

# Living Renouncement

## INTRODUCTION

The message of Cafh is Renouncement turned into life, into a reality, into a truth. But at the same time, it is a process.

Thus, living Renouncement is a central and profound topic in the life of Cafh members.

*Living Renouncement* invites us to reflect upon the decisions each moment demands from us, and to develop the ability to inwardly free ourselves on the material, mental, emotional and existential plane.

Life is energy in continuous movement and transformation.

Living Renouncement implies gradually achieving inner and lasting peace, in harmony with becoming, and discovering what is really essential in our existence.

This course provides us with guidelines that can help us develop Renouncement in our daily life, as practice, as mysticism, as liberation.

At the end of the course, there is an Annex with a series of exercises suggested for each teaching. These can be useful to inspire reflections and meditations, and as practical application of the ideas. For those willing to carry them out, the suggestion is to do them following the study of the corresponding teaching.

The experience gained during the proposed exercises can also be material to share during the reunions.

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## **1<sup>st</sup> Teaching - The mission of Cafh**

As a spiritual movement, Cafh has a mission to complete, and embracing it is Cafh 's reason for existing. Cafh has the distinctive feature of only being able to fulfill the purpose for which it was created if the Sons and Daughters, as individuals, embody this mission within ourselves.

We live in a world where many forces drive us in opposite directions, in a time of accelerated transition between paradigms and values. We call this the beginning of the age of Sakib or Aquarius. The essential and transcendent work at this time is to support the mission of Cafh in each one of us, in order to provide the world with values oriented towards the expansion of consciousness.

Cafh 's message is very much needed at this moment. Our experience in the spiritual field is indispensable to the balance of energies in the world, and to forge new conditions for the future.

Our mystical mission is to work with ourselves to develop the inner process of unfolding and the expansion of our consciousness which Renouncement involves. Our social mission is to radiate through presence, sowing that possibility within human consciousness, and opening the door of our heart to tune into souls who long for their unfolding.

We have been called to this work through our vocation of spiritual unfolding. Each one, with their characteristics and their unique life circumstances, holds in their hands the possibility of embodying the Message of Cafh and contributing to balancing Humanity 's scale.

The Message of Cafh is Renouncement.

Our task is to turn the Idea of Renouncement into a reality within us and to provide this experience for the good of Humanity.

We know that the word "renouncement" has been the source of many doubts and debates due to the meaning given to it in contexts other than Cafh. It is interesting to observe that in today 's world, renouncement is already being spoken about without so many prejudices, and with a broader meaning. In addition to the religions and spiritual traditions that have used it since ancient times, now philosophers and psychologists also speak about renouncement. It appears in articles from well-known newspapers, and we can even find fairly complete responses using Artificial Intelligence.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Teaching: Renouncement**

Renouncement is an idea that has been in Cafh since its beginnings. But it is necessary to understand it in the light of the present moment. It is necessary to free it from values like deprivation, resignation, submission, conformism and blame. These values are expressions of the duality of the pairs of opposites, and they do not reveal the true potential of Renouncement.

What is certain is that human life only has meaning through Renouncement. Does this seem like a bold statement? We discover that it is not if we carefully reflect on the meaning of human life and its becoming.

What meaning does life have if, from the moment our intelligence awakens, we endeavor to attain things that are going to pass, that we are going to leave behind? What meaning does life have if we are unable to keep our youth, the beings we love, the happy moments, or the goals we reach? Why so much suffering and effort, which ends with the death of all we know?

If life in the space-time dimension is becoming, where continuous change is the only constant, Renouncement is the one thing that can give coherence and meaning to each event we live.

Life is energy in continuous movement and transformation.

Thus, learning to renounce, to take and leave behind, involves living consciously, and it enables the experiences we live—the potential of each moment—to be transformed into learning and the expansion of our consciousness.

Thus, Renouncement is the one attitude which leads us to live fully.

Renouncement involves a wise and balanced outlook on life, which allows us to go through happy and bitter moments without been caught up in them, trapped interiorly in the past or in our desires.

We move towards each challenge with an ever-fresh look, with ever-new interest in learning something about ourselves; developing some new ability; integrating ourselves better into our surroundings, and thus being able to participate, that is, being a conscious “part of” humanity.

In this way, our life is evidence of the spiritual message of Cafh.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Teaching - Renouncement as process**

Renouncement is like a kaleidoscope that can mean different things according to the moment, the place and the person.

Let 's look at Renouncement as a process.

We start from the fact that we are complex beings living in some specific coordinates of space and time, with a simple, intangible and timeless inner center that is our essence.

Everything we capture with our senses and our mind is in a flow of permanent change. Nothing can be retained indefinitely; nothing remains the same. Each instant, everything is changing; it moves in a dynamic reality.

That is why Renouncement is a Law. This evident and, at the same time, mysterious law is what impels us to know ourselves and to penetrate the divine mystery in our interior.

We need to ask ourselves about the how. If our work is to make this idea our experience, how do we live Renouncement?

From the individual point of view, we live in a process that constantly moves and changes, not only exteriorly but also interiorly. Our thoughts, our moods, our emotions, our physical sensations and our relationships change. The rhythm of change can be different in each case, but it is inevitable.

If we have the habit of reading a book every day at the same hour, we realize that, even though we apparently always do the same, we are not the same, because our mood changes, as well as the thoughts and the worries that cross our minds. The same thing happens when we meditate; we are never the same.

Can we observe how this change happens in our inner state? Can we describe it without trying to change it? Can we identify our timeless inner center—our essence—and connect with it? Can we visualize the difference between superficial movement and the deep center? Can we visualize our heart as the place where the Divine Presence, our Eternal Essence, dwells?

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Teaching - The process of Renouncement: the observer**

Even though our body and mind are flowing in a continuous process, there is a center, an observer within us (that we could also call consciousness or spirit). Normally, we tend not to be conscious of this observer.

As we are not conscious of the observer, it identifies with different aspects of the process, like an actor who believes he is the characters he plays. Each of us tends to have a certain repertoire of characters. We can recognize some of these characters as our roles: daughter, mother, sister, husband, friend, worker, etc. But we also give life to other characters that we do not always see: kind, irascible, critical, insecure, patient, anxious, etc.

How do we realize this? For example, at a time when we feel confident and secure, we can think: I am intelligent; I am kind; I am daring. But in other more adverse circumstances, we think: how stupid I am; I have been merciless, or I am fearful. Sometimes we have stronger identifications with one of those roles and they don't change that easily. Probably, they were established in our childhood, or throughout our experiences, and they have become a part of our personality.

We are energy in movement, and that energy continues to take different forms and expressions.

We are continually identifying with these facets or compounds of our being, which vary according to the circumstances or our inner states. As long as this process is unconscious, we suffer, either because those characteristics make life or relationships difficult for us, or because we see ourselves subject to ups and downs that we cannot manage.

We call this "ignorance." Ignorance of our own being, of the way these compounds or energies operate within us. That is why it makes so much sense to dedicate ourselves to permanent inner work, to the search to know ourselves.

It is possible to leave this game and observe ourselves.

The first key question is: Who am I really? What am I in essence? If all these personalities we embody are transitory, we can understand that we are none of them in essence, but that they are manifestations of compounds that shape the vehicle we live with, manifest and experience.

Since we operate within a flowing process (the becoming), knowing this vehicle is a work that never ends. There are questions which allow us to be awake: Which image of myself or which facet am I identifying with? What aspect of my person is manifesting itself in this instant?

Inner work helps us to gradually remove the layers, like the multiple layers of an onion, and we gradually draw near to our inner center, that energy that is purely spiritual. We can discover that inner center. We can consciously position ourselves as that observer. We can sense that observer when, faced with the question "Who am I?", we ask ourselves, "Who is asking that question?"

## 5<sup>th</sup> Teaching - Myths about Renouncement: idealizations

Given our culture's education and heritage, it is possible that we hold some myths regarding Renouncement. Idealizations are one of these myths.

Idealizations are one of the most powerful obstacles in our unfolding. These obstacles often disguise themselves as "ideals", longings and noble feelings and values. But at their core they can be an underhanded way of expecting something specific from ourselves, from other persons, from circumstances, from organizations and from life. Idealizations are the opposite of Renouncement because they chain us to a determined expectation or an unconscious belief in how things have to be, instead of allowing us to flow with reality as it presents itself to us, accepting it. We react instead of creatively responding with our potential.

When we idealize ourselves or others, we tend to encounter circumstances in which we think: "**This shouldn't happen.**" And the feeling associated with this is disappointment or frustration. It is important to understand that all these feelings are the product of our own expectations and interpretations. They are not inherent in the events or in the persons we observe. They are created in our interior in an unconscious way. The next step is towards resentment, one of the most damaging feelings to our physical-emotional and spiritual well-being. This path of disappointment-frustration-resentment is the source of inner discomfort and even physical illnesses.

The same thing happens on an individual level: "**This shouldn't happen to me.**" We may feel loneliness, fear and insecurity; we may have illusions, etc. When we look at ourselves through the lens of "should be", we are using an image which we compare ourselves to (an idealization). We are not observing our true self, in its whole dimension. This may happen because it is difficult for us to acknowledge some thoughts, feelings or emotions. We must not repress them. Renouncing is not repressing. Renouncing is accepting and learning from the message being manifested within us, and which life shows us.

Reality shows us that everything that happens, happens for a reason; there is something to learn, some message that reaches us to expand our consciousness. Everything that happens, within us and in our surroundings, is material for our inner work. We receive it with love, with open-mindedness, without fear, without blame and without judgments.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Teaching – Myths about Renouncement: The absence of limits, and resignation

Another fairly common myth regarding Renouncement is that it involves “renouncing” inalienable rights.

We resist this idea because we don't want anyone to abuse, mistreat or manipulate us; we don't want there to be injustice; we think we should not allow something which is wrong or causes harm. And this resistance is legitimate, since Renouncement does not involve any of these things. Renouncing is not being weak, manipulable or naïve.

We can confuse renouncing with absence of limits, with accepting harmful relationships or abusive treatment. In fact, Renouncement, as a process of self-knowledge and acceptance, enables us to position ourselves in life in a clear, free and healthy way.

First, we can acknowledge our own emotions, reactions and actions, and even our shortcomings, without judgments or repression. Second, we have values that guide us, like respect, deep listening, kind treatment. That is, we take charge of ourselves and decide on our behavior; we don't let it be governed by external circumstances. And finally, we can establish a distance to observe the relationship or the situation and decide on what parameters it is healthy to maintain and how to position ourselves regarding it.

That is why Renouncement doesn't imply resignation either. Renouncement as resignation is one more myth. Resigning oneself to loneliness, resigning oneself to boredom, resigning oneself to meaningless, resigning... Resignation is the attitude of someone who has given up. In a certain sense, it is a comfortable attitude. Renouncement leads us to an attitude that is the opposite of comfort, since it impels us towards a continuous search and to challenge our own limits.

Renouncement does not imply passivity before life: to abandon personal care, enthusiasm and self-motivation, in short, to stop trying. Much to the contrary, Renouncement leads us to face each instant with interest and curiosity, and to make of our reality our material for learning, participating and expanding.

Likewise, we are not passive in the face of what happens around us. We know that our actions, attitudes and words are not neutral and that they impact our surroundings. In this case, Renouncement implies consciously using these things in a way that is consistent with our values.

## 7<sup>th</sup> Teaching - Attitudes of Renouncement: honesty

One of the essential attitudes for living Renouncement is honesty. Honesty is an indispensable attitude for self-observation. This honesty also allows us to doubt our assumptions and assertions, our beliefs and prejudices. It is good to ask ourselves: Why do I think this? Where does this assertion come from? Why do I judge with such certainty? Asking ourselves these questions could seem pretty simple, but it is not. Due to our education, we are accustomed to judging every act and assigning it a determined value, without knowing where these judgments and prejudices come from.

In this way, we can be honest with ourselves, recognizing the difference between “I need” and “I want”, between “that person is to blame or that circumstance was unfavorable for me” and “I am victimizing myself,” between “things are like that” and “I see things from a certain perspective.”

This understanding helps us to leave the game of the pairs of opposites. When we stop identifying ourselves with only one side of the problem, we recover our inner power. We no longer place the possibility of change on the outside, on others or on circumstances. We recognize that we have no control over this, but we do have the power to choose our attitude, our intention and our actions.

And since the flow of change never stops, our inner work is permanent. It doesn't matter how many years we have been trying to do so, nor the vows we have taken, nor how much experience we have accumulated.

If we are honest with ourselves, Renouncement has an interesting effect in our lives: we cannot have the sensation of “We have achieved this,” of having arrived at the goal. We do not have the sensation of an end, of having reached a permanent achievement. Life itself leads us to renounce that idea of achievement.

This condition, which could discourage or depress us, gives us meaning: we are always in the process of inner unfolding. It also grants us inner freedom, for by visualizing and recognizing the changing aspects within ourselves, we can choose how to think, how to feel and how to act.

Inner freedom is impossible if we are unconscious of the source from which our power emanates, and if we identify with some aspect of the process. This is because our true Being and its purpose in this life are hidden from our consciousness. Without honesty, there is no Renouncement.

## **8<sup>th</sup> Teaching - Attitudes of Renouncement: self-determination**

The ability to recognize what we are identifying with also allows us to develop the capacity for self-determination; that is, of being masters of our will and our decisions. The will is the vehicle of self-determination and freedom

How many times we think that we have no will, and we feel powerless!

Let's think about the muscles in our body. When we spend a long time inactive, our muscles weaken. So, if we do not use or exercise them, they will not respond to us when we need them. But you cannot exercise them all at once, in a single training or on a single day. You must do so gradually, with patience and constancy. It takes time. First, we train for a few minutes, and we progressively increase the time and the level of effort.

Something similar happens with the will. If we want it to respond to us when we need it, we must exercise it every day. That is, we must learn to place it at the service of our consciousness and not of unconscious impulses. For example, if we have difficulty keeping silent, meditating, or if we frequently complain, every day we can practice consciously stopping ourselves for a few minutes. As we become more able to sustain those few minutes, we can increase the time or the level of demand. We learn and develop habits in a gradual way

But the work does not end here. It is necessary to sustain the effort over time. The same thing happens with our muscles; no matter how long we have been exercising, if we stop doing so, they will become weak again.

Likewise, we move towards greater self-determination gradually. This allows us to do what we do through our conscious decision, as an exercise of our freedom, and not out of obligation, external pressures or because we must do so. If we sit down to meditate, we don't do so to "comply" with something; instead, we do so through our own awareness that we need to connect with the Divine Mother, or because we need to process the information that comes from our interior as well as from our surroundings.

From this viewpoint, self-determination is an expression of Renouncement. We train our will to stop responding to unconscious impulses, and thus, make use of our freedom. There is no Renouncement without self-determination

## 9<sup>th</sup> Teaching – Attitudes of Renouncement: Interdependence

Self-determination, the capacity to apply our will to what we propose, requires the balance of interdependence. Otherwise, when the will is strong and we feel “capable”, we can fall into the trap of arrogance.

Arrogance makes us think that we already know that we have overcome, that no one else is at our level. It can also lead us to criticize what happens outside of us (in our family, in our work, in our society or in Cafh). We do this without any recognition within ourselves, without “feeling a part of” the solution to what we are criticizing.

Arrogance makes our positions rigid and blinds us with a veil of illusion—the illusion that we are continuing to unfold ourselves—when in reality, we are stuck and identifying with a spiritual image of ourselves that has nothing to do with how we are.

When we identify with our compounds, we can have the illusion that we are separate, that we can act without considering the effect that action will have outside of us.

Renouncement—this taking inner distance—allows us to appreciate that we are part of a fabric, a net of relationships with other persons, other living beings, the surroundings and, finally, the whole planet. Everything we do affects someone or something. Everything that happens also impacts us in some way. Only then are we able to participate.

When we perceive this interdependence, we become more humble, more careful, more empathetic. We recognize the other and we incorporate it into our inner world.

Being conscious that interdependence is a condition of our existence is a profound spiritual step. It leads us to egoence, since it allows us to perceive that we are not separated from anything. Through this same condition, we can positively influence everything that surrounds us.

In the context of Cafh’s tasks, interdependence on the part of those who fulfill functions is not only indispensable, but it is an expression of the coherence and renouncement with which we perform those functions. Without interdependence, there is no Renouncement.

## 10<sup>th</sup> Teaching - Attitudes of Renouncement: action and participation

Renouncement does not imply passivity. From the perspective of Renouncement, action implies acting in the right moment with our whole potential. For example, if we have a work or responsibility to attend to, we don't ask if we feel like it or if we are in a good mood. Instead, we focus our attention on it, and we respond in the best way we can, as if it were the most important thing in the world.

Once we carry out that task, we move on to something else, we are not tied to the results. We do not appropriate the achievements; we do not wait for recognition. Our single satisfaction is a job carried out well, is having given all of ourselves to it. This attitude multiplies our capacity for action and materialization. It is what our teachings call a "pure act" or "asceticism without gain."

There is a plenitude and sense of freedom that can only be experienced when we act using the maximum potential and, at the same time, with a complete offering of the results. An act of this type has an effect of incalculable dimensions. There is no Renouncement without effective action.

Renouncement has meaning when the intention that moves us is to serve all human beings with our life, that is to say, when it expresses an attitude of participation.

Intention is like an arrow that we send forth from the center of our being. It marks our path, guides all our doing and determines the scope of the results. Participation is that arrow that we send forth from our heart when we embrace our commitment to Humanity.

The alchemy of participation is that, though we are ordinary human beings, limited like any other, our life reaches a transcendent dimension which is projected into the Mystical Body.

Everything we live—our skills, our mistakes, our joys, our pains—we place in the framework of the lives of all beings. This gives our personal experiences a relative dimension. We stop perceiving ourselves as the center of everything that happens, and we see ourselves as an infinitesimal part of the universe that contains us. Our sufferings are not ours alone; instead, we live them as something which allows us to be near the suffering of all human beings. Whatever achievement we reach is an achievement of Humanity.

## 11<sup>th</sup> Teaching – Fullness through Renouncement

We could imagine Renouncement as something severe, rigid, hard and arid. But, in reality, Renouncement is a smooth, fluid, loving, generous, healing and hospitable attitude. It welcomes everything and clings to nothing.

Renouncement is the oil—the lubricant—which makes all the pieces of our life 's motor move smoothly: our relationship with ourselves, our relationship with others and our relationship with what we do. When we sense friction in our life, it is a good indicator that we have drifted away from that loving attitude.

Renouncement is an individual good. No one can grant it to us; only we ourselves can achieve it.

We can do many things; we can change a lot exteriorly, but none of this will bring deep and full meaning if it is not through Renouncement.

What meaning does my life have today? What is manifesting within me in this moment; what experiences, emotions, thoughts? How do I follow this flow and surrender to the unknown? How do I live in the present? Questions like these help us to recognize how the Law of Renouncement acts within our life and to delve into how we can give our life a transcendent meaning.

Sometimes we may understand that living in the present moment is contrary to making plans or having future projects. That 's not what we are talking about. We need to project ourselves toward the future. We need it to be able to channel our energies, guide our life and concretize objectives. But, at the same time, we need to remain detached from whatever plan or project, knowing that everything is transitory. We can always leave the door open to what happens, to the unforeseen, and remain open to the unknown.

This attitude grants us guidance with flexibility. We count on a clear intention, but we flow with becoming. In this way, we can feel fullness in pleasant as well as difficult moments. This is because we are not tied to our expectations and desires, and we can open ourselves to life 's teaching.

## 12<sup>th</sup> Teaching – Renouncement and egoence

Egoence is being conscious of ourselves and, at the same time, of our belonging to the whole.

Renouncement leads us to egoence.

On the one hand, through our work on self-knowledge, we gradually come in contact with the essential within us, that which is not tied to changes and becoming. Thus, we learn to use the “vehicle” we inhabit—our body and our mind—in a way that is consistent with our spiritual yearnings.

On the other hand, when we connect with the essential within us, we discover that we are part of a greater whole, inseparable from us. And we recognize the need to consciously unite with that whole, which we can call humanity, the world, life, the universe, Divine Mother, God. To do so, we need to work on the way we have learned to relate with our surroundings, in order to participate and to develop less selfish and more harmonious, deeper, and healthier relationships.

Our mission consists of learning to live according to the Law of Renouncement, developing egoence, and thus planting this experience in the repository of the collective consciousness.

Humanity thirsts for real values and coherence. Speaking about mysticism makes sense in the context of the reality that surrounds us. Our mysticism is of Renouncement.

Embodying Renouncement through the Asceticism of Renouncement and the Mysticism of the Heart, and developing egoence, is Cafh’s foundational work.

And ours is a Mysticism of Love, because we take on this mission as a work of assistance to Humanity in its evolution. We call this “participating in the Integrity of the Great Work.”

Our mysticism is also a mysticism of everyday acts, because we root our deepest spiritual yearnings in the brief moments that make up our life.

We embrace our work with love and joy, since we understand that we have a magnificent destiny: to illuminate the present and future of humanity through our small and unknown human lives, and to be a source of consolation and hope for the world.

## APPENDIX

### EXERCISES RELATED TO THE TEACHINGS

The exercises proposed in this appendix can be done individually or as a group work during the reunion. But they should not be considered as part of the course.

For all the exercises, the meditation exercise can be used as a means of processing the information that gradually arises.

A clarification: these are only suggestions. They are possible ways of applying the ideas. We also consider that there are many other ways of doing so that can be designed by the Sons and Daughters during their study of the course. They are invited to develop the capacity for adapting the ideas to their own idiosyncrasies, possibilities and creativity, and to transform them into daily practices.

*“We must study the Teaching not only in texts, but in the Divine Teaching that continuously reaches the heart in Silence. This Teaching is transmitted uninterruptedly through the soul’s participation in immobile Presence in the Divine Mother’s Heart.”*

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Teaching: The mission of Cafh**

Questions to reflect upon:

- How do I live humanity’s present moment? What do I focus upon when I observe reality—the negative, the positive or both aspects? How do I feel?
- Can I identify what my prejudices or ideas about Renouncement are? Write or share the responses.
- How do I feel my mission or purpose in this life? Can I express it in some way? In words, in an image, etc.

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Teaching: Renouncement**

Questions to reflect upon:

- How do I identify the expression of the Law of Renouncement in the daily events of my life?
- What is my attitude towards the reality of the Law of Renouncement? How do I feel?

Write or share the responses.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> Teaching: Renouncement as a process**

Observe yourself over time (a week, a month). How does your inner state change over the course of a day and during your daily routine? Briefly write down what you observe—thoughts, feelings, emotions, physical states. It is important to only observe, without

judging or rating. At the end of the observation period, turn to your notes and make a summary of what was observed.

You may use the questions in the last paragraph of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Teaching to reflect upon during the meditation or during this exercise.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Teaching: The process of Renouncement: the observer**

Through the exercise of self-observation:

- We identify which roles we see in our lives. We list them. As we discover new roles, we add them to the list.
- We identify aspects of our self-image as they manifest themselves in our inner dialogue. They tend to appear as value judgments. We record them.
- We do the exercise of imagining those aspects as “garments” that we wear when we relate to ourselves and our surroundings. We try in this way to suspend this identification—we are not this in essence—and we look for our inner center. What is it like? How do we feel? What emotions arise?

We make no judgements during the process. Nothing can be considered as “good” or “bad”. We simply accept what we see and feel.

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Idealizations**

Choose some idealization that you have and can easily identify (remember that we also have unconscious idealizations).

Describe what ideas, expectations and prejudices are represented by that idealization. For example: the ideal of mother. Let’s pay attention when we think or say: a mother should be, or should act, or should feel, etc.

The idealization can be about something generic (how a mother or father should be) or something more specific (how my mother or father should have been, or how I should be as a mother or father).

Afterwards, ask yourself where these ideas arose from, where you took them from, how you constructed them. The next step is considering, if only for a few minutes, that there is no reason for it to be like this, that there is no single parameter or pattern to define something. We ourselves are unconsciously selecting a determined way. And now let us imagine the movement of leaving it behind.

This exercise can help us to gradually recognize deeper and more unconscious idealizations. It can help to free us from the pressure that idealization places on our life through feelings like disappointment, frustration and resentment.

If we find it difficult to recognize our idealizations, we can search for them starting with the feelings. We identify situations which produce disappointment, frustration or resentment within us. Starting from there, we can do the exercise mentioned above.

### **6<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Myths about Renouncement: the absence of limits, and resignation**

Choose a concrete situation from your life in which you have a difficulty in a relationship with someone. Try to apply the steps contained in the Teaching:

1. Acknowledge your own emotions, reactions and actions—even your shortcomings—without judgment or repression.
2. Write down the values you want to base your life and actions upon. For example: respect, deep listening, kind treatment, acceptance, etc.
3. Establish a distance to observe the relationship or situation. Try to describe it without judgment, as if you were seeing it as an observer and not a participant.
4. Decide how you want to position yourself, what attitude to take and how to act regarding that relationship so that it can be healthy and coherent with your values.

Try to develop an action strategy for this situation. Once you apply it, evaluate the result. In many situations it will be necessary to repeat the exercise more than once to adjust your behavior and attitude according to the evolution of the situation. Patience is an important element in attaining lasting changes.

### **7<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Attitudes of Renouncement: honesty**

Identify a circumstance that was adverse to you and then:

- List the reasoning you have or had regarding that circumstance or person. (It was unfair; they didn't listen to me; they attacked me, etc.)
- Observe how you feel in that situation (I feel sorry for myself; I feel rage; I feel defenseless; I feel hurt, etc.)
- Try to identify to what degree you feel you are the victim of the situation or person.

Ask yourself:

- What could I have done differently? In what way could I have changed my attitude? How did I contribute to this situation?
- If I reach the conclusion that I did nothing, how would I act in this same situation if I didn't feel like a victim?

If we don't make value judgements (this is good, this is bad) we can feel assured by admitting with honesty, before ourselves, how we think, feel and act.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Attitudes of Renouncement: self-determination**

Think of some activity or habit you would like to include in your life. For example: meditating, not complaining, watching less television, doing respiratory or physical exercises, reading, studying something, doing the retrospective examination, etc.

Make a plan to begin consciously practicing that activity or habit for 5 minutes every day for a week. Try to include that activity or habit in your daily routine, at a concrete time of the day when it would be viable to do it. If you are able to sustain those 5 minutes, you may lengthen the time to 10 minutes for another week or weeks. And thus, successively, until you reach a level that seems sufficient and desirable.

A small yet constant objective is preferable until the practice becomes easy and natural.

### **9<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Attitudes of Renouncement: interdependence**

**Exercise related to arrogance:** Identify some criticism or judgment you have recently made. Describe that criticism, writing it down on paper or on the computer. Try to answer the following questions:

- What are the grounds of this criticism?
- What assumptions is it based on?
- Where did this reasoning arise from, how did I acquire it? Is it really mine or did I hear or learn it from some circumstance? For example, in my childhood or youth, or due to some experience that marked me?
- Can I identify the “prejudices” underlying this criticism? Which ones? Am I really sure that things are or were that way?

Carry out an exercise of imagination in encountering other reasons—other ways of seeing the situation—that can give meaning to what we are criticizing. Imagine, for example, that we have to support or justify it. What reasons would we find for it?

Let's deeply recognize, in the Divine presence, that our understanding and our knowledge of reality is limited, that our view is always partial and conditioned.

Let's ask ourselves: how could I be part of the solution?

**Exercise related to interdependence:** Choose a situation in which you work and need to relate to others (your family, your work, your work in Cafh, some responsibility in Cafh, etc.)

- How does what others do affect me? What emotions do they produce in me?
- How do I affect—with my attitude, words, behavior and actions—the persons I relate with? Am I reactive or proactive?
- What can I do so that this interrelationship, and the objective we may have in common, develops and flows in the best possible way? Do I provide the information that others need? How and when do I give it? Is my way of communicating assertive? Am I kind in my communication with others?

### **10<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Attitudes of Renouncement: action and participation**

Look for a calm moment in your routine. This exercise may be done on a day of retreat, for example. From the moment you awake, try to observe each moment of your day with gratitude. For example, I am grateful that I woke up and that I am alive. I have one more day to learn. I have the mental clarity needed to meditate. I have a house to live in. I have water to bathe with. I have clothes to wear. I have food to eat. I have friends, spiritual companions. My life has meaning, etc. Also pay attention to what is hard or hurts you, physically or spiritually. For example: I suffer from a pain or illness, or someone dear to me is suffering.

Try to continue with this attention and gratefulness each moment of that day. And at each moment, try to connect with all human beings, with their scarcities and pains. Try to use gratefulness as a way of participating with them.

### **11<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Fullness through Renouncement**

Identify a plan or project that you have or that you are thinking about. It can be something long-range or something simple and immediate, like preparing a teaching, a special meal for family or friends, a visit that you are thinking about making.

- First, make the plan, define the details and the course of action using the best of yourself, with your whole capacity.
- Afterwards, ask yourself: What do I hope will happen in this plan's development and outcome? What are my expectations? Try to identify the expectations in all possible dimensions: the weather, the place, the surroundings, people's attitudes, your own inner sensations, the response you are waiting for, etc.
- Create an imaginative picture in which you wrap up all these expectations into a package and leave it in the Divine Presence. You surrender it, making yourself aware that you have no control over the future. You have planned, prepared, projected in order to find a direction and guide your energy, but, at the same time, you open yourself to what life brings you.
- Try to feel this freedom: you have done your part, and you let the Divine Mother do hers. Understand the transitoriness of your experience and the wisdom of living the fullness of the present moment, taking what comes and leaving what goes.

### **12<sup>th</sup> Teaching: Renouncement and egoence**

Ask yourself in what concrete ways you can be consolation and hope for the world.

If you are aware that your inner state is negative, pessimistic, hopeless, anguished, try to carry out the exercise for Teaching 10. Also, try to identify all human beings who in this moment are doing something for others or serving others, even those who are serving us—those who clean, collect the city's trash, provide health care, teach, research, cultivate or produce food, etc.

Also try to visualize all the people in the world who are trying to expand their consciousness. We are connected through threads of light and energy, creating a fabric that protects humanity and the planet, covering it with this good vibration in order to counteract the negative aspects we see.

Try to carry this good vibration into all the surroundings in which you move. By being part of this network that is life (we are a part of everything), our contribution pours over this network and makes a difference.