TOPICS · TOPIC 05

Learning to Educate for Happiness

It presents an educational approach based on loving firmness and the pedagogy of results, avoiding prohibition, imposition, and interference. It places learning within the context of spiritual development.

Love and Relationships

Context. What is the purpose of the human experience?

Before moving on to the next topic, it is helpful to place ourselves within a context that offers a new way of looking at life, a new paradigm, one that allows us to be happier and to understand human beings. You don't have to agree with everything that follows, or believe any of it, because we are not talking about beliefs. All you need to do is verify in your own life the results of applying this information, to see whether they hold true for you.

If these inner results are happiness, peace, and harmony, then we will know that this information is true. If our external experiences in relationships, health, resources, and adaptation to our environment improve, then we will confirm that this information is wisdom.

The purpose of the human experience is to evolve, to develop our consciousness so that we may be filled with wisdom and love. All human beings, without exception, have come into the world to work on our spiritual development, sharing and participating in experiences with other human beings. Life is a remarkable educational process of the Universe; planet Earth is a “spiritual school,” and every experience we live through can be compared to an academic year.

Spiritual development is inner work, absolutely individual and personal. No one can do it for another person, but neither can it be done “without others.” In other words, we need

interaction and experience with other people in order to build our own development, to get to know ourselves. Sometimes, instead of taking charge of our own development, we try to interfere with that of others; in those cases, instead of learning from others, we want to change them. All this accomplishes is to distort the educational process, or to try to distort it, and in doing so we complicate our own lives.

Only by understanding this can we effectively ask ourselves, “What does life want to teach us in each situation?”, since every situation is a lesson. Ultimately, it is about learning to transmute ignorance into wisdom.

When we notice that suffering is disappearing, that inner peace is becoming unshakable, and that our capacity to create, act, love, and serve is expressed without any condition or restriction, it means we have attained wisdom.

In order to lay the foundation for a new civilization that brings a greater level of satisfaction to all people, we must begin by bringing harmony to ourselves. To do so, it is essential to study the universal laws and apply the principles that lead to wisdom. We must bear in mind that we will truly reach wisdom only through constant practice and by discarding the theories and concepts that prove to be wrong. In this way, it will be possible to develop peace and harmony right where we are, through the lessons of daily life, since life is the best school and nature the best teacher.

All it takes to achieve efficiency is to stop resisting the perfect order of the Universe; mental inefficiency is necessary to discover, through saturation, that the Laws of the Universe exist. Once we have suffered enough, we are ready to understand the Laws. For the external struggle to cease, the internal one must cease first, and for that we must have accepted that everything that exists and everything that happens is perfect and necessary, because it has a purpose of love.

Studying and understanding why the things that exist and happen do so can lead us to recognize the Laws, which in turn make it possible to create a better future for humanity.

There are seven Laws of the Universe that govern all of its processes of creation, administration, and evolution. Of these seven, four are fundamental, since they control the development and evolution of the consciousness of the human species anywhere in the Universe. These four Laws form the lower triangle, while the Law of Evolution is the upper one, governing the lower triangle, also called the *triangle of hell* because it is the lowest part of the universal laws.

We will be within the Law when we love, enjoy, and value what we have. Everything that is within the Law works and flows on its own.

Everything that brings suffering, anguish, pain, or illness does so because we are going against the Laws, and through that we come to recognize them. The results we experience when we step outside the Laws allow us to recognize their existence. It is necessary to make mistakes in order to discover the Law. Mistakes are not the problem; the problem is not learning from them.

The Law is designed so that we ourselves make a change, not so that we try to change others.

As you can see in the following tables, the human experience is governed by four specific Laws.

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
NATURE	1. Everything complementary attracts one another. 2. Every living being requires the specific food for its species. 3. Every natural manifestation requires the right conditions. 4. Every living being has, by instinct, a sense of the Law. 5. All of nature's cycles have specific functions. 6. Every violation of the Law produces serious consequences. 7. Every living being has its function.	Physical ailments: malnutrition, disease, addictions, degeneration, misery, hunger, physical and mental defects, physical malformations, ecological imbalance, erosion, pests, shortened lifespan…

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
HARMONY	1. Everything that is emitted acts, reacts, and returns. 2. Whatever is attacked defends itself. 3. Whatever is pleasing is accepted. 4. Only love can transform beasts into people. 5. Only understanding prevents destruction. 6. We must manage situations, not be managed by them. 7. Example is the best teacher.	Psychological distress and relationship problems: mistrust, fear, distancing, isolation, individualism, loneliness, sadness, depression, fights, shyness, lack of communication, disunity, barriers, trauma, complexes…

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
CORRESPONDENCE	1. Every situation is a lesson. 2. Every circumstance is generated by oneself. 3. There is no event that does not correspond to the person who experiences it. 4. We are each placed exactly where we are meant to be. 5. We come into life with everything we need to live it. 6. Only what has to happen happens. 7. We only give or have what is necessary.	Discomforts in one's individual life environment: blockages, dissatisfaction, difficulty succeeding in what one does, draining struggles against life's circumstances, inability to take charge of one's own life, fears, anxieties, constant frustrations...

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
EVOLUTION	1. Only experience allows us to understand the truth. 2. Only opposites lead to the development of consciousness. 3. One ascends to a higher level only through the corresponding transformation. 4. One is only the result of oneself. 5. We face only those situations we have not yet understood. 6. The need for understanding alone is the reason for physical existence. 7. Only through imbalance can one recognize balance.	Social unrest: rebellion, anarchy, or self-destruction, when the experiences yet to be lived are limited; wars, strikes, violence, revolutions, crime, hatred, and conflicts, when human concepts are imposed.

In the tables above, on the right-hand side we see the effects of violating the Law. In the topic on the Laws of the Universe, we will also find an explanation of the benefits of not violating the Law.

It is important not to confuse the universal laws with human laws or with rules. The former are immutable and cannot be repealed; they originate in the wisdom of the Absolute or Divinity and are therefore absolute. They cannot be modified or negotiated, and disobeying them has a negative result, in the sense of being unpleasant, and also a positive one, in the sense of the learning it involves. That is why it is said that human beings do not actually create laws but rather establish rules; we call them *human laws*, but they are rules, because they can be repealed, are temporary, and are useful for a given moment.

We have come to planet Earth to develop the three inner virtues: Happiness, Inner Peace, and Love or Service to Others. This development brings excellent results in four areas: Relationships, Resources, Health, and Adaptation to the Environment:

Adaptation | Relationships | Inner Peace | Love | Happiness | Resources | Health

The idea is to use these virtues to relate to the external world. Learning to be happy, to have peace, and to love is the true purpose that brought us human beings into the physical world of matter.

VIRTUES	CHARACTERISTICS	SCIENCE IN WHICH IT IS STUDIED	REPRESENTS OR DEVELOPS IN
Happiness	0% suffering 100% understanding 100% self-worth	Acceptance	The function
Peace	0% conflict 0% reactivity 0% confrontation 100% respect	Taking on life with wisdom	The destiny
Love	100% capacity for service 0% resistance, 0% fear 100% adaptation 100% commitment	Unconditionality	The mission

Happiness, peace, and love are principles of the divine essence; they have no polarity; they are immutable.

Learning to **be happy**:

- To learn to be happy, you only have to face everything you believe takes your happiness away.
- To be happy, you don't need anything external, only understanding and a particular mindset.
- Non-acceptance is the only cause of suffering; we must stop resisting reality.

- It is essential to stop working on others and to work solely and exclusively on yourself, changing within yourself whatever bothers you (the ego) so that it stops doing so.
- If there is suffering, only one question needs to be asked: “What am I not accepting?” The answer lies there.
- Everyone, without exception, has what is needed to be happy; however, very few know how to be happy with what they have.

Learning to **have peace**:

- Nothing and no one provides peace.
- Inner peace is the result of one's own spiritual development, not a gift.
- Managing peace requires several elements: clear and accurate information to understand that life is a process of love and that evil does not exist; the ability to manage one's own life energy; and training.
- If you lose your peace, you need to ask yourself: “What am I resisting? What do I want to change? Whom am I blaming?”

Learning to **love your neighbor as yourself**:

- To do this, all you have to do is take part in activities or spend time with people whose behavior is very different from your own, so that you learn to love and respect them just as they are.
- Love cannot be offended; it is invulnerable, immutable, universal, and neutral.
- Love implies a total understanding of the Universe; it is a way of being and does not need an “object” onto which to project itself.
- Love is not a force, but a tool.
- Love is not a feeling.
- To love is to always give the best of yourself.
- If you’re feeling unmotivated, it’s best to ask yourself why you’re allowing this specific situation to limit your ability to serve, which in reality shouldn’t depend on external events. By developing the three inner virtues, you’ll achieve excellent external results in all four areas:
- In relationships.
- In resources.
- In health.

- In adapting to our environment. Five elements are present in the life experience of every human being: purpose, destiny, mission, function, and intention.

1. The Purpose

There is a purpose of love that brought us into the material world; it is the perfect goal of learning two things:

a) Being happy on your own, that is, not depending on anything or anyone to

enjoy inner peace and happiness.

b) Loving your neighbor as yourself, that is, respecting the rights of

all beings in the Universe.

And how is this learned? Here we can see the perfection of the Absolute's pedagogical design. To practice learning to be happy by oneself, we need to live in a certain place, with certain people and in circumstances in which everything happening around us is more or less aggressive. In this way we'll realize that our problem isn't caused by what happens around us, but by the way we relate to it, and by the rejection and resistance we set in motion.

As for the second part, loving your neighbor as yourself, it means respecting them just as they are, not trying to change them, and not resisting others. It is necessary to live in a place where the people around you think differently, have varied customs, and believe in different things. In this way, we will learn to love them as they are, without judging or condemning them. This is how the purpose of love is fulfilled; it is the true reason why we human beings are on planet Earth.

More than 2,000 years ago, the Master Jesus taught us this when he said, "Love your enemies"—who are not our enemies, but simply people who think differently.

Being happy means experiencing zero suffering in the face of whatever happens; and loving means offering zero resistance to others. Wisdom is equal to love, not to sentiment. A person who has love cares deeply about others but does not suffer; by contrast, a person who lacks wisdom but has kindness cares deeply about others but suffers enormously. Those who don't care, the callous and the indifferent, have neither wisdom nor kindness.

2. Destiny

It is what we come to learn from the material world—learning to use the seven tools of love in order to have invulnerable peace. It is a great opportunity to learn what we lack.

We all bring into the world an unavoidable destiny, one of enormous value. Our culture teaches us to try to evade destiny instead of showing us how to make the most of it. The key to making the most of destiny is: "You have the ability to enjoy anything you do, because that ability is within you".. However, if someone tells their child: "You always have to do what you like", it will create an enormous block in them.

Destiny is a pedagogical design whose purpose is to allow human beings to verify and discover information that governs the Universe and its perfect order. It is therefore the best opportunity to transcend all of our human limitations. Instead of complaining about the difficulties life presents, we should take advantage of them as a great opportunity to transcend them; then they will disappear forever. If we don't learn from difficulties, far from disappearing, they will become more complicated, persist, and become permanent.

3. The Mission

It consists of what we can teach in the material world. We should enjoy our mission intensely, whether or not it is part of our own function.

Mission allows us to recover a great deal of the vital energy invested in the exercise of learning to be happy. Mission is what has already been understood, what is already known; therefore, it can be used to serve others while enjoying ourselves intensely.

Both mission and destiny are represented in the personality: the latter through the belief system, and the former through understanding. As we transmute our ignorance into understanding and wisdom, we will have more and more mission and, therefore, more satisfaction.

4. The Function

It is what each person does to earn their livelihood; it consists of putting as much enthusiasm, joy, and love as possible into what you do, even if it isn't part of your mission.

We know that all living beings have a function within the order of the Universe. It takes wisdom to take it on with joy, with enthusiasm, with a full capacity for action and service. Function is not about "earning a living"; life is not "earned," because it is a divine gift. What we earn is the sustenance of this biological entity, this body.

Thus, our sustenance is guaranteed as a result of our function. Those who are happy and enjoy what they do will always have an abundance of resources.

5. The Intention

It is what we want for ourselves or for others. Intention should be directed in such a way that it does not interfere with the destinies of others or try to evade our own destiny.

Intention is the most complex element for human beings today, because sentiment, the idea of goodness, and the other ideas that culture mistakenly passed on to us constantly lead us to try to interfere with the destinies of others. If we accepted that destiny is something extraordinary and not "bad," that it is the best opportunity we have to fulfill what we came to do in the world, we would stop trying to change other people's destinies.

When a child wants to become independent and the parents oppose it, how can we act so as not to interfere? We always want things to work our way. In this case, the parents feel it isn't the right time because their child doesn't have a stable job, for example, and they don't want them to leave home. Our "I wants" are the cause of suffering. The "I want" is also called unconscious selfishness, because we want others to be happy doing what we want them to do.

What would be the wise and loving thing to do in this case? To tell the child: "For us, the most important thing is that you are happy and that you find your own path, so we respect your decision. Know that if you want to come back, the door will always be open."

Ultimately, wisdom means having a clear sense of purpose, making the most of destiny, enjoying your mission, taking on your function, and managing the intention not to interfere with other people's destinies, and it requires that all of this be practiced in thought, word, and deed.

Chapter 1. The Family as the Social Nucleus

The *social nucleus* can consist of a couple, a family, or any group of people with whom you share your emotional life. Within that social nucleus, it is possible to agree on a new way of sharing based on love, with the purpose of integrating all its members, as well as providing support and collaboration to achieve balance and personal fulfillment through the harmonious development of the family.

In a harmonious social nucleus, individuals capable of sustaining a new society grow and develop.

We human beings are created to become happy, but this requires some learning; that is, we are born with the potential to be happy, but to develop it we need to acquire certain tools and learn the Laws that govern the Universe. This is done from the *principle of love*.

The relationship with your children begins at the very moment of conception and extends throughout life. However, for this relationship to develop harmoniously, it must be handled in accordance with the natural, developmental characteristics of each stage of the relationship.

1.1 Stages in the Development of the Human Being

- **From conception to birth (gestation)**. This is where we propose conscious procreation. In this first stage, the future child fundamentally needs the mother to be in a state of inner peace and to hold loving thoughts toward both her child and herself. The father must also help by showing affection to his partner and taking her to pleasant places, such as places of natural beauty, and, above all, by understanding that during gestation and child-rearing a woman pours much of her attention, tenderness, and feelings into her child, which causes temporary changes in the couple's relationship. The man should offer loving support without feeling displaced or neglected as a result; on the contrary, he too should devote a great deal of tenderness to his wife and child.
- **Ages 0 to 3 (child-rearing)**. The child needs special attention from the mother, both for breastfeeding and because the child needs a lot of caresses and physical contact with her. It is also very important for the father to be involved in raising the child, working with the mother and caring for one another as they build the family relationship. At this stage, the child encodes the first elements of socialization: language, knowledge of some simple laws of nature—such as the law of gravity or the nature of fire—and learns to relate to a world that until now was unknown. Before encoding language, the child has only one way of communicating with their parents: crying. That is why it is necessary to let the child cry and to learn to interpret what they want with each cry; it may be a cry of hunger, sleepiness, pain, lack of affection, or boredom.
- **Ages 3 to 7 (early childhood)**. At this stage, the influence of the parents' loving example is essential for children to develop the foundations of a balanced personality that will allow them to find security and, later on, their own sense of self-worth. When parents are separated, children can still find that balance if they are given that love, even if it comes from each parent separately. By this stage, children have

already acquired language, so crying is no longer necessary as a tool for communicating their needs. If we do not guide them in this regard, they will keep using crying to ask for everything and to manipulate their parents. But indulging them means allowing them to keep using a tool that is no longer necessary, which is a pedagogical mistake. This is also the stage when children begin to recognize that there is an order to things, so we can gently guide them toward it, and toward the need to follow it without imposition, so that by the time they turn seven they already have commitments grounded in their own convictions.

- **Ages 7 to 12 (middle childhood)**. Children need a certain degree of independence from their parents within the home. It is important to gradually delegate certain responsibilities to them so that they can begin to take on their own commitments in life and learn to appreciate what they receive in return from their parents.
- **Ages 12 to 18 (adolescence).** At this stage, our child needs to be given a degree of freedom that allows them to develop their own sense of self-worth and to accept, on their own, the results of their decisions and life experiences. Here, the role of parents is much more that of guides who provide sufficient, efficient, and timely information than that of controllers who keep their children from maturing mentally and emotionally. “Sufficient” means they are not lacking information; “efficient” means the information is clear and understandable to an adolescent’s mind; “timely” means that, whenever possible, we give them the information before they make a mistake, in order to prevent it. In the end, we cannot keep them from making mistakes, but with good information those mistakes will be less serious and easier to resolve. At this age, they enter a phase of experimentation, and we must allow them to experiment because they already have enough information. We need to put values such as trust into practice, so that teenagers can talk to their parents about any situation and their parents can truly become their guides and mentors.
- **Ages 18 to 42 (young adulthood)**. In young adulthood, the role of parents must fade away completely to make way for the bond of *brotherhood*. Now equality must form the foundation of the union of the social circle, which supports one another as a whole in moving toward a common goal of fraternity and integration. The aim is to respect the destinies and roles that each person brings with them, in order to build relationships that foster peaceful coexistence and move toward a new world of love, peace, and harmony among human beings. We are now speaking of an adult, someone who needs to take charge of their own life. From this point on, the relationship with parents must be based on friendship, not on authority or authoritarianism, understanding friendship as a relationship of trust and loving communication. Nothing is imposed any longer; it is shared.
- **From age 42 onward (maturity)**. In maturity, parents reap the harvest of love they sowed in their children. They find in their offspring security, support, affection, companionship, and the opportunity to contribute their wisdom and skills, to the

best of their abilities, to the general well-being of the social circle, so that they can feel useful until the end of their days. This is the most productive stage, contrary to what our culture teaches us, because the person already has a wealth of knowledge and experience, has made many mistakes, and has learned from them. We speak of maturity and not of old age, because the latter is only psychological.

1.2 Healthy and Effective Teaching Tools

The main teaching tools available to us as human beings are:

- **Set an example of constant love.** The example of love that children see around them shapes their personality, and in the end they imitate it. It is very difficult to ask those we teach to do something different from what we show them through our own example. Moreover, by acting that way we lose our authority, just as we do if, in a conflict, we stoop to the aggressor's level. We must teach the aggressor that there is a better tool than aggression for resolving difficulties.
- **Engage in ongoing dialogue and reflection.** Dialogue should always be available to children as an opportunity for reflection, instead of punishment, which always leaves traumatic aftereffects.

Group Questions	Individual Questions
How did you all feel?	*What would you think if…?*
What did we learn?	*How would you feel about…?*
In what other way could it be done?	*How would you feel if…?*
Would you all like to give it a try?	*Would you like it if…?*
	How do you think others feel when you…?
	What would you like to get in exchange for…?
	What would be the best way to achieve that result…?
	What's the best thing to do when…?

Table 1. Examples of Reflective Dialogue

Information	Reflections
In my experience…	*Notice that when… the result is…*
I have verified that…	*Notice that everything worked better when…*
What I know about this is…	*Realize how important tools are…*
I've always found that…	*Notice how the game allowed us to discover the importance of…*

Table 2. Information and Reflection

- **Provide accurate and timely information** so that children know how to act in the different situations of life. This works much better than prohibitions for helping children develop a sense of security. We must provide sufficient, efficient, and timely information.
- **Not imposing behaviors or attitudes** keeps children from developing rebelliousness and makes it easier for them to choose to accept the results of their decisions and actions. Teach children in freedom (let them learn from their own experiences).
- **Don't forbid.** Prohibition is the best way to keep a child from taking charge of their own life and to make them look for a way to do what is forbidden, and in the process they will develop the habit of lying.
- **Don't react (firmness).** When parents do not react to a child's attitudes or behaviors, the child does not acquire tools for manipulating them. This non-reaction must be supported by total firmness, and the only option that should never be available to the child is to do nothing. This will lead the child to make their own decisions about how to face life and to accept the results.

ü Create options for actions that are not available

to the child. This works better than forbidding, and it also stimulates the creativity of both the child and the parents. Never say no; instead, look for options that satisfy the child's need to act.

- **Replace "no" with "yes"**. Our proposal is to create a space, inside or outside the home, called the *"Yes Lab,"* where the child can discover that there are laws. There are three phases in this teaching sequence:
- First phase: tell the child that they **can** break things, make a mess, yell, scribble…

- Second phase: **repair**. The child learns to pick up the broken glass or the toys they left on the floor, and does so as something fun, as a game.
- Third phase: **maintain**. The effort of repairing is no longer necessary; now the child is interested in maintaining. At this point, it is possible to teach them how to keep something from breaking, getting stained, becoming messy, or being damaged.

1.3 A Teaching Example

Let's say we're at the table with our son or daughter at breakfast time, and we've agreed that they shouldn't play at the table, because there is a place for everything: one for sleeping, another for playing, and yet another for eating. The child breaks the agreement, and as a result the chocolate spills on the table, and the cup falls to the floor and breaks. In a situation like this, instead of punishment, we will use guiding questions:

- *¿How did you manage to spill the chocolate?* This way, we don't reprimand the child with "Why did you spill it?" or "How could you be so clumsy?", because that isn't educational. The child might explain, for example, that they were playing with their little brother and didn't look where they put their hand. No one is to blame; they simply both made a mistake and broke an agreement.
- *What did you learn from this incident?* The child might answer: "I learned that when I play at the table, I break the agreements I made with my parents; I spilled the chocolate, I'm left without breakfast, the floor is stained, and the cup is broken."
- *What would you do to make sure this doesn't happen again?* "Next time I won't play at the table, because it's not the right place; I'll respect the agreements with my parents and go play after breakfast." These are the three pedagogical questions, but we haven't done anything yet; the rest is still missing. If we stop at this point, we won't have taught the child what is needed. What comes next is: "I'm going to teach you how to wash the tablecloth and how to make hot chocolate, and we're going to go buy another cup. I'll write down what the cup cost, you tell me in how many installments you want to pay me back, and we'll deduct it from your allowance until you've paid it off." (Paying for what they break is a pedagogical tool to help them learn to manage money, and it can be done from early adolescence.) If we don't do it this way, the child learns nothing, only that they were scolded or talked to for breaking the agreement, but there was no real outcome. By doing it this way, on the other hand, there is no punishment or aggression, just an outcome the child takes responsibility for.

1.4 Basic Agreements

Let's reach some basic agreements with our children on several key aspects:

- *Time*. Create a schedule to see how much time your child devotes to each thing: play, study, and chores at home or outside the home, such as going to buy bread.
- *Respect*. For their parents, siblings, teachers, nature, everything.
- *Management* or *organization* of all aspects of their life: personal hygiene, clothing, their room, chores… These agreements are built through dialogue and reflection, and every commitment that is fulfilled and respected generates a benefit that we can call an *acquired right*. Conversely, failing to keep any commitment does not generate the benefit: if there is no commitment, there is no result.

Starting in adolescence, children often protest against demands, so it's a good idea to "agree" with them on the responsibilities they must take on, and when they fail to meet them, remind them of the agreement.

We use the tool of *firmness* in the outcome when a child, for example, doesn't get up at the agreed time, or doesn't respect their father, and in any other case in which they fail to keep their commitments. "It's your decision to break the commitment, but the outcome you get is yours, not anyone else's." If they didn't get up at the agreed time to go to school, explain to them: "Tomorrow you'll have to deal with what you tell the teacher; I didn't punish you, it was you alone who decided to give up earning the benefit, and this is the outcome." This way we keep the child from developing resentment, a habit of blaming others, or low self-esteem. It's not about punishing, but about using the *pedagogy of outcomes*.

We will never negotiate the outcome, because that would be like negotiating with the Law, and the Law cannot be negotiated; it is always fulfilled. What we do negotiate is the agreement. In negotiation we need to be flexible, and when it comes to the outcome we need to be firm. We must never negotiate anything that is basic.

For example, we must never tell a child who has earned something that we won't give it to them, because that is completely contrary to good pedagogy; doing so makes them lose all trust and motivation. Likewise, we should never give them anything they haven't earned. The point is for them to get what is fair.

1.5 The Family as a Social Enterprise

A couple that forms a social or family nucleus creates not only an emotional bond but also a social process with common goals and a purpose of mutual growth and improvement, which gives the family the characteristics of an enterprise that, as such, needs to learn to manage certain principles and strategies in order to succeed.

Some of the principles of business success that can be applied to the family are:

- **Commitment to the mission of the organization** (the family). Generating commitment requires that no one feel obligated to do anything within their social nucleus; instead, each individual should feel important and taken into account in the organization's decisions. This creates a sense of belonging and gives rise to commitment to the common purpose of social and economic development. The idea is for every member of the family to move in the same direction, to support one another, and to collaborate.
- **Excellent service to internal and external customers**. Competition in the market is very strong, so to avoid losing their customers, companies take great care to offer them excellent service. This service rests on the friendly, timely attention provided by the employee, also called the internal customer, who in turn must also feel satisfied in order to support the service. This principle gives excellent results in keeping the family together. In this case, the internal customers are the couple and the children. A satisfied customer never switches companies. Moreover, for the external result to be satisfactory, we have to work on what is internal. The family's external customers are the jobs the parents live on, but they won't be able to work efficiently if their family is dysfunctional and full of conflict, because then they will have little mental balance to be productive in their outside jobs.
- **Optimal quality of service**. The quality of products or services is another powerful tool for a company's success, and the same happens in the family: if every task is carried out with love and excellence, the result will be the satisfaction of the whole social group and family success. The idea is for every member of the family to carry out their tasks in the best possible way, whether it's making breakfast or making the bed. And for the family to function with excellence, agreements and commitments are necessary, just as in a company.
- **Highlight the qualities and values of the team members**. This practice encourages people to work better, since when they feel valued they are able to develop their inner potential much more fully.
- **Harmonious leadership**. Some companies fail for lack of harmonious leadership, because advising is confused with directing, commanding, and imposing, and they fall into tyranny. A true leader is one who knows how to advise people and bring them together harmoniously around a goal of mutual benefit; for the same reason, a family needs parents who are true social leaders and loving counselors. A *boss* is one thing and a *leader* is quite another: the *boss commands, imposes,* and is authoritarian, whereas *the leader teaches, commits, suggests, and affirms*. In successful companies there are both leaders and bosses; both are necessary. The leader takes care of commitment, the process of teaching, and people's well-being, and the boss makes sure the rules are followed. Families need leaders, and that role belongs to the parents.

- **Learning from mistakes**. This means recognizing that no one has ever learned anything without first risking trying and making mistakes. From this principle arise creativity and the possibility of finding new options for the harmonious education of children, as well as for improving how the family is organized. Punishing the mistake instead of learning from it limits our ability to experiment and to take on life. In every human process we can make mistakes and go through crises or difficulties, and learning from them is the tool for not making the same mistakes again.
- **Think big**. Even if our company is small, we must think big and draw up the strategies of a large company. This has been the secret of the small businesses that have gone on to grow successfully. Likewise, in the family, if we build an integrated, united, and solid social nucleus, it is very likely that the families that make up society in the future will have a true community spirit and a great capacity for service, thus promoting peace, harmony, and the fraternal union of all human beings throughout the community.

1.6 Leadership in the Family Group

For the leadership process, we need to generate *trust*, *commitment*, and *loyalty*. How can we achieve this?

- To generate **trust**, there must be zero aggression and zero touchiness; in other words, we choose peaceful coexistence and choose not to take offense at what others do or say. It means opting for happiness. We decide not to suffer, and that is what creates a climate of trust in which we can talk, have dialogue, and reach agreements.
- **Commitment** arises when no one feels obligated to do anything. For this reason, punishment, prohibition, or imposition are not appropriate tools for fostering commitment, because they make people feel obligated and, therefore, not committed. To prevent this, it is useful to practice letting people deal with the results through *agreement*: "You're not obligated to do this; it's your decision whether or not to do it, but you will work out the result of doing it or not on your own"; that is what fosters commitment. Punishment, however, breeds fear.
- After an agreement and a commitment, **loyalty** arises when there is appreciation for the social enterprise and mutual respect. If something has no value to someone, they will not be loyal to it; and for it to have value, they need to have taken on the results themselves. If someone else always takes on the results for a person when that person makes a mistake, agreements and commitments will hold no value for that person. Therefore, if we make the mistake of doing for someone what they can do for themselves, or of taking on the consequences of their actions for them, they will never develop the virtue of loyalty, because of our pedagogical error. It is important to know that *no one belongs to anyone*—not children to their parents, nor partners

to one another—and that only love can unite people. It is not about "imprisoning" others, but about uniting with them through a commitment of love. Imposition never results in a solid bond; rather, it makes people want to run away. Therefore, we need to learn to live together and share in love—not as owners of anyone, but as brothers and sisters. *A family that is united and committed in love is the pillar of a new society.*

Achieving greater harmony within the family contributes your grain of sand toward a better world; to that end, it is worthwhile to apply the seven tools of love constantly.

Tools of Love	We renounce	Explanation
Accept	Trying to change others, including our own children	We work on ourselves, not on others
Take Action	Attacking others in thought, word, and/or deed	We don't react; we act effectively and calmly
Adapt	Running away from the place where we are meant to fulfill our function	We adapt to the environment in which we are meant to act; we don't fight against it—we enjoy it and give it our best
Be Grateful	Suffering over the difficulties that life presents to us	We are grateful for what we learn from every difficulty, because that is what makes us stronger
Take Ownership	Blaming anything or anyone There is no one to blame	We take responsibility for our experiences and decisions, along with their results
Respect	Criticizing others, judging them, or punishing them for any reason	We accept others as they are, without trying to change them
Appreciate	Complaining about any person or situation	We enjoy everything we have and everything we do, and we never complain

Table 3. The Seven Tools of Love

Chapter 2. What Does It Mean to Educate?

2.1 Educating Is Not About Imparting Knowledge

The reason our current civilization exhibits so many social pathologies is to be found in family units, regardless of socioeconomic and cultural level. All too often, families are marked by high levels of aggression, disharmony, authoritarianism, and personal devaluation, which cause serious psychological trauma and mental limitations in individuals.

It is easy to see that individuals responsible for corruption, violence, and social problems often come from disorganized and aggressive families, with a low level of self-esteem and of consciousness. Other times this is not the case: political corruption can occur among people who come from socially structured families, albeit with a low level of consciousness. In such families, children, adolescents, young adults, and the elderly are unable to be happy or to survive in a healthy way that respects the rights of others and the environment.

Clearly, the solution to any problem begins with correcting its cause; any other attempt at a solution will be insufficient to counteract the growing social disharmony. If the cause is not addressed, there will be more and more individuals causing psychosocial problems.

Therefore, the true purpose of education is not to impart knowledge, but to contribute to the healthy development of individuals, who in turn can form a healthy society. Knowledge is important, but it actually takes a back seat in the educational process; an individual with a great deal of knowledge but without a true human formation in the principles of love will misuse that knowledge and will not develop the ability to respect others.

To begin building a new society with a high level of human fulfillment, two actions are necessary:

1. Preparing **adults** so they can take on a true process of *harmonious guidance* with children.
2. Develop **educational processes** based entirely on the *principles of love*. If children are given the right tools during childhood to discover, value, and love life, the adolescents and young adults of tomorrow's society will have the ability to make the most of life and respect it, as well as to build excellent relationships—both with their parents and with others—by taking advantage of the circumstances they encounter in their life experience.

2.2 Stages in the Development of Personality

Through education, a child's mind gradually fills with information, and their personality (belief system) takes shape through daily interaction with parents and teachers. It is essential to make the most of a child's first five years of life by applying excellent teaching methods, so as to help them develop a flexible, adaptable, and creative personality. The goal is for children to develop a love of life—rather than fear of or aversion to living—and to learn to respect themselves and others.

In childhood, we still retain a natural inclination to learn from life itself, but this is gradually lost as we grow older, and adults should remember that life is our teacher and we are its tools. Parents should *guide* their children without becoming a hindrance to them; they should be their protectors, but not their guardians or jailers. There is no need to punish a child or burden them with the weight of our ignorance; we simply need to be like the earth, which sustains life so it can grow, and allow each child to take from it exactly what they need to express their values. Our boys and girls are counting on us.

We can identify three metaphorical stages in **personality development:**

1. *Recording*. Children are innocent and record the information presented to them until around the age of twelve. It's like setting a tape recorder to *record.*
2. *Verification of the recording*. It consists of listening to what has been recorded, and it lasts until about age 18. It's like setting the recorder to *play.*
3. *Reprogramming the recording*. If we are not satisfied with the recording, we can erase certain parts and replace them with new information. This is called reprogramming or decoding; we do it as adults as voluntary work, and it can last a lifetime. During childhood, we have the ability to see the world as it is, whereas as adults, we view it through the lens of our own beliefs. For this reason, after the age of 18, it is necessary to begin decoding useless or erroneous concepts by incorporating new information, experiences, and results. Encoding requires no development, but decoding does. That is why the cleansing work begins after age 18 at best, and often not until age 30, when we start to realize that our lives aren't working and seek out other information. Education does not consist of forcing a child to become an adult; on the contrary, adults should try to see the world through a child's eyes again in order to better fulfill their role as educators. We must dream again, fantasize, and develop all the creative capacity that still dwells within us but fell asleep along the way. Let's reawaken it so we can better understand our children, without losing the child within us. During the educational process, conflicts often arise because we insist on offering learners information that doesn't fit the reality they are living. For example, we teach them the difference between good and bad instead of explaining that both concepts are part of the same reality, and that it is necessary to be flexible and understand that different explanations can be developed for the same event,

based on each person's experience. Each of us uses the information in our minds to interpret what we see outside, but that interpretation is often the main problem in human communication. Faced with the same reality, each person makes a different subjective interpretation. For example, in response to someone's behavior, one might say: "What you're doing is bad"; or "I don't know if that's good"; or "I really liked what you did"; or, conversely, "I didn't like that at all." If we relate to the world from that perspective, it turns out to be quite chaotic. The same thing happens in education when we teach a "truth" that isn't actually true, but rather our own subjective interpretation. It's important to convey true information, not based on false beliefs, and to do so through play. Everything that exists in the Universe is perfect and necessary: there are no good or bad things. If we give a child under five the choice between seven geometric shapes, they'll simply pick one, whereas an adult chooses by reasoning and with a motive that might be the color, the shape, or the number of sides of the figure. Children see life simply; it flows; they identify with something and don't overthink things. Adults, however, generally analyze things beforehand. In the previous example of choosing among seven geometric shapes, when we have no apparent reason to pick one, it means our inner child is making the choice; the reasons always come from adults. Neither option is good or bad; we're simply verifying the same reality from different places. The first five years of life shape us forever and determine whether, as adults, we develop mental limitations and fears.

Of course, we can always choose to do trauma-clearing and mental restructuring exercises—what we call *mental reprogramming*—through, for example, psychological therapy; but none of this is necessary if we have an excellent first five years of upbringing.

> *Let's make the most of our children's first five years of life.*

The idea is to give children information that will help them develop a much more harmonious and flexible outlook on life. Ultimately, education is not for children; rather, it is first and foremost for adults, who are responsible for passing on something valuable to children rather than their own limitations.

Both children and adults learn through experience, so it is necessary to have concrete experiences in order to acquire the two tools that enable us to enjoy an extraordinary life: *wisdom* and *training*.

2.3 Communication for Education

It is helpful for parents to use *non-conclusive*, completely *deconceptualized dialogue* with their children, which means not offering them adult conclusions or concepts about

life and the situations they face.

We should not label anything or any situation as ugly or beautiful, bad or good, harmful or healthy, dangerous or harmless, etc. When faced with a child's questions or actions, instead of giving conclusive answers, it is better to engage in reflective dialogue, as illustrated in the box on the next page.

Aggressive Communication	Appropriate Communication
Careful, you'll break it!!	*What do you think will happen if that object falls or gets hit?*
Careful, you'll fall!!	*What could you do to keep from falling? Have you practiced this before without falling?*
Tidy up your room, it's awful!!	*How would you like your room to look? What could you do to make that happen?*
Don't do that!!	*Tell me why you're doing this. How do you feel about that result? What would you have to do to get a different result? What result are you hoping to achieve? How do you think you could achieve it? Give it a try and see what happens!*

Box 4. Nonaggressive Communication

Instead of using aggressive communication, let's use loving communication, which is better suited to helping children learn to reflect and draw their own conclusions.

In an appropriate dialogue, we wouldn't need to use judgmental labels, because they're nothing more than an expression of our own limitations: horrible, ugly, pretty, messy… For example, telling our daughter, "What kind of horrible music is that you're playing?" doesn't seem like an appropriate way to put it, because it may be horrible to us, but not to her. Instead, we can say, "I'd like to know the reason you've set the music at the volume it's at right now." That way, we help the mind reflect in a different way, without judging the music and without using the word "why," which is very curt and prevents the mind from formulating responses. By simply asking her to tell us the reason, we're using the *technique of non-conclusive dialogue*.

Instead of saying, "Careful, you'll break it!" we'll ask, "What do you think would happen if this fell or got knocked?" With that question, we check whether or not the child knows what might happen, since they're just beginning to discover life and may not know what it means to break things if they haven't broken anything yet, so the phrase "Careful,

you'll break that!" might not mean anything to them. That's why, as a form of pedagogical investment, we should go to an appropriate place to break things together so they can discover what it is and understand it. For example, we can play with the child by breaking something that's no longer useful. We ask them if they know what would happen if we dropped that object on the floor, and if they don't know, we ask if they'd like to find out; then we hand it to them and ask them to let go and watch it break. Then we can explain that it breaks because it can't withstand the effect of gravity against the floor. That way, we don't say it's good or bad, only that if it hits the ground, it will break.

If the child is holding a fragile object and has already experienced what it means to break something, we will ask the following questions: "¿How do you like the object you're holding? Which do you prefer, broken or as it is now?" Since the child will answer that they prefer it as it is now, we will ask: "And what would you do so it doesn't break?" This way we help them come up with answers instead of giving them information they will accept automatically, without thinking anything through. *The technique is to have the mind come up with the answer*, and it works for children and adults alike.

It's not a matter of congratulating a child when they break something, but of helping them learn to relate to their surroundings. When we give a child an expensive toy, we mistakenly assume they'll play with it like an adult, but that's not the case. The first thing they'll do is put it on the floor and "take it apart," because they want to find out what happens when they open it up. It's necessary to go through all these experiences with the child, so we must allow them to break their toys and get them dirty so they can learn what that entails and what they gain from it.

The wisdom of educators lies in verifying that the child has the necessary information, and to do that, it is necessary to ask questions.

If we tell a child that their room is very messy, what does that mean? It means that we don't like the way things are in their room; things may be very messy according to our concept of order, but if the child can find them whenever they need them, they aren't disorganized, just organized in a different way. Understanding that is an exercise in mental flexibility.

2.4 Children's Rights

To do therapy with a rebellious child, it is important to be clear about the following principle of the Universe: rights are earned; they do not exist by nature. And this is governed by the Law of Compensation.

At birth, a child has five **basic rights** that parents must never deny:

1. Appropriate *nutrition*.

2. *Clothing* to cover themselves.
3. A *place to sleep*.
4. An *education*.
5. To *feel loved*. Nowadays that love is missing in families; sometimes children are given everything except love. To avoid resorting to punishment, we'll use therapy, but first we must be clear about what their rights are. For example, the right to healthy nutrition does not include the sweets or various treats advertised on television. *Food* is anything that can nourish the body so that it stays healthy, whereas something *edible* is anything a person can put in their mouth, even if it doesn't nourish them, or even if it poisons them.

In general, the message we will give the child is:

> *Everything you achieve is the result of what you earn yourself.*

To start a new relationship with our son or daughter, then, we must explain to them that rights are earned, and that we will guide and help them so they can achieve those rights and bring fulfillment to their lives. We'll tell them: "Appreciate what you have, because from now on, whatever you achieve will be through your own effort and hard work."

The important thing is that they don't see anything as a punishment, but rather as the consequence of their behavior. It's not that their father or mother is punishing them; rather, they brought about that outcome themselves. That's why you should ask them, "How did you go about getting it?"

We will explain to the child what their rights are as part of the educational process of teaching them to value things. If they still insist on imposing their will above all else, we will create a chart to prevent aggression and punishment. This chart is not necessary if there is no trauma or defiance; in that case, agreements, reflections, and educational games are enough for the child to learn to behave harmoniously.

By using the chart, we will reach agreements on meals, schedules, and the time your child will devote to each activity; on the appropriate use of places and things—avoiding possessiveness—; on respect for others and socialization—relationships with parents, siblings, classmates, and teachers—and on behavior outside the home.

The first column lists the **commitments** or agreements, and the second lists the **benefits**. With this chart *we will do all the therapies* and avoid the use of punishment, which only causes limiting trauma.

In the "*commitments*" column, we will write down the agreements we make *with* the child, not *for* the child, because in that case we would be imposing them. For example, saying, "You have to do your homework. Do you agree?" is not an agreement at all. Instead, we can ask, "What time do you think would be a good time to do your homework?" This way, we begin to build agreements together: we give them information and reflect with them until they reach a commitment on their part.

> *To reach agreements we need flexibility and creativity. To keep them we need firmness.*

In the "*benefits*" column, we will write down everything the child asks for that goes beyond the five basic rights. For example: a pair of pants from a certain brand, watching TV, or playing on the computer. This is neither a gift nor a punishment. It is extremely important that the child be clear that we neither take anything away nor give anything; we do not punish or reward, because life does not work that way. They simply obtain results or they don't. And how do they obtain them? By keeping their commitments or not; it depends only on that. If we don't explain this, they will blame us for their results.

We can also explain that there is a place available where they can let out their anger and burn off adrenaline if they get upset. We can call it "the venting room," and it will be a place where they can cry or shout; once they have calmed down, we can return to dialogue, agreements, and commitments. Firmness is not aggressive, but if it comes before the agreements, it is not firmness but imposition.

> *What we have too much of in aggression, we lack in firmness.*

Next to each of the commitments agreed upon with the child, we will list the benefits and explain that *they are the result of fulfilling those commitments*, that it is their decision and not ours, that they have the right to fulfill them or not, but that they cannot avoid the result of not fulfilling them, because that result is theirs; no one takes anything away from them or gives them anything.

Benefits depend on the family's financial situation, so we won't offer things that can't be bought or delivered later on. It's important for the person to accept and understand that everyone has to learn to be happy with what they have, and not unhappy because of what they don't have.

As soon as the child fails to fulfill any of the commitments, we will start crossing off the benefits. If they lose them all, they know what is left: only the bare necessities; and they will feel terrible, because they want so much more. Completely avoiding the need for

punishment increases their appreciation for what they have and makes it easier for them to learn to make commitments, to show respect, and to earn their keep. The problem with people who, as adults, believe they have rights they don't actually hold is that they become corrupt; no one ever taught them that rights are earned, not stolen.

We need to explain to them how one earns one's keep: first by crying and sleeping (as a baby); then by playing and studying; later by studying and helping their parents at home; after that, perhaps by working or studying; and adults earn their keep through the role they fulfill in their lives.

We should never include love or affection in the benefits chart. We must never say to a child, “If you don't do this, I don't love you anymore,” or “If you don't do this, I won't love you anymore.” We should never tell them that the door is closed and will never open again, because our love must always be there for them. In reality, love cannot be lost by making any mistake, because it is universal.

2.5 Pedagogical Recommendations

- To make the most of the potential of a child's mind, let's stop talking to a child as if they were just a child, because that would waste their potential; **we will talk to them as we would to an adult**. Most brain and mental programming occurs through hearing, so it is important to grow up in an environment rich in harmonious sounds and language.
- When the child is not absorbed in something, we can talk to them about what they are doing, or **read them books** that have no negative emotional content. The child instantly picks up, through instinct, the emotions generated in the adult who is reading.
- Teach them **languages**. An adult's mind works 40 times more slowly than a child's, so a child can easily learn several languages without much effort in the first years of life. The purpose of the first five years is to have fun, even though the result may be very advanced mental development.
- **Meet their needs** without scolding them for anything or showing any kind of negative expression that they might interpret as danger. We need to relate to our son or daughter in a completely loving way and be patient when they cry, because at first it is the only way they have to communicate.
- **Help them gain wisdom**, not just knowledge, because sometimes knowledge becomes a set of mental restrictions that keep us from making the most of life. A wise person is someone who is able to be happy with what they have and make the most of what life offers. We hold concepts, knowledge, customs, and traditions; we resign ourselves to what we cannot change; and we end up rejecting life. We need

something much better to live by. To achieve this, *let's replace ignorance with wisdom*.

Ignorance	Wisdom
Concepts and knowledge…	… replaced by *truths*
Customs…	… replaced by *recognizing what corresponds* to each person
Traditions…	… replaced by *adapting to the environment* in which we are meant to live
Resignation…	… replaced by *acceptance*
Rejection of life…	… replaced by *love of life*

Table 5. Replacing Ignorance with Wisdom

2.5.1 A Cure for Tantrums

A child may throw a tantrum when we deny them something we don't consider appropriate for them. In these cases, the child's instincts and the adult's feelings go into battle, and usually the younger one wins; and when they do, they learn something undesirable: that through crying, manipulation, and tantrums they can get anything they want. From that moment on, it becomes their tool of the trade, but it happens only because adults allow it. Some ten-year-olds still ask for everything by crying. Why? Because it works for them; every time they cry, they get what they want. This teaching method will never produce satisfactory results.

To keep that from happening, at the child's first tantrum, or at most the second, we must take that "weapon" away from them. How do we do this? When the child starts a tantrum, the key is to stay calm, because if we lose our composure, they've already won. If we get upset or feel sorry for them, they've beaten us. What can we do? Look at them lovingly and, for example, pick up a book, sit down in front of them, and start reading as calmly as we can. Just that: *stay calm without saying anything*. If the child senses that the situation has become pleasant without our having to pay attention to their tantrum, they'll see that it won't work for them again.

So the child needs to verify that it doesn't affect us; if not, it will become a weapon. When they run out of breath and calm down, we can ask them a question: "Would you like to repeat the *show* for me? I thought it was very nice." Let's follow the Masters'

sequence, according to which, after that question, we can get two reactions from the child:

- First, they repeat it, because their anger grows. Then we go back, sit down again, and keep reading the book.
- After the second tantrum, we will ask again: “Would you like to do that again?” and they will answer: “Noooo*»*”. Next we will ask another question: “Do you think this is the best way to get the things you need?” Once they see that we are not upset, we will help them reflect: “Look, when you want something from me, I want you to know this: my heart and all my love are always open to you, and everything you need is available, but that is not the right way to ask for it. When you need something, we will talk, we will agree, and you will get whatever is necessary. If something is not necessary or cannot be obtained, we will have to accept that it is part of the mind’s process of maturing.” We will tell our son or daughter something very clear, using a key phrase:

“You won’t get anything from me with a tantrum.” That way, they’ll learn that this is not the way, and from that moment on they won’t ask for anything with tantrums or crying. If they cry, we’ll let them cry, and when they finish we’ll ask, “Do you think the best way to get something is by crying, or do you think there’s another option?” From then on, they won’t ask for things by crying; they’ll do it by talking, because that’s what language is for.

On the other hand, if aggression works for them, they’ll keep using it. There’s only one way to make them stop: it must stop working, and that depends on the parents, so they have to be very firm.

2.5.2 Children’s Suggestions to Parents

- *My crying is how I let you know I have needs. Don’t suffer over it!*
- *My tantrums are to get what I want; don’t give it to me, because then I won’t be able to value what I have.*
- *My curiosity about everything around me is how I learn; don’t punish me, or I’ll remain in ignorance.*
- *Let me try out the work that grown-ups do, because even if I don’t do it well, it helps me find my place in the adult world.*
- *Help me live each stage at my own pace; don’t push me into what isn’t right for me yet. Just show me the way, and I’ll follow you.*
- *Let my admiration for you grow stronger every day, and don’t let my feelings wither with shouting and aggression.*

- *Don't be offended by my mistakes, because only by making them can I recognize my innocence and learn the order of life.*
- *Don't give me things I don't need, but let me take on the results of my actions and decisions.*
- *I need your love in order to grow, but don't let fear take hold of me by showing me your own fears.*
- *Teach me the value of life through your example of being happy with what life has given you.*

2.6 Harmonious Adolescence

Since truth cannot be taught directly, it must be deduced from knowledge and experienced in life; this is precisely one of the functions of the personality.

Adolescence is a wonderful stage in the life of every human being, since it is the time when sexuality comes into play and the personality also awakens, seeking to verify the belief system acquired up to that point.

Until age twelve, a child is like a sponge that absorbs information, but at that point they switch keys: from "*record*" a "*play*" and begin listening to the recording. That is when their confusion begins, because it turns out that all the recordings in their mind do not match the reality of life: the information we gave them doesn't help them adapt. This state of confusion is the origin of all conflicts and can only be avoided through an excellent education.

Adolescents feel the need to experience life in order to get to know themselves, that is, to discover what kind of information is encoded in their personality; and the only way to find this out is by experiencing life for themselves.

At puberty the personality awakens and the person begins to experiment, since before that they are still being built from the information they receive. It is a stage of confusion (due in part to the hormonal revolution that takes place in puberty) because often everything they learned doesn't fit with life; that is why we say that adolescents are at the stage of getting to know themselves. In reality, adults never finish getting to know themselves either, but in adulthood there is already greater adaptation to the world, whereas adolescents not only don't know themselves, they also haven't adapted to their reality and can't support themselves; they depend on their parents.

Adolescents need to:

- **Get to know themselves.** That is, to know what is in their personality and in their belief system. The results they obtain will show them the truth or falsehood of the

beliefs they hold. Even though we, as adults, may not have managed to transcend all our limitations, we can explain to adolescents the origin of their conflicts and help them analyze their external results in four areas: relationships, health, abundance, and adaptation to the environment. But above all, we can guide them to check what inner results they are getting in those areas: whether they are experiencing happiness (they don't suffer), peace (they don't react or get upset), and love (they are willing to serve and give the best of themselves). These results will show them whether or not they are relating to others through truths.

- **Discover the truth**. As they replace their false concepts and beliefs with truths, they will obtain better inner and outer results. By discovering the *truth*, they will increase their *understanding* and their ignorance and conflicts will diminish. This is what the work of the development of consciousness is all about.
- **Adapt to the environment** or to life, which means developing the ability to make the most of our surroundings without suffering in them, understanding that they are an opportunity to learn. Whatever environment we happen to live in, from adolescence onward we all have the opportunity to learn to be happy by ourselves, without anything disturbing our inner peace, and also to learn to love our neighbor as ourselves; that is, to respect others. Once again, this is the work of the development of consciousness.
- **Taking responsibility for your life**—that is, for the results of your decisions—without blaming anyone else. In the process of mental maturation, we all need to take ownership of our thoughts, feelings, and emotions, recognizing that others are not responsible for them—only we are. Taking responsibility for your own life also means starting to do more, serve better, and demand less. Sometimes, because of a misguided upbringing in childhood, adolescents may be accustomed to asking for a lot and doing little, so they need to be taught to appreciate what they have. Adults, too—with a few minor differences—find ourselves in the same situation and need to get to know ourselves, discover the truth, adapt to our environment, and take charge of our lives. However, we have already learned to support ourselves and have accumulated more experiences, so perhaps we have developed our understanding a little further. When parents, by properly using the *tools of love*, allow young people to experience life in all its aspects, then adolescence—instead of being a difficult and traumatic time—becomes a wonderful opportunity to strengthen the relationship between parents and children. During this time, it is very important for parents to earn their children's *trust*, to make sure they can give them appropriate guidance without their children feeling the need to experience life in secret. The best guidance parents can give their teenage children is to provide them with all the *information* available, so that every experience becomes a mutually enriching event. When young people have their parents' trust, the right information, and the freedom to experience life, they have no need to hide or to "investigate" alongside strangers or in

inappropriate places to find the information they need, much less to seek acceptance in groups of disoriented and rebellious young people. Another important tool parents can use in educating their children is to allow them to take full responsibility for the results of their decisions and of their freedom. In this way, teenagers will have no one to blame and no one to rebel against, and so they will be able to find themselves and enjoy a completely harmonious adolescence, maintaining excellent relationships with their parents. Once children reach the age of 18, it is very important, in order to stabilize family relationships harmoniously, for parents to approach their relationships with their children from an *attitude of friendship and brotherhood*, completely relinquishing authority and thereby allowing young people to mature emotionally and affectively and to take charge of their own lives, free from any kind of dependence.

Chapter 3. Educating Through Play

3.1 Fantasies and Games

Play is the best way to educate, but in many cases we haven't learned how to make the most of it. The idea is for play to be educational, and to achieve that, it must be both recreational and reflective.

To educate children, we have several types of games available:

- **Fantasy games**, for children ages 0 to 4.
- **Verification games**, for children from age 4 or 5 up to 7. They follow this formula: "I don't believe it anymore; I'm going to start verifying it." They are a way to learn the truth of life and wisdom.
- **Discovery games**, which begin at approximately age 7.
- **Option games**, to awaken creativity in both children and adults.
- **Games of life**, for children close to age 12. In fantasy games, children see things that we don't see, because their personalities and belief systems haven't yet developed. In reality, these aren't fantasies, but rather what's called the *invisible world*—though it's invisible only to adult eyes, not to the youngest children. Adults perceive only the three physical dimensions; in contrast, other animals, such as cats, dogs, or horses, perceive more dimensions than human beings do; children do as well, because they have not yet formed a belief about the world. We can also call it the *world we forget,* because almost no one remembers their life experiences before the age of five. Therefore, when a child tells us about fantastical experiences, we should believe them, since children don't usually lie and are describing experiences that are valid

and real to them. The child is surrounded by a host of friends who are invisible to us, with whom they play; they are constantly tapping into and enjoying the Universe's sources of information. As adults, we need to relate what we experience to our past experiences. If, for example, we record various sounds and then play them for an adult, they may recognize some of them if they know what they are, or they may not know what they're hearing and think it's something else. For example, if we record the sound of a lawn mower and they've never heard one before, they might imagine they're hearing something familiar, like an electric drill; but if they don't guess correctly, they wouldn't like to be called a liar or a daydreamer, because they would feel invalidated or misunderstood. The same thing happens to children: if we invalidate someone during childhood, as an adult they will have low self-esteem, shyness, a fear of sharing what they see, and difficulty expressing themselves.

3.2 Discovering Life with Children

What is more important: that children understand their parents and teachers, or that their parents and teachers understand them? *It is more important that educators understand their students*. Usually, we try the former—that is, we expect young children to understand their parents and teachers, and we ask them to respect an environment they don't know. However, it should be done the other way around: we need to come down into the child's world so that they can become familiar with us, and then grow alongside them, taking their hand rather than forcing them. That is the goal of educational games: to play with the child and help them adapt to a new world in a harmonious way.

How can we help young children understand their parents and teachers and adapt to the world without provoking rejection or rebellion in them? The idea is not to impose any behavior on them, but simply to allow them to discover the importance of respecting others. Love itself, when we try to impose it, ceases to be love and becomes something that provokes rejection. Through harmonious education, *we will not impose anything, but will try to facilitate understanding*.

It's about learning alongside our sons and daughters—or our students—to discover the importance of respect and of choosing to do one thing or another without saying "you have to" or "it's your turn to do this." If we feel forced to do something, we don't commit to it. That is one of the causes of failure for many adults, which is why we shouldn't pass on that sense of obligation to children.

Instead of rules, aggression, or punishment—which are ineffective—we will use games and other tools to achieve better results and avoid causing trauma to children.

3.3 The Truth Cannot Be Taught

What is taught is not the truth, but concepts and beliefs. Even the very truth that a person has already discovered and verified, when passed on to another, is received by that person as a concept, not as a truth. The fact is that until we verify the information that reaches our minds, it cannot be considered a truth, but simply a belief. That is why it is necessary to allow for experience and to guide it wisely and lovingly, so that the youngest among us can discover the truth for themselves.

Truth is something verified in a result. When all people have followed this verification process and obtained the same result, unanimity is reached; but when only some people have verified it, *those who have not done so cannot understand,* because they have not yet discovered the truth for themselves. Therefore, only when we have verified it can we truly come to an agreement. For example, if we hand a group of people a closed cardboard box containing some objects, they can only verify what they are when they open the box; until then it will be impossible to agree. We can tell them what is inside, and they may or may not believe us, but until they open the box they will not *know whether it is true*.

Truth, then, is the result of direct life experience gained by putting our knowledge to the test. That is why we need to provide children with experiences that lead them to understand, rather than trying to convince them of a truth they have not verified; otherwise, we will only succeed in provoking their rejection.

Experiences are inevitable and necessary, but it is important that they be adapted to a child's capacity to experience. That is why they are called *educational games*: they are designed to suit the age of the children.

3.4 The Game of Options

Who would give their child, whom they love, a poison just because the child likes it? Only someone who lacks wisdom. If we teach our children to love themselves, to value themselves, and to recognize the value of their health and their bodies, then even if they see others poisoning themselves with substances like alcohol or tobacco, they will respect those people but will not imitate them.

So when a child asks us for something that isn't healthy, if we love them, we will offer a substitute that is. We won't tell them no; instead, we will give them other options for action.

It can also be very helpful to keep the child company and explain each thing they do as they do it. For example, if they are crawling and come to a small slope, we can say: "Right now you are climbing a small slope with an incline of about five degrees." It

doesn't matter if the language is very technical. If they fall, they will discover the law of gravity, and in the meantime we will explain in our own words what they are discovering physically. To give another example, we can say: "Right now you are picking a yellow flower with lots of petals." In this way, they will gradually encode the information in their mind. Even though a three-year-old thinks the sun goes to sleep at night and wakes up during the day, within their mythical mindset they are receiving information that will serve them later.

When a child becomes absorbed in something, it is better not to interrupt them and to try not to say "no," but rather to offer other options. When is there a need to say "no" to a child who is, for example, in a garden? The answer is never. We would say "no" if they were in a room full of porcelain, because that is not a place for a child, who should be playing in a garden with flowers. The only thing to watch is that they don't get near situations that exceed their ability to handle them. For example, if they are approaching a pond that is five meters deep, we will simply pick them up and put them somewhere else, without saying anything and without talking about the danger; so as not to condition them, we will offer them another option.

Keep in mind that if, because of an inappropriate guidance method, a child rebels and rejects the environment in which they live, they will lose the opportunity to find their mission in life and will then live only their destiny, but without enough strength to face it and make the most of it. As a result, their life will be filled with fears, attachments, limitations, and frustrations, which will lead to a low level of energy and very little chance of overcoming ignorance and transcending suffering.

3.5 Educational Games

In a recreational game, we let the child have fun without explaining anything, so that all we are developing through it is their psychomotor system.

For an educational game to be valid, it needs to encourage reflection on both successes and mistakes, so that we learn from both. In this way, verification becomes an educational process and real learning takes place. Achieving this is the art of pedagogy that both parents and teachers must put into practice, and it makes punishment unnecessary.

From the age of three, it is possible to begin with educational games that can produce extraordinary intellectual results, without that being their purpose.

For example, we take the little girl to the garden to watch the sunrise and say to her: "Look, that's where the sun comes up; that bright sphere you see there, we call 'the sun,' and the side where it rises we call 'east.'" We can play at teaching her the cardinal

directions, right and left, front and back; and at showing her colors by looking for flowers or other objects of each shade. Numbers can be taught by looking for branches or flowers with different numbers of leaves or petals, or by picking up stones and counting them to see how many there are. That way she will learn while she plays.

You can buy a board where the child can paint and express their creativity, or set aside a wall in their room for painting, which we will call “the yes wall.”

To teach them geometry, you can buy pieces in different geometric shapes, paint them in all colors, and play hide-and-seek with the children. We can say, for example: “Let’s look for the blue sphere; whoever finds it first can take part in another game.” It is important to create options for them so that they don’t compete with each other and learn that each one gets their own result from the game.

It is best not to use the words win or lose, because they encourage competition and lead to discrimination; a result simply leads to another game. For example: “When you find the blue sphere, we’ll look for the green cube; when you find the green cube, we’ll look for the yellow pyramid,” and so on in a sequence of games, no matter how many each child finds.

To learn numbers or the cardinal directions, there is a game children love: *the clues that lead you to the treasure*. The treasure can be a flower or any little thing they find appealing. The clues might be: “Let’s walk three steps west, then make a half turn to the right and walk five steps north.”

Another game consists of painting the whole alphabet on colored pieces, on which we will write the numbers, and then hiding them: children are born discoverers and investigators, and they love to search.

In the game *The Invention Workshop*, we will make use of old objects, such as a purse, to make, for example, a replica of her mother’s purse that a little girl can carry. Every educational game is valuable for the child if we reflect with them on what they learned and discovered, both when they got it right and when they made a mistake.

With four- or five-year-olds, instead of sitting them at a desk and asking them to write letters, we can play at hiding the letters from them. We need to think like children again and create, for example, a magic cave where the great treasure of wisdom is hidden, which they must search for by following clues.

Also, so that children can discover life, it is highly recommended to create a space for them, the *yes space*. And from the age of four, we can gradually let them enter the adult’s space and learn little by little to respect it through agreements.

3.5.1 The Learning Game

This is the game of discovering life. The aim is for children to draw their own conclusions and recognize how to learn what they do not yet know. It consists of the child first "educating" their parents, and then the parents guiding the child and supporting their self-learning in the discovery of truth.

The *techniques of the self-learning game* are simple: the aim is not to teach concepts or limit a child's ability to take charge of their own life, but rather to allow them to discover the truths of existence in nature and through their own experiences. To achieve this, it is necessary to:

- **Not impose** behaviors.
- **Not forbid** their natural actions.
- **Not punish** mistakes.
- **Not invalidate or criticize** their spontaneity.
- **Allow them to play and discover**, through play, the results of the universal law, letting them accept those results or, which amounts to the same thing, setting aside the urge to protect and the emotional reaction to the results they obtain on their own. What is needed is *non-reaction*, that is, the parents' or educators' *total serenity* and the *firmness* not to interfere in the child's process as they face the need to accept their own result.

3.5.2 Self-Discovery Games

In fantasy games, we work on love and mission, the sweet side of life, while in the following levels we work on taking on life by facing destiny. It is this last part, destiny, that may bring some minor pain, through accidents such as cutting a finger or bumping into something, and undesirable results when the child breaks one of the agreements. These games aim to help the child develop "discipline" and make a commitment to peaceful coexistence by respecting others.

- **Find the Button**

We form several groups of children. Group 1 will look for a gold button, group 2 a white button, group 3 a green one, group 4 a purple one, group 5 a black one, and group 6 a red one. Each group will have one minute to hide a button in the area of the room that we will mark off for this purpose. The button cannot be hidden in any personal item, that is, in anyone's purse, clothing, bag, or pockets, but only in places for common use.

First, the remaining groups leave the room while the members of Group 1 hide their button, and so on. When all the groups have hidden their buttons, all six groups will enter

at the same time to look for the button that belongs to each one. The game ends when all six buttons appear on the table; we'll simply note when this happens and explain it to the participants.

It's all about using your creativity, because this is a game for discovering processes of human relationships. No further clues are needed.

At the end of the game, we'll reflect on what happened and what the outcome was. For example, we might say the following:

"The result was that it took us 15 minutes to place all the buttons on the table. Do you think that result could be improved? How did you get it? You made several assumptions: you assumed this was a competition, but I didn't say that; that each group couldn't tell the others where the buttons they had hidden were; you thought you couldn't talk to each other; you also believed you had to achieve a result on your own without relying on another person or group; and that there would be a winner. However, all those assumptions were in your minds, because all I said was that the game would end when all six buttons appeared, so it could have been over in a minute. We could have gone to another group and asked them where our button was in exchange for telling them where theirs was."

We often think that something can't be done because our minds are programmed with that information. That's the effect our education has had on us: it has blocked our creativity. We were told, "You have to respect the rules and order; you have to be disciplined and learn to obey." And in this way, they managed to put our creativity to sleep, and now we need to awaken it again.

What did we learn from the previous game?

- That it's important to work as a team; and in this game, we're all part of the team.
- That it's important to negotiate. If we don't learn that, we'll end up with inefficient results.
- That it's necessary to communicate well.
- That assuming is a bad habit. What can we do to prevent it from happening again?
- Don't make any assumptions.
- To think that we're all one team, that we need to negotiate, communicate, reach agreements, and cooperate. That way, we would have achieved a better result.
- To accept that we need to do things differently.

The most important part of the game, the part that contributes the most, is reflecting on what happened and how it unfolded. The game itself is like the experience, but if we

don't draw lessons from it, it's lost.

When a child falls and gets hurt, we shouldn't say, "Poor thing," or start crying with them, because that doesn't help at all. Simply, after tending to the wound, we can sit down and reflect with them: "How did you end up falling? How do you feel? What did you learn?" And we'll do the same with their successes.

We're really reluctant to talk, communicate, and reflect, because when we were little, we were constantly told "no": "Don't interrupt the adults, don't butt into our conversations, don't touch that, go to your room…" That's how we become uncommunicative, and as adults, it doesn't even occur to us to communicate, not even in a game. We pass this mental block on to children without realizing it, which is why we need to awaken creativity and communication again.

- **The Signal Game** Here are the instructions: "The game consists of sitting in a circle, holding hands, and when I give the signal with my right hand to the person next to me, that person must pass the signal on to the next person, without speaking, just by squeezing their hand slightly. The game ends when the signal comes back to me through my left hand." Once the game is over, we'll reflect on the following: "If we don't worry about anyone else, how long does it take to pass a signal from our left hand to our right hand? A nanosecond. Let's try this method to see if it improves group efficiency and helps us reduce the time." We can also suggest other ways to improve, such as doing it with our eyes closed. What can we learn from this game? We discover that a group's result is equivalent to the individual result; that is, when each of us gives our best and doesn't worry about what others are doing, we achieve the best results. Thus, the purpose of this game is to discover tools that make our lives much more efficient and productive.

ü The Ball Game

Let's start with a question: "How quickly can we get this ball all the way around the group without anyone ceasing to touch it?"

Let's continue with a reflection. For example: "We achieved a time of 23 seconds. What suggestions do you have for improving this result?" Someone could suggest that one person step into the center while everyone else goes at once to touch the ball. Through this game, we see that coordination is necessary to achieve better results, and that coordinating means making suggestions and reaching agreements.

And we'll wrap up with a suggestion: "I propose that we agree to ask for the floor before making each suggestion. To speak, we'll raise our hands, and everyone else will listen to that person without interrupting. Does that sound good to you?"

These games are intended for children over the age of five because they involve the development of certain skills, such as reaching agreements, reflecting, using creativity, and cooperating, as well as the capacity for self-discipline, making commitments to a group, taking turns speaking, and valuing each proposal: that is, the ability to accept that one can experiment without invalidating.

The idea is that both children and adults learn to commit to life, make a commitment to respect others in order to live together peacefully, and fulfill our responsibilities, and not do what is not ours to do.

What did we learn from the previous game? Not to invalidate, to listen, to build agreements, to cooperate, to negotiate creatively, to make commitments, to accept others and the outcomes, to be present so we can make the most of what's happening in our lives, as well as the sense of belonging to a group, of feeling part of a whole, not excluded.

We need to let our minds fly so we can think the way children do. For a child, the word "impossible" doesn't exist. It's best to erase that word from our dictionary and replace it with: "I don't know how to do that yet," "I still need more training," or "I don't have that information, but I'll try to find it."

Limiting beliefs take root in our minds when we say to ourselves: "I can't; it's impossible; I'm not capable; that's not for me; this is absurd." If we accept deep down that "this can't be done," our creativity is blocked. In reality, we stop being children when we start thinking that something couldn't be done: that we couldn't fly, that we couldn't dream, that we couldn't fantasize, or that we were obligated to do something. We don't leave childhood behind when our bodies grow, but when our minds become blocked; that's why we can become children again, with a grown-up body and a free mind, if we set our minds to it.

In order to expand our consciousness, we need to recover the ability to dream, to imagine, to visualize, and to project our minds and thoughts to any place in the Universe so that we can tune in to information that lies beyond the five physical senses, just as we do in childhood. To be excellent educators and parents, we need to recover the skills that connect us with those we teach.

It is customary in our culture to encourage activities that primarily develop the left hemisphere of the brain, the analytical and rational one, while leaving the right hemisphere in the background. However, it would be better to develop both hemispheres in a balanced way, which requires doing exercises with both hands and both legs equally. In this way, our capacity for understanding will be greater: when the analytical is combined with the perceptual.

- **The Masters' Game** This game is about learning to reflect, as this is the teaching method the Masters use instead of punishment. Four simple questions can encourage reflection:
- *How did you manage to get that result?*
- *How do you feel about it?*
- *What did you learn?*
- *How would you handle it next time? How would you repeat it? Or, if not, how would you go about avoiding it?*

The teacher aims to convey information to students, while the Master wants the disciple to find the information on their own. When information is given to us, the mind *understands*, but when we have to seek it out, the mind *comprehends*. In general, the Masters' game consists of an *inconclusive dialogue*, because the disciple has to reach a conclusion on their own, which means they need to process the information mentally in order to comprehend or verify it.

Chapter 4. Mission and Destiny, the Sweet and the Bitter

As they grow, children face a major challenge: they find themselves in a place that is new to them, with unfamiliar people and customs, and they must fulfill a mission of love by learning what they need from the place and its people in order to adapt. Throughout their lives, they will need to accept the situation they are meant to live and commit to fulfilling their mission and living their destiny, because if they fail to do so, they will always feel trapped and obligated. That is why adults must help them grow and find their mission, and support them in taking it on. They must be careful not to suppress children or clash with them, as so often happens.

Love is the *mission* we bring into life—its sweet side—so educators must allow it to develop in childhood. To do so, they must support their sons and daughters, or their students, play with them, and help them learn to reflect without indoctrinating them.

Destiny, for its part, leads us to take something on, and it has to do with a kind of *discipline*, which makes it a bit bitter even though it is a non-imposed discipline—since nothing imposed yields good results. Because we need to adapt to our environment, we must learn to respect others, as well as rules, spaces, and different customs. But how can we teach children to take on respectful behavior toward their surroundings as their own? The only way is through exercises, examples, and verification.

The attitude of loving life or rejecting it develops largely during the first five years of life, depending on the information received during this stage. These are unrepeatable years that we must help children make the most of with wisdom. We often assume that knowledge and education, as well as following rules and accepting social structures, are so important that they must be learned from birth. However, we forget that throughout their lives a person can acquire intellectual knowledge, learn social behavior, or learn to respect rules, but those five years are fundamental for developing the **attitude of loving life**.

After the age of five, the mind's learning speed slows down considerably. During childhood the mind works 40 times faster than in later years; therefore, if we multiply those five years by 40, they would equal 200 years. Is it really a good idea to waste them teaching children, from the age of two, patterns of responsibility, discipline, and respect for rules? Wasting that potential multiplies the development of inner conflicts dramatically, so it is worth rethinking this issue.

Given all this, what is our educational proposal? To respect those first five years of life by filling our sons and daughters with love, setting aside the pace set by the Ministry of Education, since a child who follows a method of well-directed educational games could be considered, by the age of twelve, to have completed high school. In general, children reject studying because we impose it on them and take them out of their natural environment—which is play. The right approach is to use play and to develop teaching within the child's own environment, to avoid the mental limitations that come from immersing them, so early, in an adult environment of discipline.

We very much want children to learn to be happy, to make the most of any circumstance in life, however different it may be, and to see every situation as an opportunity to learn rather than as a problem.

What we propose is to foster in children's minds the fulfillment of the life experience, *getting the greatest benefit with the least suffering*. To this end, it will help a great deal to observe the child and note which situations seem to belong to destiny—those of difficulty or fear, or unpleasant or apathetic moments—and which ones show their mission—those in which they display ease, calm, enthusiasm, or pleasure.

Identifying what the marks of life and destiny show helps us understand and accept life more easily. It also contributes greatly to improving social, family, and personal harmony, since it allows us to understand others better and makes it easier for us to help children grow and to support adults in overcoming the limitations that keep them from expressing the love they naturally possess.

4.1 Observation Guide for Parents and Teachers

We suggest making a chart with two columns in which we will write down, on one side, situations of *destiny* and, on the other, situations corresponding to *mission*.

- *Situations that reveal* ***destiny***: these are situations that arise constantly from life itself and that seemingly have nothing to do with learned cultural limitations. For example: frightening dreams, things the child tries to avoid for no logical reason, situations the child cannot stand or accept, difficulty or excessive crying in certain circumstances, or physical or genetic problems. *Supporting the acceptance of destiny during childhood requires firmness*
- *Situations that reveal the* ***mission****:* these are the ones in which the child enjoys doing what they like most, what they talk about with great enthusiasm, their pleasant and recurring dreams, what they do with ease and become so absorbed in that they forget about time, or certain pleasant things that life provides without their having sought them. *Supporting our sons and daughters in their mission requires flexibility.* There are some **learned limitations and blocks**, associated with destiny, that recur during childhood and that are worth identifying:
- *Difficulty taking on life:* always blames others for their difficulties; takes responsibility for no task; does nothing unless told to; keeps their belongings in disorder; always says “it needs to be done” instead of doing it; makes excuses such as “It wasn't me; I didn't know; it's not my turn; no one told me; I'm busy”; rarely admits mistakes or accepts other ideas; shows laziness and apathy; often falls into silence and sadness; is very afraid of criticism and of losing people or things.
- *Difficulty adapting to the environment:* rebelliousness shown in the way a person dresses or styles their hair, in the music they listen to, in the way they eat, in not respecting schedules, or in using inappropriate language and manners; they constantly reject rules and the law, are contrary, and argue frequently; they constantly criticize and complain about circumstances, their surroundings, and other people; they easily become fanatical; they show different forms of aggression and fly into a rage easily; in certain situations they show shyness and a fear of exposing themselves and harming their own image; they come across as imposing and domineering, and they are possessive, not lending or sharing their things; they are afraid of the dark, of some animals, and of certain situations; they tend toward self-destruction and depression; they display feelings of insecurity and inferiority; they are prone to vices or gambling as a way of escaping from life and its responsibilities; they show introversion or muteness. These and many other limitations can be observed in children, teenagers, and adults, and most of them originate in an inadequate method used for their education. Most destiny situations can be overcome if the person is guided properly and given the right information. However, the difficulty of achieving this generally increases in proportion to the person's age.

In many cases, learned limitations respond favorably to *love therapy*. It is important to listen to your child calmly, without being frightened by what they say, even if it seems like fantasy to you. The goal is to keep filling in the two columns in order to help our son or daughter, once they reach adolescence, find balance in the twelve qualities.

4.2 Achieving Balance

The ideal in a human being's life is to achieve a *balance between destiny and mission*, because fulfilling one's mission provides the energy and strength needed to successfully face one's destiny. The suffering we experience in the face of life's difficulties stems from learned limitations, which are also part of our destiny; it is precisely by overcoming these limitations that we are able to be reborn and reconnect with our inner child and our consciousness, thereby overcoming suffering.

Balance, therefore, consists of making the most of one's destiny and valuing one's mission.

By **making the most of our destiny,** we enter the game of life and develop:

- The capacity for acceptance of everything that happens in the Universe.
- The capacity to appreciate everything we have—a body, faculties, material possessions…—.
- The capacity to form satisfying relationships with all beings in the Universe.
- The capacity to be happy by ourselves, without depending on anything or anyone. By **valuing our mission**, we achieve:
- Inner peace, because our inner energy increases.
- Enthusiasm for facing our destiny.
- The capacity to serve others—which is another of the tools of success—.
- Wisdom to make the most of what we have. We need to play the game of life to achieve this balance. The twelve qualities of balance are completely opposite yet complementary, and they are also necessary within a good educational process.

1. **Staying silent** when we should stay silent	... as well as **speaking** when we should speak
2. Ability to **obey**	... as well as the ability to **lead**
3. Ability to be **humble**	... as well as the ability to **value** yourself
4. Being **prudent**	... as well as having **the ability to make decisions**
5. **Acceptance**	... as well as **discernment**
6. Ability to be **cautious**	... as well as the ability to be **courageous**
7. Being willing to **own nothing**	... as well as to **have everything at your disposal**
8. Ability to practice **detachment**	... as well as the capacity for **loyalty**
9. Not being **afraid of death**	... as well as **appreciating life**
10. Knowing how to **go unnoticed**	... as well as knowing how to **attract attention**
11. Being **permeable** to new information	... as well as being **impenetrable to anything harmful**
12. Having **an understanding of life**	... as well as having **the firmness** to follow through on it

Table 6. The Twelve Qualities of Balance

To give just one example, in the field of quality control there is what is known as *paralysis by analysis*. In other words, an excess of control and *caution* leads us to immobility. But excessive *courage* can also lead us into situations we are unable to handle. That is why a balance between the two is necessary.

On the other hand, achieving balance also involves ridding our minds of the concepts of "good" and "bad," since things are neither good nor bad—they are simply situations that differ from one another. This way of thinking is a mental restriction that is part of destiny—something to be overcome.

To transcend our limitations, it is helpful to understand the *mirror effect*, which means that the flaw we see in others shows us exactly our own limitation in accepting something different from what we believe. This limitation reveals the mental rigidity of our ego and shows us our destiny.

4.3 Destiny: What We Have Yet to Learn

What is our weakest point? There's a saying that goes, "A wounded finger bumps into everything," and that's how we can identify it, because it shows up in different situations. Our weak points are part of our destiny, and we need to work on them; they are what we call the "unacceptable."

To make it easier to discover our destiny, let's answer the following questions—which are intended for children, teenagers, and adults alike.

- *My worst dream*. This is that recurring dream that is very unpleasant. Dreams of this kind reflect our deepest fears and are associated with trauma. Trauma can occur in the womb from the very moment of conception and become imprinted on the unconscious. The traumas that occur there have a lot to do with rejection by parents.
- *What I like least about myself*. For example, our height, being very heavy or very thin, having a crooked nose, or being too shy—since these can be characteristics of our physical appearance or our personality. These insecurities reflect an inability to accept the perfection that we are: we have no reason to reject anything about ourselves; this doesn't mean we can't improve it, but not out of rejection. If we feel bad about ourselves, it's because we don't accept ourselves.
- *What I find hardest to learn*. What is very difficult for us reflects what we reject because of a mental limitation.
- *What I like doing least*. It's like saying, "I wash the dishes, but I don't iron." It reflects our mental limitation in understanding that there are no better or worse jobs—only different ones.
- *The place I like least*. It reflects an inability to respect a place that's different, because we're judging it.
- *The worst business deal I've ever made*. This question is for adults. The answer helps us discover our ignorance and our inability to respect the destiny of others. When we fail, it means we're going against the order of the Universe and engaging in activities that aren't part of our function or aren't meant for us. Furthermore, this also reveals our lack of skill in serving better.
- *My most difficult relationship*. With a teacher, with our partner… That difficulty reflects our mental limitations. People often think that destiny cannot be changed, but **destiny**

has two components:

- *The part that can be changed.* For example, the way we learn what we still need to learn, and doing so at a different time or in a different place. We can also change how

we decide to respond to learning experiences.

- *The part that cannot be changed.* This is what we need to learn, and it is part of the Laws of the Universe, which are immutable. We all have two options to choose between: enjoy it and see what we can learn, or suffer.

4.4 The Mission: What We Already Know

Since our mission consists of the information we already know, and our destiny consists of what we have yet to learn, as we learn, our destiny diminishes and our mission grows.

The following questions will help us find our mission:

- *What is the most pleasant thing you find in your dreams?*
- *What do you like most about yourself?*
- *What do you learn most easily?*
- *What do you like to do most?*
- *Which place do you prefer to be in?*
- *What have been your best business deals or situations?*
- *What are your most pleasant relationships?* Everything we already know how to do is part of our mission, and therefore we like it and enjoy it; in other words, we get good results in terms of personal satisfaction. However, the game of life confronts us with what we need to learn, not with what we already know how to do. The game consists precisely in this: what frightens us the most is what we need to experience in order to learn; what we don't accept is exactly what we need to face. That is the Law of the Evolution of the Universe. When destiny and mission coincide, success is extraordinary, since everything flows in a remarkable way.

4.5 How to Face Destiny

First, *by replacing "I want" with "I need."* It's essential to guide our children by helping them face their limitations rather than run away from them, so they can learn. If they're unwilling to do their tasks, it means that those tasks are part of their destiny, so we must support them so they learn to enjoy them and not reject them.

Eliminating the "I want everything I don't have" mindset. As long as we desire what we don't have and fail to appreciate what we already possess, we will always be unhappy. Happiness is achieved by transmuting destiny into mission. That is why the Masters say: "All human beings have what they need to be happy, but very few know how to be happy with what they have, because they do not value it."

Practicing loving communication. The animal within us manifests itself in the survival instinct, which drives us to flee or fight. Therefore, we must let go of it, since it serves no purpose in building relationships or in educating. We must abandon physical aggression as well as verbal aggression—and even mental aggression, which is more subtle but still causes us harm.

Making sure that what is on the outside doesn't affect what is on the inside (spiritual independence). The fact is, our peace, happiness, and ability to serve depend solely on ourselves. When a child throws a "tantrum" and gets angry because they can't get something, the external situation is affecting their inner peace. They will have to learn that when they don't get something, it's because they don't need it, and there's no reason to lose their peace and serenity over it.

To help children work on accepting their destiny, we can use reflections, giving them information about the importance of learning something from every difficult situation. The table of commitments and benefits we created earlier is useful for this purpose.

4.6 What Is the Mission For?

The mission is the opposite of destiny; it is everything we love, what we call a calling—what fills us with joy and enthusiasm. It is something we can teach and share with others.

The mission serves three purposes:

- *To manage our inner energy*. When we do things we enjoy, our energy increases tremendously.
- *To express and develop our love.* When we teach what we know, we are expressing our love for others. Let's share with the children what we do best—what we love most.
- *To support and teach others with what we already know.*

4.7 Verification Game: The Elixirs of Life

For this game, we'll form groups of several people. Each group has three glasses: glass number 1 is empty, number 2 contains a sweet elixir, and number 3 contains a bitter one. The goal of the game is to fill glass number 1—the one we'll give to the child to drink from—and leave glasses 2 and 3 empty. The group members will have to agree on the best way to fill glass number 1.

There are many ways to mix the elixirs, and even if the result appears to be the same, the experience will be completely different. Let's consider what the appropriate experience would be for an innocent child who is about to come into contact with these "adult"

elixirs. It's inevitable that we'll give the child both, but we must decide how, in what proportions, in what order, and for what reason. What would be the outcome for the child in each case?

When we play this game, we'll see that all the groups have trouble reaching an agreement and need to think things through carefully, even though everyone wants what's best for the children. The fact is, simply wanting what's best isn't enough; we need to know what's best—in other words, we need *sufficient, efficient, and timely information*.

We have three options for filling glass number 1:

1. Serve the bitter elixir first, followed by the sweet one.
2. Have them taste the sweet one first, then the bitter one.
3. Pour in a mixture of the two. If we choose option a, the child will experience the bitter taste first, so, metaphorically speaking, they will see life as something bitter that occasionally has moments of sweetness. They won't be able to experience what the sweet taste is like on its own. If we choose option b, the child won't experience the bitter taste on its own, but will experience the sweet taste on its own. If we choose option c, the child won't be able to experience either the fully sweet or the fully bitter taste. Which option would be the most powerful for loving life? Option b, so that the child first experiences the sweet taste of life and then realizes that life also offers us an opportunity to learn what we do not know through bitter destiny. If we offer the sweet one first, then, the child will develop a love of life.

Thanks to that love, when they have to go through difficult, learning experiences, they'll be able to think, "Life is still wonderful despite the difficulties." If we do it the other way around, they may reject life despite the pleasant moments, as happens to many adults.

In this example, obviously, the sweetness of love does not refer to anything edible, since eating sweets can cause acidosis, weaken the immune system, and deplete the body's calcium reserves, as well as cause cavities in the teeth… all of which will cause them pain.

The empty glass represents the child's innocent personality. The two elixirs of life are the mission—the sweet one—and destiny—the bitter one. These two elixirs will be installed simultaneously in the child's mind over a period of five years; adults will be responsible for this. Destiny and mission become fixed in our minds through the belief system, symbolized by the filling of the glass. But the belief system has two possibilities: it can be very flexible or very rigid.

> *The last thing that helps us maintain and improve our relationships with others is being right, because it prevents us from being flexible.*

People with mental flexibility tend to build good relationships and create thriving businesses; they adapt to the world and suffer little. Meanwhile, people with mental rigidity suffer greatly in life, which for them is full of conflicts. Those who achieve success in life—in any area, whether health, relationships, or finances—do so because they have been able to become flexible.

4.8 Fear of Living or Love of Life

The fear and inner insecurity that many people feel about life stem from a lack of awareness of their own ability to succeed. Other fears related to specific situations are caused by psychological trauma resulting from inappropriate teaching methods.

In general, fear is one of the major obstacles to personal fulfillment and success in life. For this reason, it is very important for parents to learn how to guide their children properly so that they do not develop insecurities and, furthermore, to help them recognize their own abilities so they can make the most of life.

The teenager still doesn't know who they are, what kind of information is in their mind, or what their abilities are, and, naturally, they feel insecure and need to discover their identity and experience their own abilities as they face life.

Self-awareness, the ability to embrace life, and the values needed to enjoy it are undermined by poor teaching methods—that is, by the use of *the weapons of ignorance: prohibition, imposition, aggression, and interference*. Paradoxically, parents who try to shield their children from difficulties unwittingly use a method that leads directly to suffering, rebellion, a rejection of life, and all the conflicts that arise in parent-child relationships.

The fear of living originates when we offer our son or daughter the bitter elixir—that is, when we forbid, impose, attack, restrict, and overprotect. In this way, children become filled with resentment and fear. What we need to do is let everyone develop, without overprotecting or attacking them, simply growing alongside them and supporting them.

When adolescents are prevented from—or not properly guided in—discovering themselves through life experiences, they may rebel, thereby increasing the risk of confusion and of falling into bad habits or negative attitudes. This happens when they lack parental support and sufficient information to successfully face life.

As teenagers gain experience in life, if they have enough freedom, support, and firmness from their parents, they will gradually gain confidence and discover their abilities. In this way, they will come to enjoy the task of living and develop a love for existence, for themselves, and for others—which is the best antidote to vice.

A person who loves life respects their body, because they know it is a perfect vehicle for making the most of their existence, for serving others, and for evolving their consciousness; therefore, they will never willingly do anything that could harm their health, nor will they harbor thoughts of rejecting life. In this way, they will be able to live life fully and with complete satisfaction.

> *We will be able to love life when we see problems as opportunities to learn.*

A harmonious childhood, supported by parents who give plenty of affection, examples of love, appropriate information, clear agreements, and loving firmness, will help children gradually trust in their ability to manage their own lives and will lead them toward a harmonious adolescence.

Young people will find in their parents the understanding, love, support, and information they need to develop their life experience, so they won't need to look for information or acceptance elsewhere or from strangers. In turn, parents will find in their children acceptance, appreciation, admiration, and respect arising from their loving understanding. The relationship between parents and children thus becomes a wonderful experience for the whole family.

A healthy family unit gives rise to healthy individuals who can form a harmonious society. When the children in a family unit grounded in the principles of love reach the age of 18, family relationships take on the quality of brotherhood—that is, total equality.

Chapter 5. The Great Mistakes

Holding false ideas in our minds leads us to make great mistakes. It is important to distinguish between correct and incorrect associations. The table on the next page may help.

Mistaken Associations	Correct Associations
Competing: fighting against others in order to win	**Participating**: giving your best and valuing the result
Winning: defeating your competitors	**Valuing**: appreciating the result obtained in an activity
Losing: being defeated by your competitors	**Evaluating**: learning to recognize the value of every result
Goal: a result you want to obtain, whatever it takes	**Purpose**: doing your best and accepting the result obtained
Obligation: behavior imposed by others	**Commitment**: behavior you decide on for yourself
Rules: decrees that others are obliged to respect	**Agreements**: commitments you are willing to respect
Poverty: not having what you need to live	**Humility**: the ability to be happy with what you have
Possessions: believing you own something or someone	**Wealth**: knowing you can always be happy with what you have
Problem: a situation of suffering that cannot be resolved	**Opportunity:** a chance to learn management skills and understanding
Danger: situations that pose a risk to everyone	**Situations** that require skill to manage them
Reality: what happens on the three-dimensional plane.	**Reality**: what happens on any dimensional plane
Sincerity: saying clearly what you feel about others	**Values**: expressing only the virtues of others

Table 7. Incorrect vs. Correct Associations

Mistaken Associations	Correct Associations
Telling the truth: recounting an event	**Telling the truth**: giving information out of love
Love: the most beautiful of feelings	**Love**: understanding that everything has a perfect purpose
Being a fool: offering no resistance to the aggression of others	**Being meek**: choosing to live peacefully with others
Selfishness: thinking of yourself instead of thinking of others	**Self-worth**: thinking of yourself provides the resources to serve
Force: the ability to impose your own ideas on others.	**Power**: the ability to achieve satisfactory results.
Defense: a security system to deter the enemy.	**Security**: the capacity for respect and peaceful coexistence.
Principles: ideas associated with doing good	**Laws**: knowing, obeying and respecting the order of the Universe
Good: everything you agree with	**Action**: necessary to recognize the existence of the Law
Evil: everything you disagree with	**Action**: necessary to recognize the existence of the Law
Master: a being who teaches how to do good and avoid evil	**Master**: a being who teaches how to flow with the order of the Universe
God: an almighty lord who rewards or punishes	**God**: the origin of everything that exists and happens in the Universe
Drama: a situation painfully judged to be an injustice	**Occurrence**: a neutral event that allows us to assess our understanding
Tragedy: physical events that cause great suffering	**Event**: physical facts subject to human interpretation

Table 7. Incorrect vs. Correct Associations (continued)

We need to clearly redefine the terms we use to refer to the different aspects of existence. This will make it easier to reprogram our minds with new information that

frees us from the limitations that arise from culture and are installed in our brains through language associated with fear, guilt, punishment, and reward.

When our language is fully aligned with the principles of love, happiness, harmony, peace, and respect, and when we achieve a continuous process of harmonious relationships and learning, and lovingly value every experience we live, we will be able to reprogram our minds and see life as an opportunity to learn to love and to be happy on our own.

> *Using a new language allows us to reprogram our minds in accordance with the perfect order of the Universe.*

False mental associations are like the chains that limit a prisoner and keep them bound to their sorrows and suffering, restricting their ability to think harmoniously and to reprogram their mind with the information of truth. Therefore, by replacing false associations with true ones, we achieve a state of mental freedom. In other words, by breaking the false associations, the chains of the mental prison are destroyed.

By completely and definitively renouncing all forms of guilt, aggression, revenge, and punishment automatically disappear. In this way, we cease to be a danger to others. Only then will we be able to live in a civilization whose fundamental basis is freedom, respect, and harmonious coexistence.

In this new civilization, people will have the following characteristics: they will maintain, in any circumstance, *increasingly free behavior*, because they are able to be happy on their own; they will be *respectful*, because they accept everyone as they are, without trying to change them; they will be *always willing to do what is necessary*, regardless of any situation tied to their inner state; they will be *wise*, because they are experts at living happily; and also *helpful*, because they always give the best information—sufficient, efficient, and timely—and put the highest quality into what they do.

When a person decides not to suffer or fight but instead to devote themselves to peaceful coexistence—when they decide to respect others and serve them—they become a *being of love with a high level of consciousness*.

5.1 False Dichotomies

5.1.1 Truth vs. Falsehood

Generally, our definitions of things are far from the reality of life, yet this is the information we pass on to our children as we raise them. What we believe to be truths

are nothing more than subjective limitations.

The truth or falsity of a belief can be recognized by the results we get when we act on it: when we act on false beliefs, we get results that are far less satisfying than if we acted with greater wisdom.

When a person is filled with anguish, fear, suffering, and nonacceptance of life, that feeling of depression corresponds to an external result of conflicts with other people, a struggle with life, and discord with their surroundings. The person feels threatened and full of fear, and has great difficulty coping with life. What concepts do they hold within themselves—truths or beliefs? Undoubtedly, false beliefs, because *falsehood* is associated with what *does not work, either inside or outside*. If, on the other hand, the person is able to find the peace that dwells within, learning to appreciate *truths*, they will have harmony and be able to be happy on their own, regardless of their surroundings. As a result, in their outer life they will have good relationships with others, with the world, and with their surroundings, and they will not feel afraid but will instead see life as a beautiful opportunity to learn.

Truth is everything that can work in a correct, harmonious, and perfect way. If it does not, it is built on false concepts. All of our human problems originate in false conceptions of life.

Truth must have been verified and must always produce the same result with the same elements. However, it may happen that one person holds one truth and another person holds a different truth. This is because each of us has only a part of the truth, an insufficient portion of it. To understand this in a simple way, we can imagine a map of Spain turned into a 1,000-piece jigsaw puzzle. We give each person one piece, different from all the others. Each one represents a truth about the map, although on its own each piece is insufficient to understand the structure of the country. That is what happens with the Universe: through the successive developments of consciousness, we accumulate partial truths, still insufficient to comprehend the entire structure of the Universe.

A belief, on the other hand, is something that has been learned through the personality but has not yet been verified.

5.1.2 Ugly vs. Pretty

Nothing is ugly or pretty; there are simply different forms. What is ugly and what is pretty exist in the mind and eyes of the person who observes and interprets that reality. For a person to see love in everything that happens, they must clear away their limiting concepts.

For example, if we see our daughter playing with a blue butterfly, since we hold the idea in our minds that this is very pretty and very sweet, we convey acceptance and tenderness to her, which she will associate with the butterfly. But if we see her playing with a cockroach, we yell at her, make a gesture of disgust, and even hit her. The girl will therefore associate the cockroach with revulsion, which is directly linked to instinct. It will be encoded in her mind that cockroaches are disgusting, ugly, and dangerous, while butterflies are lovely and beautiful. Neither of these things is true, but that is what we conveyed to her because of our own traumas and false beliefs.

The idea is to learn to control our inner reactions so we don't pass on our mental limitations. If we see her with the cockroach, we can ask her, "How do you feel about this little creature?"

Since we are working with information based on wisdom, we will tell children very specific things—for example, that all living beings, without exception, play an important role in the Universe. We have different roles, and the way we relate to each one may also be different—for example, to a snake or to a dog—but that doesn't mean the snake is dangerous or the dog is safe; there are simply different ways of relating to them.

It is very difficult to raise a child without limitations if, as a father, mother, or teacher, we are full of them ourselves. We must try to clear away our own limitations, or at least not pass them on, if we aspire to educate little ones.

5.1.3 Dangerous vs. Safe

There are no dangerous or safe things, only necessary situations. Is fire dangerous? No, it isn't, but if we put our finger in it, we get burned. It's simply a reality; the dangerous/safe dichotomy is a concept that exists in our minds.

A person with wisdom who is properly trained is not in danger anywhere, while an inexperienced person is in danger everywhere. So what is truly dangerous? Ignorance. And what, on the other hand, can give us security? Wisdom, training, the ability to face life. Everything else is just limiting concepts.

To protect our sons and daughters, instead of teaching them, we forbid them: instead of showing them how to relate to fire, to animals, to their surroundings, to the city, to everything that exists, we restrict them: “Don’t go out because it’s dangerous; don’t go into the kitchen because you might get burned; don’t do that because you’ll fall; don’t go there because you’ll have an accident; don’t go up on the roof because if you fall you’ll kill yourself…” So what are we passing on to them? A gigantic amount of limitations.

Prohibition is also a mistake in education, because children will try to do everything that’s forbidden behind our backs. There’s a joke about prohibition: a boy arrives at

school and the teacher asks him, “What’s your name?” and the boy answers, “Until yesterday I thought my name was ‘no,’ but now I know my name is Alberto.”

The proposal is that we help our children learn to be self-confident. If we don’t gain this confidence, life will be a disaster, because everything will seem dangerous to us; but if we do gain it, nothing will be dangerous for us, because we’ll know how to relate to others from our own sense of security.

For children to gain confidence in themselves, it’s good to tell them that training is needed and that it’s also necessary to learn and know more about life, but that life is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy. Let’s not tell them it’s dangerous, because it isn’t. Children will encode their minds with the information adults pass on to them, and they can do so positively or negatively, depending on the message they are given.

If there’s something we haven’t verified, it’s best to tell the child clearly: “This is what I believe, but it’s not the truth, so let’s experiment and see what happens, what results we get.” In this way, we will show our *mental flexibility*.

5.1.4 Punishment and Lies vs. Accepting Results

Punishment is not an effective way to teach. It only instills lying and evasion, and teaches children to be cunning in order to avoid it; but it does not teach commitment, responsibility, respect, or taking charge of one’s own life. Instead of punishment, we can use a more useful tool: teaching children to accept results, the consequences of their actions. If, for example, a son makes a mistake and ends up with the police, his parents can go see him and give him support and affection, but they should not get him out of jail.

A lie is not the opposite of the truth; *the opposite of the truth is ignorance*. A lie is simply a form of defense against aggression. If we punish a child, he or she will tell lies to avoid being punished again. The same happens if we forbid things or impose them: to defend themselves against these forms of aggression, children will learn to lie as part of their adaptive instinct, but they will not be developing their understanding, only a skill that can turn negative and lead them to avoid taking responsibility for the results of their decisions, which will cause them many conflicts.

Human beings try to adapt to their environment, and if it is aggressive, they will look for a way to defend themselves from it through lying. If someone is already “settled” into lying, they need therapy. Some adults are professional liars; everything they say is a lie because they got used to lying as their tool of the trade.

5.2 The Most Common Mistakes in Our Relationships with Our Children

As parents, we usually make many mistakes in the process of educating our children and relating to them, and this is due to *a lack of adequate information* about the true meaning of education, as well as a lack of tools of love. This is so because, until now, there have been no real schools for parents. Furthermore, we rarely receive examples of love that can be applied to the process of educating and guiding our children.

Love is not associated with suffering; if there is suffering, there is no love. On the contrary, love implies inner peace and harmony; it makes us wish someone happiness, with or without us, and know that each person lives the experiences that are meant for them, without suffering because of it, but supporting them instead.

The four most common mistakes in our relationships with our children are these:

- **Prohibition**. This includes the constant control that parents exercise and try to maintain over their children. It is not only one of the causes of rebelliousness; it also limits the development of creativity and love of life, and it produces frustration in adolescents and an inability to take on the experience of life for themselves. When we forbid someone to do something, it is because we don't want to feel bad about what they do, and that is selfishness. Moreover, it is prohibition that whets the "appetite" for the forbidden.
- **Imposition.** Imposition is the second cause of rebelliousness, as well as one of the greatest limiting factors in the development of respect and a loving attitude toward others. It produces a rejection of life and an inability to value what one has. When we impose something on someone, it is because we do not accept their behavior, and that implies selfishness. Everything we try to impose will generate rebelliousness, rejection, frustration, blocks, and shields that will later be hard to take down.
- **Aggression.** This is one of the greatest mistakes in relationships. The effect of aggression on people is devastating, since it destroys positive feelings and gives way to cruelty and violence, producing all kinds of psychological trauma and mental limitations that hinder the development of peace, happiness, and loving relationships. Another effect of aggression is the impulse toward self-destruction, which not only implies a rejection of life but also leads children, as a consequence, to develop an unconscious desire to take revenge on their parents and on society. The adolescent will cause suffering, rejection, and all kinds of distress in others, who will see him or her sunk in vices, delinquency, begging, and even suicide, which confronts many people and deeply wounds their feelings. We attack someone because they don't behave the way we want, and this is another typical aspect of selfishness. All

aggression causes trauma, resentment, and bitterness that later become somatized and produce conflicts in living together.

- **Interference.** When parents know hardly anything about their children's destiny and mission, they unconsciously try to interfere with that perfect purpose, attempting to steer them toward goals, roles, activities, or professions that do not correspond to their pedagogical design—that is, what the child comes into the world to learn and to teach. Interference by parents or anyone else produces confusion, frustration, and apathy in the adolescent and limits their chances of success in life. Interference has to do with overprotection, with not allowing each person to live their own experiences; it is misunderstood help. We don't want someone to live an experience that might cause them a problem, because we don't want to suffer over it. This, too, is selfishness. All interference leaves people unable to survive on their own; it turns them into helpless individuals who do not take charge of their lives and who become a burden to others and a serious problem for society. In short, we interfere when we do for others what they can do for themselves, without letting them develop their abilities to do so. We cause them to lose the learning experience, preventing them from growing stronger, so they become weak and incapable. It would be like putting a small animal in a cage and then releasing it into the wild: it wouldn't survive five minutes.

We call these mistakes *the weapons of ignorance*, or of selfishness; logically, the use of weapons always generates war, violence, and destruction. Let us, then, renounce the weapons of selfishness so that we can think about living in peace, and let us replace them with the *seven tools of love*.

5.3 Three Tools for Avoiding Educational Mistakes

- *The first tool is* ***firmness***: do not allow aggression or threats to work. If we do, the child will become manipulative and will use threats, shouting, and aggression, because they know it works. If it hadn't worked, they would have stopped doing it. In the face of a tantrum, the therapy is not to react, but to sit down comfortably and observe the child with zero aggression. We will explain that they will not get anything through hostility, blackmail, threats, or tantrums, and that whatever they want to obtain, they can ask for through dialogue, commitment, and respect. It is necessary to stay with the child during the tantrum with a smile, because if we walk away they will feel abandoned. The point is for them to see that we love them but that we do not get upset; instead, we wait until they calm down. If our teenage son or daughter threatens to leave home, we can say: "Wonderful, the door to go and to come back is open. I'm not throwing you out, and I won't close the door on you when you want to come back. If you want to experience leaving, you can do it; I'm not going to suffer over it. But if you decide to stay, then let's reach an agreement; you decide." This tool

is called *firmness*, not punishment, and if we end up giving in, we will ruin all of the pedagogy.

- *The second tool is* ***help***. It is not about doing something for the child, because then they will never learn to develop their abilities, but rather *doing for another person something they cannot do for themselves*. In that case, it is appropriate to help.
- *The third tool is* ***respect for results***. We must never take on the consequences of another person's decision, whether a child or an adult, but it is better to use the educational tool that replaces punishment: the agreement, which is made not through imposition but through commitment.

Chapter 6. Therapies of Love

Therapies of love are necessary when a child or adolescent has been subjected to the ignorance of adults, has borne the weight of their parents' great mistakes, and has been attacked with the weapons of selfishness and ignorance.

When a teenager, or anyone else, begins to show mental confusion, inner conflict, inappropriate behavior, and rebelliousness, and their relationships with others and with life deteriorate or become chaotic, it is clear that they need therapy of love. As long as these situations have not appeared, we will not speak of therapy, but simply of education.

Therapy of love is based on the use of appropriate tools that facilitate inner change and mental freedom from the limitations the individual has learned through a traumatic upbringing.

There are six main *tools* that can be used in therapy of love:

- **New information.** Since the teenager's problem originates in the way information is encoded in their file, or belief system, the first part of therapy consists of giving them new information that can replace the old. If the parents do not have it, they need to seek it from other people who do have information about love. Among the first things the teenager needs to receive, it is of paramount importance that they know and verify that their parents have decided to make a positive change in their behavior toward them. It is necessary to tell them clearly that the mistakes made were unintentional, but that there is now other information about love that will be used to improve the relationship with them. This new information about love will allow them to recognize the right way to make the most of life. The aim is for them to understand the following: “There are better ways to get results. There is no need

to protest, to rebel, or to fight, because there are other ways I have learned, and I am willing to use them so that our relationship will be more satisfying."

- **Non-conclusive dialogue.** It is very important that dialogue and communication are always available in relationships with teenagers. The technique of *non-conclusive dialogue* is a form of communication that offers the answer at the end, so that the teenager can draw their own conclusions. This technique contributes powerfully to helping the person take on their own responsibilities without blaming others for their decisions. It also facilitates change in the limiting mental structure. Examples of non-conclusive dialogue with rebellious teenagers: Dialogue number 1:

1. *I'd like to know the reason why…*
2. *How important is it to you that others respect your tastes?*
3. *How important is it to you to respect other people's tastes?*
4. *What do you need in order to be completely free?*
5. *What do you need to do so that no one imposes anything on you?*
6. *What keeps you from being on your own or living somewhere else?* Dialogue number 2:
7. *Do you think you have more rights than other people?*
8. *Do you think you have the right to impose your tastes on others?*
9. *What do you need to do to live in peace with others?*
10. *How could you do everything you want without reaching agreements with others?*
11. *What would you do to be independent?*
12. *How would you get the money you need to be independent?*

- **Self-assumed agreements.** Agreements are the right way to define relationships between parents and children. We call them self-assumed because they cannot be imposed by someone else; they must be accepted by each person involved in the agreement. Agreements generate satisfaction in relationships and completely replace imposition.
- **Freedom of experience.** "No one can teach another what an apple tastes like without letting them taste it." This sentence clearly shows us the need for direct experience in order to understand life. When parents do not grant teenagers freedom of experience, they delay their children's emotional, affective, and mental maturation, turning them into people who are unable to take on commitments. Of course, freedom needs to be accompanied by the right information, to facilitate the experience and avoid the danger of ignorance.

- **Valued commitments.** The ability to take on and honor commitments is a clear indicator of a person's mental maturity. To help teenagers develop the capacity for commitment, it is important for parents to establish values, represented by earned benefits. The idea is that everything they receive should be the result of fulfilling the agreed-upon roles and behaviors; and, on the other hand, that when they do not receive something or lose it, they are clear that it is not their parents' responsibility but the consequence of their own actions. An example involving adults: if we own a bakery, we make a commitment to our customers. They know that at seven in the morning we have hot bread, and so they will come to buy it. But if one day we suddenly decide not to open the bakery, we will not be keeping our commitment to them. What is the result? Does something happen, or does nothing happen? The result is that we will lose our customers. Whether we complain or not, that is the result of not keeping our commitment, and it works the same way with teenagers and children.
- **Loving firmness.** Firmness is a tool of love that completely replaces the destructive weapons of ignorance. It consists of maintaining total serenity and not giving in to the manipulation attempts of a teenager who has broken a previously established agreement or commitment. To be firm, it is necessary to:
- *Know how to establish agreements, generating commitments*.
- *Set feelings aside*, using instead loving understanding as a therapeutic tool. If *non-conclusive dialogue* does not succeed in reaching an agreement, we will make a "unilateral decision," informing the other person of it.

For example, in the case of a rebellious teenager, we can tell them they have two options: reach agreements with their parents about living together and fulfill certain commitments, or leave home. We must not make the mistake of saying, "If you leave home, don't ever come back." Instead, we will say: "If you decide to leave home, you can do so; the door is open both for you to leave and to come back."

6.1 The example of the teenager who doesn't want to study

When a teenage boy or girl rebels and says they don't want to keep studying, we can tell them: "Your role, through which you earn your keep at this time, is studying, but there are other roles, so you can choose another one. If you decide not to study, tell me what role you want to take on; I'm going to give you several options to choose from:

- I'm letting the housekeeper go, and you'll take care of the ironing, laundry, cooking…
- You can beg for money on the street.
- You can look for a job.

You don't have to answer me right now; think about it for a few days and get back to me." This is what's called *love therapy*; there's no need to fight. This way, they mature and the problem goes away. It's essential not to let yourself be threatened or blackmailed, nor to shut the door on anyone. The therapy is simple: *firmness and love*. Let's never say: "I'm not going to love you anymore, don't ever come home again; if you do that, you'll never see me again." It's best to leave the options open and let them decide.

If we apply the method of resistance, the conflict will escalate—because we damage relationships and complicate our destiny. It's absurd not to accept that others won't change, that they won't be the way we want them to be; that our son or daughter might not get an education, or might not study what we want them to. The resistance method doesn't work. Let's let go! Everyone has a function and a destiny ahead of them, and we have no reason to interfere with it. Parents do not own their children; they do not belong to them. We have to support our children, but not suffer, because when we suffer we are completely manipulable, whereas when we stop suffering, we regain control of ourselves.

Conclusions

- The true purpose of education is not to impart knowledge, but to help develop healthy individuals.
- To create a new society with a high level of satisfaction, we need to prepare adults to engage in a process of harmonious guidance with children, and to develop educational processes grounded in the principles of love.
- Recognizing a mistake does not mean blaming yourself or anyone else.
- Learning from mistakes is the *pedagogy of love*.
- Punishing mistakes is the *pedagogy of horror*.
- We have to make decisions, even if we make mistakes; staying indecisive creates blockages, while deciding releases them and allows energy to flow.
- It is essential to accept our children as they are and lovingly redirect them.
- If we aspire to educate with wisdom, we need to rid ourselves of our own mental limitations or, at the very least, not pass them on to children.
- Supporting the destiny of those we educate requires firmness.
- Supporting their mission requires flexibility.
- May prudence not cancel out our decision, but may our decision not become reckless.

- One of the functions of the personality is to experience life.
- We must use pedagogical tools: trust, respect, acceptance, embracing, valuing, acting with serenity, offering support, understanding, firmness, and flexibility.
- We must lay down our weapons: punishment, prohibition, aggression, imposition, and interference.
- Example is always the best teacher.
- We will be able to love life when we see problems as opportunities to learn.
- By renouncing all forms of guilt or punishment, we cease to be dangerous.
- With information, love, and firmness, we can work miracles in pedagogy. You don't have to believe anything stated above; instead, put it into practice and verify whether this information works and gives satisfactory results in your life. With this information, we have *three alternatives for action*:

1. Store it in our library.
2. Carry it with us and teach it to everyone.
3. Make the information a part of ourselves, so that it becomes the way we act. Only in this last case will we achieve satisfactory results.

Training Exercises

To **practice pedagogical techniques in the family**, you can do the following:

- Don't punish, because there is no one to blame. There are mistakes and there is learning.
- When faced with a mistake, use non-conclusive, reflective dialogue and ask questions:
- How did you end up in that situation?
- How do you feel about the result you got?
- What did you learn from it?
- What would you do to avoid making that mistake again?
- Make decisions and encourage your children to make their own.
- Encourage each family member to take ownership of their own results.

Exercise to Help Children Grow

It's a good idea to observe the child to discover what he or she has come to learn and to teach this world. To do this, it will be helpful to create a table for each child, with two columns. In one column, note the "destiny" situations—those that are difficult, that the child tries to avoid, or that he or she is afraid of—and in the other, the "mission" situations—those the child does with ease, enjoys, and the dreams he or she has for the future.... (A complete explanation of this exercise can be found in Chapter 4 of this topic.)

Mental Reprogramming

> *Everyone does the best they know how, even if they make mistakes, and if so, that is also perfect, so that they can learn*

To the extent that you have a clear definition of the meaning of certain philosophical words or terms, you will be programming your mind with the principles of harmony, balance, and love. This is because, on the one hand, what we think is imprinted on our mind and maintains its structure; and what we say has even greater power, because in order to speak we first think and then express ourselves, so spoken expression powerfully reprograms the mind. Finally, what we do also requires prior thought. Therefore, thought, word, and deed are constantly reprogramming our mental structure, so if we always behave the same way, that structure will remain static and will not develop; but if we decide to make changes in our behavior, we will also be changing our thinking and the way we communicate. The mental structure will immediately begin to shift toward ever greater wisdom. For that reason, to think with wisdom, you need to first redefine the characteristics of the terms you use.

If you always do the same thing with the same attitude, you'll always get the same results. Change the information, change your attitude, and the results will change.

In each of these topics, we try to provide clarity so that we can all learn to work with information of wisdom. But the real work is personal, unique, and cannot be delegated; it is this work that will bring successful results through constant practice on ourselves. This will free us from suffering and make us completely loving toward all other beings, allowing us to educate in happiness.