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Translated from the Spanish by Devra Torres

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# SELF-ESTEEM WITHOUT SELFISHNESS

INCREASING OUR CAPACITY FOR LOVE

Michel Esparza

 Scepter

you to finding out who you are. . . . I notice it more and more: thirst for appreciation, or however you like to call it.<sup>7</sup>

Our masks only disappear before someone who truly loves us. Only then do we act spontaneously. Without a doubt, if we knew the love of God more deeply from childhood and lived continually in his presence, we wouldn't spend so much time performing for others.

### IDEAL LOVE AND ITS ATTRIBUTES

Without humble self-esteem, not only is the ability to receive love compromised, but so is the *purity of intention* and *interior freedom* in giving love. Because we might be unfamiliar with these concepts, it is worth examining the elements of an ideal love. We can look at them first of all in the context of love between man and woman, though they may also be applied to other loves: of God, family members, or friends.

The beginnings of love between a man and a woman are very attractive (some people even become addicted to this), but they are only preparations for the journey and do not guarantee the success of the whole voyage. "Falling in love" is a feeling that doesn't endure. It's a good point of departure, but it must be transcended in order to grow into a more mature love. "If love is understood as a mere sentiment, sooner or later a couple will conclude that they don't love each other."<sup>8</sup> To the extent that love progresses, its inner elements become more important than its outer ones. In mockery of merely sentimental love, Albert Cohen writes:

7. C. Martín Gaité, *Lo raro es vivir* (Barcelona: Anagrama, 1996), p. 149.

8. A. Malo, *Antropologia dell'affettività* (Roma: Armando, 1999), p. 293.

If poor Romeo had suddenly had his nose cut clean off in an accident, when Juliet next saw him she would have run away in horror. Thirty grams less meat and Juliet's soul is no longer nobly stirred. Thirty grams less and that is the end of sublime moonlight babble.<sup>9</sup>

Recent films have accustomed us to conceiving of physical-romantic attraction as the height of love. But they forget (it wouldn't be "dramatically correct") that when this is the case, sadly, love evaporates as easily as it once overpowered us. In the movie *Stepmom*,<sup>10</sup> the protagonist finds himself obliged to explain to his children the reasons for his divorce (his feelings "had changed"). But he didn't expect the reply, voiced with worried curiosity by the littlest one: "You mean you might fall out of love with your children, too?" It was a realistic reflection of the disappointment that frequently ensues when love is confused with passion. "Unfortunately," writes Cronin, "the idea of sexual attraction as the fundamental basis of marriage, drenched in a cloying romanticism and dripping with the false promise of an eternal honeymoon, has become an integral part of the modern dream."<sup>11</sup>

For love to be stable and enduring, one needs to pass from "love as attraction" to "love as donation"—since nothing unites two people so much as the desire of each for the good of the other. In mature love, egocentric motivations disappear, and there is more focus upon opportunities to bring each other happiness. "It is possible for everything to begin with some *reason*," notes Josef Pieper, "but when love has been

9. A. Cohen, *Book of My Mother* (New York: Archipelago, 2012), p. 80.

10. Chris Columbus, director; Columbia Pictures, 1998.

11. A. J. Cronin, *Adventures in Two Worlds* (Madrid: Palabra, 1997).

kindled, no reasons are needed."<sup>12</sup> One no longer loves so much for the sake of the beloved's attractions but *for what he or she is*—no longer the "mere physical apparel" so much as the nucleus of the person, "incomparable and irreplaceable."<sup>13</sup> This solid and mature love is imperishable. Whoever experiences it understands Gabriel Marcel's recurrent, celebrated exclamation: "To love a being is to say to him: You will not die."<sup>14</sup> Beyond the boundaries of death, the beloved continues to live within the lover.

While passion is not the most vital element, it shouldn't be excluded, since it nourishes love. Still, as love progresses, the relationship is transformed into "a deep unity, maintained by the will and deliberately strengthened by habit."<sup>15</sup> Passion is accepted and placed at the service of surrender. Love may be compared to an airplane with two engines: a primary one (will) and an auxiliary one (passion). The auxiliary engine may fail regardless of our wishes, due to sickness or fatigue, but the main engine never shuts down without our consent. If the engine of the will is lacking, Thibon observes, "the slightest physical or moral trial suffices to submerge in essential solitude those lovers who are united only by the flesh or by a dream."<sup>16</sup>

We can distinguish three types of human love: enjoyment (which remains at the physical, bodily level), desire

12. J. Pieper, *About Love* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1974); Spanish edition (Madrid: Rialp, 1972), pp. 102–103.

13. In R. de los Rios, *Cuando el mundo gira enamorado*, 8th edition (Madrid: Rialp, 2009), p. 61.

14. Cf. Ch. Moeller, *Literatura del siglo XX y Cristianismo*, Vol. IV (Madrid: Gredos, 1964), pp. 179–341. See also Jose Luis Cañas, Gabriel Marcel: *Filósofo, Dramaturgo y Compositor* (Madrid: Palabra, 1998).

15. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 92.

16. Thibon, *La crisis moderna del amor*, p. 123.

(somewhat more emotional, affective, proper to the heart), and love (essentially tied to the spiritual aspect, the soul). Ideally, lovers enjoy each other, love each other, and are good friends as well. Inversely, we can identify three types of egotism: physical (sexual possessiveness), affective (emotional possessiveness), and spiritual (pride). These three spheres also correspond to three types of happiness and unhappiness: good food or a toothache, cheerfulness or emotional clashes, inner peace or a troubled conscience. The more profound the happiness or sadness, the less visible it is from the outside. A toothache is hard to hide, but the loneliness that threatens the soul tends to pass unobserved. Whoever seeks a merely sensory happiness, if he or she succeeds, is not sad but misses out on the greatest joy—the joy of love. In French, the word for "unhappy" is "*malheureux*": literally, "badly happy."

The ideal lover puts all three spheres at the service of the beloved's happiness. Physical attraction and falling in love is, indeed, a fine anteroom to the surrender of all that is most intimate, which will come with time. For this reason it requires a purification that situates it properly. Depending on the soul's dispositions, sexual and affective egotism will be battled, or else will gain ground. A good relationship with oneself, along with the always-gratifying complement of a humble self-esteem, helps to purify one's sexual and affective intentions, whereas the opposite, marred by pride, corrupts passion. Throughout this chapter, the link between pride and affective egotism will grow gradually clearer.

Let us now explore the four properties that determine the quality of love. Ideal love is *sacrificial, disinterested, respectful, and free*. Most people aren't accustomed to evaluating their love relationships. These four parameters—which can also be called operative surrender, rectitude of intention, detachment,

and interior freedom—so difficult to unite—rise above the usual approach (“How is this courtship, or this marriage, going?”) and the usual, simple response (“We get along well; we love each other a lot.”)

The first two qualities are linked to the truth, or genuineness, of the love; the last two, to its freedom. Indeed, genuine love is ruled equally by truth and freedom. Love’s truth has to do with deeds and intentions: We truly love if we are moved by upright intentions and if our deeds confirm our love. And we love in freedom if we avoid an inner rigidity—if we don’t pressure the beloved. One’s answers to the following four questions will help determine the quality of a couple’s relationship:

1. How much are you willing to sacrifice yourself for the other’s happiness?
2. Do you respect the other’s freedom, or do you manage things by imposing your own will?
3. What is your real motivation in surrendering yourself?
4. Do you surrender freely, or do you sense an internal pressure?

The perfection of love, then, consists of two visible qualities—capacity for sacrifice and respect for freedom—and two invisible ones—rectitude of intention and interior freedom. We could call this the “body and soul” of love.

### *Capacity for Sacrifice*

*The capacity for sacrifice*—concrete deeds that contribute to the beloved’s good—reveals the authenticity of our love. “Deeds are love, not good intentions,” as the saying goes.

When determining if someone genuinely loves us, we should focus on deeds, not intentions. What does the person do to show his love? Does he sacrifice himself for us without regard to his mood, or the effort demanded? Someone who genuinely loves us will be ready for any sacrifice if it adds to our happiness. In principle, we ought to trust in someone’s love for us, but we will only be secure to the degree that it is demonstrated with deeds, since “the real proof of affection is given by sacrifice.”<sup>17</sup> This is why it’s often only in times of adversity that we discover who our real friends are.

Sacrifice, then, reveals the *truth* and also the *intensity* of love. The kind of sacrifice someone makes for us provides information about *how much* he or she loves us. “How much do you love me?” lovers are prone to ask. It’s not an easy question to answer. Instead, one would do well to ask, “In times of hardship, what would you be willing to do for me?” Only thus can we tangibly quantify someone’s love. We love as much as we’re willing to sacrifice. We all have our price.

### *Respect for Freedom*

The second visible feature of ideal love, *respect for the beloved’s freedom*, implies first of all not imposing oneself on the beloved. Lack of respect covers a broad spectrum. It ranges from spiritual pressure, like that of an authoritarian mind (regarding style, tastes, and opinions) to sexual pressure—someone who treats the beloved as a mere object of pleasure—and includes affective pressure, like that of someone with a pathological need for endless proofs of affection.

17. J. Escrivá, *The Way of the Cross* (London: Scepter, 2004), 5th station, no. 1.

Affective pressure, or “possessiveness,” is characteristic of demanding, jealous people. “He loves me a lot, so much that at times it’s oppressive,” says one of Gaité’s characters.<sup>18</sup> In such cases, everything is possible: imposition, belief in one’s exclusive rights to someone, coercion, emotional blackmail, reproaches that are only apparently well-intentioned—anything to impose one’s own will. At the other end of the spectrum is “detachment.” Later, as we study affectivity, we’ll investigate the relation between pride and the possessive urge, between humble self-esteem and affective detachment.

Far from this landscape of shadows, the ideal couple neither gives orders; each obeys. This is the point and counterpoint that respect for freedom offers, a goal as difficult as it is essential for every relationship of love. This is the scenario sketched by Delibes in one of his novels, inspired by his relationship with his late wife.

Ours was an enterprise of two. One produced and the other distributed. Ordinary, no? She never felt neglected. On the contrary, she had more than enough skill to erect herself as head without overthrowing anybody. She declined the appearance of authority, but she knew how to wield it. I would raise my voice once in a while, but in reality she was the one to resolve, in every case, what to do, or what to stop doing. In every couple, there’s an active and a passive element: one who carries things out, and one who paves the way. Although it may not have looked that way, I yielded to her good judgment and accepted her authority.<sup>19</sup>

18. Gaité, *Lo raro es vivir* (Barcelona: Editorial Anagrama, 1999) p. 89.

19. M. Delibes, *Señora de rojo sobre fondo gris* (Barcelona: Destino, 1991), pp. 41–42.

### *Purity of Intention*

Let’s take a look now at the first invisible quality of ideal love: *purity of intention*. The same act may be motivated by different intentions. One’s motives are pure when they don’t place one’s own advantage ahead of the good of the beloved. “To love” is the opposite of “to use.”<sup>20</sup> The utilitarian individual takes advantage of the beloved to the extent that he or she gives with the sole aim of receiving. It’s worth making some distinctions here, though, to avoid all possible ambiguity. “It’s not a question of going on a fanatical and scrupulous hunt for the absence of all *interest*,” explains Carlos Cardona, “but of preserving a duly ordered hierarchy.”<sup>21</sup> Human beings are not capable of an absolutely disinterested love: for one thing, because we need to receive love in order to be perfected. Only God, who lacks nothing, is capable of entirely gratuitous love. What can rightly be required of us, though, are *sincere intentions*: that we don’t consciously swindle anyone by concealing egotistical motives.

Purity of intention doesn’t merely indicate a momentary desire to avoid seeking our own advantage; it is a capacity we acquire little by little as we progress in virtue. Apart from those clearly egotistical motives that lead us to use others, there are other, deeper (and therefore less conscious) ones that also cloud the uprightness of our actions. For instance, it isn’t easy to control “background defects” such as vanity or self-love. To ensure a right intention at this level, a thorough inner purification is needed, so that the degree of disinterest in our actions gradually increases as we grow in perfection.

20. See Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1993).

21. C. Cardona, *Metafísica del bien y del mal* (Pamplona: EUNSA, 1987), p. 129.

*Interior Freedom*

The second invisible quality of love is *interior freedom*. Freedom, more than action, is a *capacity for self-determination*. I am not free simply because no one is forcing me to do something; freedom means that I am capable of *doing things because I choose to*. In other words, freedom has as much to do with the absence of a certain inner coercion as the absence of external force. Some, for want of generosity, don't know how to say yes; others, for want of firm character, don't know how to say no. Sometimes they complain that others don't respect their freedom, when in reality the trouble is that they themselves don't know how to be free.

The mature person doesn't allow himself to be pushed around, but he is capable of surrendering his own liberty out of love, since he is master of it. He always knows how *to be himself*: he feels interiorly free of other people and circumstances. He is beyond the reach of external pressures. *It's not that he does whatever he feels like doing, but rather that he feels like choosing to do good*. Freedom is the capacity for self-determination: preferably towards goodness, and better still when motivated by love, not duty. This is why the truly free person is the one who *internalizes* the good rather than being motivated by an obsession with duty. Out of love, he identifies his own will with that of the beloved.

Indeed, love best illustrates interior freedom. We're able to give ourselves freely to others to the degree that we're masters of ourselves. To love is to freely belong to another. The egoistical lover seeks to *possess* the beloved; by contrast, the ideal lover desires above all to *belong to him*. Love is "not to belong to oneself, but to be happily and freely, with heart and soul, subject to another's will . . . and at the same time to one's

own."<sup>22</sup> But in order for the will of the other to coincide with one's own, one needs to possess oneself before belonging to the other. If, for want of inner freedom, one isn't master of oneself, one ends up yielding in a servile manner. This, in the long run, will satisfy neither oneself nor the beloved. Only truly mature persons are capable of binding themselves in love with complete inner freedom.

Inner freedom is rooted in maturity, but the chief source by which it is nourished is love, because love implies a harmony with the desires of the beloved. People who love each other identify with each other's wills; they "share a horizon." This "freedom of love"<sup>23</sup> helps to clarify St. Augustine's phrase, "Love and do as you will." Whoever ardently desires the good of the beloved acts freely and gladly, not sparing any effort to make the beloved happy.

In sum, love is a mutual, free, and disinterested yielding of the most intimate depth of the self, between an "I" and a "thou." One of the best definitions of love is this: "To love means to give and receive something which can be neither bought nor sold, but only given freely and mutually."<sup>24</sup>

## PRIDE AND THE QUALITY OF LOVE

The invisible qualities of ideal love, inner freedom, and purity of intention are harder to achieve than the visible ones, capacity for sacrifice and respect for the beloved. It's easier to improve the "body" (the visible element) than the "soul" (the

22. J. Escrivá, *Furrow* (New York: Scepter, 1992), no. 797.

23. Cf. J. Escrivá, *Way of the Cross*, 10th station.

24. John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, February 2, 1994, no. 11.

invisible element). Uprightness of intention and interior freedom are the fruits of an arduous spiritual conquest.<sup>25</sup> Will-power is insufficient to attain them; much humble self-esteem is needed as well. Those who have a poor relationship with themselves, if they are very strong-willed, can, perhaps, sacrifice themselves and respect others' freedom, but they will run into great difficulty when it comes to resisting self-seeking or giving themselves "just because they feel like it." Superficially, all seems well, but eventually difficulties rooted in pride are bound to arise.

Humble self-esteem is indispensable for progress in love. Without it, all the qualities of ideal love remain in doubt or are weakened. When we analyze the phenomenon of voluntarism, we'll see how pride can pervert generosity in sacrifice. Respect for others' freedom also diminishes if humble self-esteem is lacking. The origin of possessiveness often lies in a certain fear of not measuring up, a doubt of one's own worth. If this thirst for appreciation is not kept under control, affection degenerates into oversensitivity and abuse, since those dissatisfied with themselves tend to feel a great need to monopolize others.

Pride also compromises the invisible qualities of love. We've already seen how freedom is nourished not only by love but also by the maturity typical of people "comfortable in their own skin." Finally, pride tarnishes purity of intention. People

25. Experience shows that genuine love is not merely the result of a vigorous spiritual battle. As I have already indicated, and as we'll see in more depth in the second part of this book, true maturity is also a gift (a grace) to be received. In reality, only the saints are capable of surrendering themselves entirely freely and disinterestedly. To achieve an optimal relationship with ourselves, we need to experience an unconditional love. Supernatural maturity is thus the best complement of human maturity.

plagued by self-doubt have such a need for appreciation that they tend to behave well with the sole aim of securing it. But overly confident people can also be driven by intentions that are less than pure. This happens when we allow ourselves to be led by that "somewhat questionable zeal to help others in order to convince ourselves of our superiority."<sup>26</sup>

Self-sufficient persons know how to give but not how to receive—their generosity has an element of vanity to it. Though they may seem obliging, they gaze at themselves through a flattering lens. They serve their neighbor in order to feel comfortable with themselves; they do favors for others to prove their own goodness. This way of giving recalls what Chateaubriand said of his friend Joubert: "He's a perfect egotist: he thinks only of others . . ." <sup>27</sup> In reality, this is pure self-complacency. It is therefore inaccurate to assert without qualification that the generous person is the one who gives, while the egotist is the one who receives. The art of loving requires *generosity in giving* and also *humility in receiving*. It's hard to say which of these virtues is the more accessible. What's clear is that a relationship of love only works if reciprocity is present. If one doesn't know how to receive, the other can't give.

Additionally, the self-sufficient person may know how to give, but not how to *give of self*. Love is the art of giving oneself as one gives something, and of giving something as one gives oneself. The gift of something invisible (myself, my person) needs a visible vehicle to express it. To manifest our love, we can buy a material gift for the beloved, for example. But at the same time, this gift itself may be corrupt. Any "donation"

26. J. Escrivá, *Friends of God*, no. 230.

27. In C. Pujol, *Siete escritores conversos* (Madrid: Palabra, 1994), p. 31.

implies the surrender of something intimate. Self-sufficiency gives but does not *give of itself*; it does favors, but with a certain coldness; it does not commit its own inner self.

This unwholesome independence clouds a relationship of love; to enjoy a higher level of love, one must, without exception, cultivate both an *excellent personality* and a *great affective capacity*. The greatest loves are the ones between mature persons who love each other deeply. They are wholesomely *independent*, having definitively conquered any problems of self-esteem, and lovingly *dependent*, each wishing only to make the other happy. Thus, in an ideal marriage, both spouses manage to reconcile human maturity and affective generosity, and each can say to each other: "In a certain sense, I don't care what you think of me; in another, I'm consumed by the desire to make you happy."

## DEPENDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE

Experience teaches us that we can't depend exclusively on others to gauge our personal worth. The importance of others' opinions becomes more and more diluted as self-knowledge increases. We grow familiar with our abilities and limitations and learn to accept them. There is, however, a hidden danger inherent in this process that can throw off the equilibrium we've reached with others. This occurs when one equates maturity with a lack of interest in others. It is a mistake to think that dependence on others is an obstacle to self-realization. This approach leads, in practice, not to the achievement of legitimate personal independence but to a sterile victory, through cold unconcern, over one's dependencies. It doesn't lead to independence—only indifference. True independence isn't born of coldness or distance but of inner freedom and the

ability to love with detachment. It's one thing not to depend on the opinion of others; it's quite another to disregard them. As we grow in perfection, we acquire the freedom that allows us to combine a healthy independence *and* a healthy dependence. They don't preclude each other, though at first glance they may seem to. The balanced person is at once sensitive and strong. He or she has the kindness to say yes but doesn't lack the personality to calmly say no. Maturity harmonizes these two aspects; this is why we admire those whose affection makes them vulnerable but whose sense of dignity makes them strong. They're capable of gladly accepting the bonds love creates; at the same time, their humble self-esteem allows them to preserve a wholesome independence. The opposite provokes rejection—those fragile people who require constant attentions (infantilism) as well as the arrogant ones who won't accept help or love from anyone (individualism).

We could call the synthesis of independence and dependence "*auto-dependence*."<sup>28</sup> It involves the avoidance of both false dependencies and false independence. False *dependence* leads to a servile frame of mind. We witness this in insecure people who, for fear of being disliked, are afraid to say no. False *independence*, on the other hand, denotes self-sufficiency and egotism. We observe this in those somewhat arrogant people who wash their hands of others. Whereas a servile attitude stems from a lack of interior freedom, the desire to preserve one's autonomy at all costs comes of an erroneous conception of freedom. Freedom is not worth much unless it can be surrendered for the sake of love.

False independence is far more harmful than false dependence. Calling attention to oneself is preferable to pretending

28. J. Bucay, *El camino a la autodependencia* (Barcelona: Grijalbo, 2002).



to need no one. Self-sufficiency isolates us from others; vanity at least leads us to take them into account. Loving badly is preferable to not loving at all. "Vanity," Lewis argues,

though it is the sort of Pride which shows most on the surface, is really the least bad and most pardonable sort. The vain person wants praise, applause, admiration, too much and is always angling for it. It is a fault, but a childlike and even (in an odd way) a humble fault. It shows that you are not yet completely contented with your own admiration. You value other people enough to want them to look at you. You are, in fact, still human. The real black, diabolical Pride comes when you look down on others so much that you do not care what they think of you. Of course, it is very right, and often our duty, not to care what people think of us, if we do so for the right reason; namely, because we care so incomparably more what God thinks. But the Proud man has a different reason for not caring. He says, "Why should I care for the applause of that rabble? . . . [A]m I the sort of man to blush with pleasure at a compliment like some chit of a girl at her first dance? No, I am an integrated, adult personality."<sup>29</sup>

In practice, both self-sufficiency and vanity are hard to avoid. Only the saints manage to attain it fully. They experience what St. Paul affirms: "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all . . ." (1 Cor 9:19). The rest of us, given our limitations, strive for balance and manage as best we can. Some, for fear of losing their autonomy, won't surrender to anybody and end up living in solitude; others,

29. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, p. 72.

beset by an insatiable hunger for affirmation, go about with heart in hand and bind themselves in a servile manner to the first bidder. Based on these reflections, we will now delve into the complex world of affectivity and explore its relation to the quality of love, self-esteem, and the spiritual faculties of intellect and will.

### THE HEART'S ENERGIES

Nothing makes us more dependent, in the best and the worst sense, than affection. The heart is a double-edged sword. Its good side is its *discernment* and *capacity for sacrifice*; its bitter side, its *injustice* and *possessiveness*. At its best, affection sharpens ingenuity<sup>30</sup> and lends wings to the will. At its worst, it thwarts common sense and detachment. Emotional maturity requires continual adjustments and rebalancing. At the level of intelligence, affective passion facilitates empathy, but it can also blind the reason. Affectivity fosters two hearts beating in sync, but vehement passion impedes that "natural sense of reserve which everyone finds attractive because it denotes intelligent self-control."<sup>31</sup> Thanks to affection, a mother grasps immediately how her child is feeling, but that fondness can also cloud her judgment and lead to all sorts of irrational behavior. The will is like a two-sided coin: affection facilitates generosity, especially when sacrifice is called for, but it also fuels possessive tendencies.

30. According to Thomas Aquinas, perfect knowledge is "affective knowledge of the truth" (*Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 162, a. 3 ad 1). The classical thinkers distinguished between *intellect* and *reason*: to be *intelligent* is broader than to be *reasonable*.

31. J. Escrivá, *Friends of God*, no. 84.

The heart is at once powerful and fragile. It is able to persevere in adversity, but it becomes vulnerable in the face of indifference. The sensitive person, unless he purifies his affections, suffers from an excessive need to feel loved. If he lacks other resources, he is exposed to painful disappointments. His fortitude breaks down easily. The more his self-esteem deteriorates and the more his sadness grows, the greater his tendency to demand affirmation and encourage his own fantasies. His blind desire to see his value affirmed bodes ill for the future. He appears headed for a dead end, caught between the affective expectations he's nourished with his imagination and the real impossibility of satisfying such an excessive thirst for attention.

But we will leave the negative aspects of affectivity for the next section and focus first on the profound benefits it offers. The heart is the motor that moves one to love, to give oneself. "Take note," observes Antonio Machado. "A heart alone is no heart at all."<sup>32</sup> If the heart is brimming with affection, all its strength will be poured into the desire to procure happiness for the beloved, never counting the cost. And if happiness is attained, it amply compensates for any suffering or effort. The *bliss of making someone happy* is proportionate to the affection involved.

In a mature person, heart and will buttress each other. Above all, "to love is to will the good of another."<sup>33</sup> Love resides in the will, but when the heart helps, the surrender "runs smoothly." Otherwise, if affection is reticent and self-donation becomes arduous, the "motor" of the will supplies what is lacking to make a *glad* sacrifice, even if *without inclination*. Even if the heart is *cold*, the will inflames it.

32. A. Machado, *Canciones*, no. LXVI.

33. Thomas Aquinas, *On Charity*, art. 7.b.

"The perfection of the moral good consists in man's being moved to the good not only by his will but also by his 'heart.'"<sup>34</sup> Goodness ought to impregnate the intellect, the will, and the heart. As Alejandro Llano states:

A good character formation is one that leads me to a liking for good and a dislike for evil. For this would be a sign that my freedom is leaving its mark on my very body, that a sense for what is right is being infused into the substance of my blood. Thus I can succeed in overcoming the schizophrenia, so common today, between the cold rationalism that dominates Monday through Friday and the fever of dispersion that takes over on the weekend. I begin to attain a single life, though not a univocal or monotonous one. I gradually integrate into my life those goods that are found at the roots of my own personality. The poetry of the heart begins to penetrate the prose of the intellect.<sup>35</sup>

It's a question of pooling our resources—intellect, will, and affectivity—and placing them at the service of love. The intellect inspires good intentions, and the will, sustained by the heart, puts them into practice.

The goodness that can radiate from the heart is astonishing. "Everything I've ever done in my life, in all different fields, I've done out of affection," said Eduardo Ortiz de Landázuri.<sup>36</sup> Many parents, especially mothers, could say the

34. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1775.

35. Llano, *La Vida Lograda*, p. 79.

36. In E. López-Escobar and P. Lozano, *Eduardo Ortiz de Landázuri* (Madrid: Palabra, 1994), p. 279. This university professor, admired for his medical knowledge and his sanctity, died in 1985. In 1998, his process of beatification was initiated.