mechanisms; by providing companionship and resources, friends alleviate stress in a person’s life.

There are cultural differences in the way friends are viewed across the world. In cultures that value familial network, such as the Asian culture, the function and role of a friend are often found within the family structure, and friendships are not given the same weight of importance as in another culture. There are also varying definitions as to what constitutes a friend. Someone might call another person “friend” because they have mutual interests and activities, while another person considers a friend someone he shares similar attitudes, values, and beliefs.

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**Erich Fromm**

1900-1980

German-born American psychoanalyst, social philosopher, and scholar whose writings have attracted the interest of a large general audience.

Erich Fromm was born in Frankfurt, Germany, and studied sociology and psychology at the universities of Frankfurt and Heidelberg, where he received his Ph.D. in 1922. Fromm was trained in psychoanalysis at the University of Munich and at the Psychoanalytic Institute of Berlin. In 1925, he began his practice and was associated with the influential Institute for Social Research in Frankfurt. Although Fromm began his professional career as a disciple of Sigmund Freud, he soon began to differ with the Freudian emphasis on unconscious drives and neglect of the effects of social and economic forces on personality. The theories he developed integrate psychology with cultural analysis and Marxist historical materialism. Fromm argued that each socioeconomic class fosters a particular character, governed by ideas that justify and maintain it and that the ultimate purpose of social character is to orient the individual toward those tasks that will assure the perpetuation of the socioeconomic system.

Fromm consistently advocated the primacy of personal relationships and devotion to the common good over subservience to a mechanistic superstate in his work. He believed that humanity had a dual relationship with nature, which they belong to but also transcend. According to Fromm, the unique character of human existence gives rise to five basic needs. First, human beings, having lost their original oneness with nature, need relatedness in order to overcome their essential isolation. They also need to transcend their own nature, as well as the passivity and randomness of existence, which can be accomplished either positively—by loving and creat-

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Erich Fromm (The Library of Congress. Reproduced with permission.)

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Fromm identified several character orientations found in Western society. The receptive character can only take and not give; the hoarding character, threatened by the outside world, can not share; the exploitative character satisfies desires through force and deviousness; and the marketing character—created by the impersonal nature of modern society—sees itself as a cog in a machine, or as a commodity to be bought or sold. Contrasting with these negative orientations is the productive character, capable of loving and realizing its full potential, and devoted to the common good of humanity. Fromm later described two additional character types: the necrophilous character, attracted to death, and the biophilous character, drawn to life.

Fromm emigrated to the United States in 1934, following the rise of Nazism in Germany. In America,
Fromm became increasingly controversial in orthodox Freudian circles. He served on the faculties of, and lectured at, several universities in the United States, including Columbia University and Yale University, and in Mexico. In 1941, Fromm wrote *Escape from Freedom*, an analysis of totalitarianism that would become a classic in political philosophy and intellectual history as well as in psychology. According to Fromm, the “escape” from freedom experienced upon reaching adulthood and gaining independence from one’s parents leads to a profound sense of loneliness and isolation, which the individual attempts to escape by establishing some type of bond with society. In Fromm’s view, totalitarianism offered the individual a refuge from individual isolation through social conformity and submission to authority. Among his other important books in the areas of psychology, ethics, religion, and history are *Man for Himself* (1947), *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (1950), *The Forgotten Language* (1951), *The Sane Society* (1955), *The Art of Loving* (1956), *Beyond the Chains of Illusion* (1962), *The Heart of Man* (1964), *You Shall Be As Gods* (1966), *The Revolution of Hope* (1968), *Social Character in a Mexican Village* (1970), *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1973), and *To Have or To Be* (1976).

Fromm’s work has had a deep and lasting influence on Western thought. One central thesis that appears in much of his writing is that alienation is the most serious and fundamental problem of Western civilization. In his view, Western culture must be transformed—through the application of psychoanalytic principles to social issues—into societies that recognize the primacy of human beings as responsible, sovereign individuals, and that are conducive to the attainment of individual freedom, which he sees as the ultimate goal of humanity’s existence.

**Further Reading**

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**Fugue**

An episode during which an individual leaves his usual surroundings unexpectedly and forgets essential details about himself and his life.

**Causes and symptoms**

Fugues are classified as a dissociative disorder, a syndrome in which an individual experiences a disruption in memory, consciousness, and/or identity. This may last anywhere from less than a day to several months, and is sometimes, but not always, brought on by severe stress or trauma. Dissociative fugue (formerly termed psychogenic fugue) is usually triggered by traumatic and stressful events, such as wartime battle, abuse, rape, accidents, natural disasters, and extreme violence, although fugue states may not occur immediately.

Individuals experiencing a fugue exhibit the following symptoms:

- Sudden and unplanned travel away from home together with an inability to recall past events about one’s life.
- Confusion or loss of memory about one’s identity (amnesia). In some cases, an individual may assume a new identity to compensate for the loss.
- Extreme distress and impaired functioning in day-to-day life as a result of the fugue episodes.

If the amnesia of fugue occurs without an episode of unexpected travel (fleeing), dissociative amnesia is usually diagnosed.

**Diagnosis**

Patients who experience fugue states should undergo a thorough physical examination and patient history to rule out an organic cause for the illness (e.g., epilepsy or other seizure disorder). If no organic cause is found, a psychologist or other mental healthcare professional will conduct a patient interview and administer one or more psychological assessments (also called clinical inventories, scales, or tests). These assessments may include the Dissociative Experiences Scale (DES or DES-II), Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV Dissociative Disorders (SCID-D), and the Dissociate Disorders Interview Schedule (DDIS).

The use and abuse of certain medications and illegal drugs can also prompt fugue-like episodes. For example, alcohol-dependent patients frequently report alcohol-induced “blackouts” that mimic the memory loss of the fugue state and sometimes involve unplanned travel.

**Treatment**

Dissociative fugue is relatively rare, with a prevalence rate of 0.2% in the general population. The length of a fugue episode is thought to be related to the severity of the stressor or trauma that caused it. The majority of cases appear as single episodes with no recurrence. In some cases, the individual will not remember events that occurred during the fugue state. In other cases, amnesia related to the traumatic event that triggered the fugue may persist to some degree after the fugue episode has concluded.