

OUR INFLUENCE

**The influence we have on others
when we make a deep inner change
goes far beyond those around us**

This article is largely taken from the book still being written on the culture of profit and the means to leave it. It is part of the site: "Changing oneself to change the world", so as to better understand that our personal change is not in vain, and can have a much greater impact than appearances suggest.

CONTENT

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction..... | 2 |
| Seeking to raise awareness, and to influence: is mistaken ourself..... | 3 |
| The real influence takes place far from the speeches..... | 4 |
| Collective intelligence..... | 4 |
| Mirror neurons..... | 5 |
| Epigenetics..... | 7 |
| The contagion of altruism..... | 7 |
| Morphogenetic fields..... | 8 |
| Self-contagion..... | 8 |
| The transmission of all our thoughts and emotions..... | 8 |
| The power of minorities..... | 12 |
| Conclusion..... | 14 |

Introduction

We currently live in a society based on the balance of power, where those who hold the power make the choices for others. And in recent decades, this power is no longer only held by the political, judicial, military, etc. authorities. This power is now also shared by corporations, banks, with the help of the influence of advertising, the media, and other profit-related lobbies. This influence has largely made it possible to divert this power, by dictating our behaviors - mainly consumer behaviors - by creating every day new fashions, new needs, by encouraging addictions, by manipulating, and by proposing all kinds of mirages, the one more glittering than the other.

We therefore no longer obey only rules or laws, but are much more influenced and manipulated via the implicit rules dictated by the commercial, economic and financial sphere in which we live. In this sense, influence through manipulation has become not only tolerated, but also advocated, and even downright a must in some circles. This integration is such that we can for example observe that the majority of people not only accept the presence of advertising, but they also accept that it is personalized, and some even consider this advantageous.

It is becoming more and more obvious that those who hold the power, officially, do not have that much, and do not use it, by far, advisedly. Everyone pulls the string on his side, resulting in a monstrous inertia. Conversely, those who hold the economic and financial powers put the brakes on any possibility of evolution towards sound decisions. Even if the description may seem caricatural, it is not far from reality. Inertia towards global warming is the most obvious illustration of this. We are going straight into the wall, everyone knows it, and yet the vast majority of governments and corporations are not changing direction one iota, and are even continuing to accelerate.

As individuals, and as consumers, most of the time we are caught in the trap of decisions that we either don't approve of, or that implicitly influence us. And this all the more so if we are attached to values of status and power, to money, to easy pleasure, to show-off, to waste. For these are very convincing for our impulses and our mind.

And when we become aware of this trap, we generally feel powerless in front of the size and complexity of the system that imposes a society that we would like to see change. This powerlessness freezes us in our pigeonhole, where we generally bask in inaction, or complain, grumble about everything that is wrong.

Why would I lift a finger when I know my neighbor won't do anything?

And when we have the strength to move beyond this passive state of complacent participation, submission, and inertia, we often engage in rebellion or at least some form of opposition.

We join some form of counter-power: political parties, unions, NGOs, anarchism, in order to cancel or counter the powers that we do not approve of.

However, these counter-powers have existed for decades. And if they achieved real progress until the 70s and 80s of the last century mainly, their current influence looks more like a status quo, and even in some areas a real rollback.

It is therefore essential to act differently, to act elsewhere. How then to influence the course of things?

Seeking to raise awareness, and to influence: is mistaken oneself

The answer is not in seeking to influence others. Here is why.

When awareness arises about the traps of the society of money, power, profit, and consequently the will to distance oneself from these abuses; a burning desire to influence those in power, and therefore to get those around oneself and even more to do the same, often becomes the main objective. Many people then adopt a missionary attitude, taking small steps and trying to make those around them take

big steps forward. And this more often causes the opposite of the desired effect, namely: resistance.

I will not go so far as to say that it is useless to testify, to argue occasionally (without insisting) with those around us, trying to simply question, without more, in order to bring back more rightness. But it is better to be prepared not to see the effects, at least not quickly. Because very often, there is a time lag between what we try to spread around us, and the integration of this content by those around us. And knowing it is essential. We can thus hope that the message, even if it is denied in the present, can nevertheless be integrated, and that its memory, in the future, could act during crises, or in the presence of other sources of influence, which, combined, will end up raising awareness. However, the announced disasters which multiply do not leave us the time to consider changing things by influencing in such a long term. To think that raising awareness of our surroundings is beneficial is to be mistaken.

Consequently, it is better to learn to think differently while accepting not being able to convince. Because the evolution of those around us does not depend on us (unless we have an educational role to play towards them). This does not mean that we should silence our opinions or keep information to ourselves. But we must know that their impact may be minimal or even ineffective at the time we express them. And that the more we inundate an entourage that is resistant to our speeches or arguments, the more they will try to deny them or run away from them, and thus run away from us or silence us.

But in any case, influencing cannot be an objective in itself. It is therefore better to keep in mind that it is essential not to expect to see the effect of our influence around us.

Conversely, we have all the power over our own behaviors, our beliefs, our intentions and therefore to focus on our own objectives towards more awareness, more sense of responsibility and solidarity, by better managing our impulses. and our mind so that they serve more the reasons of the heart.

Influence comes as a bonus when we change ourself. The main thing is to do our part, to give the best of ourselves, with humility.

If we know that those who hold power do not make good use of it, that those who seek counter-powers have very little impact on the decisions of the former, we still have our part to do, by leaving the game and the rules it implies. And if you believe that you are just a drop in the ocean and that investing yourself personally in change is a waste of time, you are simply mistaken.

The real influence takes place far from the speeches

For the other side of the coin is that we do exert influence, but on a whole different level.

For, if it is not easy to convince; we can nevertheless operate a change around us of another order, because a psychological force, and the radiance or charisma which results from the personal evolution can influence in another manner.

And this influence is not negligible at all, especially since it works with a snowball effect, that is to say, in an ascending curve.

At first sight, it is natural to conceive that our individual little drop of water in the ocean of almost 8 billion individuals on the planet is insignificant. Almost everyone is convinced that only buzz, mass media, large-scale marketing operations, lobbies, certain political powers, and in a pinch certain petitions and demonstrations, can bring large-scale changes.

I am not going to pretend that they are ineffective. But it's worth digging into the subject of individual power.

Individually, we are not at all powerless, but more often than not we are unaware of how great our influence can be, and usually in a totally unconscious way.

Apart from the relatively conscious aspects, such as the power to convince, the power of example, that of testimony, the power of education and teaching; the influence can operate otherwise.

And it is much less the speech than our acts and our thoughts that are at stake.

As long as we seek to exert a counter-power, in front of dysfunction in so many areas of society, we will remain deluded, fidgeting in the void much more than obtaining concrete results. When we have the possibility, it is better to leave the rules of a game that we do not approve of, and that we follow more by inertia than by conviction. For, remaining in the game means participating in all these dysfunctions, being accomplice, maintaining in place what we denounce.

Leaving the game is playing our part as the hummingbird:

<https://sechangersoi.be/EN/5EN-Tales/Hummingbird.htm>... It's about stopping being complacent, and also stopping waiting for others to do it, and focusing on our own steps, however small.

When we do our part, we de facto lead others to do the same, because a whole series of lesser-known, unnoticed sources of influence that work as catalysts will exert their effect in the same direction. These combine, and are in fact part of the same process. We are part of a whole, and it is the whole that is on an evolutionary path. By considering things in this way, we understand that evolution is inevitable and well and truly on our doorstep, and within our reach. And by deciding to walk this path at our individual level and by getting involved in it; we not only stop obstructing this evolution, but above all we contribute to accelerating it. Here are some of these influencing factors. The first and the last are not individual, but are part of these alternative and less known catalysts.

Collective intelligence

Collective intelligence is part of the solutions of the heart. It manifests itself outside the power relationships, far from circles where competition rules, from social systems based on coercion and pride. It manifests itself when each individual in a group directs his or her intentions towards one or more common causes, towards the same objective, with the main motivation being the achievement of the project, while being able to set aside personal interests. When the whole becomes more important than the self in the context of the project. For, when the will of each one works in solidarity in the same direction, it is easier to avoid disagreements and things fall into place naturally. The priorities are then fundamentally transformed and this allows access to creativity, intelligence, efficiency and persuasiveness, which are far superior to the sum of those of each individual participant. The group then functions as a school of fish, a flock of thousands of birds, a team of champions. Such projects are spreading much more quickly than others, without generating the "buzz" or receiving media publicity.

Projects working with collective intelligence are therefore much more likely to succeed than all the others. Thus, the more use will be made of them (and their functioning is increasingly known and sought after), the more opportunities will be multiplied to move in the direction of solutions, of evolution, and where creativity will take precedence over reproduction of what has always been done, without turning its back on tradition. [ref to article - in French:

<http://sechangersoi.be/4Articles/intelligencecollective01.htm>]

At the individual level, it is therefore essential to direct our actions towards groups where collective intelligence can work.

Mirror neurons

Mirror neurons were discovered in 1996 in Italy by Giacomo Rizzolatti, a neurologist from the University of Parma. This is a major discovery, which however did not make the headlines. If our learning is based on our experience; it is also, naturally and automatically, also based on the imitation of what we see, hear, perceive.

When we observe someone making a movement; motor neurons fire in our brain as well, while our body does not participate in the action. In this way, when our intention (conscious or unconscious) is to imitate the observed movement, we are already learning, just by observing it, even if we are not aware of it.

The contagion of imitation is already visible in everyday behaviors such as yawning, or laughing, easily imitated by the people around us. Knowing this effect and being aware of its consequences forces to learn to act more responsibly, in all circumstances. An example that illustrates this well is the role of the pedestrian at the crossroad. When a pedestrian crosses the street while the light is red for him; if he is not alone, there is a good chance that other pedestrians will follow him, imitate him - without having checked either the traffic light or the possible arrival of cars - by simple mirror effect.

If the pedestrian who crosses the first at the red light, is aware that a car is coming 50 meters away, and forces the pace to avoid it, it will not be the same for those who have followed him by automatism. Therefore, as a pedestrian, if we are aware of this automatic process possible in other pedestrians, we know the responsibility we bear by crossing the first at red. This will automatically lead us to reassess our attitude, and first check whether we are being followed or not, and maybe even lead us to make it a habit of respecting the red light for pedestrians in all circumstances.

If I give this example, it is because it illustrates quite well the responsibility for all our actions or behaviors in front of witnesses, even the most insignificant ones, and consequently the learning of the choice to take actions or not in certain situations, or of the way to take them, according to their consequences on those who witness them.

The parenting role of course works the same way. Besides their active role, all the actions of the parents are subject to imitation by the children.

Therefore, when we adopt new behaviors that challenge those around us, we are really able to influence them in the long term, without having to preach or argue. For, if we work to try to convince them to follow us and they are rather reluctant in the first place, we are much more likely to get resistance from them.

Our responsibility in our personal behaviors is therefore much more important than the only path we take individually. It may involve the path that others will also take.

Thus, any learning of new methods, new behaviors, by certain members of a community, may one day be imitated by the other members of the community. The responsibility for choosing the right behaviors is therefore much more important than previously imagined.

And in this sense, we can better understand the importance of the fourth power represented by the mass media. Programming shows, series, reality TV, which are based on violence, sexism, injustice, competition, manipulation; consists intrinsically in educating the viewers to integrate these behaviors.

It's the same for other media such as cinema, youtubers or influencers and their millions of followers, social networks, etc., and the massive invasion of advertising at all levels.

The content of our information, the teaching methods in schools, etc. ; are all subject to imitations for those who are the recipients.

Another aspect to consider with mirror neurons is their ineffectiveness for anything that causes our aversion. This prevents imitation.

At first sight, this could keep us away from the danger of imitating everything that is harmful in our surroundings. However, we must also take into account habituation. The more we live for example in a violent environment, the more we get used to it and the more we accept it. And this can be done at a snail's pace, without us being aware of it [ref: the boiled frog :

<https://sechangersoi.be/EN/5EN-Tales/Theboiledfrog.htm>].

It is therefore not surprising that in a society where advertising floods us and pushes us to consume, where television and cinema show us in abundance all the worst aspects of human behavior and all the horror of the news; that we end up simply taking on the role of sheep, of consumer and behaving more and more violently, selfishly, dishonestly, learning to distrust everything, and ending up supporting the most fascist policies, while trying to build a capital of shares, while clinging to do whatever we like at all costs without caring about those around us who are suffering. Of course, this description is caricatural. No one looks like this. Yet we have each adopted one or the other aspect of it in a marked way, or sometimes more subtle and insidious.

An in-depth questioning of the choice of programs and other written, television, cinematographic or online content will therefore have a serious impact on those imbued by it.

Becoming aware of this aspect of imitation by mirror neurons can motivate us to try to feed ourselves with other images, other information, but also to behave differently, and to try to seek out people who have taken the same direction.

To learn more about mirror neurons, here are two references given in the original text, in French:

[\[https://nospensees.fr/neurones-miroir-empathie/\]](https://nospensees.fr/neurones-miroir-empathie/)

[\[https://www.pourlascience.fr/sr/article-fond/les-neurones-miroirs-1419.php\]](https://www.pourlascience.fr/sr/article-fond/les-neurones-miroirs-1419.php)

Epigenetics

I cannot pretend to know this theme, and moreover, this paragraph has been added after the writing of the rest of the document, because it has been brought to my mind by reading the book [“To live happy, live equals! by Richard Wilkinson and Kate Picket], as well as by what Joe Dispenza says about it in his books, conferences and trainings. In a few words, here is what I understood about it in relation to the present subject. If we are born with a defined DNA, which composes our genes and cannot be modified during our life; our genes can be modified by our experiences. They can be activated or deactivated. And their state, depending on our experiences, can be transmitted as it is for several generations.

As soon as we learn new ways of functioning in life, before becoming a parent, this can lead to the activation or deactivation of certain genes. Our evolution will thus benefit our future children without them having to carry out all the work of transformation that we will have had to carry out.

And conversely, epigenetics can reinforce social inequalities, because if poverty only generates survival behaviors, it can also create a form of vicious circle. For, being raised in a disadvantaged environment, it generates conditioning to survival behavior in children, and beyond that, it can also be passed on to the next generations by heredity.

Therefore the evolution in behavior, in the mental and emotional functioning in potential parents, can ensure future generations that this evolution will be maintained over time.

The contagion of altruism

The contagion of altruism could be the consequence of mirror neurons. However, this contagion has an even greater force, because when we witness a gesture of altruism, we are imbued with a positive emotion, a feeling that gives meaning. And this impression generates the desire to do the same. There will not necessarily be imitation of the behavior, but the observed act of altruism is in some way the trigger for a chain of altruistic acts which will then subsequently be taken by the observer. [ref in French: https://www.rtf.be/info/societe/detail_l-elevation-quand-etre-le-temoin-d-une-bonne-action-fait-de-nous-une-meilleure-personne?id=9876159].

This contagion is also reflexive: being generous, benevolent, giving ones best, makes us feel good and pushes us to continue in this direction. The more we experience it, the easier it becomes to leave the more selfish registers of individualism which consist in persevering in doing whatever we like without taking others into account, etc.

Altruism, if it is not feigned, if it is initiated by true benevolence and empathy, can have an important counterbalancing effect to habits, conditioning, impulses and addictions. It is also the light that can help us to dissolve our dark side. For, our benevolence towards ourselves, by accepting our darker parts, opens us to accept the other in the same way, and allows us to learn to give without counting.

All behaviors that consist of getting out of the economic system as we know it today, can be marked by an altruistic intention, a thirst for justice, a motivation of solidarity. In this sense, not only can they automatically generate imitation, but they are also likely to be a stimulus to go even further, for those who witness it. In a way, solidarity and all humanistic behaviors are the driving forces of a positive,

constructive, creative spiral towards more behaviors of this kind. One can then easily imagine that the more citizens there will be who will practice them, and therefore the more citizens who will witness them; more easily these behaviors will eventually become widespread.

Morphogenetic fields

Further on, there is another level of automatic and unconscious collective learning.

Rupert Sheldrake, a British biologist, has come up with a whole theory about this [<https://sechangersoi.be/EN/4EN-Articles/Sheldrake%20EN.htm>]. His theory is based on the observation in biology, that when a community carries out a learning process, and once this learning is acquired by a sufficient number of the members of this community, it automatically becomes acquired by all the members of this community, but also by all those of the communities of the same species; and this, even in the absence of any material communication between these communities. And this is true for human beings as well.

While we usually think that our memory is located in our brain, that our genes are responsible for inherited traits and that our thoughts are only the consequence of chemical and electrical phenomena inside the brain, Sheldrake postulates that it is otherwise.

The changes that we introduce into our live at an individual level would thus have an impact on those around us, and much further, even if we do not show them or communicate them.

This theory makes it possible to envisage the acceleration of future transitions. The larger the groups concerned, the faster the transformations will take place and on a large scale. This would allow us to envisage that, faced with the collapse of our civilization, which is becoming more and more visible, the rebirth of a new civilization, that of the paradigm shift, is already taking place. Each time a critical mass is reached for a progress to be implemented, i.e. a large enough number of people become able to integrate it into their personal lives, then the progress can become widespread.

Self-contagion

The following can be linked to the morphogenetic fields, in the sense that Rupert Sheldrake speaks of morphic self-resonance when the learning or the change operated on an individual, operates an influence on this individual himself to anchor these changes (habits) or stimulate future changes.

There is a form of self-stimulation in the process of evolution towards change. Our attention, when we are awake to all the subjects that allow us to deepen or advance in relation to our current interests, will be drawn to proposals for reading, conferences, or even training, videos or documentaries, or interviews, or even practices, experiences, encounters, that lead to progress on this path. This can of course happen because we subscribe to mailing lists or as a member of associations, but there is also the fact that we will be automatically attracted, in any circumstances, to notice what concerns the subjects on which we are moving forward. And we will more easily be led to live experiences that push us to continue on this path.

The transmission of all our thoughts and emotions

"Everything that we are thinking and feeling is being broadcasted" Anna Breytenbach

"Human consciousness seems to be like a leaky bucket, with our thoughts spilling out of us, getting embedded in everything from other people to our food." Lynne McTaggart

In addition to the other influencing factors mentioned above, there is our ability to transmit our thoughts and emotions outside the channels of verbal and written language, which can partly overlap with that of the morphogenetic fields.

To better understand the concept, I suggest you watch the following video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HTdIMC6NZU4&feature=youtu.be&inf_contact_key=3fbd6de52deeb21be013a14a9ce48df1680f8914173f9191b1c0223e68310bb1.

In this video Anna Breytenbach talks about sharks, and their reason for attacking humans (which actually happens very rarely).

Although the subject evoked seems quite far from the subject dealt with here, she explains very clearly how everything we think and feel is broadcasted towards the people around us or the beings concerned by these thoughts and emotions. Contrary to commonly accepted beliefs, our thoughts and emotions do not only influence ourselves, and this in all circumstances and about everything. Understanding this implies that it is not so much our actions that affect reality; but what we think and feel about it. Choosing the direction of our thoughts and feelings will influence reality in that direction. The tale of black birds and white birds illustrates this notion quite well:

White Birds and Black Birds

"In relation to one another, humans are comparable to walls located facing one another. Each wall is pierced by a multitude of small holes where white birds and black birds are nested.

The black birds are bad thoughts and bad words.

The white birds are good thoughts and good words.

Because of their form, the white birds can only enter into holes for white birds and the same for black birds who can only nest in holes for black birds.

Now, imagine two men who believe they are enemies of each other. Let us call them Yousef and Ali. ... One day, Yousef, persuaded that Ali wishes bad for him, feels full of anger for Ali and sends him a very bad thought. In doing this, Yousef releases a black bird and at the same time liberates a corresponding hole. His black bird flies towards Ali and looks for an empty hole adapted to his form to nest in.

If, from his side, Ali has not sent a black bird towards Yousef, that is, if Ali has not emitted any bad thought, none of his black holes will be empty. Finding no place to lodge itself, Yousef's black bird will be obliged to return to its original nest, taking with him the evil which he was burdened with, an evil which will end up eroding and destroying Yousef himself.

But let us imagine that Ali too has emitted a bad thought. By doing this, he has liberated a hole in which Yousef's black bird will be able to enter in order to deposit part of his evil and accomplish there his mission of destruction. During this time, Ali's black bird will fly towards Yousef and will alight in the hole freed up by Ali's black bird.

Thus, the two black birds will have obtained their goal and will have worked to destroy the men whom they were each destined for. But once their task is accomplished, the birds will each return to their nest of origin because, it is said: 'Everything returns to its source.'

Since the evil they were burdened with is not exhausted, this evil will turn against their authors and will end up destroying them.

The author of a bad thought, of a bad wish, or of an ill-spoken word is therefore attacked by both the black bird of his enemy and by his own black bird when this latter returns to him.

The same thing happens with white birds. If we emit only good thoughts towards our enemy, whereas the enemy only addresses bad thoughts to us, the enemy's black birds will not find any place to lodge themselves with us and will return to their sender. As for the white birds who bear good thoughts that we have sent to him, if they find no free place with our enemy, they will return to us charged with all the beneficial energy which they are carrying.

Thus, if we emit only good thoughts, no evil, no ill-spoken words can ever reach into our being. That is why one should always ask for blessings on both one's friends and one's enemies. Not only does the benediction go towards its objective to accomplish its mission of pacification, but also it comes back to us, one day or another, with everything with which it is laden."

This tale or this parable expresses quite clearly the importance of our thoughts and words that we send to others, highlighting that what we think also has an effect of communicating with others.

Once we perceive of life in this way, we understand the importance of managing our thoughts and emotions, the importance of practicing meditation, and we can also understand the immense responsibility we have to do so.

By accessing this understanding we are already helping others to access it. By making the learning it involves, we are helping others to make it. Working on oneself, making a journey of personal evolution therefore consists, not only to evolve, to increase our well-being, our health, to bring us closer to happiness, to improve our relationships and our relationship with the world, to make us capable of working more efficiently and positively in this world; but this consists first and foremost to help this world to get better.

If we listen carefully to the entire video, it gives a completely different relief to our usual conceptions of the power relations. Everything we think, feel and do in the context of the power relations and/or of the fear, affects our environment. Everything we think, feel and do within a mindset of empathy, love, compassion, appreciation, altruism, generosity, fairness, consistency, mutual aid, integrity, respect, solidarity, also affects our environment.

No matter how much we try to act in a respectful, non-violent and benevolent way; if our thoughts do not correspond to our actions, even if only in part, the effects of our actions will not be as we wish.

And, in order to illustrate this difficult-to-perceive slight difference between thoughts and actions belonging to the register of the balance of power, or conversely to the register of altruism, I will take the example of our purchases. Besides the fact that consuming loses all meaning when we seek to leave the world of material wealth; the choice of our purchases will also be involved.

To stop an abusive, discriminatory, unjust policy practiced in a country, or by a multinational, we can choose to boycott the products that are manufactured there. The list of products that we can thus boycott is long if we are a little aware of political and commercial practices in the world.

The attitude of boycotting consists in directly confronting the authority that ensures the manufacturing of these products. And the claim to abandon the policy or commercial practice in question consists of a demand, relying on the force of trying to weaken profits by refusing to buy those products. The intention that generally underlies the boycott is a spirit of revenge.

Conversely, when we make choices that are no longer based on the balance of power (power relations), it's likely that we will also not buy the products resulting from an abusive, discriminatory or abusive policy or practice. unfair. But the intention that will guide our purchases will no longer be in opposition to the authorities responsible for them. The intention will first be to stop buying anything and everything, which abruptly reduces our consumption; and to leave commercial networks based solely on profit, by buying in places that offer ethical, ecological, local, bulk products, etc. The spirit of revenge is then totally absent in this attitude.

Yet it is the intention behind the act and the thought that will make all the difference. And the intention is guided / or not, by the balance of power or altruism.

The fact of living very soberly, of repairing, recycling, etc., and the one of buying alternative products, entails de facto that we no longer buy the big brands but without seeking to claim anything against them. Which is the exact opposite of boycott.

However, boycotting and alternative purchasing behaviors are in fact very similar. It is the underlying approach that is very different. Consequently, if our thoughts, emotions, and therefore intentions, are transmitted beyond ourselves, the impact will then be diametrically opposed for similar acts, depending on the intentions that are at the source.

Another example is that of demonstrations and other militant actions. As long as we campaign and demonstrate by being demanding, we remain at a counter-productive level, because we make ourselves heard in a mindset of opposition and power struggle. If, on the other hand, we demonstrate in the context of a request, of a support for a fairer policy, and in that of putting our intentions in convergence with those of all the other demonstrators and in coherence with our citizen and private behaviors in general; we then create a completely different context which will likely bring much further. And when we are in this register, it is very likely that we will not only demonstrate, but also act on many other levels, according to the same intention, through meditation and work on oneself, sobriety, participation in alternative citizen actions, etc.

When we understand the impact of the thoughts and emotions we broadcast, just by letting them pass through our mind; we can then understand that thinking twice before speaking is only a first step. We must also use our neurons and our hormones twice in our brain and in our body to learn how to dissolve thoughts charged with poison, rushes of negative emotions: which can be harmful both for the other and for oneself.

It is not a matter of denying them when they are present, but of looking them in the face, of accepting them, of calming them, and of generating new, more positive ones.

It will not only change our perspective on the problems we face, leading to a change in behavior and choices in our decisions. But it will also change the response of those who face us, who may then turn out to be no longer the source of the problems but become collaborators in the implementation of entirely new solutions.

And finally, I will also talk about the power of minorities, which is not a minor subject. It is very much linked to the power of non-violent movements. Just like the subject of collective intelligence, it is an alternative power but which is generally not exercised individually.

The power of minorities

"A minority can modify the opinions and norms of a majority, regardless of their power or relative status, as long as, all other things being equal, the organization of their actions, as well as the expression of its opinions and its objectives, obey the conditions ... of autonomy, investment or equity." Serge Moscovici in the book "La psychologie des minorités actives" (The psychology of active minorities) - 1991 p.171

The power of the minority on the part of the evolving population is not to be minimized. For, if some are rebellious, demanding, even violent; most act in a less ostentatious way and certain events make their actions perceptible to all.

Greta Thunberg is a fairly representative example of how to influence when you are in the minority. On her own, as a teenager, a female, small, and rather marginal in her profile, she went to demonstrate alone in front of the Swedish parliament by going on school strike, every Friday.

In one year she managed to mobilize millions of people around the world to follow her in her actions, and not only schoolchildren or students, very far from it. She even awakened some scientific eminences who did not dare to assert themselves so as not to lack objectivity.

And this minority grows, and will prove to be more and more influential, depending on the way in which those who carry it act concretely.

The influence of minorities can depend on a number of conditions, as follows:

- the strong conviction and the confidence that we show, in relation to the opinion, the cause or the project we feel strongly about.

The more one is convinced of the validity of what one is acting for, the more one acts with confidence; the more it impacts those who witness it;

- the consistency between what one believes and the behaviors that correspond to these beliefs.
If the approach is honest, and is not limited to an intellectual argument, but is marked by actions and the way of carrying them out, that makes them much more credible;

- the perseverance, motivation and determination demonstrated in the process.
When one persists over time in the intentions, and in the manifestation of certain behaviors, this demonstrates in a certain way, that the experience is in line with what one claims to believe;

- and this in parallel to the importance that one gives to this approach, independently of any authority or dogma.

The fact that convictions have a very important place in the eyes of those who defend them, and that they are not dictated by something external, so that one don't settle for being following the influence of others, this necessarily challenges those who witness it.

- the rightness of actions and words, corresponding with high values.
When behaviors are aligned with values of honesty, fairness, justice, respect, sustainability, etc., it is not only difficult to upset them, but they also operate a form of contagion.

- the knowledge, understanding, competency and awareness that one has in relation to the approach.
It is indeed difficult to undermine an opinion or reasoning, when this one is largely underpinned and founded;

- the desire to assume one's responsibilities.
Those who acknowledge their mistakes, try to correct them, try to learn to avoid them and act with integrity; demonstrate a form of integrity, humility and a desire to move forward in a constructive manner and with respect for the community.

- intransigence in the interpretation of what one does and the message that one gives of it, up to a certain degree of radicality.

In the sense that it is difficult to deter a person from his/her objectives when he/she knows that they are well-founded and that he/she can no longer conceive of returning to his/her old beliefs;

- and this, coupled with empathy and a relative indulgence and openness towards those who act differently.

This is what makes dialogue possible, and opinions flexible, without being influenced by the social pressure that the majority represents. It is much easier to interact with, and be influenced by, people who work from their hearts.

- and eventually, the fact that, in some cases, this approach goes, at a material level, against the personal interest of those who adopt it (even if the personal interest at a broader level converges with general interest sought).

In the sense that refusing to consume, to treat oneself (please oneself), to get rich, is the complete opposite of a selfish attitude or one that would seek to take advantage on others. The fact of defending a cause which, a priori, is that of the community, but not quite its own, makes the cause de facto more just;

- and that we are in a request and not in a requirement.

This makes it possible to avoid the frontal opposition - "what you resist persists" - and is in line with the fact of functioning with the heart.

These are all the mindset attitudes that give a minority group greater power of influence.

What also challenges is the ability to go against the tide without being influenced by pressure from the majority, which is sometimes violent, because everyone believes in what they are doing. It has nothing to do with a desire to stand out from the majority, but it's about a conviction so strong that it leads to stand out. And the power that this generates is also induced precisely because there is no attempt to exercise a power, or a constraint.

I'm talking about two very different powers here. On the one hand, a power of influence (constructive in this case - because the opposite tendency also exists, through manipulation among other things), and the power of force (whether physical or psychological) which will create resistance and therefore curb influence.

The power of influence that a minority can exercise is therefore a power of another order. Moscovici explains all this in his book on the psychology of active minorities (1991), and in particular in chapter 6 on styles of behavior p156:

The book is available in French in full online.

http://www.psychanalyse.com/pdf/psycho_minorites_actives.pdf#%5B%7B%22num%22%3A283%2C%22gen%22%3A0%7D%2C%7B%22name%22%3A%22XYZ%22%7D%2C0%2C792%2Cnull%5D

Conclusion

The prospect of having an influence around us can be an important motivator. If this is not the intention to nurture in order to make changes in our lives, it can still contribute to give much more meaning to what we undertake. Because it allows us to match our change in the frame of a general change. It can give us courage.

However, trying to influence those around us is not something to be sought when we are on a path of personal evolution, or only in a very secondary way, or even only with those who are on the same path. Understanding it allows us to move away from combatant, militant or missionary attitudes. And if we know that another type of influence operates in an unconscious way; this allows us to lay down our arms and direct our actions away from such battle.

The hardest part is knowing how to move forward silently, and very often alone, before the snowball effect occurs. For it works like contagion. The more people are affected by an evolution, the more it accelerates to eventually reach everyone. But before that, the fact of keeping in mind what we must leave, and what we are heading towards (new solutions in cooperation with all those who act in the same direction); can help us persevere, remain patient, and feed our motivation and determination.

So, knowing the influencing factors described above can make us understand that we are not treading water, that our drop of water in the ocean could well turn out to have the effect of a wave, or even of a tsunami. Metaphorically, our transformation from caterpillar to butterfly, could, by a movement of wings - in chorus with others who act elsewhere and whom we do not know - have for consequence, a hurricane of beneficent and constructive transformations which will completely modify the landscape. in which we still live.

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