

Personal Problems



What are personal problems?

Evidently, they are those that afflict the personality, that is, the whole range of physical, vital, emotional and mental expressions.

Without underestimating the pain associated with an illness or a more or less permanent physical disorder, emotional circumstances are the most decisive ones, to the point that they are the ones that colour our thoughts and even our physical disposition. It is well-known that on more than one occasion an unpleasant experience can be reflected immediately in the body in one way or another, while blocking out all logical and sensible reasoning in the mind.

Why do we have these personal, basically emotional problems? Because we don't really know our own emotional reactions, and consequently, are unable to resolve the conflictive situations that arise.

For one reason or another, all human beings who live in this world have to face difficulties. This is something logical if we agree with the classical philosophers that life has the role of teaching us how to live. And this is not a play on words. We can learn from the experience and advice of others; we can prepare ourselves to face the difficult circumstances of existence, but nothing is comparable to the living practice of what we have learned. Life teaches us every day, and it is good to recognize life as a teacher rather than as an enemy. As a teacher, it helps us bring into play our best potentials; if we see life as an enemy, it will only be a long path of problems, especially personal problems.

How does life teach us? In a different way to other types of systems. It teaches in a direct manner, attacking where it hurts us most, in order to force us into a necessary reflection.

Everything that is emotional hurts. Although the emotions can sometimes become a reason for joy and happiness, those other emotions of dislike, fear, despair, indecision and helplessness are much more numerous and powerful.

We could make an inexhaustible list of problems, but we will focus on a few that almost all of us know. There are natural problems of survival, the struggle to earn a more or less dignified living that is more or less in line with our vocations and aptitudes, our studies or training. There are also problems related to studies and education, since the opportunities to access them are not always available; or maybe someone dreams about studying in order to make their way in the

world financially, only to discover, years later, that it is not as easy as it seemed at first. There are family-related problems, as there is not always a clear understanding amongst family members. There are also existential problems, since some people worry about destiny, about the inner being, about the universe in which we find ourselves and a thousand “whys” concerning our individual and collective place in the world. And, above all, there are sentimental problems when we don’t have good relationships with others and when no satisfactory love or friendships appear.

I know that we could give many more examples, but any one of them has the potential to paralyze us once the problems appear.

In general, our attitude when facing a problem is to look for easy and quick solutions that do not involve using our own will. We turn to people we know, and ask for help wherever we can... But those who look for the solution outside themselves, and especially those who set out from the principle that life is unjust for causing them such misfortunes, find themselves blocked by problems. Negative emotions take over, ideas become more and more confused, the body starts to reflect anxiety and the problem begins to take on the magnitude of an impassable mountain. All that remains is pain, despair, irritability and aggression towards others for whatever share of blame they might have... In short, an immense pit that becomes deeper and deeper and more and more difficult to get out of.

From below, from this state of psychological breakdown, you can’t see the light. The pain eats into you minute by minute and there is no room for anything other than that obsessive passion. The solutions, then, must logically come from above. To find an answer we have to rise above the problem and the pain.

If we know that the root of the difficulty is on the emotional plane, we have to work with our mental energy to overcome the negative emotional atmosphere. It may seem difficult at first, but everything is difficult until you try it for the first time. You have to make the effort to take a step up, to rise above the clouds and to reach the clarity of your own understanding. It is true that we are not all wise, but we all have a wealth of more or less important experiences that enable us to look for feasible answers to the problem we face. It is necessary to reach into our bag of solutions: some might not work, others can be partly valid, and there will be some that work out very well. By trying and trying, with goodwill and without the anxiety of distorting emotions, you can acquire new experiences that will be useful for future occasions.

You are not just a bundle of emotions and passions; you also have the intelligence to observe yourself “from the outside” and create your own path.