

LEARNING TO EDUCATE FOR HAPPINESS

Foundation for Consciousness Development

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Context. What is the purpose of the human experience?

Before embarking on the next topic, we ought to outline a context that presents a new way of looking at life, a new paradigm; one that lets us be happier and understand human beings. You don't have to agree with everything that follows, or to believe anything, because we are not talking about beliefs. All you have to do is to see how your own life changes after applying this information, to see if it works for you.

If the results inside you are happiness, peace and harmony, you'll find this information to be true; and if the external results, in terms of relationships, health, resources and how you adapt to your environment improve, you'll verify that that this information is wisdom.

The purpose of human experience is to evolve, develop our own consciousness and so be filled with wisdom and love. Each and every one of us has come to this world to work on our spiritual development, sharing and participating in experiences with other human beings. Life is actually a process in which the Universe teaches us; planet Earth is a "spiritual school" and each life experience is like one academic year.

Spiritual development is an internal, and so absolutely individual and personal task. Nobody can do it for anyone else, yet nor can we do it "without another"; in other words, we need to interact and share experiences with other people in order to achieve our own development —to know ourselves—. Sometimes, instead of getting on with our own development, we try to interfere with other people's, and instead of learning from them we try to change them. All this does is to distort the learning, or attempt to distort it, and this complicates life itself.

Only if we understand this can we be efficient by asking ourselves what life wants to teach us in each situation, because each is part of a learning process. In short, we have to learn to turn ignorance into wisdom.

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

In order to lay the foundations for a new civilization that will bring a greater level of satisfaction for everyone, we must start by harmonizing ourselves. To do this it is essential to study the Universal Laws and apply the principles that lead to wisdom. We should bear in mind that only by sustained practice and discarding theories and ideas that prove to be mistaken can we really achieve wisdom. This

way we can develop peace and harmony directly on the ground, with the teaching of daily life, because life is the best school and nature the best teacher.

All we need to achieve efficiency is to stop arguing with the perfect order of the Universe; mental inefficiency is necessary in order to discover, through saturation, that the Laws of the Universe exist. When we reach the point where we have suffered enough, we are ready to understand the Laws. Internal opposition must stop before external opposition can, and for this to happen we have to have accepted that everything that exists and everything that happens is perfect and necessary, because its purpose is one of Love.

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

There are seven Laws that govern all of the Universe's processes of creation, administration and evolution. Of the seven, four are fundamental, for they control the development and evolution of the consciousness of the human species anywhere in the Universe. These four Laws form the lower triangle of the Laws, while the Law of Evolution is the superior Law that governs the inferior triangle, which is also known as 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 within the Law functions well and flows on its own.

Anything that brings suffering, anguish, pain and illness, happens because we are going against the Laws, and that is how we are going to recognize them. The results we obtain when we go outside the Laws enable us to recognize their existence. We have to make mistakes to be able 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 and change others.

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

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
NATURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All things that are complementary attract each other. ✓ Every living being requires the specific food for its species. ✓ Every manifestation of nature requires favorable conditions. ✓ Every living being has an instinctive sense of the Law. ✓ All cycles of nature have specific functions. ✓ Every violation of the Law produces serious consequences. ✓ Every living being has its function. 	<p>Physical ailments: undernourishment, illness, vices, degeneration, misery, hunger, physical and mental defects, physical malformations, ecological imbalance, erosion, plagues, shortening of longevity, etc.</p>

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
HARMONY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Everything that is sent out acts, reacts and returns. ✓ Everything that is attacked defends itself. ✓ Everything that pleases is accepted. ✓ Only love can transform beasts into persons. ✓ Only understanding avoids destruction. ✓ We must control situations, not be controlled by them. ✓ The best teacher is learning by example. 	<p>Psychological ailments and relationship problems: distrust, fear, estrangement, isolation, individualism, loneliness, sadness, depression, fights, shyness, lack of communication, disunity, boundaries, traumas, complexes, etc.</p>

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
<p style="text-align: center;">CORRESPONDENCE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Every situation is a learning experience. ✓ Every circumstance is generated by oneself. ✓ All events happen to whom they are meant to happen. ✓ We are always exactly where we are meant to be. ✓ We come to life with what we need to live it. ✓ Only what needs to happen, happens. ✓ We only give or have what we need. 	<p>Upsets in the individual environment: mental blocks, dissatisfaction, difficulty in achieving success in what we do, wearisome battles against the circumstances of life, inability to accept one's life, fears, anxiousness, constant frustrations, etc.</p>

LAW	POSTULATES	EFFECTS OF VIOLATING THE LAW
EVOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Experience alone opens the way for understanding the truth. ✓ Only opposites lead to the development of consciousness. ✓ We only move up a level through the appropriate transformation. ✓ We are only the result of ourselves. ✓ We only argue with situations that we have not understood. ✓ The need for understanding alone is the reason for physical existence. ✓ We can only recognize balance from imbalance. 	<p>Social upsets: rebellion, anarchy or self-destruction, when limits are imposed on the experiences to be lived; wars, strikes, violence, revolutions, delinquency, hate, conflicts, when human concepts are imposed.</p>

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

The Universal Laws should not be confused with human laws or rules; the Universal Laws are immutable and non-repealable, and their origin lies in the wisdom of the Absolute or Divinity, so they are absolute; they cannot be amended or negotiated, and disobeying them brings a negative outcome—in the sense of unpleasant—and also a positive outcome—in the sense of it being a learning experience—. That is why it is said that in fact human beings do not construct laws, but issue them; we call them human laws, but they are rules, because they are repealable, transitory and useful for a given moment.

We have come to planet Earth to develop three inner virtues: Happiness, inner Peace, and Love or Service to others. This development brings with it excellent results in all four fields of: Relationships, Resources, Health, and Adaptation to the environment:



The idea is to use these virtues to interact with what is around us. To learn to be happy, to be peaceful, and to love is the true purpose that has brought human beings to the physical world of matter.

VIRTUES	CHARACTERISTICS	SCIENCE IN WHICH IT IS STUDIED	IT REPRESENTS OR IS DEVELOPED IN
Happiness	0% suffering 100% understanding 100% self-worth	Acceptance	Function
Peace	0% conflicts 0% reactivity 0% confrontation 100% respect	Accepting life with wisdom	Destiny
Love	100% capacity for service 0% resistance 0% fear 100% adaptation 100% commitment	Unconditionality	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 we have only to face up to all that we believe takes our happiness away.
- ✓ To be happy we do not need anything outside of us, just understanding and a certain attitude of mind.
- ✓ Non-acceptance is the only cause of suffering; we must stop arguing with reality.
- ✓ It is essential to stop working on others, and work only and exclusively on ourselves, changing what it is inside us that is annoying (the ego) so that it stops doing it.
- ✓ If there is suffering, then just one question needs to be asked: what is it that I'm not accepting?; that is where the answer is to be found.
- ✓ Everyone, without exception, has what they need to be happy; however, very few people know how to be happy with what they have.

Learning to **be peaceful**:

- ✓ Nothing and no one brings peace.
- ✓ Inner peace is the result of one's own spiritual development, not a gift.
- ✓ Handling peace requires several elements: clear and accurate information to understand that life is a process of love and that evil does not exist, the skill to manage one's own vital energy, and training.
- ✓ If peace is lost, we must ask ourselves: "What am I resisting?; what do I want to change?; who am I blaming?"

Learning to **love one's neighbor as oneself**:

- ✓ All this requires is to be involved or share time with people whose behavior is very different to our own, to learn to love and respect them just as they are.
- ✓ Love cannot be offended, it is invulnerable, immutable, universal and neutral.

- ✓ Love signifies total understanding of the Universe; it is a way of being and does not need an "object" on which to project itself.
- ✓ Love is not a force, it is a tool.
- ✓ Love is not a feeling.
- ✓ Love is always giving the best of oneself.
- ✓ If there is a lack of motivation the best thing is to wonder why I am allowing the specific situation to limit my capacity for service, which in reality should not depend on external events.

By developing the three inner virtues excellent outer results are obtained in all four spheres:

- ✓ In relationships.
- ✓ In resources.
- ✓ In health.
- ✓ In adapting to the environment.

In the life experience of any human being five elements are present: purpose, destiny, mission, function and intention.

1. Purpose

There is a purpose of love that brought us to the world of matter; it is the perfect objective of learning two things:

- a) To be happy in oneself, i.e. not to depend on anything or anyone in order to enjoy inner peace and happiness.
- b) To love one's neighbor as oneself, i.e. to respect the rights of all beings in the Universe.

And how do we learn this? Here we can see the perfection of the Absolute's educational design. To perform the exercise of learning to be happy in ourselves we need to live in a place, with certain people and circumstances where everything that happens around us is more or less aggressive. In this way we will realize that our problem does not lie in what is happening around us, but in how we relate to it, and the rejection and resistance that we set in motion.

As for the second part, loving one's neighbor as oneself, this means respecting them just as they are, not seeking to change them, not putting up resistance to others. We need to live in a place where the people around us think differently, have varying customs, and create different things. In this way we will learn to love them as they are, without judging them or condemning them. This is how the purpose of love is fulfilled; it is the real reason why we human beings are here on planet Earth.

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

Being happy means experiencing zero suffering about what happens; and loving means offering zero resistance to others. Wisdom is the same as love, not feeling. Those who have love care deeply about others, but they do not suffer; however, those who possess goodness but not wisdom care deeply about others, but they suffer enormously. Those who do not care, the indolent, the indifferent, possess neither wisdom nor goodness.

2. Destiny

This is what we come to learn from the world of matter —how to manage the seven tools of love to attain invulnerable peace—; it is a great opportunity to learn what we are missing.

All of us bring to the world a destiny that is inevitable and highly valuable. Our culture teaches us to try and avoid destiny instead of showing us how to harness it. The key to harnessing destiny is: "You have the capacity to enjoy whatever you do, because that capacity is within you". However, if someone says to their child: "You must always do what you like", this will generate a huge block in them.

Destiny is an educational design whose purpose is to enable human beings to verify and discover information that governs the Universe and its perfect order. It is therefore the best opportunity for transcending all human limitations. Instead of complaining about the difficulties that we face in life, we must take advantage of them as a great opportunity for transcending them; then they will disappear for good. If we do not learn from difficulties, far from disappearing, they will become more complicated, they will persist and they will become permanent.

3. Mission

This is what we can teach in the world of matter. We should enjoy our mission intensely, whether or not it is part of our function.

Our mission enables us to recuperate a large amount of the vital energy invested in the exercise of learning to be happy. Our mission is what we already understand, what we already know. It can therefore be used to serve others while bringing enormous enjoyment.

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

4. Function

This is what each individual does to support themselves; it consists in putting all possible enthusiasm, joy and love into what one does, even if it is not part of one's mission.

We know that all living beings have a function within the order of the Universe. It takes wisdom to accept it with joy, enthusiasm, and total capacity for action and service. One's function does not consist in "earning one's living"; living is not "earned" because it is a divine gift. What one earns is what supports this biological entity, this body.

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

5. Intention

This is what we want for ourselves or for others. Intention must be directed in a way that does not interfere with the destinies of others nor seek to avoid our own destiny.

Intention is the most complex element for human beings today, because feelings, the idea of kindness and the other ideas that our culture has erroneously conveyed to us lead us continually to try and interfere in the destinies of others. If

we were to accept that destiny is something extraordinary and not "bad", that it is the best opportunity we have to fulfill what we came to the world to do, we would stop trying to change the destiny of others.

When a son or daughter wants to fly the nest and their parents object to it, how should we act so as not to interfere? We always want things to go our way. In this case, the parents consider that it is not the right moment for their son or daughter because they do not have a steady job, for example, and they do not want them to leave home. The "I want's" are the cause of suffering. An "I want" is also 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 say to the son or daughter: "The most important thing for us is for you to be happy and find your way, and we therefore respect your decision. We want you to know that if you want to come back the door will always be open."

In short, wisdom means being clear about our purpose, taking advantage of our destiny, enjoying our mission, accepting the function and holding the intention of not interfering in the destiny of others. All this must be practiced in thought, word and deed.

Chapter 1. The family as a social core

The *social core* or nucleus may be made up of a couple, family or any group of people who share their personal or emotional life. In this social core a new way of sharing can be agreed on which is based on love and whose purpose is to bring all its members together, as well as provide support and collaboration to achieve balance and personal satisfaction through the harmonious development of the family.

Individuals who can sustain a new society develop in a harmonious social unit.

Human beings are created to become happy but this requires a certain degree of learning; that is, we are born with the potential to be happy but to develop this we need a number of tools, as well as acquiring and understanding the Laws that govern the Universe. This is done through the *principle of love*.

The relationship with children starts upon their conception and extends throughout our lives. However, for this relationship to develop in harmony we need to handle it in synchrony with the characteristics of natural and evolutionary development which correspond to each stage of the relationship.

1.1 Stages of human development

- ✓ **From conception to birth (gestation).** This is where we raise the question of conscious procreation. In this first stage, the future child basically requires that the mother be in a state of inner peace, and that she has loving thoughts towards her child as much as towards herself. The father must also help, showing affection towards his partner, accompanying her to pleasant places, for example where there is beauty in nature and, above all, conscious of the fact that women, during the stages of pregnancy and parenting, devote a great deal of their attention, tenderness and feelings to their child, resulting in momentary changes in the relationship. The male needs to provide loving support without feeling displaced or neglected but instead also devoting a great deal of tenderness to his wife and child.
- ✓ **From 0-3 years (upbringing).** Children require special care from their mother, both in infancy and in terms of lots of hugging and physical contact with her. It is also very important that the father be involved in looking after the children, working with the mother and caring for each other in order to build up the family relationship. Children, at this stage, program the initial aspects of socialization: language, knowledge of some

simple laws of nature such as the law of gravity or the nature of fire, and learn to relate to a world hitherto unknown.

Before programming language, children only have one way of communicating with their parents: crying. This is why we need to let babies cry and learn to interpret what they want with each type of crying; it may be a cry of hunger, sleepiness, pain, lack of affection or boredom.

- ✓ **From 3-7 years (early childhood).** At this stage, the influence of the loving example of the parents as a couple is essential for a child to develop the foundations of a balanced personality that will enable them to find self-assurance and, later, their own value as individuals. In the case of separated parents, children can also find this balance if they can be given that love, albeit separately.

At this stage, children have already programmed language, so tears are no longer needed as a tool to communicate their needs. If we do not teach them language, they will keep on using crying to ask for everything and to manipulate their parents; letting them do so means allowing them to keep on using a tool that they no longer need, and this is a mistake in upbringing.

Moreover, this is the stage when the process of recognizing the existence of an order begins, so we can gradually and harmoniously lead them towards this and towards the need to follow it without any imposition, so that by the time they reach the age of seven they will have already made commitments, with their own convictions.

- ✓ **From 7 to 12 years (mid childhood).** Children need a certain degree of independence from parents within the home. It is important to go slowly, delegating certain responsibilities to them, so that they can start to make their own commitments in life, and learn to value the rewards they receive from their parents.
- ✓ **12 to 18 years (adolescence).** At this stage our children need a degree of freedom that allows them to develop their own powers of assessment, and learn to accept the consequences of their own decisions and experiences in life. At this stage, the parents' role is much more about being counselors who provide enough efficient and timely information, than being controlling, which prevents teenagers from maturing mentally and emotionally. Enough information means all the information they need; efficient means that the information is clear and understandable to the mind of the adolescent; timely means that, if possible, we give them

the information before they make the mistake in order to avoid it. At the end of the day, nobody can avoid making mistakes but with the right information these mistakes will be less serious and easier to correct.

At this age they enter the age of experimentation, and we should let them do this because they already have enough information. We must bring into play values such as trust, so teenagers can tell their parents about anything and everything, and they truly become advisors and educators.

- ✓ **From 18 to 42 years (youth).** In youth the figure of parents should disappear completely to give way to the figure of *brotherhood*. Now equality should form the basis of the union of this social core, which supports each other to project itself towards 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 develop relationships that facilitate peaceful coexistence and move towards a new world of love, peace and harmony between human beings.

The child is now an adult; someone who needs now to take responsibility for their own life. From this moment, the relationship with the parents should be based upon friendship, not authority or authoritarianism; understanding friendship as a relationship of trust and loving communication. There is no longer anything imposed but rather shared.

- ✓ **From age 42 onwards (maturity).** In maturity parents reap the harvest of love sown in their children. They find in their offspring self-assurance, support, affection, companionship, and the opportunity to contribute their wisdom and skills, to the extent of their own capabilities, in order to support the development of the general welfare of the social core, so that they can feel useful until the end of their days. This is the most productive stage —despite what is transmitted to us through our culture because by then our children already have a lot of knowledge and experience; they have made mistakes and learned from them. We talk of maturity, not old age, because the latter is only psychological.

1.2 Healthy and efficient learning tools

The main learning tools that we, as human beings, have at our disposal are:

- ✓ **Setting an example of constant love** The example of love that children see around them is what gradually forms their personality and which they end up imitating. It is very hard to expect them to do anything other than what we show by our own example; doing so would undermine our own authority, just as if we act like our aggressor in a conflict. We have to teach the aggressor that there is a better tool than aggression to resolve difficulties.
- ✓ **Talking things through and reflecting constantly.** Discussion should be constantly available to children as a choice for reflection, rather than punishment, which always leaves a traumatic aftermath.

Table 1. Examples of thoughtful dialogue

Collective questions	Individual questions
<i>How did you feel?</i>	<i>What would you think if ...?</i>
<i>What did we learn?</i>	<i>What would you say if ...?</i>
<i>How else could it be done?</i>	<i>How would you feel if ...?</i>
<i>Would you like to try it?</i>	<i>Would you like it if ...?</i>
	<i>How do you think others feel when you ...?</i>
	<i>What would you like to get for ...?</i>
	<i>What would be the best way to get that result ...?</i>
	<i>What's the best thing to do when ...?</i>

Table 2. Information and reflection

Information	Reflections
<i>In my experience ...</i>	<i>Notice that when ..., what happens is ...</i>
<i>I have found that ...</i>	<i>The fact is that everything worked better when ...</i>
<i>What I know about this is ...</i>	<i>Notice how important tools are ...</i>
<i>I've always found that ...</i>	<i>Notice how the game enabled us to realize the importance of ...</i>

- ✓ **Providing accurate and timely information:** so that children know how to deal with different situations in life. This produces much better results than forbidding, so that children develop self-assurance. We must provide enough (efficient and timely) information.
- ✓ **Not imposing types of behavior or attitudes** avoids children developing rebellious attitudes and helps them to decide to accept the results of their decisions and actions. Teach children through freedom (they learn through their own experiences).
- ✓ **Not prohibiting.** Forbidding something is the best way to prevent children from taking responsibility for their own lives and encouraging them to look for ways to do what is forbidden, for which they will develop the habit of lying.
- ✓ **Not reacting (firmness).** By not reacting to their children's attitudes or behavior, parents can prevent them from finding ways of manipulating them. Non-reaction needs to be backed by total firmness, and the only choice that should never be available for children is to do nothing. This will lead them to making their own decisions to face up to life and accept the consequences.
- ✓ **Creating choices in response to actions that are not available to children.** This produces better results than prohibiting and also stimulates the development of their creativity and that of their parents. Never say *no*, but rather look for choices that meet their need for action.
- ✓ **Replacing no with yes.** What we suggest is that you create an area in or outside the house, called the *Yes lab*, for children to discover that there are laws. There are three phases in this learning process:
 - Phase one: tell children that **yes, they are allowed to:** break things, mess up things, shout, scratch etc.
 - Phase two: **repairing.** Children learn to pick up broken glass or toys left on the floor, and they do so as something which is fun, playing.
 - Phase three: **maintaining.** They no longer need to make an effort to repair things, because now they are interested in maintaining things. You can now teach them how to prevent something from breaking, getting stained, cluttered up or damaged.

1.3 A learning example

Imagine you're at the kitchen table having breakfast with a son, and he makes a deal with you not to play at the table because there is one place for everything: one for sleeping; one for playing; and a different one for eating. The child breaks the deal and, as a result, spills chocolate on the table and knocks off the cup, which falls on the floor and breaks. In this situation, rather than punishing him, use learning questions:

- ✓ *How did you spill the chocolate?* This way, you avoid recriminating him by saying: "Why did you spill it?" or "You're so clumsy!" because that will not teach him anything. He might explain to you, for example, that he began playing with his younger brother and didn't look where he was putting his hand. No-one is to blame: both just made a mistake and broke the deal.
- ✓ *What did you learn from this accident?* To which he might answer: "I learned that when I play at the table, I break the deal I made with my parents; I spilled the chocolate; I got no breakfast; the floor got dirty and now the cup is broken."
- ✓ *What could you do to prevent this from happening again?* "Next time I won't play at the table because it's not the right place; I'll keep the agreements with my parents and play after breakfast."

These are the three learning questions but you have still not done anything; the rest is missing. If at this point you stop, you will not have taught them what they need to know. What you say next is: "I'll show you how to wash the tablecloth and how to make the chocolate, and we'll go and buy another cup. I'll make a note of how much the cup costs; you tell me how many payments you want to pay me back in, and we'll deduct it from your pocket money until you finish paying for it." (Paying for what they break will teach them how to manage money, and is a lesson they can start learning from early adolescence). If you fail to do so, children learn nothing, only that they were scolded or that they thought over with their parent when they broke the deal — but there were no consequences; instead, doing it this way, there is no punishment or aggression but rather an accepted result.

1.4 Basic Agreements

You should reach some basic agreements with your children on several key aspects:

- ✓ *Time*. Draw up a timetable to see how much time they spend playing, studying and doing chores at home or outside the house, like going to buy the bread.
- ✓ *Respect*. For their parents, siblings, teachers, nature, everything.
- ✓ *Administration or organization* of all aspects of their lives: personal hygiene, clothing, their bedroom, household chores.

These agreements are built through dialogue and reflection, and every commitment made and respected produces a benefit that we could call an *acquired right*. On the contrary, failing to meet any commitment does not produce any benefit: if there is no commitment, there is no result. From adolescence, children often protest against demands, which is why it is better to reach an "agreement" with them over a number of responsibilities which they must accept, and if they break the agreement, they must be reminded.

The tool of *firmness* is used in the result when, for example, children don't get up on time, or don't respect their parents, and whenever they don't honor their commitments. "It's your decision to break the commitment but the result you get is your own, not others'." If they don't get up at the agreed time to go to school, then you say: "Tomorrow you'll have to accept responsibility for what you tell the teacher; I didn't punish you, because you alone decided not to earn the benefit, and this is the result." This avoids children harboring resentment, guilt or low self-esteem. Rather than punishing, it involves using *what they learn from the result*.

Never negotiate over the result, as that would be like negotiating with the law, and the law cannot be negotiated, but is always obeyed; what you do negotiate is the agreement. In negotiations, you must be flexible and in the result you need to be firm. Do not negotiate with anything basic.

For example, if your child has earned something, never say that you are not going to give it to them, because that is totally anti-educational: doing so only makes them lose all their self-confidence and motivation; likewise, never give them anything they that they have not earned. The aim is that they should get what is fair.

1.5 The family as a social enterprise

The two partners who form a social core or family unit do not create just an emotional relationship but also a social process with common goals and the purpose of mutual growth and improvement, and as such the family resembles a company that needs to learn how to handle certain principles and strategies to succeed.

These are some of the business success principles that apply to the family:

- ✓ **Commitment to the organization's (or family's) mission:** Creating a commitment entails nobody feeling forced to anything within their social circle: on the contrary, each individual feels important and included in the organization's decisions. This prompts a sense of belonging and a commitment arises with the common goal of social and economic development. The aim is for each family member to pull in the same direction, and for everyone to support each other and contribute.
- ✓ **Excellent internal and external customer care.** Competition in the market is very strong, which is why companies strive to keep their customers by providing excellent care. This is based on the friendly and timely service provided by the employee —also called an internal customer— who in turn must also be satisfied in order to provide support for the service. This principle gives excellent results to keep the family together.

In this case, the internal customers are the couple plus the children. A satisfied customer never changes companies; and to ensure that the external result is satisfactory, we have to work internally. Customers outside the family are the jobs that let parents earn their living, but they cannot work efficiently if their family is dysfunctional and rife with conflict, because then they might not be emotionally balanced enough to be productive in their outside work.

- ✓ **Optimal quality of services.** The quality of products or services is another powerful tool to achieve business success, and the same happens in the family: if each job is done with love and excellence, the result will be the satisfaction of the entire social group and family success. The aim is for all members of the family to perform their role the best they can, whether this is making the breakfast or their bed. And for the family to function really well, commitments and agreements are needed, as in a company.

✓ **Highlighting staff's qualities and values.** This is a practice that encourages people to work better, since by feeling valued, they succeed in developing their potential.

✓ **Harmonious leadership.** Some businesses fail due to lack of harmonious leadership because advising is confused with directing, ordering and imposing, and this becomes tyrannical. True leaders are those who know how to advise and commit people harmoniously to a mutually beneficial goal. For the same reason, a family needs parents to be true social leaders and loving counselors.

One thing is a *boss* and quite another is a *leader*; the *boss orders, imposes* and is authoritarian, while *leaders teach, commit, suggest and affirm*. In successful companies there are leaders and managers: both are necessary. The leader is responsible for the commitment; the teaching process, and the staff's welfare, and the boss must ensure that the rules are obeyed. Families need leaders and this is the parents' role.

✓ **Learning from our mistakes.** This is recognizing that no-one learns anything without risking trying and making mistakes. From this principle comes creativity and the ability to find new choices for the harmonious education of children, and also improve the family's organization. Punishing mistakes instead of learning from them is limiting the ability to experience and accept life.

In every human process we can make mistakes, suffer crises or difficulties, and learning from them is the tool to avoid making the same mistakes again.

✓ **Thinking big.** Even if our company is small we must think big and work out large-scale company strategies. This has been the secret of small businesses that have come to grow successfully. Also, in the family, if an integrated, united and strong social core is created, then tomorrow the families that make up society are more likely to have a real community spirit and great capacity for service, in order to thus promote peace, harmony and fraternal union between all human beings.

1.6 Leadership in the family group

As for the leadership process, we need to generate *trust*, *commitment* and *loyalty*. How do we do this?

- ✓ To build **trust** there must be zero aggression and zero susceptibility, i.e. we make the conscious choice of peaceful coexistence and not to be offended by what others do or say. This means choosing happiness. We decide not to suffer, and that is what creates a climate of trust where we can talk, discuss things and reach agreements.
- ✓ A **commitment** arises when nobody feels forced to do anything. That is why punishment, prohibition and imposition are not the right tools for generating commitment, because they make people feel under an obligation, and therefore not committed. To prevent this from happening, try using the exercise of results through *agreements*: "It's not an obligation to do this; it's your decision whether you do it or not but you alone will have to cope with the result of doing it or not"; this is what produces commitment. Punishment, however, produces fear.
- ✓ After an agreement and a commitment comes **loyalty** when the social enterprise is valued and there is mutual respect. If someone does not value something, they will not be loyal to it; and in order to value it, they will need to have accepted the results. If someone accepts a result on another's behalf, when that person is wrong, for them the agreements reached and commitments made will be worthless. So, if we make the mistake of doing for someone what they can do for themselves, or of accepting the consequences of another's actions, they will never develop the virtue of loyalty, because we have mistaught them.

It is important to know that *no-one belongs to anyone*: not children to their parents or a couple to each other, and that only love can bring people together. This is not a question of "imprisoning" others, but rather joining them through a commitment of love. Imposing never produces a solid union, but rather makes you want to run away, so we need to learn to live together and share in love, not as owners of anyone but as brothers.

*A family united in and committed to love
is the foundation of a new society.*

Achieving greater harmony within the family is a tiny contribution towards a better world; therefore, the seven tools of love should be applied constantly.

Table 3. The seven tools of love

Tools of love	We let go of ...	Explanation
Accepting	... changing others, including our own children.	We work on ourselves, not on the others
Acting	... attacking in thought, word and/or deed.	We do not react, but instead we act effectively and calmly.
Adapting	... fleeing the place where we are meant to do our duty.	We adapt to the setting where we are meant to act, and do not fight against itself, but instead enjoy it and give our best.
Thanking	... suffering due to the difficulties that life makes us face.	We are grateful for what we learn from each difficulty, because it is what strengthens us.
Accepting	... blaming anything or anybody. There is no one to blame.	We assume our experiences and decisions with their outcomes.
Respecting	... criticizing other people, judging them or punishing them for no reason at all.	We accept other people as they are, without trying to change them.
Valuing	... complaining about anyone or any situation.	We enjoy everything that we have and that we do, and we never complain.

Chapter 2. What does educating mean?

2.1 Educating is not transmitting knowledge

The reason why today's society is prone to so many social ills lies in the home, regardless of the family's socioeconomic and educational level. All too often there are high levels of aggression, disharmony, authoritarianism, low self-esteem, which trigger serious psychological trauma and mental limitations in people.

It is easy to see that people responsible for corruption, violence and social problems often come from disorganized and aggressive families with low self-esteem and awareness. Other times this is not the case; there may be political corruption in people who come from socially well-structured families, albeit with a low level of awareness. In these families, children, teenagers, young and old are unable to be happy and survive healthily and with a respectful attitude towards the rights of others and in harmony with the environment.

Clearly, the true solution to any problem begins by remedying its cause; any other solution attempted will be insufficient to counter the growing social disharmony. If the cause is not remedied, increasingly more people will cause psychosocial problems.

Therefore, the real purpose of education is not to pass on knowledge but to contribute to the healthy development of individuals, which in turn can shape a healthy society. Knowledge is important, but really it takes second place in the educational process; an individual with many skills but without any real human development in the principles of love, will misuse them and will not develop the ability to respect others.

To start building a new society with a high degree of human satisfaction, two measures are needed:

1. To prepare **adults** to enable them to take on board a real process of *harmonious guidance* along with their children.
2. To develop **education processes** fully supported by the *principles of love*.

If small children are given the right tools to discover life, appreciate it and love it, adolescents and youths in the society of the future will be able to make the most of life and respect it, as well as building excellent relationships with both

their parents and others, taking advantage of the circumstances they face in their life experience.

2.2 Stages in the development of personality

Education serves to fill children's minds with information, and gradually form their personality (system of beliefs) in everyday interaction with their parents and teachers. It is essential to use the first five years of children's lives to give them an excellent upbringing, so as to help them develop a flexible, adaptable and creative personality. The aim is that children develop a love of life, not fear or rejection of life, and also that they learn to respect themselves and others.

In childhood the natural disposition is still there to learn from life itself, but this is lost gradually with age, 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; be their protectors, but not their guardians or jailers. There is no need to punish children or offload on them the burden of our own ignorance; we simply have to be like the Earth, which supports life so that it grows, and allows each child to take from it exactly what they need to express their values. Our children are counting on us.

We can consider three metaphorical phases in **personality development**:

1. *Recording*. Children are innocent and gradually record the information that is presented to them until about the age of twelve. This is like pressing *record* on a recording device.
2. *Verification of the recording*. This involves listening to what has been recorded, and lasts until about the age of 18. It is like pressing *play* on the recorder.
3. *Reprogramming the recording*. If the recording is not satisfactory we can delete some parts and replace them with new information. This is called reprogramming or decoding. We do it as adults voluntarily and this can last a lifetime.

During childhood we have the ability to see the world as it actually is, while, as adults, we observe it through our contaminated beliefs. So when we turn 18, we need to go through a process of decoding useless or erroneous misconceptions by incorporating new information, experiences and results. Encoding does not require any development but decoding does. So the cleaning exercise begins after the age of 18, at best, and frequently from the age of 30,

when we began to think that our life is not working and look for other information.

Educating is not a question of forcing children to be adults, on the contrary, adults need to try to look through the eyes of a child to better perform their task as educators; going back to dreaming, imagining and developing all the creative capacity that is still in us but became dormant on the way. We should reawaken it to better understand our children and hold onto the child within us.

Conflicts often arise during the educational process because we insist on giving the learner information that does not match the reality that they are experiencing. For example, we teach the difference between good and bad rather than explaining that both concepts are part of the same world, and that we need to be flexible and understand that different explanations can be found for the same event, based on each person's experience.

Each of us uses the information we have in our minds to interpret what we see outside but that interpretation is often the main problem of human communication. Given the same reality, each person makes a different subjective interpretation. For example, we might react to someone's behavior by saying: "What you're doing is wrong"; or "I don't know if that's a good thing"; or "I liked very much what you did"; or, conversely: "I didn't like what you did at all." If we relate to the world from that perspective, it turns out to be quite chaotic.

In education the same thing happens when we teach a truth that is not so, but rather is our own subjective interpretation. It is important to convey factual information, not based on false beliefs, and do it through playing.

Everything that exists in the Universe is perfect and necessary: there is nothing good or bad. If we ask a child under five to choose from seven geometrical figures, they will simply pick one, whereas the adult will choose using a process of reasoning, and for a specific reason which may be the color, shape or number of faces on the figure. Children see life in a simple, flowing kind of way; they identify with something and do not ponder over things. Adults, however, generally do a preliminary analysis. In the case of choosing one of seven geometrical figures, when we have no apparent reason for picking any one in particular, as it is our inner child which is choosing; the reasons are always adult ones. Neither of the choices is good or bad: we are simply checking the same reality from different positions.

The first five years of life mark us forever and determine whether or not we develop mental limitations and fears. Of course, we can always decide to do cleansing exercises on traumas, and mental restructuring —what we call mental

reprogramming— for example, *through psychotherapy*; but this is not necessary if we have an excellent first five years of upbringing.

Make the most of the first five years of your children's lives.

The idea is to give children information that helps them develop a conception of more harmonious and flexible life. At the end of the day education is not for children, but rather and first of all for adults, who are responsible for transmitting to children something valuable instead of their own limitations.

Both children and adults learn through experience, and so need to live through concrete experiences to obtain the two tools that let them enjoy an exceptional life: *wisdom* and *training*.

2.3 Communication for education

It is helpful for parents to use a *non-conclusive* and fully *de-conceptualized dialogue* with their children, which does not offer conclusions or adult concepts of life and situations.

Nothing and no situation should be labeled as ugly or beautiful, good or bad, healthy or harmful, dangerous or safe, etc. In response to children's questions or actions, rather than giving conclusive answers it is best to use thought-provoking dialogue, as shown in the chart on the next page.

Table 4. Non-aggressive communication

Aggressive communication	Suitable Communication
<i>Careful! Don't break it!</i>	<i>What do you think will happen if you drop or hit that object?</i>
<i>Careful! You'll fall over!</i>	<i>What would you do to avoid falling? Have you have practiced other times and not fallen?</i>
<i>Tidy your room! It's a mess!</i>	<i>How would you like your room to be? What could you do to manage that?</i>
<i>Don't do that!!</i>	<i>Tell me why you're doing that. How do you feel about that outcome? What would you have to do to get a different result? What results you hope to get? How do you think you could do it? Try it out and see what happens!</i>

Instead of using an aggressive style of communication, try using a loving style, which is more appropriate for the child to learn to think and draw their own conclusions.

In a suitable dialogue, you should not have to use adjectives because these are nothing more than the expression of our own limitations: horrible, ugly, beautiful, messy, etc. For example, saying to your daughter: "What's that horrible music you're listening to?" does not seem the right way of putting things because it may be horrible for you but not for her. Instead you can say: "I'd really like to know why you've turned up the music so loud right now." That way you help her mind to think a different way, without qualifying the music and without using the term "why", which is very abrupt and prevents the brain from developing any answers. By only asking her to tell you the reason, you are using the *technique of non-conclusive dialogue*.

Instead of saying "Careful you don't break it", you can ask "What do you think would happen if this falls or gets knocked over?" By asking that question, you find out if the child knows what might happen because they are starting to

discover life and may not know what breaking things is if they have not yet broken anything, so the expression "Be careful, you'll break it" might not mean anything to them. So, as a form of educational investment, you have to go somewhere appropriate to break things together to discover what this is and understand it. For example, you can play with your children at breaking something which is useless. Ask them if they know what will happen if you drop the thing on the floor and if they do not know, ask them if they want to find out. Give it to them and ask them to let go of it and see how it breaks. Then you can explain that it breaks because it does not resist the effect of gravity against the floor. You are not saying that it is good or bad, only that if you hit it, it will break.

If a child is holding a fragile object and has already been through the experience of knowing what breaking is, you can ask the following questions: "How do you like the object you're holding? Do you prefer it broken or as it is now?" Your child will respond that they prefer it as it is now, ask them: "And how can you make sure it doesn't get broken?" This way you help children to find answers instead of giving them information that they will accept automatically, without working out anything themselves. *The technique involves the mind developing the answer* and serves both children and adults.

It is not a matter of congratulating children when they break something, but of them learning to interact with their environment. When you offer your child an expensive toy, you mistakenly assume that they will play with it the way an adult would, but this is not so. What they do first is put it on the floor and take it to pieces, because they want to find out what happens when you open it up. You have to go through all these experiences with children, so you must let them break toys and get them dirty to learn how to do this and what the result is.

Educators' wisdom lies in checking that children have the right information, and to do this requires asking questions.

If you tell your child that their room is very messy, what does this mean? That you don't like what their bedroom looks like; because they may be very messy, according to our view of tidiness, but if they can find things whenever they need them, they are not disorganized but rather organized in a different way. Understanding this is an exercise in mental flexibility.

2.4 Children's rights

To conduct therapy with an unruly child, it is essential to have the following principle of the Universe clear in your mind: rights are won; they do not exist naturally. And this is regulated by the Law of Compensation.

A child at birth has five **basic rights** that parents should never deny:

1. Proper *nutrition*.
2. *Clothing* to wear.
3. *A place to sleep*.
4. *An education*.
5. *To feel loved*. Today this love is lacking in families; sometimes children are given everything except love.

The way to avoid punishment is using therapy, but you must be clear about their rights as children. For example, the right to a healthy diet does not include sweets or other treats they see in TV adverts. A *food* is everything that nourishes the body in order for it to be healthy, whereas something *edible* is everything that anyone can swallow even if it is not nourishing, or which can even poison them.

In a nutshell, the message you will give your children is:

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

To embark on a new relationship with your child, you have to explain that rights are earned, and that you are going to guide them and help them to earn those rights and bring satisfaction to their lives. So tell them: "Value what you have because from now on what you obtain will be thanks to your own effort and your own work."

What matters is that they do not see this as a punishment but as a consequence associated with their behavior. It is not that their father or mother is punishing them but that they obtained this result by themselves. So you have to ask: "What did you do to obtain this?"

Explaining to your children what their rights are is part of the process of teaching them about appreciation. If they still want to get their own way, then you might need to draw up an anti-aggression and punishment table, but only if they are very conflictive and disobedient. Otherwise, agreements, reflection and educational games should suffice for children to learn to behave harmoniously.

The table serves to reach agreements about food, schedules or the time spent on each activity; about the appropriate use of places and things —avoiding

possessiveness; about respect for others and socialization —relationships with their parents, brothers and sisters, classmates and teachers—, and their behavior outside the home.

The first column lists the **commitments** or agreements and the second the **benefits**. This table will let you *conduct all the therapies* and avoid using punishment, which only causes constricting traumas.

In the *commitments* column, write down the agreements we you *with* your child, not *for* the child, otherwise you would be imposing this. For instance, saying "You have to do your homework, do you agree?" is not an agreement. Instead ask: "What time do you think's the right time to do your homework?" This is how to begin building agreements with them: give them information and think about it until they enter into a commitment.

*Reaching agreements calls for flexibility and creativity.
Keeping them calls for firmness.*

In the *benefits* column, write down everything that your child asks for and which is over and above the five basic rights. For example: a particular brand of trousers, watching TV or playing on the computer. This is not a gift or a punishment. It is vitally important to be clear that you are not taking anything away from them or giving them anything; you do not punish them or reward them because life does not work that way; life simply obtains results or not. And what do we have to do to get them? Following life's commitments or not; it depends only on that. If you fail to explain this, your children will blame you for their results.

You can also explain that they have somewhere to let off steam and burn up their adrenaline if they get upset. You can call it "the letting-off-steam room", which is somewhere they can shout or cry. When they calm down again, go back to using dialogue, agreements and commitments. Firmness is not aggressive but if used before agreements, it is not firmness but rather imposing one's will.

We have more than enough aggression, but not enough firmness.

Alongside each commitment agreed on with your child, note down and explain *they are result of their meeting their commitments*, which is their decision, not yours. Explain that they are entitled to honor these or not —but that they cannot avoid the result of not meeting them because that result is theirs: nobody is giving them anything or taking it away.

The benefits depend on the household economy, so do not offer anything that you cannot buy or commitments that cannot be met. It is important that people accept and understand that everyone has to learn to be happy with what they have and not unhappy because of what they do not have.

As soon as your child fails to meet any of the commitments, cross off the corresponding benefits. If all of them are crossed off, they know what they are left with: only the essentials; and they will feel very bad because they want much more. The fact of totally avoiding the need for punishment makes you value more what you have, and makes it easier to learn to commit yourself, respect others and earn a livelihood. The problem of adults who think they have rights that they do not actually have is that they have been corrupted; nobody ever taught them that rights are earned, not stolen.

You need to explain to them how they get what they need: first through crying and sleeping (when they are babies); then playing and studying; later studying and helping out their parents at home; then they might get it by working away from home or studying; and that adults earn this with their professional role in life.

Never include love or affection in the table of benefits. Never tell a child: "If you don't do this, I won't love you anymore." You should never say that the door is closed and will not be reopened because your love must always be there for them. In fact, love cannot be lost from making any mistakes because it is universal.

2.5 Educational recommendations

- ✓ To tap the potential of a child's mind, you need to stop talking to a child in a childlike way, because that way their potential will be wasted; **instead, talk to them as an adult.** Most brain and mental programming occurs through hearing, so it is important to grow up in a medium with a wealth of harmonious sounds and language.
- ✓ When your child is not distracted, talk about what they are doing, or **read them books** that have no negative emotional content. A child's instinct immediately tunes into the emotions that adults feel as they are reading.
- ✓ Teach them **languages**. The adult mind works 40 times more slowly than children's, so we 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 although the result can be a very high degree of mental development.

- ✓ **Meeting their needs** without scolding them for anything or showing any negative type of expression that can be interpreted as danger. You need to relate to your child in a totally loving way, and fill yourself with patience when they cry because, at first, it is the only way they can communicate.
- ✓ **Help them to gain wisdom** not just knowledge, as sometimes knowledge brings mental limitations which do not allow us to enjoy life. Wise are those who are able to be happy with what they have and make the best of what life offers them. We have concepts, knowledge, customs, traditions: we resign ourselves to what we cannot change and end up rejecting life. We need something much better in order to live. To achieve this, *replace ignorance with wisdom.*

Table 5. Replacing ignorance with wisdom

Ignorance	Wisdom
Concepts and knowledge ...	<i>... with truths</i>
Habits ...	<i>... with recognizing what corresponds to each of us</i>
Traditions ...	<i>... with adapting to the habitat we have to live in</i>
Resignation ...	<i>... with acceptance</i>
Rejection of life ...	<i>... with love of life</i>

2.5.1 A cure for tantrums

Children can throw tantrums when you refuse to give them something that you think they should not have. In these cases, their instinct and your feelings as an adult come into conflict and usually the child wins; and when they do, they learn something undesirable: they can get anything they want with tears, tantrums and manipulation. From then on, this becomes their working tool but it happens because adults allow it. Some ten-year-olds continue to ask for everything by crying. Why? Because it works: every time they cry they get what they want. This method of learning never produces satisfactory results.

To prevent this happening, the first time it crops up or, at the most, the second, you must take away this weapon. How? When children begin with their tantrum, it is essential that you keep calm because if you lose control, they will have won. If you get upset or feel sorry for them, they win. What can you do? Look lovingly at them, for example, take a book, sit down in front of them and start reading as calmly as you can. Just that: *keep calm and say nothing*. When children see that everything has gone back to normal without anyone taking any notice of their tantrum, they realize that this won't work anymore.

Children need to see that this does not affect you; otherwise, it becomes a weapon. When they run out of steam and calm down you can ask them: "Would you like to put on that *performance* for me again? It was lovely." According to the sequence of the Masters, after this question children may have one of two reactions:

- ✓ First, repetition: because they get angrier. So you go back, sit down again and continue reading the book.
- ✓ After the second tantrum, ask again: "Would you like to do that again?" to which they will answer "No-o-o-o." Then ask another question: "Do you think that's the best way to get the things you need?"

Once they see that you don't get upset, you will help them to reflect:

"Look, when you want something from me, I want you to know this: my heart and all my love are always open for you, and you can have everything you need, but that's not the right way to ask for it. When you need something, we'll talk about it, we'll come to an agreement and you'll get what you need. If there's something you don't need or that we can't get, we must accept that this is part of the experience of the mind maturing."

Send your child a very clear message with one key sentence: "You won't get anything from me with tantrums." They will learn that this is not the way, and from that moment they will stop using tears or tantrums to ask for anything. If they cry, let them cry, and when they finish, ask: "Do you believe that the best way to get something is crying, or do you think there's another choice?" Instead of crying for things, they will ask for them with words, because that is what language is for.

Yet if aggression works, they will keep on using it. There is only one way to stop them from using it: if it does not work, and that depends on the parents, so they have to be very firm.

2.5.2 Children's tips for Parents

- ✓ *My crying is my way of telling you that I have needs - don't suffer because of it!*
- ✓ *My tantrums are to get what I want; don't give it to me, because I won't appreciate what I have.*
- ✓ *My curiosity about everything around me is my way of learning; don't punish me because I'll keep on being ignorant.*
- ✓ *Let me try to do adults' jobs because although they don't suit me, they help me to find my place in the adults' world.*
- ✓ *Help me to experience each stage at my own pace; don't force me to do what is not for me, just show me the way, I'll follow you.*
- ✓ *Let my admiration for you grow more and more; don't undermine my feelings with shouting and aggression.*
- ✓ *Don't take offence at my mistakes, because only by making mistakes can I recognize my innocence and learn the order of life.*
- ✓ *Don't give me things I don't need, but let me take responsibility for the results of my actions and decisions.*
- ✓ *I need your love to grow but don't let fear take hold of me by showing me your fears.*
- ✓ *Show me the value of life with your example of being happy with what it has given you.*

2.6 Harmonious adolescence

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

Adolescence is a wonderful stage in the life of every human being, as this is the time when sexuality awakens and the personality comes to light, attempting to verify the system of beliefs acquired so far.

Until the age of twelve, children are like sponges, soaking up information, but then the key changes: from "*record*" to "*play*" and they start to listen to the recording. That is when confusion begins because it turns out that not all the recordings in their mind match life's reality: the information we gave them does not help them to adapt. This state of confusion is the source of all conflicts and can only be avoided through an excellent education.

Teenagers feel the need to experience life so as to get to know themselves, i.e., to find out what type of information is encoded in their personality; and this is possible only by experiencing life by oneself.

In puberty, the personality awakens and teenagers begin to experiment because until then their personality has been still taking shape with the information it receives. It is a confusing stage (due in part to the hormonal revolution that occurs in puberty) because often everything that was learned does not fit; so we say that teenagers are at the stage of getting to know themselves. Actually, adults never get to know themselves completely, but by adulthood we have adapted far better to the world, while teenagers not only do not know themselves but also have not yet adapted to their surrounding environment and do not know how to be self-supporting; they depend on their parents.

Teenagers need to:

- ✓ **Get to know themselves.** In other words, know what lies in their personality and their system of beliefs.

The results obtained will reveal whether their beliefs are true or false. Even if we, as adults, have failed to overcome all our limitations, we can help a teenager to understand the source of their conflicts and to analyze their external results in four areas: relationships, health, wealth and adaptation to the environment. Yet above all, we can guide them so that they can see for themselves what internal results they are getting. If these are happy results; if they do not suffer; if they are at peace; if they do not react or get upset —and if they are the result of love; if they

are willing to serve and to give the best of themselves. These results will show whether they are interacting with others through truths or not.

- ✓ **Discover the truth.** As they replace their concepts and false beliefs with truths, they will get better internal and external results. Discovering the *truth* will boost their *understanding* and reduce their ignorance and conflicts. This is the work of developing their consciousness.
- ✓ **Adapt to the environment** or life, which means developing the ability to take advantage of the environment without suffering in it, realizing that it is a learning opportunity. Whatever the medium in which we live, from adolescence we all have the opportunity to learn to be happy in ourselves, without anything disturbing our inner peace, and also to learn to love our neighbor as ourselves; i.e. respecting others. Again, this is the work of developing the consciousness.
- ✓ **Accept life**, that is the result of their decisions, without blaming anyone. In the process of mental maturity we all need to accept our thoughts, feelings and emotions, recognizing that others are not responsible for them, only us. Accepting life also means starting to do more, to serve better and demand less. Sometimes teenagers, due to misguided care during their childhood, can be accustomed to asking for a lot and doing very little, so they have to be taught to appreciate what they have.

Adults too, albeit with some minor differences, are still in the same situation and we need to know ourselves better, discover the truth, adapt to the environment and take responsibility for our lives. However, we have already learned to be self-sufficient and cherish experiences more, so perhaps we have developed our understanding somewhat more.

When parents, using the *tools of love* properly, let young people experience life in all its aspects, then adolescence, rather than being a difficult and traumatic time, becomes a wonderful opportunity to forge stronger bonds between parents and children.

During this period it is essential that parents earn their children's *trust*, to ensure proper guidance without having the need to hide their life experiences.

The best form of guidance that parents can give their children is to offer teenagers all the *information* available to make every experience a mutually enriching event.

When young people have their parents' trust; the right information and freedom to experience life, they do not need to hide or "investigate" in the company of unknown people or in the wrong places to find the information they need, nor even less to seek acceptance among gangs of other unruly, disorientated teenagers.

Another important tool that parents can use to educate their children is to enable them to fully take on board the outcome of their decisions and their freedom. If they do, teenagers will not have anyone else to blame, or disobey, and so may understand themselves better and enjoy a truly harmonious adolescence, maintaining excellent relationships with their parents.

Once children reach the age of 18, in order to stabilize family relationships harmoniously, it is very important that parents conduct their relationships with their children from an *attitude of friendship and brotherhood*, stop acting with authority and thereby enable young people to mature emotionally and sentimentally so that they can take responsibility for their own lives without any kind of dependence.

Chapter 3. Educating by playing

3.1 Imagining and games

Games are the best way to learn but very often we have not learned how to use them. The idea is that games are learning experiences, and thus need to be entertaining and thought-provoking.

There are several kinds of games for teaching children:

- ✓ **Imaginative:** for children aged 0-4 years.
- ✓ **Verification-based:** for children aged 4 or 5 up to 7. These consist of the formula: "I no longer believe this; I'm starting to see for myself." They are the way to learn the truth about life and wisdom.
- ✓ **Discovery-based:** which begin about the age of 7.
- ✓ **Choice-based:** to spark creativity in both children and adults.
- ✓ **Of life:** for children around 12 years old.

In fantasy games, children see things we do not see because their personality or system of beliefs has not yet developed. Really this is not fantasy but the so-called *invisible world*, if only for mature eyes, and not so for small children. Adults only perceive the three physical dimensions; however, other mammals, such as cats, dogs or horses, perceive more dimensions than humans do; children too, because they have not yet formed a belief about the world.

We can also call it the *world we forget* because hardly anybody remembers their life experience before the age of five. So when a child tells us about fantasy-based experiences, we must believe them, as they do not often lie and they will be telling us about experiences which are valid and real for them. Children have around them a number of friends who are invisible to us, who they play with. They are continuously taking advantage of and are enjoying the Universe's sources of information.

Adults need to associate what we experience with our previous experiences. If, for example, we record several sounds and then we have an adult listen to them, some may identify them if they know what they are, or they may not know what they are listening to, and believe it is something else. For example, if we record the sound of a lawn mower and someone has never heard one, they might imagine they are hearing something familiar, like an electric drill; but if they are wrong they would not like to be called a liar or storyteller, as that would make

them feel invalidated or misunderstood. Children would feel the same: if we invalidate someone during their childhood, when they are an adult they will have low self-esteem, shyness, fear of explaining what they see and they will be inarticulate.

3.2 Discovering life with children

What matters more: that children understand parents and teachers, or that adults understand children? *Teachers understanding their pupils is what matters more.* Usually we try to do it the other way round, getting young children to understand parents and teachers, and asking them to respect an environment that they do not know. We should do it the other way around, and go down to children's world so that they get to know us and then grow with them, taking them by the hand, not forcing them. That is the goal behind educational games, playing with them and helping them harmoniously to adapt to a new world.

How do you get the youngest children to understand parents and teachers and adapt to the world without sparking a certain degree of rejection or disobedience in them? The idea is not to impose any behavior on them but simply to let them discover the importance of respect for others. This same love when we try to impose it, ceases to be love and becomes something that produces rejection. Through harmonious education *we do not impose anything but instead try to facilitate understanding.*

This is about learning with our children, or pupils, to discover the importance of respect and choosing to do one thing or another without saying "you have to" or "it's your turn to do this." If we feel compelled to do something, we do not commit to it. That is one of the reasons why many adults fail, so we must not pass that feeling of obligation onto our children.

Instead of rules, aggression or punishment, which are not effective, we should use games and other tools for better results and not cause trauma in children.

3.3 Truth cannot be taught

What is taught is not truth but rather concepts and beliefs. Even when one person transmits to another the same truth that they have already discovered and verified, that other person receives it as a concept, not a truth. And until we verify the information that comes to our mind, it cannot be considered a truth but simply a belief. So we need to allow experience and direct it, wisely and lovingly so that children discover the truth for themselves from a young age.

Truth is something which is verified by a result. When everybody has followed this verification process and has obtained the same result, unanimity is reached; but when only some people have verified this, *those who have not cannot understand* because they have not yet discovered the truth for themselves. So only when we have verified can we really agree. For instance, if we give a group of people a closed cardboard box with some objects inside it, they can only see what the objects are if they open the box; until then it will be impossible to agree. We can tell them what is inside, and they can believe us or not, but until they open the box *they will not know if it is true*.

Truth, then, is the result of direct experience in life which we obtain when we test our knowledge. So we need to provide children with experiences which enable them to understand, not try to convince them of a truth that they have not verified; otherwise we will prompt them to reject it.

Experiences are inevitable and necessary but it is important that adults adapt to children's ability to experiment. This is why they are called *learning games* because they are designed to suit the children's age.

3.4 The game of choices

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

So, when a child asks us for something that is not healthy, if we love them we will offer a substitute that *is*. We do not say no, rather we will give them other choices for action.

It can also be very useful to accompany them and gradually explain everything they do. For example, if they are crawling and come across a small slope, you might say: "Right now you're going up a little slope of about five degrees." It does not matter that the language is very technical. If they fall, they will discover the law of gravity and in the meantime you can explain to them in your language what they are discovering physically. To give another example, you might say: "Now you're picking a yellow flower with lots of petals." This way you will slowly encode the information in their mind. Although three-year-olds think the sun sleeps at night and wake up in the morning, within their mythical mind set they are receiving information that will be useful to them later.

When they get distracted, it is best not to interrupt them and to try not to say "no", but rather offer other choices. When do you ever need to say "no" to a child, for example, in a garden? The answer is never. They will be told "no" if they are in a room full of porcelain because it is not a place for children, who should be playing in a flower garden. The only thing to remember is to never let them get into situations that they cannot handle. For example, if they are getting close to a lake that is five meters deep, just pick them up and put them somewhere else, without a word and without mentioning the danger; offer another choice to avoid imposing conditions.

Bear in mind that if they receive the wrong kind of guidance, become disobedient, and reject the environment they live in, children will miss the opportunity to find their mission in life and then will experience only their destiny but without the strength to face up to it and make the most of it. Consequently their lives will be full of fear, addictions, limitations and frustrations, leading to a low level of energy and very little chance of overcoming ignorance and suffering.

3.5 Learning games

In recreational games, we let children have fun without explaining anything, so they will only be developing their physical capabilities.

For a learning game to work, it needs to encourage thinking about successes and mistakes, so as to learn from both. Thus the verification process becomes a true teaching and learning experience. Achieving this is the art of educating, which both parents and teachers have to implement and which renders punishment unnecessary.

From the age of three, children can begin with learning games that can produce extraordinary intellectual results, without this being their actual purpose.

For example, take your daughter out to the garden to see the sunrise and say: "Look, over there is where the sun rises; that glowing sphere that you see there, we call it "the sun" and that direction where it comes up we call "east". Play at showing them the points of the compass; right and left; front and back; and showing them the colors by looking for flowers or other objects of every shade. You can teach numbers by looking at branches or flowers with different numbers of leaves or petals, or picking up stones and counting them to see how many there are. This way they learn while playing.

Buy a board for them to paint on and express their creativity, or set aside a wall in their room for painting on, which you can call "the yes wall."

To teach geometry, buy pieces of different geometrical shapes, paint them all different colors and play hide-and-seek with the children. Say to them, for example: "Let's look for the blue ball; the first to find it can play another game." You have to create choices for them so that they do not compete with each other and learn that they all get their own result from the game.

Avoid using the words *win* or *lose* because they spur competition and cause discrimination: a result simply leads to another game. For example: "When you find the blue ball, 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 and the points of a compass there is a game they love: *the clues that lead you to the treasure*. This can be a flower or any little thing they find attractive. Clues can be: "Let's walk three steps to the west, then turn right and walk five steps to the north."

Another game is to paint the entire alphabet in colorful pieces, write numbers on them and hide them: children are born discoverers and love looking for things.

In *the inventions workshop* game, use old objects, like a wallet, so that, for example, a little girl can carry around one that is just like her mother's. Every learning game works for children if you think over with them what they have learned and discovered, both when they were right and when they were wrong.

With children aged four or five, instead of getting them to sit at the desk and asking them to write the letters, play at hiding them. Think like a child again and create, for example, the magic cave where the great treasure of wisdom is hidden, then give them some clues that they have to follow if they want to find it.

To make it easier for children to discover life, a very good idea is to set aside a special space for them, the *yes space*. And from the age of four, you can let them come into the adult space gradually and learn little by little to respect it through agreements.

3.5.1 The learning game

This is the life discovery game. The idea is that children draw their own conclusions and learn how to recognize how to learn what they do not yet know. First the child "educates" their parents and then the parents guide the children and support their self-learning in the discovery of truth.

The *self-learning game techniques* are simple: this is not about teaching concepts or limiting children's ability to take responsibility for their own life, but

enabling them instead to find the truths of existence in nature and their own experiences. To do so, you need to:

- ✓ **Not impose** ways of behaving.
- ✓ **Not prohibit** 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, enabling them to accept them or, to put it another way, suppressing your urge to protect them and ignoring how your feelings react at the results they obtain on their own.

What parents or educators need to display is *non-reaction*, i.e., *total serenity* and *firmness* so as not to interfere in the process of the child learning to accept their own result.

3.5.2 Self-discovery Games

Imagination-based games focus on love, mission and the sweetness in life, while the next levels focus on accepting life by facing up to one's destiny. It is this last part, destiny, which may bring some amount of pain, in accidents like cutting your finger or getting a bump; and undesirable results when children break some of the agreements. The aim behind these games is to help them develop "discipline" and make a commitment to peaceful coexistence with respect for others.

✓ **Find the button**

Put children into several different groups. Group 1 has to 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 has one minute to hide a button somewhere in a specific part of the sitting-room. Tell them not to hide the button in any personal item such as wallets, clothes, bags or anyone's pocket, but instead in places that everyone uses.

First the remaining groups leave the room while group 1 hides its button, then the next group, and so on. When all groups have hidden their button, all six groups come back in at the same time to find each group's button. The game

ends when all six buttons are on the table; just take note of when this happens and explain this to the players.

The idea is to use creativity because this is a game to discover the processes involved in human relationships. No other clues are needed.

At the end of the game, go over what happened and the result. For example, tell them:

"The result was that we took 15 minutes to get all the buttons back on the table. Do you think this result could be improved? How did you do it? You made several assumptions: you thought that this was a competition but I didn't say that; and that each group couldn't tell the others where they had hidden the buttons; you thought you couldn't talk; you also believed that you had to get a result for yourselves without helping anyone else or any other group; and also that there would be a winner. However, all these assumptions were in your mind because the only thing I said was that the game would end when the six buttons appeared, so we could all have finished in one minute. We could have gone to another group and asked where their button was in exchange for telling them where ours was."

Very often we think something cannot be done because our mind has encoded this information. This is the effect of our upbringing, which has blocked our creativity. We were told: "You have to obey rules and respect the order of things; you have to be disciplined and learn to obey." That way they made our creativity dormant, which is why it needs to be awakened again.

What did we learn from the previous game?

- ✓ That it is important to work together; and in this game everyone is part of the team.
- ✓ It is important to negotiate. If we do not learn that we will obtain very inefficient results.
- ✓ We need to use effective communication.
- ✓ Supposing something is a bad habit.

What can we do to prevent this from happening again?

- ✓ Do not assume anything.

- ✓ Think that we are all a team; we need to negotiate, communicate, reach agreements and cooperate. That way we would have obtained a better result.
- ✓ Accept that we need to do different things.

The core of the game, and what contributes most, is thinking about what happened and how it happened. The game is like experience itself but if we do not capitalize on this, we lose any benefit.

When a child falls and hurts themselves, avoid saying "poor thing" or start crying with them in sympathy because that does not help at all. After treating the wound, just sit down and think it over with them: "Why did you fall down? How do you feel? What have you learnt?". And do likewise with their successes.

It takes us a lot of effort for us to discuss things, communicate with each other or think things over because when we were children our parents used to say "don't" to us all the time: "Don't interrupt adults, don't get into our conversations, don't touch that, go to your room ...". This makes us uncommunicative and, as adults, it does not occur to us to communicate in a game. That mental block we gradually transmit to children without realizing it, so we must reawaken our creativity and communication.

✓ **The Sign game**

These are the instructions: "In this game, we sit in a circle, holding hands and when I give a sign with my right hand to the person next to me, they have to pass it on to the next person, without speaking, just by squeezing their hand a little. The game ends when the sign, or hand-squeeze, comes back to me through my left hand."

Once the game is over, make the following observation: "If we don't care about anybody else, how long do we take to pass a signal from the left hand to the right hand? One nanosecond. Let's try this method to see if we make the group more efficient and do it quicker." You can also suggest other improvements, such as doing it with your eyes closed, etc.

What can children learn from this game? They discover that a group's result matches the individual result; i.e., when each child does their best without worrying about what others are doing, they get the best results. So the aim of this game is to find tools that make their lives much more efficient and productive.

✓ **The ball game**

Start with a question: "How fast can we pass this ball round the group, with everyone touching it?"

Continue with a thought. For example: "We've managed it in 23 seconds. How could we improve this result?". Suggest that someone goes into the middle and that everyone else goes at the same time to touch the ball. This game shows that being coordinated brings results; and coordinating means making proposals and reaching agreements.

Then finish with a suggestion: "Why don't we agree to ask permission to speak, if you want to make a suggestion? To speak, we put our hand up and the others listen without interrupting us. Is that a good idea?"

These games are meant for children aged five or more because they involve developing certain skills, such as reaching agreements, reflecting, bringing in creativity or cooperating, also the capacity for self-discipline, making commitments to a group, respecting the right to speak, and weighing up each suggestion: i.e., the ability to accept that we can experiment without invalidating.

The idea is that both children and adults learn to engage with life; that we accept the commitment to respect others for the purpose of peaceful coexistence; and to do what we are supposed to do, not what we should not.

What can be learnt from the previous game? Not to override others; to listen to others; to build agreements; to cooperate; to negotiate using creativity; to make commitments; to accept others and results; to have a presence and take best advantage of what is happening in our lives; as well as a sense of belonging to a group; to feel part of a whole, not excluded.

Let your imagination go wild and think the way children think. The word *impossible* does not exist in a child's mind. It is best to remove it from your own personal vocabulary and replace it with: "I don't know how to do this yet", "I still lack training" or "I don't have the information yet, but I'll try to get it."

Limiting beliefs take root in our mind when we say: "I can't; it's impossible; I'm not capable of this; that's not for me; this is absurd." If we accept the answer "this can't be done", our creativity is blocked. Actually, we stopped being children when we started thinking that we could not do something: that we could not fly; we could not dream; we could not imagine things; or that we had to do something as an obligation. We do not abandon childhood when our bodies grow but when our minds are blocked; so we can go back to being children with a large body and a free mind if we make the decision to do so.

In order to expand our consciousness, we need to recover the ability to dream, imagine, visualize, project our minds and our thinking towards anywhere in the Universe to tune in to the information that is beyond the five physical senses, as we did in childhood. To be excellent educators and parents we need to regain the skills that bond us with our growing children.

Our culture generally encourages activities which preferably develop the left hemisphere of the brain (the analytical and rational part), leaving the right hemisphere in the background. However, it would be better to develop the two hemispheres equally, which is why we need to do exercises with both hands and legs in a balanced way. This way our ability to understand will be greater, when we combine our analytical abilities with our perceptive ones.

✓ **The Masters' Game**

This game consists of learning to reflect: this is the teaching method that the Masters use instead of punishment. Four simple questions can encourage reflection:

- ✓ *How did you get that result?*
- ✓ *What do you feel about it?*
- ✓ *What did you learn?*
- ✓ *What would you do next time? How would repeat it? Or, what would you do to avoid it?*

Teachers aim to transmit information to their students, while Masters want their disciples to find out the information for themselves. When we are given the information, the mind *understands*, but when we have to search for it, the mind *comprehends*. In general, the Masters' game is a *non-conclusive dialogue*, because the disciple has to reach a conclusion by himself, so he needs to mentally build up the information to understand or verify it.

Chapter 4. Mission and destiny: sweet and bitter

As they develop, children have a huge challenge ahead of them: they are somewhere that is new to them, with unknown customs, and have to fulfill a mission of love, learning what is needed in that place and about its people in order to adapt. Throughout their lives they will need to accept the situation that they are to experience and make a commitment to fulfill their mission and live out their destiny because, if they do not, they will always feel trapped and obligated. That is why adults need to help them grow and find their mission, while supporting them so that they can achieve it. Yet being careful not to make them feel unimportant or clashing with them, as so often happens.

Love is the *mission* we bring to life (its sweet part), so educators must allow it to develop in children. To do so, they must support their children, or pupils; play with them and help them learn to think without indoctrination.

Meanwhile, *fate* leads us to accept, and has to do with a kind of *discipline*, so it seems rather bitter, although it is a discipline which is not imposed —since nothing imposed produces good results. As we need to adapt to the environment, we must learn to respect others, as well as regulations, places and different customs. But how do we teach children to behave responsibly and respectfully towards the environment? The only way is through exercises, examples and verification.

The attitude of loving life or rejecting it develops largely in the first five years of life, depending on the information received at this stage. They only live these years once, so we need to help them wisely to make the most of this period. We often assume that knowledge and enlightenment, as well as obeying rules and acceptance of social systems, are so important that they must be learnt from birth. Yet we forget that throughout our lives we can acquire intellectual knowledge, learn social behavior or to obey the rules —but those first five years will be crucial in developing the **attitude of loving life**.

After those five years, the mind learns much more slowly. During childhood, the mind works 40 times faster than in later years; multiply those five years by 40 and we get 200 years. Do we really want to waste them by teaching children, from the age of two, about discipline, guidelines and how to obey rules? Wasting this potential dramatically increases the likelihood of internal conflicts, so it is worth rethinking this issue.

Having said this, how do we think children should be brought up? By respecting these first five years of life, filling our children with love, ignoring the pace set by the Ministry of Education, because if children follow a well-directed,

educational game-based method, by the age of twelve they could be regarded as having completed their entire primary and middle-school education. Children usually dislike studying because they are forced to and are taken out of their natural environment, which is playing. The best approach is to use playing, and develop education within children's own environment to avoid mental limitations which involve enveloping them in an adult environment of discipline so early on.

We really want children to learn to be happy; to take advantage of any circumstance of life, no matter how different, and to be able to see every situation as a learning opportunity rather than a problem.

The goal is to show children how to enjoy their life experience to the full, *making the most of it with the least possible suffering*. This involves watching children and noting which situations seem to be destiny-related (difficulty or fear or apathy, or unpleasant moments) and which ones point to their mission (ease, calm, enthusiasm or pleasure).

Identifying what the marks of life and destiny can show helps children to understand and accept life more easily. It also contributes greatly to improving social, family and personal harmony, enabling us to better understand each other. Lastly, it makes it easier to help children to grow up and support adults in overcoming any limitations that prevent them from expressing the love that they possess naturally.

4.1 Observation guide for parents and teachers

Make a chart with two columns, and use one column to write down *destiny*-related situations and, in the second, *mission*-related situations.

- ✓ *Situations which reveal our **destiny***: these situations constantly arise from life itself, and are apparently not related to learned, culture-bound limitations. For example: bad dreams, things that children try to avoid for no logical reason; situations they cannot stand or do not accept, any particular circumstance that they find too difficult or that makes them cry too much, or physical or hereditary problems.

Helping a child to accept their destiny requires firmness.

- ✓ *Situations which reveal our **mission***: these are the ones where children enjoy themselves doing what they like most; that they talk about most enthusiastically; their pleasant, repetitive dreams; what they do easily

and are distracted with, losing track of time; or certain nice things that life brings them with without having looked for them.

Helping our children in their mission requires flexibility.

There are some **limitations and learned mental blocks**, associated with destiny, which are repeated during childhood and should be identified:

- ✓ *Difficulty in accepting life:* they always blame others for their difficulties; they do not take responsibility for any task; they do nothing without being told to; they are untidy; they always say something "has to be done" rather than doing it themselves; they apologize with: "It wasn't me; I didn't know; it's not my turn; I wasn't told; I'm busy"; they rarely admit their mistakes or accept other ideas; they seem lazy and apathetic; they are often silent and sad; they fear criticism and losing people or things.
- ✓ *Difficulty in adapting to the environment:* disobedience expressed in the way they dress or wear their hair, the music they listen to; how they eat; not meeting time limits or using inappropriate language and manners; continually disobeying rules and the law; they disagree with everyone and argue a lot; they criticize and constantly complain about their circumstances, the environment and people; they easily become fanatic; they behave aggressively in different ways and get angry easily; in certain situations they seem shy, afraid of being in public and harming their own image; they are domineering, possessive and always want to get their own way; they do not lend or share their things; they are afraid of the dark, certain animals and certain situations; they tend to be self-destructive and suffer from depression; they seem to feel insecure and inferior; they are prone to unhealthy habits or gambling as a way of escaping from life and its responsibilities; they are introverted or do not talk much.

These and many other limitations are to be seen in children, teenagers and adults alike, and are mostly the result of a poor upbringing.

Most destiny-related situations can be overcome if people are given the right guidance and information. Yet the older someone gets, the harder it becomes to give them what they need. In many cases, learned limitations respond favorably to the *therapy of love*.

It is important to listen to children calmly, without being scared by what they say, even if they seem to us to be imagined fantasies. The idea is to fill in the two columns, little by little, in order to help our child when they reach adolescence, to achieve a balance between the twelve qualities.

4.2 Achieving balance

The ideal thing in a human being's life is to strike a *balance between destiny and mission*, because performing the mission gives us the energy and strength needed to tackle our destiny successfully. The suffering that life's hardships cause us stems from learned limitations, which are also part of our destiny; it is precisely overcoming these limitations that enables us to be reborn and connect with our inner child and our consciousness, thus overcoming suffering.

Balance is therefore taking advantage of destiny and assessing the mission.

By **using destiny to the full** we enter life's game and develop:

- ✓ The ability to accept everything that happens in the Universe.
- ✓ The ability to assess everything we have — a body, faculties, material goods, etc.
- ✓ The ability to establish satisfactory relationships with all beings in the Universe.
- ✓ The ability to be happy in ourselves without relying on anything or anyone else.

In **assessing the mission** we achieve:

- ✓ Inner peace because our internal energy increases.
- ✓ Enthusiasm to face our destiny.
- ✓ Ability to serve others, which is another tool of success.
- ✓ Wisdom to take advantage of what we have.

We need to play life's game to achieve this balance. The twelve qualities of balance are both complete opposites and complement one another, but are also necessary in a good education process.

Table 6. The twelve qualities of balance

1. Being quiet when we have to	... and talking when we should
2. Being able to obey	... and being able to lead
3. Being able to be humble	... and being able to value oneself
4. Being cautious	... and having decision-making ability
5. Accepting	... and discerning
6. Being able to be cautious	... and being able to have courage
7. Being prepared not to own anything	... and to have everything
8. Being able to detach oneself	... and being able to be faithful
9. Not being frightened of death	... and appreciating life
10. Knowing how to go unnoticed	... and knowing how to be noticed
11. Being open to new information	... and being impermeable to what is harmful
12. Having an understanding of life	... and being firm about meeting its commitments

To give just one example, in the field of quality control there is something called *analysis paralysis*, which means that too much control and *caution* can bring us to a standstill. Yet too much *courage* can lead us to situations that we cannot handle. So we need to strike a balance between the two.

Achieving this balance also involves removing the concepts of "good" and "bad" from our minds, because things are not good or bad, but just different situations. This concept is a mental limitation which forms part of destiny, something to be overcome.

One way of overcoming limitations is using the *mirror effect*, according to which the faults we see in others show us exactly our own limitations in accepting anything that clashes with our own beliefs. This limitation shows the mental rigidity of our own ego and destiny.

4.3 Destiny: what we need to learn

What is our weakest point? There is a saying: "A hurt finger hits everything", and this is how to identify it, because it appears in different situations. Our weaknesses are part of destiny and we need to work on them; it is what we call the "unacceptable."

Searching for our own destiny is easier if we answer the following questions, which are for children, adolescents and adults alike.

- ✓ *My worst dream:* Repetitive and very unpleasant dreams mirror our deepest fears and are associated with trauma. Trauma can occur in the womb from the moment of conception, and be etched in the unconscious. Dreams that stem from the unconscious have a lot to do with parental rejection.
- ✓ *What I like least about myself.* Such as my height, or being very fat or very skinny, having a crooked nose, or being too shy. In other words, physical features or aspects of our personality. These complexes reflect our own inability to accept that we are perfect: we need not reject anything of what we are; this does not mean we cannot improve but not because we reject it. If we feel bad about ourselves it is because we do not accept ourselves.

- ✓ *What I find most difficult to learn.* What we find hardest reflects what we reject due to some mental limitation.
- ✓ *What I least like doing:* This is like saying: "I wash the dishes but I don't iron." This reflects our mental limitation in understanding that there are no better or worse jobs, only different ones.
- ✓ *The place I least like:* This reflects the inability to accept a different place for what it is because we are judging it.
- ✓ *My worst ever business deal.* This question is for adults. The answer will help us to discover our ignorance and inability to accept other's destiny. When we fail, this means that we are going against the order of the Universe and doing things that do not form part of our role or that are not up to us; and it highlights our inability to serve better.
- ✓ *My most difficult relationship:* with a teacher, our partner etc. This difficulty reflects our mental limitations.

It is often thought that destiny cannot change but **destiny has two components:**

- ✓ *What can be changed:* such as how we learn what we still need to learn, and doing it at another time or elsewhere. We can also change our decision about learning experiences.
- ✓ *What cannot be changed:* This is what we need to learn, and is part of the Laws of the Universe, which are immutable. Everyone has two choices and we have to opt for one of these: to enjoy ourselves and see what we can learn, or to suffer.

4.4 Mission: what we already know

As the mission is made up of the information we already know, and destiny consists of what we still need to learn, as we gradually learn, our destiny gradually decreases and our mission increases.

The following questions will help us find our mission:

- ✓ *What is the loveliest part about your dreams?*
- ✓ *What do you like most about yourself?*
- ✓ *What do you learn most easily?*

- ✓ *What do you like doing the most?*
- ✓ *What's your favorite place?*
- ✓ *What has been your best situation or business success?*
- ✓ *Which are your best relationships?*

Everything we already know how to do, and therefore what we like and what we enjoy forms part of our mission; that is, we get good results in terms of personal satisfaction. However, life's game confronts us with what we need to learn, not with what we already know. The game consists precisely of the fact that what frightens us most is what we need to experience in order to learn; what we 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 exceptionally great because everything flows wonderfully.

4.5 How to cope with destiny

First, *changing the "I want" for "I need."* It is essential to guide our children to help them cope with their limitations and not run away from these, so that they can learn. If they do not want to do these tasks, that means they are part of their destiny, so we must encourage them to learn to enjoy them and not reject them.

Eliminating the "I want everything I don't have." As long as we want what we do not have and do not value what we already have, we will always be unhappy. Happiness comes from transmuting mission into destiny. 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 in us is reflected in the survival instinct that drives us to fight or flight. We have to give this up as it is no good for building relationships or for bringing up children. We have to give up both physical and verbal aggression, even mental aggression, which is more subtle but hurts us, ourselves.

Trying to ensure that our outside does not affect our inside (spiritual independence). The fact is that our peace, happiness and ability to serve depend only on ourselves. When a child throws a tantrum and gets angry if they do not get something, external events affect their inner peace. They need to learn that

when they do not get something, it is because they do not need it and there is no reason to lose their peace of mind and serenity because of it.

We can get children to accept their destiny by getting them to think it over and provide information about the importance of learning something from every difficult situation. The commitments and benefits table mentioned earlier is very useful.

4.6 What is the mission for?

The mission is the opposite of destiny: it is everything we love, what we call vocation, which fills us with joy and enthusiasm. It is something we can teach and give to others.

The mission serves three purposes:

- ✓ *To manage our internal energy:* by doing things we enjoy, our energy grows immensely.
- ✓ *To express and develop our love:* by showing what we know, we are expressing our love to others. We express to children the best way we know how to do things, what we most like.
- ✓ *To give support and teach others what we already know.*

4.7 Verification game: the elixirs of life

This game involves putting people in several groups. Each group has three glasses: glass No. 1 is empty, No. 2 contains a sweet elixir and No. 3 a bitter one. The purpose of the game is to fill glass No. 1 (which the child is given to drink) and leave glasses 2 and 3 empty. The members of the group have to agree on the best way to fill glass No. 1.

There are many ways of mixing elixirs, and although apparently the result is the same, the experience will be completely different. Think about the right experience for innocent children who are going to come into contact with these "adult" elixirs. They have to be given both, but you have to decide how to, in what proportion, in what order and why. What would the outcome be for the children in each case?

When playing this game, it is easy to see that all the groups find it hard to agree and need to think it over quite a lot, even if everyone wants the best for their children. Yet wanting the best is not enough; you need to know what is best, i.e. you need to have *enough efficient and timely information*.

There are three ways to fill glass No. 1:

- A) First serve the bitter elixir and then the sweet one
- B) First give the sweet one and then the bitter one.
- C) Pour in a mixture of the two.

If you choose option A, children will experience the bitter taste first, so, metaphorically, they will see life as something bitter, albeit with certain moments of sweetness. They will not be able to see what the sweet taste is like alone.

If you choose option B, they will not experience the bitter taste alone, but will experience the sweet taste alone.

If you choose option C, they will not experience total sweetness or total bitterness.

What choice would be the most powerful to love life? Option B, so that they first experience the sweet taste of life and then realize that life also offers us an opportunity to learn what we do not know through bitter destiny.

If you offer them the sweet one first, then they will develop love for life. Thanks to that love when they have to go through difficult experiences, learning experiences, they may think: "Life is still beautiful despite its difficulties." If you do it the other way around, they may reject life, despite the good times, as happens to many adults.

In this example, of course, the sweetness of love does not refer to anything edible, since eating sweets can cause acidosis, weaken the immune system, use up the body's calcium reserves and cause tooth decay, etc., all of which produce pain.

The empty glass represents the child's innocent personality. The two elixirs of life are, firstly, the mission (the sweetness) and secondly, destiny (the bitter elixir). These two elixirs will simultaneously take root in the child's mind over the course of five years; adults will take care of that. Destiny and mission take root in our minds through the system of beliefs, symbolized by filling the vessel. But the system of beliefs has two possibilities: it can be very flexible or very rigid.

What least serves to maintain and improve our relationships with others is being right, as this does not enable us to be flexible.

Mentally flexible people usually build good relationships and create thriving businesses; they adapt to the world and suffer little. Meanwhile, mentally rigid people suffer a great deal in life which, for them, is full of conflict. Those who achieve success in life, in any area: health, relationships or economy, do so because they have managed to become flexible.

4.8 Fear of living or love of life

The fear and insecurity which many people experience in life stems from the ignorance of their own abilities to succeed. Other fear of specific situations is caused by psychological trauma due to inadequate teaching methods.

In general, fear is a major limiting factor in personal satisfaction and success in life. That is why it is so important for parents to learn to guide their children properly to prevent them from feeling insecure and also to enable them to recognize their own abilities to enjoy life.

Teenagers do not know who they are or what kind of information they have in their minds, or what their capabilities are and, naturally, they feel insecure and need to discover their identity and experience their own abilities in life.

Self-acknowledgment, the ability to accept life and values, in order to be able to enjoy it, are ruined by poor teaching methods, i.e. by the use of the *weapons of ignorance: prohibition, imposition, aggression and interference*. Paradoxically, parents who try to avoid their children facing difficulties unwittingly use a method that leads directly to suffering, rebellion, rejection of life and all the conflicts that arise in relationships between parents and children.

Fear of living comes from offering our child the bitter elixir, i.e., prohibiting, imposing, attacking, limiting and overprotecting them. All of this fills children with resentment and fear. The right way is to let everyone develop without overprotecting them or attacking them, simply growing with them and supporting them.

When teenagers are prevented from, or get the wrong guidance about self-discovery through experimenting life, they may fight back, making them more prone to feeling confused and falling into bad habits or negative attitudes. This happens when they do not have their parent's support or enough information to face life successfully.

As teenagers gradually experience life, if they have enough freedom, and support and firmness from their parents, they gradually gain confidence and discover their capabilities. So, they end up getting a taste for the task of living,

and develop a love of life, of themselves and of others. This is the best antidote to bad habits.

People who love life respect their bodies because they know that they are a perfect vehicle for taking advantage of their existence, to serve others and to develop their consciousness. So they will never voluntarily do anything that might harm their health or harbor thoughts of rejecting life. That way they can live a full and entirely satisfactory life.

We can love life when we see problems as learning opportunities.

Children who have a happy childhood, supported by their parents with plenty of affection, examples of love, the right information, clear agreements and loving firmness, will gradually trust in their own ability to manage their own lives and this will lead them to be happy teenagers.

As teenagers, they will get from their parents the understanding, love, support and information they need to enjoy their life experience, without having to turn elsewhere or to strangers for information or acceptance. In turn, parents will get from their children the acceptance, appreciation, admiration and respect which comes from their understanding of love; thus the relationship between parents and children becomes a wonderful experience for the whole family.

A healthy household produces healthy individuals who can form a harmonious society. When, in a household underpinned by the principles of love, children turn 18, family relationships turn into a brotherhood, based on full equality.

Chapter 5. Big mistakes

Misconceptions in the mind lead to big mistakes, which is why a distinction needs to be made between right and wrong associations. The table on the next page may be of help.

Table 7. Wrong vs. right associations

Wrong associations	Right associations
Competing: fighting against others to win	Participating: giving the best of oneself and valuing the result
Winning: defeating our competitors	Valuing: appreciating the result obtained from an action
Losing: being defeated by our competitors	Assessing: learning to recognize the value of all results
Goal: the result we want, whatever the cost	Purpose: doing our best and accepting the result we get
Obligation: behavior imposed by others	Commitment: behavior decided on by ourselves
Standards: laws that others must obey	Agreements: commitments we are ready to accept
Poverty: not having what we need to survive	Humility: ability to be happy with what we have
Possessions: believing that we own something or someone	Wealth: knowing we can always be happy with what we have
Problem: situation of suffering which cannot be remedied	Opportunity: learning the ability to manage and understand
Danger: situations which are a risk for everyone	Situations which require an ability to manage them
Reality: whatever happens on a three-dimensional plane.	Reality: whatever happens in any dimensional plane
Sincerity: saying clearly what we feel for others	Values: expressing only the virtues of others

Wrong associations	Right associations
Tell the truth: telling what happened	Tell the truth: providing information from love
Love: the most beautiful of feelings	Love: understanding that everything has a perfect purpose
Being silly: not putting up resistance to others' aggression	Being placid: deciding to live peacefully with others
Selfishness: thinking of ourselves instead of others	Appreciation: thinking about ourselves provides the resources for serving
Force: ability to impose ones ideas on others.	Power: ability to obtain satisfactory results.
Defense: security system to dissuade the enemy.	Security: ability to live with others peacefully and to respect them.
Principles: ideas associated with doing good	Laws: knowing, obeying and respecting the order of the Universe.
Good: everything we agree with	Action: needed to recognize the existence of the Law
Bad: everything we do not agree with	Action: needed to recognize the existence of the Law
Master: being who teaches us how to do good and avoid evil	Master: being who teaches us to flow with the order of the Universe
God: almighty lord who rewards or punishes	God: the source of everything that exists and happens in the Universe
Drama: situation assessed painfully as injustice	Incident: neutral event which enables us to assess understanding
Tragedy: physical events which produce a great deal of suffering	Event: physical events subject to human interpretation

The terms used to refer to different aspects of existence have to be clearly defined. This will make it easier to re-program our minds with new information which frees us from the limitations arising from our cultural background, rooted in our brain through a language associated with fear, guilt, punishment and reward.

When our language is fully associated with the principles of love, happiness, harmony, peace and respect, and when we achieve a continuous process of relationships and harmonious learning, and we lovingly value every experience we have, we can then re-program our minds and see life as an opportunity to learn to love and be happy in ourselves.

*Using a new language can re-program the mind
to fit the perfect order of the Universe.*

False mental associations are like chains that limit the prisoner and keep him tied to own pain and suffering, restricting his ability to think harmoniously and re-program his mind with information from the truth. Therefore, by replacing the false associations with other truths, a state of mental freedom is achieved. By breaking the chains of false associations, we destroy the chains of our mental prison.

By totally and definitively renouncing all forms of guilt, aggression, revenge and punishment disappear automatically. Thus we no longer pose a danger to others. Only then can we live in a civilization whose foundation is based on freedom, respect and peaceful coexistence.

In this new civilization, people will have the following characteristics: under any circumstances, they will *behave in an increasingly freer way* because they are capable of being happy themselves; they will be *respectful*, because they accept everyone as they are, without trying to change them; they will always be *ready to do what is necessary*, regardless of any situation associated with their personal feelings; they will be *wise* because they are experts in living happily; they are also *helpful* because they always provide the best information —enough efficient and timely information— and they always do everything to the best of their ability.

When someone decides not to suffer or fight and instead give themselves up to peaceful coexistence, when they decide to respect others and serve them, they become *loving beings with a high level of consciousness*.

5.1 False dichotomies

5.1.1 Truth versus falsehood

Usually our definitions of things seldom mirror life's reality, but this is the information we pass onto our children to educate them. What we believe to be truths are merely subjective limitations.

A belief's truth or falseness can be seen in the result we get when handling it: when we act according to false beliefs, we get significantly more unsatisfactory results than if we had handled the belief more wisely.

When someone is steeped in anxiety, fear, suffering and does not accept life, that feeling of depression corresponds to an external result of conflict with others, contention and disagreement with their environment. Such people feel threatened and very frightened, and find it very hard to cope with life. What concepts do they harbor? Truths or beliefs? Undoubtedly, false beliefs, as a *falsehood* is associated with what *does not work either within a person or externally*. Yet if someone manages to find the peace that dwells within them, learning to appreciate *truths*, they will find harmony and manage to be happy within themselves, regardless of their environment. The subsequent external result will be that they build good relationships with others, with the world and with their environment, and instead of feeling frightened will see life as a wonderful opportunity to learn.

Truth is everything that can function correctly, harmoniously and perfectly. If it does not do that, then it is built on false concepts. All our human problems stem from misconceptions of life.

The truth must be verified and must always produce the same result with the same elements. However, it may be that one person holds a truth and another person possesses a different truth. This is because everyone has a part of the truth; an insufficient portion of it. To understand this in a simple way, imagine the map of Spain and turn it into a thousand-pieced jigsaw puzzle. Each person is given one piece, which is different from the others. All represent a truth of the map, but each piece is insufficient on its own to understand the country's structure. This is what happens to the Universe: in the successive developments of the consciousness, we accumulate partial truths, still insufficient to understand the whole structure of the Universe.

By contrast, a belief is what has been learned through one's own personality but which has not yet been verified.

5.1.2 Ugly versus beautiful

There is nothing ugly or beautiful, rather there are different forms. What is ugly or beautiful is in the mind and eye of the beholder and of those who interpret that reality. In order for a person to see love in everything that happens, they have to clear out their constricting concepts.

For instance, if you see your daughter playing with a blue butterfly, your mind interprets this as a very lovely and tender concept, so you convey acceptance and tenderness, which she will associate with the butterfly. But if you see her playing with a cockroach, you shout at her, show your disgust and get rid of the cockroach. So she will associate it with disgust, which links up directly with instinct. Her mind will remember that cockroaches are nasty, ugly and dangerous, while butterflies are lovely and beautiful. Neither of these perceptions is true but this is what adults transmit through their own traumas and false beliefs.

The idea is to learn to control our internal reactions to avoid transmitting our mental limitations. If you see her with a cockroach, ask her: "How does this little insect make you feel?"

When working with information from wisdom, tell children very specific things, such as that each and every living being, without exception, plays an important role in the Universe. We have different functions, and the way we relate to each one may also differ; for example, to a snake or a dog, but that does not mean that the snake is dangerous or that the dog is safe: there are simply different ways of relating to them.

It is very hard to bring up a child without any limitations if, as a parent or teacher, we are full of them. We must try to clear out our limitations or at least not transmit them if we want to educate children.

5.1.3 Dangerous vs. safe

There are no dangerous or safe things, only necessary situations. Is fire dangerous? It is not but if we put our finger into it we burn ourselves. This is simply a reality; the dangerous/safe dichotomy is a concept that is in our mind.

A wise person and who has been properly trained is in no danger anywhere, while an inexperienced person is in danger anywhere. So, what is really dangerous? Ignorance. On the contrary, what can give us safety? Wisdom, training, the ability to face life. All other concepts limit us.

To protect our children, rather than teaching them, we forbid things: instead of showing them how to relate to fire, animals, the environment, the city, everything that exists, we limit them: "Don't go out because it's dangerous, don't

go into the kitchen because you might burn yourself, don't do that because you might fall, don't go there because you might have an accident, don't go up to the roof because if you fall you'll kill yourself", etc. So, what are we transmitting? A huge number of limitations.

Prohibition is also wrong in education, because children will try to do on the quiet everything that is forbidden. There is a joke about a child whose parents always forbid everything. One day he goes to school and the teacher asks: "What's your name?" And he replies: "Until yesterday I thought my name was "No" but now I know that it's Albert".

The idea is to help children to learn to become self-confident. If they fail to do so, life is a disaster because everything seems dangerous; but if they manage to do so, nothing seems dangerous because they will know how to relate to others from their own self-confidence.

For children to gain self-confidence, it is good to say that it takes practice and that they also need to learn and know more about life, but this is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy themselves. Never say that it is dangerous, because it is not. Children will store the information that adults give them, and they can do this positively or negatively, depending on the message they are sent.

If there is something that we have not verified, it is best to tell children clearly: this is what I think but it is not true, so let's experience it and see what happens; what results we get. In this way we show our *mental flexibility*.

5.1.4 Punishment and lies versus accepting results

Punishment is not an effective way of teaching. It only teaches children to lie and become smart to avoid it; they do not learn commitment, responsibility, or respect or accountability for their own lives. A more useful tool than punishment involves teaching children to accept the consequences of their own acts. If, for example, a son does something wrong and gets arrested, his parents can go to see him, and give him support and love, but not get him out of prison.

Lying is not the opposite of the truth: *the opposite of truth is ignorance*. Lying is simply a form of defense against aggression. If you punish children, they will tell lies to avoid being punished again. The same happens if you forbid or impose things: to defend themselves against these forms of aggression, they will learn, as part of the instinct to adapt, to lie, but they will not be developing their understanding, only an ability that could become negative later, and lead to not accepting the consequences of their decisions, which will create a lot of conflicts.

Humans try to adapt to their environment, and if this is aggressive they will seek ways to defend themselves by lying. If someone is already "locked into" lies, they will need to do therapy. Some adults are professional liars: everything they say is lies because they became used to this being their working tool.

5.2 The most common mistakes made with our children

Parents usually make lots of mistakes when bringing up their children and in their relationship with them. This is due to a *lack of adequate information* about the true meaning of upbringing and the lack of tools of love. This is the case because until now there have been no real schools for parents. In addition, we rarely receive examples of love applicable to the process of bringing up children and guidance for them.

Love is not associated with suffering; if there is suffering there is no love. On the contrary, this implies inner peace and harmony. It makes us wish someone happiness, with or without us, and know that everyone has the experiences that correspond to them without suffering for it, but rather supporting them.

The most common mistakes we make in our relationships with our children are the four following:

- ✓ **Prohibition.** As well as the constant control that parents exercise and try to maintain over children. This is not only a cause of disobedience but also limits the development of creativity and a love of life; and makes teenagers feel frustrated and unable to take on board their own life experiences. When we prohibit someone from doing something, it is because we do not want to feel bad about what they are doing, and that is selfishness. Moreover, prohibiting something is precisely what whets the "appetite" for what is forbidden.
- ✓ **Imposition.** Imposition is the second leading cause of defiance besides being one of the major constraints for developing respect and an attitude of love towards others. It makes us reject life and unable to appreciate what we have. When we impose something on someone it is because we do not accept their behavior, and that implies selfishness. Everything that we try to impose will produce defiance, denial, frustration, mental blocks and defensive attitudes which will be difficult to break down later.
- ✓ **Aggression.** This is one of the biggest mistakes in relationships. The effect of attacking people is devastating because it destroys positive feelings and leads to cruelty and violence, producing all kinds of

psychological trauma and mental limitations for the development of peace, happiness and relationships of love. Another effect of aggression is the urge towards self-destruction, which not only involves rejection of life, but also, as a consequence, children develop an unconscious desire to take revenge against their parents and society. As teenagers, they tend to upset everyone else in all kinds of ways, making them suffer and then fall into bad habits, the world of crime, begging and even become suicidal, which bring many people into confrontation and deeply wounds feelings. We attack someone because they do not behave the way we want, and this is another typical aspect of selfishness. Every act of aggression causes trauma, resentment and rancor which somatize and produce conflicts with those they live with.

- ✓ **Interference.** When parents know hardly anything about their children's destiny and mission, they try unconsciously to interfere with that perfect aim, attempting to direct them towards goals, roles, activities or professions that do not match their learning pattern —which would be what children come into the world to learn and teach. Whenever parents or anyone else interferes, teenagers feel confused, frustrated and apathetic, which limits their chances of success in life.

Interference has to do with overprotecting, with not allowing everyone to live out their own experiences; it is misplaced help. We do not want someone to have an experience that might cause them a problem because we do not want to suffer from it ourselves. This is also selfishness.

Any interference means people are unable to survive by themselves; it makes them useless and not accountable for their own lives, and this constitutes a burden to others and a serious problem for society.

We interfere, in short, when we do for others what they can do for themselves, without letting them develop their own skills. The outcome is that the learning experience is lost, preventing them from becoming strengthened, so they will become weak and incapable. This is like putting an animal in a cage and then releasing it into the wild: it would not survive five minutes.

These mistakes are called *the weapons of ignorance* or selfishness; logically, using weapons always creates wars, violence and destruction. The solution is to forget about the weapons of selfishness and instead think about living in peace, and to replace them with the *seven tools of love*.

5.3 Three learning tools to avoid making mistakes

- ✓ *The first tool is **firmness***: not allowing aggression or threat to be successful; if we do, children will become manipulative and use threat, shouting and aggression because they know it works. If it did not work, they would have stopped doing it. If they throw a tantrum, the solution is not to react but rather sit back and watch the child, with an attitude of zero aggression. Explain that they are not going to get anything with hostility, blackmail, threats or tantrums, and that if they want something, they can ask for it through dialogue, commitment and respect. Throughout their tantrum, stay with children and smile at them, because if you leave, they will feel abandoned. What matters is for them to see that you love them but do not get upset, and instead wait until they calm down.

If your teenage child threatens to leave home, say: "Wonderful, the door to go and come back is open. I'm not throwing you out, nor will the door be closed when you come back. If you want the experience of going, you can have it, I won't suffer for it. But if you decide to stay, then we come to an agreement; you decide." That tool is called *firmness* not punishment, and if you finally give in, you will waste all the learning.

- ✓ *The second tool is **help***. This does not mean trying to do something for them, because then they will never learn to develop their own faculties, *but rather doing for others something that they cannot do themselves*. In that case it is appropriate to help.
- ✓ *The third tool is **accepting the results***. Never accept responsibility for the result of another person's decision, whether they are child or an adult. It is better to use the learning tool that replaces punishment: agreement, which is not by imposition but by commitment.

Chapter 6. Love therapies

Love therapies are needed when children or teenagers have been subjected to adult's ignorance; when the weight of their parents' huge mistakes has come down on top of them and they have been attacked with the weapons of selfishness and ignorance.

As soon as teenagers, or anyone else, begin to show signs of confusion, inner conflict, inappropriate behavior and disobedience, and their relationships with others and with life deteriorate or become chaotic, it is clear that they need the therapy of love. Yet if these situations do not occur, they do not need therapy but simply a proper upbringing.

The therapy of love entails using appropriate tools to facilitate internal change and mental release from the constraints that individuals learn from a traumatic upbringing.

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

- ✓ **New information.** Since teenagers' problems stem from how that information is encoded in their archive or system of beliefs, the first part of the therapy is to give them new information to replace the old. If parents do not have this information, it must be found in other people who *do* handle information based on love.

As part of the first information that these teenagers should receive, it is of paramount importance that they know and see for themselves that their parents decided to make a positive change in their behavior towards their children. Teenagers need to be told clearly that the mistakes made were not intentional, but that now their parents intend to use love-based information to improve the relationship with them. This new information will enable them to recognize the proper way of enjoying life. This is to understand the following: "There are better ways to get results. There's no need to protest or fight back or fight, because there are other ways which I've learned, and I'm willing to use them to make our relationship more satisfying."

- ✓ **Non-conclusive dialogue.** Dialogue and communication must always be available in the relationship with teenagers. The *non-conclusive dialogue* technique is a form of communication which offers the answer at the end, the intention being that the teenager reach his or her own conclusions. This technique contributes powerfully to the person taking

responsibility for their own action, without blaming others for their own decisions. It also makes it easier to change their mind set.

Examples of non-conclusive dialogue with rebellious teenagers:

Dialogue n° 1:

1. *I'd like to know the reason why ...*
2. *How much does it matter to you that others respect your tastes?*
3. *How much does it matter 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 nobody imposes anything on you?*
6. *What prevents you from being alone or living somewhere else?*

Dialogue n° 2:

1. *Do you think you have more rights than other people?*
 2. *Do you think you're entitled to impose your tastes on others?*
 3. *What do you need to do to live in peace with others?*
 4. *How could you do everything you want without reaching agreements with others?*
 5. *What would you have to do to be independent?*
 6. *How would you get the money you need to be independent?*
- ✓ **Voluntarily accepted agreements.** Agreements are the right way to define the relationships between parents and children; *voluntarily accepted* is the term used because they cannot be imposed by others but must be accepted by each of us involved in the agreement. The agreements produce satisfaction in relationships and totally replace imposition.
 - ✓ **Freedom of experience.** "Nobody can teach anybody else what an apple tastes like without trying it themselves." This sentence shows clearly the need for direct experience in order to understand life. When parents do not give teenagers freedom to experience life, they delay

their children's emotional, affective and mental maturity, turning them into people who are unable to make commitments. Of course freedom needs to be accompanied by adequate information to facilitate experience and avoid the danger of ignorance.

- ✓ **Valued commitments.** The ability to accept and respect commitments is a clear indicator of someone's maturity. To facilitate the development of the capacity for commitment in adolescents, it is important that parents set values, represented in vested benefits. This way everything adolescents receive is the result of toeing the line and behaving as agreed; and secondly, when they do not receive something or lose something, they are clear that it is not the responsibility of their parents but the consequence of their own actions.

Example from an adult context: if we own a bakery, we take on a commitment to customers. They know that at seven o'clock in the morning we have hot bread and therefore they will come to buy it. But if, unexpectedly, one day we decide not to open the bakery, we are not fulfilling the commitment to them. What is the result? Does something happen or not? The result is that we will lose customers. Whether we complain or not, that is the result of not maintaining our commitment, and this works the same way with adolescents and children.

- ✓ **Loving firmness:** Firmness is a tool of love that completely replaces the destructive weapons of ignorance. It consists of maintaining complete serenity and not giving in to attempts to manipulate us by adolescents who have failed to keep an agreement or commitment previously made.

To be firm we need to:

- ✓ *Know how to reach agreements, making commitments.*
- ✓ *Put aside feelings, using instead the understanding of love as a tool for therapy.*

If *non-conclusive dialogue* does not work in reaching an agreement, we shall adopt a "unilateral decision", informing the other person of it. For example, in the case of the rebellious teenager we can say that they have two options: to reach agreements over living together with their parents and meet certain commitments, or leave home. Do not make the mistake of saying: "If you leave

home, don't come back". Instead we say: "If you decide to leave home you can; the door is open both to leave and come back".

6.1 The example of the teenager who does not want to study

When a teenager rebels and says they do not want to continue studying, we can say: "Your role, which you earn a living by at this point in time, is to study but there are other roles, so you can choose another. If you decide not to study, tell me what role you want to take on, I'll give you several different options for you to choose from:

- ✓ I get rid of the home help and you take care of the ironing, washing, cooking etc.
- ✓ You can beg on the street.
- ✓ You can look for a job.

You don't have to answer now, think it over for a few days and then you can give me your answer."

This is what is called *caring therapy*; there is no need to fight. This way they mature and the problem is over. You should not let yourself be threatened or blackmailed, or close the door on anyone. The therapy is simple: *firmness and love*. Never say: "I'm not going to love you any more, never come back; if you do that you won't see me again." It is best to leave options open and let him decide.

Applying the method of resistance increases the conflict because it damages the relationship and complicates destiny. It is absurd not to accept that others do not change, or that other people are not the way you want them to be; that your children drop out of university, or do not study what you want them to. The resistance method does not work. Just let go, because everyone has a function and a destiny and there is no reason to interfere. Parents do not own their children, and children do not belong to them. Support your children, but without suffering, because when you suffer, you are prone to be manipulated, whereas when you stop suffering, you regain self-control.

Conclusions

- ✓ The real purpose of bringing up a child is not to transmit knowledge but to help develop healthy individuals.
- ✓ To create a new society, with a high level of satisfaction, adults have to learn to offer their children balanced guidance, and base their upbringing on the principles of love.
- ✓ Admitting a mistake does not imply blaming oneself or anyone else.
- ✓ Learning from mistakes is *teaching love*.
- ✓ Punishing mistakes is *teaching horror*.
- ✓ Decisions have to be made, even if they are wrong; indecisiveness blocks the mind, whereas making a decision releases these mental blocks and enables energy to flow.
- ✓ It is essential to accept children as they are and redirect them lovingly.
- ✓ Bringing up children wisely entails getting rid of your own mental limitations or, at least, not passing them on to your children.
- ✓ Supporting your children's destiny requires firmness.
- ✓ Supporting their mission requires flexibility.
- ✓ Being overcautious can stop you making decisions, but never make a rash decision.
- ✓ One of the personality's functions is to experience life.
- ✓ Use all the educational tools: trust, respect, acceptance, accountability, appreciation, calmness, support, understanding, firmness and flexibility.

- ✓ Stop using the weapons of punishment, prohibition, aggression, imposition and interference.
- ✓ The best teacher is learning by example.
- ✓ Seeing problems as learning opportunities makes it easier to love life.
- ✓ Stop blaming and punishing and you stop being dangerous.
- ✓ Information, love and firmness bring miracles in teaching.

We do not need to believe any of all this, but rather practice and verify whether this information works and brings satisfactory results in life.

With this information we have *three alternatives for action*:

1. We can keep it in our library.
2. We can carry it with us and show it to everyone.
3. We can integrate the information within us, so that it becomes how we act. Only in this last case will we obtain satisfactory results.

Training exercises

Do the following to **practice teaching techniques within the family**:

- ✓ Avoid punishment because nobody to blame. There are mistakes and there is learning.
- ✓ When faced with a mistake, use non-conclusive or reflective dialogue and ask these questions:
 - How did you get to this situation?
 - How do you feel about the result?
 - What did you learn from it?
 - What would you do to avoid making that mistake again?
- ✓ Take decisions and encourage your children to take their own.
- ✓ Empower each member of the family to accept their own results.

Exercise to help growth

Watch children and find out what they come to learn and teach the world. First, draw up a two-column chart for each child, and use one column to note down destiny-related situations, i.e., ones they find hard, try to avoid, or that frighten them; and use the other to write down the mission-related situations, i.e., what they find easy, or enjoy, and their dreams for the future. (This exercise is explained in greater detail in Chapter 4).

Mind reprogramming

Everyone does what they know best, even if they are wrong, and if they are, this is also perfect for them to be able to learn

To the extent that you have a clear definition of what certain philosophical terms or words mean, you will be programming your mind with the principles of harmony, balance and love. Whatever you *think* is recorded in your mind and maintains the same structure; but what you actually *say* is stronger still because when you speak, you think first and then express it, so verbal expression reprograms the mind powerfully. Finally, what you *do* also requires you to think

first. So thought, word and deed are constantly reprogramming your mind set, so if you always behave the same way, that structure will remain static; it will not develop; but if you decide to change how you behave, you will also change your thinking and how you communicate. Your mind's structure will immediately start changing towards ever greater wisdom. For that reason, to think wisely, first you need to redefine the characteristics of the terms you use.

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

Each of these subject tries to shed light and show everyone how to learn to manage information through wisdom. Yet the real task at hand is personal and unique, so nobody else can do it for you, and only constant practice on and with yourself will bring successful results. Success will bring release from suffering, a feeling of utter love towards everyone else, and the ability to educate for happiness.