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The Labyrinthine Road of Life

Throughout our lives, we human beings have sought to understand our origins, the reason for our existence, the meaning of our lives; but, above all, what has caused us great confusion is the experience of being able to distinguish between anxiety/discontent, evil, and displeasure. Life is a road of pleasant and unpleasant experiences, decisions that lead us to results like love, peace, harmony, balance, and others that inevitably lead to the bitter flavor of anxiety or discontent.

For a psychoanalyst to exist, there first has to be a patient. The analyst himself must experience the journey of becoming a patient in his own story. Patient is not synonymous with someone who is ill. A patient is the person who is in search of his own peace. The exercise of an analytical experience is the encounter of two human beings who meet to find peace for the one who situates him/herself as a patient. The analyst has two functions: speaking to find the question that will spark the unfolding of the

unconscious, and silence, which will allow it to be the patient who, through the word, will find the cure. Cure of what? Of the adversity implied in being alive. Emotional life cannot be controlled. Emotional life is lived, experienced.

Psychoanalysis is an experience of life in which the result is that one of the participants has the opportunity to analyze him- or herself and understand him/herself. However, it does not free us from pain. Understanding life is not avoiding it. Understanding humanity does not free us from the impact of coinciding. If we stop a moment to identify all our options for being, we can make a journey within and begin to experience the web of existence.

The origin of discontent is situated in the four interweaving fundamental relationships at their two poles: positive and negative. How we relate to love, to religion, to our capacity for creation, and to our capacity to care for our bodies to ensure our survival. The negative pole, such as hatred, rage, selfishness, and rancor, prevent us from loving others, loving life, and, above all, loving ourselves.

If religion gave us a connection to our divine essence, seeing ourselves as part of the universe, the essence of a god, divine beings worthy of dignity and love that we must

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care for and bless everything we are and everything that surrounds us, the reality is that it stamps us with the mark of evil. We feel that we are imperfect beings, dirty, evil. That bad relationship with our spiritual essence leaves us defenseless in a world that seems more hell than paradise.

Creativity is the source that allows us to generate flexibility, creating possibilities when faced with a crisis or adversity. But when we cannot connect to that ability, the only thing left to us is paralysis, rigidity; and that rigidity can break us or uproot us completely when the storm hits: it goes right through us or blasts us apart.

When we haven't developed the awareness of what it means to take care of our bodies as they are, the housing for our souls due to a paradoxical situation; when we are suffering or feeling upset by anxiety or mourning, instead of caring for our bodies from the outside in, we often neglect and destroy them. And that is when insomnia appears. Hunger disappears and we activate the compulsion of damaging our bodies by stopping listening to them and consuming what they do not need.

In my clinical experience, psychoanalysis is not a therapy: it is an experience in which the cure happens as an afterthought. I am more and more convinced each day that we lead our lives in accordance with an internal script dictated to a great extent by our family of origin. Our family history becomes a weight that restricts us and from which we must free ourselves to realize ourselves as individuals.

For a civilization to be ruled by an abundance of well-being, it must respect universal laws. All beings are the result of a same original source. Recognizing that unity gives us the opportunity to relate to the external world with dignity. Everything we do, think, say, and feel has consequences and will come back to us or our descendants. Gratitude and generosity are the highest forms of love and are the keys to abundance. Avoiding patricide, fratricide, incest, and pedophilia, and assuming that the feminine is the closest to the source of creation will lead us along the road of blessings. Being blessed is the consequence of speaking well, wishing well, feeling well, acting well, living well. The opposite of a blessing is a curse. It is the spoken expression of an evil desire against one or several persons; a curse contains a sharp desire that the person cursed will experience great evils. A curse is the consequence of speaking badly, feeling badly, wishing badly, acting badly, living badly.

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Family curses, inherited and inscribed in a subject's unconscious, necessarily require approaching art to attract beauty into the place inhabited by horror; witchcraft to fight the internal demons, but, fundamentally, love and psychoanalysis. This implies believing that pain and malignant experiences exist that evoke demons who wounded, hurt great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, and children, that have not yet managed to break the spells that hold together the chains of hell that torment us. This hypothesis implies deepening our search into human evil and identifying those who are elected to withstand it. When the members of an endogamic group are not able to recognize their own hatred, we sometimes need a third party to lend his/her body, his/her soul, and his/her psyche to deposit it and carry it.

Some injuries are transmitted from one generation to another. The bewitched became sorcerers, projecting on their children what had been projected onto them. The objective of this research, in addition to referring to this phenomenon, which is part of the psychic biology that accompanies humanity, is to come up with an explanation and, if possible, find an antidote to break the spell in the form of a curse or of suffering. In this barrier, we find the bitter psychological sediments of our fathers and our mothers, of our grandparents and our great-grandparents. In this phenomenon, the chosen one, the one chosen to carry the curse within the family tree, has the option of identifying himself with what he is cursed with or to dis-identify himself with the past, with the purpose of acceding to a new experience in the present. Every time a person has a problem that seems to be individual, the entire family reacts as belonging and identification. If one member refuses to carry the curse, that rejection changes the structure of the living family and the dead who inhabit the extended family's unconscious. For this reason, the past has the opportunity of moving, even of transforming, in the liberation of a subject who has the opportunity of bringing the antidote, the blessing to himself and all those who wish to cure themselves inside the extended family.

When we understand and analyze without prejudice the history of our ancestors, who we consider guilty of our pain or curses, we gain the ability to forgive. What is more, when we honor them through knowledge and analysis, we are able to dissolve our perception of them and to thank them and love them to —finally— see the “blessing” in each of them. All these factors would allow us to spiritually transform our family mission. Whenever any of us falls, we drag down the whole family, including the little boys and girls as yet unborn. Lastly, the success or failure of a family depends on each of its members. The wings one member has to grow or fly with depend on the roots that nourish them to bless or curse their journey.

To heal an illness, we cannot limit ourselves only to science. The artist’s gaze balances that of a doctor capable of understanding biological problems, but who lacks the techniques needed to detect the sublime values buried in each individual. For that person to heal, it is necessary for the patient to be what he/she really is and to be freed from the identity he/she has acquired: what others have wanted him/her to be. In accordance with what I have observed in the years I have been practicing art and psychoanalysis, all illnesses come from an order we have received in childhood, forcing us to do something we do not want to do and a prohibition that forced us to not be what we really are.

Evil, depression, and fears stem from a lack of awareness; from forgetting beauty; from family tyranny; from the weight of a world full of contradictions and obsolete religions. To heal a patient —that is, to help him/her to be what he/she really is—, he/she must be made aware of the fact that he/she is not an isolated individual, but rather the fruit of at least four generations of forebears. It is impossible to know ourselves if we do not know the material and spiritual legacy of our genealogical tree. However, the structures of the extended family must not be the object of restrictive interpretations that analyze beings as though they were machines. To find the balance between love and hatred, it is necessary to make peace with the family history; being able to renounce our identification with the risk of being excluded in the quest for our peace.

Untangling discontent, displeasure, and being cursed requires a mourning process; achieving it implies having the courage to dare to bear life as it is.

Although they share some similarities, both depression and mourning are terms with different connotations.

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Mourning implies a process of accepting that we are losing or have just lost something or someone very dear to us. Accepting that loss requires taking a difficult and painful path. The journey is neither short nor quick, but we know when it comes to an end when we once again begin to feel like ourselves. That is when we reestablish our identity and are prepared to face and deal with new losses that life may present us with. Having processed mourning presupposes that the memory of what is lost no longer makes us ill. It allows us to inhabit our psychic memory bearing what we have lost, with the entire gamut of feelings: from joy and love to nostalgia. This memory becomes a refuge and a consolation throughout our lives. The journey along the road of mourning is not made in the company of others. It is solitary. It forces us to suffer the cold of sadness and loneliness, the thirst for courage and for anger, the uncertainty of fear and of loneliness. Nevertheless, that journey always leads us to the goal of reaching those havens that are processing our mourning. The pain created is always proportional to the love of what we lost. If we love a great deal, the pain will be great. But that is precisely what life is all about: living it, experiencing it, daring to live it and retain the experience that is the only thing we will take with us the day we leave it. Mourning is not an illness; mourning is part of living. Everything we love is destined to end with our experience of finite time, but it gives us the subtle impression that life is sometimes only a great perishable dream. And, like all dreams, it deserves to be dreamed.

Untangling discontent is an act of liberation that requires all our compassion, all our strength, and all our respect. It consists of reconnecting all the bridges that have been broken. It would seem to involve recovering innocence lost, but with the experience acquired to be able to decide to say “no” when discontent approaches and to become aware of the dignity within ourselves. Our destiny is to be free to be who we are, to feel what we feel, and to live our lives in blessedness. ■■■