IV

What Determines Your Energy: Accelerators and Retarders

The activities of electronic and molecular processes in the body vary considerably from person to person. In the determination of personality, these eleven facts express the individual's molecular activity. Let us group the determiners of personality under two heads, those which derive from native internal chemisms that are integral with the basal metabolism; and secondly, those which come from the physical and social environments.

I. Wholly or chiefly native determiners:

Accelerators	*Retarders*
Low body weight	High body weight
Great stature	Inferior stature
Certain superiorities in food assimilation	Certain inferiorities in food assimilation
High motor responses (rapid and frequent)	Low motor responses (slow and rare)
High fantasy	Low fantasy
Strong anger, fear, and curiosity	Weak anger, fear, and curiosity
Thyroids (normal)	Parathyroids (normal)
High sexuality	Low sexuality
Youth	Age

II. External determiners:

Accelerators	*Retarders*
Fats and carbohydrates	Proteins
Tonics, such as caffeine, theine, etc.	Depressants, such as alcohol, nicotine, acetanelid, etc.
Heat	Cold
Sunlight (ultra-violet rays)	Darkness (chiefly lack of ultra-violet rays)
Muscular exertion	Muscular inaction
Aphrodisiacs	Antaphrodisiacs
Herd life ("circular response," in which emotions and motor responses are intensified)	Solitude, with progressive introversions

Now, to what extent can you change these determiners? Except in disease, you must accept those which are native and adjust your environment and your mode of living to them so that they serve you as well as possible. Study your native characteristics carefully. Human beings vary enormously here. Some characteristics which speed you up may be offset by others which retard you. Thus, if you react swiftly with your muscles, but are well past middle age, your swift and frequent motor response is hampered by the lower basal metabolism of age. So you must adjust yourself accordingly. If, then, in your twenties you were a speedy and brilliant tennis player largely because your muscles reacted so rapidly

and frequently, at forty-five the latter may still move swiftly while your metabolism has dropped distinctly. It would, then, be dangerous, if not fatal, for you to play tennis as often and vigorously as you did when young. In fact, you might better give up the game entirely, and devote yourself to—say—billiards, which requires high motor response without taxing so heavily your lower rate of metabolism.

But it's another story with the external determiners. These you can shift and regulate at will. Their skillful manipulation, indeed, is the key to success in making the most of your energies. Learn to rule your surroundings so that they best serve your own nature.

During at least half of his waking hours, man's surroundings are determined by the work he does. And the job molds a man's outlook and attitudes more than any other single set of influences. As it also consumes more of his energies than anything else save the simple task of keeping alive, must we not agree at once that the worker who picks a vocation best suited to his natural energies will have the best chance of using the latter most economically, hence with the highest eventual satisfaction? This seems self-evident. If it is, then the first critical step in the art of tapping energies involves a choice of careers.

A man intent upon chopping down huge trees all his days has one set of energy problems. A man who dreams of designing calculating ma-

chines has quite another. Wisdom for the one is foolishness for the other. So, could we cover the whole subject of tapping energies here, we should have to consider jobs and their various requirements. Ten volumes, however, would have to be filled with this topic alone. So we must content ourselves with a few signposts that may mark the approaches.

What is the relation, if any, between the gross amount of energy you naturally discharge over long periods and the things you take an active interest in and pursue by preference? The first step toward such an answer is to ascertain how much energy is consumed in each of the many common activities, such as walking, talking, writing, lecturing, typewriting, singing, painting, dancing, and the like.