

## The Human Person and an Education to Love

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### The Starting Point

The human person is a being with body and soul, equipped with intellect, will and mind. He has his purpose inside of him and does not need extra justification for his existence. He is not an availability for other persons. „Human dignity is inviolable“ (Art. 1 Basic Constitutional Law of the Federal Republic of Germany). The deepest reason for his dignity is the fact, that man is dignified through God's love.

Body and soul belong to each other. They cannot be separated until death. The spirit permeates the body, and the body is the voice for the soul. However the physical dimension of man also shapes his spiritual dimension. Soul, spirit and body act in union like a composer, his composition and his instrument.

A basic activity of the human person is to act (from Latin 'agere': I am doing something). The 'actus humanus' is what is seen as typical human action. It's got its roots in the spiritual dimension of the person. It assumes the freedom of a person and calls for conclusions, willingness and decisions. It is always directed to a

good. This action forms the morality of a person. By performing good actions a person becomes good, by doing bad - bad. The (formed and always in need for more formation) conscience always aims at doing good and avoiding evil.

4. One must differentiate between 'agere' and another basic activity of humans which is occurrence (pati). The „occurrence“ is rooted in the physical dimension of man. The person experiences himself as passive. He is unable or very limited in how he can influence the occurrence/situation. Of course there is also unconscious occurrences (i.e. breathing, heart beat,...), but there are also occurrences that reach ones conscience and call for action (i.e. the different appetites, temperaments,...). The mood, the emotions of a person supply a bridge between the physical and the spiritual dimension of a human. It is hardly controllable.

5. The physical and spiritual dimension of man are not in harmony. The forces of the body need to be incorporated into the whole person. Only then will one be able to live self-sufficient. This integration needs to be learned. It demands a lot of will power. However through continued practice of this integrated action, it becomes something natural. Then we can call it a virtue.

6. A person is an end in himself. But he is not self-sufficient. A person is always oriented towards another 'you'. One is able to enter into a real relationship with another person. I and you turn into a 'we'. A 'we', a community begins whenever different people aim for, and work together for the good.

Every person has the same (God given) dignity. Because of that the only valid attitude towards another person can be one of saying 'yes' for their own sake. Without the mutual yes it is impossible to establish a community. This yes to another person for their own sake is love. The biggest human desire is to find love and give love. Only the one who finds love, also finds happiness.

### **The goal**

Love goes away from I to you. It is more than a feeling. It is about willing the good of the other and ultimately leads to self-gift. The more a person gives of himself the more he will find the fulfillment of their inner longing for love and happiness.

Whoever gives himself, will receive. Man is able to find his fulfillment through self-gift. To realize this connection of giving and receiving and to incorporate this more and more into ones life should be the educational goal number one.

For an education to love one needs to communicate knowledge about the human person, i.e. their constitution, meaning and goal. Those who know the general context and know the goal, which is love, will find it easier to follow the hard path there.

The focus of this education is practice and experience not theory. Truth does not only want to be discovered it also wants to be lived out. Love needs to be practiced.

4. The way of love is not free from temptations and illusions.  
„There is basically no bigger problem for the education to love as the overcoming of the different forms of egoism.“ (Karol Wojtyła/ St. John Paul II)

5. Love that overcomes egoism turns into faithfulness. Faithfulness stays true to the „You“ even if the mighty „I“ tries to claim its rights. This is also very important to practice for an education of love.

6. Self-gift is the highest form of love and gives the foundation for two different forms of life: marriage and celibacy. Both ways will lead man to their fulfillment. The education to love also means to encourage and to enable one to come to a decision about one of those two forms of living.

7. The self-gift of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, to redeem humanity through cross and resurrection is the very core of our Christian Faith. Because of his self-gift we were adopted Children of God. Since we are blessed by his boundless love, we are also enabled through Christ to love one another. On the basis of this faith we learn through the education to love to let Christ's love work through us.

### **III. The way**

#### **I. Impart knowledge**

The skills and the relations of body and soul, the knowledge of sense and goal of the forces of body and soul help to value them.

### **Being an example of lived out love**

ive is not realized through words but deeds. Here the old saying  
unts as well: arguments are persuading, role models electrify.  
ne way parents treat each other forms the way children treat one  
rother within the family. Essential conditions and elements of  
ve are learned this way: Attention, helpfulness, interest,  
;straining oneself, standing up for each other, taking the  
itiative, being able to give in,...

### **The one who gives receives**

ne biggest obstacle on the way to love is the egoism and illusion,  
hat we may find happiness when we satisfy our ego. It is  
portant to enable and to support the experiences of children  
nd adolescents in learning that those who give also receive.

### **Fighting pays**

is part of the reality of life that it is hard to overcome our own  
go. To see these efforts as „fights“ which lead us to our goal  
elps us not to avoid them.

### **Reversion is training to love**

the struggle to love there can be setbacks again and again and  
ie momentary illusion of egoism seeming to win. Turning back  
nd starting over is training and preparing the way to move from  
re I to you. To ask for forgiveness and to forgive are necessary  
eps on the way to love.

### **Courage to set boundaries**

dolescents want to test their strengths and they have to be able  
o do that. To set moderate boundaries helps them to respect

boundaries even of their own ego and will. Through this they also  
learn to move from I to you.

### **7. Security of a Child of God**

He who knows everyday that he is loved and cared for as God's  
child. Who lives everyday turning back, asking for forgiveness and  
God's mercy is able to find the way of true fulfillment and true self-  
gift more easily.

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