

## *To Live Is to Trust*

When, overcome by an indefinable fear, I do not place my trust in others, I employ a technique of control by which I exert the influence of intelligence and will to dominate others. I thus destroy myself and become incapable of functioning. Others are not friends; they are, rather, partners to be succoured, instruments to be used, folks to be educated, adversaries to be controlled, in view of achieving predetermined results.

This style of exploiting others without being bound by the links of friendship causes impoverishment, nervous tension, stomach ulcers, heart attacks and cirrhosis of the liver.

When I trust others, I live a different style altogether. At first, I divest my mind of the idea of control; I observe the people who live and work around me. I attempt to discern their needs in the same manner that I attempt to make them sensitive to my own. Having apprised others of my expectations, I set my goal.

The fruition of my endeavours is seen in the people I love and understand, around whom I have woven a fabric of life which lends itself to the

sharing of responsibilities and to the increase of mutual trust.

I am no longer a despot, I no longer have any fear of others. I am a companion. I no longer take upon my shoulders the burdens and the problems of the whole world. In our discussions, we feel an atmosphere of brotherhood, we share our responsibilities, we embark together on the adventure of life or of work. I no longer stand in solitude; I feel the closeness of others. I am no longer alone in my desire for achievement. Surprisingly enough, all share the same interest.

In despotism, there is a diminution of life and a loss of considerable energy; in companionship, there is a joy of life and a feeling of togetherness. It is less taxing on the nerves; the mind is less burdened, the will is no longer impervious but is sensitive to the pleadings of the heart.

a. *I believe in others*

- Am I a member of a working team or am I a member of a community?
- Are others part of my working team or, if they live under my roof, do they participate in my mode of living?
- What is my attitude with my colleagues at work? with the members of my immediate family? with members of my community?

Wherever I may be or whatever my lifestyle may be, I take the same course: I trust, and I believe in the potential of others. To establish human relations which are agreeable, long lasting and profound, I must believe in others. Belief in others signifies my adherence to these persons to whom I open my heart, not as burdens to be borne but as amiable people to be loved. I must pause, I must strive to understand, to accept others unconditionally. I don't have to change them, I don't have to bend them to my will. I must content myself with instructing them, listening to them and being sensitive to their needs and expectations.

If I accept them, I feel willingly drawn to their side, to help them fulfil their being and to live out their positive qualities. One of the quickest ways prescribed by psychology for personal enrichment is the harnessing of all those positive qualities which are capable of producing a sense of wonder. It is by detecting the values of others that I develop within myself the capacity to love and to listen.

If, in my endeavours, I detect in others their weaknesses, I must not dwell on them lest I succumb to the impulse of making remarks designed to change them, to mould them to my way of thinking. Such an impulse would not even be effective in diminishing my personal sufferings or even in weeding out what in others is displeasing to me. Very soon, I would begin to view others, their weaknesses and their defects in just the same man-

ner as I would examine the mechanism of a trap to avoid wounding myself or being caught in its jaws.

Above all, I will apply myself to gathering the positive attributes of others, that is to say, all that is good, beautiful, right and truthful in them. Moreover, I will hasten to give them credit; this is a marvellous way to buttress one's capacity of loving.

The human organism, in order to operate, requires special attention. It needs calcium, proteins, it requires a certain number of calories; it has to be replenished with vitamins, etc... There is the same correspondence from the psychological point of view. A sincere compliment, paid at the opportune moment, revives the jaded spirits and activates human energy.

A doctor said to a young married man: "Compliment your wife each day and I will lose a patient." A compliment which touches the being invigorates him or her. "I am not surprised at your success, you have talent, you are energetic and you know how to get people to love you." This is better than to be told that, "You have a beautiful sweater, you have changed your hair-do, it becomes you..."

To believe in others is to allow them to reach down to the bottom of the heart where there will be neither aggressiveness, nor jealousy, doubt nor fear.

To believe in others is to be mindful of them, to love them, to accept them, to keep them company

just for what they are. All thoughts of domination fade away. To draw nearer to them is not to spy on them but is to give them a prominent place among my friends.

To believe in others is to take time to make myself aware of their essential needs, it is to be responsive to their expectations in order to help them to live positively without compromising my independence and my identity.

To be amiable is already to love; to understand myself is already to understand others; to be liberated in myself, to feel comfortable within, is already to foster a climate of liberty for others; it is to allow them scope to blossom.

To have confidence in myself, is to regard others without envy or fear, it is to see them with compassionate eyes.

The desire to control must never influence my being and my relations with others. The desire to control ought to play in my life the role of a clock or a watch; it is something precise to indicate how to regulate my rhythm but not to direct my life. The desire to control should not to come first in my priorities. In my relations with others, I ought never to consider them as objects to be manipulated and branded in my own style. An encounter with others is not only a necessary dimension in my life but is also a response to their innate trust.

With others, therefore, I ought to share, exchange ideas, converse, listen, explore the same

possibilities, and eventually I will end up with love. The success of my neighbour is my own justification.

*To love is to set myself up at another's side, while preserving my independence. To love is to be at another's side even before he or she expresses his or her need, or solicits help. To love is to be in a disposition to serve.*

Jesus, in his Gospel, engenders in his disciples a way of life which is pleasing to him. He attaches great importance to the quality of being present. *"Be dressed, ready for service, and keep your lamps burning like servants waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. Happy those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes... he will come and will wait on them."* (Luke 12:35-38)

*To love is to open my heart to others, to be capable of entering into others because I bring with me a thing desired; to love is to bring to them all the love of my heart, all the attention of my spirit, all the energy of my will, without the least shadow of aggressiveness, of personal interest, or without any tinge of fear.*

*To love is to look at others with a shining countenance, with eyes filled with human warmth; to love is to preserve my trust in them despite the sowing of falsehoods, calumnies, slander, and even of doubt.*

*To love* is to feel immune to fear; to shatter hesitations, to give myself without reserve; it is to accompany others in their journey, in their development; it is to help them to progress, to succeed in their lives, to bring their being to fruition.

b. *I find him to my liking*

To trust is to credit a person with good intentions even when appearances do not seem to warrant it. Everyone has the urge to better himself or herself. Everyone, more or less, consciously desires the blossoming of him or her own being. Everyone is conscious of having a certain personality which one wishes to develop and does not wish to leave others in doubt of what one considers to be one's own essential values.

In my relations with others, I ought to invite them to articulate their hopes, by a sympathetic attitude, by friendly questions, by avoiding reproach, by desisting from offering guidance and by avoiding stereotyped advice.

It is up to me to put at their disposal information which will aid them to discover those valuable resources which will bring to fruition their human yearnings. It is up to me to help others so that each person with whom I regularly associate is easily enabled to evaluate himself or herself in a positive manner, and discover the rhythm of his or her personal progress.

It is up to me to create the climate in which everyone gradually matures until at last he or she lives up to his or her full potential. To live with others, one has to pay a certain price each day. One has to make concessions to earn friendship, but one must never demean oneself to the extent of browbeating oneself and losing one's integrity. All psychologists write about human relationships because no one is created to live alone and no one can continuously do without others.

It is loneliness — bereft of company and joy — that will most quickly bring ruin to a human being. Human companionship is essential for nurturing the growth of human beings until they come to full bloom. We need the ideas of others, we are unable to do without their sense of humour; we cannot boast of our capacity to love ourselves to the extent that we completely exclude others. It is no easier to wrest from one's mind the mental picture of others than it is to lose the image of one's own self.

If it is marvellous to witness the bloom of roses in my garden, it is just as wonderful to observe the surge of positive qualities in those around me. It is really an offence against God to be indifferent or hostile to our kith and kin. "*...Anyone who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.*" (1 John 4:20)



## *Human Relations Exact a Price*

Every human being is responsible for his or her deportment. Every human being must personally strive for the fulfilment of his or her own being. I cannot be replaced in my station in life and in my qualities. Each person is responsible for himself or herself. No one else can think for me nor can he or she be good or generous on my behalf. I have my responsibilities well defined. It does not help to ignore them, and "passing the buck" is often impossible.

To be myself, to live my positive qualities, is not to show myself as being impatient, unfaithful, beside myself, in a series of temper tantrums. To be myself is not to show myself detestable, imposing my ideas, my outlook, nor is it to uncover my emotionalism; to be myself is not to be contentious, voicing loudly my disapproval, breaking whatever is at hand; it is not to enclose myself in an ivory tower, manifesting to others my indifference or callousness; it is not to detest my work; to be myself is not to be brusque with whom I associate, nor to poison the ambiance of life with adolescent tantrums.

To be myself is to delve into the depths of my being for the positive qualities which constitute the essence of my personality; it is to detect in myself the image of God since I am made in His own image. I must then apply myself to interior reflection to discover within the centre of my being all my positive values; thus, I will find God who has sown in me fragments of His infinite attributes.

In scrutinizing my innermost being, I make the divine encounter, I visit my friends, those whom I consider to be my neighbours. By noticing the divine presence everywhere, God becomes my friend because I recognize myself in Him. God descends to my plane to the extent that I find in myself some positive qualities to live out each hour of the day.

Many pretend not to believe in God but no one denies the reality of His power and bounty in the world; limitless power, unconditional and inexhaustible bounty constitute the visible aspects of the countenance of God. Living my personal qualities is to immerse myself in a reality which surpasses human capabilities and which unites me to a neighbour in need of love and support, and to a God that I must serve and honour.

In the cavernous depths of my soul, God has implanted those qualities of strength, of love, of understanding, of trust. I have them in me as seeds of wondrous riches. In order to adorn my garden, I must convince myself that all this wealth is ex-

pended in my daily living as long as I apply myself to live what is best in me when I am with others.

To be myself, I ought to detect all the genuine values of my being, I must take the responsibility to live out these values, to use them in the service of others. Thus, my human relationships will be praiseworthy and stable. It is my responsibility to take the first steps. How am I going to do this?

I wish to be happy just as everyone else, I do not wish to be a hindrance to the joy of others who live with me. Those others fill my spirit with their presence. They are those who prowl in my imagination with their disproportionate joy and pain, they impregnate every fibre of my being. I have them ingrained in my memory. The thought of them pacifies me or agitates me, their memory either calms me or aggravates me, torturing my nerves. It is with those people that I live; the passer-by, in relation to my life, is like a storm raging in a neighbouring country, but those with whom I establish relationships either exasperate me or make me happy.

To establish a relationship with others, I follow a certain procedure. At the start, I make no demands, I attempt to look at them with sympathy, I create a climate of indulgence, I am full of respect for people. I simply ask of them what they expect of me as a member of their team. I am receptive to their opinions without in any way feeling obliged to agree with them. I accept their negative attitudes

without obliging them to change their philosophy of life. I attempt not to pass severe judgement on their behaviour, which I assess or perceive without effort. I will not fret while listening to them talking in stilted language where euphemisms mask the truth, or when the use of the common idiom reveals a certain rudeness or even perhaps brutality or vulgarity.

In the face of the emotional attitudes of others, even though uneasiness pervades the group I live with, I wish to avoid psychological rejection, to avoid giving them the impression that I condemn them, that I desire a change in their attitudes. I will avoid making remarks in the style of a hypocrite when I do not have the courage to be frank. Therefore, I speak as the unappointed spokesman of others: there are some people who say that you ought to make this change... there are some who are discontented and would wish to say to you... they do not have the courage... I do it in the name of friendship...

Often, it is cowardice because the others never really complained, but this is a devious method of revealing one's interior turmoil. I wish to avoid rejection, I do not wish to demand change in others as an excuse for unburdening myself interiorly. I must pay my own price, make the necessary concessions to make others feel accepted by me. After having established friendship, one realizes that

love overcomes many difficulties which at first appeared insurmountable.

Often, the psychological and personal growth of others depends on my own positive attitude. This means I should be a leader who is capable of helping others to achieve the fullness of their being.

I also accept, whatever my rank may be, the necessity of treating others as equals. I give them rights over me just as I have rights over them. In the group, I am just an individual. Since human relations are based on personalities rather than on functions, I am obliged to remain unpretentious, and open to the authority of my superiors while giving them the respect which is demanded of a person in my position.

On the other hand, if I, myself, am in a position of authority, I will attempt to forget my titles and concern myself with the human touch in interpersonal relations. Communication will be normal if I myself benefit from the positive values of others and, conversely, bring to bear on such relationships my knowledge, experience and creativity.

Others can count on my discernment, my experience, in the same manner that I could count on those qualities in them. In human relations it must be accepted that the positive values of each and every individual have to be woven into a single fabric in order to achieve better results recognizing all the while that complementary talents are essential for the evolution of the group. It is more human

to accept help from others than to do everything by oneself, without the help of others, as if others were incapable or indifferent.

To be open to receive help is to recognize that I am an incomplete individual. Doing everything by oneself is a hapless expression of one's egoism or of one's exaggerated fear of inconveniencing others.