

INTEGRAL EDUCATION FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE VIEWPOINT OF VIKTOR FRANKL *

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Introduction

Viktor Frankl's thought¹ offers scholars of the education of the human being a broad and precise horizon that helps to reflect on the imperative need to understand that each person is a complex world, each human existence includes various spheres that define and determine it and, concomitantly, refer it to the concrete existential plane. Following the teachings of his teacher Max Scheler (1874-1928),² identifies the person with the spiritual dimension. Spirit and person are expressed as synonymous terms: "The center of the spirit, the person, is not an objective or material being but an ordered structure of acts that is continuously self-realizing (essentially determined)" (Scheler, 1964). He also understands with Scheler that human personal existence consists in that self-realization that becomes effective in the course of personal history. For Frankl, the person is not only unity and totality in itself, but the person offers unity and totality: he presents the physical-psychic-spiritual unity and the totality represented by the human creature.

In this article we propose to offer a proposal that favors the understanding and concreteness of what integral education of the human being means, from Frankl's anthropological perspective. To do so, we will analyze the dimensional ontology that includes the study of each of the human dimensions, in order to offer with precision the comprehensive vision offered by the author and its application in the field of integral education. But first, we will refer to the philosophical foundation of Logotherapy in order to frame the author's thought and to understand his approaches in depth.

1 He was born in Vienna on March 26, 1905, into a practicing Jewish family. In 1927 he came into contact with the thought of a philosopher who had a particular influence on his anthropological thinking: Max Scheler, especially with three of his works: *Ethics*, *The Place of Man in the Cosmos* and *On the Eternal in Man*. He received his doctorate in medicine in 1930. From 1942 to 1945 he was interned in four concentration camps, including Auschwitz; most of his relatives (his wife, parents, brother and sister-in-law) did not survive the Nazi holocaust. He was professor of neurology and psychiatry at the University of Vienna. From 1961, Frankl worked as a professor in the United States, at the Universities of Harvard, Stanford, Dallas, Pittsburg and San Diego. Founder of Logotherapy, a Viennese school of psychotherapy. He wrote more than thirty books on logotherapy and existential analysis. Frankl died of heart failure in his hometown on September 2, 1997.

2 German philosopher, author of several works whose central themes revolve around ethics, values and philosophical anthropology, although he also ventured into sociology, philosophy of religion and theology.

Philosophical foundations of Logotherapy

In every theory (pedagogical, psychological, sociological, etc.) there always underlies a vision of the human being and of reality. As Frankl clearly expresses it in his book *Psychoanalysis and existentialism* (2001: 18), logotherapy is based on an “explicit theory of life”. And more precisely, on three intertwined ideas: freedom of the will, freedom of meaning and the meaning of life.

The freedom of the will. From a phenomenological perspective (Husserl),³ Frankl explains that the freedom of the will has been denied in two ways: one, by those who suffer the deception of believing that their will is manipulated and their thoughts controlled by others, and the other, by those who maintain a deterministic stance that denies the possibility of detaching themselves from biological, psychic or cultural impositions.

It goes without saying that the freedom of a finite being such as man is a freedom with limits. Man is not free from conditioning factors, be they biological, psychological or sociological in nature. But man is and remains free to take positions with respect to these conditionings; he always retains the freedom to decide his attitude towards them. Man is free to rise above the level of the somatic and psychic determinants of his existence (2001: 19).

Frankl teaches that the human being can rise above these biological or psychological conditioning factors because he has the capacity to transcend them due to the noetic (spiritual) dimension he possesses.

Man is a being capable of reflecting on himself and even of rejecting himself. He can be his own judge, the judge of his own acts. In short, the specifically human phenomena linked to each other - consciousness and self-consciousness - would not be comprehensible unless we understand man as a being capable of distancing himself from himself, abandoning the plane of the biological and the psychological to move into the space of the noological (Ibidem).

The freedom of meaning. Frankl starts from the affirmation that the person “only actualizes himself insofar as he realizes meaning” (Ibid.: 19-20). This means that self-actualization (self-actualization) is not an end in itself; the human being turns back on himself, takes care of himself, after having mistaken his mission, after having failed in the search for the meaning of life (Ibid.: 24). But (...) in reality no one can fight for his identity in a direct way; we find our identity rather in the measure in which we commit ourselves to something that is beyond us, to a cause greater than ourselves (Ibid.: 25).

The key question in this order of thought is this: Should man only develop his inner potentialities or - as it is also often said - express himself? At the heart of this approach lies the opposition between what we are and what we should be, between existence and essence,

3 Frankl understands phenomenology in this context as the “language of pre-reflective human self-understanding that does not interpret a given phenomenon according to preconceived patterns” (2001: 18).

between being and meaning. This tension is inherent to human beings, indispensable for their harmonious and healthy growth.

Thus we have begun with man's orientation to meaning, that is, with his will to meaning, and we have now arrived at another problem, namely: his confrontation with meaning. The first question refers to what man basically *is*: oriented to meaning; the second refers to what he *must be*, confronted with meaning (Ibid.: 26).

This confrontation is the appropriate path for human development. Meaning is something that is beyond oneself, it is not exhausted in oneself nor is it identified with oneself, it opens itself to the other (to others, to otherness). "In other words, meaning does not have to coincide with being; meaning goes before being. Meaning sets the tone for being. Existence breaks down unless it is lived in terms of transcendence towards something beyond itself" (Ibid.: 27).

As a consequence of this confrontation with meaning, the person matures and his freedom is transformed into responsibility: Man is responsible for the realization of the meaning of his personal life. And he is also responsible before his own conscience, before society, before humanity and before God.

The meaning of life. The human being, seen from the phenomenological point of view, finds meaning in his life not only through what he does, but also through his experiences, "his encounters with what is true, good and beautiful in the world (...) and through his encounters with others" (Ibid.: 29).

Life can become meaningful in three ways: first, by *what we give* to life (in terms of creative works); second, by *what we take* from the world (in terms of our experience of values); and third, by *the approach we take* to a fate we can no longer change (an incurable disease, an inoperable cancer, or the like) (Ibid.: 30).

Therefore, the will to meaning can only manifest itself if meaning itself can be understood as something that is essentially more than the mere self-expression of it (Ibid.: 31).

However, it is important to emphasize that: "The meaning of life must be conceived as the specific meaning of a personal life in a concrete situation. Each man is unique and each human life is singular; no one is replaceable and no life is repeatable" (Ibid.: 31-32).

All this increases the responsibility of every human being. Human life includes questions that the person must answer by making decisions. This does not mean that he will always be able to find or find the right answer for each situation or to find the true meaning of his existence. Each person must assume the risk of making mistakes, because no one is exempt from error.

Human spheres or dimensions: dimensional ontology

In order to understand Frankl's vision of the human being, it is important to understand that besides being a psychiatrist and founder of Logotherapy⁴, Frankl is also a philosopher, a thinker who offers an integral vision of the person whose depth is evident; his approaches are based on daily life, on pain and illness, on the effort that human beings make to find meaning in what they do, on reason and even on faith

In his work *Psychoanalysis and existentialism*, Frankl states that "existential analysis highlights the multiple character of the body-mind-spirit within human existence. It does so in order to be able to appeal to what is called in logotherapy the challenging power of man's spirit" (2001: 139). Therefore, he states that:

Existential analysis attempts to be not only an analysis of the concrete person, that is, an analysis in the ontic sense, but also an analysis in the ontological sense; in other words, it attempts to be an analysis and an explanation, the unfolding of the essence of personal existence, as well as a self-folding of personal existence as it unfolds in life and is made visible by biographies (Ibidem).

It is important to highlight the relationship between human existence and transcendence: "This means that man transcends his environment in order to reach the world; and more than this, he also transcends his being towards an *ought to be*" (Ibid.: 140). This means that the human being rises above the somatic level and the psychic level and enters the noetic or spiritual level. The somatic and psychic levels represent only two dimensions, but the genuine dimension of the human being is the spiritual. From this perspective, Frankl understands that:

Raising spirituality above one's own psychophysical condition could also be called the existential act. By means of this very act man opens himself to the noological dimension of being, entering into it; moreover, he even creates this dimension as his own (Ibid.: 140).

As can be seen, the whole approach to human dimensions is studied by Frankl under this approach called dimensional ontology.

As can be seen, I am speaking of dimensions and not, as is usually and formally done, of strata of being. For, in my opinion, the only way to deal with the psychophysical problem of past epochs in man without disintegrating his totality and his unity seems to be this approach which I have called dimensional ontology. This means that we no longer speak of physical, psychic and spiritual strata, because, the moment we do so, it is understood that these strata can be separated from each other. On the other hand, if we try to understand body, psyche and mind as

⁴ Logotherapy is not only a therapeutic or clinical method, but also a theory about human reality, therefore, it is a philosophical anthropology based on a philosophical worldview, which expresses a lifestyle and denies reductionism (biological, psychological, sociological and spiritualistic). It is also a therapy based on philosophy, that is to say, it is a theory that applies philosophical concepts to the psychotherapeutic task.

so many dimensions of one and the same being, their totality is not destroyed in the least. This dimensional interpretation avoids seeing the integral phenomenon as if it were composed of diverse elements (2001: 141).

Frankl has a unitary philosophical conception of the human being: anthropological unity in ontological multiplicity. To explain it, he exposes in his dimensional ontology a geometrical analogy, based on two laws (1987: 153-154):⁵

- 1^a) *One and the same thing, projected from its dimension to various lower dimensions, dissociates into figures that contradict each other.* With regard to the human being, when we project him on the biological plane we observe somatic phenomena (proper to this plane), and if we do it on the psychological plane we observe psychic phenomena. But this does not contradict the unity of man, it only shows us his diverse modes of being, which are united in a greater dimension, the spiritual, which embraces all the planes of that being.

- 2^a) *Different things (not the same one) projected from their dimension (not in different dimensions, but) to the same lower dimension, give rise to figures (not contradictory among themselves, but) that are polyvalent.* In this case, if we project diverse persons on a single plane, we reduce their being to a single dimension, and if from there we try to explain these beings, we run the risk of reducing them only to that dimension and also of erasing their individuality, since all are thus standardized by our single conception, which is otherwise only one, and only one, way of approaching the question.

This approach concerning the three spheres or human dimensions, exposed throughout his works, connects with Hartmann's writings⁶: the human being is composed of three spheres, the somatic, which involves the physical aspect and the psychophysical interaction; the psychic, which refers to the instinctive and the psychodynamic, and the spiritual, which expresses the value proper to the human: a unity in the totality of the human.

Frankl, moreover, starts from the idea that the human being is not finished, defined in his individual concreteness, but is constantly constructing his personality through the search for meaning.⁷ The human being as a person represents a corporeal-animal-spiritual totality that constitutes an interrelated dynamic unity: "This unity and totality cannot be overemphasized, since we do not in any way affirm that man is composed of body, soul and spirit. Everything is unified; but only the spiritual constitutes and guarantees the "one" (1987: 137).

5 See also *The Will to Meaning*.

6 Cf. *Ontology III. The factory of the real world*.

7 "Man is always oriented and ordered to something that is not himself; whether it is a meaning he has to fulfill or another human being he encounters. In one way or another, the fact of being man always points beyond oneself" (1987: 11).

At the basis of this approach, we find a key explanation: the unity of the human being does not consist of a simple union of three elements (body, soul and spirit), but of a “dialogue” that sustains the spiritual with the bodily and psychic:

(...) man as spirit is always adopting a position before himself as body and soul; man as spirit is always confronting himself as body and soul. What he has before himself is body and soul; what he “is” before body and soul is spirit (1987: 137).

1. Somatic dimension (corporeality)

The human being, Frankl affirms, is conditioned in his way of being primarily by his corporeality, by his bodily existence, an unpredictable and therefore contingent way of being, since it does not depend either on the person himself or on his generators: “Man is conditioned primarily in his corporeality, in his bodily existence. But he is not ‘there’ as if he had fallen from heaven, but was begotten and born: it was his parents, and not he himself, who brought him into corporeal existence” (Ibid.: 137).

Frankl speaks of the way of being, but not of existence. He refers to the “how” of the being of the children, which is clearly unpredictable and contingent. Their bodily mode of being, therefore, is “the fruit of chance”. Although parents, in generating a new creature, lend their chromosomes that determine the psychophysical element, they do not infuse it with the spirit, therefore, they do not create the spiritual person (1987: 140). Parents transmit to their children a corporeal-animal possibility, a psycho-physical power, but not the spiritual freedom proper to each person (Ibid.: 141).

The bodily or somatic dimension is constituted by the basic organic operations. It includes biological operations, physiological processes and vital dispositions analogous to those of any other mammal. This level is constituted by certain organic functions that occur in the individual biologically considered, by the mere fact of being alive, and which are the basic vegetative functions: growth, feeding, generation, etc., directed, therefore, to the conservation and self-development of the individual.

2. Psychic dimension

The psychic dimension is constituted by the sensitive operations. They are those organic functions that are carried out through the senses. These sensitive organic functions are the result of biological operations and adaptation to the environment, and require various psychic operations linked to animal sensitivity; sensitive aspects that refer to the basic tendencies of the individual, manifested especially in the basic instincts of conservation: nutrition and reproduction. At this second level are the functions of the five external senses of the human being, which are sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, and where the sensory synthesis is carried out through the configuration and perceptive synthesis of the internal senses: the common sense, the imagination, the cognitive and memory, following the Aristotelian-Thomistic terminology.

The development of these instinctive-based functions in animals takes place naturally; on the other hand, in human beings they are the object of learning and humanization, although their organic-physiological basis is earlier in its elementary or basic aspects; they require to be and are susceptible of being educated under the influence of intelligence and will. At this level is also situated the exercise of the motor capacities of the individual, who moves to achieve his desires and needs, which allow him to preserve his life, and to avoid what puts his life in danger; we refer to the basic impulses, such as aggressiveness.

The sensations or perceptions that begin with the five external senses are internalized through the internal senses. On this plane we can distinguish aspects of sensibility that are related to the faculties of the sensory-rational type. These aspects are those related to experience, as well as to the attribution and comprehension of meaning of the sensitive events already lived (memory). These memories and experiences that are fixed in the intellect, are related to the impulses of aggressiveness or desire, which in a second moment will be related or fixed in the will.

3. Spiritual dimension

This dimension, also called noetic, is constituted by the inorganic operations. They are those carried out by means of the intelligence and the will. The intelligence searches for the truth of things and of reality; in this search it finds the good as true and presents it to the will as a universal good toward which the will must direct itself. It is here that the volitional act, that is, the decision, is produced. Once the truth is attained and the good is possessed, the human being perfects his nature. The will, as a force or power that determines the human being to be in a certain way, in conformity with his perfection or opposed to it, produces either good habits, called virtues, or bad habits, called vices.

Frankl, in another of his works, *Facing the Existential Void*, points out that the human being is not only biology and psychism (like animals), but fundamentally is spirit, possesses spirituality, which constitutes the specifically human dimension:

The person is not only unity and wholeness in itself, but the person provides unity and wholeness: he presents the physical-psychical-spiritual unity and wholeness represented by the creature "man". This unity and wholeness will only be provided, founded and dispensed by the person. Man is a point of interaction of three levels (or dimensions) of existence, for he is a totality, but within this unity, the spiritual of man is opposed to the physical and the psychic (non-psychic antagonism) (1990b: 112).

The psychophysical unity is opposed to the spiritual dimension: the person, as a spiritual person, is always taking a position before himself as body and soul. The spiritual refers, therefore, to the person's faculty to distance himself from himself, from his own psychic and physical determinations (1991: 113).

It is through this spiritual dimension that human beings can transcend the physical world and consider issues such as freedom, responsibility, values, the meaning of life and work, religiosity, etc.

Man transcends his medium in order to reach the world; and more than this, he also transcends his being into a *must be*. When man does this, he rises above the level of the somatic and the psychic and enters the sphere of the genuinely human. This sphere is constituted by a new dimension, the noetic, the dimension of the spirit (2001: 140).

Human spirituality is widely manifested by our experience, through human capacities that transcend the level of the material dimension:

- a) In the cognitive area: the ability to abstract, to reason, to argue, to know the truth and to enunciate it in a language.
- b) In the volitional sphere: the capacity to will, to freely self-determine, to act in view of an intellectually known end, etc.
- c) In both areas: the capacity for self-reflection, so that we can know our own knowledge (know that we know) and will our own acts of willing (willing to will).

As a consequence of these capacities, our knowledge is open to the whole of reality, without limit (even if particular knowledge is always limited); our will tends towards the absolute good, and is not satisfied with any limited good; and we can discover the meaning of our life, and even freely give it a meaning, projecting the future.

For all these reasons, Frankl will affirm that the spiritual dimension is the most specifically human dimension; it is the “founding” dimension of human reality.⁸

In short, according to Frankl, it is possible to recognize three dimensions in the human being: the biological, the psychosocial and the spiritual; all three make up what the author calls: “three-dimensional ontology”:

Man, as a spirit, exists as a person; but in this sense it can be affirmed that his personal existence is of a triple kind: it is a unitary existence, it is a total existence, and it is an ever new existence. Existence, as unitary or one, is indivisible; as total existence, it is infusible; and as new, it is non-transferable (1987: 143).

8 It is important to clarify, as Frankl does, that this statement does not imply accepting spiritualism as a philosophical doctrine. Frankl explains that just as materialism “reduces reality, being, to the world, to something physical, spiritualism deduces the world from the spiritual” (1987: 97). Frankl's position is clear when speaking of the three dimensions intimately united, inseparable.

The relationship between the three dimensions

The relationship between the three dimensions is absolute: each one presupposes the previous one and, moreover, is made possible and conditioned by it. The spiritual finds in the biological and the psychosocial its instrument of expression, (1987: 131), but it itself is not an epiphenomenon of the biological or the psychological but is a founding dimension of man's reality. However, what is strictly personal is the spiritual dimension. The spiritual is what personalizes the psychosomatic unity: "If man is projected from the spiritual sphere, which naturally corresponds to him, to the plane of the merely psychic or physical, not only one dimension is sacrificed, but precisely the human dimension" (1991:112).

The somatic sphere or dimension is much more than the physical, because it overflows the physical, taking into account that it is immersed in the psychic.

What is the relationship of the somatic dimension to the person? Frankl explains:

The relationship between the person and the somatic organism is an instrumental relationship; the spirit instrumentalizes the psychophysical; the person manages the psychophysical organism, makes it "his own" by making it a tool, *organon*, instrument. The person relates to his organism as the musician does to the "instrument". (1987: 131).

Man "has" body and soul, but "is" spirit. It can also be said that body and soul have him, man, since man is unconditioned only insofar as he is spirit: as man, he does not cease to be conditioned" (1987: 137).

Therefore, "(...) man is, in addition, conditioned in his bodily mode of being (...) We speak of the mode of being, not of existence" (ibid.) The body, besides being conditioning, is also enabling: it is an opening for something to give form to this possibility: "The organism is thus revealed as the material that awaits to be shaped" (ibid.:145).

In the same way that the psychic actualizes and determines the somatic, the spirit individualizes the psycho-physical organism. To this is added that the psychic expresses itself in the personal physical. And the psycho-physical unity is realized by the action of the spirit: "the bodily makes possible the psychic realization of a spiritual demand" (ibid.:136).

Having said this, we can fully understand the following text by Frankl:

It is clear that with each human being that comes into the world something absolutely new acquires reality, since spiritual existence is non-transferable, it is not transmissible from the parents to the child. The only transferable thing is a corporeal-animal possibility, a psycho-physical power; the only reproducible thing is the corporeal-animal field of action, not the spiritual freedom within it; the only reproducible thing is the psycho-physical limits, not what will occupy them. The only reproducible thing is the construction materials, not the architect (ibid.:141).

Frankl's anthropology not only has the merit of incorporating the spiritual dimension to the human being and the practical consequences that derive from it in medical or psychological terms, but also provides a very interesting answer to the ever-present problem of the mind-body duality. Frankl overcomes the apparent contradiction of dualism, proposing an idea of man that is based on what he calls "unity in multiplicity": man is one but has several dimensions that coexist in the unity of the human.

In the face of psychophysical conditioning, the spiritual opens up as the optional in the human being, as that which cannot be, even "in spite of". The spiritual is that space from which one chooses those options that will build one's personal existence. For Frankl, the human being is a permanent *gerund*, he is a "being being", architect of his life from his choices.

Frankl is clear and categorical in defending the non-conditionality of the spirit to the somatic and the psychic. When referring to psychophysical illnesses, he states that:

The psychophysical disease can disturb, but not destroy, the person. What the disease can destroy is the psychophysical organism. This organism constitutes the field of action and the field of expression of the person. The disarrangement of the organism means, consequently, nothing less, but nothing more, than a blockage of the access to the person (Ibid.: 134).

That means, then, that:

The spirit is not totally conditioned by the corporeal; what is manifested in it is not an absolute conditionality, but a margin of freedom: its relative independence or, in Nicolai Hartmann's expression, "autonomy in spite of dependence" (Ibidem).

The conclusion is decisive, because the person possesses and maintains, in the face of psychophysical conditioning factors, his freedom and spirituality.

As a culmination of this section, Frankl himself tells us:

(...) the corporeal is mere possibility. As such, it is open to something that can realize this possibility, since a bodily possibility is nothing but an empty mold arranged on the biological plane, a mold waiting to be filled with something. In this sense not only the somatic is open to the psychic, but also the psychic is open to the spiritual. (...) the corporeal (as mere possibility) needs the psychic (as its realization) and finally the spiritual (as its fullness), this double connection can be stated in the combined conditional and causal principle: if something is "possible" corporeally, it is "realized" psychically because it is a spiritual "necessity" (Ibid.: 136).

Comprehensive vision of the human being

Taking into account what is expressed in dimensional ontology, we can understand Viktor Frankl's fundamental theses on the human being understood as a person, mainly pointed out in two of his main works: *The Will to Meaning* and *The Suffering Man*. And we summarize them as follows:

The person is an individual: the person is something that does not admit partition, it cannot be subdivided, split, because it is a unity:

Man, as a spirit, exists as a person; but in this sense it can be affirmed that his personal existence is of a threefold kind: it is a unitary existence, it is a total existence, and it is an ever new existence. Existence, as unitary or one, is indivisible; as total existence, it is infusible; and as new, it is non-transferable. In strict opposition to its psychophysical facticity, the spiritual-existential person of the human being is an in-dividual, an in-sumable and a *novum* (1987: 143).

The person, therefore, is not only an "individuum", but is also "insummabile": he cannot be split or aggregated because he is not only a unity but also a totality. As such, neither can it be incorporated into inclusive classifications, as they are, in the mass, in the class or in the race: all these units or totalities, which represent hierarchies in which man is encompassed are not personal entities, but at most pseudopersonal. "The person "is neither divisible nor summable." His unity does not allow him divisibility, and his totality does not allow him summability either. This explains why the human being is not only an absolute novelty, but also an absolute "in-dividual" and an absolute "unsumable"" (Ibid.: 142).

Therefore, each person is absolutely a new being: with each person who comes into the world, a new being is inserted into existence.

The person is spiritual: because of its character, the spiritual person is in opposition to the psychophysical organism. The person needs his organism to act and express himself; therefore, as an instrument, he is a means to an end and, as such, has a utilitarian value. The opposite concept to that of utilitarian value is the concept of "dignity". It belongs only to the person, it corresponds to him naturally, independent of any social or vital utility.

The person is existential: man, as a person, is not a factual being but an optional being. He exists according to his own possibility for which or against which he can decide. To be man is above all to be responsible. This also means that he is more than merely free: responsibility includes the what for of human freedom, in favor of what or against what he decides. The person is not determined by his instincts, but oriented toward meaning. He does not aspire to pleasure but to values.

The person is egoic: he does not respond to the "it", he is not under the dictatorship of the "it": the person, the "I" cannot be derived from the "it" by the instinctive, neither dynamically nor genetically. The person is not only unity and totality in itself, but the person provides unity and totality: it presents the physical-psychic-spiritual unity and the totality represented by the creature man. This unity and this totality are constituted, founded and guaranteed only by the person. We know the spiritual person only in coexistence with his psychophysical organism.

The person is dynamic: it is precisely because of his capacity to distance himself and move away from the psychophysical that the spiritual manifests itself. Because the spiritual person is dynamic, we should not hypostasize it, and for this reason we cannot qualify it as a substance, at least not in the ordinary sense. To exist means to get out of oneself and to confront oneself, and the spiritual person does this insofar as he confronts himself as a spiritual person with himself as a psychophysical organism. Only this self-distancing from itself as a psychophysical organism constitutes the spiritual person as such, as spirit. Only when man enters into a dialogue with himself, the spiritual is separated from the psychophysical.⁹

The person is transcendent: he understands himself only from the point of view of transcendence: the human being is such only to the extent that he understands himself from transcendence. The human being is a person only to the extent that transcendence makes him a person; and this call is received in the conscience.

The person is a unit: Frankl conceives the human being as:

Unity in spite of diversity. Because there is anthropological unity in spite of ontological differences, in spite of the differences between the differentiable modalities of being. The characteristic mark of human existence is the coexistence between its anthropological unity and its ontological differences, between the unitary form of being that man has and the differentiable modalities of being, of which it participates (2001: 48-54).

Integral Education

Taking as a reference what has been expressed throughout this work, we can offer a proposal that facilitates and helps to understand the content of integral and integrative education related to the human being.

The human being is becoming and, therefore, is education (...) Man “has” body and soul (biology and society), but “is” spirit. It is the difference between “having” and “being”. From the point of view of education, this difference is important. The educational action cannot be limited to affect the human being in the field of “having” (knowledge, attitudes, habits, skills...), but also and mainly in the “being”, in the construction of the “spirit”, because only by this we are unique and unrepeatable. The human being is “permanent education”, and only death can mean the end of education (Mèlich, 1994: 97).

9 As a consequence of what has been affirmed so far, it is understood that the animal is not a person: because it is not capable of transcending and facing itself. Just as the animal from its environment cannot understand the human world, neither can the human being apprehend the superior world, except through the path of faith.

In addition, for all of the above, we must keep in mind that in educating the human being the three dimensions must be in permanent union; to try to emphasize one of them to the detriment of the others would be a mistake with dire consequences.

Education must consider and embrace the three human dimensions pointed out by Frankl: somatic, psychic and spiritual. Addressing these dimensions in the educational endeavor implies understanding the intrinsic unity of the human person. Moreover, it is essential to bear in mind that each human being, each person, each learner, is a new, unique being, an unrepeatable individual who is worth by himself and who does not depend, in his being a person, on another reality. As we said before, it is a unitary existence, a total existence and an ever new existence.

Attention to the body dimension

In any educational process, it must be taken into account that each human being has his or her own experience of corporeality:

The body, with its peculiar characteristics, is given to us, but each person converts this facticity into ways of life. The human being does not invent his corporeality, but finds himself living in a body that he has not chosen. However, the way of reacting to this facticity depends on each one: accepting or rejecting it; the relationship of each one with his body determines to a great extent his personal realization. The perception and knowledge of one's own body makes it possible to understand our contingency and even our destitution, especially because we discover its precariousness and weakness. Thus, for example, pain, suffering, illness, physical ailments have a great influence on the moods of the person, that is, on his or her own interiority (Acosta Sanabria, 2010: 213).

For all these reasons, we have no hesitation in affirming that:

Knowing and understanding the corporeality is an indispensable requirement for the construction of one's own personal identity. Since the human being is an embodied reality, the knowledge of each of the aspects of the body favors its identity. Thus, from childhood, the acceptance of one's own body in every human being has a considerable influence on self-esteem and makes it possible to configure a normal personality, to the extent that there is harmony in the growth and perfection of the external and internal dimensions of the subject. This means that the body (corporeality) is a constituent part of the existential situation of each person: my body is the body that I live, that I experience, that I am (Ibid.: 213-214).

In short,

(...) corporeality manifests the personal history of each human being: the body is an expression of the person. Each part of our body shows in some way what we are,

what we have lived, what we desire and love, what we have suffered. The human body records, so to speak, our history, leaving the traces of our joys and our sorrows, our successes and our failures, our loves and our heartbreaks (Ibid.: 214).

The pedagogical action, therefore, must take into account what was previously stated; the somatic dimension or sphere is determinant in the construction of the learner's personality.

Attention to the psychic dimension

The bridge between the bodily and the spiritual dimension is, as we have seen, the psychic dimension. In pedagogical activity, this dimension is, like the bodily and spiritual, always present. This is why, taking into account Frankl's approach, we must specify how to develop an integral and integrative education that takes into account all aspects of the psychic and emotional reality of the human being.

For example, it is essential (Aranguren, 2003: 135) to take into account the factors that have a determining influence on the perception of human reality: the environment, emotions, physical state and behavior. The environment and the physical state are directly related to the bodily dimension. Emotions and behavior are based on the psychological dimension of the human being. Knowing the psychic and emotional structure of the learner is indispensable in the whole educational process; teaching cannot be reduced to the intellectual or volitional sphere, it must start from the psychological reality of the subject, because it conditions his behavior, his conduct:

An important task of education will be to help learners to achieve the balance of their personality; this balance will be achieved to the extent that the three factors mentioned above (intelligence, will and affectivity or feelings) develop harmoniously, avoiding the excessive prominence of any of them, or the absence of any of them; therefore, we must avoid both excess and defect (Acosta Sanabria, 2010: 220).

Regarding the relationship between the somatic and psychic dimensions, Frankl explains that we must consider that although the way of being of each person cannot be readjusted biologically, because in that area it is finished, there is room for psychological readjustments that can be made and/or corrected through pedagogy:

(...) there is, in fact, a "reconciliation" in the form of re-education of the child. This re-education changes the child's way of being. But this other way of being does not obey so much to the will of the parents, but to a moral duty that the child lives as such. In other words: this post-education of a human being is properly a self-education, a self-determination. If we understand by life the bodily existence, the life of a child is the work of his parents; but if we do not understand by life the bodily existence, but the spiritual way of being (= essence), and, therefore, not

the biological level, but the biographical one, the life of a human being is in reality his own vital work (1987: 140).

This has practical consequences when focusing and orienting the education of each human being. Each person has to determine himself, has to try to reach the goal he has set for himself according to his vision of the world and reality. The function of educators (parents, teachers...) is none other than “enabling the self-realization” of the learners (Ibid.: 141).

Attention to the spiritual dimension

According to Frankl, the spiritual sphere is the foundational and constitutive dimension of the human person; it is what primarily defines the human being. It is important to clarify, however, that we do not identify the spirit with the simple capacity to think or reason, because we think that the spiritual dimension is radically a foundational dimension of the human person.

As a concrete application of what has been expressed so far, we can affirm that only the human being can be an adequate subject of education, since only he is the privileged possessor of the spiritual dimension (San Cristobal, 1965: 76).

Moreover, education is possible insofar as the human being, who is spirit, is open, by his ontological freedom, to the process of his own constitution and perfection:

The only part of the human being that admits perfection is that which by its very essence is flexible and ductile. Only the spirit possesses the intelligence and freedom pursued by education. Spirituality is the first condition of educability (Fermoso, 2000: 243).

The spirituality of the person implies that human development presupposes the capacity to make decisions, freedom. And this freedom is obviously not absolute: there are bodily and psychic conditioning factors that cannot be avoided, but each human being can assume or not these conditioning factors. This means that freedom does not imply the absence of conditioning factors, but is expressed in the attitude one has towards them:

So freedom is one of the human phenomena. But it is also an all too human phenomenon. Human freedom is finite freedom: man is not free from conditioning, but is free only with respect to the attitude in which he is to assume it. But man is not unequivocally determined. For, in the end, it is up to him to decide whether he allows himself to be overcome, whether he submits to conditioning (2011: 150).

This means that the human being is a being who not only is, but also “decides what he is”, is not content simply to be, but decides what he wants to be. That decision is the one that should be favored in every educational process, because human nature is projected to meaning and that translates into the construction of possibilities, in decisions. “The search for meaning is the realization of values, and to the extent that such values are assumed by man, it is self-

realization" (Mèlich, 1994: 99). Meaning cannot be imposed from outside the person: it is the learner who has the duty to find it: "We cannot teach values, we must live values. We cannot give meaning to the lives of others: what we can offer them on their journey through life is rather and only an example: the example of what we are" (2011: 32).

From this follows the imperative need to respect the autonomy of each learner at all times; any imposition that affects personal fulfillment, that "spiritually" conditions the learner must be rejected. Moreover, taking into account the "totality" of each person (the complete vision from all human dimensions), the learner must find himself, with the help, but not imposition, of his educators or tutors, the final goal, the ultimate reference of his realization as a human being. In every educational process, the development of the learner's potentialities must be favored so that he/she can gradually respond to the dictates of reason, to use his/her abilities, skills and knowledge with confidence and to develop his/her emotional capacities.

The above leads us to consider the importance of understanding that education must be vigilant to ensure that the learner reaches a sufficient degree of freedom, freedom that includes a sense of personal responsibility: because every human being must respond to the demands of his or her own sense of life. Therefore, we have no hesitation in affirming that for Frankl, responsibility is the fundamental educational purpose. This has or should have direct consequences in any educational process and in any human circumstance. The human being does not reach his full realization, the full meaning of his life if he is not responsible, if he does not decide with freedom and responsibility, if he does not assume the consequences of his free actions. We insist that the educator must understand that his pedagogical function must favor the full exercise of freedom, allowing each student to assume with responsibility the reins of his life.

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