of little practical relevance. There are some people who conduct their lives at several phantasy steps away from their own immediate experience or their own intentions. Family interactions are often dominated by these issues. An analyst or psychotherapist is constantly using his capacity to make, it is hoped, valid inferences about the patient's phantasies about him." (pg. 174)

c. Further Readings:
- The nature and function of phantasy, by S. Isaacs https://winnicottisrael.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/isaacs-the-nature-and-function-of-phantasy.pdf