

Seminar on Direction and the Aphorisms

The seminar lasts one day and participants arrive in the morning.

Ceremony of the Service

First Part: Introduction (1 hour)

Plan of Work: We will work with the text of the Aphorisms (**The Book of the Community**) and some guided reflections. This work is organized to help us experiment with each of the Aphorisms and, from our own personal experience, understand the differences between them. We are going to concentrate on forming a personal Aphorism that corresponds to the basic direction of our lives.

The best way to work together is to be relaxed and in theme, with a focus on the work we are doing. The appropriate attitude is that of a “researcher,” trying to understand, paying attention, and without expectations. This is a simple work, carried out with liking.

What are "The Aphorisms" and why are we going to work with them?

We know that when we are going to do something that is important to us we need to have clarity in our thoughts and images, have faith and conviction that what we are doing will turn out well, and carry out all the tasks that are necessary to achieve what we want. This "something" we are doing can be very internal. It could be looking for a job; it could be helping another person; it could be a project that includes others; it could be setting in motion a new Community of the Message; it could be the general construction of my life. Whatever it is, we need the maximum coherence among our thoughts, feelings, and actions. The Aphorisms work precisely on these points.

Our Aphorisms are formulated in three levels of depth. They are:

- (1) Thoughts produce and attract actions.*
- (2) Thoughts with faith produce and attract stronger actions.*
- (3) Thoughts repeated with faith produce and attract the maximum strength in one's actions.*

A Personal Aphorism is a phrase, an image, or a simple mental construction that directs my thoughts, feelings, and actions in a certain direction. The function and power of an Aphorism is exactly this: that of clarifying and transforming my ideas and feelings into actions that are conscious and intentional. This Aphorism creates energy and it creates future. An Aphorism can be personal or collective. In all cases, the indicators that this Aphorism is well constructed and corresponds to an inner truth are that the future opens and personal coherence grows. In this sense, the internal work with the Aphorisms can be considered a step toward a clearer understanding of our internal functioning.

A personal Aphorism can obviously also be something more immediate, and not necessarily only a work about the central part of my life. Here we are exploring and learning about the Aphorisms, and have taken the direction of our life as our object of study. If we go deeply

into this work we will surely incorporate a new personal tool that will be useful in many situations, and possibly fundamental for the construction of the life to which we aspire.

Direction

The positive energetic potential of a personal Aphorism is found in its closeness to the central direction or meaning that my life has. This is important because in the measure that my daily actions coincide (or do not coincide) with my mental direction, my life will grow in coherence or in suffering, both for myself and those around me. There is a direction within me that pushes me forward, or that guides me one way and not another (regardless of how things have sometimes turned out). This can be felt as a sort of magnet in the future that attracts me, or an internal motor that propels me... in different ways, but in any case it is there, operating.

For some reason, our lives have taken us here to be together today. Even though the details of our lives may be very different, there is something in common in our direction. Each of us may feel this "something" in a different way, expressed in a different manner, but somehow the aspirations of Silo's Message coincide with our own aspirations for our lives and what we desire for others.

There is an internal image operating here that has certain common characteristics: on one hand there is a search that impels us toward the profound and sacred in ourselves; and on the other there is centrifugal direction that goes out toward others, an interest that opens communication and goes beyond discrimination and violence. There is a suspicion or certainty that life does have a meaning, that not everything ends with death, and this determines how I build my life. There is a desire to overcome suffering in myself and in others. This direction is what is important to us, and this could be thought of as the rudder of a vessel. You don't see the rudder, but it is what enables the ship to reach its destination. Without a rudder the ship just goes around in circles, at the mercy of the tides and the currents, of external forces. Our interest is to understand this rudder, to make it explicit for ourselves and evident in our lives.

Aspirations

How can we know what our real aspirations are? Surely we have many different things that we want, desire, and need operating at the same time, from the most mundane to the most exalted. Some of these lead us in a valid direction and others lead us to suffering. The key to discovering our deep aspirations has to do with the positive emotional commotion that is felt when we make contact with them. There are many things that we want or would like to have happen, but without this emotional connection they are just reveries, good ideas, but they lack the profundity of something important for our lives.

In the measure that I feel that my internal coherence and unity are growing, that my life is taking on a valid meaning (at least for myself), then I know that I am on a path of profundity and truth within myself. There is an experience of recognition in the contact with this profound aspiration that is operating, even though it may not be fully clear, manifest, or explicit.

Our interest in this work with Aphorisms is to try to get close to this internal aspiration – which is like an underground current that is operating in me, guiding my life in a certain direction – so as to then be able to guide my daily actions with greater coherence.

First Work - Personal Aphorism (1 hour)

A. Reflection:

Guided external and internal relaxation... .. I look for images that have a register of something that I aspire to... .. ideas or images of people and situations that mobilize me... .. I look for meanings... .. What do I feel when I make contact with that aspiration?... .. Can I feel that this aspiration grows without limits?... .. Can I recognize this feeling in other moments of my life?... .. In different situations of my life?... I sift through the different moments and situations of my life with this register, guided by this feeling... ..

Write your conclusions (without interchange)

Take notes on your experience. If you do not feel you have made contact with this emotion, try working with an inspiring register.

B. Reflection:

I feel myself relaxing... .. again I get in touch with this feeling... .. With this feeling I reflect upon my thoughts and actions... .. I search throughout my life, seeing the moments where this feeling was more evident... .. I see the moments when this feeling was absent... .. I remember the thoughts and actions in my life in the times when this feeling was absent... .. I get in touch again with the feeling of my aspiration... .. I remember the thoughts and actions that were related with this feeling in those moments... .. I see my future... ..

Write down your conclusions

C. Meditate internally

and begin to construct a personal Aphorism of how this aspiration can be expressed in your life. This Aphorism can be a phrase, an image, a way of expressing this sentiment just for yourself. This is like an internal affirmation, created in an intuitive way more than a logical way. It may not exactly reflect your aspiration but it could come close. The point is that when you make contact with this phrase or image you feel the strength of this sentiment.

D. Reflection:

I relax my tensions... .. I feel this Aphorism operating... .. and gaining life within me... .. gaining life within me... ..

Interchange in groups of three (1 hour)

Break - Lunch (one hour)

Part Two: The Aphorisms (The Book of the Community) (2 hours)

1. "Thoughts produce and attract actions."

What does this mean, thoughts "produce actions?"

It means simply that I act in life according to what I feel now, what I remember from the past, and what I imagine about the future. Any activity that I carry out will depend on what I have done previously, and on having a clear image or plan of what to do. If my thoughts are confused, it is very likely that my actions will be confused, and so on.

In regard to how thoughts "attract actions," it is clear that if I have produced confused actions, this will create confusion in my activities and in the people toward whom my actions are

directed. Then, as a consequence I will receive the same type of confused actions in return. For example, if my thoughts are resentful and I act in this way, surely I will create resentment and attract those actions from others in return. All a person has to do is to believe in their "bad luck" for their actions and those of the people around them to end up producing these "unlucky situations."

Reflection:

I relax my tensions... .. I connect with my personal Aphorism... .. I feel my Aphorism... .. I see the images that appear... .. Where am I in the images?... .. What are my thoughts?... .. What are my actions?... .. Where do my actions lead, where do they end?

Write down your thoughts and actions. What actions were produced, and what actions were attracted? Consider the consequences of these actions.

Comments by the participants.

2. "Thoughts with faith produce and attract stronger actions."

By "faith" we mean a conviction, strong feeling, or confidence that something is the way a person believes it to be. It is not at all the same to think something with doubts as it is to think something with strong emotions. When you see how much a strong feeling like love can do, you can understand what we are saying.

Reflection:

I relax my tensions... .. I breathe deeply... .. Now again I focus on the same images and my Aphorism... .. the same feelings... .. I see them clearly... .. I see my thoughts... .. I see my actions... .. I feel this emotion inside me... .. I strengthen this feeling... .. I make this feeling deeper... .. I put faith and certainty in this feeling... .. what are my thoughts... .. what are my actions... .. I continue increasing my faith in my Aphorism... ..

Take notes on your experience. What differences do you observe with your thoughts from Aphorism 1? What were your actions and what were their consequences?

Comments by the participants.

3. "Thoughts repeated with faith produce and attract the maximum strength in one's actions."

The more you repeat an action or a thought, the more it is engraved in your memory, the stronger your habits will be, and the more it will predispose you to repeat future actions in the same direction. If a person continuously thinks with faith that they are sick, it is more likely that they will actually become sick than if they only think this a little, or without conviction. The same holds true with the projects that I have in my life. I must think them out clearly, with faith, and I must think about them over and over again. Then, my actions will go in this direction, and they will also create positive responses from my environment and from the people around me in the direction that is of interest to me.

How do I repeat with faith my personal Aphorism? With daily meditation, with intention, making it central to each day, incorporating it into the activities of each day. If I have an Internal Guide, I can ask the Guide to strengthen my Aphorism.

The Guide and the Asking: If I have an Internal Guide, then the best approach will be to incorporate my Guide (with their Strength, Wisdom, and Kindness) into the work with my

Aphorism. I can call upon my Guide to accompany me, to strengthen and guide my Aphorism, to ask advice on how to best advance in different situations. In this way I "infuse" my Aphorism with the attributes of my Guide. I incorporate the strength of the Asking with my Guide into my thoughts and my actions.

Reflection:

I again see the same images and my Aphorism with faith... .. I see myself in daily life... .. I see my activities... .. I see my thoughts... .. I keep repeating internally this contact with my Aphorism... .. I am connecting profoundly with this internal truth... .. I observe my thoughts.... .. I see the strength of my actions.... .. I see the consequences of my actions... ..

Take notes on your images, your thoughts, your actions, and their consequences.

Interchange in groups of three.

Write your personal conclusions and synthesis.

Final interchange among the participants.

Short break

Ceremony of the Service

Closing with shared refreshments.

Bibliography

[The Book of the Community](#)