

The knowledge and the evolution of oneself

Somebody can believe that the knowledge of oneself is a selfish knowledge that excludes other people or that it promotes the internal enclosure and the estrangement from the daily activities.

The knowledge of oneself does not refer to issues being so particular that exclude us from the world of human relationships, but on the contrary.

When one says "knowledge of oneself" one is thinking mainly about the comprehension of the conditions within which one happens to live. Therefore, we are speaking of a knowledge that has as an object the problems that arise daily in people, in their work, in their family, with their friendships, etc.

To clarify this from the beginning is important, because there is no lack of those who think that it can have self-knowledge separated from every daily situation. And what derives from this posture is an imaginary construction that does not have anything to do with what really happens to the human being in concrete situations.

The knowledge of oneself refers to the comprehension of the daily, everyday situation in which one lives.

Certainly, knowledge is important, but it is incomplete if practical consequences cannot be drawn from it. Hence, this is why **evolution** is spoken of, and it is understood as the **favourable modification of situations, in such a way that one goes on experiencing a growing satisfaction** with oneself, and it can offer help to others so that they also obtain these benefits.

Upon saying "evolution of oneself," certain people tend to think that what is being proposed is the development of certain psychic abilities as attention, memory, etc. And there are those who relate the evolution of oneself with matters such as the control of the emotions or with complicated and extravagant practices.

If what is being proposed was to educate the attention or the memory, we would not be touching the most important point. If partial technical were offered, we would not be trying to solve fundamental problems.

All the human beings, no matter how different their ideas and their practices may be, they face an unfavourable factor in their development. **That factor is the unnecessary suffering.**

And "unnecessary suffering" is said because we distinguish between the **physical suffering** or pain, caused by the accidents, the illnesses, and the **mental suffering**, a product of the imagination.

The elimination of physical pain depends on the advance of science and technology; the elimination of mental suffering does not depend on that development, but rather it depends on the development of ourselves.

Thus, the knowledge and evolution of oneself deals with, precisely, with **understanding the situations in which one lives daily with reference to the problem of the unnecessary suffering, in order to change that state of things in favour of oneself and, as a consequence, in favour of others who live in the same difficulties.**

How does suffering, in general, arise?

One suffers because one does not have something that one wants. One also suffers because, having something, one thinks that one can lose it. And that something that one succeeds in possessing or that one fears to lose refers as much to objects as to people, to situations, to values or qualities of oneself.

One also suffers by fearing the solitude, illness and death. And one suffers too when one sees or imagines that others suffer due to some of the mentioned reasons.

If one asks oneself, what makes me suffer in my job?, what makes me suffer in my family?, what makes me suffer in my social life?, which desire I want to reach that makes me suffer?, what do I fear to lose that makes me suffer?

If one replies appropriately and in depth to those questions, two truths will be proven. First, that even regarding the smallest things (for example, the suffering that produces me a word from another person that makes the image that I have of myself diminish), or regarding more serious things, **I can reduce every type of suffering referred to possession** (be it because I want to possess something that I don't have, or because I fear to lose something that I possess or I believe to possess).

In second place, I discover that **I cannot solve the daily conflict partially**, since when one disappears, another appears. If I pay a good attention to my own life, I notice that when I have stopped suffering due to one thing, I have begun to suffer due to another, and so on and so forth.

It is understood that the problem of the suffering cannot be solved partially. Although one is vegetarian or practices yoga, or stops drinking coffee, or is a believer of a religion, or is atheist, the problem of

suffering does not change at all. Also in the condition of being a father, son, boss, subordinate, leader or follower, the problem of the suffering subsists and does not depend precisely on my position; in any event, it is reinforced if I place a special interest in that aspect of the position.

Now then, previously, physical pain was spoken of. It is known that there are many forms of physical pain. It is also known that when certain necessities are not fulfilled, pain takes place. This way, to satiate the hunger is a necessity, to protect the body is a necessity, and, if these necessities are not fulfilled, one risks the destruction of the body and with great pain.

Therefore, **a necessity is that which brings about pain if it is not satisfied, and it can destroy me. On the other hand, a possessive desire is that which, if it is not satisfied as I imagine it, creates mental suffering in me.**

It is unavoidable that the human being satisfies his necessities, but it is not necessary that he satisfies his possessive imaginary desires. Quite the contrary. Due to going after that imaginary possession, he creates suffering for himself, and creates suffering in the world of the other human beings.

If all the above-mentioned has been understood, one can advance in the knowledge of the situation in which one lives with regards to the problem of the suffering, and **one can also change the attitude in front of life in general**, not partially. And, consequently, the human being can be liberated from suffering.

The change of deep attitude is possible and it allows one to evolve, because it gives enormous possibilities that were blocked by suffering and fear.

Although the objective of the self-knowledge has been outlined quickly, the techniques that should be carried out have not been explained. However, in few words we can tell in advance that it is about this:

One has to study one's own life, that is to say, to write one's own biography from the moment of one's birth until today, understanding the most important facts that have produced suffering. It should also study the situation in which one lives at present in the job, the family, etc, and the desires and frustrations to which one is subjected. And one should, lastly, study the root of one's imaginary desires, of one's dreams.

All this takes, certainly, some time. But not more than the one that people lose while going for any entertainment program.

An effective tool exists for the change of attitude in front of life, and it is called "The Principles." These Principles are understood well, and they can be applied correctly, if a good self-knowledge has been done. It will be seen that some in fact offer difficulties because a task of previous understanding is required and, besides, because **it is necessary to explain its sense correctly and to give examples that illustrate their application.**

But it is necessary to know that, when speaking of "knowledge and evolution of oneself," Self-knowledge fulfils a function of understanding of the situations of daily suffering and the application of the Principles fulfils a task of evolution. It is clear that cannot be separated from the other, but they are very different subjects.

It would be enough to adjust the attitude in front of life according to what the Principles propose, to go achieving reconciliation and progress in oneself.

The Principles are enunciated in this way:

1. To go against the evolution of things is to go against yourself.
2. When you force something toward an end, you produce the contrary.
3. Do not oppose a great force. Retreat until it weakens, then advance with resolution.
4. Things are well when they move together, not in isolation.
5. If day and night, summer and winter are well with you, you have surpassed the contradictions.
6. If you pursue pleasure, you enchain yourself to suffering. But as long as you do not harm your health, enjoy without inhibition when the opportunity presents itself.
7. If you pursue an end, you enchain yourself. If everything you do is realized as though it were an end in itself, you liberate yourself.
8. You will make your conflicts disappear when you understand them in their ultimate root, not when you want to resolve them.
9. When you harm others you remain enchained, but if you do not harm anyone you can freely do whatever you want.
10. When you treat others as you want them to treat you, you liberate yourself.
11. It does not matter in which faction events have placed you. What matters is that you comprehend that you have not chosen any faction.

12. Contradictory or unifying actions accumulate within you. If you repeat your acts of internal unity, nothing can detain you.

Well then, it has already been explained here which the sense while saying "knowledge and evolution of oneself." What in any event is not clear is how one works this accurately, neither how that liberating and deep change is experienced in one's own life when one goes on overcoming the unnecessary suffering.

To come closer to this work, **one has to start by questioning two prejudices** that one normally has. The first is enunciated this way: "suffering is necessary so that the human being carries out activities", and the second: "suffering is unavoidable."

Just as these two prejudices are usually affirmed, **we affirm exactly the opposite and we prove it in the practice.** But whoever denies this possibility does not prove that the human being is unable to advance over suffering (as he has advanced in his science and his technology), but rather it proves, in any event, that he is afraid of getting liberated from his chains and that psychologically he accepts the slavery of fateful prejudices.

Then, it has been understood that self-knowledge requires understanding of one's own suffering in life, and that the evolution and growing satisfaction with oneself depend on a fundamental change of stance in front of life. And, although the techniques have not been widely explained, it has been grasped which is the general direction of these works, which are its objectives and with what type of matters is related whoever that seriously wants to walk down the path of the liberation.

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