

Youth and Personality Formation – The World Belongs to the Strength of the Young and to the Wisdom of the Elderly (A Point of View of the Communicologist)

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ABSTRACT

It is known from the pedagogic, didactic and experience coordinates that a man doesn't become better by using words but by his actions. They are matchless examples for the self-apprehension process and the perception of the action itself as well as the only worthy and accurate offer for the assessment of the range and the significance of the achieved result. From the earliest stage of their life, from the childhood and then later on in different stages of their development and growth, the human being as a social being has a double need: to feel himself in the range of his »I« and to feel himself as a member of a group, a family and of the society in general. Satisfying the sense and the level of those needs doubtlessly depends on the examples given by the life itself and the circumstances of the living within the family, the school and finally the society, that is, the surroundings where the individual is affirming himself by his individual creative capability and skills with which he realizes himself as a subject on its own as well as within the social group he lives and works in. The conditions of the life and work of the elderly are necessary for this important and precious task in the development of a young man so that the applications of their experiences could ensure reliable guidelines for the harmony and success of the life and work of the young. On this bridge of generations the experience of the old is affirmed along with the need for its aimed, creative and fruitful offer to the young in the dynamic process of their development to the maturity and creativity.

Key words: youth and personality formation, communicology

When the young sing, dance, laugh, work or love, when they are astonished or amazed by something, they reveal themselves and point to a possibility of a fuller and happier life.

The young people love to be noticed and understood, they want the others to hear what they think and wish. In a crowd the individual feels pushed back and sometimes almost lost.

The fear to be absorbed by the crowd is acutely felt by the young. In the course of getting aware of their personality they need the conditions to be created for a reasonable answer to the questions: *who* are they and *what* are they?

Youth – that exciting, crucial and uncertain stage in human development and personality formation – needs time and space for freedom and opportunities for a bold testing of its abilities so as to acquire the sense of responsibility, of faith in itself and in the world.

Within the framework created by the adults, the young find themselves in a system of institutions, which are coordinates of their movement and development.

In such imposed conditions the young show two distinct needs: to feel and preserve their individuality and, at the same time, to adequately belong to the society, to the community.

This is a double task that determines a young person in all stages of life: to become a member of the society, to successfully weave oneself into the community and, simultaneously, to discover in oneself (and to create) one's own peculiar personality.

That duality of endeavor, individualistic and societal, can result in harmony contributing to the meaningfulness and drive in life directions. If such double needs and tendencies are not in balance, problems, difficulties and hindrances occur in the relationship between the individual and the society.

Personality development, maturing and growth in contemporary circumstances are faced with considerable tensions in the relations between the individual and the society.

That cognition may indicate that in adult life there are factors that make difficult the creation of conditions for the maturing of the young and their inclusion into the world and the society without a certain amount of stress.

The adults are, no less than their children, faced with identity issue, which strongly demands a solution.

The adults also wonder who they are, if their life corresponds to their desires, what they might become, where they are supposed to direct their time, their energy, their knowledge and experience, how they can love and who they really are in the light of accumulated cognitions.

All those questions are most frequently based on examples of persons which did not succeed in bringing into mature age a creative dynamism, a vitality and direction along with a sense of meaningfulness of life.

Personality is not a static notion, it is a dynamic process implying body hormones in a young human being, the changes going at the somatic level and in family life (as a starting ambiance which gradually contributes to further socialization), in view of life direction choice based on self-confidence and love for others. It includes delving into oneself (the question: »Who am I?«), into one's past (the question: »What are the habits and customs of the environment I come from?«), the future (the question: »What are my chances and prospects?«).

Valid answers to those (almost crucial) questions contribute to establishing and developing personal balance, self-discipline and freedom, a sense of societal value, and consequently of resistance to all forms of negativity within themselves and the environment we live in.

In communities in which there is no sense of social order, individuals strive to attain personal power, even by force, which creates a basis for crime, violence (as an »art pour l'art« phenomenon) and a process of deterioration of work conditions often leading even to murder.

We ought to believe that the tense relations existing both at individual as well as societal level will engender processes breeding individuals which will dedicate their energy and their abilities to the improvement of social goals and simultaneously preserve their sense for creative work and freedom which will facilitate critical observation for the sake of the progress of a society caring for education and successful growth. The responsibilities and the meaning of youth ought to be observed in that light.

Despite the fact that youth is an age of rapid personality growth, the forming of a person does neither start nor end in that period.

The way a young person will cope with changes caused by youth, the sort of personality and character that will be formed, depend on the earlier stages of his/her life cycle.

Certain notions concerning our parents – whether they can be fully trusted, and whether they can provide a strong support in case of youth ramblings – are acquired in the earliest childhood. Are they coherent in their attitude irrespective of the amount of love; are they firm, optimistic or maybe skeptical? Since the days of childhood and early youth, with the first steps and acquisition of first habits, when reading, writing and much more is learnt, the process of acquiring notions takes place with the aim of establishing correct connections and judgments.

The cognitions concerning the environment, the rules of behavior and the engrained habits are acquired, and thus the level of social organization becomes the basis of an early awareness of the existence of authorities to be respected, leading to the discrimination between the values that are and that are not acceptable.

These experiences of early age create coordinates for favorable fostering of properties gradually growing into virtues, such as independence, resourcefulness and work habits which are possible bases for self-confidence and a feeling of personal dignity. That is particularly important because its existence suppresses to some degree the occurrence of distrust, shyness, suspicion and inferiority complex, which are all together a threat to the harmonious growth of a young person.

That is the reason why it is important to notice that many actions of the young reflect similar actions of the older members of their families.

The young people try to turn the passive experience of their growing phase into active experience in a later stage of their development.

The extended time-span between childhood and maturity makes room for the young age with all its difficulties.

The young have a lot of desires for the realization of which they have to wait for a long time.

During that time they may fall into all sorts of traps, all kinds of troubles. Some of those traps are amusing and innocuous; others may be serious and damaging.

That is often emphasized by the mistakes, even a whole range of them, committed by some older people from their immediate surroundings, most frequently their parents. The parents are often irresolute in their attitude, ranging from strict to permissive, from too close to the children to too authoritarian.

Such indecisive attitude of the parents affects the young, which are with one side of their being within the family or the foster-family circle, while with the other side they are always outside that circle. When the young reach a certain economic independence, when they are no longer part of the family and the household, it still does not mean that they are completely mature; consequently, every time a young person falls into trouble, it becomes a problem of the entire family.

People are often judged by what they do. Many offenders have become what they are only after they have realized that they are considered as such.

In an ambiance where relationships are marked by tactfulness, patience and trust of the adults, the abilities of the young thrive.

When the young are denied trust and patience from the adults, they draw into themselves and find it harder to develop their abilities.

In case there is no consistence in the relationship between the adults and the young, the latter may find themselves in a »space of illusions« about some sort of personal power which, in the long run, may result in lack of confidence and in fear.

The awareness of time being an important life factor and of their being only a part of the life cycle (i.e. that they are meant to grow up, to live maturely and harmoniously and finally to take a descending step until the moment their »lease of life« has expired) is only gradually developed in the young.

Time is an increasingly important life factor and therefore the attitude towards it changes. The academic year seems endless, and the month between two haircuts passes in »a jiffy«. The time up to maturity has a slow pace, while in old age it is hectic.

Although time is, to a certain degree, confusing for the young, the threat of a trap arises only after the time factor has become for some reason – problematic for the young. Quite a few young people become depressed (due to the wrong, »unrelativised«, concept of time) or else they speed up their pace due to the concept that life is too short; therefore they sometimes decide on the life-direction too early, opting for the circumstances they are not yet mature for. The time problem is best solved by choosing meaningful objectives to strive for (within the limits of personal abilities, of course).

What are meaningful objectives and what is their usefulness both for the individual and the society? It is a

many-layered, complex issue which always implies a new intrigue for the individual, for the family and for the community. This road is often hard (especially for those who are following a straight line) because of the difficulties in materializing the intended goal which implies keeping the publicly proclaimed moral norms, values and concepts.

Regardless of hesitations and even conflicts in the temptations of advancing and growing to maturity on this path of life, every generation is capable of emerging from the troubled waters of youth with a genuine respect and affection for the fellow-man. The exciting opportunities of the youth can open new worlds for the young; as for the elderly, they can awaken a new interest in the world they live in.

When the young people get involved into the movements for non-violent reforms, when they conclude that ideas can be changed without conflicts, in a peaceful, honorable and pleasant way, they will start helping an increasing number of contemporary people and peoples, and pointing to alternatives to the ideas of loneliness and hopelessness encountered in the grayness of human crowds.

Young people have to direct their enormous energy, to control it, and to consciously participate in hard investigation of the world, deeply involved and consistent in fulfilling their worthy obligations, loyal to themselves and to the others.

In this way, gradually but certainly, the young will grasp their individuality and reach a balance between their desires and the needs of the society, which is a must they have to embrace with all their heart. The spirit and the bases of intergenerational relations are an »evergreen«

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MLADI I OBLIKOVANJE OSOBNOSTI – SVIJET PRIPADA SNAZI MLADIH I MUDROSTI STARIJIH (VIDENJE JEDNOG KOMUNIKOLOGA)

SAŽETAK

Iz pedagoških i didaktičkih, iskustvenih koordinata znano je da se čovjek ne popravlja riječima, nego djelom i djelima kao nenadomjestivim primjerima za samospoznaju i percepciju akcije te činom kao jedino vrijednom egzaktom ponudom za mjerenje dometa i značenja ostvarenoga rezultata. Čovjek kao društveno biće od prvih dana po-

stojanja, od djetinjstva i kasnije u etapama razvitka i rasta, ima dvojaku potrebu: osjetiti se u opsegu svojega Ja i osjetiti se članom grupe, od obitelji do društva u širem smislu. Zadovoljavanje smisla i razina tih potreba nedvojbeno ovisi o primjerima koji nastaju životom i uvjetima kretanja u okvirima obitelji, potom školi i napokon u društvu tj. sredini u kojoj se pojedinac eksponira svojim individualnim tvoračkim kapacitetom i znanjima kojima se ostvaruje kao subjekt za sebe i subjekt u društvenoj grupi u kojoj živi i djeluje. Za tu važnu i vrlu zadaću u razvitku mladoga čovjeka, potrebni su uvjeti života i rada starijih, kako bi iskustvene aplikacije starijih osiguravale pouzdane smjernice za sklad i uspjeh života i rada mladih. Na tom mostu generacija stječe afirmaciju iskustvo starijih i potreba za njegovom usmjerenom, kreativnom i plodotvornom ponudom mladima u dinamičnom procesu njihova razvitka do zrelosti i tvorbenosti.