

To Develop Trust

Each person possesses within his or her own self the source of trust. This source is nourished by all the positive qualities present in each human being. This source manifests itself in life at the moment we become conscious of our own interior dynamisms, of our good inclinations and of our natural endowments. It also manifests itself at the moment we become aware that we possess these marvellous qualities, which are sufficiently efficacious for establishing healthy relations with others.

If human relations are so difficult today, it is because too many people have a poor image of themselves, or are crushed by the various demands of our consumer society. If we cultivate the habit of studying ourselves more seriously so as to accept the fact of being distinct from others, we would soon discover our capacity to love and to be loved, to understand and to be understood; we would soon acknowledge that the Author of life has been prodigal with every human being; we would also cease to allow ourselves to be ruled by fear; we would rid our being of the many perturbations, of worry and anguish, and take the time to live.

We do not really live if we have no trust in ourselves; moreover, those who come within the sphere of our influence are insecure because it is impossible for us to trust them. It is utopian to imagine that trust can fall into three categories: one which embraces us, another which suits our neighbour, and the third, slightly more superior, which is meant for God. We believe that these categories of trust are autonomous, and that while one is a weak force, another is strong. Trust is homogeneous. We have it or we do not, we profit from it or we do not. It forms the basis of acceptance of ourselves, of our relations with our fellow humans and with our God. In order to make use of this trust, the source of which is found in our innermost being or in the bottom of our heart, we must become aware of the positive values of our being; we must gather in those positive qualities as we discover them — those inclinations towards good; let the conviction grow in us that our vital energies, our generous dispositions, have blossomed, and, in the process, helped others to live in relative security.

Let us accept others as we would have others accept us. All human beings expect our trust freely given, our unpretentious love, our trust in their ability to act without our standing in their shoes, the concession on our part of their freedom and autonomy, of their capability of taking their life in their own hands, and of the ability to shoulder their own responsibilities. Are we capable of under-

standing this? We know that those who love us are those who trust us.

Trust is a source of life which nurtures solid friendships, irrigates our whole being, activates these forces, which we have always possessed and of which we have been unaware, burst out in flood. It is not easy to put our trust in others. We have no conviction that trust is a positive and essential element of our own being; we are so unsure of ourselves, we are so often troubled by the fear of failure; we have not developed the habit of standing on our own two feet; we lean so much on others. Nevertheless, we would wish that others would envelop us with their trust. This is ridiculous. We have within ourselves all that we need. We simply have to help ourselves by delving into our innermost being. The table is laid by the marvellous host, the Lord.

Why this paralyzing uneasiness? Why do we believe ourselves guilty because we detect in ourselves some qualities? because we imagine that we will sink into pride? We have but to remember that our qualities come from the Author of life, are freely given to us, and we have the obligation to avail ourselves of these gifts. Because of these qualities God has bound us with the commandment to love our neighbour *as our own selves*; without such gifts, we would be incapable of loving.

When we will have grasped this truth, we will place our trust in others, we will cease to be trou-

bled by the thought that without our intervention they are liable to make mistakes. The failure of a friend will cease to trouble us — we will trust in him or her.

There are two ways in which we can place our trust in others: one is to give our trust totally to those we wish to love and to act as if we knew and accepted them all along; the other way is to dole out our trust in little doses, increasing each dose in the same measure that the desired friends prove themselves to be worthy. This second mode is abominable, it paralyzes, it is contemptible, and it is alien to true love. Christ did not wish this mode of loving, even for the common sinners such as the woman taken in adultery and the Samaritan woman at the well. Let us purify ourselves of this manner of trusting since we must love others *as we love ourselves*.

In order to achieve self-loving, we ought, without false humility, to make the inventory of our positive qualities — qualities of mind, intellect, and of heart, and also admit to the physical attributes of beauty, personality, robust health, and also a well built body — but why not?

If we believe that we have not been blessed with these natural endowments, we ought to investigate equivalent qualities that are capable of building us up. Psychologists, who have scrutinized the human being, agree that the great part of our riches remain unexploited because of a lack of personal

interest, or because we have been victimized by a system of education which has taught us to seek out our weaknesses and ignore our good qualities under the guise of false modesty.

Modesty well understood is a virtue, but, taking into consideration what we are, love of self is an essential virtue and all our human productivity depends on it: it welcomes life and others, creates companionship, implants true love, accepts others without compelling them to be different from what they are.

Maxwell Malz, a plastic surgeon, examines his patients and feels the need to rebuild in their eyes their self-worth. "When we experience emotions of happiness, of self-trust, of success, we feel fully alive. When we suffer anguish, fear, guilt, personal condemnation, rancour, rejection, we are less alive, we taste less of life, we distance ourselves from the Will of our Creator, who wishes for us to use our talents." (cf. *Psycho-Cybernetics*.)

In every human being, there is a drive for success, a creative streak which works instinctively within us, without our being aware of it. This drive is self-trust; may we believe in it. Every day we ought to make a list of those things that have pleased us, a list of our successes, of the joys that others have given us, and analyze our innermost being to savour the peace which springs from self-fulfilment.

To Love and Not to Control Others

Each person is able to find the responses to these questions:

- Why are human relations so uneasy?
- Why is it so difficult to get along with one another?
- Are we, at this time, at the peak of strife?
- Is it possible to rely on true friends?

I have posed them to Mr. X; the responses have been spontaneous, and I summarize them as follows: "We do not understand one another because of our lack of love for one another... We do not love one another because we do not know how to listen to one another... We do not know how to listen to one another because we don't put our trust in one another... We do not put our trust in one another because we watch for the propitious moment to pounce on others mistakes and throw their shortcomings in their face."

We do not, unfortunately, base our trust on one another by reinforcing the essential human values, but rather by developing a mechanism of control

which demonstrates that human relations are often founded on the fear which resides within ourselves or which others instill in us.

All the responses are true. Mr. X surely affirms it because he describes what he feels, what he experiences.

- To trust is to love and not to control.
- To love is to avoid the control and to rely on the intelligence and the good faith of others.
- To love is to stop, to take time to listen without interrupting, without interjecting personal examples, without applying everything to ourselves.
- To love is to strive to understand what the other experiences.

Mr. X provokes reflection. Let us formulate a certain hypothesis: Each human being has a style which is proper to himself or herself. Some trust others naturally, still others are hesitant — they reason but yet cannot trust. Let us endeavour to discover our own style.

To Don One's Own Garment

a. *I feel isolation in action*

I perceive, in my colleagues or in those who live with me, a certain tension. They are ill at ease. I would wish them to be more frank, more open. I would wish to communicate with them but I feel that I dominate them, that they are erecting a barrier between me and them, that they have some vexing mysteries. I imagine that I put my trust in them, but they perceive me differently... They appear to be afraid of me. What is happening?

My tone of voice is usually strident, it does not tolerate repartee. When I ask for suggestions, people imagine that I have worked everything out in advance, that I use this strategy in order to bring them around to my own point of view. By analyzing myself in depth, I realize that the inveterate habit of total control is commonplace with me.

This is how others perceive me. I work hard to motivate them. Remarks which fill others with guilt come easily to me, I set myself up as an example by pressing home to them my manner of thought, of action, of operating. I give them the impression that I have my eyes fixed on them, that

nothing escapes my attention, that I end up by knowing everything, that I do not trifle, that one has to perform. Also, I have a fear of being tricked — they harass me, I feel it in my bones; I am afraid that they will do something wrong.

The more I think of them, the more I feel tense, the more my nerves are on edge. Therefore, instead of extending my trust to them, I recoil within myself and I put up my guard. So, the least weakness or the most insignificant oversight turns into a drama. Really, I am on the point of having my nerves tied up in a knot; I feel an emerging sense of belligerence oppressing me.

Therefore, I control, I accuse, I judge, I condemn, I pardon only on condition, I tighten the controls, I exaggerate to compel reflection; my colleagues, tense and reserved, grow more uncompromising, and their vigilance is far from friendship. A mere trifle will make them explode; if they explode, I consider them to be on edge, to be lacking equilibrium: they ought to be warned, to be reprimanded, to be trained. Unconsciously, I conclude that the human race is unworthy of my trust. Therefore, I end up by exalting my methods and blaming the others.

b. *What is my method of enlightening others?*

I ought to enlighten others. My collaborators and those who live with me may well make sug-

gestions to me, but I never accept them at first blush. I put them in the storehouse of my memory. I digest them slowly, I mull them over, perhaps I make them my own. Later on, I place before them my own reflections springing from their own suggestions, yet not acknowledging the nourishment they bring to my mind, lest inflated with pride they become overbearing. I must place on them a heavy hand to exert my authority. My style is severe but efficacious. I govern them with an iron fist encased in a velvet glove.

In my mind's eye, it would appear that enlightenment, to be of any value, must dawn within myself without the inspiration of others. Nervous, tense, I do not wish others to walk over me roughshod. I know my business, the others simply have to understand me and all will be serene.

My mode of thought has established a one-track mind: all is well when I have had the time to think my own thoughts. Being prejudiced, I accept nothing from others because nowadays, "it is not easy to build trust." I examine the information, I look at others with the eyes of a judge who seeks to pass sentence on an accused found guilty.

c. *What is my perception of work?*

If work is to be delegated, I must delegate such work myself. The speech of others needs to be controlled — even more so their actions. Therefore,

not only must I outline their work for them, but also show them the way it should be done; I will even limit the time for execution. On principle, I will not be content.

When the work is perfectly executed, I ought not to say: "This is excellent, this is perfect," no! such a compliment is always exaggerated... because excellence and perfection do not exist here below. At the most, I will say "It is good... For once you have succeeded... I have done well in controlling you, now we have achieved results."

d. *As for me, power is salutary*

This is the law, people are instruments for service. Based therefore on these rigid principles, I establish a system of testing. It is good to establish a method of control.

Control is necessary to know if everything is running smoothly... I, therefore, ask astute questions, I make enquiries; I call this diplomacy. I have some principles: one must be discreet, one must constantly be on guard and not be taken by surprise. It is good to kill the monster before it's hatched. One must prevent problems from being born...

Nowadays, relationships are painful. Also, I ask for a report, both written and oral. I want to be informed of everything that happens both day and night, thus avoiding a lot of unpleasantness. One must have his eyes open.

The others must be aware that they are dealing with an intelligent leader, a leader with perspicacity, keen on achieving results. I have set goals, expectations; I have determined what my needs are and I meet them even at the cost of others' suffering. Moreover, each one has to resign himself or herself to the inevitable: suffering is a reality, which cannot be avoided under any circumstances. It is possible that my style will cause human suffering, but these sensitive souls will suffer no matter where they are, with their weak personalities unconsciously crying out to be controlled.

I, myself, harness my energies for the production of results... never mind the others. In the final analysis, I love them well enough. They will ultimately understand me and one day they will thank me. Perhaps my approach is harsh, but one does not acquire power nor does one establish discipline by being prodigal with compliments.

Compliments are often deceitful, goes the proverb. Therefore, "whatever deserves to be done deserves to be done well." I have my ideas, I am a person of principles. "Life on a bed of roses begets but a Don Juan." I, myself, am for discipline, productivity, efficiency, stability, solidity, permanence and durability.

This sketch is a little caricature of the style of certain people we happen to meet on life's journey. Evidently, it is difficult to establish human relations with such people because they are incapable

of liberating themselves from an interior fear which engenders a style considered today as inhuman. It is almost impossible to foster empathy, friendship, cordial relations or to establish lasting bonds with this category of people. Their philosophy of living is based on efficacy and control. Often, one says that corporations do not have a heart; one could say that there are some people similarly heartless. Not to have a heart means to believe that there is no place for friendship in business affairs.

If there are so many unhappy people who detest their work, who feel trapped, and who find it impossible to change, it is because, in many instances, people put business, productivity and efficiency before the individual. They sacrifice the essential needs of human beings: to love and to be loved, to understand and to be understood, to be free and to leave to others the vital space where they can meet their own needs, to allow them to blossom, to build trust, to share responsibilities, to savour the friendship that others have engendered in us.