

TRUE AND UNTRUE ALTRUISM

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Altruism is the most convenient answer to the solitude and an essential requirement to our psychophysical health. The best solution aiming to put our obsessive thinking off from the false self, as Buber and Frankle underline.

“Why should we benefit the world? Apparently to give help, in fact to be beneficial to ourselves” (Vivekananda).

- Does the true altruism exist? Let us look over the **untrue altruism** aspects.
- altruism as a reaction to a sense of guilt, it refers to expiation, repair. Many people acting the voluntary service give reasons for that.
- An altruism linked by a depressive mechanism turned to create and maintain relationships. A dependence takes origin towards the helped person “until I’ll be useful to him, until he will need me, he will not leave me”.
- Often an altruistic mood can be settled up on a narcissistic and megalomaniac subpersonality. The aim is a self-ostentation. A strong need of showing off, of display.
- The altruistic action can be a way to escape from myself, my inner world, my problems.
- Altruism, unexpectedly, can show a projection of aggressiveness aiming to keep the other person in subordination.
- We can find another altruism, not so misleading, but inappropriate, as to become detrimental and dangerous. It comes up due to a form of egocentrism (as for the funny story of the “merciful monkey”, which, moved by compassion, takes a fish away from a river just to prevent it from drowning and puts it on the top of a tree)
- Altruism then can become for someone goods of exchange in order to earn a place in Heaven (it borders on fanaticism)

It is not easy to be an unselfish person because all our actions as a matter of fact are reactions: they are connected to our personality and our past life

As long as we want to achieve the true altruism we need to perceive our emotional maturity..

It includes:

- overpassing selfishness, egocentrism, narcissism
- To be able of giving, to be a very helpful person, altruism
- To keep solving the problem of loneliness and lack of communication.

A child in his first years is egocentered.. He may happen going on his egocentrism as an adult for different reasons of the inner psychology, childhood trauma, dynamics on the family of origin

Gurdjeff said: ”Only a sane selfish man can be a real unselfish man”. We cannot give what we don’t possess: to make highly charity we have to become rich. He who does not possess, what can he give? How many kinds of richness or indigence do exist? We can cross material wealth and spiritual poverty.

As Vivekananda reminds us, we can offer **three** kinds of help:

- Spiritual=on the roots
- Mental= on the branches
- Material= on the leaves

Before helping other people we ought to be able to watch clearly: otherwise it could happen as if a blind man would guide another blind man

True altruism is a quality spreading from our soul and potentially all of us possess it.. It is an expression of our Transpersonal Will. It includes a certain aspect of fullness, of accomplishment: to give does not mean to be lacking, but to spread out (as the symbol of theSun).

True altruism requires impersonality, while often after an altruistic action we expect thankfulness and gratitude, and if we don’t have something in return we feel hurt

and offended: these are examples of deceitful, interested altruism.

Altruistic attitude is an open mood in our heart, from where it arouses a behaviour which appears altruistic in facts, in actions.

“Perfect action is made on the maximum self-profit and the maximum no-interest”(R.Assagioli)

Altruism and Charity: all religions improved charity as for a profound sense of guilty towards money (Seneca writes to Lucilio:” No one condemned philosophers to indigence”). Some notes on the gnostic Gospels say :” if you’ll give charity, you’ll damage your soul”. And also :”Your right hand must not know what your left hand does”. Charity is something different from sharing: often a charitable person happens to help other people feeling them inferior to himself ;that is a form of “self-elevation” and “fanaticism”.

Altruism and Unselfishness.:A true altruism is a” spontaneous motion, not a purpose, a goal; it is an outcome of the overflowing (“ to be radiant”)

Some meaningful sayings:

“Blessed is not he who receives, but he who gives”

“The real altruistic man behaves on this way to everyone, not towards a single person only”

“Altruism is a spontaneous motion, it deals with the here and now”

“The more we’ll get Altruism as an intention, the more it will be difficult to succeed in fulfilling it”

“We cannot be altruistic making plans for ourselves: it is impossible”

“Be happy and you will be good”(not the opposite)

“Unfeasible project is do well for everybody, nevertheless we can anyway show goodness to everybody”.

Mainly it is up to :us to understand the deepest meaning of the famous evangelic speech:” Do love your neighbour as yourself”: the “as” means “because” it is you” .

Let us remind that ”near” means “the next”, “the closest” : So . it is a nonsense to imagine an abstract love to very far people. Even if they are an integral part of ourselves as Human Beings. To overpass the illusion of Separableness.

The idea of Love (as for the idea of God) rises or subsides in connection to our degree of conscience evolution.

From Altruism to Service: growth, as an expansion of our Conscience, is closely related with unselfishness. Assagioli reminds us that.” In lifting ourselves we serve, in serving we raise ourselves” ,