EMOTIONAL MATURITY

What does emotional maturity consist of? Two words can define this maturity: first, being in possession of oneself and, secondly, the giving of oneself.

The possession of oneself

We could also mention here emotional equilibrium (balance) which is the ability to be in charge of one’s impulses, tendencies and tensions. It is impossible to surrender or give oneself if one is not in possession of oneself….if one does not control oneself, if one does not have self-control. By means of my self-control, I am going to be a bearer of life and love for my spouse, for my children, my group brothers and sisters, for my friends.

Our maturity should rekindle the life we find in our home and in the world around us. Instead of collapsing, destroying, or killing with my superficiality…..my extemporaneous commentary, my unloading, my lack of self-control…..precisely there, I give a little bit more life. Love which does not guide life is not love. Selfishness is the bearer of death, love is the bearer of life.

Possession of oneself means possessing a rich inner world, cultivated, a world which includes a fine grade of personal intimacy, of privacy. There are people who are interiorly rich, but they are not in possession of themselves because they are always conversing, they are talking permanently.

And the one who talks sticks his/her foot in his/her mouth. The one who talks little, sticks the foot in less. Ordinarily, the one who does not talk does not stick the foot in the mouth. The person who has the need to tell everyone what goes on, does not have intimacy, does not have self-control. To have self-control means also to have moments of silence, moments of recollection, moments of prayer. In that way we assimilate what God plants in us.

Here we can see the sense of the secret. No one will trust in us if there is no sense of secrecy. What is the secret? Possession of oneself…..not having the crazy whim of wanting to tell everything to the first person we see. How important it is to self-educate ourselves on this aspect!

Even if it means telling oneself: I’m dying to tell my husband something, but no, I am going to wait for an hour and then I’ll tell him.

Or, we hear some gossip. Whether it is the truth or a lie, if I continue telling it, the only thing I do is plant death, not life. I kill my brother or sister’s reputation, I put in doubt something about him/her. Therefore, on my part, no more gossip. In keeping secrets you have a good, concrete way of self-possession. One must see how people open up when they find someone who is able to listen and to remain quiet afterward.

Another small exercise along with maintaining the secret, is not unloading something at any time and with any person. It is better to put-off those moments of unloading: tomorrow I am going to talk about that with my spouse, or next week. In this way one becomes a person who is not drowning and, therefore, does not need to unload.

The giving of oneself

Self-control can end up in selfishness; therefore, the second aspect of emotional maturity: the giving of oneself. Once I am in possession of myself, I am giving of myself, I offer myself. Giving of oneself is the ability of getting out of a receptive and selfish “I” to become a fruitful “you” and an “us.” To give myself, to surrender, is a task which can be applied to all areas of our life: at work, in the family and in the marriage, in society, in the parish, in the relationship with God. In all areas I am always possessing myself and giving myself, always in that game. The beautiful thing about all of that is that the more I give myself, the more I receive: more joy, more security, more love, more wisdom, more happiness. We used to say that possessive love is like a bottomless barrel. This love, giving love, is enriched without measure. And the more it gives itself, the more it possesses itself.

Questions for reflection

1. Do I talk about what I hear before making sure it is the truth?
2. Do I wait for a while…..before telling something?
3. Do I listen to others or do I “perturb” them with my conversation?

If you wish to subscribe, comment on the text or give your testimony, write to: pn.reflexiones@gmail.com

Translation: Carlos Cantú Schoenstatt Family Federation La Feria, Texas USA 091309