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Who Am I? Unity of Life and Personal Growth

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K. Ogunyemi et al. (eds.), *Humanistic Perspectives in Hospitality and Tourism, Volume 1*, Humanism in Business Series,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-95671-4_7

1 Introduction

"What do you want to be when you grow up?" From childhood, we're taught to dream about a certain profession. We seek fulfillment in our work—and rightfully so. The *other* isn't the only one who comes out winning in the dialogue of genuine hospitality; if we approach work as a venue for personal growth in virtue, we definitely end up finding the self-actualization we seek.

Growth has a starting point: *who am I?* It also entails a vision: *who do I want to be?* A crucial element to growth is *unity*: unity of ideals, values, attitudes, and dispositions with outer expressions and actions, forming a personality that is coherent, whether in private or in public. To achieve this unity of life, one must consciously direct one's powers toward a worthwhile goal, seeking the best answer to *who do I want to be?* Ultimately, becoming a good hospitality professional means aiming at a goal that is even higher: striving to be a good human being.

In this chapter, we take a tour of a philosophical framework that helps structure personal growth and unity of life. First, we take a closer look at the universal potencies of the human person and the role they play in our activity. Second, we introduce the notion of virtue. Finally, we sketch out how the traditional four moral virtues can be exercised in hospitality.

2 A Closer Look Within: The Person's Blueprint

You're a barista, it's 5 a.m., and you should be getting up and ready for the opening shift. You feel sluggish and a little bit more tired than usual, though—you've stayed up late for several nights finishing coursework for a food and beverage certification program, and your mom's been sick for a week. It's fallen to you to cook family meals, and there has been more rush at the café these days. You consider calling in sick: tomorrow is your day off, anyway. But part of you is reluctant: you've never missed a day of work so far, and you *do* take pride in your job. What do you do?

You're a sous chef, and it's Saturday night. Tension runs high in the kitchen as you all deal with the rush of diners *and* the lavish birthday

banquet occupying one of the restaurant's event rooms. A junior chef is particularly slow today: he's made mistakes in basic operations and doesn't seem to understand the instructions repeated to him (twice). Then, at a particularly critical point of the night, someone from front-of-the-house comes to tell you that a diner is getting impatient, just as the junior passes you the wrong ingredients for the dish. You feel an incredible rush of anger and the great urge to yell and let him have it. At the same time, all the recent news reports about aggressive chefs come sharply to mind. What do you do?

You're a hotel HR manager, and five minutes before closing time, your secretary tells you that there's a very distraught housekeeping staff member who has just come in, claiming that she urgently needs to speak with you. You've had a particularly full day, have that rather dazed feeling from too many meetings, and have spent the last hour dreaming of getting home and watching something light on Netflix. What do you do?

Inner conflict is familiar to all of us. This experience led Plato and Aristotle to posit different powers within the person, starting with the basic division of desire and reason. When conflicted, we feel a strong or significant inclination toward something, and at the same time, are conscious of reasons for *not* doing what that desire is inclining us to do or reasons for doing something better. Thomas Aquinas would take up these explanations, developing a four-part framework of the powers or faculties of the human soul. Because classical philosophers strove to form a clear idea of the principles of human activity, they also had a strong explanation of *good human action* and what we have to do to live well: *grow in the virtues*. Let's take a look at the powers of the soul that play into personal growth.

The aforementioned classical philosophers had a thick notion of the soul: it is more than just mind.[1] As discussed, the soul is the immaterial principle of life and unity for the entire person: our being holds together because of our soul. The capacity to know and think is one of its powers, *distinct* from the capacity to desire or reject what we come to know. The difference between knowing and wanting is something we can phenomenologically experience. When we *know*, the object of our knowledge becomes *present to us in some inner way* (Lombo & Russo, 2014, p. 55), but we don't automatically desire everything we know. Studying for exams shows this to us in a particularly vivid way: we can possess knowledge (and if we study well, we do so for years after). Still, we don't necessarily like *or* dislike everything we study—we can be quite neutral about what we learn. On the other hand, when we *want*, we experience a *tendency or inner movement towards a good* or *away from an evil*, and this can move us to act. If we are pastry chefs and see a YouTube video of new chocolate decoration techniques, we can experience a strong inclination to try them out. The object of our knowing is what has been classically called an *intentional form*, while the object of our wanting is the thing *in itself*. If you are hungry, the knowledge of pizza will not satisfy you as much as a real pizza.

In Aristotle and Aquinas, since the powers to know and want are parts of the soul, their purpose is to sustain the life of the whole. So, where does inner conflict come from if these capacities were meant to work for the creature's benefit? From the fact that the human is a complex being—his/her life spans different levels, as he/she is body *and* rational soul. The classical philosophers identified three degrees of life: vegetative, sensitive, and rational. This makes our knowing and wanting multilayered as well.

[1] For more insight into the matter, see Sanguineti, J.J. *Filosofía de la mente*, in Fernández Labastida, F. and Mercado, J.A. (Eds.), *Philosophica: Enciclopedia filosófica on line*. Retrieved April 16, 2021, from http://www.philosophica.info/archivo/2008/voces/mente/mente.html; Sanguineti, J.J., and Villar, M.J. (2016). ¿Es posible hablar de alma o espíritu en el contexto de la neurociencia? In Vanney, C., and Franck, J.F. (Eds.), *¿Determinismo o indeterminismo? Grandes preguntas de las ciencias a la filosofía* (pp. 513–534). Logos-Universidad Austral.

Aquinas argues that wanting or appetite is dependent on knowledge, and he points out that we are capable of two different types of knowledge: sensible and intellectual.[2] Thus, we also have sense appetite and intellectual appetite or will. *Senses* and the *sensitive appetite* are linked to bodily organs and activity, while *reason* and *will* are spiritual faculties that do not involve organs; rather, they are directly seated in the rational soul.

Through external and internal *senses*, we gain knowledge of corporeal, material, and concrete realities.[3] With the *sense appetite*, we desire what we come to know through our senses. Aquinas identifies two "subdivisions" of the sense appetite—desire which leads us to pursue a pleasant good, and desire which gives energy against difficulties or for a useful good (Miner, 2009, p. 50). Generally, he explains emotions in the key of these desires. Joy, for example, comes when we reach what we desire, sadness when we don't have what we desire, and anger when we see an obstacle blocking us from something we desire (which is why we would need the energy to overcome the difficulty). Again, because we are a unity, there is significant overlap with our rational life here: we can feel these emotions for intangible or spiritual goods as well (friendship, justice, beauty, etc.).

Reason makes us open to all reality—material *and* immaterial. The intellect grasps universals: thanks to the intellect, we can know a thing's nature, its causes, being, truth, and good. We can know completely immaterial realities such as the soul, God, dignity, and hospitality. Because Aquinas holds that appetite is dependent on knowledge—and because he thinks they should be proportionate—he says that the desire corresponding to intellectual knowledge must be *capable of desiring and uniting with goods that are not solely material*. This desire he calls the intellectual appetite or the will. Only the will can want things *because*

[2] Vegetative life's powers are nutrition, growth, and reproduction—not knowledge and wanting.

[3] A full discussion cannot be made here, but a list might help: external senses are touch, taste, smell, sound, sight and internal senses common sense, imagination, cogitative power, and memory, see Chapters 6 and 7 by José Ángel Lombo and Francesco Russo (Philosophical Anthropology).

they are good, that is, not just because they are pleasant or useful. Our will, which responds to the goods identified by our intellect, enables us to *choose*. By the will, man has the capacity to "orient himself knowingly toward perceived goodness or towards his own specific ends" (Lombo & Russo, 2014, p. 95). Again, intellect and will are purely spiritual faculties because only such would be capable of having immaterial objects.[4] Because of intellect and will, we are free and live our life through freedom and choice.

Senses, sense appetite, reason, and will are what undergird our action. The faculty approach is useful in explaining why inner conflict can arise *and* also how it can be resolved. We always desire things because we grasp them to be good in some way. Sometimes inner conflict is a tussle between something appealing largely to our sense appetite and something appealing largely to our rational appetite. Consider the situations mentioned above: in the sous chef scenario, you are seeking emotional relief (letting out stress in anger) but need to weigh that against reputation *and* what is good for the team dynamic. In the barista or HR manager dilemma, you probably feel the inclination toward a largely physiological and sensitive good (rest). Still, you find yourself considering it against another, less tangible good (i.e. working well, serving the other).[5] On the other hand, sometimes conflict can very well be over several rational goods, precisely because our rational soul opens us to loving so many things: do we give more time to work, family, or friends? In these cases, a lot of reflection is needed to choose wisely.

What do we have to do then, to live well? Examining inner conflict shows us that there is a plurality of goods to choose from. The ongoing task of the good human life is to put order among these goods and choose the *best* good at a given moment—*good* also meaning course of action or way of acting. It is not a matter of calculation or hard-and-fast rules. What we need is the *ability* to know what the best thing to do is, and to carry it out. Having the capacity to know, desire, and choose in a way

[4] At the same time, they do not operate independently nor separately from the sensitive faculties.

[5] Note that the faculty structure schema has its limitations: many times we experience something as good or bad *as a whole*. Rest, for example, can also be very good and necessary for the rational powers.

that is consistent and coherent with the best we can be is what it means to have a strong personality, and to be virtuous.

The part that can know what's good for us as a *whole*, as *persons* (with all that entails—see previous chapter), is reason. Classical philosophers often called it the best part of us. But we can't just know what's good—we have to want it and do it as well. The journey of personal growth entails uniting the different powers within ourselves—desires for pleasure, desires which give energy against difficulties, free will, and reason—integrating them through choice and activity such that they cooperate in choosing the best at every moment. This unity takes place through the virtues, because they order and render our mode of behaving conducive to the good of human life as a whole. Being virtuous *is* a worthwhile goal, and the best answer to *who do I want to be?*

3 Virtue: Releasing Your Potential

In Greek, virtue is "arete (αρετή)", excellence. For Aristotle, a happy life is one lived in accordance with the virtues, which are excellences of the intellectual and appetitive powers. Similarly, Aquinas characterizes virtue "an operative habit…a good habit, and an operative of the good" (Aquinas, 1981, I–II 55 3c).

What does this mean? Aquinas traces the Latin *habitus* to the verb *habere*: to have or possess. A *habitus* is an enduring characteristic of the person that implies a profound possession of his own nature, making him master of his own actions. Since habits reside in our faculties as stable dispositions, they procure us the power to act readily, with regularity and dexterity. The philosophical notion of habit goes much deeper than the way we usually use habit today: an ingrained stimulus—response circuit. Modern and contemporary psychological treatments of *habit*, following William James, tend to portray it as rigid, automatic, unconscious, opposed to goal-directed actions, and bereft of any possibilities, whether good and bad (Bernacer & Murillo, 2014, p. 1; Austin, 2017, p. 24).

This is not the case in Aristotle and Aquinas' anthropology, which characterizes virtue as a good habit of a free nature. When classical philosophers call habit and therefore virtue a "stable disposition," this does not mean that it determines (i.e., boxes in) or automates the activity of our intellect, will, or sense appetites. It means that it enables them to be more capable of acting toward the good of the entire man, or the good of reason.

Think of a normal, unathletic person who decides to start on an exercise program. At first, there are certain workouts or even movements that he/she is not able to do, because his/her muscles aren't ready. Continuous exercise, however, makes the muscles suppler and increases stamina and speed. The perfection of the muscles is not a determination, strictly speaking, but an increase of capacity. Neither is it an automation, because the person must always use his/her own muscles. As a person continues to exercise, his/her muscles gain a more perfect disposition to challenging activity, making the subject more physically fit overall and more capable of challenging workouts and routines. This is an excellent image of how virtue perfects our intellect, will, and sense appetites: they are our "muscles" in living a good human life, and they release and even increase our potential. Another aspect of virtue's being a stable *disposition* is that it disposes or orients the lower faculties to the higher faculties, creating harmony and order among them. This makes it easier for our sense appetites, will, and intellect to work together for our good—just as exercise leads to better muscle and movement coordination.

Virtue as a "good operative habit" or "good habit bearing on activity," stands in a special relation to the soul, which is the remote source of all our activities. The profound union of our body and soul grants our faculties to be the proximate sources built into the soul by nature and the habits as immediate principles acquired to hone our faculties. In other words, the soul aids man, faculties aid the soul, and habits aid the faculties. In perfecting our faculties, virtue perfects us as entire persons, helping us aim for the good. Virtue has a fixed relation to a *good*: the good of the person with respect to operations of external things, i.e., justice, and the good of the person with respect to operations of internal things, i.e., passions and impulses. Thus, virtue does not just mean goodness in *external actions*, but *internal desires and emotions* and *intention* as

well. It is a habit of choosing the good because we want it *as something good*, a habitual perfection of our inner choice.

Virtue is acquired through constantly choosing, and at the same time, gives us the capacity to constantly choose the good. This is not a matter of mechanical repetition: true virtue requires a notion of *habit-as-learning* as opposed to neuroscience's view of *habit-as-routine* (Bernacer & Murillo, 2014, p. 5). Recall that choice is an activity of the will, and so closely linked to reason. Well-formed reason tells us what the right choice is. Our will carries this choice out, doing so more energetically when our sense desires cooperate with it. When we consistently reflect over what the best thing to do is in a given situation and consciously choose and do it despite any difficulties, the virtue we acquire eventually leads to spontaneity, thus becoming second nature to man. Virtue and choice have a circular relationship.

Human beings are ordered to self-perfection. We are wired to direct—or in some cases, redirect—our course toward a fulfilled life: we are purpose-driven, goal-oriented creatures. Flourishing is the highest good of human endeavors. All our free actions have flourishing as its target, its intended goal. We have seen above that virtues are habits, stable dispositions that provide us with guidance on how we are to live our lives. This is personal growth: being responsible ourselves, for our own character forged in the virtues, and ultimately for our quest for answering the originary question—*Who do I want to be?*

Virtues, then, are intrinsic elements of a flourishing life. There is an inextricable, not *just* instrumental, connection between virtues and human flourishing. Viewing virtues as instrumental would mean seeing them as important because they help us achieve results or manage our emotions, rather than because they are valuable in themselves. If virtues release our potential, then they are *part and parcel* of flourishing. Kristjánsson is convinced that the virtues are "a defining aspect of human flourishing - indicating both that they are *irreplaceable* by anything else and *objectively valuable*" (Kristjánsson, 2018, p. 10).

Kristjánsson observes a rather instrumentalist understanding of virtue among some contemporary psychology trends, including positive psychology (Kristjánsson, 2018, p. 7). For instance, he comments on Barbara Frederickson's treatment of gratitude as "simply a positive emotion that is valuable insofar as it broadens and builds personal resources" (Kristjánsson, 2018, pp. 10–11). In this framework, it seems like "gratitude is, in principle, replaceable by any other means that happens to be more useful for this instrumental task." On the other hand, however, "gratitude *qua* quasi-Aristotelian virtue (…) would be an irreplaceable part of a flourishing life" (Kristjánsson, 2018, p. 11).

In other words, as intrinsic elements of flourishing, virtues are more than positive performance attitudes that contribute to a positive workplace morale and long-term success. When we see it this way, we can fall into the trap of cultivating the virtues in the workplace with the sole end of productivity, or as Kristjánsson says, *business-as-usual instrumentalism*. If we are productive, positive, and emotionally stable thanks to the strategies of PERMA, mindfulness, the Steen Happiness Index, etc., but not *virtuous*—not choosing to cultivate virtues because it is good—then we are not, strictly speaking, living a flourishing life.

If becoming a good hospitality professional means aiming at an even higher goal—striving to be a good human being—then work is our stage for this virtuous performance. We can be *virtuosos* in the hospitality industry, not only in the sense of being highly skilled employees but of being excellent human beings living a flourishing life. Think of an executive chef who spends over a decade of consistent training for countless hours a day. This entails a progressive learning scale, stepping up and down every now and then, which eventually forms one to be a *virtuoso* in the culinary arts. A manager becomes a *just* manager if he/she practices the virtue of justice day in and day out. He is acclaimed as a hardworking person not because his shift is more than eight hours a day but because when he is working, he concentrates on the task at hand diligently. This way of acting for an extended period of time becomes a lifestyle, a virtuous cycle. Just as constancy and consistency enable one to be an expert professional, the virtuous stamina of the hospitality professional is built up in the workplace.

As a human activity, hospitality also has a subjective significance regarding the self-fulfillment of the person who performs it (Lombo & Russo, 2014, p. 228). Practicing the virtues helps us release and develop our potential and live a purposeful life even at work, where we spend two-thirds of our day. Meyer attests that it pays off to surround oneself with compelling persons from whom one can learn and with whom one can be challenged to grow (Meyer, 2006, p. 130). The workplace, therefore, is the best arena to cultivate and exercise virtues. Carrying out our work well by incarnating the virtues is synonymous with working toward becoming more virtuous persons. As a result, we gain skills that help us become more confident in all that we do (Engelland, 2018, p. 185) because the virtuous person is most free and most capable of doing good things: a release of one's potential toward a flourishing life. Work then is a growth opportunity, a character builder, and a human potential catalyst. It is where we are constantly challenged and constantly choose, and so, constantly practice and cultivate the virtues.

4 A Flair for Hospitality: Virtues in the Workplace

Among the virtues Aristotle discusses in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, four stand out: the moral virtues of temperance, fortitude, prudence, and justice. When Aquinas develops these, he calls these cardinal virtues; his account holds them as virtues that all others are part of and can be loosely mapped onto the four human faculties (*ST* I-II, Q. 61 Art. 2). Temperance and fortitude generally perfect the sensitive appetite, prudence perfects reason, and justice the will. At the same time, we have to keep in mind that virtue unifies our powers—so cultivating and exercising all of them require the cooperation of our sense appetite, will, and intellect. We briefly discuss the four virtues and how they can be exercised at work.[6]

[6] The summary we present has three major sources: the *Nicomachean Ethics*, the *Summa Theologiae*, especially the second part of the second part, and Mercado et al.'s *Personal Flourishing in Organizations*, where one can find a chart that adapts and links positive psychology's VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues with classical approaches.

4.1 Temperance and Fortitude

As mentioned, temperance and fortitude perfect the sense appetite. Specifically, temperance—also called self-mastery—perfects the desires that pursue pleasure or sensible and bodily goods. On the other hand, fortitude perfects the desires to flee from or combat sensible or bodily evils.

Temperance protects us from excess, especially in pleasures or comforts. Pleasure and comfort are not bad in themselves: in fact, the flourishing life needs a level of pleasure and comfort, and the task of hospitality is to bring pleasure and comfort to others. However, when we indulge in them in the wrong time and place, or to the wrong degree, they can derail us from higher goods. Being dependent on short-term gratification *can* make you unable to achieve and savor long-term, more valuable goals. Although temperance is also known as moderation, it doesn't consist in only being able to stop oneself. When we are temperate, we become capable of working toward and really enjoying better things.

Fortitude makes us stand firm in the face of difficulties and strive for the good. When there are external and internal obstacles to our goals, fortitude helps us overcome them. When work gets tough, fortitude helps you follow procedures, do things well, and work against tiredness if you judge it to be the appropriate thing to do. When controlling your temper or doing the right thing gets difficult, fortitude also helps you do what you know you should.

Some positive traits that fall under temperance are forgiving those who have done wrong, humility by "letting one's accomplishments speak for themselves" (instead of boasting), being careful about one's words and actions, and regulating one's emotions. Some that fall under fortitude are integrity and authenticity—speaking the truth and being genuine even against social pressure; not shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty and pain; finishing what one started, and "approaching life with excitement and energy" (Calleja & Mercado, 2018, p. 76).

4.2 When Do Situations Call for Temperance and Fortitude?

Traditionally temperance has to do with the pleasures of food, drink, and sex, while fortitude with fear and daring, especially in the face of danger or death. So one could imagine that temperance and fortitude are needed when you are, say, exceptionally exhausted, and you are offered the chance to get drunk or get high. But the self-mastery and resolution that these virtues form in us can also be very applicable in the world of our emotions. If we are temperate and strong, we will not give in to every urge to burst out in anger, tears, acid remarks, or nerves; we would have the capacity to rein in the impulse, calm ourselves down, process our thoughts, and act such that the problem causing our reaction is resolved in a good way.

This is especially important in interpersonal relations, whether the particular situation is that a particular co-worker always rubs us the wrong way, or whether we work in a restaurant kitchen subject to constant levels of high tension. The temptation to be aggressive (or passive-aggressive) can be very strong, and circumstances do not often favor peace. However, with temperance and fortitude, we can reach a point of maturity where we can be in command of ourselves and act respectfully even when we are tired and stressed. Fortitude, in particular, enables us to channel our energy to something constructive rather than aggressive. This will be possible because the virtues have shaped our desires to such an extent that they respond more easily to the good of reason: possibly remembering that I want to be a respected leader and a respectful person will be enough to calm me down.

Temperance and fortitude also definitely perfect how we do our work. On one hand, temperance can help us not overwork ourselves and take the right number of breaks. Fortitude helps us not slack, be punctual and diligent at tasks, and take the initiative. On the larger scale, temperance helps us not be carried away by pleasures such as promotions, perks, or elite status. It enables us to enjoy them when we deserve them, and when it will not harm "ourselves, our firms, or others." Fortitude enables us to withstand criticism or embarrassment from people who do not share

our ideals when it is time to take a principled stand at work (Engelland, 2018, p. 179).

In brief, temperance and fortitude foster affective maturity, facilitate teamwork and interpersonal relationships and help us be constant and consistent in our work ethic. Learning to smile and be attentive to others while under stress and persevering in work when tired spring from the virtues that regulate pleasure and endure difficulties.

4.3 Prudence

Prudence perfects reason such that it knows how to discover or detect the good in practical matters. It is more than just being clever, business-savvy, or "emotionally intelligent" such that you know how to win people over. When we say that prudence has to do with practical matters, we mean the practical matter of *living*: a prudent person can give advice about the good human life as a whole, which is why we can say that it deals with the ways in which man is happy (Aristotle, 2004, *NE* 1143b20). Prudence is a flexible virtue: it knows that the "right thing to do" does not depend on an abstract standard operating procedure, but is discerned in every situation. At the same time, prudence does entail knowledge of universals—i.e., of what is good for the human being—to be able to apply it to the particulars of the moment.

Prudence "consists of a knack for distinguishing ends from means together with an ability to be attentive to the nature of things," giving one insight, direction, and allows him to discover the true, the good, and the beautiful at work (Engelland, 2018, p. 179). It entails study, familiarization with particulars such as hygiene protocols, organizational skills, and standards of good service; it also requires a deep knowledge of the human person, his worth, and his needs. Traits that come along with prudence are creativity and innovation in doing things, curiosity and interest in the ongoing experience, open-mindedness by examining all sides, love for learning, and being able to give perspective or counsel to others (Calleja & Mercado, 2018, p. 76).

Prudence guides and directs all the other virtues, and is reinforced by them as well. As can be seen from the action prompts of the other

virtues, temperance, fortitude and justice also entail prudence. One does not become virtuous without reflection on what is truly good for me, as a human being, at the moment, without getting to know the particulars of a situation, without experience, and without (ethical) deliberation.

4.4 When Do Situations Call for Prudence?

The truth is, all the time. One needs to exercise right reason whenever one makes a decision (except, for instance, situations like choosing between *pistacchio* and *stracciatella* gelato). Prudence is needed when you're faced with difficult ethical situations, which certainly will come up at work. Perhaps you do not need to decide what to do with other people, but you *do* need to be able to decide what to do yourself if you find yourself in a clearly moral dilemma. Prudence is also needed in ordinary, daily decisions—knowing how to treat others, knowing how to decide what you're going to do at work, knowing how to rank priorities in life, knowing when to take a break. Part of prudence is also having an attitude of study and evaluation to always try to work (and live) better, with technical excellence and human excellence.

Action Prompts
In the face of a problematic situation, we are sometimes called to make difficult judgments. Here is a brief outline of steps that can aid you to resolve the situation or make decisions wisely. Note that the spirit of these steps is that a prudent person informs himself/herself, pays attention to the concrete particulars, and discovers what is good for the human person in this situation.

- Gather the observable facts of what happened.
- Listen to both sides.
- Identify the problem.
- Reflect on the concrete particulars, and consult with the right people (i.e. those in the lawful position or have the competence to help you judge or resolve the situation).

- Dialogue with the interested parties, if it is possible to collaborate with them to find the solution.
- When you make a decision, follow through coherently.

Learn to reflect, and ask yourself *why* you do things.

Look at your co-workers—reflect on human dignity. Take the talk about human persons and human worth seriously. This gives one clear priorities, and good reason to treat others with respect and regulate expressions of emotions.

4.5 Justice

Justice perfects activity toward others, giving them what is due. In hospitality, which is all about the other, justice means actively honing and perfecting skills pertaining to one's department, thus providing good service: culinary excellence and food presentation, cleanliness in housekeeping, efficiency and warmth at the front desk, receptivity, and graciousness for all staff.

As a virtue, the object of justice is *what is due* directed to the other either for a *particular good* (work satisfaction, empowerment, and personal growth) or the *common good* (harmonious and effective teamwork resulting in the company's success and/or its positive contribution to society's growth). If not practiced, it would be impossible for us to live with others as justice entails positive traits that underlie a healthy community life—fairness, leadership, and citizenship/loyalty/teamwork (Calleja & Mercado, 2018, p. 76). Aristotle emphasizes the specific meaning of justice as a virtue that consists in the observation of the *just mean* in the distribution of goods and obligations. Employees need to feel that the distribution is fair and equitable to act justly themselves in the workplace.

Justice has a paramount role in the workplace. We realize how, in our experience of the practice of this virtue, it is characterized by *alterity*—the recognition of others as another *I*; *sense of obligation*—we give what is owed in the strict sense of the word; and last but not least, *equality*—not in the sense that every person receives exactly the same thing, but rather justice re-establishes equality between the other and me, i.e., when a chef was asked to do overtime and has been paid for it, leaving neither of the two owing anything to the other. All these three characteristics imply a fundamental recognition of the inalienable and irrevocable dignity of every human being, regardless of his/her position in the workplace.

4.6 When Do Situations Call for Justice?

Justice is not a virtue on its own. It requires the virtues examined above and is to be practiced all the time, whether or not someone is looking at us. It is more than a matter of rights. The practice of justice involves *a relationship with others* and embodies *the good of others*.

Many real-life situations intensify the call for justice. A particularly relevant case is when we're tempted to put profit over people. It's peak season, and your hotel needs more manpower to attend to the influx of guests. However, hiring more people, albeit contractual, would mean spending more money, which you would rather save up. To cut costs yet still gain more profit, your solution was to add three hours more to all of your employees' eight-hour-shift and glossing it over with a 10% increase in the 13th-month pay. But, as the manager to whom people look up to, are you giving your workers what is due?

In positions of power, justice means fairness in treating employees, fairness and transparency in implementing rules and regulations; safe and healthy working conditions to avoid harassment, bullying, and exploitation; fair wages. Justice should not only be lived at managerial levels. Living justice at work means avoiding pilfering, regardless of whether things have little value; it means not cutting corners even if a task or procedure may seem insignificant. In short, justice is in each worker's responsibility to work and work well. When we treat each other justly, we learn to trust the other as he/she acknowledges us as another *I*.

Action Prompts

- Distribute tasks, attention, and feedback fairly.
- As a manager, create an environment where equal opportunities, not equal rewards, are given to everyone. Take care of your employees. Recognize outstanding efforts. Celebrate every goal met.
- As an employee, carry out your tasks with accountability and responsibility.
- Make work/life balance a team priority.
- Foster constructive communication through open channel feedback.
- Treat each other with dignity, compassion, caring, understanding, and respect.

What would virtues "look like" in the workplace? One could say that living the virtues gives us the flair for hospitality. This is more than just an expression: recall that virtue unites our faculties: makes our sense appetite more responsive to our will and reason, and helps all the powers in us aim for what's truly good for the human person. When we work hard to acquire virtues, constantly seeking to choose well, our virtues can permeate us to great depth. This can mean several things: on one hand, this makes things that seem difficult at the beginning become more natural with time: we can actually reach a point where we enjoy being good—being hardworking, courteous, or orderly.

On the other hand, virtue also manages to shape our sensitivity and perception. Some philosophers have pointed out how we cannot, say, help others or be compassionate if we do not first perceive suffering (Blum, 1994, pp. 31–37). Virtue doesn't just cultivate our inner disposition; it also shapes our moral perception. When we live the virtues, we end up noticing, very naturally, what the other may need and what we can do to gift the other with genuine hospitality.

5 Conclusion: Changing a Harsh Work Culture

When celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain took his life, others began to speak up on their views and experiences of mental health in the restaurant industry brought about by constant pressure, harassment, and lack of social support (Osipova, 2018). The effective way these chefs used to deal with mental health was to acknowledge it and practice better self-care. If we translate this to an anthropological perspective, *authentic self-care* means living a life of virtue. The virtues, when practiced by everyone in the industry, especially from top-down, can create a mold for a thriving work culture.

A champion work culture is the DNA that serves two important functions in the workplace: The genetic material of the virtues passed from top-down and serves as *the information* to direct and regulate the development of personal and professional growth and flourishing. Work culture is akin to the wind. Its invisibility environs all hospitality workers, making its effect be seen and felt. When it is blowing in the direction of flourishing, it makes for smooth sailing. But when it is blowing against human flourishing, everything becomes more toilsome.

We have learned in this chapter how our work in the hospitality industry is a human potential catalyst for us to achieve a flourishing life. However, we also know that no workplace is unflawed. While some experience the maximum job satisfaction, others wallow in an unhealthy work environment—and sometimes, they only choose to stay to be able to put something on the table at the end of the day, or because it's the job that they love no matter what the odds are.

Harsh work culture is plagued by constant stressors resulting in unhappy employees. These stressors can be the lack of trust (between employer and employee, and between you and your co-workers), injustice, individualism, power struggle and opportunism, unclear goals, mismatched job tasks, to name a few. All this boils down to the failure to effectively recognize each person's dignity and his multiple capacities for growth and development. Is there no way out then for a harsh work culture? The good news is that work culture is *created* and not directly produced by hospitality industry stockholders. Personal growth

can lead to culture change: the person himself becomes the backbone of the industry's character. But such change must take place at *all* levels of any institution.

When hospitality is well done, one serves the other as an entire and integral human person, creating spaces, environments, and experiences infused with order, harmony, and beauty, therefore allowing and fostering the other's bodily, psychological, and spiritual flourishing. More, living the virtues as hospitality professionals is *perfective of the person*: the best way to establish a humanistic and flourishing work culture.

Study Questions

1. How can I direct my human potentials toward a worthwhile goal?
2. What does *growing in the virtues* entail in my life as a hospitality industry professional? Which virtues and traits do I need to work on most?
3. How can personal growth effect culture change in the workplace?

Chapter Summary

Personal growth and unity of life can be achieved in the workplace, in particular, in the hospitality industry. This growth indeed involves *the other*, but it primarily seeks to answer the question: *Who am I?* in view of the vision, *Who do I want to be?* Knowing and understanding our blueprint as persons endowed with inalienable dignity and various capacities that help us develop ourselves and become better human beings is a crucial step to a flourishing life. In our pursuit of self-actualization in work, virtues as *habit-as-learning* occupy an integral place, as intrinsic elements, in our daily life as professionals. Our work serves as our stage for virtuous performance, giving us the flair for hospitality. Through the virtues, our faculties—the intellect, will, and affectivity—are united, cultivating our inner disposition as well as shaping our moral perception. In the end, personal growth is living the virtues of self-mastery and

fortitude, prudence, and justice, molding us to behold *the other* and gift them the genuine hospitality they deserve.

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