

EDITORIAL

ECOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND LIFE QUALITY

*Isabel Amélia Costa Mendes**

When addressing ecological literacy, CAPRA argues that by keeping in view his reconnection to the web of life man can learn valuable lessons from the analysis of ecosystems - which means creating, nourishing and educating sustainable communities, where our needs and hopes could be fulfilled without disregarding the chances of future generations.

To that end, the author focuses on the basic principles of ecology and says that we need to become ecologically literate, that is, we must understand the organization presuppositions of ecological communities and use them in the construction of sustainable human communities, since the former and the latter present the same basic organization principles - they are structurally closed systems, but at the same time receptive to flows of energy and resources. Despite the differences between an ecosystem and a human community, we can learn from ecosystems how to live in a sustainable manner while searching for, cherishing and improving life quality. These actions are mainly based on cooperative relationships and activities.

The interdependence principle establishes that the essential characteristics and the existence of organisms itself derive from the interconnection of living beings in a large and complex system of relationships – which CAPRA denominates the web of life. In this way, the implications to human communities are clear. According to the cited author, a “sustainable human community is aware of the multiple relationships among its members. Nourishing the community means nourishing these relationships”.

Therefore, **partnership** is fundamental in sustained communities and it means the tendency to the formation of associations and connections by keeping in view that cooperation is a requirement for life quality. Conciliating partnership and the process of transformation and development will bring about “co-evolution”. Individuals co-evolve by means of a reliable partnerships.

Also in relation to the question – life quality – **flexibility** is another essential characteristic since the lack of it results in tension. As CAPRA states, “temporary tension is an essential aspect in life; however, prolonged tension is harmful and destructive to the system”.

Such considerations make us understand that managing an organization “means finding the ideal values” for its variables.

Finally, **diversity** also plays its role in the search for, improvement and cherishing of life quality; but it will only constitute a strategic benefit if the human community is sustained on a web of “relationships” and if it is aware of interdependence, that is, of the mutual dependence of its members. In this way, diversity will be an enriching factor of “co-evolution” relationships.

Survival and life quality of the human race is closely related to our ecological literacy, to our understanding of ecological principles and to their adaptation to our human communities, aiming at their sustainability.

REFERENCE

CAPRA, F. A teia da vida: uma nova compreensão científica dos sistemas vivos. Trad. Newton Roberval Eichenberg. São Paulo: Cultrix, 1999.

* Vice-President of the Editorial Board of Revista Latino-Americana de Enfermagem and Full Professor at the Department of General and Specialized Nursing at the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Preto College of Nursing, World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for the Development of Nursing Research