

The Journal of Psychological Studies

Science, Philosophy and Religion

New Year

We thank all the workers and collaborators, national and international, who have helped with the Society's activities during 2009.

Always in pursuit of the ideal of love, lets carry on, as cons-

tructive agents, in service of Life.

The Executive Committee



Motivation

Evanise M Zwirtes

"Sow a thought and you will reap a wish, sow a wish and you will reap an action; sow an action and you will reap a habit; sow a habit and you will reap a character". (Tihamer Toth)

Observing Nature, we notice that nothing is static; everything is movement, despite the human being seeking permanent stability, creating necessities based on having. This stability, in the material level, is no more than one of so many personality manifestations, building a life based on the possession of things and people, in detriment of the being. **Few people recognise that there are more transcendental needs, which are basic to the human being and have nothing to do with having or possessing material goods. They are necessities of the soul, of the spirit.**

We understand that motivation is an inner state which activates a desire to satisfy a need; it is what provokes in us a need of fulfilment. It is an impulse that moves us to effect transformations in our lives. Therefore, motivation is to have a motive for action.

With the objective to carry out transformations in our lives, we need to update our beliefs in relation to habits, attachments, resentments, criticisms, fears, angers, covetousness, apathies, weaknesses,

indecisions, etc. **To propose to ourselves modifications, it is fundamental to identify negative conditioning, which is not always easy as the ego does not like to be questioned** (attachments are difficult to be removed, to greet an enemy we need humbleness, to not criticise we need tolerance, etc). For this reason we need to exercise will, discipline, perseverance, which are motives that conduct us to the process of self-control.

The conscious person, considering the transience of his existence, recognises his faults, develops new strategies, re-organises his life plan and has defined what wishes to conquer for his soul. He does not get disturbed by unsuccessful attempts; on the contrary, he demonstrates joy for the here now opportunity for self-fulfilment.

To motivate is to move, to awaken interest or enthusiasm. Where do you find yourself? Moving things or determined to transcend them?

Evanise M Zwirtes is a Psychotherapist and Coordinator of The Spiritist Psychological Society in London - UK.

"Although nobody can go backwards and make a new beginning, anyone can start now and make a new end." Chico Xavier

The Psychology of Virtues

Adenáuer Novaes

Virtue is a particular moral quality. Virtue is a stable disposition to practice goodness; it reveals more than a simple characteristic or an aptitude for a determined good action: it is a true inclination. Virtues are all the constant habits that lead man to the good, be it as an individual, be it as species, be it personally, be it collectively. Virtue, in its highest degree, is a set of all the essential qualities which constitute the good man. Virtue, according to Aristotle, is an acquired disposition to do good; and virtues perfect themselves with practice.

Human beings are born with their own aptitudes, inherited from their reincarnating experiences, available for new learning processes.

The received education can or cannot contribute towards consolidation and broadening of the virtues, whose acquisition began during his evolutionary course. It is not enough for the Spirit to have lived one experience in which has practiced some virtue. The process of integration of a quality requires the repetition of several experiences in the exercise of that virtue. Only one incarnation exercising this or that virtue may not have been enough to integrate it in his being. To learn is not only to know something, but, mainly, to live and internalise that which is lived in a natural, spontaneous and pleasurable form. Virtue is a positive quality of someone's character, whose usage always results in a personal or collective good. In this sense, thanks to the paradigm that the spirit always evolves, we all have virtues, whether we use them or not.

It we take virtue as a quality or aptitude to do some good which results in benefit for oneself and for the fellow being, charity would be one of the great virtues, besides kindness and love practiced in favour of people and of life. For the Christian, it is not difficult to know this; however it has not been easy to live any of these virtues in a world so competitive and poor of public examples. Everyone wants to win, more due to ignorance than to evil, more for not believing in something beyond the limits of matter than for a materialistic conviction.

The world has been poor of values, above all spiritual ones; those which neither moths eat away nor robbers steal. Therefore, a great opportunity for service, in favour of oneself and of society, is the work of the spiritist in acquiring and promoting significant experiences, in which the virtues propagated by Spiritism can in fact be lived by him in the collective dimension.

Adenáuer Novaes is a Clinical Psychologist, living in Brazil. He is one the directors of the Foundation "Lar Harmonia" in Salvador - Brazil.

Desire and Will

Manuel Portásio Filho

Amongst the great potencies of the soul, intelligence, conscience, memory, mediumship, will... are found. All of them are of

extreme importance in the being's life management. Will, however, has a prominent role in its development. It is divided between wanting and wishing.

Emmanuel places will in the government of all the mental action's plannings, which shows us its power. But he goes beyond when he affirms that "only the will is sufficiently strong to support the harmony of the spirit". (*Thought and Life*, 2nd chapter). Allan Kardec, in "Genesis", affirms that "The Spirits act on the spiritual fluids... with the aid of

thought and of will", leading us to conclude that thought is the selecting element, whilst will is the agent, that which determines what to do. For this reason, Leon Denis also says that "each soul is a focus of vibrations which the will puts in movement" (*The Problem of the Being, of the Destiny and of the Pain, chapter 20*). Thought is pure vibration.

Finally, it has been said that "to want is to be able to". Not everything that we want, however, is given to us, but only that which we need. It is our degree of evolution that determines it. André Luiz, however, reminds us that "every desire, in essence, is an entity taking a corresponding form" (*Green Light, Chapter 24*). Therefore, to desire has its "risks". I invite us to reflect upon this.

Manuel Portásio Filho is a lawyer who lives in London. He is a member of the Solidarity Spiritist Group in London - UK.

"The well directed will is an essential factor for an emotionally healthy and enriching life, therefore yearned for by every individual who thinks and struggles to be happy."



Guilt and Responsibility

Ana Cecília Rosa

In the Gospels, several passages are narrated, in which remorse for committed mistakes is the primary condition for forgiveness of sins and eternal happiness. The view of God as a strict and vindictive judge is still feared by many and motivating change of behaviour and longing for chastisement of oneself. Regret is the scream of conscience, our inner voice that recognises the moral conduct transgression and the deviation from duty, leading us to experience guilt and its consequences. Spiritism clarifies that we are only regretful Spirits, touched by remorse in search of readjustment through reparation.

When someone for some reason makes a mistake and regrets it, it is comprehensible that guilt installs itself in the conscience. According to Joanna de Angelis, "guilt arises as a necessary form of catharsis for conflicts liberation" (*Consciousness Moment, 6th Chapter*). Not being a negative feeling in itself, it takes the role of awakening us to the necessary attitude to morally recompose ourselves. The experience of feeling guilt without any purpose of transformation or wish not to recommit the mistake consolidates remorse, generating unhappy attitudes of self-punishment. **Any attempt to retain past mistakes or lost opportunities in the memory, lamenting them, will not cause the mistake to be erased. On the contrary, it provides serious psychological disturbances, consciously or not, mainly if the individual is incapable of practicing the resource of self-forgiveness.** The sustentation of this ill thought will not only bring the false idea that lived suffering is, by itself, the repairing agent of the mistake, as it also impedes the necessary edifying actions sought for correction, the only form of guilt liberation.

To take conscience of one's mistake and to liberate oneself from guilt does not let the individual off the need to repair his fault, as the offended one, generally, is not exempt from the pain caused by our unfortunate action. According to Allan Kardec, "repentance, despite being the first step for regeneration, is not enough by itself; atonement and reparation are necessary" (*Heaven and Hell, 1st part, 7th*

chapter). It is relevant to consider that moral and conscientious notions develop slowly, along different incarnations, for the immortal spirit. It is precisely at the moment in which responsibility is made present that it is established the counterpoint between "healthy guilt" and pathologic remorse. When converting guilt into responsibility, we psychologically grow and become more predisposed to the practice of forgiveness and consequently, reparation.

Responsibility marks, in fact, a difference in the being's conduct. **To be responsible implies having conscience of existential problems, humble recognition of faults, to demonstrate capacity to act with elevation and dignity and wish sincerely to repair the fault. If, on dealing with feelings of guilt, the individual assumes responsibility for his acts, thoughts and feelings in a mature way, he will know how to face the consequences of his actions without the perturbation of pathologic remorse.** To erase the unhappy remembrance of a fault and its consequences is work of souls who already have knowledge of the true moral values and practice a more realistic and productive posture in relation to life.

According to Emmanuel, "To fall into guilt demands, for this reason, living great humbleness for the immediate and possible readjustment of our inner equilibrium, this if we do not desire the restless ingress in the school of long reparations". (*Thought and Life, Chapter 22*).

Spiritism, affirming that the human existence is opportunity for growth and realizations in the good, renovates our hope to carry out the necessary atonement in order that our conscience becomes pacified after the reparation.

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Frustration and Patience

Eliana Galvão Puoli

We are all spiritual beings in continuous evolution and we seek, at each moment, our individuality's development through knowledge and contact with our inner self. It is also true that we have as a basic principle the search for joy, happiness and perfection. If we take another direction throughout life, or if we encounter problems along the way, it will be because of some mismatches, as our main objective is the search for growth, for evolution.

Along our walk on Earth, we daily live innumerable problems, setbacks, mismatches and misfortunes, all of which we call "frustration". Normally, we have the habit of facing it as a perverse enemy placed in front of us "to destroy our joy" and to disturb our life.

Unfortunately, we take a long time, sometimes several incarnations, to realise that it is exactly through these "sufferings" that we will have true and real possibilities for maturation, as long as we develop our patience and tolerance in living and assimilating all these setbacks.

"Problems and difficulties must not be seen as unhappiness, rather they should be examined under the condition of mechanisms for the acquisition of valuable experiences, without which nobody is able to attain either integrity or ascension."

Patience must be used as an instrument in struggle, providing us with the capacity to face the occurrences. It reflects our inner capacity, our trust in God's wishes. Patience is a precious treasure that respects time without hurry.

Frustration only exists and makes sense for those who "lack" patience. If I am able to be patient and tolerant, I am understanding and know the Law of Justice and the Law of Action and Reaction, thus I am aware of God's Laws. To get irritated or rebellious with the laws of causality which most of the time bring us what does not "please us", is only to aggravate a situation that **cannot** be changed.

In the *Gospel according to Spiritism*, 9th chapter, page 128, patience is discussed, we can observe that this is one of the most supreme Laws of God, which we must search for our moral and spiritual development. God created us to search for patience and to be benevolent. In there it is found: "pain is a blessing that God sends to his elected ones... Be patient, as patience is also charity, and you must practice the law of charity, taught by Christ, sent by God. The charity that consists of giving alms is the easiest one of all. But there is one much more painful, and consequently much more meritorious, which is to forgive those God puts in our path, to be the instruments of our sufferings and to submit our patience to the test."

In the same way, to be "charitable" means to be "patient". To do charity implacates, therefore, in continuous work and study, in an infinite search to always improve ourselves and improve our fellow beings. It is giving oneself fully, whilst still being sometimes firm and strict. It also implies humbleness to welcome the unknown with respect and, at the same time, knowledge; it implies to admit that of which one **has no** knowledge and that, if known, will bring elevation, progress and knowledge.

Finally, say that "frustration" is the highest training for our "patience". Only when we are capable of living through our frustrations, accept our limits, our "not knowing" and understand that all these problems are placed before us as the first and essential way for the development of that which is the most beautiful in the teachings of the Father - Patience - is then we will be able to feel that we are walking in the true harvest of Faith, Hope and of the possibility of a world more tolerant, productive, full of the true meaning of Love.

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"Patience can also be considered as the science of peace, and for this reason the pacifiers are blessed, those who work methodically and with peaceful confidence in favour of the world's and its creature's renovation ..."

Fear and Self-confidence

Rodrigo Machado Tavares

"From the conquest of patience, together with perseverance that completes it, one moves into self-confidence, under the certainty of the existing possibilities that can be applied in the favour of inner longings."

We are all imperfect beings and because of that, we are still on what we can call as "psychological childhood". This condition makes us to have certain types of feelings. **Fear** is one of them. **Fear** makes us to feel worried constantly, in both aspects, namely: physical and psychological. **Clearly, fear is a natural feeling; nevertheless, depending on the level in which it is developed in ourselves, it can impact negatively our progress.** For instance, when **fear** is well dealt, it can be transformed into caution. In the other hand, when it is not well managed, it can become phobia.

According to Joanna de Ângelis: "the courage of keeping in touch with our own **fears** is an important therapeutic process for eliminating them...". It is interesting to observe that Carl Jung used to say that: "only what we really are can cure us". In other words, we can say that we should not have fear of our fears; we must identify them and deal with them. Therefore, our fears will not dominate us, because we will have the confidence to manage them appropriately.

The Spiritual Benefactor Joanna de Ângelis also says that: "**love is the efficient cure for overcoming fear and consequently its elimination**". **It is through LOVE that we start to develop SELF-CONFIDENCE; which is fundamental for our "psychological maturity"**.

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LIBERATION OF THE EGO

Joanna de Ângelis

"(...) there is an incomparable sun of hopes at the higher levels of the psyche, in which is found, in all its nobility, the legitimate expressions of the spiritual being, waiting for its blossoming.

The psychology of love, inaugurated by Jesus Christ, is the pioneer in the process of self-transformation, for being the holder of the indispensable treasures of sublimation of the primitive impulses, leaving the cruel shackles of the ancestral experiences, necessary for the inner growth, but distressing if they still remain even though the period of their validity has passed.

The being, conscious of his immortal reality, works on himself with joy, refining the angles of the personalism and selfishness, by their natural substitution with altruism, generosity and service of moral aggrandizement of oneself and of one's fellow creature, which makes the Gospel the most important treaty of psychotherapy and of psychosynthesis, in its vibrant proposal of self-discovery, inner journey, search for the Reality, of Unity...

Once the attempt of surpassing of the ego is initiated, immense satisfaction invades the being who feels free for more sublime challenges, such as abnegation, the devotion to causes of humanitarianism of science, religion, art, technology, always having in view other beings, without abandonment of one's own aspirations and longings for harmony.

This task undertaken, which today or later presents itself as non-transferable, no trauma is manifested, no conflict expresses itself, because the feeling of love inundates every field of feelings and of thoughts, proposing always more action and detachment from the atavistic impulses of the enslaving past.

Every form of ascension requires effort, which is compensated by the joys of acquired achievements. With regards to surpassing the *Ego*, understanding as necessary for the *Self* manifestation, the contribution of desire, sometimes difficult, becomes important since the permanence at the instinctive level only, equally produces afflictions which are neither compensated nor transformed into well-being, as it occurs in the conscious quest of the *Profound "Oneself"*.

As the being develops morally, more will it spiritualise and modify itself, including the molecular constitution of the physical organisation, whose needs alter themselves, giving place to subtler emotions which start to govern behaviour, working the cells and their organizational procedures, which then elaborate equipments according to the new impulses, now subtler and less toxic, that before required more dense structures and even coarser, having in view the vestment to cover this new being, the one who surpassed the tenacious and dominating *Ego*."

Source: *The Awakening of the Spirit*

Spirit: Joanna de Ângelis - Automatic Written by: Divaldo PereiraFranco