



# THE PARTY SPIRIT

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# I

## DESIRE FOR INFINITY

Periodically, we notice that when there is a party or some kind of joyful gathering, the participants do not want it to end. Often, they resist the termination rather strongly, either they do not want to leave, or they criticize the person that signals the wrapping up of the event. Probably, this reluctance to such interruption is primarily connected to the pleasant emotional state involved in the party experience, and the desire to endlessly perpetuate this mental state. This attitude and behavior remind us of children on the carousel at the fair, who get upset when they are told it is time to get off and go home.

Parties are generally filled with fun, laughter, enjoyment and even excitement. Whether it is dancing, talking with friends, or just enjoying good food and music, people are immersed in a positive experience and want to prolong that feeling as long as possible. They provide a unique opportunity to connect with others. Whether rekindling old friendships or making new ones, the social interactions at a party are a major draw. The idea of the party ending means these connections will pause, separation occurs, when participants rather want to keep the interaction going.

For many, parties offer a temporary escape from daily responsibilities, chores, banality, stress, dullness and routines. The reluctance to leave a party may then stem from a fear of facing unresolved issues or underlying dissatisfaction with everyday life. Some individuals use

the party as a way to avoid confronting deeper emotional or psychological discomfort. The party environment, with its distractions and heightened emotional states, provides a temporary escape from these issues, so the reluctance to leave indicates a deeper sense of anxiety about returning to the challenges and responsibilities of ordinary life.

Ending the party therefore means returning to a certain reality, so people try to extend the fun for as long as possible. The atmosphere, be it music, decorations, environment or freedom, the bonding and the relaxed vibe, create a special, sometimes even magical, environment, and provide a sense of excitement. People prefer to stay in this atmosphere, which feels different from everyday life. The party ending induces a sense of “missing out”, with the anxiety that accompanies it. Participants worry that if they leave or if the party stops, something “great” might have happened or could have happened, or simply that they haven’t fully experienced all that the party has to offer. They may not want the night to end because they know it will be a treasured lasting memory and they want to savor every moment. If alcohol is involved, its primary effect is to lower inhibitions, making people feel more carefree and less concerned about reality. This leads to a desire to keep the good times rolling without thinking about the end.

In other words, the combination of enjoyment, social interaction, and a break from routine is why people often prefer a party not to end. It’s all about prolonging happiness and delaying the return to normalcy.

One specific effect of such parties is the “coupling” desire it naturally engenders. Besides the strong sense of collective bonding such gatherings provoke, it can as well arouse “elective affinities”, be they romantic, friendship, intellectual or else, largely due to the particular social dynamics, atmosphere, and behaviors that parties foster. This phenomenon has different plausible reasons.

Parties typically provide a relaxed and informal setting where people feel more comfortable being themselves. This loose atmosphere

makes it easier for individuals to approach others, strike up more intimate conversations, and get to know someone in a more open and natural way than in other settings, more formal. Parties offer shared experiences, such as dancing, playing games, frank conversations, enjoying food and drinks together. These shared moments create a sense of special connection and camaraderie, laying the groundwork for deeper interactions between some individuals. Parties are designed to bring people together, often mixing different social groups. This increased social interaction leads to meeting new people who share similar interests, values, or chemistry, sparking intense connections. Alcohol is often present at parties, and it lowers inhibitions, making people more daring, talkative, or flirtatious. This leads to individuals expressing interest in others more freely, which might not happen in a more sober or usual setting. The mood of a party, enhanced by music, dancing, free conversation and a festive environment, fosters bonding. These elements create an atmosphere that encourages people to let their guard down and be more inclined to establishing new relationships. For some people, the unspoken goal of such gatherings might already be to meet new persons or establish “special” connections. Being in close and friendly proximity to others in a festive setting for an extended period provides ample opportunity for conversations and connections to deepen. This increased interaction naturally triggers mutual interest and eventually, coupling.

In essence, the combination of a relaxed environment, lowered inhibitions, and a focus on social interaction makes parties fertile ground for emotional connections to form. The temporary nature of the party also adds a sense of urgency or excitement, leading people to seize the moment and explore potential interests, romantic or other.

Another reason explaining the reluctance to end such gatherings can be called a “taste of the infinite” that is characteristic of the party spirit, in opposition to the finiteness of daily life, where most things we do are tiring, boring, and hopefully should be limited in time. This sensation arises because parties are typically associated with height-

ened emotions, freedom from routine, and therefore procure a thirst of eternity and a sense of timelessness. The combination of music, laughter, social connections, and often a break from everyday responsibilities create an atmosphere where time seems to stretch or even stand still, desirably so. In contrast to the structured and often repetitive nature of daily life, parties offer a space where the usual constraints are lifted, an intense sense of togetherness, leading to a feeling that anything is possible, and the moment indeed could go on forever, should go on forever. This is why many people find parties so appealing, they provide a temporary escape from the ordinary, where the possibilities seem endless, if only for a short while.

For this reason, a party evokes feelings of transcendence, a sense of being part of something larger than oneself, a taste of absolute, evoking some "religious moment". If we think of "religious" in a broad and metaphorical sense, as an experience that feels deeply meaningful, as an enthralling experience, almost sacred, transformative of the subject, one could argue that a particularly profound or euphoric moment at such gatherings might have a "religious" quality to it, as we see for example in major sports events, which sometimes generates delirious enthusiasm. We should remember that the term "religious" comes from the Latin *religare*, which means bonding, bonding to the group and bonding to some transcendent reality. Thus, when people feel a deep connection to others, lose themselves in the music or the dancing, or experience a sense of unity and belonging, these moments trigger a feeling similar to what some people might describe as a spiritual or religious experience. The intense emotions and sense of community found in a feast resemble the communal and uplifting aspects of religious gatherings, through the sense of going beyond our limited self and the feeling of infiniteness that it provides. But it seems that in opposition to actual spiritual or spiritual gatherings, the sense of infinite engendered in parties comes in opposition to daily life, which is the main reason why the party should not stop, when a

religious ceremony naturally comes to an end and blends with daily life.

Let us examine this relation between the special event and our usual routine. An emotional sense of the infinite can have a profound impact on daily life in several ways.

When individuals have an emotional connection to the infinite, they may experience a heightened sense of awe and wonder in everyday life. This potentially leads to greater appreciation for the beauty and complexity of the world around them, whether it's in nature, art, or human relationships. It infuses daily life with deeper meaning. People may feel that their actions and experiences are connected to something larger than themselves, leading to a stronger sense of purpose. This motivates them to pursue goals and live in a way that aligns with their values and beliefs. When faced with challenges or hardships, an emotional connection to the infinite provides a sense of perspective. It helps individuals see their problems as part of a larger, more enduring context, making them more resilient and better able to cope with difficulties. Feeling emotionally connected to the infinite enhances a sense of unity with others and the world at large. This brings about more compassionate and empathetic interactions with others, as individuals may feel that they are all part of a shared, infinite experience. It is a potential source of creative inspiration. Artists, writers, and thinkers often draw on their feelings of connection to something boundless when creating their work. This spawns more innovative and imaginative approaches to everyday tasks and projects. This sense also encourages an improved consciousness, as individuals may become more attuned to the present moment, recognizing its unique place within the vastness of existence, cultivating a deeper awareness of reality. One can observe their thoughts and feelings without labeling them as good or bad, simply acknowledging them without clinging to them, through obsession, greed and regret, by not trying to change reality or wishing it were different. This helps reduce stress and anxiety, as people focus more on the here and now

rather than getting caught up in worries about the past, fostering a state of equanimity.

And from a more existential point of view, music and dance provide a feeling of life, of vitality, which is quite appropriate for people who want to chase away the hollowness and stench of death. Sometimes, at the end of a party we sometimes observe an interesting ritual: the long and noisy “goodbyes”, highly expressive and emotional, with hyperbolic expressions of eternal bonding, as a wish that the fusional experience would never end, as a way to exorcize the return to the usual distance and isolation of the self. The “last drink”, which is never the last one, is another expression of the same phenomenon.

Thus, an emotional sense of the infinite can profoundly enrich daily life by deepening meaning, enhancing resilience, fostering connection, and inspiring creativity. It helps individuals to navigate through life with a greater sense of purpose and appreciation for the wider context in which their lives unfold, and regain a kind of vital energy.

Then, does the excitement of a party harmonize with daily life, or is rather opposed to it? Let us propose that our usual rituals both match and oppose the general emotional sense of the infinite, depending on how all this is experienced.

The excitement of a party leads to moments where individuals feel a sense of transcendence, losing themselves in the experience. This creates a temporary feeling of being part of something larger, where time seems to stop, and the boundaries of the self dissolve into the collective energy of the group. In this way, the party’s excitement evokes a fleeting sense of the infinite. Parties often foster a strong sense of connection among participants. The shared joy, laughter, and energy instigate a feeling of unity, where individuals feel connected to others in a way that mirrors the interconnectedness often associated with the infinite. This collective experience momentarily lifts people out of their daily concerns and into a space that feels boundless, and such



an experience potentially impacts their usual life, by a principle of psychic replenishment.

On the other hand, the excitement of a party is often intense but fleeting. It is tied to the immediate moment and is driven by external and circumstantial stimuli like music, alcohol, or social interactions, in a very particular context. Once the party ends, the excitement typically tends to fade, leaving a contrast between the temporary high and the return to normal life. This ephemerality might oppose the enduring, timeless quality associated with a sense of the infinite. Parties often emphasize the present moment, sensory pleasures and social context, easily at odds with the deeper, more substantial connection to the infinite. The focus on immediate gratification and external validation might distract from the introspective and expansive qualities that are often linked to an emotional sense of the infinite. In the absolute, it is thus possible to experience both aspects simultaneously. The excitement of a party can serve as a gateway to fleeting moments of transcendence and connection, hinting at the infinite, even if only temporarily. However, the nature of this excitement is typically grounded in the here and now, and may not sustain the deeper, ongoing connection to the infinite that one might find through more reflective or spiritual practices. In essence, the excitement of a party sometimes aligns with a sense of the infinite by providing moments of unity and transcendence, but it also inherently contrasts with it due to its temporary and often surface-level nature.

The desire to continue the party, or rather the frustration of having to stop it, can be linked to the desire to experience a fulfillment that would mark the finitude of one identity in its transition to another. It is akin to the aspiration expressed in the ancestral ritual of transition. These traditional rituals are essential practices in many cultures, serving to mark and facilitate the passage from one stage of life to another. They generally consist of a separation from an initial state, an intermediate transition, and a reintegration into the community, a sort of "humanization" principle. They play a key role

in maintaining social order, transmitting cultural values, and providing spiritual support to individuals in their existential development. These rites give meaning and value to the inevitable changes of human life by embedding them in a spiritual and collective framework. Transition rituals are often rich in symbols that represent the ideas of transformation, renewal, and the cycle of life.

Thus, the chaos of dispersion represented by the party only ends in communion: we become unified, we become fused. It is a sort of desire for coupling, like an orgiastic aspiration that brings us back to ancestral functioning, to a primordial, almost mythical unity. And once the "coupling" has taken place, continuing the party no longer makes sense. But in fact, it is the illusion of a moment, a desire for the impossible, although this desire generates action. Human beings constantly believe in the possibility of fulfillment, which motivates them to act, an action which triggers movement, which generates a certain energy. Otherwise, they would be immobile, frozen, when life is the permanence of movement. It is therefore inevitable for human nature to aspire to this desire for the impossible; it is probably part of what makes one human.

In the orgiastic principle, as it is often understood in a sociocultural or psychological context, fusion is indeed rather momentary. This fusion represents a temporary state of unity or intense communion among participants, often in a festive, ritual, or ecstatic context. This moment of fusion is often characterized by the temporary dissolution of individual boundaries and a deep sense of connection with others or with a transcendent reality. This relational fulfillment, this sense of integration with others, compensates for the incompleteness of our existence. This integration with others also brings a sense of timelessness and infinity.

But in reality, fusion within the framework of the orgiastic principle is ephemeral by nature. It occurs in a particular context, such as a party or ritual, and tends to dissipate once the event is over. The emotional and sensory intensity that accompanies these moments cannot

be sustained indefinitely, contributing to their temporary nature. After the party or ritual, participants generally return to their normal individual state, where personal boundaries and social distinctions reappear. The fusion dissipates, giving way to everyday reality. For this fusion is intrinsically linked to the collective experience and the particular energy of the moment. The return to reality is a natural transition, where the state of fusion is replaced by usual social and psychological structures.

Nevertheless, although the fusion fades after the event, the experience leaves lasting traces in the participants' memory, potentially influencing their perception of reality or their sense of connection with others. However, the fusion itself does not extend beyond the orgiastic moment. It represents a temporary state of intense communion that is tied to a specific context and, once that context is over, gives way to a return to individual and social normality.

On a more personal level, the party spirit, especially enhanced by the effect of alcohol or narcotics, produces an exciting and interesting effect of overexistence, a surplus of being, where a person experiences a sense of self beyond the usual boundaries. Admiration, of oneself and others, is a typical manifestation of this phenomenon. "I am great", "you are great", "we are great", "everybody is wonderful". Unlike our daily life, where we feel insecure and tend to undervalue ourselves, and to devalue or fear others, we are galvanized by a heightened sense of our person and self-worth. We become charming and seductive, we find others charming and seductive, we dare to express our erotic power, even excessively so, due to the lowering of inhibition produced by the context.

During this process, we experience an increased bodily dimension of existence, which usual social life tends to repress. We should bear in mind that civilization and social rules, while they help maintain order and cohesion in society and increase the cultural level, often do so by imposing limits on the expression of the body, considered more primitive, more animal. These limits take many forms, from mod-

esty norms and legal restrictions to internalized shame and pressure to conform to formal ideals. While these constraints serve important social functions, they also often lead to the repression of natural bodily expressions, which have complex psychological and existential consequences. Thus the lifting of such inhibitions allows us to experience our body and somewhat “turn off” our mind, the delightful sensation of a state where reason slides away, with its rules and obligations. We undergo a heightened sense of being, we simply exist and enjoy our own self, without any constraints or obligations. In a strange way, our existence becomes “palpable”, an experience we cannot describe well, that doesn’t seem to have much value when it is described: it can only be lived and enjoyed. We discovered that we have a body, that it has its own life and desires, it is more erotic than we thought. In this state of overexistence, all the other “layers” seem to evaporate, for example, morality, social codes, a suspension which is necessary in order to be able to “really” become oneself.

Let us mention in passing that there is a paradox in this regard, between the desire for dissolution, loss of self, and original fusion, and the desire for identity, security, and permanence. This paradox is explained by the duality inherent in human nature, which oscillates between the need for stability and the desire for freedom. Thus, in everyday life, we desire and seek a certain identity, something that defines us in a specific, distinct, and stable manner, a way of being that gives us confidence in ourselves. A clear and consistent identity allows us to navigate a complex world by providing reference points, both for ourselves and for others. It helps us understand our place in society, fulfill our roles, and meet social expectations. This fixed identity, though potentially reductive, represents a certain protection against uncertainty and constant changes that may be perceived as unsettling or threatening.

Conversely, the context of a celebration represents a space-time where social norms are suspended or relaxed. In these moments, individuals seek the dissolution of the boundaries of the self because it al-

lows them to escape the constraints of daily identity. The celebration becomes a moment of liberation where people explore more fluid and diverse aspects of their personality, connect more deeply with others, and experience a sense of communion or unity. This dissolution of boundaries offer a feeling of euphoria and fulfillment that strongly contrasts with the limitations of everyday life. Strangely enough, the “explosion” of the identity provides the feeling of an enlarged self, what we call a sense of overexistence. Therefore the end of the celebration means a return to the fixed identity and daily constraints, which is felt as a loss or a return to a form of oppressive rigidity. This paradox illustrates the tension between our need for security, represented by a fixed identity, and our desire for freedom, symbolized by the celebration. A stable identity anchors us, but the celebration offers us a temporary escape where we explore a more fluid and collective form of existence, a nostalgia for a return to the "originary," a metaphysical vision of a primordial unity. This oscillation between two poles is a deeply human paradox. A similar phenomenon of such paradoxical tension is observed in love relations, in the pursuit of ideal, or in diverse aesthetic experiences.

## II

# APOLOGY OF PARTY SPIRIT

The concept of "party spirit," particularly in the sense of embracing the exuberance, chaos, and emotional intensity often associated with celebrations and festivities, is something that diverse thinkers have explored.

Friedrich Nietzsche makes the apology of this modality, which he calls "Dionysian", inspired by Dyonysos, the Greek God of wine, vegetation, fertility, festivity, and ritual madness. The Dionysian, in Nietzsche's framework, represents chaos, passion, instinct, and the embrace of life's most primal and ecstatic aspects. This is contrasted with the Apollonian, inspired by Apollo, god of sunlight, harmony, music and poetry, purification and healing, which stands for order, reason, and the structured aspects of human existence. Nietzsche suggested that a healthy society needs a balance or tension between Dionysian and Apollonian forces. He saw the Dionysian as necessary for a full expression of life, creativity, and a deeper understanding of human existence.

Dionysian forces, when they express themselves publicly, sometimes provoke reactions of rejection, when they are perceived as unacceptable by institutions or by the "vox populi", when they clash with established traditions or values. This is what we might call the



subversive power of art. It can therefore be considered shocking, corrupting, immoral, or simply incomprehensible, which in all cases produces a feeling of alienation in the viewer. Art has the capacity to provoke strong emotional reactions. Works that arouse feelings of unease, fear, anger or disgust are rejected because of these emotional responses. For example, art that depicts violence, suffering or death may be difficult for some audiences to accept. Or the “ugliness” of the work, shocking, when its appearance does not correspond to pre-conceived ideas of beauty, to the prevailing aesthetic canons.

Nevertheless, Nietzsche also recognized that society cannot function solely on chaotic, primal energy. He believed that the greatest cultural achievements, like Greek tragedy, arose from this dualistic and paradoxical relation. Since Nietzsche was critical of the modern, overly rational, and structured societies of his time, which he felt suppressed the Dionysian element to their detriment. So, while he might not argue for a society entirely based on Dionysian values, he would advocate for a society that embraces these values as a counterbalance to excessive rationality and order, as he saw the need for a dynamic interplay between the Dionysian and Apollonian forces. In his later works, he explores the idea of the *Übermensch*, an individual who transcends conventional morality and societal norms, potentially embodying a more Dionysian spirit, free and creative.

Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian philosopher and literary critic, extensively analyzed the concept of the “carnival”, an interesting traditional form of mass partying. A carnival is a festive event, typically held before Lent in Christian culture, characterized by parades, music, dancing, costumes, and public celebrations. It often involves elaborate street processions, masquerades, and a general atmosphere of revelry and indulgence before the more solemn period of Lent begins. Grotesque imagery, feasting, and excess are important elements of many traditional carnivals. These aspects contribute to the carnival’s atmosphere of liberation, reversal of usual rituals and hierarchies, and celebration of life’s extremes.

The grotesque in carnival involves exaggerated, distorted, or fantastical elements that challenge social norms and expectations, allowing for a kind of existential levity and freedom that challenges the rigid structures of everyday life. This includes outlandish costumes, burlesque make-up, freakish masks, and performances that mock authority, question societal structures, and tear down the boundaries between the sacred and the profane. The grotesque serves to subvert the ordinary and highlight the freedom to express what is usually repressed in daily life. The feasting is a central part of carnival, reflecting the idea of indulgence and profusion. Before the fasting and austerity of Lent, carnival provides an opportunity to enjoy rich foods, excessive drinking, and communal meals. This element of excess in food and drink symbolizes a break from the restrictions of everyday life, celebrating abundance and the pleasures of the senses. Excess in carnival extends beyond feasting to include extravagant behavior, caricatural displays, and exuberant celebrations. The emphasis on excess reflects the temporary suspension of social rules and the embracing of freedom, chaos, and joy. It is a time when people indulge in behaviors and expressions that are normally constrained, embodying the spirit of "letting go" before returning to the routine of daily life. Overall burlesque imagery, feasting, and excess are important because they embody the essence of carnival as a time of social and cultural liberation, inversion of norms and hierarchies, and celebration of life in its most vibrant and uninhibited forms. It highlights the exaggerated, the absurd, and the earthy aspects of daily human existence. This focus on the body also serves as a counterpoint to the more refined and sanitized representations of the body in official culture. Traditional rules and expectations are upended, allowing for a kind of communal joy and unbridled expression that rejuvenate society. People experience a sense of liberation from the norms and expectations that usually govern their behavior. It fosters a sense of unity and shared experience, where people are brought together in a space free from the usual constraints of social and class divisions.

Bakhtin saw the carnival as an essential space for the expression of collective creativity and a challenge to official culture.

Diverse other authors explored the themes of excess, transgression, as the limits of human experience, the role of feasting, eroticism, and violence as a way of breaking through the constraints of everyday life and societal norms, establishing the importance of transgressive experiences and excess or celebrating intense emotional experiences. Such emphasis on imagination, passion, and the sublime can be seen as a form of apology for the emotional and chaotic aspects of human experience that organized society often tries to suppress, which finds its natural expression in festive gatherings.

Indeed, “partying” has several positive effects on our lives, contributing to our well-being, social connections, and even personal growth. They provide an opportunity to meet new people and strengthen existing relationships, such interactions can lead to meaningful friendships, romantic relationships, intellectual or professional connections. Socializing at parties is a great way to unwind and take a break from the stresses of daily life. The laughter, fun, and camaraderie help reduce stress and improve our mood. Being surrounded by friends and engaging in enjoyable activities releases endorphins and other “feeling-good” chemicals in the brain, boosting overall happiness. Participating in festive rituals and events helps us feel connected to a larger community or group, providing a sense of belonging and shared identity. It helps us develop and refine our social skills, such as communication, empathy, and the ability to engage in different types of conversations, making us more confident and comfortable in collective settings. They present opportunities to try new activities, whether it is engaging with new people or simply being in a different environment, encouraging personal growth and adaptability. These events bring together diverse groups of people, leading to the exchange of ideas and perspectives, which inspire creativity and open our mind to new ways of thinking. As many parties involve dancing or other forms of physical activity, they not only provide ex-

ercise but also help release pent-up energy, improving both physical and mental health by exercising bodily movements, sometimes in an excessive fashion where the emotions dimension is totally unbridled. It can be described as the action of externalizing energy accumulated inside the person, sharing this energy with the other participants in the party. A kind of vital, archaic, collective energy. And more simply put, parties are fun! Enjoying music, dancing, games, or just enjoying the general atmosphere lift our spirits and provide a refreshing break from routine. And they create lasting memories, for example when significant life events are celebrated, such as birthdays, weddings, or major events, which contribute to the richness of our life story.

Therefore, attending parties enhances our life in various ways, from fostering social connections and reducing stress to inspiring creativity and providing opportunities for personal growth. While moderation is generally essential, the positive experiences and relationships built at parties, despite their excesses or thanks to them, can contribute significantly to a well-rounded, fulfilling life.

# III

## REASON

As we have seen, the “party spirit” longs for infinite. But it seems to us that only reason can maintain a permanent and real sense of the infinite, reason itself or any activity somewhat involved with reason, with reflection, with some type of thinking activity. Because reason allows us to contemplate concepts like infinity in a structured and continuous way. Through rigorous thinking and intellectual exploration, reason sustains an ongoing understanding or pursuit of the infinite, it leads to a deep and enduring engagement with the concept of infinity. A larger view might suggest that reason is only one of the tools we use to explore and understand the infinite, but it is complemented by emotional, spiritual, and experiential aspects of life, since an experience of awe or wonder also provides a sense of infinite. These experiences may not be as constant or controlled as reasoned thinking, but they can be powerful and enduring in their own right. Some might even argue that these aspects of human experience, rather than reason alone, provide a more profound and immediate sense of the infinite. But it seems that together, these dimensions allow for a more complete and sustained engagement with the idea of infinity, a combination which is encountered in most religious practices.

We have proposed a parallel between the “party spirit” and the religious experience. Nevertheless, we claim that there is an important difference between these two phenomena. It seems that religious

faith generally maintains some type of closer relation to reason. Even though we cannot say that religious belief always has a strict connection to rationality, in many cases, there is a strong interplay between the two modalities. In fact, most religious traditions have developed sophisticated theological and philosophical arguments using reason to support belief in the existence of God or justify other spiritual truths. It is used to interpret sacred texts, develop doctrines, and explore ethical principles. This process often involves rigorous logical analysis and debate of ideas. Faith and reason are considered complementary, as reason helps to understand and articulate faith, while faith provides a foundation for moral reasoning and a sense of purpose. For example, reason explores the existence and attributes of God through observation of the natural world, suggesting that reason and belief can work together to understand the divine.

Indeed, it is considered that faith transcends reason and that certain truths are accessible only through revelation or mystical experience. In this view, reason has its limits, and faith involves a trust in the divine that goes beyond what can be fully grasped by human intellect. Mystical experiences, which are often a core component of religious belief, are typically described as beyond the realm of reason, involving direct, personal encounters with the divine or with sacred texts that defy logical explanation. Thus fundamentalist interpretations reject certain scientific or philosophical conclusions in favor of a literal interpretation of sacred texts. Just as reason can lead to skepticism or doubt, as individuals critically examine religious claims and find them lacking in empirical or logical support. Religious traditions might prioritize experiential knowledge over rational analysis, while others have historically placed great emphasis on reason.

Thus some religious belief is deeply intertwined with reason, while for others, it transcends reason or even stands in tension with it. The relationship between the two is dynamic and varies widely depending on individual perspectives, religious traditions, and cultural contexts, but we could say that the relation is never totally absent, as for the



adept of a religion, the appropriate belief and attitude are deeply intertwined with some epistemological and ethical dimension of the mental processes.

We should specify as well that there are different conceptions of reason, some of which are rather restrictive, emphasizing logical, analytical, and deductive processes, while others include non-rational thinking, expanding the concept to encompass other forms of understanding that might not fit strictly within the boundaries of classical rationality.

For example, the concept of “embodied cognition”, which suggests that reason is not just a disembodied, abstract process but is deeply connected to our physical experiences, emotions, and intuitions. In this view, non-rational forms of thinking, such as gut feelings or emotional responses, are integral to how we reason and make decisions. Thus, Nietzsche opposes the “great reason” of life, to the “small reason” of the mind. For him, the body and its drives, emotions, and instincts are the true sources of wisdom, deeply connected to life itself, embracing the full range of human experience, including desires, passions, and the will to power. As well, practical reason involves making decisions based on values, ethics, and what is intuitively deemed appropriate in a given context. It often includes considerations that go beyond pure logic, such as emotions, social norms, and personal experiences. This form of “reasoning” acknowledges that humans are not purely logical beings and that our decisions are influenced by a mix of rational and non-rational factors. In general, our interpretation of reality is influenced by historical context, cultural background, and personal experience, all of which involve non-rational elements. Intuitive thinking, often seen as non-rational, can be considered a form of reason in a broader sense, especially “educated intuition”, developed through practice and experience. It involves quick, often subconscious processing of information, leading to insights or judgments without conscious deliberation. Creativity, which often involves thinking that is not strictly logical or linear. It includes

imaginative leaps, metaphorical thinking, and the ability to see connections between seemingly unrelated ideas. This kind of thinking is essential in the arts, sciences, and innovation, and can be seen as a form of reasoning that transcends traditional rationality. Sagacity, or practical wisdom, is a type of reason that involves making sound judgments in complex, often ambiguous situations. It includes moral and ethical dimensions, recognizing that human reasoning must accommodate the complexities and nuances of real life, which are not always captured by purely rational analysis.

Nevertheless, we should make a distinction between an enlarged concept of reason that includes the body and emotions, and something that is totally irrational, involving understanding how reason can be expanded to encompass aspects traditionally viewed as non-rational without losing its capacity for coherence, understanding, and guiding action.

Emotions are seen as valuable sources of information rather than irrational impulses to be suppressed. For example, feelings of fear might signal a threat that reason needs to consider. Emotions can thus be understood as a part of practical reasoning, helping to prioritize concerns and motivating action.

The body is not merely a passive vessel for the mind but plays a crucial role in shaping our thinking processes. Bodily experiences influence our conceptual frameworks and decision-making processes. Reason, in this view, is not detached from the body but is informed by it.

Reason includes not just logical analysis but also moral sentiments, social emotions, and bodily experiences. It seeks a synthesis where some consistency is maintained, although the full range of human experience is brought into consideration.

Let us propose the principle that something is considered totally irrational when it disregards any standards of coherence, consistency, or justification, when it denies any principle of reality.

Irrational thoughts or actions often lack internal coherence. They do not follow any logical or consistent pattern, and they might contradict themselves without any awareness or any attempt at resolution.

Irrationality often involves ignoring evidence or reality, holding beliefs or engaging in behaviors that have no grounding in experience or facts, and it even contradicts the obvious.

Irrationality can manifest as acting purely on impulse without any reflection, consideration of consequences, or deliberation. It bypasses reason entirely, acting purely out of unchecked emotion, belief or instinct, it does not examine and evaluate its own thoughts and actions.

While reason seeks to understand and integrate different aspects of experience, irrationality often rejects understanding or integration. It might involve holding onto beliefs or attitudes stubbornly, even in the face of contradictory evidence.

Therefore, in an enlarged concept of reason, emotions and bodily experiences are integrated into a larger, purposeful framework that seeks to understand and respond to the world in a coherent way. In contrast, irrationality typically lacks this integration and purpose, leading to fragmented or contradictory responses.

Enlarged reason maintains a commitment to coherence and justification, even when it includes non-traditional elements like emotions or the body. Irrationality, however, does not seek coherence or provide justification, often resulting in actions, impulses or beliefs that are random, contradictory, or unfounded.

Reason, even when expanded, involves a degree of reflective awareness, considering why we feel or act a certain way, and how these responses fit into a broader understanding. Irrationality often lacks this reflective quality, acting without consideration or awareness of broader implications.

## REALITY PRINCIPLE

Reason is strongly connected to the “reality principle”. This principle, defined in a general way, can be understood as the cognitive and behavioral mechanism by which individuals or systems adjust their actions, desires, or expectations in accordance with the constraints, demands, and conditions of the external world, and of their personal reality, what can be called overall as “necessity”. It refers to the process or guideline by which an individual moderates their behavior, desires, or plans in alignment with the objective conditions and limitations of the external and internal environment. It involves recognizing and adapting to the realities of a given situation to achieve sustainable and effective outcomes. This might include physical, psychological, social, legal, or economic constraints that require adjustment of one’s actions or expectations. This principle often entails postponing immediate desires or impulses in favor of more practical or long-term goals. It involves a pragmatic approach that considers the feasibility and potential consequences of actions. The reality principle is grounded in a rational assessment of circumstances. It requires a thoughtful consideration of what is realistically possible and appropriate, leading to decisions that are informed by the actual state of affairs. While desires and aspirations are natural, the reality principle ensures that these are tempered by the realities of the situation. It seeks a balance between what is wanted and what is possible or advisable in a given context. Adhering to the reality principle helps in making choices that are sustainable over time, avoiding actions that might lead to negative consequences due to a failure to account for real-world limitations.

In a general sense, the reality principle is a guiding process that ensures actions, desires and plans are aligned with the objective realities of the environment. It is about making decisions that are realistic, practical, and sustainable, considering the limitations and conditions of the external world and internal necessity. This principle plays a

crucial role in ensuring that behavior and strategies are effective and viable in the long term.

An enlarged concept of reason might involve them considering not just the logical pros and cons, but also how they feel about diverse options, their emotions, and how their body reacts when facing them. They might use these bodily and emotional cues to help guide their decision, but they do so in a way that seeks coherence and understanding. This is rational, albeit in an expanded sense. On the other hand, if the person ignores all evidence, acts purely on a fleeting impulse without considering the consequences, or holds onto a belief that has been clearly disproven, they are acting irrationally. Their decision lacks coherence, justification, and reflective awareness. Thus, an enlarged concept of reason seeks to integrate a broader range of human experience while maintaining coherence and purpose. Irrationality, by contrast, disregards coherence, evidence, and reflection, leading to inconsistent or unfounded actions and beliefs. And in this sense, we see how the “party spirit” is a radical rejection of reason.

On a more metaphysical or epistemological level, the disorder of non-being and the harmony of being are articulated in a dialectical relationship, where one cannot exist without the other. Chaos represents the freedom of being, the random possibility of becoming. Being represents the actualization of non-being, which without this would be a pure negation, a gaping void devoid of any potentiality. Chaos is rupture, and rupture, like any change, requires continuity. Being is the emergence of order, yet there is no order without a disorder to confront. Being can stifle reality with its rigid formalism. Non-being can stifle reality by drawing it into the abyss of incoherence. Thus, just as the “feast” disrupts the structure of the world, its routine and obligations, reason, the order of things, disrupts the “feast” celebration, otherwise both would be deprived of meaning and substance. Yet everyone will indeed have their preferences, and each will identify their fragility or blind spot.

# IV

## BAD INFINITE AND TRUE INFINITE

Let us propose the idea that the infinite quest of the “party spirit”, is in fact a bad infinite.

A "bad infinite" refers to a concept in philosophy where something is infinitely large or endless, in a way that is considered necessarily incomplete, unsatisfactory, or problematic, it is rather indefinite. The term is often contrasted with a "true infinite," which represents a concept of infinity that is more complete or meaningful. The “bad infinite” is primarily a notion of infinity that is merely quantitative and never reaches a conclusion. It is a kind of endless progression, like counting whole numbers endlessly (1, 2, 3, ...), where there is no final or ultimate state. This infinite is always "beyond," a never-ending sequence that keeps going but never culminates in a totality. This infinity is "bad" because it lacks completeness and is essentially an endless repetition without resolution. In contrast, the "good infinite" refers to a qualitative infinity, more “complete”, fulfilling and self-contained. In metaphysics, this might be represented by a concept like the “absolute”, which is infinite but also whole and self-fulfilling. The "true infinite" is a concept of infinity that is not merely the absence of an end, but is an entity that fully contains and resolves all oppositions and contradictions within itself. Hegel sees the true infinite as self-



complete and self-contained, incorporating both the finite and the infinite within it.

In geometry, a circle is considered finite in that it has a defined boundary, but it is also a true infinite because it is a closed loop, which has no beginning and no end; it has no beginning and no end. The circle fully contains within itself the movement that produces it; it is a self-enclosed, self-sufficient whole. The circle as a whole is both finite and infinite, resolving the contradiction between the two in its very structure. In human terms, the true infinite might be likened to the concept of love. In a mature relationship, two people overcome their individual finitude, their separateness, by forming a unity that contains and transcends their differences, thereby achieving a true infinite, a complete and self-sustaining relationship where the totality is more than the sum of its parts. So, the true infinite is an infinity that is self-contained and fully realized, encompassing both the finite and the infinite within a higher unity. This is what makes it "true" in Hegel's sense.

The concept of transfinite numbers symbolizes the idea that not all infinities are equal, therefore some infinities are "larger" or "more powerful" than others, which implies that there is finiteness in the different levels of infinity. The term "transfinite" was introduced by the mathematician Georg Cantor to describe quantities that are larger than any finite number but are still distinct from absolute infinity. Transfinite numbers are used to describe different sizes or magnitudes of infinity in the context of set theory. Philosophically, this implies that our understanding of the infinite must account for order, degrees and diversity, rather than treating it as a monolithic concept, linear and undetermined. In calculus, the concept of limits allows for the idea that a sequence approaches a finite value as it progresses towards infinity. For example, when the sum of an infinite series converges to a finite number. This is a way in which the infinite is "resolved" into the finite. In Hegelian philosophy, there is an idea that the infinite is not something that stands opposed to the finite but

is something that includes and transcends it. In this view, the finite and infinite are interconnected, and the infinite manifests through finite forms. Thus the idea of infinity being "resolved" into finiteness, where finite realities are seen as expressions or manifestations of an underlying infinite truth. Philosophers like Zeno of Elea presented paradoxes that involve infinity, such as the famous paradox of Achilles and the tortoise, to illustrate the difficulties of resolving the infinite into the finite, otherwise we end up in absurdities like the arrow never reaching its goal. These paradoxes highlight the challenges in reconciling the infinite with the finite in a logical sense. In numerous religious or theological contexts, infinity is often associated with the divine or the absolute. The idea that the infinite be "resolved" into the finite might be seen as the process by which the divine manifests in the finite world, as a metaphysical resolution, for example the incarnation of the absolute in a given individual, such as Christ or Krishna. The infinite realizes itself through some finite representation or embodiment. This suggests a relationship between the infinite and the finite, where the infinite expresses itself through finite forms, or is understood as containing finiteness within it.

In an existential context, the continuous process of self-discovery and personal growth can be seen as a "true infinite." This process doesn't have a final end, but it's fulfilling because it involves ongoing reflection, learning, and the deepening of one's understanding of self and life. Even though you never fully "arrive" at a perfect understanding, the journey itself is meaningful and enriching. In opposition, the endless pursuit of external validation or approval from others can be seen as a "bad infinite." No matter how much validation one receives, it is never enough, leading to a constant, unfulfilling chase. A person who is constantly seeking "likes" on social media, or approval from their peers, may find themselves in a never-ending cycle of needing more and more validation. This pursuit is "bad infinite" because it is unsatisfying and can never lead to true fulfillment. The obsessive search for perfection in any aspect of life can lead to a "bad infinite."

The closer one gets to an ideal, the more flaws one sees, leading to an endless and frustrating loop of striving for an unattainable goal. For example, an artist who continually revises their work, never satisfied, always finding imperfections, might be trapped in a "bad infinite." This endless cycle of dissatisfaction can prevent them from ever completing or enjoying their work. A person who is caught in a nihilistic worldview, constantly reinforcing the idea that nothing matters and thus feeling trapped in a loop of despair, experiences a "bad infinite." The loop is endless and provides no sense of resolution or fulfillment. In existential terms, the "good infinite" represents pursuits that, while never truly completed, offer ongoing fulfillment and meaning. The "bad infinite" represents cycles of behavior or thought that are endless and lead to frustration, dissatisfaction, or despair. Chronic indecision, wallowing in the infinite range of possibilities, is a classic form of this, a rejection of finitude, a fear of commitment, a refusal to exist. The person who doesn't choose deludes himself into being pure potentiality, into being free, whereas his indeterminacy is a manifestation of lack and powerlessness.

We could say as well that the "true infinite" is focused on the process, when the "bad infinite" is focused on the results. The "true infinite" emphasizes the journey, the ongoing experience, and the intrinsic value found in the process itself. It acknowledges that the journey might not have a final destination, but this lack of finality is not problematic because the process is meaningful and fulfilling in its own right. From an existential perspective, focusing on the process allows individuals to find meaning in the present, in their actions at any moment, and in the unfolding of life, rather than obsessing over an ultimate goal or endpoint. The "bad infinite," on the other hand, is characterized by an obsessive focus on achieving a specific outcome or result. This focus engenders a void where the result is always just out of reach, leading to frustration, dissatisfaction, and a sense of incompleteness. The endless pursuit of success, with the emphasis on results, makes any achievement feel insufficient, leading to

a never-ending cycle of seeking more. This result-oriented focus often leads to a sense of futility, since the desired outcome is never fully realized, or is quickly considered insufficient, prompting the pursuit to continue endlessly without providing any lasting fulfillment.

Another example of “bad infinite” connected to immediate gratification is what we call “introspective rumination”. It consists in constantly brooding about our past, recalling painful events, sulking over bad memories, an infinite process which engenders bitterness and resentment. We feel bad about others, or about ourselves, or both. We conclude that we are victims of bad circumstances or bad people, which makes us powerless and weak, or we simply conclude to our own worthlessness. And strangely enough, some people will easily wallow or drown in their own mud, indulging in self-pity or self-depreciation, in anger or in grudges. They will go on and on, contemplating their own desolation, speaking about it, sharing their drama with whoever wants to hear it, or even imposing it on reluctant listeners. They are stuck in an impotent modality of speech and thought, they are caught in a form of “negative narcissism”, where surprisingly they brag about their misery and their mediocrity. A useless chewing about self-obsession and pity for oneself, empty self-blame and lengthy complaints. This endless, infinite process leads nowhere, it does not produce anything, it does not allow any transformation of the subject, it only justifies their sorry existential state. Nothing can please them or satisfy them. Actually, ruminating people protect themselves from their own insights, that they are incapable of perceiving at the moment, they resist any real thinking. During this type of introspection, their psychological self-defense is very active, or vividly reactive. One does not allow himself to reach any new idea of insights, since it would trouble their little comfort. They are not ready to envisage diverse perspectives. Therefore their introspection remains superficial, their mental activity rotates around the same compulsive and consuming ideas.

At this point, what would be necessary is to step out of their sad gestalt, to transcend their psychological matrix, to produce new insights, new concepts, thus sublimating their present psyche. Such a leap would not deny the reality of their past, it is not a matter of producing some simplistic and artificial “positive” thinking where everything is great, but to capture their own reality from an enriched perspective, problematizing the reductionist and repetitive vision they have of themselves. This implies a certain dose of critical thinking, of creativity, of freedom on their part. The linear process they were involved in is subsumed in a higher order mental geometry, more enriching, more challenging, more empowering, more interesting, more joyful. Unless they engage in such a leap, their self-exploration remains illusory, they are not really analyzing themselves; their introspection is a mere moping, a vicious circle where they remain prisoner of their own primitive mental constructions, a very fixated, self-obsessed, psychological scheme, sad and neurotic. And the more they speak, the less they say anything significant, but they get drunk in their eternal narration, a true sign of bad faith. More than a bad infinite, we can call this phenomenon a self-destructive drive.

Thus we see the party’s desire for infinity as a bad infinity, because in reality it leads nowhere. It is simply a powerful desire that seeks to perpetuate itself without ever being satisfied, while it’s constantly threatened by the principle of reality, by the threat of that limit they seek to forget in drunkenness but which in fact they cannot avoid.

# V

## ORGIASTIC THINKING AND CONSTRUCTIVE THINKING

Another way to describe the opposition between “bad infinite” and “true infinite” in terms of thinking processes, is through the opposition between “orgiastic thinking” and “constructive thinking”. This opposition can be understood as a contrast between two fundamentally different approaches to thinking and behavior, taken as a whole: how they relate to judgment, decision, creativity, emotional expression, existence, etc.

The opposition between "orgiastic thinking" and "constructive thinking" is not a classical or recognized formulation in philosophical or psychological literature. These terms might be used metaphorically or descriptively in certain contexts, but they do not represent a formalized or traditional dichotomy. The term "orgiastic" is used to describe behavior or thought processes characterized by excess, emotional intensity, or a lack of restraint. But in ancient Greek philosophy, Plato discussed the need to balance reason (logos) with the spirited part of the soul (thymos), the seat of noble emotions such as courage, pride and honor, and desire (epithymia), the lower part of the soul linked to primal desires, sensual appetites, bodily needs

such as hunger, thirst, sexual desire or material comfort. And in Nietzschean philosophy, as we already described it, the opposition between the Dionysian and Apollonian elements is somewhat related to this idea. The Dionysian represents chaos, emotion, and instinct, while the Apollonian represents order, reason, and structure. This dichotomy explores how these two forces interact within art, culture, and the human psyche.

As we see it, "orgiastic thinking" refers to a mode of thought characterized by intense, unrestrained emotional expression, impulsivity, and a focus on immediate pleasure. The principle of "brainstorming" is an example of it: a creative problem-solving technique where a group of people generates a large number of ideas or proposals in a free-flowing and open environment, where the focus is on quantity over quality, encouraging participants to think freely and suggest any idea that comes to mind, with the goal of sparking creativity and exploring a wide range of possibilities. Orgiastic thinking involves a chaotic or frenzied approach to thinking and to life, where actions and ideas are driven by passion, desire, or irrational impulses rather than careful deliberation. Thoughts and speech are hasty, judgments and decisions are made quickly, based on emotional reactions or a desire for immediate pleasure, without much consideration for implications and consequences. Mental processes are rather disorganized, lacking a clear direction or logical coherence. There is often a high level of emotional involvement, where feelings dominate over rational analysis. The emphasis is on personal experiences and immediate outcomes, the thinking is reactive, rather than being preoccupied by coherence and continuity, rather than building something sustainable or grounded. Such an attitude often leads to judgments and decisions that may satisfy immediate impulses, but results in negative consequences or instability in the long term. It tends to be driven by unchecked emotions, it engineers careless thinking, leading to potentially erratic or unpredictable behavior.

In the life process, orgiastic thinking involves pursuing fleeting pleasures or indulgences without regard for future consequences, whereas constructive thinking focuses on setting goals, making plans, and working steadily toward them.

"Constructive thinking" refers to a mode of thought that is deliberate, organized, and aimed at creating coherent, clear, structured and lasting outcomes. It involves careful planning, logical analysis, and a focus on building or improving its production over time. Judgments, assertions and decisions are based on reason, evidence, and logical thinking, with an awareness of long-term implications. Thought processes are organized, with a clear plan or method for achieving goals. Emotions are acknowledged but managed in a way that supports a direction, a plan, rational decision-making and adequate problem-solving. The emphasis is on creating sustainable, positive results, often involving patience and perseverance. Constructive thinking approaches problems methodically, seeking to understand the root causes of issues and develop a thoughtful, effective result.

It aims for decisions that build toward long-term success and stability, even if they require more time and effort to implement. It involves a regulation of subjectivity, where emotions are considered but not allowed to override rational decision-making. In a creative process, orgiastic thinking might result in a burst of unrestrained creativity that lacks coherence or sustainability, while constructive thinking would involve channeling creativity into a structured project with a clear objective and purpose.

Constructive thinking applies the various skills of reflective thinking: argumentation, analysis, critical thinking, conceptualization, concretization, questioning, interpretation, synthesis and so on. It involves taking distance, working on form and content, modifying the production over time and reflecting on it. It is open to dialogue and criticism as a means for improving the work.

The opposition between "orgiastic thinking" and "constructive thinking" highlights a fundamental contrast between impulsivity and



deliberation, between short-term emotional gratification and long-term, rational goal-setting. While both modes of thinking have their place depending on the context, constructive thinking is generally more effective for achieving sustainable, positive outcomes.

But orgiastic thinking, despite its potential drawbacks, includes several positive aspects, particularly in contexts where spontaneity, creativity, and emotional expression are valuable. Here are some examples.

Orgiastic thinking allows for the free flow of ideas without the constraints of logic or structure. This potentially leads to innovative and original ideas that might not emerge through more structured, controlled and rational thinking. It encourages thinking outside the box, challenging conventional norms, and pushing boundaries. This is particularly beneficial in artistic and creative fields where new and unconventional ideas are often valued. Orgiastic thinking allows for the full expression of emotions, rather cathartic and authentic. This mode of thinking embraces feelings and passions, leading to genuine self-expression. When emotions are expressed openly and intensely, it creates strong emotional connections with others, fostering empathy and understanding in social and personal relationships, engendering a more joyful and cordial atmosphere.

Orgiastic thinking is often associated with spontaneity and the ability to live in the moment. This leads to experiences that are vibrant, dynamic, and full of life, allowing individuals to fully engage with the present. It promotes a flexible and adaptive approach to life, where individuals are open to new experiences and willing to change direction as needed. This can be beneficial in situations where rigid planning and control are less effective. The intense emotional energy that characterizes orgiastic thinking is a powerful motivator. It drives people to pursue their impulses and passions with enthusiasm and determination, fueling efforts that would otherwise be hindered by overthinking or caution. The passion and energy of orgiastic thinking are rather contagious, inspiring others to engage with their own

emotions and ideas more deeply. In situations where people are stuck in routine or feel creatively blocked, orgiastic thinking serves as a catalyst to break through stagnation. The rush of unfiltered ideas and emotions enhances progress and generates momentum. It also helps individuals embrace change and uncertainty, responding to life's challenges with a sense of adventure rather than fear. Orgiastic thinking liberates individuals from the constraints of societal expectations, norms, or self-imposed limitations. It encourages a more free-spirited approach to life, where one's desires and instincts are given space to flourish. By engaging in orgiastic thinking, individuals explore aspects of their identity, desires, intuitions and emotions that are typically suppressed or ignored, leading to greater self-awareness and personal growth.

While orgiastic thinking has its risks, such as impulsivity and lack of long-term reflection, it also has positive sides that contribute to creativity, emotional richness, spontaneity, and personal freedom. When balanced with more constructive and rational approaches, orgiastic thinking reveals itself as a powerful tool for innovation, self-expression, and living a passionate, engaged life.

A classical example of this distinction between the two types of thinking is visible with people that enjoy discussing ideas but have a hard time to sit down and write, and even to read an arduous text, by themselves. When we think alone, we rely solely on our own knowledge and perspective. In dialogue, others offer new insights, challenge our assumptions, and help us see things from different angles, leading to richer and more diverse ideas. Dialogue stimulates our thinking process, already by the mere presence of others, then by introducing new ideas and prompting responses from us. This back-and-forth helps generate ideas more quickly and keeps the thought process dynamic, while thinking alone leads to slower, more linear thinking.

Indeed writing, and thought-provoking reading, require energy and a certain inspiration. This energy and inspiration are more easily deployed during the enthralling moments of a dialogue. So much

so that sometimes there are no resources left to withdraw into ourselves, for a moment of meditation or solitary creation, as if we were totally purged, exhausted. Comparatively to the exciting situation of a discussion, writing or reading alone seems dull, even depressing, and our mind easily diverges, procrastinates or gets deconcentrated. We have to produce a new type of energy. For intellectual activities in isolation, we have to patiently focus and laboriously create, while during emotional exchanges with others, we spend the energy that we already have at disposal. Dialogue is often a form of shapeless purging, while concentration requires giving shape to our ideas and channeling our thinking process. In the case of excitement in dialogue, we use the others to get rid of the tension that is already in us, we do not need to think, we just “let it go”. It is more impulsive and reactive, we are stimulated but the interaction with others. It can be compared to throwing paint on a canvas or producing rapid *ébauches*, in opposition to fully representing something.

The presence of others is an important stimulus. In moments of excitement in the company of other people we get some feedback; in intellectual activities we are by ourselves, we are abandoned to our own interiority, our own little microcosm, we feel more insecure, we are more constrained. Since no one responds to us, we undergo a strong sense of void. What we produce in our writing, the efforts made in concentrating on a difficult text, will always seem more dull than what we experience when we get excited in an exchange.

Even alone, when our mind is chaotic and overflowing with many ideas, we oscillate between an overflow and a lack of energy, whether for writing or for thinking in a focused way. We cannot get that acute sense of existing through writing or reading as what we get through emotions. People who get easily emotionally excited always experience difficulty channeling that energy into some productive task. Plus they fear having their “thoughts” wasted, which is the reason why they speak compulsively and abruptly. If we want to write, we should be careful of not getting over-excited beforehand; otherwise

it will be difficult to calm down and concentrate. Plus, when we get excited over an idea, it always seems so sublime and so great, that the writing will necessarily be disappointing. Written out, the thinking will often be inferior to how it felt when we first experienced it. That is why for many people, the writing activity is connected to a sense of lack, of limitation, of powerlessness. That is why such an activity is not natural to them, they have to painfully force themselves to do it, or they totally avoid the exercise.

In the emotional excitement of dialogue, the pleasure is immediate and intense, it is there since the beginning. In calm and continuous thinking work, the pleasure is peaceful, temperate and arrives only at the end of the process, unless someone is already trained to appreciate the subtle pleasure of effort in its aesthetic dimension. We have to first go through the moment of insipidity and strain, or even frustration, in order to deserve some bliss. But if there is no habit of such askesis, it will be very hard to set ourselves in such motion.

Another problem afflicts people who respond emotionally to ideas: they fall in the trap of comparison. They read or hear something they consider “great”, they get enthusiastic about it, they are admiring, then they feel rather impotent, indifferent or despondent about themselves and their own thoughts. If we glorify great poetry, it becomes difficult to compose our own piece, as our own composition cannot be as inspiring as what we just read. As well, emotional excitement is always accompanied with distractions, with the mind suffering from “racing thoughts” or “scattered thinking”. Random perceptions, intuitions and opinions follow one another in a chaotic manner, producing a jumble of impressions, a kind of whirlwind. As a result, chaos feeds excitement as excitement feeds chaos.

Thus, those who indulge in chaos resist emerging from it, and even try to impose it on all those who approach them. They want to express it, justify it, explain it, protect it. At the same time, orgiastic thought wastes itself, exhausting itself in unfulfilled impulses, be-

cause it thinks it is touching the absolute at every moment, through every word. Chaos has its own powerful, driving inertia.

This phenomenon generates a difficulty and reluctance to order our thoughts or feelings into anything more or less structured. In order to think rationally, we need to be distant, to ourselves and others, to occupy a position of an observer, an aloof and “cold” position. We are not a participant anymore but a distant spectator, it feels like remaining on the outskirts of being, instead of being in the center of action. Excitement of dialogue is an “all-immersive” psychological situation, where we experience a sense of totality and absoluteness. So we can understand the disappointed reaction of readers fond of the orgiastic spirit, when they will read our analytical account of the party spirit, the form of which fails to capture the ecstasy they aspire to to experience.

# VI

## ADDICTION

An activity is generally considered an addiction when it meets specific criteria related to compulsive behavior, loss of control, and negative consequences. Here are the main criteria indicating that an activity has become an addiction.

- The individual finds it difficult or impossible to stop the activity, even when they want to. The behavior becomes compulsive, meaning it is performed repetitively, often without conscious control, even if progressively it procures very little or no satisfaction.

- The subject becomes preoccupied with the activity, constantly thinking about it or planning the next opportunity to engage in it.

- There is a tendency for the activity to escalate over time. The person may need to engage in it more frequently or intensely to achieve an adequate satisfaction or relief, similar to how habit works with substances.

- Attempts to moderate or interrupt the activity often fail, leading to longer or more intense engagement than intended. The individual loses control over themselves.

- The activity begins to have detrimental effects on the person's physical or mental health. This could include stress, anxiety, depression, physical harm.

- The activity provokes overall negative consequences on personal life, relations, responsibilities, social interactions or profession. The

person might neglect important aspects of their life in favor of the addictive activity. They may withdraw from social interactions or relationships, preferring to spend time on the addictive activity.

- The person continues to engage in the activity even after recognizing that it is causing harm to themselves or others. This persistence is a strong indicator of addiction. There may be a tendency to deny or minimize the extent of the problem, often justifying the behavior or rationalizing its continuation.

- When the person tries to stop or reduce the activity, they may experience withdrawal symptoms, such as irritability, anxiety, restlessness, or other physical symptoms. There is often a strong desire or craving to re-engage in the activity, which can be overwhelming and difficult to resist.

Here are some of the classical addictive activities.

- Gambling, when it leads to compulsive betting, loss of control, financial ruin, and damage to personal relationships.

- Excessive use of the internet, online gaming or social networking, become addictive when it interferes with daily life, relationships, usual activities, obligations, and leads to physical or mental health issues.

- Compulsive overeating, especially of certain types of food, is addictive when it leads to health problems like obesity and when the person feels unable to control their eating habits despite wanting to stop.

- Pornography, when the usage gradually increases over time, and the individual seeks out more extreme content to achieve the same level of arousal. Attempts to quit result in irritability and intense cravings, drawing the individual back into his perverse cycle.

An activity is considered an addiction when it involves compulsive commitment, loss of control and leads to significant negative consequences in the individual's life. The persistence of the behavior despite awareness of the damage, as well as potential withdrawal symptoms and irresistible cravings, further reinforce the classifica-

tion as an addiction. These characteristics distinguish addictive behavior from mere habits, passions or preferences, by revealing the serious impact it has on the individual's well-being.

Therefore, addiction is not determined by quantity and intensity, since a passion driving one's own existence can be intense and even considered excessive. It is primarily determined by a lack of self-accomplishment or even by self-destruction. A passion can nevertheless engender some characteristic of self-destruction, as we know for example from artists that endanger their health, their relations or their social life when they are carried away by their main activity. But we would not call their passion an addiction, since overall, we can consider that this consuming drive represents the accomplishment of their existence.

Partying becomes an addiction when it meets the same general criteria that define addictive behaviors: compulsive engagement, loss of control, and significant negative consequences in various areas of life. Here is how partying manifests as an addiction.

- An individual might feel compelled to go out and party frequently, even when they recognize the need to slow down or stop. They may find it difficult to miss social events, feeling a strong urge to participate regardless of other obligations or consequences. The person might become preoccupied with thoughts of the next party, planning and prioritizing social events over other aspects of life, such as work, relationships, or health.

- Over time, the person may need to party more often or engage in more extreme behaviors, for example drinking more, taking drugs, staying out later, or engaging in riskier activities, in order to achieve the same level of excitement or satisfaction. This is similar to building a tolerance in substance addictions.

- Even when the person tries to limit their partying, for example deciding to go out only on weekends, they may find themselves partying more often than intended, such as going out on weeknights or extending parties into the next day.



## *The Party Spirit*

- Excessive partying leads to physical health issues, such as chronic fatigue, alcohol or drug abuse, poor diet, and sleep deprivation. It also contributes to mental health problems like anxiety, depression, or feelings of emptiness.

- The addiction may interfere with daily responsibilities, such as work, school, or family and social commitments. For instance, the person might frequently miss work or classes, perform poorly, or neglect important responsibilities due to late-night partying.

- Relationships with family, friends, or romantic partners might suffer due to the person's preoccupation with partying. They may become unreliable, miss important events, or neglect loved ones in favor of going out.

- Frequent partying often involves significant expenses, such as drinks, club entries, transportation, and more. This leads to financial strain, debt, or spending money, relationships, career, or finances. They might feel trapped in the behavior, unable to stop even as the consequences mount.

- They may deny the severity of their partying or rationalize it as "just having fun", or by attesting that "it's okay to have fun", even when it's clear that this behavior is damaging their life.

- When the person tries to stop or reduce partying, they may experience feelings of boredom, irritability, anxiety, or depression. They might feel a strong sense of missing out or an inability to enjoy life without partying. There may be a strong desire to return to the party scene, with cravings for the excitement, social interaction, or mood-enhancing substances like alcohol or drugs associated with partying.

- In some social circles, partying is heavily normalized and even encouraged. The individual may feel pressure to keep up with friends or conform to social expectations, which contribute to the development of addictive behaviors. The pervasive fear of missing out on "important" events drives compulsive partying, leading individuals to prioritize going out over other important aspects of life, even when it's detrimental.

An individual might start by going out to parties occasionally, but over time, they begin to prioritize partying above all else. They might party multiple times a week, staying out late and engaging in heavy drinking or drug use. Despite noticing that their work performance is slipping, their relationships are suffering, and their health is deteriorating, they continue to go out. When they try to cut back, they feel anxious, bored, and unable to enjoy themselves in other ways, leading them back into the same pattern of behavior. And of course, they encounter difficulties when facing any challenge, since they have developed the habit of pursuing immediate gratification, therefore effort and patience become quite difficult if not impossible for them.

We should mention as well a common “soft” form of addiction to the party spirit, nonetheless problematic, which affects those who constantly seek out social life, meetings with friends, social events, outings and so on. They don’t seek the excitement so much as the light exhilaration of mundane life. But for them, it is not a question of accomplishing anything, they don’t aspire to specific conversations that could enrich them. They just want company, they want to be surrounded, they avoid and fear solitude, so they want to meet people. They dread the boredom of being alone with themselves, they always want to be surrounded, they need the drunkenness of being with others. This practice, though less outrageous, less demanding and less risky than the previous one, nevertheless becomes an obstacle to self-realization. For the series of small, everyday pleasures stand in the way of the much-needed challenge of existence. The negative consequences for the subject’s psyche are bound to follow. This is what we will see in the next section, on immediate gratification.

# VII

## IMMEDIATE

### GRATIFICATION

People who fall into the “party spirit”, the “fun seekers”, tend to be focused on "immediate gratification". Their quest revolves around a tendency to prioritize short-term pleasures or rewards at the expense of long-term interest. This behavior leads to various negative consequences in different aspects of their lives. Here are the key issues associated with a focus on immediate gratification.

- People who seek immediate gratification often make impulsive decisions without considering ulterior consequences. This induces choices that are satisfying in the moment but detrimental in the long run, as they are primarily seeking pleasure, they avoid challenge and responsibility, they tend to adopt imprudent, thoughtless or reckless behaviors.

- Immediate gratification prevents individuals from planning for the future. They may neglect important tasks or duties because they prefer to do something more enjoyable right away, leading to certain problems. A typical symptom is profligacy and practical negligence, for example compulsive buying.

- A focus on immediate gratification brings about unhealthy habits, such as overeating, substance abuse, internet addiction, neglecting mental or physical exercise. The pursuit of short-term plea-

sure, like indulging in junk food or alcohol, results in long-term health issues such as obesity, diabetes, or addiction.

- Constantly seeking quick fixes for emotional discomfort, through drugs, medication, alcohol, or compulsive behaviors, exacerbate underlying mental health issues. This creates a cycle of temporary relief followed by increased stress, anxiety, or depression. Such an attitude both reflects and feeds a personal difficulty to face any existential duress, a form of hypersensitivity constituting a psychological weakness.

- Focusing on immediate gratification leads to neglecting important responsibilities in relationships, such as being present for a partner, fulfilling social or family obligations. This generates tension, resentment, and ultimately damage relationships.

- The pursuit of instant pleasure makes individuals more self-centered and infantile, prioritizing their own needs over those of others. This provokes conflicts, lack of empathy, and weakened social bonds.

- Immediate gratification often provides only temporary satisfaction, leading to a need for constant stimulation or reward. This results in a never-ending cycle of seeking quick fixes without achieving lasting contentment or substantial fulfillment.

- By always opting for the easy or pleasurable choice, individuals may miss out on opportunities for personal growth, skill development, or achieving long-term goals. The discipline and effort required for these achievements are often bypassed in favor of immediate rewards.

- Immediate gratification triggers procrastination, where individuals put off important tasks or work in favor of more “enjoyable” activities. This results in poor academic or job performance, missed deadlines, a lack of professional progression, an absence of self-challenge. A focus on short-term pleasure hinders long-term success. Achieving significant goals often requires sustained effort and delayed gratifi-

cation, which those focused on the immediate may struggle to maintain.

- The pursuit of immediate gratification reinforces negative behaviors, making them harder to break over time. For example, using food, shopping, sexual pursuits, gaming, internet browsing or other quick fixes, as a way to deal with stress, when it becomes a systematic response, fosters more significant problems.

- Over-reliance on immediate gratification makes it difficult for individuals to adapt to situations that require patience, perseverance, or delayed rewards, limiting their ability to cope with life's challenges.

Immediate gratification lacks a real, meaningful process because it focuses on obtaining quick and easy rewards rather than engaging in a deliberate or sustained effort that involves projection, persistence, or delayed satisfaction. Since it is driven by impulses and the desire for quick rewards. It bypasses the thoughtful decision-making process that typically characterizes actions aimed at long-term goals. Since the focus is on satisfying a desire as quickly as possible, there is little to no time spent reflecting on the nature of an activity, on its goals and strategies, on its consequences or its alternative course of actions. This contrasts with processes that require time, effort, and patience and reflection. Immediate gratification often involves taking the path of least resistance to achieve a reward, skipping over the steps that would normally be part of a comprehensive process. The habit of eating snacks for immediate pleasure, a quick relief, without the patience of preparing a healthy meal is a typical example. Engaging in immediate gratification typically involves avoiding more difficult or challenging tasks that require sustained effort and time. The process of overcoming obstacles and working toward a goal is replaced by the quick fix of immediate pleasure.

Immediate gratification is centered around the "here and now," with little regard for future outcomes. This short-term focus eliminates the need for a process that might lead to greater, but delayed, rewards. The satisfaction gained from immediate gratification is of-

ten shallow and fleeting, lacking the deeper sense of accomplishment that comes from following a process to achieve something meaningful. A real process often involves growth, learning, and development, which require time and effort. Immediate gratification bypasses this developmental process, opting instead for instant results without the benefits of learning or growth. Processes that involve skill-building, whether in personal, professional, or creative endeavors, are typically gradual and require practice and persistence. Immediate gratification skips these stages, leading to a lack of real achievement or progress.

Immediate gratification involves engaging with tasks or activities in a superficial way, without fully immersing oneself in the experience. This contrasts with processes that require deep engagement, reflection, and commitment. Since immediate gratification is about quick rewards, it requires minimal emotional, intellectual, or physical investment. In contrast, a real process often involves significant investment and commitment over time.

Therefore, immediate gratification lacks a real process because it prioritizes quick and easy rewards over sustained effort, planning, and long-term thinking. This approach bypasses the steps, challenges, and growth that typically characterize meaningful processes, resulting in superficial satisfaction rather than deep accomplishment.

A more tricky or subtle type of immediate gratification, quite different from the “party spirit” and “fun seeking”, manifests as the regular fulfillment of “urgent”, often less challenging obligations while postponing more difficult or long-term tasks. This “urgent” often takes the form of “obligation”, as another form of justification. This behavior is known as procrastination by prioritization or structured procrastination. This sense of “gratification” remains unconscious, since the individual does not perceive these urgent tasks or chores as particularly pleasant. They tend to be quite tedious, although they are generally easier. They might even be really urgent, but they are mainly used to avoid more painful or intimidating challenges, evading more complex or significant activities. In this way, we protect

ourselves against failure, since these tedious but easy tasks can only be successful!

While realizing these immediate “urgent” tasks may provide a sense of accomplishment and reduce short-term stress, they serve as a form of avoidance, delaying the more significant work that requires sustained effort and focus. Immediate gratification in this context involves prioritizing tasks that seem useful but may not be the most important or impactful. This leads to a cycle where a person continuously attends to urgent but less meaningful duties while putting off the more challenging activities that contribute to long-term goals.

Completing urgent tasks and fulfilling menial obligations provide a temporary sense of relief and satisfaction, similar to other forms of immediate gratification, although this one is less pleasant. Its dynamic is to keep the individual busy in order to avoid thinking. However, this attitude does not contribute to long-term success or personal growth. By consistently opting for easier or more immediate tasks, individuals might avoid activities that require deep thinking, growth, creativity, or long-term planning. Over time, this engenders missed opportunities for development and achievement. While it might feel productive or ethical to be completing such tasks, this behavior leads to important challenges being consistently delayed. As a result, challenging endeavors become more daunting over time, potentially leading to increased frustration, stress, anxiety, and even depression, providing a sense of being overwhelmed or feeling meaningless.

Here are typical examples of such immediate gratification.

- A mother who focuses daily exclusively on taking care of the household chores and family obligations without any consideration for her personal life and self-development.

- An employee who spends most of their day responding to emails and completing small, quick tasks like organizing files or updating spreadsheets, while avoiding developing a strategic report, tackling a complex project, or preparing for an important presentation.

And of course, this type of immediate gratification is more difficult to handle and to realize its true nature, because it grants the individual the sense of a clear conscience, an illusion of satisfaction, since they actually do something “productive”, from which they get a feeling of “job done”. It also feeds a certain form of narcissism through the idea of a “glorious” self-sacrifice, since the individual spends his time on uninspiring tasks. And such individuals might easily be convinced that they have no other existential choice, a typical manifestation of bad faith.

Overall, immediate gratification indeed provides temporary satisfaction, but it comes at the expenses of long-term well-being and self-realization. It induces or reinforces an immature, egocentric or narcissistic mental scheme. The illusion of momentary immediate satisfaction hinders self-consciousness and self-mastery, it reduces our power of being, it inhibits our freedom. And inevitably, it engenders frustration, anxiety and depression.