

Formacion Humana y Capacitacion

(Becoming Human and Training)

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Introduction

The central subject of the book is Education, and it is written with the understanding that the purpose of Education is to guide our boys and girls in the path of their becoming human beings that respect themselves and others through the continuous generation of a space of coexistence that gives rise to collaboration, joyfulness and responsible freedom. The conceptual grounding implicit in what we propose and develop in this book, is the biology of love.

We live a cultural present in which the word love appears and is frequently used in many different areas of reflection and doing. Thus we may speak of love from the perspective of religion, philosophy, or daily life. Furthermore, we frequently speak as if there were many different kinds of love, each according to the relational domain in which it occurs.

At the same time, there are now days, many kinds of workshops and trainings that offer to connect, or reconnect us with love. This is not our purpose. Our subject in this book is Education, that is, the relation between the teachers and the students, the teachers and the students themselves, and what one may wish to happen in the relation between teachers and students in the process of education. And love is the fundament that makes possible what we want to do.

The biology of love is the relational dynamics that gives origin to humanness in the history of our lineage. When we speak, imply, evoke or connote the biology of love, we speak, imply, evoke or connote the systemic conditions of the evolutionary and ontogenic constitution of humanness. The claim of the participation of the biology of love in the constitutive origin of humanness, is not an opinion, it is a denotation of the biological process that constituted and still constitutes us as the kind of living beings that we are and could stop being (see *Biology of Love*, by Maturana and Verden-Zoeller, 1996).

Love is an emotion, a manner of living together, a kind of class of relational behaviors in living systems. Love as an aspect of the realization of our animal living, is a biological phenomenon. Love is not a sentiment nor a feeling, love is not a recommendation for a better living in company. As an emotion, as a class of relational behaviors, love is very simple, and can be characterized by making reference to the circumstances when there is love: love takes place as in our living interactions with other beings, the other, whoever or whatever, he, she or it may be, arises as a legitimate other in coexistence with us. Or, what is the same, love (loving) is the emotion that constitutes and conserves social living.

Our reflections in this book arise from our biological knowledge and understanding, not from a philosophical, religious or political position. No doubt we wish that our children may grow as happy self-respecting and responsible citizens. But what we say here is not an exhortation, a recommendation, or a message, and its fundament is not moral or ethical, even though accepting it has moral and ethical consequences. We only speak of that that happens in the human relational domain under different emotions and particularly under love, and the validity of what we say and propose for education, rests precisely on the biological knowledge and understanding of humanness and of what makes it possible.

We are living beings, and all that happens to us as human beings even though it happens in us in conversations as a continuous flow of the recursive braiding of languaging and emotioning, it happens to us in our living in the realization of our living. It is from this that the understanding of humanness requires the understanding of the biological dynamics that gives rise to it. Finally, it is precisely for all that we have just said, that our purpose in this book is the expansion of our understanding of what occurs in the educational process as well as the implications that that process has, or may have for human life, and does so from a perspective that recognizes the biological fundamentals of knowing and learning.

EDUCATION

Much is said now days about the need of accommodating or adjusting education to the conditions and needs that will prevail in the twenty first century. This is surprising for three reasons.

1. We do not know how life will be in the twenty first century, and any prediction in that direction will only be an extrapolation of our present living.

But if our present manner of living is what indeed preoccupies us because we do not find it satisfactory, and if we think that education is in crisis because it reflects that manner of living, is it adequate that we should think in a future defined from our actual present as a continuation of it?

Furthermore, if the manner of living that we now live in our historical present, has arisen from our present manner of feeling, desiring, acting, and arguing, and we do not like it, do we want the future to which that manner of feeling, desiring and reasoning is leading us?

2. We human beings create the world that we live in moment after moment in the flow of our living, how can we pretend then, to specify a future that will not belong to us because it will arise in the living of our children and will not be created by us? Do we want to steal from them that responsibility by specifying now the world that they will live in as a cage from which they cannot escape?

We act now as if we wanted our children to grow and create a world that we specify now, in our ignorance of the future and our disrespect for them. Where do we leave them in all of this?

3. We human beings live in the present; the future and the past are manners of being in the present.

If we want to prepare our children to live in the future by making our present their future, we negate them in their present, trapping them in a manner of living that is basically alien to them, and we force them to search outside themselves for an identity that will give sense to their lives. And we know that he or she who searches for his or her identity outside him or herself, is bound to live in the absence of him or herself and will always be moved by the opinions and wishes of others. Such a person has no place in his or her own life, and is not even there, as young people are prone to say.

We think that the future must arise through the life of those men and women that will make the future with their living. And if we want a future in the conservation of human dignity, mutual respect, collaboration and social and ecological consciousness and responsibility, those men and women must be persons of integrity, that can be autonomous and responsible for the life that they lead, because they act in self respect.

They must be loving men and women, conscious of their social existence and aware that the world that they live arises through their living it. Men and women of that kind can arise only if our children do not grow alien to themselves. Such men and women can exist only if our children grow in self-respect and social consciousness. Men and women of such a kind can exist only if our children grow, who are capable of learning anything because their identity does not reside in what they do, but in their being self-respecting human beings.

It is because we think in this way, that we think that the task of education is to create a relational space in which our children grow now, in the present, as self-respecting socially conscious and ecologically responsible human beings. That is, we think that the task of education is to create a relational space in which our children may grow to live in the present, in any present, aware of the desired or possible future, but not alienated in any description of it. Thus, a relational space in which our children can grow as human beings can be trusted, because they respect themselves, i.e. human beings capable of reflecting on anything, and of doing whatever they do as a socially responsible conscious act. Our intention in this proposal is to contribute to create such a relational space.

OUR PROPOSAL

The greatest difficulty that we face in the domain of education in our cultural present, is the confusion between two different kinds of processes that take place in the upbringing of children. Namely, what we call the growth of a child as a particular kind of human being, and the learning of the operational abilities proper to the historical moment that they happen to live in. This is so, particularly if we want our children to grow and become socially conscious and responsible human beings in a democratic culture. Thus, we think:

A. The aspect of education related to the process of becoming a particular kind of human being is concerned with the growth of the child as a person capable of being a co-creator with others of a desirable social space of human coexistence.

In these circumstances, the task of education refers to the growth of the children as socially and ecologically conscious and responsible human beings, and creates with them the following relational conditions: a) that would guide and support them in their growth as human beings capable of living in respect for themselves and others; b) that would

guide them in their growth as human beings and who can say yes and no, as they stand in their integrity and autonomy that provides their self respect; and c) that would guide them in their growth as human beings whose individuality is founded on their self respect and self acceptance and not in their opposition or difference from others. Therefore, they can collaborate, because they do not fear to disappear in their relations with others.

B. The aspect of education referring to the learning of the operational abilities proper to the historical moment that the children happen to live, is concerned precisely with the acquisition of those abilities and operational capacities by the children, as a set of resources or instruments that they will have for the realization of what they want in the course of their living.

Accordingly, the teaching of the operational abilities proper to the historical moment that the children happen to live, consists of: a) the creation of the relational and interactional space in which the abilities and capacities that are desired for children to learn, can be realized as a space of coexistence with their teachers; and, b) in the creation of such a space as an ambience in which its openness for the expansion of the capacities for actual doing and to reflect on what has been done, is part of the life that the children live, and wish to live at that moment.

Finally, we think that the creation of the relational space in which the children become self-respecting and socially conscious responsible human beings, is the central task of education. Only if this aspect of the upbringing of a child is realized, the child can become a person capable of living as a socially conscious and responsible human being. A person who is capable and free to reflect on his or her doings are free to see and correct errors and mistakes in relation to his other living as a conscious social and ecologically responsible individual human being. Only if this central aspect of education is taken care, the child can grow to become a person capable of living in cooperation as an ethical being, because he or she does not disappear in his or her relations with others, as his or her individuality is founded on his or her self acceptance and self respect.

It is only if this central aspect of education is taken care of, that a child can grow as a person, free and capable of rejecting the peer pressure to use drugs or any other kind of self corruption. This is so, because he or she does not depend on the opinion of others for his or her identity.

The teaching of operational abilities is an instrument for the realization of the central task of education, which guides children in the growth as human beings. A child that grows in self respect and self acceptance can learn anything and acquire any ability that he or she wishes. That natural thing is that there are no limitations of intelligence in the learning of the children. Intelligence is the capacity for participating in the realization or development of plastic domains of operational coherences with other living systems or with non living circumstances in which they may happen to live. Language is one of those domains of plastic operational coherences, and we human beings exist as such in language. But, what is significant in this respect, is that the intelligence required to live in language as we human beings do, is so enormous, that we human beings are all essentially equally intelligent unless we have lived particular situations such as trauma, genetic alterations, or

nutritional failures. Under these conditions, learning difficulties are usually the result of emotional conflicts, not limitations in intelligence.

In the following, we present 15 points that we consider to be valid and fundamental as the fundamentals for the task of education if we want our children to grow as self respecting socially conscious responsible human beings:

Education as a Space for Becoming a Self Respecting Human Being

1. We think that the task of education as an artificial relational and operational space of coexistence, should allow, facilitate, and guide the growth of our children so that they can become human beings that live and act in self respect and respect for other. As a result, they operate with ecological and social consciousness, and can behave with responsibility and freedom in a democratic human community.

Freedom and responsibility are possible in human life only if one acts in the conditions of self respect and self acceptance, which are the only conditions that permits us to choose without being swayed by external opinions.

2. We think that for point (1) to be realized, the relational space generated by the teachers in their recursive interactions with their students, must be one in which these arise at every moment as totally accepted and respect legitimate complete beings, and not as transitory entities in the process of becoming adults.

Point (2) means that the attention of the teacher as he or she interacts with his or her students, should not be oriented to the desired outcome of the educational process, but to accept and respect them in the total legitimacy of their present, while he or she acts in the full awareness of what he or she wants his or her students to learn. This point also means that education must be centered on the growth of children as self respecting and socially conscious responsible human beings. And that all the particular technical, operational, or reflective abilities which they must also acquire to participate in the activities of the human community to which they belong or will belong, must also be treated as tools or instruments for the realization of such a fundamental purpose.

3. We think that the basic task of teachers is to make the school a relational and interactional space that permits and invites the children and students in general, to expand their capacity of action and reflection so that they can contribute as they grow in their continuous creation and conservation of the world that they live with other human beings, as a space in which one can and live in self respect, social consciousness and ecological responsibility.

For the realization of point (3), the different themes of study, or the different activities with which the children or the students in general become involved at the school, should be done so that they live them as fields of reflective and manipulative activities that continuously invite them to look in freedom at any

changes that they want to do at any instant. What is involved here, is the expansion of the capacity of the children in the fields of doing and reflecting, not a change in the nature of their being.

4. We think that education occurs as a process of transformation of the children in their living together with the teachers. This occurs as the teachers constitute it with their living the domain of relational coherence in which the children become transformed in the process of their growth as human beings.

This transformation takes place in the child, in all the explicit and implicit dimensions of coexistence that the child lives with the teacher, through their conscious and unconscious interactions. What is central in the process of education, is that the teacher/child relation modulates the emotioning of the child determining in every moment the emotioning of the child. The child learns this in an unconscious manner of seeing, hearing, reflecting, understanding, accepting, reasoning and doing. Furthermore, what is also central in the process of education, is to know that the emotioning learned by the child at school will constitute his or her manner of relating with him or herself and others, during his or her whole life unless his or her manner of emotioning changes through the awareness of disliking it. Finally, it is also central in the process of education that the teachers should know that their students become whatever they become through learning their emotioning with them.

5. We think that this is fundamental for educators to know, that human life follows the course of emotions not of reason, and that this is not a limitation but a feature of our human constitution as living beings. Education, then, must take place in the knowledge and understanding that emotions are the grounding for all that we do, including our rationality.

Biologically, emotions correspond to internal body dynamics that specify the kinds of relational behaviors in which an animal can participate at any instant. Yet emotions occur in the relational space of the organism. This means that although emotions arise in the flow of our internal dynamics, what which we distinguish as we distinguish emotions in daily life, are kinds or classes of relational behaviors.

It is because emotions occur as kinds of relational behaviors that they can be fully characterized in terms of the relational behaviors that constitute them. Thus, for example, love is the domain of those relational behaviors through which the other arises as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself. In similar terms, aggression is the domain of those relational behaviors through which the other is negated as a legitimate other in coexistence with oneself.

We human beings belong to an evolutionary history defined by a manner of living centered on love, not on aggression. This is so much so, that we become ill at any age when we are deprived of love. Depriving a child of love results in

a serious interference with his or her growth as a self-respecting human being that can live as a conscious and responsible social person.

It is because we are loving beings, that we think that the educational space must be one of love, cooperation and mutual respect, and not of competition or strife. It is because we are loving beings that we think that the educational space reflects this. If a correction seems necessary, what is corrected is the doings of the child, and not his or her being.

The learning and the behavioral difficulties that children show at school or at home, do not arise from intellectual difficulties or from intrinsic traits of their personality, but arise from their living in a relational space in which love is denied, and can be solved by restoring love.

6. All that we human beings do, occurs in conversations, that is, in the interweaving of languaging (coordinations of coordinations of consensual behaviors) and emotioning.

At school all conversations of life intercross, particularly the conversations of learning some particular abilities, and in their intercrossing, they become confused, mostly without our awareness. The conceptual and operational separation of these two kinds of conversations allows us to do two things: 1) training the emotioning and understanding of the teacher in such a way that he or she interacts with his or her students in the biology of love, and thus encounters them without correcting their being; and 2) creating for the teachers a space of expansion of their capacity for reflecting on what they know, as well as an expansion of their capacity for doing and reflecting on what they do in their different domains of knowledge.

To the extent that those two types of conversation can be kept separated conceptually, it is possible to mix or to separate them at will in the process of education.

7. We think that the purpose of education is not to prepare our children to become useful and responsible citizens, but they become so in their simple spontaneous growth as socially and ecologically conscious self-respecting human beings.

We also think that the purpose of education should not prepare the children to be well-integrated members of the community to which they belong, but rather this should be a spontaneous natural result of their growth as integral members of it. The school as an artificial relational space in which the children grow to become particular kinds of human beings, and learn the doings proper to the community to which they belong, replaces the space of daily living in which they should learn the emotioning and the doings of such a community through living in it.

It is because of what we have just said, that a school will not be adequate if it does not replace those relational aspects of the life of the community to which the children belong or will belong. It is also because of what we have just said,

that if we want the children to learn social values, they do not have to be taught. They have to be lived through living the biology of love. Thus, for example, the school should not teach cooperation. The children must learn it through living it as they live in the mutual respect that arises from living in mutual respect.

8. The teachers and the children are the most fundamental elements in the process through which the children grow to become self-respecting human beings capable of learning any ability or of acquiring any capacity for action, because they provide all that is needed in human terms.

The children and their teachers are equally intelligent and equally capable in the emotioning domain, although they may be different in their preferences and habits of thinking and doing, because they have lived different lives. If a child arises as a legitimate other in the biology of love, it does not mean that the teacher does not see the particular present features of the child, or that he or she does not have a liking or disliking of them. On the contrary, it means that the teacher sees them and is aware of his or her emotioning about them, but relates with the child as a legitimate other even if his or her task as a teacher is to create for the child a relational space in which he or she may expand his or her capacities for action and reflection.

9. We think that the task of education is to be realized only in one way, namely, in the biology of love, that is, through relations and interactions between teacher and students that do not intend to correct the manner of being of the students, but continuously invites them to reflect on what they do, and on what they want to do, in a space of mutual respect.

A central aspect of teaching teachers to become teachers, is to treat them in the same desired way as they would treat their students. At the same time, it is central to train them in the reflexive attitude that will permit them to see their own emotions in their relations with the students. This provides an opening to correct their mistakes and to apologise for them, with the fear of wanting to disappear in the act. They are able to do this, because they act in self-respect.

10. The educational space as a space of coexistence in the biology of love, must be lived in the pleasure and joy of seeing, touching, hearing, smelling, and reflecting. This makes us capable of seeing, hearing, smelling, and touching all that which becomes accessible to us when we are freed to look. When we look simultaneously at the context and particularly the situation in which we are at any instant, we do so in openness and not in fear.

For the educational space to be lived in that manner, students and teachers must meet in mutual respect with the implicit or explicit understanding that they are the cocreators of what they live, i.e. the operational coherences of what they are doing together.

The scope of our intelligent behavior changes in the flow of our emotioning. Thus, envy, fear, ambition, competitiveness, restrict and reduce our intelligent behavior. They restrict

our vision of the sources of our envy, fear, ambition or competition, which in turn limits our reflective abilities of those sources.

Only love expands our intelligent behavior, because it expands our vision. Love is visionary, not blind. Accordingly, for the educational space to be a relational space of expansion of the intelligent behavior of the students and teachers, it must be lived in the biology of love. The biology of love are relational dynamics that conserves and fosters the self respect of the students, even when it seems necessary to correct their doings.

What this means, is that the educational space must be lived in a manner that respects the different learning temporal dynamics of the students. This allows each of them to take a learning pace that fits him or her, without treating the apparent slowness of some of them as a deficiency or intrinsic limitation.

The School as a Relational Space for Acquiring the Operational Abilities of the Community

1. The learning of manual, conceptual, or reflective operational abilities, occurs in the actual practice of the abilities to be learned. Those abilities are learned in the expansion of the intelligent behavior when such a practice is realized in the relational space of mutual respect, the biology of love. It is only in the biology of love that the students learn a relational sense that is meaningful in their lives.
2. All human beings can learn to do what other human beings can do. All human beings are basically equally intelligent, and they differ with respect to their learning abilities only in their learned emotioning. Yet, the learning of any operational ability in self respect, requires the reflexive freedom and trust of the student in his or her capacity to learn anything that other human beings can do. Such self trust is possible for the students at school, as an act in harmony with their own lives. However, this can only occur if the teacher acts in total intimate recognition and acceptance that all human beings are equally intelligent and capable of learning to do whatever any other human being can do. Furthermore, for the students to learn in self respect, respect for the others and self trust, the school must create a noncompetitive relational space as a feature of the basic emotioning that defines the students coexistence in it.
3. A student learns his or her operational abilities in any domain as a capacity to act, and with the freedom to reflect on what he or she does, only if he or she has learnt the possibility of being responsible. For this to happen, the school must offer the students the operational space required for their responsible practice, of the abilities desired to learn in self respect and responsibility.
4. A teacher can contribute to the learning of his or her students of whatever operational capacity he or she is teaching, when acting from his or her own operational abilities. That is, the reflexive freedom, and capacity for doing what he or she teaches in self respect.

5. The students, at whatever age, come to the school from a cultural world that they have lived as a network of conversations, that has made them whatever they are at that moment. So the students are, in themselves, the very fundament for their becoming self respecting, socially and ecologically conscious responsible social beings, that can learn anything.