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A FREE TRIBUTE FOR YOU

SOME SHORT REFLECTIONS

DRAWN FROM

MINDSET

&

PERSONAL GROWTH

THE LITTLE BOOK
FOR MY PERSONAL GROWTH

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There are two quotes that I like and which lend themselves very well to a clear introduction to this text. The first is from George Orwell, who says that "*The best books, he perceived, are those that tell you what you know already*" and the second, by Marcel Proust which, in some way, confirms the previous quote: "*Every reader finds himself. The writer's work is merely a kind of optical instrument that makes it possible for the reader to discern what, without this book, he would perhaps never have seen in himself.*"

We are therefore talking about something that we already know, which is already present in us, in our unconscious: our potential. Nothing extraordinary, nothing magical. Simply something that nature has already thought of for us and that we will have to consider more carefully and then concretely experiment in everyday life.

If you are reading it now, dear reader, it means that there are still some aspects of your life that you would like to overcome or improve.

We therefore know why we are here, together.

It is likely that you have already read many other books that deal with these topics. I might therefore think that you are an expert person and for this reason, for the correctness that is due to those who start reading a book, I will tell you that I do not promise miracles and I do not offer you infallible methods, or something prodigious that would do nothing other than unnecessarily delude your expectations. Promises, in fact, are always something very risky and easy to make.

With this small and very simple manual, it is my intention to encourage those who read it to improve their lives because I know that this is really possible and, after all, it is exactly what we all need.

This is a short essay, useful for reflecting and reawakening the desire to be the protagonist of one's own life.

How? With the MINDSET or FORMA MENTIS (in Latin), our mental structure.

There are essentially two types of mindset: the "fixed mindset" and the "growth mindset" and they represent two fundamental approaches that people adopt in their perception of themselves and their potential.

Fixed mindset it's when you think that your talents and your intelligence are hereditary and immutable, and there's not much you can do with them.

Growth mindset, instead, is what leads you to believe that intelligence and talent can be developed, improved, increased.

We can change our usual mental state and look at everything from a different point of view.

Because improving and being yourself is not just a hope, but a duty and, as we well know, this is possible, and it is possible for anyone who really wants it.

In these first pages, before addressing more specific aspects of understanding how to be ourselves despite the world around us, I will share with you some concrete events in my life, because I believe it is right to start by telling something about myself.

Each of us has a personal story and a very specific path.

Well, thank you for trusting me, I wish you enjoy reading.

Giovanni Cismondi Pravisani

I was born in Italy, into a family belonging to the so-called middle class.

Like all children born in the last century, I grew up in a much simpler society than today's. There wasn't much talk about pollution, unemployment, crime. Life was simpler and also richer in healthy physical effort, like that of a farmer in the field, under the sun, with a spade and sweat on his forehead. That physical effort that makes you understand what work is and appreciate everything, even a short break or a simple glass of water. A breath of air that refreshes you, a pat on the shoulder. A good morning said with clarity of heart. And even the language was simpler, more true. More free.

Today, however, in our modern and advanced world, language is often obligatory, one-way, especially for certain social communities where so-called standards are imposed which you cannot escape.

Whoever has the kindness to read these reflections will understand how language and communication are the key topic that has always characterized me. These same sentences are *communication*.

Communicating has always been essential. After all, if we did not possess a language we would not be able to express our thoughts, our feelings and our emotions, we would be prisoners of ourselves. Instead, we know how human beings have always looked for different ways to come into contact, or if you prefer, communicate, with other human beings.

But is it possible to speak freely with our family members? Is it possible to speak freely with work colleagues? Or is communication, dialogue, often avoided because it seems impossible to say what we think? Wouldn't they understand us anyway?

But, let's go step by step.

I was saying that the period in which I was born and raised, the last century, was very different from today. There were no computers, there were no mobile phones, there was no internet, nor social media and people had a very different relationship with everyday life.

Can I say that they were freer, indeed, that we were all freer to use our imagination? Yes.

(...)

I believe that it is not very difficult, especially in today's age of artificial intelligence and electronic brains, to understand how the most important and functional tool we have at our disposal is our brain: the most powerful computer available to human beings.

Our mind.

The new neurosciences, i.e. the set of studies scientifically conducted on the nervous system, tell us that the mind is a function of the brain and therefore mind and brain indicate the same thing. We can therefore use the term mind to simplify the discussion.

It contains everything we need, but if we don't know it, if we aren't aware of it, we can't use this potential and we easily become slaves to things, people, habits, and other situations.

There is always the risk of being prey to judgements, prejudices and clichés.

For me, it all started like this, almost by chance.

After many difficulties, not knowing how to get out of a situation in which things were no longer going the way I wanted, I did something very simple, natural: I made a decision.

Without knowing it I used a potential that was innate in me, in my mind. I could act, I could react and do something different, discovering new things.

So I started studying those strategies that could develop in me the latent abilities to dare and take control of my life.

I attended several post-university courses, from Existential Anthropology to NLP, from Hypnosis to Autogenic Training, Smile Therapy, Problem solving, Master in Shaolin Training Methods and again, and above all, I was able to delve deeper into the Semiology of communication.

I finally dared and made some very important choices that I had never considered before.

I trained with Umberto Eco and Paolo Fabbri regarding Semiology, with some specialists for hypnosis and Bandler and Grinder regarding Neurolinguistic Programming.

The most recent years also represented for me the beginning of a new era which led me to push the boundaries of home and live new experiences in Mexico, Chiapas, England and Spain in the Canary Islands.

(...)

The opportunity to travel, work and stay for long periods in other countries has given me the opportunity to meet many people and, with some of them, share important experiences of collaboration and work. Among the best known I like to remember Sergio Leone, Charlton Heston, Roger Moore, Gianni Agnelli, Margherita Hack, Margaux Hemingway, but the list would still be very long.

(...)

I am a *semiologist*.

What? Don't worry, it's quite normal that most people don't know what it is, they always ask me, and this chapter will give an answer to this question.

The definition found in dictionaries or encyclopedias says that Semiology, from the Greek σημεῖον, sign, is the *general science of signs, of their production, transmission and interpretation*.

We are immersed in signs and continuously produce them, both consciously and unconsciously.

Umberto Eco, one of the leading experts on the subject, tells us that "*For at least two thousand years, since the Greeks, people have been thinking about a discipline that studies the variety of signs used by human beings and that Semiotics or Semiology, which are Terms of Greek origin, etymologically, appeared for the first time among doctors of the Hellenistic period, interested in understanding the origin of certain diseases or the presence of certain diseases from the signs of the face and skin. It was in 1600, in England, where research of this type flourished, that the word semiology or semiotics was used. A great philosopher like John Lock said that there must be a science, semiotics, which deals with logic and all such problems. Lately, two directions of research have been characterized, one of Latin origin, which comes from linguists, such as Ferdinand De Saussure, and the other of more philosophical origin, which comes from American scholars. ... At a certain point it was realized that there were too many intersections to make too clear distinctions, so let's say that, today, Semiology and Semiotics are synonymous.*"

Signs are part of our habits (signs, signals, symbols, numbers, notices, signs, etc.) and like everything that is usual they do not always attract enough attention. We use signs all the time, but we don't always pay attention to them. Signs are not obvious and natural things, but symbols of those who generate them. Everything is a sign: from an actor's facial expressions, to a package of spaghetti, to telephone numbers.

(...)

The semiological approach, which I use to investigate the human being, makes use of all these elements just described. It is a complete approach because it uses many tools that allow an overall vision of the person, of their needs and, consequently, to identify a precise strategy to overcome any obstacle or difficulty.

However, I also combine this semiological approach with a working method that aims at personal growth.

Today this method is commonly known by the English term Mindset.

Mindset literally means mentality, that is, that particular way of conceiving, understanding, feeling, judging things, considered proper to an individual, a social group, or even a people. We could also say that mentality is synonymous with *forma mentis*, a Latin phrase that refers to the mental structure especially with regard to the way of considering and understanding reality, as it is determined in the individual, by nature and education.

Three different definitions that explain the same thing to us.

Mindset is very important, because our cultural formation and our mental structure influence everything we do, what we feel, what we perceive and think. Our mentality influences our relationship with the world and research has shown that there are many different types of mentality among which, as I have already mentioned, there are two particularly important ones: the Growth Mindset and the Fixed Mindset.

The **Growth Mindset**, or open mindedness, leads us to believe that our basic abilities can be developed and improved through a process of personal growth that will allow us to improve and achieve our goals.

The **Fixed Mindset**, or fixed and blocked mentality, pushes people to believe that their abilities cannot be developed and consequently they will not be able to achieve their desired goals.

(...)

We have to decide what is really positive for us, what is good, because perhaps we have never been able to take important initiatives or decisions and have let others decide for us. An extremely serious mistake.

The time has come, and it is always the right time, to ask yourself: what do I want to do with my life?

And, above all, what is my dream?

It is not a rhetorical, banal or easy question, it is the question that can really trigger a process of change in each of us, a process that can make us grow and move and get out of a situation in which we are stuck.

Everyone has a dream, a special dream, and dreams are just what we need, and remember, there is no dream too big, no dream that is impossible.

If we really want to move on, we have to talk to the deepest part of ourselves just like we would with our best friend, and we have to do it sincerely because in this way we will set out on the path that can really change everything.

(...)

If you have a goal, you know where to go, if you don't have a goal you will remain in your static position forever, in that uncertainty and unhappiness that you can no longer bear.

Is that what you want?

It's the action that sets things in motion, it's the action that can animate and bring your dream to life.

It is therefore necessary to define what steps must be taken to reach the identified goal. You don't have to suddenly go on a long run and be out of breath, but you can identify stages to reach one at a time, with calm and determination, and everything will be easier.

Take small steps to intervene on daily habits with small changes.

The best thing is to start with these little things.

For example, don't repeat the same gestures you do every day. Change them!

If we interrupt habits, even the simplest ones, and modify the surrounding environment, we open ourselves to new ways of looking at things and thinking.

Everything new will open new horizons to your mind.

Staying in your comfort zone, in your protected but limited space, won't help you.

Remember to always dare.

(...)

When we have understood how important we are, when we have understood that we need to pay more attention to ourselves, when we have understood that life is a truly wonderful and unique thing, we will have finally found the way to set up a new existence in which we can be who we are really, with all our qualities and potential.

When you change the way you look at things, everything changes, you just need to want it.

Of course, it takes a decisive action, but it's worth it.

So, change your attitude.

Now is the time.

(...)

I am here, ready to listen to your needs, ready to give you full support to achieve your goals.

It will be a pleasant journey and a wonderful transformation.

*The Mind is everything.
What you think you become*

Siddhārtha Gautama