

TOWARDS A NEW, PROCESSUAL CONCEPT OF HOPE

In the light of the above considerations a new, processual concept of hope might be delineated. The ways of dealing with uncertainty introduced by Sztompka and described in the introduction to this article placed hope in the realm of ambiguous feelings, distinguishing it from trust conceived as an active attitude supported by a specific type of learning about reality. The work carried out as part of these considerations made it possible to make some semantic shifts in this respect. In accordance with those assumptions, an attempt was made to reconsider the phenomenon of hope with special regard to the 'process'

that allows us to experience it. It has been established that we can understand hope as an active attitude, the foundation of which is an envisioned purposeful order of the anticipated future. The fact of 'seeing' this order is connected with positive emotions: in the wake of the realization of the potential of the future order motivation emerges. Two aspects have been recognized as crucial to this perspective: the moment of the 'emergence' of the order in question and the co-instantaneous forces that stimulate the individual's experience, thus allowing the individual to 'face' the future. Maslow's 'peak experiences' and Csikszentmihalyi's 'optimal experiences' have been recognized as fulfilling those criteria.

The important conclusion which follows from the proposed approach is that hope needs to be understood as a process which begins with the human being actively building a new 'order of thoughts.' The existence of such an order in the consciousness of a human subject turns out the condition of the appearance of hope, and the research material used in this article has confirmed the real possibility of such an order, as well as provided a very practical indication of the kind of mental processes which can trigger it. In *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Csikszentmihalyi even describes a 'procedure' helpful in building the experience in question within oneself. A strong focus of attention proves to be the precondition of an orderly view of the reality which, in turn, releases positive emotions and motivation in the subject which are necessary in order to free up the subject's agency.

However, do the experiences which have been described here make it possible to point to the moment when hope is born in a human being? Do they give hope for hope? As in the case of any essential question, there are no unambiguous answers. The examples we have analyzed meet the theoretical conditions of the 'occurrence' of hope we determined while setting the denotative field of the concept, but the fact that the model we have created can be considered as coherent does not mean that it is true.

There is, though, a personal experience which can confirm the legitimacy of the train of thought presented here. In the search for the essence of the phenomenon of hope, and in the hope for finding it, the author has experienced that mobilizing sense of 'ordering' that filled the work on this issue with meaning.

Therefore, an experience of hope should not be regarded in terms of a realistic assessment of the existing options. Hope is not about seeing the future. Rather, it calls for a coherent vision of the reality as it should be and for an inner strength making it possible for the person to try and implement the perceived order of things.