

The Realm of Interiority

February 16th, 2018, Phase 1, Day 6:

The Roots of Professional Practice: What Do You Stand For?

The difference between a professional and a *professional* is that the former applies their skills and knowledge to whatever the client would have them do, while the latter have clear standards of what they will and will not offer. The former are merely the tools of those who purchase their skills while the latter represent something greater than them. What they stand for is worked out in the realm of interiority, where all the tools previously covered are put to work. In other words, the phase 2 case study is as much about whom you are as it is about the “fake news” that you are about to encounter. It is these internal changes that are carried over into phase 3. They are the changes that lead to progress rather than decline, and they have all to do with our capacity to live in freedom.

Liberty and Freedom is:

1. Operative at the reflective level of the human good
2. Is ultimately concerned with terminal value, i.e., what is really of importance
3. Involves a communal effort among free individuals not operating in an instructional structure but as a series of personal relationships

Freedom is not:

1. The pure exercise of human will or an unencumbered drive for power
2. But the capacity to recognize the needs of time-and-space-specific situations
3. And act in a reasonable and responsible manner to meet these needs

Freedom is a function of:

1. Authenticity or genuineness
2. Expressed not as a state of being but as a process of becoming
3. Involves radical shifts in whom the subject is (foundational shift, not vertical or horizontal expansion)
4. This radical shift can only be described as intellectual, moral, and religious conversion
5. Ultimately, the problem of liberation is met only through the Divine Mystery (falling in love with God)

Is achieved through personal encounters

1. Actualizing one’s potential for living a free life involves the personal encounter with another person life story and general orientation/world view
2. This process is one of mutual self-mediation, where both parties become part of a process greater than themselves
3. In this encounter, both face the reality of their own inauthenticity especially when put into the context of the reality of the Divine Mystery
4. At its heart, it involves a willing to change—or at least to allow oneself to be changed

Mutual Self-Mediation¹

1. Mediation defined as a shift from the immediate to the mediated where “the immediate is any principle, origin, source, ground, basis; the mediated is any effect, consequence, result, outcome, any sphere of influence, radiation, expansion” (p. 12).
2. There are two basic forms of mediation: energy and control

¹ Bernard Lonergan, S.J., “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer” (*Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, Volume 2, Number 1, March 1984), pp. 1-20.

3. Mutual self-mediation “is the encounter in all its forms (meeting, regular meeting, living together). One’s self-discovery and self-commitment is one’s own secret. It is not a natural property that can be predicated of all the individuals in a class. It is an idea conceived, gestated, born within one. It is known by others when one chooses to reveal it, and revealing it is an act of confidence, of intimacy, of letting down one’s defenses, of entrusting oneself to another. In the process from extroversion, from being poured out on objects, to existential self-commitment, to fidelity, to destiny, we are not Leibnizian monads with neither doors nor windows; we are open to the influence of others and others are open to influence by us” (p. 13).
4. Mutual self-mediation occurs in a variety of contexts and varies to its extent, e.g., falling in love and getting married, educating an infant or child, relationships between siblings, personal relationships in a neighborhood or business or profession.
5. “Mutual self-mediation proves the inexhaustible theme of dramatists and novelists” (p. 13).
6. “It lies in the immediate interpersonal situation that vanishes when communication becomes indirect through books, television, programs, and teaching by mail” (p. 13).

Objectification (being aware depends on having a sound theory anticipating what there is to be found)

1. For the most part, people do not attend to their intending; they go along with the state of affairs without any critical reflection on their part.
2. If they do, often it is conceived as a “looking within”; but this is a misnomer, for it is not through “seeing” but through enhancing one’s awareness of what it is that one is doing.
3. Being open to experience; being an intelligent detective in search of clues to answer a question, being a reasonable dispassionate judge carefully weighing and collecting the evidence to make a judgement, and being a responsible individual whose judgments of what is really of value combined with the freedom to act as the situation demands.
 - a. Are you aware of what you are doing when you are doing these things?
 - b. And do you have standards that allow you to assess the quality of your work?
 - c. Tough questions. But until you answer them you are in effect flying on autopilot.
4. Note that each level has to do with successive layers of *being*
5. Objectification, and through objectification self-criticism—how can one follow a methodology without being aware of the methodology one is following?

Professional Practice

1. It is one thing to be an arm-chair general pontificating on the affairs of the world and actually take up the task of becoming the sort of person who gets their hands dirty attempting to contribute to the state of the world.
2. This project represents one attempt to prepare students interested in actualizing Lonergan’s notion of a cosmopolis to take on a “professional” stance.
3. It does so by providing opportunities for people to open up to their own being in the world, doing so by taking on the objectification possible through personal mutual self-mediating encounters.
4. This is accomplished by working with the two fundamental standards for performance laid out by Lonergan: transcendental method and functional specialization.
5. This is a communal process grounded in mutual self-mediation among professionals and would-be professionals.