

The Principle of Proportion

“Things are well when they move together, not in isolation”



This **Principle** means that if, in striving toward a goal, we disrupt our whole life, then we may in turn be subject to numerous accidents that make it hard to reach our goal, and even if we do reach it, this result will have bitter consequences.

For example, if in order to gain wealth or prestige we harm our health, sacrifice our loved ones, or give up other values, we may have accidents that will keep us from reaching our goal. Or we may obtain it, but no longer have good health to enjoy it, or loved ones to share it with, or other values that give us meaning.

“Things are well when they move together.” This is so because our

life is a whole that requires balanced, not partial, equilibrium and development.

Since some things are more important than others, everyone should have a true scale of values so that first, second, and third level priorities can be taken care of in proportion. If energy is applied according to the importance given each priority, everything will truly work together.

Let us illustrate this with a tale showing how disproportionate actions can produce disastrous consequences:

There were four magicians who were friends. Three of them attained great learning but lacked judgment. The other one abhorred learning but his reasoning was excellent.

One of the magicians said, “What good is judgment without learning? One could know if something is good or bad but not know how to do one thing of another. “

To illustrate this, the youngest of them said, “Tomorrow we should be in Persepolis, but it is a long way to there, a distance that our camels will not be able to travel in one day. But with our learning, we could do it.”

So they asked the wise one to bring one of the camels near. One magician stretched its legs until it reached the height of a house of silence. Another widened its back so that the four could fit in the other humps and the remaining magician gave the animal a neck so long that it could perceive from far away any point of interest.

The next morning, only three mounted because the wise magician said, “Better three than four when the problems multiply.” So the three magicians mounted, laughing at the fearful one.

The race started at great speed but in a short time, there was not enough water to quench the thirst of such an animal. To make it worse, the strong sandstones were hitting the extremely high head of the enormous monster, instead of standing upright, it had to move more like a serpent, which goes fast after its prey.

Thus the camel, weakened and thrown off balance by the abnormal position of its neck, ended up falling like a tower without foundation.

Sad was the return of the magicians. But, fortunately, the wise one was waiting to comfort them

In this way, they did not arrive to the proposed place and lost their business.

Another day, the four found a dead animal, and wanting to prove to the wise one the value of learning, the learned ones said, “Hey, let us do something for this poor dead lion. But this time let the three of us agree, so that all the parts coincide well and form a reasonable whole, because all of that business with the camel was due to the ability of each one, but not of all three of us.”

The first then said, “I know how to unite the skeleton.” And the second said, “I can supply the skin, meat, and blood.” And the third one said, “I can give it life.”

So the first joined the skeleton and the second magician supplied skin, meat and blood. But while the third one tried to give it life, the wise magician advised against this, noting, “This is a lion. If you give it life, it will kill each one of us.”

“Idiot.” cried the others. “It will be I who will reduce your good judgment to nothing.”

“In that case,” he replied, “Wait a moment while I climb this nearby tree.”

When he had done this the others gave life to the lion, and it arose and killed the three. When the lion had gone the wise magician descended from the tree and went to his house.