DEEP FRIENDSHIP, VIRTUE AND FULFILMENT

RETRIEVING AND EXPLORING THE PLACE OF FRIENDSHIP IN EUDAIMONISTIC VIRTUE ETHICS

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Dedication

To my parents, Ian and Shirley Loretz
in honour of their deep and enduring friendship,
which shaped my life.

Abstract

Over the past fifty years, neo-Aristotelian eudaimonistic virtue ethics has emerged in the ethical landscape as a viable alternative to the twin towers of utilitarianism or deontology. Yet the experience of deep friendship has been largely neglected, despite occupying about a fifth of Aristotle's ethical output. Also missing is the role of the final cause as the principal cause governing the ethical life. These neglected insights feature prominently in the writing of a philosopher who is little known outside French Catholic circles, namely, Marie Dominique Philippe O.P., who used the experience of deep friendship as the foundation for ethical exploration.

Part One of this thesis seeks to retrieve these insights, which are only hinted at in modern virtue ethics literature, showing how the logic of final causality governs the unfolding of Aristotle's ethical writing. By means of an initial exposé of the specific relation between final causality and deep friendship, three significant aspects from Philippe's analysis of friendship are outlined and explained, namely, the experience of 'spiritual love', the 'intention of life' and the ongoing 'amical choice'. I furnish these insights with examples of my own. This culminates in an original integration of these insights as a way to clarify why 'virtuous friends' become 'other selves', where utility or pleasure friends do not.

At the core of this thesis, is an analysis of the close relationship between virtue, practical wisdom and deep friendship, which I argue are co-constitutive. I employ an original musical analogy to evoke the strong links between them. From here I explore and develop the contribution that deep friendship makes to the maturation of both practical wisdom and, by way of example, the virtue of fortitude.

Part Three of this thesis applies these insights to wider questions, including the perennial egoist objection to eudaimonistic virtue ethics. I then explore ways that deep friendship opens those involved outward toward a wider ethics, beyond the immediate scope of the friendship itself. Finally, I offer future avenues of enquiry for both natural theology and metaethics from the final causality implied in deep friendship.

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INTRODUCTION

What depth of friendship without virtue?
What depth of virtue without friendship?
What level of fulfilment without both?

This study seeks to give at least a partial account of these three essentially rhetorical questions and to lend philosophical support to the intuitions that underpin them. In doing so, I hope it will prove valuable to those who already labour in the vineyard of eudaimonistic virtue ethics, to not only rediscover something of the richness of the 'old wine' that is implied in the first question, but to savour the new and exciting possibilities revealed in the second and third. In particular, I seek to explore the light that deep friendship can shed on the human aspiration to be good.

Beyond the immediate field of 'virtue ethics' itself, it is also my hope that insights presented here may be useful for any ethical discipline that takes the analysis of human experience as a valuable starting point for open-ended enquiry, including phenomenological approaches. Similarly, for those dedicated primarily to friendship literature, or indeed to exploring *eudaimonia* (human happiness and fulfilment) apart from a focus on its formative contribution to virtue and *phronesis* (practical wisdom), it is hoped that this work might highlight certain connections that have perhaps not been brought into sharp enough relief since ancient times.

Virtue ethics has made an impressive re-emergence in the modern day, taking its place alongside utilitarianism and deontology as a serious approach, rich in ethical insight. While it is true that many of those who have been dedicated to this revival have looked to Aristotle's writing as their main source of inspiration, they have tended to neglect about a quarter of his output on the subject, focusing only on the part of his ethical discourse that explores virtue, *phronesis* (practical wisdom) and *eudaimonia* (human happiness and flourishing). Yet both Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and his *Eudemian Ethics* culminate in an extensive exploration of both friendship and the contemplation of the noblest truths. By contrast, modern discourse on virtue ethics has given only occasional though respectful nods in the direction of the contribution that deep friendship might

make to human character and fulfilment, and even less to that of contemplation. As Neera K. Badhwar and Russell E. Jones note:

> It is striking that Aristotle devotes 20% of the *Nicomachean Ethics*… to a discussion of friendship – more than to courage, temperance, generosity, magnificence, magnanimity, mildness, social grace, truthfulness, wit, and appropriate shame combined, and twice as much as to either justice or intellectual virtue. That is a sharp contrast to the space devoted to friendship in most general works on ethics nowadays.[1, 2]

This study will focus on exploring what the dimension of deep friendship implies for the ethical life. Indeed, I seek to show that this fundamental human experience, which is largely universal and transcultural, plays a vital and indispensable role in the maturation of human virtue and flourishing, and thus lies at the heart of human ethical development. I propose that the light that deep friendship sheds on human ethics makes the experience at least as central to a meaningful and penetrating discourse on ethical maturity as virtue, *phronesis* and flourishing have proven themselves to be. It is also my conviction that when virtue is seen through the lens of its connection to deep friendship, more sense can be made of its intrinsic link to the human quest for fulfilment and happiness. I shall leave to future study the other promising line of enquiry that Aristotle weaves into his tapestry of ethical reflection, namely the role that contemplation might exercise in a fulfilled human life.

Personal Interest in this Study

My interest in this subject was sparked by having undertaken what I consider to be two very privileged periods of study, one informal and the other formal. The first was in France from 2004-2008, where I had the opportunity, as a lay student, to attend the philosophical formation of a relatively new Catholic religious congregation, the "Community of St. John," in the little village of St. Jodard, located in the Loire Valley. This was not a typical Catholic religious community, in that it had sought to undertake a genuine revival in philosophical studies from the grass roots,

[1] Badhwar, Neera K. and Jones, Russell E. (2016) at 1.
[2] Indeed, Martha Nussbaum notes that Aristotle devotes more space to friendship than to any other single topic. See Nussbaum, Martha C. (2001) at 314.

rather than to extract philosophy from the theological work of Aquinas, or to indiscriminately mix insights and conclusions from theological sources with those of philosophy, as Catholic scholastics since Aquinas had tended to do. While the community regarded Christian revelation as the primary source for Christian theology, they saw human experience as taking that role for what they called 'realistic philosophy'. They embraced Aristotle as their philosophical guide and master, for showing a way of progressing in philosophy through an analysis that deeply respects the diversity of different categories of human experience, while seeking out the diverse principal causes that might pertain to each, in order to then explore the complexity of each branch of experience through the lens of its principal cause.[3] This way of proceeding also contrasted with that generally found in universities, where philosophical research often takes as its starting point a study in comparative texts and ends up seeking to adjudicate between the affirmations of various relevant writers, while contributing to this ongoing academic discourse. It also contrasts with phenomenological approaches, which focus on detailed descriptions of human experience that rely for their impressive extension on material gleaned from various scientific disciplines, such as psychology, sociology or neuroscience, without analysing these experiences in the light of principal causes.

The community's founder, Marie Dominique Philippe, was a Dominican priest who had been a professor of philosophy at the Pontifical Dominican University of Fribourg (Switzerland) from 1945-1982. In 1975, he agreed to a request by a group of his students to help them to pursue their

[3] Aristotle is clear that multiple causes can be operative in a given reality or experience. Part of his philosophical analysis involves discerning an underlying order within this multiplicity, and thus coming to see what is 'first' or 'principal' with respect to cause at whatever aspect or 'level' of the reality is being investigated (eg., the reality at an artistic level, an ethical level, at the level of natural change, at the level of its life, or at the level of its being (i.e. the metaphysical level)). This order will differ for different categories of experience or different aspects of the reality, and for Aristotle, this gives rise to different branches of philosophical study. For example, with the production of an omelette, which falls into the category of human making (or artistic activity), five causes can arguably be discovered: The ingredients constitute the material cause. They are transformed via the efficient cause, which is a combination of the chef's skill and the heat and instruments she employs. They thereby gain a new form (that of an omelette), which first exists as an idea (the exemplary cause or model) in the one who conceives of it and then as the formal cause within the omelette itself. The activity is undertaken with an end in view (its final cause), e.g., 'in order to make a nice birthday breakfast for my friend'. While each of these aspects is causal in an Aristotelian sense, only one is principal. For artistic production it is arguably the idea that effectively determines the material chosen, the manner of work undertaken, the assessment of the end result, and so forth. While the exemplary cause tends to be principal for experiences of human art, production and work, different categories or aspects of experience are distinguished by having different principal causes. The ethical as opposed to the artistic aspect, even of this activity, lies not so much in the success of the omelette *qua* omelette, but in the appropriateness of such an activity in the light of a more personal end (eg., finding the best way to honour the birthday of this particular friend). This is already a hint that the final cause, rather than the exemplary cause is principal for ethics, which is a theme we shall develop over the course of this work. For a fuller explanation of 'principal cause', see Chapter 4.1.

desire to become a new religious community, dedicated to truth-seeking along three specific trajectories, which they called 'the three wisdoms', namely: philosophical wisdom, theological wisdom and mystical wisdom.[4] Philippe, who remained a Dominican, became not only the founder of the "Brothers of St. John." but also its first formator and prior general. He later helped to establish two other branches of the community, the "Contemplative Sisters of St. John" and the "Apostolic Sisters of St. John," both of which had their own foundresses, and were similarly dedicated to the three wisdoms. I encountered this community in 2004, when Philippe, at the age of 91, was still lecturing for a group of over 200 young male and female postulants and novices living in St. Jodard, within a congregation that had rapidly grown to over a thousand members. They allowed me to study alongside them for the next four years, during which time Philippe passed away. Throughout this time, I was intrigued by the central place the founder had given to friendship within his approach to ethical analysis. Philippe did not tend to speak of Aristotle's ethics primarily as a species of "virtue ethics," but rather placed virtues and *phronesis* within the broader picture of human relations, seeing them as the chief and essential means by which meaningful relations are enabled, maintained and enhanced. He saw deep friendship as 'calling for' the sort of character development that we associate with the virtues and *phronesis*;[5] and came to view deep friends as the very 'end-goods' that allow each other to prioritise, order and orient their voluntary activity in a profound way.[6] Philippe also made a major contribution in exploring what the experience of deep human friendship implies for what he called the "metaphysics of the human person" in the light of Aristotle's exploration of potentiality and act.[7] His work was strikingly original, though it remained little known outside a small French circle of Catholic theological and philosophical interest.[8]

My second privileged period of philosophical study was at the University of Auckland, where I had the rare opportunity to be introduced to the modern revival of virtue ethics by one of its key

[4] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1994 A).
[5] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 224-232.
[6] Ibid at 195-199.
[7] Ibid at 390-400.
[8] After his death, controversial allegations have emerged, claiming that Philippe had used his spiritual influence to manipulate adult women into sexual liaison. The Community of St. John have taken these allegations seriously and they are under investigation, though to date there has been no civil or canonical proceedings. I do not take a position on the veracity or otherwise of these claims. While they are relevant to the internal question as to whether or not the community should propose Philippe as a 'model of sanctity,' they do not impact upon his philosophical output, which should be assessed on its own merits. What is relevant to this study are his original insights concerning the way in which deep friendship functions as a foundational experience for human ethics.

players, Rosalind Hursthouse; as well as to gain insight into the supporting metaethical philosophical project of 'natural normativity', which Hursthouse had developed,[9, 10] alongside her friend and mentor Philippa Foot.[11, 12] The chief goal of this project was to look for the natural underpinnings to which one can appeal in order to rationalise and more clearly discern why certain character traits have come to be regarded as genuine virtues. Hursthouse herself is a pioneer and champion of the ascendency of virtue ethics in our times, presenting its strengths and ably defending it against many of the early criticisms that emerged, as it vied philosophically for a place alongside the more established ethical approaches of utilitarianism and deontology.

It was fascinating to see the common ground between these two approaches of Philippe on the one hand and Hursthouse/Foot on the other, which had both drawn their inspiration from Aristotle. At the same time, it became clear that the experience of human friendship had not gained a significant foothold within contemporary writing on virtue ethics. Indeed, deep friendship had not even managed in modern times to ascend to the place that Aristotle had afforded it in his ethical writings, much less been further developed for the rich insights that it might have to offer. This did not seem to be a conscious rejection of these possibilities, but rather a fact of circumstance, given the way that the early debates unfolded around the validity of virtue ethics.

Indeed, the modern focus on the relationship between virtue, *phronesis* (practical wisdom) and fulfilment, did not tend to anchor itself in any particular human experience, perhaps due to attempts to make it immediately as universal as deontology or utilitarianism claimed to be. In this sense, while the explorations into virtue ethics yielded rich insights, they were not as unified or penetrating as they might otherwise have been. In particular, there was no underlying sense that final causality or attraction to the good functions as the principal cause in human ethics, whereas, for Philippe, this was one of the central and most important insights that he had gleaned from Aristotle.[13]

[9] Hursthouse, Rosalind and Gavin Lawrence and Warren Quinn (eds.) (1995).
[10] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 192-265.
[11] Foot, Philippa (2001).
[12] Foot, Philippa (2004), 1-13.
[13] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1994 B) at 26-33.

One of the main differences in the two approaches mentioned above was around the role each afforded to virtue. In Book I of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle presents virtue as intrinsically tied to *eudaimonia* and thus as having the character of an end for human activity. The virtuous life in action effectively constitutes the fulfilled and happy human life, so long as there is enough prosperity to allow for its meaningful and healthy exercise. Yet by Books VIII, IX and X, it becomes clear that deep friendship and philosophical contemplation are equally tied to *eudaimonia* and also possess the character of 'end-goods', as I shall explore in Chapter II. It seemed to me that Philippe emphasised friendship with secondary references to virtue, while modern virtue ethicists had emphasised virtue and practical wisdom, with only passing references to friendship. Thus, at the core of this work will be an attempt to elucidate the close inner relationship between virtue, *phronesis* and deep friendship. This in turn will shed light on the question of human fulfilment and its intrinsic relation to human ethics.

After completing these two phases of study, I became interested in trying to bridge these two worlds, one that had taken place largely within a monastic setting and the other whose modern home was more securely within the university. In particular, I wanted to explore what a focus on deep friendship could bring to the field of virtue ethics as it continues to unfold within the literature today.

For this reason, it will be useful to open this work with an examination of the revival of virtue ethics in modern times, insofar as it touches upon the dimension of deep human friendship (Chapter I). From there I will re-examine the most important 'source' document, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (while also drawing on his *Eudemian Ethics*), with a careful eye on the role that final causality plays within Aristotle's ethical analysis (Chapter II). Next I shall give an account of the analysis of friendship as developed by Marie Dominique Philippe, attempting to furnish his main points with accessible examples of my own, with respect to the type of love he ascribes to deep friendship (Chapter III) and the unique way that the final cause operates within the mutual choice of a deep friend (Chapter IV). This will culminate in my own exploration of what it means to say with Aristotle that a deep friend becomes 'another self' (Chapter V).

Following that, I shall analyse and attempt to elucidate the specific relationship between virtue, *phronesis* and deep friendship, with an original musical analogy. To this end, I shall develop in

some detail the way that deep friendship contributes to the development of *phronesis* (Chapter VI) and to the virtue of fortitude (Chapter VII), by way of example.

From Chapter VIII onward, I shall explore how an ethical focus on the experience of deep friendship sheds light on certain wider issues within ethical discourse and beyond. Firstly, I shall address the recurring egoist objection to virtue ethics in the light of deep friendship (Chapter VIII). Then I shall look at the potential within deep friendship to broaden our ethical horizons beyond our immediate relations, to the wider community in which we interact, either from a widening of association, or from the light that deep friendship sheds on human potency, empathy and agency (Chapter IX). Finally, I shall sketch some ways that an understanding of the relationship between deep friendship, virtue and fulfilment can bring new impetus to certain metaphysical questions that underpin natural theology and to the metaethical project of 'natural normativity', as developed by Foot and Hursthouse (Chapter X).

I

THE MODERN REVIVAL OF VIRTUE ETHICS AS IT TOUCHES DEEP FRIENDSHIP

To lay the groundwork for this study, I shall retrace here something of the modern revival of virtue ethics, insofar as it connects with the experience of deep friendship. I will also review certain friendship literature, insofar as it touches the question of virtue or character development. I seek here to gather some of the relevant threads, proposed or developed among the modern-day pioneers in these areas, that point toward the value of an exploration into what the dimension of human friendship might offer for ethical enquiry. This is in no way an attempt to summarise the impressive philosophical legacy of these writers or even get to the heart of each one's contribution. I refer to them only inasmuch as they furnish us with clues as to how an exploration of the relationship between deep friendship, virtue and fulfilment might get off the ground.

1.1. Elizabeth Anscombe

The revival of virtue ethics in modern times was sparked by a paper of Elizabeth Anscombe in 1958, entitled "Modern Moral Philosophy,"[14] in which she criticized contemporary approaches to ethics that emphasised law, obligation and duty, questioning the relevance and validity of these foci in a secular world that had largely put aside or rejected their historical underpinning in the presence of a divine lawmaker. Instead, Anscombe advocated a revival of an ancient approach that considered 'goodness' before 'rightness', and saw attraction to the good as foundational for ethics, with notions such as duty being more derivative. As a fruitful field for ethical exploration, she recommended the ancient Greek emphasis on excellence of character (practical wisdom/the virtues) and human flourishing, which effectively safeguards the important place of motivation, intention and the emotions within ethical evaluation. These elements had been largely neglected from within the two approaches that had come to dominate philosophical reflection on ethics since the Enlightenment, namely, the utilitarianism derived from Jeremy Bentham or J.S. Mill, which

[14] Anscombe, G. E. M. (1958).

was chiefly anchored in the consequences of actions; and the deontology inspired by Immanuel Kant, which centred itself around adherence to universal principles.[15]

In advocating the rediscovery of the ancient approach as the way forward for reviving modern ethical discourse, Anscombe no doubt had Aristotle most clearly in her sights, seeing that, among the ancients, he most derives his ethical discussion from an exploration of the link between human character and human flourishing (*eudaimonia*). Both of these aspects emerge from Aristotle's attentiveness to the centrality of the good, and of desire for the good, when analysing ethically admirable action. Book I of his *Nicomachean Ethics* in particular is dedicated to forging the link between flourishing and virtue that Anscombe specifically emphasises. Over the course of the next six books, Aristotle continues to explore human character via an elaboration of virtue, both in its nature (Book II) and specifics (Books III-V); in the *phronesis* or practical wisdom needed if one is to live virtuously within the complexity of life's circumstances (Book VI); and in the degrees to which a virtue might be possessed or approximated in the face of competing desires within the agent (Book VII). Given that this makes up the bulk his *Nicomachean Ethics*, it is not surprising that Aristotle is often regarded as the founder of virtue ethics. But in Books VIII and IX of the same work, he makes a seamless transition into a discussion of 'perfect' or 'complete' (*teleion)* friendship[16] (which I shall refer to here as 'deep friendship'), before closing with a reflection on the contemplation of the divine in Book X. It is unclear from Anscombe's essay whether these parts of the Aristotelian ethical venture were consciously within her scope, though had she intended to include deep friendship as a fruitful field for ethical exploration, it would certainly have been consistent with her emphasis on recovering the role of human intention, emotion and motivation within ethics, as well as with her intuition that goodness and attraction to the good are prior to notions such as duty and obligation. Indeed, Hursthouse specifically mentions friendship and family relationships as among the topics that deontology and utilitarianism have tended to neglect, and that virtue ethics by its very nature is better equipped to bring to the fore,[17] even if these subjects to this day still wait largely in the wings, and have not yet been given a chance to shine centre stage in the writings of contemporary virtue ethicists.

[15] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 1.
[16] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (N.E.), 1156b.
[17] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 2-3.

Regarding both consequentialism and deontology in particular, Alexander Nehamas points out that neither approach has found much scope to include deep friendship within ethical consideration. He notes:

> Philosophers of both schools have tried to devise ways to include friendship among the moral goods. But, in the end, any mode of thought that requires that we treat those closest to us as we would treat a stranger is bound to make us suspect that the unashamed preference [that] we give to our friends is an avatar of tribalism. The relationship of friendship to morality remains uneasy and its role in moral philosophy is secondary at best. Most modern philosophers have had little or nothing to say about it.[18]

1.2. Michael Stocker

Michael Stocker was one of the first to echo Anscombe's concerns in identifying duty, obligation and rightness as "only a small part, a dry and minimal part, of ethics".[19] He criticised utilitarianism and deontology for overly concentrating on these, and thus for focussing on reasons for action (values and justifications), while so neglecting motives that they effectively became irrelevant or disconnected from the actions under discernment. For Stocker this opens the way to a type of "moral schizophrenia", where potential disharmony between one's reasons and one's motives fails to emerge as problematic, even though these factors normally need to harmonise if an individual is to have a chance at a happy or good life.[20]

In illustrating his point, Stocker's example could not be more pertinent to our study. He points out that pleasure seekers, such as hedonist egoists (and presumably by extension, Epicureans), are in fact precluded from the higher pleasures that result from love, deep friendship, affection, fellow-feeling and community, because to seek primarily the pleasures that flow from these relations would be to miss out on having those very relations in the requisite depth needed to produce these effects. This is chiefly because such relations of depth are not possible unless the other is truly loved for her own sake, which would effectively shift the priority from 'pleasure for me' to the

[18] Nehamas, Alexander (2010) at 215.
[19] Stocker, Michael (1976) at 445.
[20] Ibid.

'flourishing of the other', and thus cause the person to leave the world of hedonism (or Epicureanism) insofar as this shift has taken place. Therefore, even if pleasure-seekers were to engage in the same external pastimes as those who enjoy these relations, by partaking in deep conversations, shared life and even, in certain cases, love-making, they can at best only know the passing pleasures associated with these activities and not the deeper joy that comes from the union of hearts made possible when two people consistently love each other for the other's own sake. Stocker goes on to explore the 'essential loneliness' in this kind of position, pointing out that the other is never grasped in her uniqueness but remains effectively interchangeable, seeing what is sought is the effect she has on us, rather than her actual person.[21] This amounts to a re-affirmation of an Aristotelian insight that mere pleasure-seekers do not attain deep friendship, which requires virtue in order to be sustained. Rather, such folk are limited to more commonplace friendships of pleasure or utility, or to some generic friendliness.[22] The problem is particularly clear when one aims for a generalised good of 'love' without properly seeking the good of any particular 'beloved'.[23] Stocker suggests that a full-scale philosophical anthropology would be necessary for the further development of his argument, namely a study that might show:

> how such personal relations as love and friendship are possible, how they relate to larger ways and structures of human life, and how they – and perhaps only they – allow for the development of those relations which are constitutive of a human life worth living: how in short they work together to produce the fullness of a good life, a life of *eudaimonia.*[24]

In the 40 years since Stocker penned these words, few writers in the field of virtue ethics have addressed these issues. This present work seeks to be part of this very undertaking by at least opening this valuable line of enquiry.

Stocker would later criticise modern ethical theories for failing to understand or allow for:

> the large and important parts of human life, including such important goods as love and friendship. For here, motivation and value must come together if the

[21] Ibid at 457.
[22] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.
[23] Stocker, Michael (1976) at 449.
[24] Ibid.

> goods are to be actualized: if I do not act for your sake, then no matter whether what I do is for the best, I am not acting out of friendship. And whether or not friendship is for the best, human life without friendship is hardly human life.[25, 26]

1.3. Philippa Foot

1.3.i. "Virtues and Vices"

Philippa Foot was one of the first to extensively take up Anscombe's challenge to re-orient ethics around the human response to goodness, and specifically in approaches that emphasise human flourishing and the virtues. Her "Virtues and Vices" penned in 1978, argued the connection between virtue and happiness, pointing out that some virtues clearly benefit both their possessor and those with whom she deals, while others at least benefit those around her, even if they sometimes come at a great personal cost to the virtuous agent herself.[27]

> First of all, it seems clear to say that virtues are, in some general way, beneficial. Human beings do not get on well without them. Nobody can get on well if he lacks courage, and does not have some measure of temperance and wisdom, while communities where justice and charity are lacking are apt to be wretched places to live, as Russia was under the Stalinist terror, or Sicily under the Mafia.[28]

Foot does not develop the theme of friendship in any significant way with regard to her exploration of either virtue or fulfilment, beyond a few perceptive asides that point in that direction. However sparse these references are, it is worth assembling them here, for the promising hints that they provide at useful lines of enquiry. For example, in discussing the challenge of trying to encapsulate the essence of practical wisdom, Foot astutely notes a fundamental difficulty in accounting for why some pursuits are more worthwhile than others and why some matters in human life should be considered trivial and others important:

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[25] Stocker, Michael (1996), 173-190.
[26] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a.
[27] Foot, Philippa (2003) at 106-7.
[28] Ibid at 106.

> Since it makes good sense to say that most [people] waste a lot of their lives in ardent pursuit of what is trivial and unimportant it is not possible to explain the important and the trivial in terms of the amount of attention given to different subjects by the average [person]. But I have never seen, or been able to think out, a true account of this matter, and I believe that a complete account of wisdom, and of certain other virtues and vices must wait until this gap can be filled. What we can see is that one of the things a wise [person] knows and a foolish [person] does not, is that such things as social position, and wealth, and the good opinion of the world, are too dearly bought at the cost of health or friendship or family ties. So we may say that a person who lacks wisdom 'has false values' and that vices such as vanity and worldliness and avarice are contrary to wisdom in a special way.[29]

This observation furnishes us with a useful light on the development of practical wisdom itself. It implies that the experience of ongoing deep relationships, whether they be within friendship or family, plays a vital and indispensable role in clarifying what amounts to a wise prioritising of goods, which is itself an essential component of practical wisdom. Aristotle is clear that *phronesis* forms over time through attentiveness to experience, rather than arising from logical deduction or systematic teaching. For this reason, he affirms that one can far more readily find among the young those advanced in the fields of mathematics or logic, than those notable for their ethical maturity.[30] Without fleshing out the detail, Foot effectively identifies the area of deep human relations as having a vital connection to the development of an authentic practical wisdom.

Aristotle already explicitly linked virtue, and, by implication practical wisdom, as *sine qua non* conditions of deep friendship.[31] Here I shall go further, exploring the possibility that these three phenomena are related more symmetrically than is perhaps often assumed. In other words, deep friendship may well be essential for the maturation of both practical wisdom and virtue. It is my

[29] Ibid at 110.
[30] Aristotle, N.E.,1142a.
[31] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a – 1156b.

conviction that the experience of deep friendship makes an indispensable and unique contribution to the growth of the ethical self and sheds light on the question that Foot effectively raises here without answering: namely, what in life allows us to sufficiently discern noble goods over trivial ones, and to prioritise the deep relationships of friendship and family (along with the health needed in order to enjoy the full exercise of these) over more egoistic secondary concerns? It will become evident that the experience of deep friendship contains the impetus to take us beyond mere aspirations to 'be a good person', as common as these tend to be, into the world of prioritising another for her own sake. Indeed, I shall argue that this phenomenon may well provide the key toward answering traditional objections to virtue ethics that centre around the claim that to seek a *eudaimon* life is to necessarily embark on an egoistic or self-centred pursuit.[32]

Foot goes on to discuss the connection that often exists between virtues and the human need to curb certain tendencies or temptations that might lead us to periodically capitulate to whatever is easier or pleasurable in life, rather than face the full ramifications that a commitment to higher goods entails. This is particularly obvious when it comes to the structure of virtues such as fortitude or temperance, but it is Foot's examples concerning charity and justice that are most pertinent here. Regarding these two virtues, she makes the observation that one of the problems humans must overcome is what she calls a deficiency of motivation when it comes to the good of others:

> If people were as much attached to the good of others as they are to their own good there would no more be a general virtue of benevolence than there is a general virtue of self-love. And if people cared about the rights of others as they care about their own rights no virtue of justice would be needed to look after the matter and rules about such things as contracts and promises would only need to be made public, like the rules of a game that everyone was eager to play.[33]

While Foot presents charity and justice as helping to bridge the gap between a strong self-love and a regard for others that is often too weak, I cannot but think of Aristotle's conviction that it is precisely within deep friendship that those closest to us come to be regarded as 'other selves' in

[32] This will be explored in detail in Chapter VIII.
[33] Foot, Philippa (2003) at 112.

the healthiest sense of the term.[34] I shall argue that it is not simply that one needs a virtue in order to cross the divide from self-love to a regard for others that is more rooted in charity or justice, but in fact, the powerful experience of deep friendship is what precisely intervenes as a bridge between the two. Thanks to deep friendship, the good that we naturally seek for ourselves is happily and readily extended to the 'other self', who is our friend. I shall explore in Chapter IX the very real possibility that this experience is essential, if any charity or justice exercised toward strangers is to develop beyond what natural empathy might already produce. It may well turn out that a generalised sense of charity or justice owes as much for its development to the experience of deep friendship as it does to the healthy self-love that often grounds human empathy. Indeed, the very experience of deep friendship is able to purify self-love from its potentially unhealthy elements, as shall be explored in Chapter III.

Aristotle also presents friendship as transforming the virtue of justice from within, along the lines that Foot indicates, namely that, on the one hand, there is no strict need for justice between deep friends, seeing they strive out of love to go beyond what is merely 'owed' to one another.[35] As Stocker points out, via his example of visiting a friend in hospital, the act of friendship is undermined when the loving concern that it implies turns out to have been chiefly motivated by duty.[36] Yet, in other ways, the demands of justice are heightened within deep friendship, seeing that good friends tend to enlarge the sphere of responsibility that they happily accept to take on for one another, due to the free choice each makes of the other in love.[37]

There may be a more subliminal connection between the need for a generalised virtue of charity or benevolence that Foot identifies and the experience of deep friendship. Those who seek to revive virtue ethics in modern times have noted that between the ancient Greek era and our own, a sustained period of Christianity has imprinted upon Western thought a high regard for a universalised virtue of charity, which itself does not appear in ancient lists of virtues.[38] Moderns often seek a way to retain this benefit, even if many tend to regard the world they live in as 'post-Christian'. Here, it is relevant to note that at the heart of Aquinas' theological explanation of the

[34] Aristotle, N.E., 1166a; 1170b. The phenomenon of 'other-selfdom' in deep friendship will be explored in Chapter V.
[35] Aristotle, N.E. 1159b-1160a
[36] Stocker, Michael (1996) at 462.
[37] Aristotle, N.E., 1159b-1160a.
[38] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 8.

Christian virtue of charity, is his direct application of the Aristotelian approach to deep friendship to the divine/human relationship that Christianity promotes between each human being and Christ, whom Christians profess as the incarnate God.[39] For a Christian to unite in friendship to Christ's heart, her own heart must expand through grace to embrace all whom he holds dear, which in fact, within the Christian understanding, turns out to be all other human beings capable of sharing heavenly beatitude.[40] While this aspect lies outside the scope of our present study, it will be useful to examine the parallels and illustrations that Aquinas makes with deep friendship at the purely human level, in order to see how this experience has the potential to open those involved toward a charitable consideration of others who lie outside their immediate amical relations. Aquinas presents a number of scenarios where others are loved for the sake of one's friend.[41] Deep friendship is particularly equipped to foster this outward looking approach, in contrast with certain more 'needy' or possessive expressions of friendship, which tend to subsume those concerned into some sort of closed-in or even reclusive state, or into a limited sphere of activity that is circumscribed merely by what suits them both.

1.3.ii. Ethical Naturalism and Natural Normativity

There is another aspect of Foot's work, beyond her direct writing on virtue, that should be raised here, precisely for the potential contribution that an analysis of deep friendship from an ethical perspective can offer it. In her "Natural Goodness" published in 2001, Foot lays the groundwork for her theory of 'natural normativity' regarding the assessment of goodness in living things, where she thoroughly elaborates Peter Geach's notion that "humans need virtues as bees need stings."[42, 43] In this major work, Foot seeks to ground the virtues within a wider context of a consistent conceptual structure for the assessment of goodness across a diversity of lifeforms. She does this by developing Michael Thompson's approach to 'natural history propositions', or 'Aristotelian categoricals' (such as "rabbits eat grass" or "wolves hunt in packs"), which are not so much statistical normalities but rather concern what may be said to be characteristic of a species (as observed over what would amount to a stable historical period as far as evolutionary adaptation is

[39] Aquinas, Thomas, *Summa Theologica* (S.T.), II-ii, qu. 23, art. 1.
[40] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 25, art. 8.
[41] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 23, art, 1 (For a detailed discussion of this aspect, see Chapter IX of this thesis).
[42] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 35.
[43] Geach, Peter (1977) at 17.

concerned).[44, 45] Notably, Foot refines Thompson's notion of an Aristotelian categorical, by specifying that it refers to what is of teleological significance for the flourishing of the life form in question. Thus, an Aristotelian categorical pertains to what 'plays a part in the life of the species', where that part is meaningful to its good and proper functioning, in the light of what might naturally be called its 'ends'.[46] It is here that this study can shed unique light, insofar as deep friendship illustrates that personal goodness constitutes something of a summit with regard to human end-goods that are able to orient our ethical lives.[47] For this reason it would be useful to briefly recall some aspects of Foot's work here.

In terms of plants and non-rational animals, Aristotelian categoricals largely refer to what serves the development, self-maintenance and reproductive ends of a given species, and in some cases, the rearing of its young.[48] Close attention to the life cycle of a particular life form allows the derivation of its norms of flourishing, and thus effectively establishes what 'should be' found in a given individual of that kind. This provides criteria against which individual members can be assessed in evaluative judgements, concerning how 'good' or 'defective' they are in terms of being equipped to achieve these ends.[49] Already, as the focus shifts from plants to animals, a great adjustment needs to be made in order to take into account the part that perception plays in the characteristic activities of an animal.[50] Foot demonstrates however, that once this is properly factored in, the structure of Aristotelian categoricals remains essentially the same across the perception divide.

With the 'sea-change' of rationality that human beings usher in, there is an exponential increase in life's complexity, especially because *sui generis* ends are introduced that are not simply tied to the survival of the individual or of the species. Indeed, humans are the animals who can see ends precisely as ends, going not only for the *good that they see* but for *what they see as good*.[51, 52] It is Foot's major thesis that even when these differences are appropriately considered, the grammar

[44] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 27-9 and 33-4
[45] Thompson, Michael (1995) at 272.
[46] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 33.
[47] See in particular Chapter IV and Chapter X of this thesis.
[48] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 31-3.
[49] Ibid at 32-6.
[50] Ibid at 40-1 and 53-6.
[51] Ibid at 41-56.
[52] Aquinas. S.T. I, ii, qu. 13, art. 2.

and structure of the assessment of goodness remains intact. In this way she argues that human ethical goodness can be shown to be largely a matter of rectitude of the rational will.[53] Other Aristotelian categoricals remain concerning the bodily intactness and the healthy functioning of the human organism, with regards to the ends that we share with animals and plants concerning our own survival or that of our species, though even these now make reference to the more distinctly human dimensions that rationality brings to the fore, be they artistic, ethical or communitarian.

Thus, Foot gives passing examples of certain necessities specific for human life, such as having a larynx, an ear, an imagination and a mental capacity conducive to speech and song or fostering art and artists for the flourishing that they bring to the life of the community.[54] She goes on to say:

> Men and women need to be industrious and tenacious of purpose not only so as to be able to house, clothe, and feed themselves, but also to pursue human ends having to do with love and friendship. They need the ability to form family ties, friendships, and special relations with neighbours. They also need codes of conduct. And how could they have all these things without virtues such as loyalty, fairness, kindness and in certain circumstances obedience?[55]

It is no accident that as the ends shift from providing for physical or even artistic needs to maintaining relations such as close family or amical ties, then the means themselves immediately take on a more distinctively ethical character. Foot explicitly evokes the necessity for virtue in the maintenance of deep relations with family, friends and neighbours, as well as appealing to the necessity of these relations if a human life is to flourish. As perceptive and illuminative as this is, it remains undeveloped and is simply a passing reference. Her main focus is to establish the continuity of the 'grammar of goodness' and of natural normativity across the rational divide, and thus, across all physical life forms. The one connection that Foot does emphasise, however, is the same one explicitly advocated by Anscombe for modern times, and indeed the one that tends to recur in the writing of today's virtue ethicists, namely, the link between human flourishing and

[53] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 72.
[54] Ibid at 43-4.
[55] Ibid at 44.

virtue. This is of course the link that Aristotle explicitly makes in the opening book of his *Nicomachean Ethics*.

Significantly, Foot also recognises the need for a close examination of the specific ends of human life in order to discern what makes our human life cycle so distinctive, and thus what would allow for clear evaluations of human goodness, though she does not attempt to carry out such an examination herself:

> To determine what is goodness and what defect of character, disposition and choice, we must consider what human good is and how human beings live: in other words, what kind of living thing a human being is.[56]

Combining this with Aristotle's affirmation that "without friends, no one would choose to live, though [she] had all other goods",[57] it becomes possible to argue that deep friendship forms an indispensable part of any thorough investigation into what allows us to discern and evaluate human virtues, and indeed, what lies at the heart of human ethical development.[58]

The effort to understand the importance of deep friendship in connection with virtue, practical wisdom and human flourishing, promises to be particularly fruitful ground to till for both ethics and metaethics. Thus, it is all the more surprising that it remains relatively untouched to date, particularly given that Aristotle himself had already laid the foundations for this very exploration in both his *Nicomachean Ethics* and his *Eudemian Ethics*, as has been noted.[59]

1.4. Rosalind Hursthouse

Rosalind Hursthouse has been one of the main champions of the revival of virtue ethics and it is significant that despite her extensive output in the field, the role that deep friendship might play in its relation to virtue and fulfilment has not significantly featured. The focus of her work typifies a set of priorities that developed among virtue ethicists in response to the initial reception or lack thereof that virtue ethics received as the 'new kid on the block', vying for position in philosophical

[56] Ibid at 51.
[57] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1170b.
[58] We shall take up this aspect in Chapter X as something of a postlude to this study.
[59] Aristotle, N.E., Books VIII and IX; E.E. Book VII.

ethical discourse alongside the more established players of utilitarianism and deontology. Hursthouse takes up Anscombe's call to recover a focus on human goodness, virtue and flourishing within ethical discourse, ushering back a place for the emotions, motivation, and intention. She devotes herself to answering early attempts at stifling the ascendency of virtue ethics, defending it as a third and distinctive ethical approach, and showing that it is at least as capable as utilitarianism and deontology at offering guidance for ethical actions,[60, 61, 62] particularly with regard to difficult dilemmas.[63, 64] At the same time, she is prominent among those who seek to establish that the business of ethics is not primarily about reducing ethical decision making to something codifiable or mimicable by computer algorithms.[65, 66]

Like Foot, Hursthouse is concerned to show the connection between virtues benefitting their possessor and making their possessor a good person,[67] and is among those who sought to answer various forms of the egoism or self-centred objection to eudaimonistic virtue ethics.[68, 69, 70] In addition, in taking up and developing the ethical naturalism and natural normativity project of Foot, she had to devote time and attention to defending it from the claim that scientific or psychological approaches to goodness have somehow superseded philosophical ones.[71, 72, 73, 74, 75 76, 77]

On the more positive and less defensive side, Hursthouse is among modern writers who have been concerned to show that virtue ethics takes greater account of the emotional content of our

[60] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 29 ff.
[61] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1996), 19-36.
[62] Hursthouse, Rosalind and Pettigrove, Glen (2018) at 19-42.
[63] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1996) at 43-87.
[64] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1995).
[65] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 39-42.
[66] Hooker, Brad (1996), 141-155.
[67] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 167ff.
[68] Hursthouse, Rosalind and Pettigrove, Glen (2018).
[69] Christopher Toner (2006), 595-617.
[70] Lott, Micah, (2016) 363-375.
[71] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2018), 25-46.
[72] Lott, Micah, (2012 B).
[73] Lott, Micah, (2013).
[74] Lott, Micah, (2012 A).
[75] Odenbaugh, Jay (2014).
[76] Brown, Stephen R. (2008).
[77] Korsgaard, Christine (1996).

interactions;[78, 79, 80, 81] as well as to explore, extrapolate and develop the subtleties of specific virtues and vices.[82] Indeed, she joins those who have explored what character traits might count as a virtue in modern contexts, other than those explored in ancient times.[83, 84, 85]

Given the preoccupations of the initial battleground where Hursthouse and other pioneers laboured to re-establish virtue ethics in modern ethical discourse, the relationship between virtue and friendship had little room to emerge. This neglect among the modern virtue ethicists of the focus that Aristotle brought to bear on deep friendship at the culmination of his work on virtue and *phronesis* has meant in part that their work has tended to appear more generalised than it perhaps needed to be, abstracted from the human contexts that give virtues their deepest *raison d'etre* and that ultimately shape the adequacy of their 'fit' for human life. While the insistence on the need for practical wisdom in the complexity of life's circumstances has been widespread, exploration of virtue has not, perhaps quite reached the sort of depth or detail that anchoring it in life's most significant relations would have facilitated.

I have mentioned that in addition to her direct writing on virtue ethics, Hursthouse is pivotal in developing the natural normativity project of Foot, her friend and colleague, to whose work she attempted to give more structure and specification. Notably, she took up the aspect of ends and how they relate to the assessment of goodness. Like Foot, in carrying out this work, Hursthouse is not seeking to furnish the reader with a foundation for virtue, nor motivating reasons, but rather to help establish criteria by which one's beliefs about "which character traits are virtues… [can] survive reflective scrutiny and be given some rational justification."[86] For both Hursthouse and Foot, natural normativity is part of metaethics, and does not in any way constitute a substitute for the exercise of practical wisdom or of the virtues themselves, when it comes to determining right action within life itself.[87] I shall save an exposition of Hursthouse' contribution in this field until

[78] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1997), 99-117.
[79] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 108-120.
[80] Stocker, Michael (1996), 173-190.
[81] Stocker, Michael (1976), 453-466.
[82] Pieper, Josef (1966).
[83] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 8.
[84] Baier, Annette (2003), 168-183.
[85] Taylor, Charles (2003).
[86] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 194.
[87] Ibid at 211-2.

Chapter X, not least of all because I wish to offer a refinement to it, in the light of the analysis of deep friendship presented in this study. I do so in a spirit of great respect for the extraordinary work of both Foot and Hursthouse and because it is my conviction that an analysis of deep friendship with a careful eye on human ends provides an essential and hitherto missing piece of the puzzle that helps the efficacy of ethical naturalism to emerge with greater clarity.

1.5 Lawrence A. Blum

Lawrence Blum was one of the first modern authors to explicitly explore the link between deep friendship and ethics. As early as 1980, he advances two principal claims:

> (i) … Acts of friendship are morally good insofar as they involve acting from regard for another person for his own sake" (and)
>
> (ii) … the deeper and stronger the concern for the friend – the stronger the desire and willingness to act on behalf of the friend's good – the greater the degree of moral worth.[88]

Blum sees the deepening of friendship itself as a process of ethical growth:

> friendship is an expression of moral activity on our part, of a type of regard for another person, of giving of oneself, and a caring for another for his own sake.[89]

While he views the overcoming of obstacles and of one another's shortfalls in a deep friendship as morally significant, Blum asserts that the ethical component in a friendship is not so much a function of these, but rather correlates with the level of care that the friends have for one another. He is careful to distinguish the care found within a love of someone for her own sake from a strong passional or possessive love, that can, at least for a time, cause a friend to lavish great attention, devotion and even acts of care on the other.[90] This latter 'romanticism' falls short of an ethically significant care that would entail and necessitate a growth in virtue.

[88] Blum, Laurence A. (1980) at 68 and 82.
[89] Ibid at 73.
[90] Ibid at 70.

Blum argues that conceptions of friendship that see it simply as a natural occurrence that 'happens to us" or even as a projected extension of our own self-love (loving something of ourselves in the other) are inadequate[91] and do not recognise what it means to come to 'love another for her own sake'.[92] These caricatures may be found among certain pleasure friendships but never constitute deep friendship, which necessitates, for its development and permanence, a true attentiveness to the other's good and a practical wisdom in one's dealings with the other, that arises from having discovered her as a personal good. She is not only 'a good for me' but is someone good 'in her own right'.

Blum also points out that the commonly made distinction between 'self-interest' and 'disinterested love' is often not relevant in deep friendship. We can act decisively for our friend's true good, while at the same time taking legitimate pleasure in being able to help her, being conscious of the importance of this friendship in our life. This in no way undermines the moral significance involved in the acts of virtue that one might engage in for the sake of a friend.[93]

Blum's focus on the moral component and value found within deep friendship is a perceptive one. I shall advance the position that not only does the move toward loving another for her own sake constitute a significant moment of ethical growth, but that this is perhaps the ethical step *par excellence*, necessary for anyone to come to any true maturation with regard to *phronesis* and virtue. In affirming this, I am not seeing virtue as a steppingstone to friendship, nor indeed friendship as a steppingstone to virtue, but rather affirming that the relationship between the two is far more intrinsic than is perhaps commonly imagined. It is to the exploration of this relationship that the main body of this work is devoted.

1.6. Friendship Literature that Touches Virtue Ethics

In general I have noted that friendship has been very little incorporated into modern philosophical discussions on virtue and virtue ethics. Within friendship literature, there have been discussions as to why Aristotle's 'ideal' or 'perfect' friendship is relatively rare and can be sustained only

[91] Ibid at 75.
[92] Ibid at 75-7.
[93] This will be developed in detail when I explore the egoist objection to eudaimonistic virtue ethics in Chapter VIII.

among the virtuous, as they share life together, in contrast with the more commonplace and less stable utility or pleasure friendships, which come and go as the people concerned diverge in needs or tastes, or find others more conducive in these areas. As Dean Cocking notes, these discussions have often been framed around the assumption that these deeper friendships form between people who are somehow already virtuous or near virtuous agents, perhaps attracting each other by their virtue,[94] or able to trust and open up to each other because of it.[95] These virtuous friends are then able to help each other to progress in the self-knowledge that partly propels practical wisdom, either by being role models for each other to contemplate,[96] or through enhancing each other's sensibilities[97]or by providing an objective gaze on each other.[98] Cocking himself suggests that these explanations fall short of capturing the heart of the dynamic relationship between deep friendship and virtue. Indeed, he advocates exploring new ground, namely that the relational self that is developed through the shared lives of friends opens both parties to new possibilities for the enhancement and development of their virtue:

> [In] ideal friendship we create reasons and values together, including in ways that take each of us quite beyond where we were or might have imagined in isolation. It is through our shared activity in ideal friendship that virtue and the moral life are generated and developed. We do, in part, come to know ourselves and mutually recognise virtue in one another through our shared activity. But more importantly we also *realise* virtue and are able to lead a worthwhile life and come to know and recognise ourselves as doing so through such activity.[99]

It is precisely this pathway suggested but not taken up by Cocking that this study will substantially explore and seek to advance.

[94] Sherman, Nancy. (1993) at 105-6.
[95] Cocking, Dean (2014), 83-90.
[96] Sherman, Nancy (1993) at 105-6.
[97] Thomas, Laurence (1989) at 147.
[98] Cooper, John M., (1980), 322-33.
[99] Cocking, Dean (2014) at 90.

II

THE ROLE OF FINAL CAUSALITY IN THE ETHICS OF ARISTOTLE

2.1. *Eudaimonia* and Virtuous Activity

The controlling notion for Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* is goodness, which, as he asserts from the outset, constitutes the target at which every art, inquiry, action or pursuit, aims.[100] With this comes the recognition of the importance for human action of the role that attraction to the good plays, in its great variety of expressions. Different types of goods, which are often present within the same reality, give rise to different types of attraction or love, as shall be explored in Chapter III. From this perspective, it is already clear that the human ethical quest to determine and carry out right action cannot be divorced from the discernment of an authentic order or hierarchy of goods, not only within the multiplicity of levels of attraction, but among the goods themselves, with an eye to judge what is more ultimate and indeed nobler, and thus, what is truly worthy of pursuit.[101]

Early on, Aristotle puts forward an important component of this discernment and furnishes us with a simple but strikingly effective tool for both ethical analysis and practical reasoning. He notes that, within the multiplicity of goods and loves, we often seek one good for the sake of another, in such a way that a good can be a proximate end for our immediate activity as well as a further means toward deeper goods or ends. In pursuing chains of such proximate ends, for the sake of which we act at various times, we unveil the nobler goods, which often frame and shape human activity and choices.

It is not uncommon for small children to show a propensity to generate a series of 'but why?' questions, which can seem interminable at times to a busy or impatient parent. Yet these reveal that even in the toddler, the seeds of this desire to trace the deeper reasons for one's activity are

[100] Aristotle, N.E.,1094a.
[101] This calls to mind the appeal of Philippa Foot, quoted above, for the need to investigate what, for the wise, grounds nobler goods *qua* nobler, as a prerequisite to the analysis of many virtues. See Foot, Philippa (2003) at 110.

already emerging, as a way of understanding what is going on and indeed of better knowing how to go on. I could recall here how Wittgenstein famously links the process of understanding to our 'knowing how to go on' with regard to appropriate usages.[102] Indeed, the quest to understand 'why we do what we do' begins almost as early as a child begins to understand a language. When it comes to seeking the reasons and indeed the reasoning behind our actions, the child is already embarking on a quest for the good that we seek when we carry out a given action. By intuiting that the chain of 'but why' questions is potentially infinite, she is already expressing an intuition that deeper goods stand behind more immediate ones. At the same time, the parents begin to induct her into their own prudence, by educating her to go beyond immediate wants and comforts for some greater good, whether it be learning to have an early bedtime, to finish her vegetables or to share her toys.

In the same trajectory, Aristotle will explore in what good or activity lies the deepest human good and happiness, that it might inform and enlighten human ethical discernment and action. Interestingly Auguste Comte in his 'law of the three stages' proposes a sociological theory that humanity passes from an initial phase of seeking the 'why' of things in supernatural agents, through an infantile stage of seeking metaphysical answers to the 'why' of things (which he sees as abstract entities), to a mature phase where the question 'why' is replaced by the question 'how' and finds its answers in scientific laws.[103] This attitude, rather than seeing the promise in the first intuitions of a child tends to disparage the immature, all the while abandoning any spirit of enquiry that runs deeper than the search for mechanistic explanation.

Among Aristotle's four causes, material, formal, efficient and final, which he explains in the *Physics* and the *Metaphysics*, attraction to the good is most linked to the final cause. For Aristotle, the final cause of a thing is 'that for the sake of which that thing is what it is'; and the final cause of an activity is 'that for the sake of which that activity is carried out'.[104, 105] It is clear early on that Aristotle approaches the analysis of activity largely through an examination of ends. His first major distinction is the broad division between what is effectively artistic activity taken in the sense of human making and what is more properly speaking ethical activity, pertaining to human

[102] Wittgenstein, Ludwig (2001) no. 155.
[103] Bourdeau, Michel (2020).
[104] Aristotle, *Physics* 194b-195b.
[105] Aristotle, *Metaphysics* (Met.) 1013a.

acting. He notes that it is characteristic of the former to aim at a product that endures beyond the cessation of the activity that generates it (as painting aims at a painting, or carpentry at a table), while the second class of activity does not have a clear endpoint beyond the activity itself, and in some way contains its own *raison d'etre*.[106]

With the sphere of human work via *techné* fitting generally into the first class of 'human making', Aristotle notes that the products involved are higher than the activities that are ordered toward their completion.[107] Within these products, a further division may be made at the level of ends, between useful goods on the one hand, such as tools or furniture, that we employ with the aim of achieving further goods or ends (eg., in order to hammer in a nail; in order to produce a table; in order to support the conviviality of a meal) and those goods that are effectively 'sought for themselves', whose function lies more in their ability to delight the intelligence of the beholder, and which one might classify as the 'higher arts'.[108] Again, what places these latter activities above the crafts is their closer proximity to ultimate ends.

Certainly, for the true artisan, beauty is an essential aspect of her work. She is not merely in the business of producing something functional, as with the mass-produced plastic chairs that fill most schools. For her, furniture goes well beyond the primary goal of supporting the posture of its users and includes a note of beauty and gratuity, aimed at pleasing aesthetical taste. One could say that with human productive activity, the more that the aesthetic element takes pride of place over utility, the more the enterprise can be classed as art, and its production seen as a nobler endeavour. Architecture presents an interesting cross-over between functionality and aesthetics. A great building, while well suited to purpose, also aims at expressing something more profound, such as a particular conception of the human person's place within the larger cosmos for example, as seen with the world's great basilicas, temples, mosques, *whare rūnanga,* palaces and government buildings.

The second class of activity, where there is no direct product or endpoint that endures beyond the activity itself, pertains more directly to human flourishing and to this belongs virtuous activity,

[106] Aristotle, N.E., 1094a.
[107] Aristotle, N.E., Ibid.
[108] Aristotle, N.E., 1096b; N.E., 1097a.

deep friendship, the contemplation of truth, and indeed the *eudaimon* (happy, fulfilled or blessed) life, which arguably embraces all three. These activities are more essentially tied to a life well lived and each can be described as being sought in some way 'for its own sake'. We might justify an action because 'it is the honest/decent/generous/courageous thing to do'. We might appeal to the depth of a relationship to explain our readiness to go to great trouble for someone else: 'she's a good friend, I'd do anything for her'. It could be as simple as 'she needed my help'. We might seek to contemplate something noble simply 'because it is so good/wonderful/true'. By the same criterion that distinguishes the fine arts from the crafts in the first class of activity, this second class of activity is higher than the first. Ends that are themselves means to further ends are less complete than ends that are simply 'for their own sake'.[109] I shall refer to this way of ranking goods in the realm of action as the 'logic of final causality'. It is the recognition that final causality naturally implies a hierarchy, in that what is in the service of something else may be considered subordinate to it.

Following this logic, Aristotle takes up the *eudaimon* life, using a key term from Greek philosophy, designating a happy, fulfilled or even blessed life, as that at which we ultimately aim when we act for some good.[110] Hursthouse discusses the difficulty in finding an adequate translation for *eudaimonia* within virtue ethics, noting the disadvantages of various contenders such as 'happiness', 'flourishing' or 'well-being'. She points out that 'flourishing' is so broad a term as to be applicable to plants, whereas we would only use *eudaimonia* in regard to rational beings. As for 'happiness', it can seem too subjective in modern parlance, in that one is not normally able to be challenged as an authority on whether or not one is happy, as one might be concerning whether or not one is healthy or flourishing. It can be a modern temptation to reduce 'happiness' to the level of an emotion. Hursthouse suggests that 'true happiness' gets closer to a notion of happiness that carries an objective connotation. She also notes that 'well-being' is not enough of an everyday term and that it becomes clumsy for not having a corresponding adjective.[111, 112] While I shall mainly use 'happiness' throughout this discussion, I do so in the more eudaimon sense of 'true happiness'.

[109] Aristotle, N.E.,1097a; N.E., 1156b.
[110] Aristotle, N.E., 1095a.
[111] Hursthouse, Rosalind and Pettigrove, Glen (2018).
[112] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 9-10.

Aristotle points out that while there is a sense in which one seeks honour, pleasure, intellect and every virtue for themselves, each is also sought for the sake of happiness (*eudaimonia*); whereas happiness is not sought for some further good.[113] It is the point at which the chain of answers generated by the question: "… and why would you want that?" comes to an end. In other words, the question "… and why would you want to be happy?" has the immediate feel of a 'silly question'. Plato has already noted this in the *Symposium*:

> That's what makes happy people happy, isn't it – possessing good things. There's no need to ask further: "What's the point of wanting happiness?" The answer you gave seems to be final.[114, 115]

Already in Book I, then, by various routes, Aristotle arrives at *eudaimonia* as the ultimate end toward which all human action aims, even if only implicitly.[116] Not only is *eudaimonia* not sought as a means to anything else, but it is also that which renders life 'lacking in nothing', fulfilling Aristotle's second criterion of 'self-sufficiency'.[117] This term is not used in the sense of independence, as if to imply that if one enjoyed *eudaimonia,* one would not need loved ones and fellows. 'Self-sufficiency' here refers to what makes life complete and 'worthy of choice', which arguably necessitates and embraces those very relational goods.[118] J.L. Ackrill, while focussing only on the end-goods of virtue and contemplation, with respect to *eudaimonia*, argues that Aristotle's use of *eudaimonia* implies an end that "is inclusive of all [of its] intrinsic goods," adding that "[it] is not necessary to claim [in support] that Aristotle has made quite clear how there may be 'components' in the best life or how they may be interrelated."[119] Indeed, it is largely this task that lies ahead of me here, once the relevant insights from Aristotle's discourse on ethics have been assembled.

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[113] Aristotle, N.E., 1097b.
[114] Plato, 'Symposium' (Sym.), 205a.
[115] We shall explore the various ways in which goods such as virtue, deep friendship and contemplation are sought for their own sake as this study progresses, for it will help to illuminate the intrinsic relationship between them and help us to avoid common pitfalls, such as thinking that Aristotle affirms that the 'reason to be virtuous' or even to have deep friendships is primarily for one's own happiness. Such a view gives rise to the recurrent 'egoist objection' to Aristotle's eudaimonistic ethics, as we shall discuss in Chapter VIII.
[116] Aristotle, N.E., 1097a (via completeness); N.E., 1097b (via self-sufficiency); N.E., 1097b (via characteristic activity); N.E., 1098a (via higher nature); N.E., 1098a (via living and acting well).
[117] Aristotle, N.E., 1097b.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Ackrill, J.L. (1997) at 185-8.

Furthermore, the reader must be careful not to equate Aristotle's use of the words "complete" with a life in which some endpoint is reached, after which nothing more is to be expected. A life "worthy of choice" is neither static nor finished. It is first of all a "life" in the fullest sense of the word, and is thus vibrant, abundant, active and ongoing at the level of the deeper goods. Aristotle observes that various accounts of happiness each have something to commend them, whether they emphasise virtue, practical wisdom, philosophical wisdom, or these accompanied by pleasure and including adequate external prosperity.[120] Although friendship does not appear on this list, I shall argue that it is the indispensable thread that weaves together these various elements that Aristotle has already assembled in Book I.[121]

At this point, Aristotle employs his famous *ergon* or function argument, both as a third prong in his demonstration that the *eudaimon* life is what human action ultimately seeks, and more tellingly, as a way to specify more precisely what constitutes that life.[122] He develops this by posing the question as to whether there could be a 'characteristic function' for a human being as a whole, as opposed to the characteristic activity of say a chef or a flautist, for example. In examining the analogous way that the word 'good' is used at so many levels of being, Aristotle asserts that when it comes to describing someone as good *qua* human, this goodness would need to correspond to what is highest in human nature, in as much as it pertains to what is most distinctively or characteristically human with regard to activity.[123] Thus, it will not directly concern the 'vegetative life', whose immediate activities (such as breathing, nutrition, growth and reproduction) we share with all life forms and which are not under the direct command of reason.[124] Nor will it primarily focus on the sensible element with regard to what may or may not 'obey' reason,[125] i.e., the passions and emotions, which we share analogously with the beasts.[126] Rather, it will pertain to the activity that is most closely linked to reason, and thus to human activity under its most distinctive aspect.

[120] Aristotle, N.E., 1098b.
[121] Indeed, Aristotle elsewhere notes friends (*philoi*) are "the greatest of external goods". See N.E., 1169b.
[122] Aristotle, N.E., 1097b; N.E., 1102a; N.E., 1103a.
[123] Aristotle, N.E., 1098a.
[124] Aristotle, N.E., 1097b.
[125] Aristotle, N.E., 1102b.
[126] Aristotle, N.E., 1098a.

Further, Aristotle notes that when actions are performed well, it is not by the addition of some form to an activity (as if activities are done with or without the form of 'wellness', as one might have coffee with or without milk or rent an apartment with or without furnishings). To do something well refers to the quality and completeness of the activity and thus to the fullness of its actuation.[127] When a human being acts consistently for noble goods, from stable dispositions, with a certain facility by which she wisely discerns and navigates the particulars involved, she is said to be a good person (as opposed to a good musician or a good doctor), and this turns out to be what people mean by acting from virtue.[128] Aristotle points out that while each virtue is a summit in its own way, an excellence or 'extreme with regard to goodness',[129] around which there can be all manner of ways of 'missing the mark', still some virtues are subordinate to others, which may be considered nobler and more complete. This leads him to the affirmation of a highest virtue, corresponding to what is most characteristically human among our activities. This he later specifies as being beyond the practical sphere itself (both immediately ethical and artistic), and he locates it in the act of contemplation.[130] Here contemplation is taken in the sense of seeking and gazing upon the deepest truths for their own sake and not primarily with a view to right action or utilisation, which is not to say that such truths could not also shed light on action and on the sort of prioritising of goods that can inform practical wisdom.

In Book I, viii, Aristotle finds confirmation from several directions of his notion that happiness is reached via a life of virtuous activity: it accords with an emphasis of goods of the soul over those of the body and over external goods;[131] it favours actuation over potentiality in that it pertains more to activity than it does to 'states' and in particular, to living and acting well;[132] and it accords with common and distinguished views about happiness that variously emphasise virtue, practical wisdom, and philosophical wisdom, along with some element of pleasure.[133]

[127] To 'play the flute well' is really what we mean by being able to play the flute. To play the flute badly means someone might be on the path toward flute playing but in a certain way does not yet know how to play the flute.
[128] Aristotle, N.E., 1098a.
[129] Aristotle, N.E., 1107a.
[130] Aristotle, N.E., 1098a.
[131] Aristotle, N.E., 1098b.
[132] Aristotle, N.E., 1098b; N.E.,1099a.
[133] Aristotle, N.E., 1098b.

Pleasure enters the equation given that Aristotle does not yet consider a person virtuous until she genuinely enjoys good actions and dispositions and indeed takes proportionate pleasure in goods according to a realistic appraisal of their quality and nobility. So long as there remains an interior battle with conflicting desires, the person may be thought of as 'continent' (if she tends to win the battle) or 'incontinent' (if she tends to lose it).[134] The 'wicked' are defined as those who delight in wrong action. That is to say, they at least happily allow the delight that they take in the lesser pleasures that are attached to secondary goods (such as succeeding or gaining power, status, wealth or physical pleasure) to be prioritised at the expense of the higher goods (such as maintaining the integrity of oneself and others, or respecting justice, or one's responsibilities and so forth). Furthermore, they lack sufficient love for those greater goods so as to render their compromise or loss lamentable. Indeed, such people lack the practical wisdom to realise which goods of life are nobler, for they prize the lower over the higher, which is the very opposite of wisdom.

By contrast, the truly virtuous life in action will itself be genuinely pleasurable, in that good people take pleasure without qualification in noble activities.[135] This is opposed to both the pleasure taken by the masses in whatever it is they tend to prefer, which could be called 'ornamental pleasures' and to the perverse pleasure that the 'wicked' might take in what would not be pleasurable to any decent person,[136] as when a bully might revel in her power over the weak, or a thief rejoice over her spoils. The passing pleasures of the wicked then are in no way comparable to the legitimate pleasure of the virtuous, for the wicked are ultimately marred by a sort of disintegration, as I shall discuss in chapter V.

> Happiness, then, is the best, the noblest and the pleasantest thing, and these qualities are not separate.[137]

Though Book I specifies that virtuous action is central to happiness (as opposed to virtuous dispositions that might remain dormant as mere potencies), Aristotle is realistic enough to add that a certain prosperity is also necessary for a life to count as 'blessed', including a minimum of

[134] Aristotle, E.E., 1237a. "… for it is (via the) disagreement of the good with the pleasant in the passions that incontinence occurs."
[135] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b.
[136] Aristotle, N.E., 1099a.
[137] Ibid.

resources, 'friends, wealth, noble children, beauty' and so forth.[138] Early on in his discussion then, Aristotle has argued for a direct link between happiness and a life of virtue in action, at least when it is accompanied by this element of 'blessedness', where circumstances have not been so unfavourable as to reduce life to a miserable plight or a mere quest for survival.

Had Aristotle stopped here, the reader might be forgiven for concluding that the eudaimon life largely consists in virtuous activity, with friendship playing a supporting role akin to that of wealth, resources or beauty, as an accessory that facilitates the fuller exercise of virtuous activity, without itself constituting an essential component of the happy life.[139]

Books VIII and XI of *Nicomachean Ethics*, however, preclude this possibility, and flesh out a more complete picture of *eudaimonia* as I shall now explore. They present a vision of the importance of friendship that lines up consistently with the logic of final causality that has driven Aristotle's exploration of happiness in Book I. Indeed, I shall argue that deep friendship is the thread that weaves virtue, practical wisdom and contemplation together, allowing each to be more fully itself and thus providing the very oxygen by which *eudaimonia* lives. It is to these books on friendship that I now briefly turn.

2.2. ARISTOTLE – *Eudaimonia* and Friendship

I have asserted that Aristotle's conception of *eudaimonia* is not exhausted by arriving at virtuous activity via the various paths of exploration taken in Book I. In Books VIII and IX, as the focus shifts from an examination of what constitutes specific virtues and of the practical wisdom that shapes and enables them, to an analysis of friendship itself, it can be seen that a life well-lived and the ongoing experience of 'perfect' or 'complete' friendship have much more than an arbitrary connection.[140]

[138] Aristotle, N.E., 1096a; N.E., 1099a; N.E., 1099b; N.E., 1102a.
[139] Jeffrey D'Souza for example equates a virtuous person's seeking of the eudaimon life with the seeking of human goodness *qua* goodness, and then advances what he calls an "altruistic account of motivation" where " the virtuous agent may be understood as being motivated by human goodness, valuing objects and persons only insofar as they participate in human goodness…" (See D'Souza, Jeffrey (2017) at iv).
[140] Similarly, in Book VII of *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle juxtaposes a discussion of friendship with the discussion of the virtues that has occupied the books immediately prior. Here he refers to 'perfect friendship' as 'primary friendship'. I continue to use 'deep friendship' throughout this study.

Aristotle begins by speaking of friendship as a 'sort of virtue' or akin to virtue, emphasising both its necessity and nobility: "for without friends, no one would choose to live, though [she] had all other goods."[141] The sentence is put forward as an obvious truism for Aristotle, as though it does not require further proof. It is assumed that such a statement resonates with anyone who has enjoyed a reasonable experience of life. Indeed, if our immediate impression is that it would seem unduly sceptical, pedantic or academic to take issue with the assertion, there is already here a sign that the inseparability of *eudaimonia* and deep friendship is something universally intuitive.

Not all friendship falls into this category of course. Aristotle begins his analysis of deep friendship by first gathering and specifying the characteristics that are common to any type of friendship: in particular, a reciprocal and consciously recognised benevolence of some sort, which, one could add, is presumed to be ongoing.[142] Different types of friendship emerge as we effectively distinguish the different types of goods that friends want or will for each other.[143] The fullness of friendship is not found in those who simply or primarily want to be useful or pleasurable to one another, as often as these relations occur throughout our lives, but rather in those who consistently will that the other flourish for her own sake. Indeed, this complete, full or 'perfect' friendship, which I shall call throughout this study 'deep friendship', assumes within itself all that is good in utility or pleasure friendships, and contains these goods in a preeminent way.[144] In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle refers to deep friendship as 'primary friendship', not because it is chronologically prior or somehow more primitive than other sorts of friendship, but on the contrary, because it constitutes friendship in the fullest and most eminent sense of the word. He insists that we should not expect all of the characteristics of primary friendship to be present in all friendships, but nonetheless recognise that other relations merit the name 'friendship' inasmuch as they embody certain of these.[145] Thus, utility and pleasure friendships can be seen as partial participations in deep friendship, which may also be regarded as friendship in its fullness.[146]

[141] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1170b.
[142] Equivalently, he states in *Eudemian Ethics*: "So a man becomes a friend when he is loved and returns that love, and this is recognised by the two men in question." Aristotle, E.E., 1236a.
[143] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a-1155b; N.E., 1156a-1156b; E.E.,1236a; E.E., 1237b; and E.E., 1238.
[144] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b; E.E., 1236a-b.
[145] Aristotle, E.E., 1236a.
[146] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b; E.E., 1236b; E.E., 1238a.

While both utility and pleasure friendships contain an aspect of happily willing those respective goods for the other, a legitimate question arises as to what extent they are willed 'for the other's own sake'. Aristotle notes that so long as these goods constitute the main basis of the friendship, we ultimately will them for our own benefit in that field. Pleasure friendships can be had between people so long as both enjoy the experiences they make together. In this sense, one eye is kept on the self in such ventures. The same can be said *mutatis mutandis* for utility friendships. Because the good we look for from the other or the good we wish for her is not tied directly to the good of her character, she is not so much loved for who she is in herself, but insofar as she is useful or pleasant.[147] This is not to deny legitimate benevolence at whatever level the friendship is operating (i.e., the utility friend has benevolence for her friend at the level of utility and the pleasure friend *mutatis mutandis* at the level of pleasure), as Hursthouse,[148] Nussbaum,[149] A.W. Price,[150] John Cooper,[151] and Sarah Broadie[152] all point out. But it is also the reason why these friendships lack long-term stability, for as circumstances change or people mature, what was once commonly held as useful or pleasant tends to diverge, and other individuals may emerge whose circumstances and outlook are more naturally conducive to the forging of new relations of mutual usefulness or pleasure.[153]

In the *Eudemian Ethics*, Aristotle spells out three aspects that uniquely pertain to deep friendship: stability; a strong element of mutual amical choice; and the need for time and shared life in order for the friendship to be tested and to develop.[154] People can notice each other's goodness fairly quickly and early on they can begin to exhibit, even with some excitement, their joy in bestowing friendly favours on one another, but this is more a preliminary to deep friendship. Aristotle notes that "the desire for friendship can arrive quickly, but friendship itself does not," and "[people] cannot know each other till they have eaten salt together."[155]

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[147] Aristotle, E.E., 1236a.
[148] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2007) at 328-9.
[149] Nussbaum, Martha C. (2001) at 355.
[150] Price, A. W. (1989) at144.
[151] Cooper, John (1977), 619-648.
[152] Broadie, Sarah (2002) at 58.
[153] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.
[154] Aristotle, E.E., 1237b; E.E., 1238a; E.E., 1239b. N.E., 1171b-1172a. Indeed, Nussbaum notes that spending time with someone whom one finds both wonderful and delightful is, for Aristotle, 'the most chosen thing' among *philoi.*" See Nussbaum, Martha C. (2001) at 258.
[155] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b; E.E., 1237b; E.E., 1238a.

In distinguishing deep friendship from utility and pleasure friendships, the same logic of final causality is at play. This is more obvious when it comes to utility friendships. Usefulness in particular implies helpfulness with projects and activities that aid the good functioning of aspects of life. What is useful is, by that very fact, *for* something else. Pleasure is broader, in that to some extent it accompanies all goods, and implies the enjoyment taken in pastimes or people. While this is more directly connected to the enjoyment of life itself and thus potentially to such higher 'enjoyments' as loving a person for herself, the notion is so broad as to include both trivial and deep pleasures and a range of endeavours from the perverse to the noble. This is possible because pleasure is not necessarily simply taken proportionately in what is good, but also in what appears to be good,[156] and if one's loves are not commensurate to an authentic hierarchy of goods, then one's pleasures may be similarly askew as noted above. So long as pleasure is what is principally sought, the other person is easily relativised to the self, as a secondary good,[157] and is not yet fully loved for her own sake *qua* person. When it comes to willing the good of a truly flourishing life for another and willing to be an authentic personal good for her, however, we touch more directly on the deepest good that a person can be for someone else.[158] This pertains more closely to her ultimate end of happiness. At the same time we approach what Aristotle calls 'pleasure without qualification'.[159] We are thus in closer proximity to true human fulfilment and to the ultimate ends that frame authentic human action than we would be by simply emphasising what we both regard as useful activity or ornamental enjoyments.

Concerning those involved in a deep friendship, Aristotle notes that "these wish well alike to each other *qua* good and they are good themselves."[160] Such a friend delights both in being a good for her friend for that friend's own sake and in the reciprocation of this. The more the love is for the other's sake, the less the other is approached as a means to some further good for oneself. Aristotle insists that only a virtuous person is capable of consistently being such an authentic good for her friend: "The good [person] in becoming a friend becomes a good to his friend,"[161] and what is good without qualification turns out to be pleasant without qualification.[162] Not only that, by the

[156] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b; E.E., 1235b-1236a.
[157] This was noted by Stocker, as mentioned above. See Stocker, Michael (1976) at 445ff.
[158] Aristotle, E.E., 1236b; 1238a.
[159] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b.
[160] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b; E.E., 1237a; E.E., 1238a.
[161] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b; N.E., 1157b.
[162] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b.

very discernment of which they are capable, the practically wise are also able to be the most useful to each other, in light of what is conducive to the other's authentic flourishing. Thus, coming to love another for her own sake in no way reduces the usefulness or pleasure that one friend brings to another. Even while rendering these aspects secondary, they are enhanced, in that they are able to assume their proper place within goals and ends that are already nobler, compared with scenarios where utility and pleasure remain the determinant goods. Both aspects are relativised to a love that has penetrated more profoundly to the other's person. It is central to our thesis that it is precisely within the desire that arises in deep friendship to be a consistent and authentic good for the other for her own sake, that virtue and practical wisdom are able to mature and become fully themselves.

There is a direct relationship between a love that reaches the other at the level of a personal good and the desire for stability in the friendship.[163] The discovery of someone's goodness at this level and the attraction that this exerts on the human heart, do not leave us indifferent. They give rise within the persons concerned to a desire for ongoing union, opening the way to the possibility of a shared life.

The desire to share life is specifically a feature of deep friendship, much more so than the desire to have regular shared pastimes within utility or pleasure friendships. Friendships of utility tend to revolve around achieving the common goal of those involved; and encounters within friendships of pleasure are more dependent on one's mood and propensity for certain comforts or enjoyment. Yet, once friends discover the goodness of each other at the level of their person in a significant way, then another of Aristotle's affirmations takes on its full force: "there is nothing so characteristic of friends than living together."[164] The pleasantness and satisfaction that is naturally concomitant with a shared life is underpinned and sustained by the personal love that animates the friendship. This love is rooted in amical choice and not so much in practical goals, mood or ambience.[165]

[163] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.
[164] Aristotle, N.E., 1157b; N.E., 1094b-1095a; E.E., 1237b; E.E., 1238a.
[165] Aristotle, E.E., 1236b.

Aristotle notes that love is the "characteristic virtue of friends, so that it is only those in whom this is found in due measure that are lasting friends, and only their friendship that endures."[166] Seeing love is a response to goodness, this is another way of saying that a prerequisite to having such enduring friendships is that one is able to discover another person in her deep personal goodness.[167] This gives rise to the delight that those in deep friendship take in being able to spend their days in each other's presence. As with virtue, so too with friendship. Virtue is not fully itself if it remains as a dormant disposition toward the good but only when it is able to blossom into virtuous activity thanks to practical wisdom. Friendship too is not satisfied with sentiment or with ongoing benevolence unless it can flower in a practical sharing of life where each one's good intentions can be actualised and manifested.

As this kind of love and shared life develop, so too does a concord of wills. Aristotle points out that concord is deeply rooted in practical action and is not a matter of having the same opinions about speculative truth.[168] It concerns discerning something significant at the practical level regarding what should be done and setting out together to achieve the goal. Deep concord is particularly possible between virtuous friends because they tend to desire the same things with constancy and have compatible outlooks when it comes to what each considers to be worthy of serious pursuit, as noble or worthwhile. Concord is particularly noble when friends set about to help each other in the pursuit of the truth for its own sake. Those in deep friendships particularly enjoy exploring what is important in life together. Any meaningful sharing of life implies concord and indeed constitutes it. The deeper the friendship, the more the friends are happy to embark upon worthwhile pursuits together. Aristotle goes so far as to say that the happy person needs friends, not only in difficult situations, but especially in prosperity: for superabundance and generosity imply others with which to share; and the sharing of life's fullness seems essential to a happy

[166] Aristotle, N.E., 1155b-1156a.
[167] Our use of 'personal goodness' here and throughout this work should not be taken in the restricted sense of 'personal virtue', as if a deep appreciation for someone's personal goodness meant only a heightened admiration of their virtues. Rather, it refers to an appreciation of the goodness of that person's very existence and life, in all its uniqueness, which includes of course the virtuous activity by which they manifest that goodness, while pointing beyond it to something permanent in the person that grounds that very goodness. Thus, it suggests an appreciation of their very person and existence as something particularly 'good', not only for them in themselves, or for 'me' as their potential friend or friend, but also for the world itself, which we feel able to affirm is better off for having them in it.
[168] Aristotle, N.E., 1167a-1167b.

life.[169] Here Aristotle effectively affirms that the milieu of deep friendship is precisely where the virtuous life is able to blossom and be fully itself.

As the common life develops between such friends, another dimension comes naturally to the fore, namely that they seek and enjoy what is best in and for each other, as if the other were 'another self'.[170] Aristotle notes that the virtuous person already finds her own existence and life a great good, seeing what is good by nature is good and pleasing to her, and in particular her life of virtuous activity.[171] Yet he affirms that it is better and easier to contemplate virtue in another than in oneself. These friends develop a deep appreciation for the being and life of the other as 'another self'.[172] What is interesting is that the more we discover the other in her unique centre of being, knowing and loving, the more we come to see her as 'another self', intrinsically aligned to ourselves. Her own happiness becomes implied in our own.

We discover that our friend is unique, irreplaceable and wonderful in her very being. There may be many honest, caring, humorous, generous, courageous or compassionate people, but we love our friend in her uniqueness beyond these qualities. The particular preciousness of a friend perhaps grounds the aforementioned observation that "… without friends, no one would choose to live, though [she] had all other goods."[173] Aristotle explicitly links coming to love the very being of one's friend with a healthy self-love:

> Now [a person's own] being was seen to be desirable because he perceived his own goodness, and such perception is pleasant in itself. He needs, therefore, to be conscious of the existence of his friend as well, and this will be realised in their living together and sharing in discussion and thought; for this is what living together would seem to mean in the case of man, and not, as in the case of cattle feeding in the same place.[174]

[169] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a-1155b; 1167b.
[170] Aristotle, N.E., 1166a; 1170b.
[171] Aristotle, N.E., 1170b.
[172] Ibid.
[173] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; 1170b.
[174] Aristotle, N.E., 1170b.

Paradoxically, the more we reach the other in her deepest goodness, precisely as other in her very being, the more she is able to become 'another self'.

At this point, it would seem sadly inadequate to sum up Aristotle's exploration of *eudaimonia* by simply linking it to virtue and practical wisdom. If the eudaimon life carries a note of superabundance, then it is clear that deep friendship lies at its very heart. This is the place where the virtuous life most comes into its own. This virtuous life however is not limited to practical (ethical) virtues, but includes the exercise of what for Aristotle is the highest virtue of them all, namely the speculative (theoretical) virtue of contemplation, and it would be useful here to briefly explore this aspect.

2.3 *Eudaimonia* and Contemplation - Deep Friendship and the Noblest Quests

With this emphasis on discussion and thought, the importance Aristotle places on seeking truth together as a distinctively human and noble quest comes to the fore. Indeed, halfway through Book X, his picture of the *eudaimon* life is completed by a further dimension beyond the common life of friends, whose virtuous activity allows their meaningful human relations to flourish and endure. As he already indicated by the *ergon* argument in Book I, the greatest happiness and indeed the best pleasure is found when someone cultivates the activity that is most 'divine' or spiritual in human life, an activity that transcends a life of labour for other ends and that indeed constitutes the height of qualitative leisure, enjoyed directly for itself.[175] In Book X, Aristotle is able to specify that the philosophical act of contemplation constitutes this most sublime human activity,[176] for there the noblest truths are sought and loved for their own sake, as the true goods of the intellect. This activity may be called 'divine' (or 'divine-like') in relation to the gods, and Aristotle does not hesitate to affirm that it is most akin to the only activity in which one could imagine God being engaged. Aristotle sees God as *energeia,* and beyond potentiality.[177] God therefore has no ends as such to pursue in order to reach fulfilment, in contrast with human quests which typically embody some journey from potentiality toward act. Rather, God is his own fulfilment. As Josef Pieper notes. "For God… being and being happy are one and the same."[178] It is incongruous and

[175] Aristotle, N.E., 1197b; N.E., 1102a; N.E., 1103a.
[176] Aristotle, N.E., 1177a.
[177] Aristotle, N.E., 1177a-1177b.
[178] Pieper, Josef (1998 A) at 19.

anthropomorphic to see God as deliberating over practical courses of action or even mastering passion through virtues, let alone labouring and bartering for a living.[179, 180] Indeed, Aristotle reasons that God must eternally enjoy his own fullness and his proper act must be the contemplation of himself. Aquinas' natural theology is rooted in Aristotle's metaphysics regarding actuality and potentiality, and the notion of God as 'pure Act' becomes a central pillar of his reasoning.[181] As Aquinas notes:

> The beatitude of God consists not in the action by which he established the creation, but in the action by which he enjoys himself, needing not the creation.[182]

One must be careful here not to project onto God a limited personhood and then balk at the idea that the fullest life could possibly consist in contemplating oneself, as if it were akin to human naval-gazing! Aristotle sees that by philosophical contemplation we can momentarily taste in a passing way what is proper and permanent to God's inner life, and so actuate what is noblest in human capacity, to which naturally attends the highest pleasure and happiness without qualification.[183]

Pieper summarises the essential elements of the human act of contemplation:[184] It is the silent perception of reality; it is a form of knowing that is not arrived at by discursive thinking (*ratio*), but rather through the seeing and intuition (*intellectus*) of something that is present. In other words, it does not move us toward an absent object but rather 'rests upon' one that is there; and it evokes wonder or amazement, as an encounter with a totality or whole that completely surpasses us. It is not a neutral knowledge but more akin to the 'seeing' of something that is beloved.[185] It is like a lightning flash, in which one somehow briefly touches the ground of all that is, tying the visible to the invisible, the finite to the infinite.[186]

[179] Aristotle, Met., 1072b.
[180] Aristotle, N.E., 1178b.
[181] Aquinas, S.T., I, i, qu. 2, art. 3; S.T., I, i, qu. 3, art. 2.
[182] Aquinas, S.T., I, ii, qu. 2, art. 7.
[183] Aristotle, N.E., 1177b.
[184] Pieper, Josef (1998 A) at 73-5.
[185] Ibid at 80.
[186] Ibid at 81-7.

Contrasting Plato's conception, Aristotle does not see friends as dispensable instruments that help us on our ascent toward the contemplation and enjoyment of 'Goodness in itself' and then can be discarded.[187] Rather, he is aware that 'two can go further together'[188] in the common human quest for what is good, noble and true. The friend wants her friend to flourish in the better part of herself, and when it comes to seeking and enjoying the truth, this includes the full development of her capacity for contemplation. We can be tempted to see this kind of emphasis, which prioritises both speculative philosophy and religious contemplation as the bias of a philosopher in an earlier age and not of great relevance to the majority of people today. Yet the quest for meaning in life is not a topic that is limited to an academic or even theological elite. Even among pleasure friends whose main focal point might be having a pint together on a Friday night to unwind, once the minds and tongues have been sufficiently loosened, conversations often turn toward 'solving the problems of the world' and arrive at the 'deep and meaningful'. Indeed, as friends increasingly share who they are with each other, it is natural that their outlook on life with its hierarchy of priorities becomes something that is explored together and ultimately shared. For Aristotle, the virtuous will naturally seek and enjoy what is more profound in life, and so become companions in helping each other go further in the quest for truth. This assistance becomes an essential and valued part of the shared activity of deep friendship.

Friends help each other go beyond the difficulties, obstacles and even opposition that might present themselves along the way in their exploration of truth. The delight that a friend takes in the progress of her friend in this regard can be one of the strongest encouragements for that friend to press on further. Indeed, insight, being a spiritual good, can be immediately shared by two as soon as it is gained by one.[189] There is not the same danger of jealousy among the virtuous when it comes to insight into life or goodness for its own sake, as there might be between mere pleasure friends, should one friend benefit disproportionately to the other in the field of some passional pleasure linked to quantity. To be able to readily share in the joys of another is a sign of spiritual love, perhaps even more than the ability to commiserate when something goes wrong. Even a less than virtuous friend might feel some empathy at the misfortune of her companion, all the while guarding a pocket of relief or even perverse satisfaction that it was the other and not herself who

[187] Plato, Sym., 210a-212c.
[188] Aristotle, N.E., 1177a.
[189] 'Spiritual good' here is contrasted with 'physical goods' that are linked to quantity. It is not meant to have a religious connotation.

was knocked back. By contrast, the happiness of a virtuous person implies the happiness of her friend and includes the deep joy that is experienced as we help someone whom we love for her own sake to advance in a life where she can be most fully herself.

The structure of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is in keeping with what emerged about human happiness from Aristotle's *ergon* argument in Book I. There he reasoned that if human life were to have a characteristic activity, it would engage that part of us that is most uniquely human, over and above what we share with plants and animals, and thus touch the intellect and the will where they are most themselves.[190] By devoting his final three books to deep friendship and contemplation, I would suggest that Aristotle effectively emphasises the very activities that are most able to fulfil the human heart and mind. The human intellect as a capacity to know what is true, and the human will as a capacity to love what is noble and good, are arguably most fully alive and themselves in the distinctly human activities of friendship and contemplation, and this is exactly where one would expect human happiness to lie. Thus, these activities are not merely an adjunct to human happiness, but the privileged place from which such happiness can spring.

I would point out that these two arrival points regarding happiness are not the same. Contemplation nourishes the highest capacity of the human intellect, which for Aristotle is the 'highest part of the soul', with the noblest truths. This summit in intellectual fulfilment brings a person the highest levels of pleasure without qualification. Friendship by contrast fulfils the person at a more integrated level of life and activity that involves her whole person, engaged in the ongoing activity of two lives shared as one. This takes up more directly the movements of the passions and the practical wisdom needed to discern the best way to respect another's dignity and good. In service of this, we place our memory, foresight, imagination and creativity, as we seek to incarnate day by day a love that is oriented toward our friend's true flourishing. Loving a friend in this way, I would argue, is part of what a fulfilled life looks like as a whole. It is not simply the fulfilment of a vital capacity of the soul, such as the intellect, even if it most concerns the vital capacity of the will or heart. For this reason, it implies an integration of the practical and bodily life with the person's deepest orientation toward another, taking up her emotions and motivations, and orienting them toward the consistent end of loving the other 'for her own sake'. This necessarily calls for

[190] Aristotle, N.E., 1097b; N.E., 1102a; N.E., 1103a.

an ensemble of virtues, that such a life intention be maintained in a healthy state and be used to actualise the amical intention day by day in practical action.

Concluding Remarks

It can be shown that within the rich tapestry of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, his exploration of final causality plays a key role, driving the unfolding of the various themes that the philosopher explores and unifies. By examining what in life is sought more 'for its own sake' than for the sake of something else, Aristotle unveils certain 'end-points' throughout his discussion: *Eudaimonia* is in one sense the ultimate end, beyond which we do not seek to justify human quests. Yet the happy life presumes essential elements that are each sought 'for their own sake'. One of these is deep friendship, where a person who is loved for her own sake becomes another self, but essentially linked to this is the life of virtuous activity that is, in another way, its own justification. Without a life of virtuous activity, friendships of depth could not develop nor be sustained, and deep friendship itself allows the virtuous life to flourish and find its full expression. Indeed, I shall argue that it is difficult to envisage the development of virtue in any real maturity outside of the context of deep human relations.

The third essential element concerns the seeking of truth for its own sake in a way that is open to the contemplation of what is most noble or profound. This for Aristotle is not only the highest virtue, generating the highest pleasure, but is also the noblest endeavour that virtuous friends can seek together as they facilitate each other's flourishing.

Thus, in cultivating what is highest in human nature, one is able to transcend the sense of being merely swept along by fate (*moira)*, or by one's own inclinations, imagination and passions, in response to a constant influx of sensation. In friendship and contemplation, one touches ends that are beyond the biological ones we share with other living beings, namely the physical survival of the individual and the continuation of one's kind, whether conceived in the common parlance of one's 'species' or in the narrower and more sophisticated scientific sense of 'communicating genetic material'.

Deep friendship and contemplation may be properly called human, ‘personal’, or indeed ‘interpersonal’, embracing the unique goodness of each person’s being and the highest actualisation of the human capacity for the good and the true.

It is my conviction that virtue (as shaped by practical wisdom), deep friendship and contemplation are arguably the three legs of the stool that supports Aristotle’s concept of *eudaimonia*. Our study shall examine in particular the pivotal role played by deep friendship in facilitating and uniting these other aspects.

III

FINAL CAUSALITY AND DEEP FRIENDSHIP IN PHILIPPE - I: SPIRITUAL LOVE

Introduction

As noted above, the main themes in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, namely *eudaimonia,* virtue (informed by *phronesis),* deep friendship and contemplation are tied together by final causality. Each in its own way is an endpoint, sought and engaged in 'for its own sake'.

In order to elucidate the interrelationship between these elements, it is first of all useful to specify more clearly the role of final causality within the experience of deep friendship, and this is the focus of our next two chapters. Here, I shall draw upon, explore and seek both to illustrate and develop, the insights of the French philosopher and theologian, Marie Dominique Philippe, O.P., who sees the experience of friendship as foundational and indeed paradigmatic for developing a 'realist ethics' in the tradition of Aristotle.[191]

Philippe notes that a friend, in her personal goodness, provides the ground or foundation for her friend to form an ongoing 'intention of life'[192] and a stable amical choice[193] in her regard; and that both of these emerge from within a 'spiritual love' that has arisen precisely in response to that same personal goodness.[194] Philippe's term 'spiritual love' effectively corresponds to the specific type of love found in Aristotle's deep friendship. It also corresponds to the love within friendship that Blum identifies as having moral significance.[195]

From the outset, it is worth pointing out that Philippe's designation of the term 'spiritual love' is not meant to have specifically religious connotations, let alone to imply any dualism between the soul and the body. Rather, the name derives from the insight that this love penetrates to the very being and life of the one who is loved 'for her own sake'.[196] It is a love that responds to the friend's

[191] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 23.
[192] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 195-203.
[193] Ibid at 203-24.
[194] Ibid at 181-95.
[195] Blum, Laurence A. (1980) at 67-83.
[196] Aristotle, N.E., 1170b.

personal goodness, which is known via a judgement in the intellect.[197] In this way it involves an alliance between the human intelligence and will, two capacities that Philippe calls 'spiritual', in that they are less immediately linked to the sense data that comes to us via sense organs. The operations of the intellect and will implied here are not so much those that we may analogically have in common with non-rational animals, at the level of emotions or even psychology, but involve a more specifically human penetration of reality, where we assign and respond to meaning and personal goodness.[198]

Philippe's analysis of spiritual love introduces several perceptive distinctions that are worth outlining and developing here. They allow us to make more precise the nature of a love that reaches the other 'for her own sake' and thus that is capable of blossoming into deep friendship. It will be our central thesis that such a friendship becomes the privileged *milieu* and indeed the motor for ethical growth, uniquely fostering the development of both practical wisdom and virtue.

In order to appreciate why this type of love is intrinsic to ethical maturity, it is first of all useful to contrast it with other loves that are prominent in human experience, namely those rooted in instinct, passion and the romantic imagination. After this I shall explore the main distinctive features of spiritual love in some detail. In Chapter IV, I will examine what Philippe regards as the passage from affective to effective love, where friends form an 'intention of life' for one another and come to choose each other deeply in an ongoing way, with the implications this has for both ethical freedom and responsibility. It is here that we can appreciate the depth to which the friend herself can become an 'end-good' for her friend.[199]

3.1. Distinguishing Types of Love

Philippe distinguishes instinctive, passional and romantic love from the spiritual love in deep friendship, by noting that love is determined by the good to which it responds and conditioned by the type of knowledge that gives primary access to that good.[200] I shall briefly survey these types of love below, which I have furnished with examples to make them more accessible, and to which

[197] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 27-8 and 34-5.
[198] Ibid at 23-8.
[199] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 195-223.
[200] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 24-5.

I have added 'affectionate love', which seems to be a special hybrid between passional and romantic love. Following this, I shall embark upon a closer examination of the characteristics of spiritual love itself. From the outset, I affirm with Philippe that the distinction of types of love through philosophical analysis in no way implies their separation in practice. Love tends to engage and unify the whole human person in such a way that we would expect to find various types of love in admixture in any given experience of human loving.[201, 202, 203]

3.1.i. Instinctive love

Instinctive love responds to basic goods that are linked to the necessity of our survival or that of our kind[204] and our awareness of these goods also has an instinctive element.[205] The 'vegetative' level of life, as Aristotle calls those vital operations that we share analogously with all earthly life, namely respiration, nutrition, growth and reproduction, touches something fundamental in the living being. When these goods are threatened significantly, they take on for us a sense of vital necessity, with a corresponding intensity of desire, as happens analogously in other animals.[206] We might speak of 'dying for a drink' as we are offered a beer after having mowed the lawns on a hot day. We praise as a 'life-saver' someone who passes us a water bottle as we finally reach a mountain peak after a hard day's hike. In the face of instinctive need, certain desires intensify and can dominate and overwhelm. We could mention how difficult it is to concentrate on the demands of intellectual work on an empty stomach or note the common counsel to avoid supermarket shopping when one is 'starving'. And we need not document here the force with which the sexual

[201] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 23 and 27.
[202] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 24-5.
[203] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 44.
[204] Here I use the notion of the 'survival of our kind' as a naïve term to capture the fact that animals, whether rational or not, exhibit instincts that are linked to reproduction. Whether this is looked upon or argued as being linked to the 'survival of one's species' or as the 'continuation of one's genetic material' or indeed for some other end that scientists specify in the future, is neither here nor there. The same can be said of the instinctive preoccupation to preserve one's life. The status of self-preservation as instinctive still leaves it open that this instinct has further purposes, be they biological, ethical or teleological etc. Whether one is preserving one's life in order 'to be happy' or in order 'to pass on one's genetic material' does not undermine the existence of such an instinct.
[205] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 24.
[206] C.S. Lewis notes that water is an example of a 'need-pleasure', in that the pleasure taken in drinking water tends to be proportional to someone's thirst. His category of need-pleasures corresponds to instinctive love in Philippe. This is in contrast with an 'appreciative-pleasure', as a glass of fine wine might be to a connoisseur, which Philippe calls 'passional love'. (Should someone become an alcoholic, they may not be any longer capable of personally enjoying this distinction or indeed the wine itself, as Lewis points out.) See Lewis, C.S (1960) at 19-20.

urge can emerge from puberty onwards. It is perhaps only matched by the fervour of devoted sex educators with programmes designed to channel it in whatever direction current fads deem 'responsible', 'safe' or 'safer', or toward which, philosophical ideologues have decided society should be 'evolving'; or of an advertising machine that shamelessly seeks to exploit it in order to pedal their wares; or indeed by the anxiety of parents who might seek to shelter their children from certain of these influences.

With the strong 'need' element present within instinctive love, it tends to be a self-serving or self-satisfying love, ultimately in service of the survival of the human animal at some level of its vegetative life.[207]

3.1.ii. Passional love

Passional love responds to the sensible qualities in a reality: the colours, sounds, odours, tastes or textures that we experience in all their pleasantness via our senses; and so is conditioned by the awareness we have of these goods through the sense-knowledge that we analogously share with other animals.[208] The pleasure taken in these qualities gives rise to a desire to hold and maximise our enjoyment of them within ourselves. We savour our affective response, lingering over experiences and pleasant sensations. With other qualities, or perhaps due to a lack thereof, we can experience aversion with equal intensity.

The passional sensations associated with food, drink or sexual pleasure can be so seductive that we might be tempted at times to make decisions that are contrary to our better judgement regarding our bodily health or even our psychological or spiritual integrity. We can become so turned in on our own sensuality in a quest to 'satisfy it', fuelled by imagination and sensations, that the pleasure of bodily satisfaction overpowers the ecstatic dimension of love that would open us toward loving another person for her own sake. Instead, the other ends up being 'used' in the pejorative sense of the word. Arising from the possibility of this sort of distortion, comes the long-standing acknowledgement of the importance of the virtue of temperance for a passional being who also happens to be a rational being concerned with upholding nobler goods. Similarly, fortitude refers

[207] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 192.
[208] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 24.

to that disposition of character that allows us to curb our tendency to relinquish nobler goods when the going gets tough, in the name of a less perturbed life or of some more immediate aspect of self-preservation.

Pleasures themselves, of course, range from the basic to the highly refined, thanks to the aspect of human art and creativity. In an Epicurean spirit, we can refine our approach to pleasures in the service of an enjoyable life, developing our preferences as would-be connoisseurs or gourmets, for example. We might embark on wine tours, indulge in *dégustation* menus or scan restaurant reviews in search of the most conducive and highly qualitative meal experience or ambience. We are struck by the sublimity of certain music; enchanted or moved by this or that artwork. There is no shortage of adjectives to describe our aversion to what misses the mark in this regard: we shun what is 'gaudy', 'vulgar', 'crass', 'kitsch', 'cheesy', 'tacky' or 'tasteless'. At the other end of the spectrum, even the addict or hedonist looks for her next experience to be the best 'hit' yet of whatever brings momentary release or relief, pushing her limits in the endless quest to find a 'fun' that might compensate for her lack of deeper joy.

Across these experiences, we enjoy sensual qualities with a possessive and passional love that revels in pleasant sensations and we often want to share these with those whose company we cherish. Goods loved in this way often form the basis of Aristotle's 'pleasure friendships', though at all levels of friendship it is natural to want to make oneself pleasant for the other and to favour pleasant experiences. The inner motor within this love is the possession of enjoyable sensations, individually or collectively, and even where these are happily shared with those whose company we enjoy, and when our pleasure comes chiefly through the sharing, this love tends to be primarily self-satisfying.

3.1.iii. Romantic love

Romantic love responds to an ideal that is formed in our imagination, through the juxtaposition of possible or experienced qualities.[209] We might be so struck by the freshness of the qualities we find in someone that she takes on a unique glow in our eyes, approaching the perfect. "She can do no wrong - *she* would never do that - she is somehow different to the others - only she

[209] Ibid.

understands…" For a while at least, others seem to have only a shadow of her intuition, sensitivity, kindness or attentiveness. The person loved as a romantic ideal becomes a personalised *cause exemplaire* of beauty, qualities or virtues, epitomising what everyone else should be! This love can awaken the *troubadour* within us, as we strive in vain for words pregnant enough with meaning to give birth to our welling sentiments. The other is mysteriously unattainable in her perfection, or, we love, as John Legend sings: 'her perfect imperfections'.[210] This romantic aspect can be united to our creativity or artistry, as we employ our imagination in the service of creating encounters with our friend that somehow seek to reflect her idealisation and perfection.

Idealising another can certainly prepare us for a greater attentiveness toward her, which could well help us to eventually discover her more authentically, for who she really is. But it equally poses the danger of cutting us off from this deeper love by keeping us locked in our imaginations. Our rose-tinted glasses can ironically shield us from seeing the actual uniqueness of someone whom we instead believe to be 'so unique' in the way of our own making. Romantic love in itself is not sustainably satisfying over time. At a deeper level, the human heart seeks a love that is anchored in the real, beyond our idealising tendencies. We want to know a friend in truth. In capturing our aesthetic curiosity, romantic love can carry us along for a while, but our desire to know our friend increases our thirst for her real presence. Indeed, it is her sustained presence that is able to purify and anchor the endless possibilities presented by our imagination. This is not to say that romantic love is totally unrealistic, for the real observations of someone's qualities often lie at the basis of our idealising. But inasmuch as we prematurely encounter the other as 'perfect', our imaginative tendencies remain in need of the purification that can only come through sustained real presence.

Indeed, in situations of prolonged absence, the imagination tends to fill in the gaps, either entrenching our false idealisation ("were she here, she would never have treated me as these others have") or increasing anxiety and truncating love ("why hasn't she kept more in touch? - what is she up to? - has she outgrown me?"). No news is not always good news. The human heart cannot be properly sustained by a sort of 'Facebook friendship' from a distance. It is not content with what is already known of the friend, let alone with her artificial self-presentation via 'selfies' on social media, even if snippets of news have their merits in calling to mind a loved one who is far

[210] Legend, John (2013).

away. Some news can indeed be better than no news, but news in any case is no substitute for presence, once the person of the other, and not simply her idealised qualities, becomes recognised as the chief good that elicits our love.

As romantic love is closely linked to our creativity and the imaginative formation of an ideal, it tends toward a good that remains within our own mastery, possession and control and so does not transcend a certain level of self-satisfaction.

3.1.iv. Affectionate Love

While Philippe does not specifically mention affectionate love in his survey of types of love, we include it here as a sort of hybrid between passional and romantic love. This can be well illustrated in the love we might feel for a pet. Our response is typically 'warm' and can be evoked by an animal's cuteness or eccentric look, its affectionate or playful gestures, or even its approximation of qualities such as loyalty or sympathy. We observe over time that each pet has its own 'character' or 'personality', and we develop a particular affection and fondness toward each one. If we have only one cat, she is perhaps the best of cats and we might delight in sharing her superior qualities with other cat owners, when given the chance to exchange cat stories. These often include a tendency to ascribe to her hints of more sophisticated human qualities, which only add to our chuckles and fondness. In approaching the feline ideal she elicits something analogous to romantic love. Some might speak, albeit with a hint of tragedy, of their dog as their 'truest friend', jaded by the cynicism of having been stung too many times by a certain selfishness or unreliability in human dealings. Their puppy by contrast seems to love unconditionally, always ready to offer its master a fresh chance and only ever taking 'no' as a temporary setback! We might equally share how 'naughty' a kitten or puppy tends to be as we fondly complain about her, as if the incident at hand somehow proved her superior intellect! 'Oh, she is shrewd, cunning, cheeky, calculating and clever little wretch! The other day she chewed through my vacuum cleaner cable!' Occasionally we might speak of envying our cat in her Epicurean genius, for she seems to have mastered a supremely care free and *laissez faire* attitude, forging a life that is primarily content with snuggling by the fire.

We see analogous examples of this kind of affectionate love with regards to babies and toddlers to whom we might also rush to ascribe more sophisticated qualities from any hint that they offer

us. Their gurgles, smiles, tiny gestures, and even their attempts to reach out to comfort and console, can all give rise to great affection within us and become fondly treasured.[211] Their emerging cleverness or sweet nature easily becomes the subject of parental or grand-parental boasts and comparisons not unlike those shared among cat owners. This affectionate bond is no doubt enhanced by the sense of responsibility that pet-owners, parents and grandparents analogously feel toward the little ones in their care. What seems special to this type of love is that it is evoked in response to the *figura* of the other. There is something in their ensemble of looks and gestures that 'tugs at the heart strings'. We fondly respond to what we find 'cute, adorable, delightful, enchanting or charming' in the one entrusted to us. This may be tied to their littleness and dependence, and particularly enhanced by their own affectionate responses to our care for them. Aristotle notes that "affection seems to be a feeling, but friendship a state. For affection occurs no less towards soulless things, while mutual friendship involves rational choice, and rational choice comes from a state, and it is a state and not a feeling, that makes people wish good to those they love, for their sake."[212] In as much as affectionate love is grounded in feelings, it is a particular species of passional love; and in as much as it tends toward idealisation, it is a species of romantic love. It can be a particular kind of revelling in what is endearing in the other, and so falls short of a love that allows us to come out of ourselves for the other *per se.* It is to this latter love, which seems to lie at the heart of deep friendship, that our discussion now turns.

3.1.v. Spiritual love

Philippe gives the term 'spiritual love' to the *philia* that lies at the heart of Aristotle's 'perfect friendship' or to what I am generally calling 'deep friendship'.[213, 214] Philippe asserts that the existent goodness of another person, recognised by a judgement of the intellect, gives rise to the response of spiritual love in the heart.[215] With spiritual love, the person is loved 'for her own sake'. This love is conditioned by an intelligent knowledge of the other, who is found to be good not only in her qualities, but in her unique centre of autonomy, knowing and loving.[216] This situates

[211] As C.S. Lewis points out, these can be expressions of the child's emerging affection, as the little one herself becomes fond of what is benign and familiar around her. See Lewis, C.S. (1960) at 43-8.
[212] Aristotle, N.E., 1157b.
[213] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 23.
[214] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 181-95.
[215] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2000).
[216] Aristotle, E.E., 1237b.

the love in the more 'spiritual' core of the will, rather than in the passional élan of the emotions, as happens when love is conditioned primarily by instinctive or sense knowledge, or by ideals formed in the imagination. It also tends to make this type of love even more person-specific than are the loves based primarily on a person's qualities or attributes.

Philippe points out that the reason we should awaken in spiritual love to one person and not another is somewhat veiled in mystery and resists easy explanation.[217] A mother might ask of her son regarding his fiancée: "but why *her*?" and as he tries to justify his heart, he might be conscious that any words for which he grapples seem to miss the mark. Our descriptions fail to capture the particularity of the attraction. Indeed, were someone able to give an abstract account of the 'sort of person she would be friends with', as opposed to the 'sort of person she would never be friends with', the listener might become uneasy. She would be seeking a 'type' and not a person, prevented by the immaturity of idealism from embracing the full realism of love. Or perhaps she would simply be stopping at some quality or secondary element and becoming enamoured with that, without her appreciation of her friend's goodness reaching the level of her very person and being. In spiritual love, the object of our love is the person of the friend, resulting from the attraction of her goodness.

Compared with the more obvious *élan* in the emotions that typifies passional love, Philippe notes that spiritual love often emerges discreetly, while still enveloped in desire.[218] It can seem to impose itself spontaneously, as a purifying element within other loves that are more self-seeking. Attraction can begin anywhere. We might be struck by someone's understanding eyes or refreshing outlook, find her humour appealing or be impressed by her knowledge or skill. Perhaps we are touched by her kindness, empathy or humility. Something about her goodness leads to the desire to increasingly enjoy her presence and, if possible, to forge experiences together. This can at first be akin to a sort of Epicurean 'sun-bathing' in the pleasantness of someone's company, just as our cat might enjoy curling up by the fire. But within this attraction, a further awakening can occur, whether progressively or quickly. No matter the pace of the emergence of this love, something demands to be ongoing.

[217] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 26.
[218] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 191-5.

The more we become attentive to the goodness of her character, person, existence and life, the more we not only want to be part of her life, but to enhance her life, by being part of her good. We want to bring her all the savour and goodness that one close friend can bring another. This heightens our attentiveness to who she really is, rather than seeing her primarily through the lens of whatever benefit she brings to our lives.[219] She becomes someone capable of drawing us on an open-ended journey of discovery. Indeed, her own attentiveness in our regard can stand out for us, compared with what tends to happen in our friendly interactions with others. She seems genuinely interested in how our life is unfolding and in who we really are. Her conversation starters are not mere pretexts to talk further about her own life!

We can notice spiritual love emerging, as we notice the joy that we develop in the presence of the other, which as Philippe notes, can be manifested in something as simple as a smile.[220] The first smile of a child is a wonderful event for her parents and reveals her emerging capacity for human spiritual love. It cannot be 'faked', like the many smiles that may later be 'pulled' for cameras. The child begins to bask in the joy of her parent's presence. There is something distinctively human about a smile. With someone loved in this way, we can become acutely aware of her presence in a crowded room. It is what makes all the difference. This is, of course, not an affirmation that she is somehow superior in her goodness to others. Rather it is an acknowledgement of the reality that we have 'woken up' in her regard. We feel somehow privileged to be capable of appreciating her goodness in a particular way, and this becomes a heightened experience when we discover that it is mutual. We are aware that ours is not the only budding friendship in the world, and yet it seems unique. Others may well have awoken each other through spiritual love, but we have woken up to the goodness of our friend!

It is useful now to summarise and explore more deeply some of the chief characteristics of spiritual love. Philippe draws our attention to five aspects, which we shall attempt to explore and expand upon, as we furnish them with examples. These are the ecstatic and receptive dimensions of spiritual love; spiritual love's relation to both knowledge and mutuality; and its requirement of permanence.

[219] Aristotle, E.E., 1237b.
[220] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 193.

3.2. Characteristics of Spiritual Love.

3.2.i. The Ecstatic Dimension

Philippe characterises spiritual love as being primarily ecstatic.[221, 222] When we begin to love a friend for her own sake, we are drawn out of ourselves toward prioritising her true good and flourishing and we take delight in opportunities that allow us to help her life to go well. This love turns us toward the other, not as a possession, but with a new intentionality, toward a good that leads us to 'forget ourselves'.[223] This movement is not experienced as a burden or imposition, but instead is strangely freeing. Such a dynamic implies an element of generosity and carries a note of strength and superabundance. We find ourselves capable of doing more for the other than would normally have been the case without the presence of such love. The ecstatic movement can sometimes arise as a response to our perception of the other's vulnerability. We might be moved by our friend's capacity for love and want to respond to this thirst in her, which we find somehow beautiful or precious. In discerning her needs and vulnerabilities, love leads us to become more resourceful in her regard and to go beyond what is convenient or comfortable in order to facilitate her good and help her life to flourish.

I could contrast this with what is more typical of utility or pleasure friendships. Hearing that someone at work or in our social circle has taken a particular turn for the worse from some misfortune or tragic event, might naturally elicit genuine empathy from us, along with sentiments such as: 'oh, what a shame', 'how awful', 'I'm so sorry' and so forth. Some might even guard a pocket of perverse relief that the affliction is another's rather than our own, and whisper: "How terrible, thank God it wasn't me!" With work colleagues who mutually like one another (an everyday case of utility friendship) Hursthouse points out that one often has enough good will to put oneself out for the other's sake to a limited extent, but we do not like the other 'for herself' but rather 'as a colleague'.

> You listen sympathetically to their troubles, readily offer to take one of their classes when they want to be away, offer to drive them to the airport to meet their

[221] Ibid at 192.
[222] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 25.
[223] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 45.

> mother when their car has broken down, offer to baby sit, buy a book for them you know they would like when it catches your eye, and so on. And you expect the same good will from them because *ex hypothesi*, you are friends.[224]

Indeed, if her misfortune began to significantly impact upon us, we can become agitated at the unfairness of the situation. "I understand she is going through a tough time, but this is affecting everyone. Something should be done." When we have a deeper spiritual love for the person however, we tend to appropriate her tragedy as if it were our own and this enlarges our capacity to accompany her in her difficulty. Our immediate response is to look for ways to make things better. We are far more invested in our friend's life and implied in it. We can go so far as to wish we could carry the burden instead of her, if that could somehow lighten her load. The "what's mine is yours" that characterises spiritual love in times of abundance also implies another level of sharing. In difficulties, struggles and problems, it translates to "what's yours is mine". If we cannot solve the problem, we can at least lighten the load by walking in solidarity with her. She must know that she does not face this tragedy alone. As Aristotle notes in his *Eudemian Ethics*:

> For a friend wishes most of all that he might not only feel pain when his friend is in pain but feel actually the same pain—for example when he is thirsty, share his thirst—if this were possible, and if not, as nearly the same as may be. The same principle applies also in the case of joy; it is characteristic of a friend to rejoice for no other reason than because the other is rejoicing.[225]

The more we love a person, the more we naturally find ourselves willing to make sacrifices for her without hesitation, as if she were 'another self'. We may even take a particular delight in being able to manifest our friendship by having a real opportunity to tangibly help her where it will make a real difference. To share the load when our friend faces significant challenges is part of what it means to be a good friend. Again, it is enough to say "She is my friend" to justify our preparedness for sacrifice for her sake.

[224] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2007) at 329-30.
[225] Aristotle, E.E. 1240a.

By this love, we naturally forego lesser concerns and goods when necessary in order to genuinely help our friend. Indeed, love allows us to make the very discernment as to what constitutes our deeper concerns. The goodness of our friend inclines us to joyfully make the necessary time for a shared life, giving her 'quality time' that is not swamped by our own busyness and by our daily preoccupations with life's demands. And when the shoe is on the other foot, we are humbled and deeply comforted to discover that this sort of concern and impetus is mutual. It is part of the way that difficult times test and prove deep friendship. It is a sign that spiritual love is operative, rather than the more possessive or self-seeking types of love that we outlined above.

Similar observations could be made at times when we hear that something wonderful has happened to our friend. With pleasure or utility friendships, we enjoy sharing in good news but if the news is too good it risks undermining the friendship! Elements of jealousy are more likely to creep in should one person benefit disproportionately to the other from some turn of events. We speak of 'catty singers', based on how difficult some amateur sopranos find it to praise their colleagues in an unqualified manner at a time of success: "That lighter sort of song suits her smaller frame" or "her nasal singing works for portraying that sort of character!" When a peer appears on the cover of Metro magazine, as an up-and-coming young star, a fellow singer might commend her aptitude for self-promotion.

With a dear friend however, we are genuinely delighted to hear of some success or break-through on her part. There is no veiled competition. We do not have a reflexive eye that immediately compares the 'returns' that the other enjoys to those that we extract from the friendship or from life in general. Aristotle is right to have noted that pleasure or utility friendships are more subtly based on equal returns, with the harmony of the friendship even relying on some equilibrium of outcome.[226] Spiritual love, by contrast, is more genuinely and primarily outward looking in its essence and prepared to unreservedly take delight in the advancement of the other. Jealousy is a sign that our love still occupies an all too possessive realm.

[226] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.

3.2.ii. The Receptive Dimension

While noting that spiritual love is primarily ecstatic, Philippe draws our attention to an internalising dimension, as a new receptivity and sensitivity to the other deepens within us.[227] We come to anticipate her feelings and reactions, becoming vulnerable to her vulnerabilities, in a new interiority.[228] Friends develop a sensitivity to what each other holds dear, and what is important to one tends to grow in importance for the other. Deep friends naturally attune to each other, as much as to what affronts or offends the other as to what pleases or delights them.

I would suggest here that the experience of the friend as 'another self' is particularly marked. An empathic dimension of 'feeling things together' arises from the love in deep friendship. We begin to want the flourishing of the other at least as much as we want our own. Indeed, her flourishing and happiness becomes an integral part of our own, and even its *sine qua non* condition. We become preoccupied so long as our friend suffers. When she is badly treated, we can become more indignant and defensive on her behalf than we would normally be in our own regard or than she would be in hers. We cannot bear to see her taken advantage of: "Do not just stand for that - you are better than that - they are abusing your good nature..."

Upon realising that there is someone who receives us in such a way, we are uniquely affirmed in love. It is touching to see that we have a friend who understands us deeply, who is able to anticipate our inmost heart and be genuinely sensitive to what delights or hurts us. Plato speaks in the *Symposium* about love touching both superabundance and poverty.[229, 230] Spiritual love not only makes us stronger for the other, equipping us with a preparedness to go beyond our normal limits for her. It also renders us more receptive and relational, blossoming all the way to eventually regarding her as 'another self', though in a way that respects her 'otherness' and resists fusion.

[227] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 25.
[228] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 45.
[229] Plato, Sym., 203a-e.
[230] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 193.

3.2.iii. Spiritual Love and Knowledge

In comparing spiritual love and knowledge, Philippe is able to draw out several illuminating distinctions, namely that spiritual love is not measured by the knowledge we have of our friend but rather transcends it, all the while allowing it to become deeper and more objective.[231, 232] As well, there is a very different 'weight of presence' when it comes to spiritual love, compared to the assimilation that tends to accompany the acquiring of knowledge.[233]

3.2.iii.a. Spiritual Love Transcends Knowledge

While minimal knowledge of another's existence and goodness is always needed in order to love her, it is clear with spiritual love that our attraction is neither in relation to, nor determined by this knowledge, and thus not measured by it.[234, 235] Philippe points out that spiritual love can emerge even where our knowledge of the person is still very implicit or underdeveloped.[236] Certainly, there is a circular relation between knowing and loving, when it comes to deep friendship, with each calling for an increase of the other. We want to know the one to whom we are attracted where she is most herself, which in turn leads to a greater discovery of her goodness and lovability. "To know you is to love you" holds particularly true of deep friends.

If this love is to blossom to its full potential, however, it is clear that our friend must remain the chief object of our love and not be substituted by the knowledge that we have of her, however important this becomes for us.[237] Love for our friend takes us beyond the limits of our understanding of her at any given moment. Otherwise we remain locked in ourselves and love becomes truncated. I would argue that so long as we cling to the security of our own knowledge, of which we tend to be the master, we risk relegating our friend to some box. In reality, she always transcends our categories of understanding. To think of her as 'that type of person' would betray that she is not really a deep friend of ours. Spiritual love resists both categorisation and mastery.

[231] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 28.
[232] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 24-5.
[233] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 43-6.
[234] Ibid at 43-5.
[235] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 196.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 44.

We are aware through love that our friend exceeds what we can know or grasp of her. We might not think so generously about a colleague or acquaintance that we have not come to love in a deeper way. Through spiritual love we do not 'possess' or 'assimilate' our friend, but rather adhere to her in a spirit of humble discovery. Her otherness takes on the air of something sacred and inviolable. She must be respected and treasured for who she is. Mastery by comparison is an all too lonely affair and when we see someone else reducing our friend in such a way, we easily become indignant. However much we want unity with our friend, we know that she would be lessened by being subsumed or somehow assimilated.

3.2.iii.b. Spiritual Love Deepens Knowledge of the Other

This said, it is certainly true that friendship as it develops opens up the pathway for a new knowledge of the other, made possible by love. There is no capping the desire of close friends to share who they are in their inmost core. This is potentially inexhaustible. Spiritual love gives a new type of access to a person, beyond anything mere observation, research or information could yield. Google, Facebook or Wikipedia pale beside the amical knowledge of someone 'from within', made possible as we become increasingly willing to embrace the vulnerability implied in unveiling one's secret heart to someone else. This can take place only in the climate of trust that spiritual love allows within deep friendship. Love drives out the fear of rejection or manipulation that potentially accompanies exposure.[238] The secret of the heart is only unveiled within the safety of loving trust. Any other arena ends up leaving the stale aftertaste of violation. This privileged knowledge of another made possible through spiritual love is of course irreducible to 'facts' or information, just as she herself can never be reduced to the affective knowledge we have of her.

I note here that when we are a recipient of such trust and realise that someone is prepared to become vulnerable to us, we can go one of two ways. If the unveiling seems premature, it can seem like 'too much, too soon', implying that we are not yet prepared to take on the responsibility for the other that this sort of trust entails. If our friendship is insufficiently grounded in the spiritual love that would carry us through such a moment, we can be disturbed by this encounter with someone's 'neediness'. Within a climate of mutual spiritual love however, such a moment can

[238] Nussbaum notes Aristotle's insistence on the importance of trust in *philia,* and especially on the point that "*philia* requires an openness and receptivity that is incompatible with fear." See Nussbaum, Martha C. (2001) at 359. See also Aristotle, *Rhetoric,* 1381b.

seem like a great privilege and the other becomes all the more precious to us for having made herself vulnerable. We come to treasure the person in her inmost core, as well as the friendship itself, appreciating that our friend wants us to know her deeply. We seek to honour that trust by guarding the 'secret' of the heart, which can be ruined in the telling. These well-judged revelations of the self to the other in a climate of trust become moments of great growth in deep friendship and are regarded dearly by both parties.

3.2.iii.c. Objectivity and Affective Knowledge

In this light, it can be argued that, when it comes to persons, spiritual love opens the door to a more objective knowledge. We can be tempted to think that someone's friend is likely to be biased in her regard, rather than objective. There are certainly business contexts where decisions should be made purely on the basis of someone's professional merit, in which undeclared friendship can be seen as a 'conflict of interest'. But on a deeper level, a friend is someone who best knows her friend, due to both the extensive first-hand observations to which she has been privy throughout multiple experiences and also through the shared interiority that friendship allows over time. A friend can vouch for her friend in a way that mere observers or acquaintances cannot, having privileged access to her intentions, capacities and heart, thanks to ongoing and mutual openness. In this respect, friends can often be the best character witnesses for each other.

I can remember Philippe emphasising in lectures that it is not silly to place more stock on the good we hear of a person from her close friend than on the negative reports of her detractors. An enemy may have been stung, having encountered someone's harsh or less than virtuous side on a bad day. The friend by contrast knows her friend beyond the obstacles and difficulties that occasionally weigh her down. Through friendship, one's vision can penetrate further: allowing one to see something in one's friend what is still worth loving. Of course, this is not absolute, but what is part of an intelligent prudence in any situation is the right 'reading' of persons, and a significant component of the data that allows this is the testimony one friend genuinely bears another.

3.2.iii.d. The Weight of Presence

Philippe develops what he sees as an essential difference between love and knowledge, with regard to both presence and unity. Knowledge tends toward becoming assimilated and integrated into our

repertoire as a possession and tool, to be called upon whenever our need for mastery in some field or our quest for truth requires it. Our knowledge seems to become 'part of us'.[239] Indeed, knowledge tends toward universals, rather than being locked into the specifics that were involved at its accumulation. I could illustrate this by way of example. Once we understand Pythagoras' theorem, we have a permanent way of finding the unknown side of a right-angled triangle. A mathematician might marvel at the harmony implied in this relation of quantity and even find it 'beautiful', but in general, the insight and resulting skill become part of her repertoire for ascertaining quantity.[240] She might 'carry it in her head' (even as an admirable fact) but not so much in her heart.

The friend by contrast is precisely carried in the heart thanks to spiritual love. This means that she has a far greater weight of presence than something that is merely known as a fact. This is another aspect of the receptive dimension of spiritual love that we began to discuss above. Spiritual love guards the particularity of the person loved more than passional or even idealised love is able to do. When our love reaches the other's being, she becomes irreplaceable, whereas utility or pleasure friends are often substituted by others as life progresses.[241] If we love only our friend's qualities, she is not yet unique. Many others possess her qualities and some to an even greater extent. But when spiritual love penetrates to the being of the friend, a new level of appreciation is reached. It heightens our concern not to allow the fusional or assimilating tendencies of passional love to threaten her unique identity or reduce her to the status of a possession or of a means to some further end. When spiritual love is at the fore, we realise that our friend transcends us. We desire a closeness and union without assimilation. Her presence gives rise to a deep sense of appreciation, capable of renewing our attraction. We do not wish to truncate this to the realm of what we can master or control.[242, 243, 244] Nussbaum notes that Aristotle's conception of the love found in deep

[239] Ibid at 43-5.
[240] Aristotle for example speaks of mathematics as an art as well as a science for the beauty of its order, symmetry, and definiteness. See Aristotle, Met. 1078a.
[241] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.
[242] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 23-6
[243] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 43-5.
[244] This seems to be the problem with Alexander Nehamas' assessment of Aristotle's 'complete' friendship. He sees Aristotle as identifying human nature with virtue (rather than affirming that a life of virtuous activity implies the actuation of our higher capacities) and thus equates 'loving a person for her own sake' with 'loving a person for her virtue'. That Aristotle affirms the need for virtue in order to enjoy 'complete friendship' is taken to mean that virtue is the basis of deep friendship. Nehamas goes on to reject this view, which I would see as a caricature of Aristotle's teaching. See Nehamas, Alexander (2016) at 11-36.

friendship has already gone further than the highest human love described in Plato's *Symposium*, even on the lips of Socrates, where control and possession seem to remain intrinsic to all love.[245]

One of the signs of a budding spiritual love developing is the way we feel when facing the friend's absence for a significant period of time. We know plenty of people who when not around do not give rise in us to a second thought. But now and then, someone emerges whose absence is strangely 'felt'. Life has less savour when she is missing.

I would suggest that the common linguistic expressions we have to express our noting of absence are revealing here. The English phrase "I miss you" implies that the other's presence has become a target that one is prevented from reaching. Spiritual love is characterised by a natural *élan* that carries us toward the person loved. It is an outward movement, from the self toward the other, such that absence becomes a frustration. The Italian phrase "*sento la mancanza di te*" or "I sense the lack of you" implies that someone's absence has itself become experiential; such is the weight of her presence. In this way, locals might 'sense' the lack of the tree on "One Tree Hill."[246] The French "*tu me manques*" – or "you are missing to me" or "your presence is lacking to me" carries similar connotations. When someone is loved spiritually, her absence is experienced as incompleteness, and this is a promising clue as to her implication in our fulfilment. We miss her beyond the shared projects or good times that we enjoyed together. With passional love, the other can indeed be craved with a deep intensity, based on the enjoyment she brings to the senses. She can even become a sort of addiction, from which we might suffer 'withdrawal' symptoms. Here someone might point out to us that we are in fact infatuated. But spiritual love calls for a deeper level of togetherness. This person's goodness has given rise to a desire for a sharing of life and of life's goods. Indeed, when something good happens only to us we wish the other were included: "If only she were here - She would have loved this so much - I must bring her next time" We want her flourishing for her own sake and we delight in playing our part in it. Periods of necessary absence can undermine deep friendship, first of all in its exercise, without affecting the intention

[245] Nussbaum, Martha C (2001) at 556. Here Nussbaum notes that jealousy and fear of loss seem to be inseparable from human love in Plato's *Symposium*, and even in *Phaedrus,* where Plato approaches a love closer to Aristotle's *philia* in linking aspiration with receptivity, he still emphasises 'mad passion' as an essential component of human love.

[246] *Maungakiekie* (One Tree Hill) is an Auckland landmark. The pine tree that stood out on the landscape alongside the obelisk, was cut down by activists in 2001, as they deemed an exotic tree inappropriate on this site (see https://teara.govt.nz/en/photograph/15835/one-tree-hill).

of love *simpliciter*, but over prolonged time it may cause us to forget the very love itself as Aristotle points out. [247]

By contrast, Hursthouse notes that with colleagues that are utility friends, the friendship tends to dissolve as soon as one of the friends changes job or retires:

> We don't miss each other, never think of each other unless especially reminded; meeting each other by accident we may well find we have little or nothing to talk about. It usually wouldn't occur to me to ring them up out of the blue and ask them to put themselves out for me in some way, and if they rang me up, expecting me to do that, I would be very surprised and slightly irritated.[248]

Hursthouse notes that the same is true of even erotic pleasure friendships, where one loses his attraction for the other. This can be particularly painful for the other, who may be under the impression that all the attention she received was a sign of deeper friendship and not simply a mode of pleasure friendship whereby passion was allowed to take the day, promising everything and seeming to make everything so temporarily perfect. The partner who cannot understand how love can be like a tap turned off after all that has happened, has misconstrued the élan of passional love for the fidelity and permanence implied in spiritual love.

With the growing desire for presence that spiritual love gives rise to, the friends can spend enough quality time in each other's presence to help to purify the spiritual love of the imaginative or possessive elements that characterise romantic or passional love. When this happens, we welcome the other taking increasing prominence in our life, rather than simply being a welcome addition to our schedule, as we might timetable enjoyable pursuits or physical exercise in order to achieve a balanced, pleasant or productive life.

There is of course no dichotomy here. Even when deep friendship is fully developed, a project's goals and the pleasant experiences that may have constituted the initial pretexts for shared life can continue to constitute its daily content. Friends might seek to become fit together, enjoy good

[247]N.E., 1157b. See also Nussbaum, Martha C. (2006) at 360 for an account of this.
[248] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2007) at 330.

cuisine, the arts or some hobby, and so forth. A lot of their conversation might remain the stuff of daily small talk. But over time the sharing of what is important in life takes on its own rhythm. As friendship deepens, what is meaningful begins to trump either the merely enjoyable or the finite goals of worthwhile projects, without ever eliminating or suppressing them.

At the same time, each friend delights in opportunities as they arise to be a true good for the other. The friend might first emerge as 'someone I wouldn't mind being the friend of' and later as someone whom I could regard as my 'best friend'. As we notice this priority growing, active discernment is called for: could this be someone around whom and for whom we should significantly re-orient our life? Would her potential absence outweigh the absence of whatever goods we might forego in order to secure her presence? We notice that the personal goodness of the other exerts a sustained attraction over us. There becomes no substitute for the ongoing presence of a deep friend.[249]

The question also arises as to how many deep friendships one can sustain simultaneously or even have throughout life. There is nothing in spiritual love *per se* that demands exclusivity, seeing it does not in itself imply the passional dimension of relationships that are also physical or sexual. Yet the requirement of shared life is a practically limiting factor, as Aristotle has noted.[250] The modern ease of travel compared to the ancient world also means that people do not always live out their days in the same location over the course of their life, which tends to set up situations of different pockets of 'deep friends', based on places where one has spent significant periods of time. This does not so much affect our focus here, however, which will concentrate on the ethical development that deep friendship facilitates, because as we find ourselves in new situations and hopefully develop new deep friendships, we carry with us the character traits and qualities that we have been able to develop and foster via earlier friendships.

3.2.iii.e. Spiritual Love Deepens Knowledge of Self

Alongside the privileged knowing of each other that is made possible by the friends' mutual desire to share who they really are with each other, the door is opened to a deeper practical knowledge

[249] I shall explore this passage toward increasingly prioritising the other in an 'intention of life' in section 4.1.
[250] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b.

of oneself. Each friend may progressively realise the need to make changes in herself for the sake of her friend. The desire to be true to someone for whom we care and to someone who places her trust in us, has a way of bringing our own shortcomings more clearly to the fore. Part of becoming stronger in love for a friend can be the way in which we are prepared to face our own deficiencies for her sake. We notice that something prevents us from following through on our good intentions when it comes to concrete situations. Our love for our friend motivates us to root out the bad habits that hinder and stifle true friendship. So long as we operate or live in isolation, it is easy to turn a blind eye to our own laziness, self-indulgence, irascibility, impatience, stinginess, poor time management, thoughtlessness, and so forth, or at least postpone addressing these. Yet they become intolerable if their continued presence means that we risk significantly letting down someone dear to us when she needs us to be fully ourselves. The goodness of the other becomes a motive for reform. This can go so far as facing the significant effort needed to address long standing deficiencies of character on our part. There is an echo of this on a more surface level, for example, in the creative and extra touches one adds when cooking for someone one cares about, or the way one improves one's attention to clothes, haircuts and sometimes even physique on becoming engaged to be married, for example.

The growth in character that occurs over time is an important part of deep friendship. As friends spend time together, they grow not only in the desire that the other's life go well but also in their ability to discern how to best facilitate this. Coming to know each other with an affective knowledge means that their discernment of how best to facilitate the other's flourishing can be made with increasing finesse and refinement. Practical wisdom does not develop in a vacuum but within life's daily complexities and in the light of goods that are worth pursuing, of which the friend's good and the friend herself comes to be ranked among the highest.

Friendliness and friendship may be distinguished analogously to how Aristotle distinguishes natural virtue in the young from full-blown virtue, for which there is no substitute teacher for experience. A fine young person might have a generous disposition, with a heart that goes out to each beggar in the street, realising only later that true generosity wisely discerns to whom, when, what, why, how and how much one should give.[251] Similarly, if we were to compare ourselves at

[251] Aristotle, N.E., 1144b.

the beginning of a friendship to how we have developed as it matures, we might see a growth in awareness, sensitivity and practical intelligence regarding the best way to be an ongoing good for this person, or at least the friend might see it in us, for as Aristotle notes, we do not tend to be the best contemplatives of our own virtue or its growth but are better at contemplating such things in our friend. Indeed, each friend becomes a true mirror for her friend, providing through loving eyes a better lens to view oneself than one might have found alone.

This raises another way in which the spiritual love within deep friendship can lead to a more perceptive self-knowledge. We may discover the goodness of our friend at first from within a climate of low self-esteem, where for whatever reason we are blinded to the goodness of our very self, whether actualised or in potential. Yet our friend reciprocates our love and seems to be attracted by our goodness, which we have struggled to grasp or appreciate. This may cause us to re-evaluate, in the face of new evidence supporting the fact that we are indeed loveable. "My friend is an amazing person. She is no fool and she consistently thinks there is some goodness in me. Maybe she is right!" Pieper writes of the way love can give rise to a type of 'shame' in us, which can be taken in a positive and healthy sense that leads us to blossom or a destructive sense that causes us to recoil in on ourselves.[252] For Pieper, the "I love you" between deep friends effectively translates to "it is wonderful that you exist!"[253] and if we do not tend to look upon ourselves as particularly wonderful, this might give rise to a tension within us, and our response go broadly one of two ways: "Well, I know I am not always so wonderful as she thinks, but she sees this potential in me and I want to live up to this potential and be my best self, so as not to disappoint her faith in me." Her high estimation of me can spur me on to strive to be better. Or we could go the other way and think: "She doesn't really know me. If she gets to know me more she will realise that I am a let-down and a fraud. She has tinted glasses and a false idea of my goodness. I need to withdraw and hide myself away from her carefully or she will cease to love me."

3.2.iv. Spiritual Love and Mutuality

As mentioned above, mutuality is essential for friendship to go beyond mere benevolence. Mutuality helps the consciousness of spiritual love to develop. We become aware of each other's

[252] Pieper, Josef (1997) at 180-7.
[253] Ibid at 167-87.

ongoing good intentions. As our desire for the good of the other increases, it becomes natural to want to invest the best of ourselves in the friendship. The more we love what is personal in the other, the more we appreciate the uniqueness of this love. Reciprocity allows spiritual love to mature with full intensity and realism.[254] As each friend shares herself with the other, the love becomes stronger and more lucid. Without mutuality, spiritual love remains incomplete. It risks descending into the imaginative realm where the gap left by the lack of response is easily filled by the imagination of the one who loves, either as a craving idealism or as a nagging negativity. If mixed with passional elements, this love easily descends into a frustration at being unable to possess, leading to jealousy and resentment. Passional love quickly becomes passional hatred when it cannot possess what it loves.[255] Even if the love remains at a spiritual level for the other's sake, without reciprocity it cannot progress beyond a benevolent disposition. I have already alluded to the problems that can arise when one of the friends is operating at a lower level of friendship (pleasure) than the other (spiritual).[256]

Philippe points out that what is true regarding knowledge equally applies to reciprocity. As necessary as it is for love's development and blossoming, reciprocity must not become the measure of love.[257] We do not love the other as a function of how or of how much she loves us back. Should that become the case, we would tend to pull back whenever we thought that she loved us less. Under those conditions, friendship soon loses its stability and fidelity, and disappears. It can be tempting, especially in inexperienced or budding relationships, to be distracted or preoccupied by the way in which the other loves us and stop short of loving her for herself. We begin to wonder if her response is proportional to our own level of care for her. This anxiety can be a sign that our gaze is still primarily on ourselves and has not yet penetrated to the other 'for her own sake', despite how genuinely deep we might believe our care to be. Love's natural unfolding is sabotaged when our chief concern lies in the return we expect from our investment in the friendship.

A true spiritual love for our friend enables us to distinguish her profound love from any limitations that may hinder her manner of loving, especially when she is assailed by difficulties or fatigue. A friend is loved beyond what prevents her being fully herself on any given day. Indeed, I could add

[254] Philippe, Marie Dominique, (1992) at 26.
[255] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 26-7.
[256] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2007) at 331-4.
[257] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 24.

that with someone very close, we might even feel free enough at times to show a bad mood, rather than guard the polite appearances that acquaintances might be expected to uphold. Friends can sometimes reveal themselves to each other at their most haggard.

This said, the matter is delicate because if deep friendship can blossom only when benevolence is mutual, we must respect situations when it turns out not to be the case. As much as we might love for a friendship with a particular person to blossom, we know we must always respect her desire in the matter. When this turns out instead to be a lack of desire, this can be particularly painful for a time, as we come to accept that the friendship will in fact not be possible.

Where the love is mutual, however, to go beyond our own assessment of the returns in love and to maintain a love that is for the other's true flourishing and genuinely for her own sake, is a sign of ethical maturity. Over time, it increases the stability and fidelity that are characteristic of deep friendship, as opposed to the lesser forms of friendship that are based chiefly on utility or pleasure, and which rely more directly on the returns implied within the friendship.[258]

3.2.v. Spiritual Love Ennobles and Purifies Other Loves

It was mentioned at the beginning of this exposé of spiritual love that within the experience of love, it often co-exists with instinctive, passional and romantic love. But because spiritual love pertains most of all to the other for who she truly is, it resists the assimilation and mastery that might be normally implied at those other levels of love. Thus, it tends to assume these other loves without suppressing them and in this way it has a purifying quality.[259, 260]

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[258] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.

[259] In attested strategies to deal with addictions, based on the programme of Alcoholics Anonymous, the principle of invoking a higher power and effectively a higher love is well known, as is the support one gets from deeper comradery in one's struggle for self-mastery, in the face of some physical, psychological or passional addiction. Effectively these are examples of the power of a higher love to assume and purify a lower love and of a nobler final cause to draw one away from more proximate ends that have proved destructive in the limited nature of their scope. See Alcoholics Anonymous (2004) at 25-33.

[260] The children's book "I Just Ate my Friend" by Heidi McKinnon plays with the notion that impulse control and possessive passional love needs to be moderated if spiritual friendship is to be maintained. It begins with a lonely figure, who laments the fact that she has just eaten her good friend. For the rest of the saga she is in search of another, only to meet with six rejections. At the conclusion, she finally finds someone, but alas, in this case the reciprocity is too marked, for she promptly finds herself consumed by the new friend, who begins the lament all over again. See McKinnon, Heidi (2019) *I Just Ate my Friend* (Sydney: Allen and Unwin).

Spiritual love may well emerge within what may have started as a more dominant passional love, and yet as we increasingly love the other for her own sake, our desire to possess her is purified without in any way lessening the pleasure we take in her. On the contrary, we take increasing pleasure in what enhances and ennobles our friend's life and her very flourishing. This pleasure is more profound and lasting the less love remains self-serving. I could illustrate the point by an example. Two pleasure friends might have primarily enjoyed exploring restaurants together, flattering themselves for their superior taste and refinement. Through the regular banter, one may come to be touched by the other's personal struggle and show empathy. As she comes to know her friend more, she sees ways to genuinely help her through the difficulties or shed light on her situation through sound advice, as well as to provide a listening ear and an understanding heart. As the scenario unfolds and is perhaps resolved over time, the friends have grown in appreciation for who the other really is and in their desire to be part of each other's lives in more significant ways. They have come to enjoy more than the menus of restaurants together, appreciating each other in aspects of life that more directly pertain to their person. They realise too that they care more deeply and have found meaningful ways by which to be good for each other. Their restaurant experiences are none the less for that. Indeed, they retain all their former enjoyment at the level of ambience and flavour, but over time this regular relaxing together is all the more valued, for the friends themselves have become a place of rest and refreshment for one another at the level of their person.[261] When the time comes to move on from this recreational past-time for some reason, it may be that they do not wish to simply move on from each other's lives. They may seek other ways to manifest their desire to be in each other's presence and to incarnate their ongoing intention for each other's good. They now take more direct pleasure in the other *per se* with a pleasure that pertains more to the other's good in significant aspects of life.

Hursthouse agrees with Brewer that few friendships are simply pure cases of one of the three forms that Aristotle describes.[262] Indeed, she notes that many good marriages may have had pleasure friendship as a starting point.[263] I would suggest that what makes such marriages successfully evolve and mature is that the couples allow the ascendency of spiritual love to bind them together in a deeper friendship that is more truly devoted to the other's happiness and flourishing.

[261] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 392-7.
[262] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2007) at 334.
[263] Ibid.

On another level, should our passional and imaginative desires tempt us to exploit another through mastery or possession, in ways that do not take adequate cognisance of her personhood, the presence of a spiritual love recalls us to a more intelligent respect that refuses to trample her in this way. Spiritual love demands virtue in the face of possessive passion, in order to remain what it is: a love that is oriented to the other and that would never subjugate or subsume her for one's own sake. We realise that our friend is a rich and transcendent source of goodness to be discovered and adhered to; someone capable of exerting ongoing fascination and wonder over us. As we grow in knowledge and love of our friend through presence and shared life, our romantic imagination is rendered more realistic and our passional love purified, yet our admiration and appreciation are in no way lessened. The real friend is a far richer reality than any ideal we could have formed of her. She has a real substantial existence and is able to bring goodness into our lives and help actualise our potential for love as no ideal can. This is part of the dynamic of the virtue of temperance which naturally arises as spiritual love purifies passional love.

3.2 vi. The Desire for Permanence

As spiritual love develops, so does the desire to stabilise the friendship and render it permanent. The benevolence seeks tangible ways of becoming effective day by day. For this to occur, we effectively need to discern how our lives could be more interconnected, shared and ultimately even oriented to each other's good. At this point significant elements of choice begin to enter love. So long as it remains in seed, spiritual love is itself beyond choice. The growing attentiveness to the person's goodness and the forming of a preference for her can be something that we notice 'coming over us'. But there comes a point when this mutual love leads both parties toward a more conscious choice of each other, and this development is vital as we allow our love to reach the other 'for her own sake'.[264] Philippe sees it as a moment when the intelligence enters into the heart of love and plays a more active role, helping each friend to order her life around the good of the other, who is increasingly seen as an end good.

[264] Aristotle, E.E., 1237b.

This is part of the maturation of love, to such an extent that it is often said of love that it is a 'choice rather than a feeling'. It is true that if it lacks the element of choice, love will never reach its proper maturity and will easily disperse. The notion reflects the fact that intensity of feeling tends to fluctuate with time, but this should not undermine a deeper love for the person of the other. The phrase has particular relevance when someone's feelings are not yet in conformity with the underlying spiritual love in her will, due for example to a lack of the virtue of temperance.[265] In such a case she may need to 'choose' to love in a way that is for the other's true good, as a 'continent' person needs to choose a level of integrity that will not allow her possessive tendencies to dominate her actions and feelings. Temperance chiefly guards the choice of a higher love over a lower one, or the preference for a noble good over a lesser one, despite the human tendency to want to remain in lesser comforts for the immediate reward that they seem to offer.

I could add that love *per se* is not a choice. It is a response to goodness. But when that goodness is at the level of the other's person, it can lead to the formation of an ongoing intention and culminate in a permanent amical choice for the other, where each friend freely decides to become a good for the other in an ongoing and open-ended way. This gives expression to the desire in spiritual love for permanence and stabilises the love in deep friendship, so that both parties consider that they will be nothing less than 'friends for life'.

To gain a fuller picture of the way that friends actuate each other and become deeply implicated in each other's lives, we need to examine the passage from the first spiritual love to the amical choice that each one makes of the other in deep friendship. This choice implies the formation of what Philippe sees as an ongoing 'intention of life',[266] which effectively includes the preparedness to reorient one's life and activity to someone to whom we intend to be a 'friend for life'. At this moment, spiritual love is allowed to blossom and become more fully itself, thanks to the role played by the intelligence from within the heart of this developing love. We seek to prioritise the goods of life in an authentic order that respects the friend as a truly 'noble good'. Deep friendship needs this discernment and the choice of one another in which it results. Of course, the intention

[265] Aristotle, N.E., 1104b-1105a.
[266] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 28-9.

and the choice are ongoing and not static. Aristotle reminds us that desire is not enough for friendship. The desire needs to be tested by time, trials and shared joys.[267]

> This then is the primary friendship, which all people recognize. It is on account of it that the other sorts are considered to be friendship, and also that their claim is disputed - for friendship seems to be something stable, and only this friendship is stable; for a formed judgement is stable, and not doing things quickly or easily makes the judgement right. And there is no stable friendship without confidence, and confidence only comes with time; for it is necessary to make trial…[268]

It is to a closer examination of this 'intention of life' and the mutual amical choice that occurs within deep friendship, that we now turn.

[267] Aristotle, E.E., 1237b.
[268] Ibid.

IV

FINAL CAUSALITY AND DEEP FRIENDSHIP IN PHILIPPE - II: THE INTENTION OF LIFE AND THE AMICAL CHOICE

4.1. The Intention of Life – The Friend Becomes First in an Order of Goods

4.1.i. Reaching the Other as an End-Good

Spiritual love awakens us to someone's goodness in such a way that we do not wish to let her pass by. We grow in our desire to be oriented toward her true good, and with this 'intention of life', so long as it is mutual, the friendship is able to deepen. For spiritual love to progress beyond a mutual disposition for friendship, both persons need to make the judgement that the other should take significant prominence in their lives. This implies that a new prioritising take place, which Philippe points out is the work of the intellect within the interior of love, since the seeking out of an order among goods is the province of the intellect, while the goods themselves are precisely known as goods, due to the attraction of love.[269]

It is not simply that the would-be friend gets elevated up a scale of goods on her way to becoming a 'favourite' good, as an Epicurean might discern a superior pleasure or even a superior way of organising pleasures. For a full-blown intention of life to form, the other person needs to take first place in a practical order of goods, in such a way as to render those other goods secondary. In this sense she effectively becomes an 'end-good': someone for the sake of whom other goods come to be regarded precisely as means. When this occurs, we are not prepared to relativise our friend for other gains, but on the contrary, we find ourselves willing to significantly orient our practical life around her, utilising other goods for her sake, prepared to place a myriad of activities and goods at the disposal of her true flourishing.[270]

[269] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 195-9.
[270] Ibid at 196-7.

Philippe points out that it is precisely because a spiritual love has reached the other as an end-good that we gain greater lucidity upon 'means' as such.[271] In everyday life, it is easy to become preoccupied with what is pleasurable, which can be treated as a series of delights to be experienced, comforts to be maximised or even simply pains to be minimised. Epicureanism does not distinguish an overarching end from the means *per se* but remains in relative goods, even if it seeks a hierarchy among pleasures that often ends up favouring the more sustainable or the more refined.[272] But when a true spiritual love awakens us to someone else, we reach what we might call a noble good. The deep friend is a personal good; for whose flourishing lesser goods can be relativized in the light of this deeper love.

The passage from loving another person as a 'good for me' to loving her as a 'good in herself' and 'for her own sake' in no way negates or lessens the pleasure we take in her. Rather than reducing other loves, spiritual love tends to purify them by orienting them to the highest good, which is the flourishing of the friend for her own sake.[273]

Indeed, the more we love the friend for herself, the more other aspects that we legitimately love about her themselves become relativized, such as her beauty, presence, talents, virtues, the various benefits she brings to us, her attentiveness and care for us, and so forth. At the same time they retain their vital importance and luminosity. Indeed, they elicit our appreciation, admiration or gratitude all the more, because they are the means by which her being and goodness clearly manifest themselves to us.[274] We delight in her gifts not simply for ourselves, but as part of wanting her flourishing. On the other hand, were we to love her only on account of these gifts, she would not yet be regarded as an end-good, for whom we would happily develop an intention of life. Love for a person's giftedness falls short of love for her unique being. It does not yet imply a re-orientation of our life in a significant enough way to render the friendship stable and deep. An admirer might be enamoured by the exquisite voice of a young soprano, even to the point of imagining whenever he hears her how good it would be to 'marry such a voice', only to find this enchantment elusive whenever her song comes to an end. Philippe notes that forming an intention

[271] Ibid at 199.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 23.
[274] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 200-3.

of life for a close friend takes us to the point where we would continue to love her, should her gifts become veiled or disappear, or her outward beauty vanish.[275]

Of course, the secondary goods regarding the person, such as her qualities and attributes, cannot be separated from her being and life. The profound spiritual good that we end up locating in her very person is at first concealed within these means and can be reached only through them. In this sense, our love for sensible goods is foundational and leads us to love the good that is present in and through them and by which they are lovable. Philippe points out that once our intelligence grasps the friend as an end-good, in and beyond the means that helped get us there, we grasp her goodness in an absolute manner, whereas it is only present in a relative way in the various manifestations.[276, 277]

Within our experience of love, we have an experience of the goods that we love as well as an experience of our state of loving and of the circumstances that tend to condition our love, such as the multiple motivations of our temperament and psychology, our various desires, our opinions and those of others, and so forth. It is important to see that these latter aspects in themselves cannot bring us fulfilment. If we become locked into the psychological level, life can be reduced to a constant flux of influences and we would never attain a stabilising end-good.[278] We might experience love, which is a response another's goodness, but we only reach the other as an end-good via the intelligence. This is what ultimately gives our life orientation around chief noble goods and leads us to see means precisely as such.[279]

Here the importance of the distinctions noted above concerning spiritual love becomes evident. We do not primarily love our knowledge of our friend, or the mutuality of her love, or the sense of fulfilment that she brings to us, or even what she brings to our life externally or in our personal development, though we can certainly legitimately enjoy all of these aspects. We love the friend for herself, even if we delight in the fact that she is the source of these other goods for us. She herself remains the true object of our love. We are not simply enamoured by the 'state of loving'

[275] Ibid at 197-8.
[276] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 28-9.
[277] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 195-6 and 201-2.
[278] Ibid at 201.
[279] Ibid at 199-200.

that she has given rise to within us. Our love for our friend transcends the reflexive sentiment of much popular music: "I love the way I feel when you are near," though this may well be true. This move is ethically defining. We have crossed the threshold that would otherwise mean that our regard for others is primarily seen in relation to ourselves and to the benefits that they bring to us.

To the extent that we come to love the being of the other,[280] she is able to become someone for whose sake we consistently act and, as such, someone who 'finalises' our voluntary activity, beyond any goals sought within the specific activities themselves.[281] A myriad of goods and actions can be measured against our ongoing intention for her good. This intention becomes effectively fixed in our life, though the means by which it is manifested and realised remain extremely flexible and multiple.[282, 283] These means are discerned and determined by the practical judgements that the friends make under the umbrella of their ongoing intention for one another. The more they attentively share life, the more these judgements can be refined and tailored, not only to the specifics of situations but also to the capacities of the persons involved. It is in this realm that practical wisdom comes into its own. We shall see later how a strong and ongoing intention for the other's true good becomes the hidden force within the maturation of practical wisdom over time.[284]

We note too that the relation of means to ends is very different from that seen in the sphere of artistic activity, where the product aimed at is the end, chiefly determined by the creative idea. In the sphere of human making, the means to attain this product are themselves fairly fixed, effectively determined by the same controlling idea and by the capacities of the matter employed in whatever transformation is involved. From an Aristotelian philosophical standpoint, the principal cause in art is the idea that stands behind the transformation of the matter involved, and it tends to determine the means employed to successfully bring the product into being. By contrast, the intention in friendship is fixed on the good of the friend, who is herself the overarching final

[280] Aristotle, N.E., 1170b.
[281] I use the word 'finalise' here, in that the friend's flourishing has become a final cause that stands behind much of our voluntary activity. Activity might have proximate ends, but the friend's good becomes an over-arching end that gives the discernment of activity undertaken for her sake its deeper sense.
[282] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 27-30.
[283] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 199.
[284] For a detailed discussion of the influence deep friendship has over the maturation of practical wisdom, see Chapter VI.

cause of action within friendship, leaving the means relatively open-ended.[285] In artistic activity, there may well be 'more than one way to skin a cat', but with friendship, the skinning of a cat is itself not essential. 'Skinning a cat together' is only one way of expressing friendship! With an intention of life, the quest concerns how to best 'be for the other' in any given circumstance and this naturally varies far more than any *modus operandi* that our expertise obliges us to adopt in order to reach specific artistic goals. Putting aside the meaning of the saying, it may well literally be difficult to make an omelette without breaking eggs, but it is relatively easy to sustain a friendship without breaking eggs. One simply makes something else for breakfast.

4.1.ii. The Necessity of Prioritising the Other

The forming of an intention of life paves the way for love to become significantly anchored and stabilised in the mutual ongoing choice of one another. Without the ordering of life's goods and loves implied in forming this intention, our passions and imagination risk truncating love, because we will not be consistently oriented around the other's true good. We would easily turn in on ourselves in difficulties or seek out what may appear to be 'better options' when they come along. Were we to simply remain at the level of fondness and benevolence for this or that person whose goodness strikes us from time to time, and not allow an intelligent re-prioritising of our own life in their regard, we would easily become dispersed. We might eventually convince ourselves that 'all that matters is the heart', and that all will be well so long as we maintain an 'openness to everyone' and consistently exhibit a 'good nature'.[286] Without being anchored in an authentic priority of goods, our benevolent sentiments can become generalised to the point where they end up largely imaginary. In practice they risk being relativized to whatever project drives us at any given time. Thus, it would be difficult to go beyond the beginnings of love, no matter how fine our disposition might be. We would struggle to engage in a way that would allow love's demands to be challengingly felt. The moment the going gets tough regarding some associate, we might well be tempted to 'get going', not in the motivated and mobilising sense intended in the proverb, but in a more cowardly and self-serving way. We would declare that we are 'over it', 'out of here' and 'move on', thus evading or escaping the demands of greater personal involvement.

[285] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 27-30.
[286] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 196.

By contrast, once we discern, through an exercise of the practical intelligence, that this person is someone whom we could love for her own sake, and whose flourishing would come to imply our own, then our will and activity can be mobilised in service of this love. We can have a greater lucidity over this increased practical engagement than we may have had over the spiritual love for the person itself as it began to emerge.[287] We mentioned earlier that we sometimes become aware of the existence of the deeper love in our hearts for someone precisely by noticing the ease with which we are prepared to happily go the extra mile for her without a second thought, whereas for others we hesitate and question the 'justice' of having to be 'put out' in this way or that, or even the 'cheek' that they seem to expect so much from us. The prioritising of the other all the way to an end-good is not something that occurs subliminally. We become conscious that we indeed want this friend to occupy an important and significant place in our lives; even more: we want to re-orient ourselves around her true good.

4.1.iii. A Practical Induction

Philippe asserts that the forming of an 'intention of life' in the development of deep friendship involves a 'practical induction'.[288, 289] He uses the word here in a specifically philosophical sense (rather than in a mathematical or scientific way) describing the movement in the intelligence from effect to cause, but in a particularly personalised and practical way.

It might be useful to first consider a more trivial example of such an induction: we observe someone we know returning from shopping one afternoon, laden with luxury items. She changes the tablecloth, lights little scented candles and selects soothing background music. We might conclude that someone important is coming over to dinner. This controlling 'idea' unifies her activity. Similarly, a parent might notice uncharacteristic behaviour in her teenage son: "He actually got out of bed himself! He's been going to the gym every other day, he's tidied his room, he greeted me cheerfully, he wears his good jacket… I'm worried he might be in love!" Neither conclusion flows logically as if it were implicit in the premises, as with a syllogism. Rather, the intelligence seeks a unifying cause that holds a variety of related events or features together and

[287] Ibid at 195.
[288] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 28-9.
[289] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 195.

renders them comprehensible. What's more, this cause is present in the reality and manifested in the effects.

For Aristotle, each branch of philosophy is ultimately distinguished from another by the difference in its principal cause, which is discovered by induction from within the multiplicity of the activity's chief components.[290] From a chronological standpoint, these components are more immediately and easily known, but in another way the principal cause within the reality is 'prior' to these other determinations and grounds them. Once it is reached by induction, it sheds new light on every other aspect within the given reality. Aristotle remarks:

> Let us not fail to notice, however, that there is a difference between arguments from and those to the first principles. For Plato, too, was right in raising this question and asking, as he used to do, 'are we on the way from or to the first principles?' There is a difference, as there is in a race-course between the course from the judges to the turning point and the way back. For while we must begin with what is known, things are objects of knowledge in two senses – some to us, some without qualification. Presumably, then, we must begin with things known to us.[291]

Other examples of Aristotelian induction include the discovery in the philosophy of nature of the distinction between form and matter; the distinction between the body and the soul as its formal cause and as the unifying principle of life in the philosophy of the living being; the induction of the exemplary cause (as a species of formal cause) as the principal cause of artistic activity; and the induction of 'substance' and of 'being-in-act' in metaphysics, as two principal causes at the level of being.[292]

The practical induction made in the formation of deep friendship is not so much a conclusion about what grounds someone else's behaviour, but the gaining of lucidity about one's own love and life in relation to the friend. Specifically, we realise that this person has assumed more and more

[290] Aristotle, E.E., 1216b; Met. 1026a.
[291] Aristotle, N.E., 1095a-1095b.
[292] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 199.

importance in our life, to the extent that we would be prepared to relativise other goods that would normally have taken priority, at times even so far as where we might live or work. We would consider making significant sacrifices in order to preserve the friendship if this were needed. By taking first place, she renders other goods secondary and gives our voluntary activity its deep orientation.[293] She effectively becomes an 'end-good', shedding new light on lesser goods precisely as means toward safeguarding this good. In this way she becomes a fixed point of reference for our ongoing benevolent intentions.

The induction that the friend is potentially an end-good or 'finality' for me is reached through practical reasoning around attraction to the good, rather than by speculative logical reasoning or practical creative reasoning.[294] We do not conclude that it 'makes sense' to re-order our life around our friend. Nor do we conceive it simply as a 'good idea' in a 'moment of inspiration', deciding to 'construct our lives in such a way'. Rather, through the practical experience of being attracted to her goodness, we have come to see her in a certain way that sheds light on the way we see other aspects of life. Our discernment is made within a practical order, regarding the value we place on life's goods and thus upon our corresponding love for those goods. In this sense, it is an exercise in what was classically called *intellectus* (where the intellect 'sees' or intuits) rather than *ratio*[295] (where it reasons), with a specific focus on judgements of goodness.

As Pieper explains:

> The Greeks – Aristotle no less than Plato – as well as the great medieval thinkers, held that not only physical, sensuous perception, but equally man's spiritual and intellectual knowledge, included an element of pure, receptive contemplation, or as Heraclitus says, of "listening to the essence of things". The Middle Ages drew a distinction between the understanding of *ratio* and the understanding of *intellectus*. *Ratio* is the power of discursive logical thought, of searching and of examination, of abstraction, of definition and drawing conclusions. *Intellectus*, on the other hand, is the name for the understanding in so far as it is the capacity of

[293] Ibid at 195.
[294] Aristotle, N.E., 1140a.
[295] Pieper, Josef (1998 B) at 28.

> *simplex intuitus*, of that simple vision to which truth offers itself like a landscape to the eye. The faculty of mind, man's knowledge, is both these things in one, according to antiquity and the Middle Ages, simultaneously *ratio* and *intellectus*; and the process of knowing is the action of the two together. The mode of discursive thought is accompanied and impregnated by an effortless awareness, the contemplative vision of the *intellectus*, which is not active but passive, or rather receptive, the activity of the soul in which it conceives that which it sees.[296]

When it comes to life's goods, we can order them only if we first of all love them as goods. We have noted that spiritual love arises from the recognition of a personal good. This love that attains to the person for her own sake, is conditioned by a knowledge that receives her for who she really is. The more receptive and truly contemplative this knowledge, the less it is concerned with how the other fits into our lives at the level of useful projects or pleasurable pastimes and the more it is prepared to welcome her as someone who transcends me, and who calls for my deep respect and authentic love.

Within these movements of the will, as the intelligence intervenes to seek out an authentic hierarchy, the importance of this person in our lives increasingly dawns on us. Not only that, we see her person as grounding her attributes, and thus come to love her very being and life beyond these attributes.[297] We could see it as a practical parallel to a more speculative metaphysical exercise, where we might seek to understand which levels of being are more permanent and ground the others. We happily and, in a sense, naturally embrace activity that will help our friend flourish. We act and are increasingly prepared to make significant decisions for her sake. In the light of discovering the goodness of her being and life, we appreciate her various qualities and attributes as marvellous manifestations of this.

This practical induction allows the passage from a spontaneous first love to a stable intention of life. The other is indeed becoming another self, and we welcome the responsibility of becoming the same for her. It is deeply affirming to know that someone so believes in our goodness as to be

[296] Ibid at 28ff.
[297] Aristotle, N.E., 1170b.

prepared to re-orient her life toward us. Indeed, this highlights the need to be true to her choice for us, as such a good for her life. We do not want to let down someone who chooses to rely on us as a chief good in her life and who seeks to be the same for our life. If she devotes herself to our flourishing, then it becomes less obviously a 'private affair' whenever we choose to compromise ourselves for lesser goods, as if no one else were involved. To betray or undermine the intention of life she places in us can seem worse than letting ourselves down. Such an intention, supported by spiritual love, becomes a hidden source of strength, as friends allow themselves to become deeply implicated in each other's flourishing.

4.1.iv. The Intention of Life as an Opening to Human Fulfilment

With the deepening of friendship that the formation of an intention of life makes possible, each friend stands to her friend both as act to potency and potency to act. Simply put, our friend's goodness attracts our love and brings it about, at the level of final causality. Our capacity to love is actuated into a state of loving, thanks to the attraction of our friend, who is effectively 'goodness in act' for us. But as the relation is mutual, we are, in our personal goodness, the 'act' that helps to actuate her capacity for love that it increasingly become a state of loving. This state of loving is potentially infinite and can always deepen. In this way, each friend brings to the other what she cannot bring to herself. Philippe notes that we always remain an immanent good to ourselves, but as such we cannot draw ourselves into a fullness that we do not already possess. Yet through love, our friend in her alterity can be a rich source of the actuation of our potentiality, just as we can be for hers. [298]

It is true, as Aristotle has effectively affirmed, that the love of self remains an important precondition for the love in friendship, for we want to share only what is truly worth sharing with someone we love. We will not regard the friend as 'another self' if our own self is something we despise and disparage.[299] Yet this natural self-love can never bring to us more than we already are. Our spiritual desire and our intelligence are both potentially unlimited and open to the infinite. Both are actuated from beyond themselves: our love by what is good and our intellect by what is true. Thus, the way that each friend can flourish as they regard and love their friend as 'another

[298] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1999) at 26.
[299] Philippe, Marie Dominique 1977) at 52-6.

self' exceeds what she might bring to herself through any form of self-help. The flourishing of the self at which self-love aims, is more properly achieved when we open outwardly in love to another. Once experienced, this comes to be regarded as indispensable. "Without friends, no one would choose to live, though [she] had all other goods."[300] Indeed, even an authentic self-love grows through the experience of being loved and of loving another. We can appreciate our own value from the value others place on us in love, just as we can appreciate our own agency when we reflect on it in an actuated state. As Pieper notes, we do not want to call our friend a liar when she effectively declares that it is wonderful that we exist! If our friend finds us deeply loveable, then we are challenged to accept that this must actually be the case, and this is of course deeply affirming at the level of self-esteem.[301, 302]

One could draw an analogy with the vital operations. The intelligence as a 'capacity to know' is ordered to what in the real is 'true'. The classical notion of 'the true' being a 'transcendental' is summed up by the insight that the 'true' is effectively the 'real in as much as it founds knowability', just as the 'good' is the 'real in as much as it founds lovability'.[303, 304, 305] The intelligence cannot be satisfied in simply knowing itself knowing. The same is true for the will as a capacity to love the good. We can love our capacity to love, but this cannot be love's chief object. Indeed, this appreciation of our own faculties is necessarily reflexive. We have to 'catch ourselves' knowing and loving to even begin to know and love these capacities. The knowing and loving of the self cannot be the full flourishing of the self.

By contrast, the self can be partially but truly fulfilled by another human person, because even though that person is also finite and limited, she brings to her friend a new goodness that her friend does not already possess, with the inexhaustible depth and uniqueness of a person. In the love of deep friendship, each one is properly respected in her 'otherness'. Philippe observes that, while it is not otherness *per* se that attracts, but rather goodness, it remains true that existential otherness is a condition for our attraction to the good.[306] The love of friendship has a more profound realism

[300] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1170b.
[301] Pieper, Josef (1997) at 167-82.
[302] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 52-6.
[303] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1994 B) at 237-40).
[304] Pieper, Josef (1989) at 34-5.
[305] Aquinas, Thomas (1952), Vol. 1, Qu. 1, Art.1, Body p6 at 28-9.
[306] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1977) at 46-8.

than that allowed by self-love. The person of our friend calls to be loved and respected as she is. Philippe notes that we attain the other in her proper uniqueness in as much as she exists outside of us, all the while being our proper personal good, someone who elicits from us our most personal love.[307, 308]

In saying that the friend is capable of completing us in a way that we cannot complete ourselves, the word 'complete' does not imply something finished, as when an artistic work is complete. As noted above, friendship is part of a life well lived and it is far from static. It is an open-ended and ongoing activity. To flourish in our ethical selves is not something that is reached like a destination in a tramping expedition. What remains stable amid the multiplicity of manifestations, is the fact that the friend has been discovered as an end-good and an ongoing intention of life and love is fixed toward her. This reciprocal intention of life, which blossoms into the full choice of deep friendship, means that each friend is now *for* her friend in a way that neither would consider temporary. A 'trial friendship' would undermine the essence of deep friendship, whose intention implies an ongoing desire in the heart of each friend, giving rise to the imperative to safeguard the intention whenever it comes under threat. To say: "Let's be friends for a year and see how it goes" is not yet to want to be friends.

This practical induction naturally leads us to regard the friend as another self. We move from a loving disposition to an effective love that gives her priority in our lives, as genuinely and as naturally as we tend to prioritise ourselves. This induction finds a sort of resting place in the conscious and mutual choice that each friend makes for the other, by which the intention of life is concretised and actualised. Having discovered the treasure in the field it becomes legitimate to sell what we must in order to buy that field![309]

[307] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 25.
[308] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 212.
[309] Mt. 13,44.

4.2. Choice, Freedom and Responsibility Within Deep Friendship

4.2.i. Types of Choice that Emerge in Deep Friendship

A number of types of choice emerge within the experience of deep friendship that have a bearing on ethical development. Philippe analyses these in order to sketch a view of both freedom and responsibility as they naturally emerge within this context.[310] He sees deep friendship as providing the key paradigm for a wider view of ethical freedom.[311] I shall outline these choices here, as they will have repercussions in the relationship between practical wisdom and deep friendship, which we shall later explore.

As noted above, spiritual love can well emerge without much element of conscious choice. Because this sort of love is a response to the personal goodness of another, it can appear to 'sneak up on us', or 'come over us'. As such it is prior to both freedom and responsibility. Similarly, we do not necessarily choose the circumstances that may lead to the emergence of this love. Yet what remains within our freedom and discernment is whether or not we will allow this love to significantly reshape or re-orient our life. This depends in part on the reciprocity that is essential for any friendship to develop. It also depends on whether an affirmative choice in this direction is consistent with our commitment to honour any existing intentions that may need to be respected and safeguarded.[312] Following this discernment, our will can freely engage in either accepting or rejecting the emerging love.[313] The choice two people face to allow the spiritual love they experience to develop into a friendship that prioritises the other's flourishing as an overarching good in their lives, implies both an exercise of freedom and the taking up of responsibility.

The choice to allow the emerging love to begin to reorient our lives in the direction of this person, prepares the way for a more profound choice that will anchor the friendship and render it stable, namely, the ongoing and conscious choice of this particular person as my deep friend. We may well note our growing benevolence in her regard, before this conscious choice is made, but at some point it dawns upon us that we want this person to be a life-long friend. This choice of the friend

[310] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 203-24.
[311] Ibid at 210-5.
[312] Ibid at 210-3.
[313] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 31.

highlights her uniqueness and comes from a love of predilection or preference. It is arguably one of the most deeply personal choices we will ever make.[314] Unlike the first spiritual love or the circumstances that condition it, this subjective choice to prioritise a certain person as an end-good in no way imposes itself. We may not have chosen whether she radiates in our eyes, or whether we find certain of her qualities, attributes or activities compelling, noble or beautiful. But whether or not to allow her, in her goodness, to become somehow the 'secret of our heart', remains within our free choice. We are not simply choosing to love this person and to accept love from her, but also to consistently orient ourselves toward her true good, 'for her own sake', and to resist reducing her to a means for other goods in our lives.[315, 316]

Even when the circumstances bear in on our choice in such a way as to heavily condition it, they do not determine it.[317, 318] The friend is freely chosen from within our core, within the climate of the love that we have for her. Thus, as Philippe points out, it is the fruit of both a spiritual love and a reflection of the practical intelligence over the different ways in which we could orient our will and our capacity to love this or that person.[319]

This amical choice is deeply experiential and immanently practical. It is rooted in love for an existential good, a person in front of us, and so, like matters involving virtue, is not something akin to the sort of knowledge that can be passed on through teaching or through conclusions formed by logical deduction. Intellectuals may have a propensity to consider abstract factors from all sorts of angles, weighing up diverse and complex options, but this does not necessarily equip them for the sort of self-engagement that the deep amical choice demands.[320]

Similarly, a choice as significant as that of another person for whom we would reshape our lives is not something that can be delegated. The wise advice of others may well cast valuable light on our decision but it can never replace it. Choosing one's friend for her own sake involves the personal engagement of our will. Even in cultures which continue their traditional practice of

[314] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 204.
[315] Ibid.
[316] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 30-1.
[317] Ibid.
[318] Ibid at 30.
[319] Ibid at 31.
[320] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 209.

‘arranged marriages’, where it may appear to an onlooker that this fundamental choice of love, at least for spouses, is relegated to parents, it is still presupposed that the couple will have to actively engage their hearts, freely choosing one another for themselves, if the marriage is to gain real traction.

Here it is useful to highlight this choice of the friend herself, as it is a key ethical moment, where we begin to cross the divide between fitting others into our own life in ways that suit certain of our own more useful or pleasurable objectives, and the world of loving another person chiefly for her own sake.

Yet another genre of choice emerges alongside the choice of the friend. It is in the choice of means that one should employ at the various stages of the development of the friendship. At first, this may involve the pathway we choose in order to secure the friendship in its initial stages. Then there are a multitude of ongoing choices that we will engage in so that our intention and amical choice of our friend are to be realised effectively as we share something of our lives together. Alongside this, we need to have the resolve necessary to see these choices through to concrete action.

Here the strong relationship between virtue, *phronesis* and deep friendship becomes particularly evident. The friend becomes the best (and at times even urgent) reason to grow in virtue. So long as we are isolated in our own world, our ethics need not run too deep. But as we come to discover and love another to such an extent that we begin to regard her as ‘another self’, then we grow in our concern to be a true, authentic and consistent good for her. Our day to day choices that facilitate her true flourishing call for a combination of both practical reasoning and creativity.

The choice of means, more than the choice to allow love to develop or the choice of the person herself, naturally favours turning an ear toward the counsel of those we consider to be wise or more experienced. In discussing the ground of virtue ethics, Hursthouse points out that the question “what would a virtuous agent do under the circumstances?” not only brings us light when considered hypothetically but all the more so when we actually seek out the advice of such an

agent in real life.[321] We turn to those who are not only practically wise themselves through experience in these matters but who objectively seek our good and know us well. They can help us to discern whether we are moving toward a true good or are in some way deceiving ourselves. This is particularly seen in the build-up toward marriage for example, where we become particularly aware of the importance of ensuring that we are doing the right thing in the right way, for the right reasons and at the right time, and so forth. In this situation, the stakes are high enough to warrant seeking of advice from among those who know and love us and whom we consider to have lived well themselves. This naturally calls for a certain docility and openness to the wisdom of others. Interestingly, these considerations echo the various criteria that Aristotle advances for arriving at the mean of virtue in any given discernment,[322] but here they emerge as part of a larger-scale picture. Could it be that the discernment involved in our day to day activities with respect to virtue is arguably analogous on a smaller scale to the kind of macro-discernment needed in determining the means to be employed for us to establish those enduring relationships that will end up significantly framing our ethical life? These considerations assume their vital importance once we see another as an end-good who will potentially 'finalise us' and bring us toward a fullness that we cannot give to ourselves, while, at the same time we accept to assume this role for that same person.

Looking at this variety of choices mentioned above, it can be noted that any choice involves a phase of evaluation. We choose in the midst of our sensibilities and capacities, and in the light of our end. Thus, we could lean toward what most suits our conditioning and ways of proceeding, or toward what is most sure in function of our end. Some means are closer to our 'comfort zone', but these may not necessarily be the ones most conducive to our friend's flourishing. Preferring the means that are best suited to our friend's good, even when they are not so convenient or easy for ourselves, can be another moment of ethical growth and demand some stamina and courage. This can be one of the ways that we learn to come out of ourselves and embrace the adventure of loving the other not only for who she truly is, but also according to who she really is; that is, in ways that are best for her.

[321] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 29 and 35.
[322] Aristotle, N.E., 1106b.

4.2.ii. Delegating Choice in Love

Within a deep friendship, Philippe points out that there are even some choices concerning ourselves that we might be prepared to hand over to a trusted friend to make for us.[323] This can especially occur if we see her as someone who consistently acts for our good and who has, on occasion, a more objective eye for our situation than our own. There may be occasions where it takes a warning from such a friend in order for us to come to our senses and emerge from some self-delusion, especially where we may have taken undue risks in the pursuit of some lesser good. It may be that underneath, we know that we need a degree of courage to face a certain situation that needs to be addressed in our lives, but left to ourselves we have been paralysed in procrastination. For that reason, we might even postpone confiding a difficulty to our friend, knowing that once we do, her impetus and insistence will force us to confront what our own sensibility or cowardice might have us avoid. A good friend who looks out for our good may foresee a disaster coming our way with greater rapidity and lucidity than we can muster for ourselves, so long as we remain entrenched in our situation. She may be able to alert us ahead of time when the road we have chosen is in fact a dead-end.

Deep friends welcome this sort of collaboration in life, whereas, when similar advice comes our way from mere acquaintances, we can resent what can seem like the undue interference of busybodies! A trusted friend is allowed to discreetly mention that our weight has become a problem or even that our eating might be disordered, whereas such a remark from a casual acquaintance might be the occasion for immediate offence. When we allow a good friend to make certain decisions in our regard, it is not that we submit in obedience to some authority that she has over us as such. It is rather a particular act of friendship, which allows the 'other-selfdom' of the friend to come naturally to the fore. We effectively say to her: "You decide for me. I trust your judgement over my own in this matter." This situation is one of the fruits of deep friendship, and part of the humility that such a friendship can foster, where we happily cede our will in a climate of deep amical trust.

[323] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 213-5.

4.2.iii. Freedom Within Amical Choice

With these diverse choices, we see different aspects of ethical freedom and responsibility that emerge within the over-arching climate of spiritual love. The types of free act that were examined above, all imply a judgement in love which compares two or more goods. One choice brings to light the goodness of the act of love itself and the freedom that we have to allow this love to blossom into an intention of life. Another highlights the absolute character of this preferential love for the friend herself, or the quality of this or that means over other possibilities for securing friendship and incarnating our ongoing intention. It is true that freedom is an essential aspect within love, but it is not freedom in itself that is the source of human happiness. Freedom does not find its fullness so much in itself, as if we are most free when we do what we like with the utmost originality. But there is a type of freedom that emerges from love and is founded in it. It comes into its own when we are able to choose our end (finality) in love along with the best means to truly attain it, and the means to live this out to the full. In the full freedom of this amical choice, we are able to blossom in our being and be happy. Originality in love emerges the more we are able to be fully and uniquely ourselves, rather than in the novel way by which we carry everything out.

The friend is chosen from among others, implying a preference and an order and she is chosen for herself, rather than for some further good. She takes on first place in a preferential order, highlighting her uniqueness. Perhaps she is the person we have most come to love. Every choice involves an element of order from the intelligence, intimately linked with an element of love in the will. With the amical choice in particular, love is at the source of the preference and so it measures the order. When it comes to the best means to incarnate a project together, it may be that the intelligence takes precedence in measuring the appropriateness of the possible means.[324]

The choice of the friend is the fruit of both a spiritual love for a person and a reflection by the practical intelligence on the various ways that one could orient one's life and one's capacity to love.[325] In this sense love carries our choices, rendering them sweet and giving them impetus. Our desire for such an end-good calls for lucidity and judgement. We can freely choose once the

[324] Ibid at 206-7.
[325] Ibid at 204.

practical intelligence has lit up the various possible pathways. Choice is thus complex and relative to a person's core and proper character. We see it particularly in the choice of a fiancée, which is the amical choice *par excellence*. Maturity in ethical choice would be naturally truncated without a climate of spiritual love, where the personal goodness of the other attracts us to seek her flourishing for her own sake.

Philippe points out that in the definitive choice of a friend, the voluntary act is more perfect, compared with the first love, which leans more on the side of potentiality than act.[326] The first love is the beginning of love and not yet perfectly what love can be. For this reason, it can be embraced or rejected. Once we choose to let it be transformed in an intention of life, it becomes more perfectly determined in the choice for the other and as time progresses, this matures within the shared life of deep friends. The choice for the friend is not only maintained in love but it allows love to come into its own. Love is more properly human when its fidelity is maintained in a free and faithful choice. Once made, the choice carries a note of necessity, like a promise, which stabilises love and helps it to endure.

4.2.iv. Responsibility Within Amical Choice

Ethical responsibility emerges alongside this liberty in love. In having freely accepted the first spiritual love, we become responsible for it and for what flows from our choice of the friend. We have chosen to be oriented toward her good and to help her to be more fully herself. We effectively choose to be a source of happiness for her, letting ourselves be linked to her as her proper finality. It would be wrong to abandon her and thus betray this spiritual love and the free engagement that underlies our choice. As Philippe notes, two aspects of responsibility already begin to emerge: not only are we responsible for our acts and for the profound orientation of our life, but we accept a certain responsibility for our friend, who is freely chosen.[327] This responsibility for actions and for the person of the friend goes beyond the sort of responsibility we have for our possessions. In the amical choice, our ability to self-govern extends as far as to take possession of ourselves in this profound autonomy so as to make a gift of ourselves for another.

[326] Philippe, Marie Dominique (1992) at 34-5.
[327] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 215.

4.2.v. Choice Outside the Climate of Love

It is of course possible to exercise choices outside of a climate of love. Stoic choices, for example, typically involve engaging our efficient will in order to overcome whatever obstacle threatens our success in achieving some goal or ideal. Philippe points out that if the heroic pursuit of an ideal replaces love, we can easily become brittle and jaded.[328] The efficient will can rely on the force of our decision, drawing on a certain fortitude aimed at conquering the obstacles, even outside of love for an end-good, but this will not finalise our heart, which remains in need of love. Conquest alone is hollow unless it is carried by love for a nobler good.

We could add, for similar reasons, that no matter how satisfying it may be to review the fruit of our creative labour, artistic activity cannot ultimately finalise us, because the product of our work, however wonderful, is too limited a good. It is never a personal good that can 'love us back'. Our creativity is not enough to 'make the most of ourselves'! The self in giving itself away to someone capable of receiving it in love, and in receiving that same person in a way that engages the whole self for the other's good, finds itself strengthened from within and thus able to be more fully itself. Here we touch the profound link between a healthy self-love and the ability of the self to 'pick itself up in autonomy' and make of itself a truly personal gift to another. We find a place of rest in the heart of a friend, as she does in us.[329]

The stability of the amical choice and the ongoing intention to live in such a way as to be a good for each other, means that deep friends continue to develop together, yet without making 'character development' the reason for their friendship. This commitment gives rise to a desire for ongoing authenticity for the sake of the other, and thus for a deepening of virtue, as I shall go on to explore.

Concluding Remarks

Philippe's analysis of spiritual love and its culmination in an intention of life and in the deep amical choice, one for the other, sheds light on the way in which one person is capable of 'completing' or partially fulfilling ('finalising') another. The personal existent goodness of each

[328] Ibid at 212.
[329] Ibid at 392-5.

friend is the foundation for the emergence and the attraction of spiritual love. It is also what anchors the amical choice, in the sense that each friend loves and chooses the other for her own sake. This same goodness gives rise to both the ecstatic and receptive dimensions of this love. Knowledge and mutuality are both essential components but neither measures nor determines the love. Nothing short of real presence will nourish and sustain such a friendship, and thus, the ongoing need emerges within deep friendship for some sort of shared life.

Through a practical induction, the other person comes to be regarded as an end-good for which we would happily reorient our life and around whom we would focus our voluntary activity. She is wanted for herself and not for the sake of something else. We have found someone who becomes so significant to us that we no longer wish to exclusively occupy the centre of our own world. And due to friendship's mutuality, we are uniquely affirmed in discovering that occupy a place of similar importance for her. 'Losing ourselves' for another becomes a way of 'finding ourselves in the other'. We give ourselves away only to receive ourselves back as uniquely loved and valued, appreciated and affirmed. It becomes a particular source of joy and happiness for each friend both to freely embrace being a consistent source of goodness for the one she loves and to have found someone who freely embraces being that source of goodness for her. This naturally leads each person to seek practical and creative ways to incarnate this loving intention, calling for an intelligent attentiveness to the other and to the particularity of life's circumstances, so as to find the best way to honour these life intentions. We shall see that it is here that the development of virtue and practical wisdom will take on a note of vital necessity, animated by hearts taken up in spiritual love, informed by an ordering of the practical intelligence and the ongoing free choice one for the other in the will.

Within deep friendship, human activity reaches a new summit. We are not simply tracing a chain of artistic activities in order to find some master art that commands our other artistic choices. Nor are we simply seeking to improve the conditions of our existence in order to render life more enjoyable and pleasant. Rather, we have discovered that the other is a personal good for whom it is worth re-orienting ourselves, and this is only possible when the friend is consciously and mutually freely chosen. In discovering that someone we love can be for us an end-good, and indeed that we can constitute such a good for that person, gives life new savour and meaning. We come

to realise and embrace goods that transcend our projects and ambitions, and in this sense our very projects and ambitions can be re-oriented intelligently in the service of a deeper finality.

It is not simply that another has entered our world, but rather, we have left our world for another. Our world is significantly expanded and reshaped for being shared. We have discovered someone else truly as ‘other’ and in this very discovery, paradoxically they become ‘another self’.

V

FINAL CAUSALITY AND THE UNION OF LOVE: THE FRIEND AS ANOTHER SELF

5.1. The Relation to Self is Applied to the Friend

Aristotle mentions several times that a friend in the fullest sense of the word is someone who has become 'another self', and notices that the sorts of things people say in describing friendship are first of all and pre-eminently true of the way that a good person is in relation to herself: a friend wishes and does what is good (or at least what seems to her to be good) for her friend's sake; she wants her friend to exist and to flourish for her own sake; she shares time and life with her friend; has similar tastes; and shares in her friend's joys and sorrows.[330]

In making these statements, Aristotle's comparison is not so trite as to simply mean that a good person tautologically has the same taste as herself, or necessarily spends all her time and carries out all her activities 'with herself', or, in simply being herself, cannot but help rejoice while she is rejoicing or grieve while she is grieving. He refers more to the harmony and integration that a 'good person' enjoys, with respect to her intellectual discernment, desires, feelings, consistency of actions, assessment of memories and so forth. A good person is not torn in various directions by conflicting desires, but rather "desires the same things with all [her] soul,"[331] including the good of her own being, with actions that flow consistently from her good wishes for herself. She wills her own existence as a good and the authentic flourishing of her life in its highest intellectual element. Her joys and sorrows are in line with her deepest strivings, for she is rightly 'at home' in herself and happy to be herself.

> For being is a good to the good person, and each person wishes for what is good for himself; and no one chooses to have everything if he has first to become someone else (since as things are God possesses the good), but only if he remains whatever he is. And each person would seem to be the intellectual part, or primarily this. And such a person wishes to spend time with himself, since he

[330] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1166a; N.E., 1170b.
[331] Aristotle, N.E.,1166a; N.E., 1104b-1105a.

> finds it pleasant to do so. For his memories of his past actions delight him and his hopes for the future are good, and so both are pleasant. And he has in his intellect a wealth of subjects for contemplation. And he, more than others, shares his own griefs and joys with himself, since the same thing is always painful, the same thing pleasant…[332]

Aristotle observes that even the masses 'bad as they are' are disposed toward themselves, generally wanting their own good and enhancement, at least insofar as they are able to understand what that might entail. But he is clear that this disposition unravels the more incontinent or outrightly wicked a person becomes, due precisely to a lack of integration and consistency:

> For no one who is altogether bad and wicked has [these qualities of friendship toward themselves] or even appears to. Indeed, even bad people scarcely have them, since they are in internal conflict, and have an appetite for one thing but wish for another; they are like incontinent people, since they choose harmful pleasures in preference to what seems good to them. There are others whose cowardice or laziness makes them shrink from doing what they believe to be best for themselves. And those who have committed many dreadful crimes and are despised for their wickedness run away from their lives and destroy themselves. And wicked people seek others with whom to spend their days, and they avoid themselves. For when they are by themselves they remember many disturbing actions and foresee others like them, whereas when they are with others they forget. Because they have no qualities worthy of love, they feel no relation of friendship to themselves. Nor, therefore, do people like this share their joys and griefs with themselves. For their soul is in a state of civil strife and one element in it, because of its wickedness, grieves in abstaining from certain things, while the other element is pleased, the one draws them this way, the other that, as if tearing them apart. If a person cannot be pained and pleased at the same time,

[332] Aristotle, N.E.,1166b.

> nevertheless after a short time he is pained because he was pleased, and he wishes these things had not become pleasant for him; for bad people are full of regret.[333]

Let us leave aside for now the question of the disintegration of the wicked or highly incontinent and presume that unless someone's life has been marred by destructive habits derived from repeated unhealthy choices, or by severe impediments imposed through limiting situations, she will generally tend toward having a good disposition toward herself, desire her own flourishing insofar as she understands it, and have a reasonable estimation of the value or her hopes and memories and of what is good for her, at least at some level. This will become all the more enhanced and refined the more she is able to develop the stable character traits of virtue, which bring legitimate priorities into sharper focus, but still there can be a normal presumption that a person even at quite an undeveloped ethical stage, will look out for what she understands to be for her own good in any given situation.

What is interesting is that the passage from this natural kind of self-concern to having the same sort of concerns for another for their own sake is already a passage of significant ethical growth. The discovery of another as 'another self' is a 'coming out of oneself' in an ecstatic movement toward someone else through love and this is a crucial part of what ethical growth implies.

From a relatively young age, for example, we may be quite quick to defend or excuse ourselves in the face of an accusation or condemnation, even before we are particularly concerned with defending others or making allowances for them. At worst, this phenomenon can come from bias or from the childish desire to get out of trouble at all costs, perhaps stemming from an unhealthy self-love where we situate ourselves squarely at the centre of our world, from whence we never seem to do anything wrong except for the odd (very) innocent mistake! This might even be at the origin of a child's first lie, in the form of an untruthful denial of disobedience, aimed at escaping its consequences.

But sticking up for oneself can equally arise from sound self-assessment and an authentic sense of justice, depending on the situation. After all, when it comes to condemnation from outside, our

[333] Ibid.

accusers or judges may have falsely assumed certain negative motivations for our behaviour and we may be saddened or indignant at their unfair or harsh assessment, given our privileged access to our own intentions, over which we enjoy a particular authority.

That is not to say that our intentions are inscrutable to others, or that our motives are always obvious to ourselves. Just as others might realise we are in pain despite our Stoic attempts to conceal it,[334] so they may rightly assess our motivations, even when these remain relatively obscure to ourselves. In fact, it is here that those who love us dearly can have particularly good insight, to the point where they can at times offer a gentle word of correction should they see us deceiving ourselves. We may believe in our own good intentions without noticing ourselves slipping into rationalisation and self-justification, temporarily blinded by some powerful secondary desire at the expense of a greater good that we are in danger of neglecting. Perhaps we highlighted to ourselves only positive reasons to act as we wanted and chose on the whole to ignore certain very good reasons not to. Interestingly, if the correction comes from a good friend, we are more inclined to reconsider the situation. In particular, we can be surprised to find that something we did or said that we thought was well-intentioned actually hurt a friend, when this was furthest from our intention. We are more likely to reconsider the action with an attentive eye if the person involved is someone for whom we have a particular concern and care and who bears the same concern for our true flourishing. At times the gaze our friend has on us can be more revealing than our own gaze in the mirror. We can temper our self-defensiveness after a friendly word of caution comes our way, for example, if we sense the one offering the correction does so out of concern for our good. Yet, in general, because our motivations 'come from us', we have access to them and some authority over at least knowing what they are, just as we might explain our idea to someone in the field of artistic endeavour.

On the other side of the coin, when it comes to our judgement of others, in a state of moral immaturity, we can be very quick to believe a harsh word about a relative stranger and hastily dismiss someone based on hearsay, empathising *a priori* with our interlocutor with sentiments such as "yes, I hate people like that too, - those sort of people are so annoying", and so forth.

[334] Wittgenstein, Ludwig (2001), no. 246 at 76.

It becomes a very different story, however, should a dear friend be impugned. Knowing her as we do, we may confidently affirm: "Oh no, I'm sure she wouldn't have meant it like *that.* She is not vindictive in the slightest. She's just not that sort of person." And while bias on our part toward a friend remains possible, we have mentioned above that there is something particularly legitimate about the notion that, as a friend, one knows and understands one's friend in a privileged way, more so than might a relative stranger or especially an enemy, who seems to have stopped at some obstacle and lacks the eyes to see her in her proper goodness. The privileged access we have to our own intentions and heart is echoed in the access we have to those of a close friend. Indeed, on days when weariness has caught up with us and we are tempted to have an indulgent and exaggerated moan about someone to let off steam or elicit sympathy, we are careful not to unload onto one of her friends! In this sense, Aristotle affirms that only a friendship that has reached the other 'for her own sake' provides protection against slander.[335]

That is not to say that friendship renders us unrealistic. Even while assuming the best of our friend's actions and intentions and being quick to speak up for her when she is attacked behind her back, we might also cautiously reflect on the situation afterwards, re-examining her behaviour, which seems to have given rise to such angst in the complainant, in order to assess the extent to which such a chastisement might be grounded in truth. Was our friend not quite herself that day, perhaps overwhelmed by pressures that are mounting in her life, and so forth? Is there something practical we could do for her? Perhaps there is some clarity we could help bring to her, that she might overcome the contributing difficulties? Is her manner of responding in certain situations doing her no favours? How might we gently help her to see this? Again, the sorts of reflections one would normally make of oneself in a similar situation arise naturally with regard to another in friendship.

Our developing insight into our friend's situation takes place within the climate of trust that grows as friendship deepens, and each one feels able to progressively reveal the depth of herself to the other: her loves, joys, concerns, priorities, hopes, disappointments, sufferings and vulnerabilities. This revelation takes place experientially as the friends share life together and not simply as an exchange of words or personal information. Each one finds in her friend a receptivity of heart and

[335] Aristotle, N.E., 1157a.

a sensitivity in her regard, while at the same time developing this in herself for her friend, to the extent that she can anticipate her friend's reactions and feelings, and come to grieve or rejoice with her. I have noted above that deep friends begin to appropriate each other's interiority within the safe climate of loving acceptance and this mellowing or docility is part of the ethical refinement of the self.

But what is it about deep friendship that accounts for this development, where love's sentiment "what's mine is yours" is effectively extended to begin to include one's very self?

5.2. Preliminary Analogies with 'Other-Selfdom': Art, Education, Procreation

Elijah Millgram examines Aristotle's treatment of the friend as 'another self', highlighting analogous comparisons that the philosopher makes to both the artistic and the procreative spheres.[336] In both cases, Aristotle notes a preference: of artists for their own work and of parents for their own children. "… everyone likes his own products more than [other people's], as parents and poets do"[337] (and similarly, craftsmen and so forth).[338] There is a way in which an artist can be thought of as being 'in her art' and a parent 'in her child'. Indeed, when Aristotle speaks of 'kinship friendship' he emphasises that it is "uniformly derivative from the love of parents for their children"[339] and specifically states that "[a] parent loves his children as [he loves] himself. For what has come from him is a sort of other himself."[340] Similarly, he mentions a sense in which brothers are identical with each other, "since they are identical with their parents. They are in a sense the same thing, although in separate individuals."[341]

With these promising clues, Millgram attempts to extract an Aristotelian account of the hidden reason why deep character friends become other selves to each other. He suggests that this goes some way toward explaining the mysterious element of preference within this kind of friendship, where certain virtuous individuals end up being preferred over others and only a few qualify as 'other selves'. Why should virtuous friends not be as interchangeable with other people of their

[336] Millgram, Elijah (1987) at 361-76.
[337] Aristotle, N.E., 1120b.
[338] Aristotle, N.E., 1167b; N.E., 1168a.
[339] Aristotle, N.E., 1161b.
[340] Aristotle, N.E., 1161b; N.E., 1161b.
[341] Aristotle, N.E., 1161b.

kind or at least as 'upgradable', when more virtuous contenders come along, as utilitarian or pleasure friends tend to be throughout life? What accounts for the particularity of our deeper friendship choices and specifically of our finding this virtuous person like 'another self' and that one not?

Millgram joins the dots from both the artist and procreation analogies to friendship, via two important Aristotelian considerations: namely that virtue is an important part of what makes someone who she is,[342] and that virtuous friends actualise each other's life of virtue, or at least play a significant role in the maintenance and enhancement thereof.[343] Thus, he argues that the 'other-selfdom' of a virtuous friend arises for Aristotle, at least in part, because each is able to fondly behold her own creation or actuation in the other. By contrast, the common work of utility or experiences of pleasure that might be the main basis of other friendships are not so tied to 'who' the person is and thus do not give rise to such a direct beholding of one's self in the other or to a sense of the other as an extension of oneself.

Millgram generalises a *ratio procreationi* thus: "If A is a procreator of B then (i) A is a creator of B in the sense that A is causally responsible for B's being, and (ii) B has the same [kind of] being that A does," [344] specifying that with the procreation of a child, the parents are responsible for 'what' their child is (i.e., her 'human being'), while with friendship, each friend is responsible for 'who' her friend is (i.e., her 'virtuous being').[345] Thus we 'make' friends in at least two senses of the word.

He argues that for Aristotle, it is this 'procreative' relation that gives rise to other-selfdom, which naturally tends toward loving the friend for her own sake, just as we love our self for our own sake:

[342] Millgram, Elijah (1987) at iv.
[343] Ibid. Millgram reports that Cooper includes in his account of Aristotle's arguments to show that friendship is part of a flourishing life, the fact that friends act as human mirrors in which one can better see one's own virtue and that one's friends are the teammates one needs to play the game of a virtuous life. Millgram, Elijah (1987), at iv (referencing Cooper, John M (1977) 619-48). Millgram adds moral education as one service that a virtuous friend does for another for the enhancement of her virtue.
[344] Millgram, Elijah (1987) at iii, iv.
[345] Ibid at iv.

> …the creature is the procreator's 'other self' because the procreator is responsible for the creature's having the being that they share, and it is natural for the procreator to have a special concern for his creature as an actualisation of his being.[346]
>
> … B loves A because he is a procreator of A, and procreators love their creatures. These causal interactions make each friend the other's 'other self' and bring about the love of the friend for his own sake.[347]

At the end of the article, Millgram somewhat distances himself from what he regards as the implicit conclusions in Aristotle's text, saying that they give too much and the wrong kind of role to self-love within friendship. He quotes the final line of Robert Frost's poem 'Hyla Brook' to delineate his own position: "We love the things we love for what they are," to which he adds "not for what we have made them."[348]

His suspicion that these creative and procreative connections overplay self-love within friendship-love is hasty, and tends toward collapsing the analogies into direct comparisons, all the while taking too reductive a view of the sources of satisfaction that one can legitimately take in one's own work, whether in the field of art or in the development of one's students or children. In any case, these comparisons of Aristotle are not meant to tell the full story of 'other-selfdom'. They occur more as asides designed to effectively evoke certain aspects of the subject at hand. Closer examination reveals how perceptively Aristotle's comparisons are chosen, despite their fundamental differences, for they point toward the unique bond that will be established due to friendship's particular mode of the actuation of potentiality.

After mining these comparisons for the riches contained therein, I shall seek to analyse friendship's particular mode of actuation, for this will provide the key in elucidating the thread that binds together *eudaimonia*, virtuous activity and virtuous friends, vindicating the structure of *Nicomachean Ethics* with remarkable clarity.

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[346] Ibid.
[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid at vi.

It is useful first of all to observe that to naturally prefer what came from oneself or what intimately touches one's own life is not essentially or even primarily a projection of self-love. It is true that in friendship there is a particular significance and importance in the shared experiences by which friends have helped each other become 'more who each one is', and thus to flourish, manifesting their mutual benevolence toward each other. But when we look more closely into these analogies of 'other-selfdom', all the while respecting their unique differences, we can see a progressive opening toward the other, which exists in seed even at the artistic level, with the respect the artist has for natural qualities and for the materials of her medium in their properties for transformation; and which goes all the way to the profound alterity seen in deep character relationships, where the other is truly loved for her own sake. Friendship has its own particular genius when it comes to 'bringing us out of ourselves'.

5.2.i. 'Other-selfdom' in artistic activity

5.2.i.a. The artist's conception governs the work

I shall first assemble the aspects of 'other-selfdom' that already begin to emerge within artistic activity. It is uncontroversial to assert that an artwork somehow contains within it something of the artist, who is its source. Generally speaking, with human work, the artist aims at some sort of transformation of matter until it attains a new form, one that to some extent already exists or initially begins to develop in her imagination and intelligence as an idea, which then functions as a model or 'exemplary cause' for the work's realisation. This artistic idea determines every aspect of the work, from the choice of matter for transformation, through the selection of the tools used and their manner of employment, to judgements regarding the work's completion and level of success. I have already alluded above to the fact that the exemplary cause is 'principal' for artistic activity, whether the idea predates the beginning of the working process as something already complete in concept, or whether it evolves during the work itself and crystallises at some point into what the artist/worker realises that she is aiming at.

With the finer arts in particular, each work in some way bears the artist's signature, the stamp of her unique genius. The work exteriorises her creative inspiration, combining her innate gift with the talent, virtuosity and finesse that she has been able to develop in her medium over time, shaped

by her particular set of relevant formative experiences. Indeed, the artist can touch a type of immortality through the works that continue to be appreciated across generations. Today's connoisseurs can feel intimately acquainted with Bach or Giotto, centuries after their passing, bearing them fond gratitude, via appreciation of their genius as it is manifested in the works that survive them. In an artist's work, we can contemplate and admire her creativity, her way of finding such striking juxtapositions that highlight the expressive qualities of her medium, and her ability to hold the work together as a cohesive whole, capable of radiating its new form with clarity and splendour to the delight of the beholder.

For good reason, the artist might take legitimate pride in a successful work from several angles: she might enjoy the fact that she herself is the source of this new creation; or that she has succeeded in incarnating her idea, overcoming via intelligence and labour whatever obstacles presented themselves; or that she has been vindicated in the whole enterprise as her idea came to fruition, justifying the effort and sacrifice that she personally invested in the project. The work may clearly show forth that her intuition was particularly inspired. Just as in friendship, one virtuous person might stand out among many others as 'someone we would like to be friends with', so one artistic possibility may have stood out among many to the artist as 'the promising idea that should be realised' and when this intuition proved correct, the result is particularly satisfying to behold.

Notwithstanding this sort of self-satisfaction, other aspects of her artistic genius are already outward looking. Each successful work reveals some aspect of her sensitivity or appreciation for the sensible qualities of her medium, often where these occur in nature, along with her sense of their evocative potential and ability to move the human soul. Upon completion of a work, she may simply savour its objective beauty alongside other beholders, albeit with the heightened appreciation that comes from having developed a greater artistic intelligence in her speciality. Her satisfaction in having captured and embodied in art some insight into the beauty of things might not first of all have its accent on her own success. Rather she may be taken up in admiration for the transcendent beauty that her work evokes.

There are two sides to the coin of artistic satisfaction and only one bears the artist's head! While she always stands at the origin of her work, it is not uncommon for an artist to feel privileged and awed at having uncovered such beauty and brought it to the fore, as if she has as much discovered

as created it. She may feel undeservedly humbled in possessing an artistic gift that gives her this uncanny ability to reveal hidden treasures, allowing her to make explicit what is always somehow implicit in the universe. Why did it fall to her to pick out this gem of a melody or discover that haunting harmony that was somehow eternally in the air, poised in the limbo of the possible? How was it that she happened upon the treasure of this effective combination of light and colour that could just as well reveal itself in tomorrow's sunset? As early as Plato, writers have picked up on this sense of inspiration as containing a divine or divine-like element, 'from above' as it were,[349] for which they rightly feel a sense of gratitude in having been associated. This is perhaps analogous to the notion of procreation in the Judeo-Christian tradition, which fosters an awareness in parents that while, from one point of view they are at the origin of their child, from another they could never have 'made' something so wonderful. At the level of creativity what has emerged is beyond them. The notion of 'procreation' has always included a sense of co-operation with God, who according to a traditional Christian metaphysics, directly creates the soul, while the parents contribute bodily matter, which in its intricacy was itself not even of their own designing. As Eve says in Genesis 4:1, "With the help of the LORD I have brought forth a man."

In any case, the great artist will not overly revel in her own work. No sooner might she finish than she readily embark upon her next project, as if propelled by inner necessity, given that no one work can exhaust her creativity or express all that her medium presses her to express, in respect of her deep appreciation for its possibilities to embody beauty. It may well be that working on one idea helps germinate the next, which now takes on its own 'need to exist'. We think of Beethoven's famous turning point in the '*Heiligenstädt testimony',* where he wrote, as depression over his encroaching deafness threatened to overwhelm him, that were it not for the inspiration of his art, he would have taken his own life:

> …it was only my art that held me back. Ah, it seemed to me impossible to leave the world until I had brought forth all that I felt was within me.[350]

An artist is aware that her idea, however original, is preceded by the pre-existing beauty of the sensible qualities of which she is not the author and that she is so given to admire in nature.

[349] Plato, 'Ion' at 533d-535a.
[350] Beethoven, Ludwig, (1972) at 38-40.

Coupled with this is an awareness of the 'rightness' of her finished product, perhaps analogously with the way parents tend to marvel at the 'perfection' of each newborn. She can humbly acknowledge that she indeed possesses a 'gift', all the while being taken up in the responsibility not to waste it through laziness or neglect. Artistic talent can seem to her as it did to Beethoven, to carry the inner necessity to be developed both for the benefit of others and in the service of her art.

Related to this is the way an artist will often find her idea unfolding and evolving with its own compelling logic throughout the artistic process. A Mozart who can seemingly perceive the whole of a new work from the outset is a very rare phenomenon, though here the case for 'giftedness' emerges with even more clarity, for he seems to grasp all at once the 'rightness' of his music. Most artists walk a more mundane path toward the glory of their finished work and yet even where an artist suffers dryness, she is often able to trust that the breakthrough she needs is just around the corner. She 'knows' that with perseverance, she will suddenly find *the* way of proceeding so that this artwork that somehow 'needs' to exist, actually can. Thus, present within the artistic process can be a sense of solving a riddle in order to bring forth a new work. She trusts, through some unspecifiable artistic logic, that there will be a way forward that will ultimately manifest her intuition. Once the struggle is over and the problems are resolved, artistic labour is overshadowed by the satisfaction that the 'inevitability' of the work that she somehow sensed in the foggy shadows of artistic exploration has finally emerged into the clear light of day.

5.2.i.b. '*Hexis*', '*habitus*', or 'stable disposition' in art – and the deepening of wonder

The more an artist develops the *hexis* (*'habitus'* or 'stable acquired disposition') of her art, that is, as her talent takes root in her and becomes connatural to her, the more she is intimately acquainted with all of the complexity it entails. Living through the struggles first-hand, even while developing facility, helps hone her knowledge of what is involved in bringing a fine work to completion, more so than if she were merely a keen connoisseur. She remembers every step along the way, particularly the conquering of difficult hurdles. Her craft becomes all the dearer to her the more of herself she has invested. This in turn contributes to her deeper appreciation for the work of others in her field, for she knows what goes into things. She can admire what her colleagues have been able to achieve. But like a mother, she will form a particular bond with the child she has personally

carried and sometimes all the more so if that pregnancy and labour posed singular challenges. Indeed, henceforth she will regard other children with the appreciation of a 'mother's eye'.

Aristotle's word *hexis* can be applied analogously to both art and virtue.[351] Both are developed through many experiences that render the attentive person practically intelligent: the first in some field of mastery, the second in the business of living well. A chef might make an omelette, but many omelettes make a chef, just as one might become courageous through performing many brave acts. The artistic *hexis* develops as a quality in her intelligence, rendering her an artist, and, providing it does not go to her head as if she were somehow 'superior' to those less appreciative 'plebs', it will make her more attentive to the great work of others in her field and fill her with a spirit of awe and appreciation. The greatest artists are often the humblest when it comes to their own work and that of others. They are not pre-occupied with proving themselves or with climbing some competitive ladder to establish a reputation and so they are less susceptible to jealousy in the face of another's success. Rather they continuously occupy the world of wonder and admiration for the artform that has preoccupied and shaped them for so long.

Already with art then, where one could well consider a creation the possession of its creator, the creativity operates within a wider world of appreciation that the artist does not possess and that rightly calls for wonder and transcendence. This sense of awe is perhaps as necessary a pre-requisite for authentic art as Plato and Aristotle believe it to be for authentic philosophy.[352, 353] The artwork in its perfection tells a deeper 'truth' than the splendour of its own form or the idea of its maker. Its beauty stems from, and points to, the 'rightness' and indeed the 'goodness' of all that is. Great art in itself calls for the contemplation of the beholder and rewards that contemplation with a taste of delight. It prepares the way for the more ultimate contemplation of the truth and goodness that grounds all of reality. Art takes on the biblical role of a 'John the Baptist', announcing a transcendent beauty that it cannot fully embody but to which it bears witness and in which it participates, despite its limitations.[354] Thus, as Pieper notes, the arts naturally become the

[351] Aristotle, N.E., 1105b, 25-6; Met. 1022; Categories viii.
[352] Plato, 'Theaetetus' at 115d.
[353] Aristotle, Met. 982b.
[354] Jn. 1, 23-7.

companions and means to human festival, which, historically in every culture in a multitude of ways, seeks to celebrate goodness at its radical source.[355]

5.2.ii. Other-Selfdom in Education

As much as an artwork speaks of the artist's creative genius, it is of course of a different nature from that of the artist herself. Michelangelo is more than a static object and Bach more than a sound. But when it comes to teachers and students, and especially to parents and children, there is another sort of satisfaction in generating 'another self' that can exceed that taken in inanimate works within the artistic sphere, however splendid these might be. An artist may love her finished product, but it cannot reciprocate, nor express gratitude of any sort. Her work cannot possess the true alterity of another self.

Teaching is a sort of 'cross-over' art, in the direction of parenting, of which it can be seen as an extension, in that the fruit and product of one's labour is the development of a person in some field of expertise. A teacher may be said to be *in* her students, as Aristotle notes in Physics:

> It is not absurd that the actualization of one thing should be in another… (e.g., the teacher is in the student).[356]

The teacher enables the actualisation of a certain potential within the student. She helps to induct her student into the wonderful world that she already occupies at whatever level of expertise. To see her student flourish in her field and even exceed her own competence can be a particular source of satisfaction for a teacher. As a student grows in practical know-how, artistic endeavour, understanding or contemplation, the teacher delights in sharing the joy that such mastery can bring to life. On a related level, Aristotle mentions the particular love a benefactor has for his beneficiary: "the beneficiary is his product and hence he likes him".[357] Again, the beneficiary is enabled by her benefactor to develop and realise her potential that would have otherwise been limited due to lack of resources.

[355] Pieper, Josef (1999) at 52-9.
[356] Aristotle, Phy., 202b; Met., 1058a.
[357] Aristotle, N.E., 1168a.

In turn, there is a bond of gratitude that can develop from a student toward a great teacher. Teacher and student can even later become friends, as was the case between Plato and Aristotle,[358] as the relationship progresses beyond the imparting of understanding, skill or art, and within the depth of such a friendship are embedded mutual happy memories from the formative period of the student's life. In a similar way parents and children can later become friends, once they enter more obviously into relations of equality. A willing and appreciative student who exceeds all expectations is a rare delight for her teacher; and the teacher destined to be remembered is the one who inspired her students and seemed to believe in their potential perhaps more than they did themselves at the time. The student is ever grateful to have met a teacher who was prepared to go the extra mile to help her potential be realised.

We have seen how an artist has already developed a deep respect for the qualities and potential of the material that she employs, in its reactiveness to this or that touch or tool, condition and so forth. Analogously, the educator must respect her 'material for transformation' but all the more this time, for it is a person, who equally shares an interiority and lives a life. This person may be more or less cooperative, having both good days and bad days. She may well be fitting the enterprise of learning into a much wider gamut of life's activities that claim her attention at all sorts of levels.

Thus, the teacher is already less 'possessive' over her students than an artist would be over an inanimate work. She in no way owns her students. She seeks to help them develop a *hexis,* which will be part of their repertoire in life, enhancing the quality and freedom that they bring to their endeavours. She does not mould her student as a potter does clay. A teacher may legitimately claim copyright over certain teaching materials she has developed, but never over her students. They are not her creation in the same way. Were a devoted teacher of a very promising baritone to counsel him never to marry in order to pose no obstacle to his developing career, she would have surely overstepped the mark. The student is always more than a budding artist.

[358] Aristotle, N.E., Book I.

Furthermore, the student can delight her teacher in her very uniqueness. It is part of the adventure of teaching to see how each student personalises their learning and uniquely manifests their talents. The student will develop her own artistic personality as it were and express her art in her own way. Each person's creative pathway unfolds individually, taking into account the many and varied influences on that particular life, of which the teacher is but one. This adds to the richness of the experience. The teacher is not in control of her student's destiny. She is not in the business of cloning. She has facilitated her student's growth and enlarged her possibilities. She has helped enrich a life and can feel particularly grateful to have been a part of a process of formation that transcends herself. 'A child is educated by a village' and one of the key members to co-operate in any meaningful education is of course the student herself, whose eagerness, spark or zeal can make a tremendous difference. Indeed, the gratitude of a student can spur a teacher on to offer more. Seeing her student come alive or grow in excitement motivates, inspires and reinvigorates a teacher, helping her to rediscover her first love, that is, the freshness and natural appeal of her field of study that had so excited her in her own time of first discovery, and which (if she is the best kind of teacher) continues to excite her.

The satisfaction taken by the teacher in seeing the unfolding career of a successful student reflects in part the investment of time, energy and expertise that went into the process. The teacher may have offered her efforts to many students, but for some mysterious reason this particular one has 'clicked' and 'soaked everything up'. Similarly, there is a bond of gratitude from a student who realises which teachers along her path were able to truly inspire her and were there at significant turning points in her artistic development. The teacher herself develops through teaching, not just a *habitus* for teaching but a more reflective understanding of her own subject, gaining insight over time as to what is truly essential. She may behold something of herself in the successful student, but much more than this, she admires the way that her student has personalised the *habitus* of her art and now is able to uniquely embody and manifest it.

5.2.iii. Other-Selfdom in Procreation

The other analogy for 'other-selfdom' is procreation and it is clear that parents have a particular love for their own children, who have (usually) not only come from them genetically, which in itself is already a source of awe, but in whom they have invested so much of themselves and with

whom they have shared the most formative and significant moments of their child's life. Biologically, the child may be thought of as a prolongation of her parents, continuing their name and often bearing certain of their features and characteristics, sharing in and being formed by their common familial and cultural heritage. New parents often attest that their lives change radically overnight with the arrival of their firstborn, naturally accepting that everything now revolves around another, who elicits from them the care and love that she needs to thrive. The child's flourishing becomes the decisive good for this new community and quickly reorients many decisions. In procreation parents are of course more than the material source for their child's developing body. With the birth of the child they are straight away the guardians of the development of her soul, all the while respecting that this new person emerges with increasing autonomy and freedom as time goes on. The privileged task of 'bringing up children' is the first natural exercise of authority, where those with more competence find themselves in charge of others who totally depend on them, necessitating the continual making of wise choices that facilitate the psychological and spiritual growth of their child, that it may keep pace with her natural physical growth.

Parents are normally the first educators of their children and from this point of view something of what has already been mentioned about the bond that can develop between teachers and students applies here also. But education in the family, while including the developing of competence and skill in many areas, is often more centred around the development of character, functioning as an apprenticeship in practical wisdom. Even the initial education around building habits of eating and sleeping helps to set up the preliminaries of temperance, where the intelligence needs to penetrate the desires that accompany the instinctive and passional drive toward what offers immediate solace. A new child takes her first steps within the family, not just in walking, but in sharing, empathising, sacrificing and forgiving, often thanks to the enforced daily presence of her brothers and sisters. Her early sense of justice and entitlement with regard to what is 'mine' gets tempered with the need for gentleness and an awareness of the limits and capacities of others: "Your sister doesn't understand. Let her have a turn." The child learns to receive love and give it in return; she grows in obedience and respect for those in authority over her; she learns how to heed advice and to trust, as well as to be honest and trustworthy herself. The preliminaries of courage may develop via encounters with bullying or nastiness, or even facing bee-stings and falls with resilience, or

through learning to 'roll with the punches' in sport and other games. Indeed, the family is normally the first place where the precursors of full-blown friendship develop in bud.

In childhood, one never has to face the lonely philosophical question posed by Descartes in his 'method of doubt' or quest for certainty,[359] as to whether or not someone else actually exists. We are not born in isolation but immediately into relationship. Indeed, in the first few years, the child may spend every waking minute with family members, who take no shortage of interest in her development. Her battle later on may indeed be for her own space, her own bedroom and time to herself, well before she faces the more sophisticated challenges of apparent philosophical solipsism that tend to arise within the solitude of university offices!

What is unique to the parent-child relationship is that it begins in total dependence and one-sidedness and eventually develops toward equality and even friendship, while guarding a permanent place for the legitimate filial piety that arises from the debt of gratitude from child to parent. At the beginning, parental wisdom substitutes for any prudence on the child's behalf but arguably the greatest parental task lies in the education of their child's prudence, that she might one day take her place among the wise, with all the *nous* and virtue she needs to face life's challenges and complexities. So many of the problems that typify the parent-child relationship during the child's teenage years stem from a passage that both parties often find difficult: the parents in letting go and gradually relinquishing their guardianship and authority in favour of a role of friendly counsel; and the child in taking up more responsibility along with the greater freedoms she longs to exercise.

The life that a family builds together, with all of its particular joys, stories, humour, struggles, tragedies, sacrifices and so forth, leads to bonds that tend to be life-long. The default for a family is that no matter what happens, they are 'in this together'. The family often gives the first taste of 'unconditional love'. Brothers and sisters of a similar age typically develop special kinship friendships, having shared most of their formative experiences in close proximity, notwithstanding normal sibling rivalries. Indeed, they will probably be the very ones at the bedside of whomever among them is first to pass away. Within the community of the family, where an overarching love

[359] Veitch, John (1850) at iv.

has enveloped a network of dependence and responsibility for so many years, the sense that family members are implicated in each other's lives and that the thriving of one cannot be properly envisioned without the thriving of the others lends itself very quickly to a sense of other-selfdom that is far from self-centred. It is not simply the extension of an individual to that of a clan, but the emergence within a clan of a genuine desire one for the other that each one thrive and flourish in personalised ways that truly matter. When things go as they should, this community learns to live for each other in ways that foster life-long mutual gratitude and appreciation.

5.2.iv. Other-Selfdom in Deep Friendship

Only one kind of relationship seems to penetrate deeper than these natural family bonds and it often becomes the basis for a new family bond, namely the friendship of spouses or life-partners. In turning now to the other-selfdom of friendship *per se*, we seek to examine its uniqueness and show clearly that a healthy self-love, a love for one's friend as another self and the loving of a friend for her own sake are perfectly compatible with each other and deeply intertwined.

Compared with the parent-child or the teacher-student or benefactor-beneficiary bonds, and certainly beyond the relation an artist may have to her work, the bond of friendship is strikingly more symmetrical, equal and immediately reciprocal. It is also freely chosen and so boasts a greater element of election than do family bonds or than is usually the case between students and teachers.

That the natural pronoun between friends is a simple and natural use of "we" is a sign of this. The actions of friends often arise together with initiatives prefaced by the imperative "Let's…" rather than the "What we are going to do today is…" that characterises the instructions of teachers. Here, of course, the 'we' is a less bossy way to say 'you' or if it means 'we' it refers to different modes of participation, such as 'I as instructor, you as instructed' or 'I as mentor, you as mentored'. Enlightened educators might shun so-called top-down 'empty-vessel' approaches to education that seem too much like "I teach, you learn," though they delight in other asymmetrical models such as "I facilitate, you discover" and the general underlying expectation in many cases remains that what lies in store by way of student discovery has already been largely appropriated by the teacher. When this turns out not to be the case it can become a source of particular delight. A teacher may

report to her colleague that "little Maria or Johnny came up with a whole new way of approaching something today which was so striking and actually brilliant. I'd never looked at it like that, but she is absolutely correct!" Even here though, part of the delight and noteworthiness is the rarity of such occasions, and the teacher is in a position to evaluate the brilliance, being so much more familiar with the complexity of the subject at hand than the student who has hit upon a clever route of entry.

Parents too need to have more of an eye on the overall agenda of a family's activities than their children can be expected to have. One tends to cringe on seeing a parent constantly acquiesce to a toddler's demand at a supermarket for "that one" or who overly consults her little one in order to know what to buy or do next. Used in the right way, this technique of involving the child in the shopping can of course serve two ends, one immediate and the other more long term: namely to keep the child from smouldering in the irritation of boredom before erupting into a public tantrum demanding to go home; or to foster the broader development of prudence by inviting the child into the world of connecting what is bought in a supermarket with what is actually needed in the family. Notwithstanding this however, a child can be traumatised by being regularly treated as a little expert, if she is thrust into a position of responsibility for the family purse or timetable that is beyond her ability to manage. It can also foster the development of a little 'King or Queen Tut' where the child's wish becomes the parents' command and we sense that such a development serves no one's good. By this kind of indulgence, she may be said to be 'spoiled'.

Among the relations surveyed that touch 'other-selfdom', friendship is the only one that is not chiefly concerned with 'getting the other off the ground', and more naturally embraces simply being and doing things together. The artist gives her work its formal determination and the benefactor enables her beneficiary at some level of means. Teaching is primarily formative and parenting, while wider than this, arguably derives its chief responsibility from that same aspect, even while pertaining more to the child's character and being enveloped in a love that outlasts the formative stage. The togetherness of the family is certainly real beyond formative experiences, but while to some extent a family may at times be seen relaxing on holiday, a certain level of work, formation and care for the children enjoys no day off. One only has to see the level of offence taken if someone describes a 'stay-at-home-parent' as someone who 'does not work', to realise that this formative component is never far away. We do not speak of the time passed between good

friends as ‘work’ in the same way. Were we to do so, we would imply that something is amiss: as if being with our friend were somehow draining, due to some sort of overdependence. It is more akin to babysitting than friendship. They are not ‘pulling their weight’. Thus, benefactors, teachers and parents prepare a person for life in different ways, while friends are more directly those with whom that life is lived. They engage together, sharing life’s adventure.

We have noted Aristotle’s great insight whilst observing the myriad of friendships that unfold in life, namely, that friendships that are based primarily on utility or pleasure are at best partial friendships, so that one could see them as apprenticeship or practice friendships for deeper and more complete ones. These friendships prepare for fuller friendship in a manner analogous to the way in which playground or school experiences help to socialise youngsters, or apprenticeships prepare someone for skilled labour. Friends like this may delight in sharing various useful or pleasurable experiences together but they do not yet share in life’s fullness. They do not tend to unveil to one another who each of them is in their core and so do not in any deep sense make of themselves a gift to the other.

A deeper sharing of life and self calls for an authentic prioritising of life’s goods and loves, as Philippe’s analysis outlined above made abundantly clear. While it is true that deep friends will share the whole gamut of experience together, whether trivial or meaningful, for lasting and mature friendship, each has had to develop a certain wisdom around what is more important in life and has allowed this to shape their priorities in ways that truly help the other flourish. Indeed, as the friend comes to be seen as a personal good whom one has discovered in her own right in a climate of love, she herself becomes one of those goods that is most important in life. As we explored in Chapter IV, the deep friend is one of the noblest goods known to us, for the sake of whom other goods are utilised, relativised and even at times happily foregone.

Aristotle observes in the *Metaphysics* that potentiality and actuation are in interplay in analogous ways at diverse levels of being.[360] It is important to realise here that the way in which a friend actuates her friend’s life of love is very different from the way an artist actuates her art, or a teacher her student. The clear distinction between ethical and artistic actuation goes as far as a difference

[360] Aristotle, Met., Book ix.

in principal causality. As we have seen, what is principal for artistic actuation is exemplary causality, which is a special instance of formal causality. The form for the new work is first present intentionally as an idea, and it is this that determines the emerging reality at every step, in the manner of labour employed to bring it about, the choice of tools, the way of judging completion and success and so forth, with regard to the transformation of matter involved. This aspect remains primary in the 'art of education' which communicates some form (in knowledge or know-how) from one subject to the other. By contrast, the actuation that deep friends are able to be for each other is primarily at the level of final causality. The friend becomes an end-good, loved for her own sake, and for the sake of whom other goods become ordered as means. The goodness of a friend helps to actuate one's capacity for love into an ongoing state of loving, anchoring an intention of life and an amical choice that renders that love stable. We have already explored the unique way that love, in co-operation with the intelligence, becomes an organising force. Spiritual love allows us to reach the level of alterity necessary to love another for her own sake and this has immediate implications for the way in which the other comes to be seen as 'another self'.

Millgram presented Aristotle as accounting for the particularity of the preference for the other in character friendships and the stability of such friendships, by the fondness one naturally has for what one has actuated and the fact that this actuation touches the level of the other person's stable and good character traits and thus is closely tied to their being and life.[361] Through evoking the various analogies touched on by Aristotle, Millgram asserts that the philosopher's underlying reason for this fondness stems from the notion that if something is significantly brought into act by another, it contains within itself an extension or prolongation of its source of actuation. He believes that for Aristotle this recognition of a prolongation of oneself in the other is the key to regarding the other as 'another self' and for the particular fondness of this love. But this would imply that friends are somehow at the origin of a new form for each other, akin to a work of formation seen analogously in art, education and parenting. Were this true, the friends having 'made each other' in the act of 'making friends' could indeed enjoy contemplating themselves in one another. The actuator, who already loves herself healthily (as the virtuous do), could now love what is 'of herself' in the other with a love of predilection. This, of course, becomes the very

[361] Millgram, Elijah (1987) at iv.

reason that Millgram ends up rejecting the explanation as having given too much and the wrong kind of role to self-love within friendship.

We are now in a position to pinpoint the detour taken by Millgram that made his so-called Aristotelian account into a caricature worth rejecting. We suggest that the reason for the preference and particularity in deep friendship is simpler than the admiration of a new form that one has helped to originate in the in the other person. If we imagine for a moment that someone could easily substitute other virtuous people for a dear friend and or seek to upgrade her friend when she meets a more virtuous example, it would become clear that another problematic assumption is at play, namely that virtue is the *basis* of the friendship. That is to say, the two would have chosen each other either because they enjoy contemplating virtue in one another or because they need virtuous people in their lives. This effectively makes of character friendship a particular case of either pleasure or utility friendship (or both) and hence gives rise to the same possibility of interchangeability of persons as one finds there, whenever circumstances change in such a way that others can provide more conducive forms of enjoyment or usefulness.

But if virtue is not at the basis of deep friendship, what is?

The particularity of such friendships is indeed tied to the actualisation of potentiality, but not at the level of exemplary causality, where what is actualised takes on a new form thanks to what is in act, as we saw within the analogous levels of formation regarding artistic activity, education and parenting. In these areas there is legitimate pride in having been at the source of another in some way, even if there is, at each of these levels, a way in which the other is already partially transcendent, as we have explored. We have seen with the artist that much more is going on than someone admiring a prolongation of herself in her work. She is first of all a contemplative of the qualities in nature that her art embodies, and her own work pays them certain homage in its beauty and perfection. The teacher and parent inasmuch as they contribute to the formation of those in their care, whether in fields of art or virtue, become sources of actuation so that the other can be more fully who she is and realise her own potential in these areas. They share something of life's fullness in order to draw another into fullness, rather than strictly draw her into becoming some sort of replica or prolongation of themselves. Thus, even within the exemplary causality implied

in education (whether by teachers or parents), the other is empowered in an open-ended way that contributes to her personal autonomy.

The mutual actualisation that takes place in deep friendship is governed more directly by final causality, where the personal goodness of each friend, recognised in the intelligence of the other, becomes the source of an attraction of spiritual love that draws each one out of herself and toward the other, all the while hollowing out a space of deep receptivity in each one's heart. Within this state of loving, where we seek to share life with the one we increasingly carry in the heart, the intelligence makes a discernment regarding the value of this friend as someone worth putting first, ahead of a myriad of secondary goods and goals. This re-orientation of the self around another is the opposite of selfishness and a far cry from a mere projection of the self. The friend is chosen for herself and this predilection goes to all the way to her being, not stopping at what each friend grasps of the friendship or how each one benefits from it, whether in pleasure or usefulness. Within the personal engagement implied in this mutual choice, no sense can be made of upgrading or moving on from one's friend should 'better' candidates arrive. Indeed, the alterity in deep friendship is all the more heightened than that already seen within the various analogous types of formation.

Virtue's indispensable role in all of this emerges under this umbrella of spiritual love. It is framed by the goodness of the friend on the one side and the loving intention it gives rise to on the other. Fidelity to one's friend and the responsibility implied in allowing oneself to actualise the other's capacity for love and to anchor her intention of life and amical choice, necessitates a practical wisdom that resists sacrificing higher loves for lower ones, or nobler goods for lesser. Thus, the actualisation that takes place in the context of final causality, includes not only one's capacity to love and one's capacity for deep personal engagement, but also one's capacity to develop the practical intelligence and stable character traits that enable this engagement to be lived out within the complexities of daily life.

The good friend is another self *par excellence,* not because she is seen as a prolongation of ourselves, thanks to our contribution to her life, but because we have allowed her goodness to take first place amid a myriad of goods, thanks to spiritual love, intention and choice. This preference paves the way toward fulfilment and happiness, which in itself bears witness to the fact that the

human spirit is incomplete in isolation. And within this choice of deep friendship, the other's flourishing becomes inseparable from our own. It is in this healthiest of senses that Aristotle refers to the notion that the friend becomes another self. She means as much to me as I do to myself; has the same priority in my life that I would normally have reserved for myself, and so forth. And while I may have been privileged to play a role for my friend toward the actuation of her 'best self', it is her 'self' that is actuated and not 'me in her'. She is not an embodiment of my idea as in art, nor formed thanks to my craft or expertise, as in education. She is my friend and so I delight in finding ways to be a true good for her. I would willingly and joyfully treat her as I would naturally tend to treat myself, especially in the way in which a virtuous person would seek her own true and authentic good, rather than simply what is most pleasurable and useful for herself. Similarly, the friend's actuation of my capacity to love through her personal goodness, allows me to be more truly myself. It is only when some unhealthy fusion has taken place that she might be reduced to becoming an extension of myself, as when passional or pleasurable elements take first place at the expense of safeguarding spiritual love. When a useful project takes over, human relations are in danger of being reduced to networking and under those conditions we cannot get beyond the self in a way that enables the ethical life to properly flourish. When pleasure or enjoyment takes first place, what is demanded and expected of the other is what is most conducive to my pleasure, and this risks subsuming the other.

Aristotle's ethics has at times been unfairly criticised as egoistic, inasmuch as the virtuous subject ultimately seeks her own happiness.[362] This accusation misses the fact that both deep goodness and happiness come together within the full-blown experience of a friendship as each friend helps to fulfil the other. This experience is counter-egotistical, helping a person to go beyond herself in favour of another. She becomes happy not to be the sole occupant at the centre of her world. At the very least 'I' has become 'we', but more importantly, 'I love' has found a 'you' significant enough to draw one out of what might otherwise tend to be a self-seeking or self-centred existence, however much it might aim at noble projects or impressive mastery. It is not of course infallible that any newfound 'we' has been the result of the mutual discovery of another's personal goodness in a spiritual love that reaches the other for her own sake. Erich Fromm writes for example of love and marriage where "the main emphasis is on finding a refuge from an otherwise unbearable sense

[362]I shall address this charge in detail in Chapter VIII.

of loneliness," and "an alliance is formed of two against the world (in an) … *egoism à deux* [that] is mistaken for love and intimacy."[363]

Yet in deep friendship, amid the myriad of goods that attract us and draw our capacity to love into a state of loving, the existent personal goodness of someone whom we welcome as another self and who reciprocates this love in our regard, holds a unique place, with regards to both happiness and ethics. This is because here we encounter someone who has become an end-good, around whom we would happily orient our life. This experience is all the richer for being reciprocal as we at the same time become such a good for that person.

[363] Fromm, Erich (1956) at 72-4.

VI

THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRACTICAL WISDOM, VIRTUE AND FRIENDSHIP

I shall now explore the interrelationship between friendship and what may be regarded as the two essential pillars of 'Virtue Ethics', namely *phronesis* (practical wisdom) and virtue itself. In Aristotle it is explicit that virtue and *phronesis* are inseparable and co-constitutive,[364] as is the notion that complete friendship is only possible among those for whom virtue and *phronesis* have become a way of life.[365] What is also clear is that friendship is essential in life and in particular to the virtuous for the full expression of their life of virtuous activity.[366]

I shall attempt to complete the triangular relationship between *phronesis,* virtue and friendship, by seeking to elucidate what remains implicit in Aristotle's text, namely that deep friendship itself is essential to and co-constitutive of both *phronesis* and virtue.[367] I shall try to shed light on this side of the relationship and seek to make explicit the philosophical order that binds them one to another, within what is effectively their inseparability in practice. For this purpose, it will be useful to summarise *phronesis* from an Aristotelian perspective, before tracing its relationship first with virtue and then with friendship. I shall then explore the formative role that the development of deep friendship plays with regard to specific elements of *phronesis*.

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[364] Aristotle, N.E., 1139b.
[365] Aristotle, N.E., 1156b.
[366] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a.
[367] Martha Nussbaum has assembled the threads in Aristotle where he presents what she divides into the instrumental value of *philia* (See Nussbaum, Martha (2001) at 262-5) and its intrinsic value (Ibid at 365-8) for ethical maturity. She notes that *philia* plays an instrumental role in the development of good character and appropriate aspiration, particular in the context of close personal family relationships, where the affection and sense of belonging to each other increases the sense of responsibility and gratitude. By extension, the particularity of the knowledge that parents have for children enable them to be more accurate in the estimations and deliberations that contribute toward practical wisdom in their regard (Ibid cf. 362-3). A second instrumental influence is the way that friends tend to become interested in each other's interests, and this can be a force for good or bad, depending on the caliber of the friends (Ibid at 363). Similarly close friends tend to want to emulate each other and this can provide motivation toward ethical growth, again depending on the caliber of the friend (Ibid). Other instrumental helps come with the way that friends tend to make their resources available for each other, and readily assist one another when help is needed. They also tend to add a note of enjoyment to any activity that they are able to share together compared to what would have been possible alone (Ibid). Furthermore, they help one another with self-knowledge, by receiving from the other how they are perceived and understood (Ibid at 364). Regarding the intrinsic value of *philia*, Aristotle relies on our intuitions regarding the incompleteness of the solitary life and our sense that *philia* is the greatest of the external goods, rooting these insights in the sense that we have of our own nature. The human being is a social creature and is somehow incomplete without the deepest bonds that this nature makes possible for human life (Ibid at 366-7).

6.1. *Phronesis* or Practical Wisdom in Itself

In distinguishing *phronesis* from four other species of knowledge, namely wisdom, scientific knowledge, intellectual knowledge and skill, Aristotle specifies several of its parameters and distinctive characteristics, which will be useful to review here briefly, before I examine the role of friendship in its development and *vice versa*.[368]

6.1.i. *Phronesis* is a Species of Knowledge for Practical Action

The scope and purpose of *phronesis* is practical action, which immediately contrasts it with three forms of speculative knowledge, namely wisdom, scientific knowledge and intellectual knowledge, as the philosopher characterises them. These latter three are sought *qua* knowledge, that is to say, chiefly for the sake of truth; and the type of truth sought is already embodied in the realities being explored, awaiting discovery by the truth seeker.

For Aristotle, wisdom touches in particular divine, eternal and unchanging truths, to be sought and contemplated for themselves and which in turn shed light on secondary realities, enabling them to be seen and loved in right order in the light of their source.[369] One might 'gaze' on the deepest realities in order to see and love things 'as they truly are', but this does not immediately involve deliberation *per se*, for there is no course of action that lies at the heart of this knowledge. The gaze might be 'discerning', but it is not 'discernment' because it is sought for its own sake and not in view of a course of action. Similarly, scientific knowledge as Aristotle characterises it, concerns universal truths which can be reached in one of two ways. The first is via deduction from first principles in various fields, so that secondary elements can be grasped in the light of them. This knowledge enables the principal cause or the immanent 'source' of a reality to be grasped in its effects or secondary elements. The other approach allows the principal causes themselves to be reached via induction from knowledge of their effects, as I have discussed above.[370] This knowledge, whether obtained by deduction or induction is, for Aristotle, underscored by another

[368] Aristotle, N.E., 1139b-1143a.
[369] Aristotle, N.E., 1141b.
[370] Aristotle, N.E., 1139b-1140b.

knowledge that is more intuitive or immediately known, namely the 'intellectual knowledge' of the premises of demonstration,[371] by which scientific knowledge can be derived.

6.1.ii. *Phronesis* is Knowledge for the Purposes of Living Well

Thus, the truths of wisdom, scientific knowledge and intellectual knowledge do not entail deliberation as to 'what to do'. With practical knowledge however, the realm of truth concerns the contingent future and the knowledge is sought in view of an action to be taken. Into this category fall both practical wisdom and artistic or creative skill (i.e., both acting and making),[372] with the latter being more limited in scope, concerning itself with some specific area of production and requiring a more fixed pathway for its realisation; whereas practical wisdom pertains to the ongoing business of living well. To be wise day by day is broader than to be 'wise in flute-playing'.[373] A skill is necessarily more specialised and localised, while broader ethical intentions tend to support a multitude of possible manifestations.

While it is true that a great flautist is no less for being a terrible cellist, a person would not be considered to have practical wisdom whose discernment did not stretch to the ensemble of virtues that need exercising for the symphony of good living.[374] Indeed, *phronesis* holds an array of interconnected virtues together. One can easily think of situations where to be temperate or chaste simultaneously calls for elements of fortitude such as patient endurance; as well as for the respecting of another's rights and dignity according to justice; and including virtues such as honesty, generosity of heart and fidelity in love.

Aristotle highlights another telling contrast with skill, reminding us that in art, deliberate or voluntary 'mistakes' are considered better than accidental ones, while the reverse is true in the field of practical wisdom.[375] An artist may choose to distort something for effect, in order to make her artistic point more starkly, whereas the more a mistake arose accidentally in ethics, the more it is forgivable, as court sentencing often illustrates, seeing that upright intention is a core element

[371] Aristotle, N.E., 1141a.
[372] Aristotle, N.E., 1140a.
[373] Ibid.
[374] Aristotle, N.E., 1144b-1145a.
[375] Aristotle, N.E., 1140b.

of right action and bad will is a particular sign of vice.[376] Analogously, one could say that intention stands to ethics as inspiration and idea stand to art, with a bad one leading to a particularly bad result.

6.1.iii. *Phronesis* Allows Us to Hit the Mean of Virtue

For Aristotle, to be practically wise is to habitually be capable of discerning and realising good action for worthwhile ends amid life's complex circumstances.[377] Only thus can virtue be fully itself, for without it, the good impetus of courage or temperance for example would fail to attain the 'mean' of right action amid a myriad of possible pitfalls.[378] Even when courageous or temperate actions 'hit the mark', if they do so *only* because of another's discernment, thanks to advice or instruction, then the subject of them cannot yet be said to be practically wise or virtuous in any significant way, though of course the practically wise person always remains open to the advice of someone who possesses relevant wisdom, gained from experience.[379] For Aristotle, it is *phronesis* that allows virtue to be navigated between the various ways that actions and feelings can be 'deficient' or 'excessive'. Aristotle's broad category of 'deficiency' covers any lack of what is called for in virtuous action or the feelings that should accompany it, as stinginess stands to generosity; or cowardice to courage; or feelings of panic in the face of danger; or of resentment when generosity of heart is demanded, and so forth. The category of 'excess' applies to any false caricatures or inauthentic substitutes for what true wisdom and virtue might entail: as with flamboyance or wastefulness in the realm of generosity; or careless *bravura* in the field of courage; or the feelings of smug superiority that can spoil otherwise good actions, for example.[380]

An action 'hits the mean' of virtue only if it arises from a discernment as to what is the right way, time, reasons, object and person with which it should concern itself, however instantaneous and habitual such discernment may have become. [381] Similarly, a person's feelings 'hit the mean',

[376] Ibid.
[377] Aristotle, N.E., 1140a-1140b.
[378] Aristotle, N.E., 1106b-1107a.
[379] Aristotle, N.E., 1116a-1117a.
[380] Aristotle, N.E., 1104b-1105a; N.E., 1106b; N.E.,1140a.
[381] Aristotle, N.E., 1140a. Josef Pieper highlights that for Aquinas, perfect *phronesis,* which Aquinas calls prudence necessarily includes the ability to instantly grasp an unexpected situation with extreme quickwittedness and in the moment maintain clear sighted objectivity, a capacity that Aquinas gives the name *'solertia'.* Pieper, Josef (1966) at 13.

when proportionate pleasure is taken in acting rightly without being carried away or distorted by feelings that might attach themselves to any dangers or secondary pleasures involved.[382]

6.1.iv. *Phronesis* Can Develop Only Experientially

As such, authentic practical wisdom can develop only experientially. It is not imparted as one might lead another to an understanding of the theorem of Pythagoras or even as one might teach the art of flute-playing, though this latter example obviously involves an extensive practical component. It is clear for Aristotle that ethics does not arise from the formulaic application of principles, such that a computer could be programmed to derive ethical conclusions from scenarios that somehow function as the premises of deductive syllogisms. Nor is it chiefly the result of the repetition of ethical 'exercises' in isolation from relevant contexts, as someone might 'practice courage' by walking barefoot on sharp stones. It is however built up through engaging in ongoing virtuous activity, which eventually leads to a refinement in practical reasoning and judgement when competing or complex factors are in play. At the heart of the ethical discernment that constitutes *phronesis* is an astute evaluation of a multitude of goods with regard to their importance, nobility and necessity.

Hursthouse notes certain things that the Aristotelian *phronimos* has come to know experientially:[383]

> ... the *phronimos* has a grasp of the important, the fine, and the necessary [that is] superior to that to most of us ...
>
> .... he has a superior grasp of other concepts too, such as those of the fine (again), the expedient or useful the (truly) pleasant and their opposites.[384] He has a superior grasp of the right or correct as it occurs "to the right extent, towards the

[382] Aristotle, N.E., 1104b-1105a; N.E., 1106b.
[383] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2011) at 44-5.
[384] Aristotle, N.E., 1104b.

> right people, for the right reason, etc." He also has a superior grasp of *eupraxia* – acting well – and *eudaimonia.* And he has a superior grasp of virtues and vices.

Indeed, the *phronimos* has mastered the concepts of "the fine", "the necessary", "the important", "the advantageous", "the beneficial", "the pleasant" in a way not possible for the person who lacks practical wisdom and the requisite experience that has allowed it to develop.[385]

Practical wisdom operates within real situations and not hypothetical or imaginary ones. Ruminating over the artificial ethical dilemmas that are often posed in philosophical clubs, concerning such things as whether one would flick a switch so that an oncoming train might kill one's terminally ill grandmother in preference to a caravan of illegal immigrants, might be an interesting thought experiment for teenagers to debate, but it is unlikely to lead them to any finesse regarding the practically wise decisions that a mature ethical life calls for.

Because of this experiential aspect, *phronesis* as such is not normally found among the young, however decent certain young people may turn out to be. Aristotle notes that youths may well exhibit the common decency of the 'pre-wise', which can be largely explained as a disposition toward certain virtues that they either possess partially in a natural way,[386] or which they approximate thanks to the good example of those around them in their childhood. This is especially the case if a wholesome home life has allowed them to encounter role models or mentors, from whom they can begin to observe the intricacies of wise deliberation first hand. At this formative stage, however, they normally do not yet possess these virtues *qua* virtue. Aristotle observes that the young will master scientific knowledge via education or even practical skill by apprenticeship and practice more easily than they will acquire true practical wisdom, which involves a complexity of observation, judgement and foresight in human affairs that cannot circumvent the maturity of experience.[387, 388]

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[385] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2011) at 49.
[386] Aristotle, N.E., 1144b.
[387] Aristotle, N.E., 11421b-1142b.
[388] Hursthouse argues the fruitfulness of focusing on the distinction Aristotle draws between the sort of 'natural virtue' that can be found in the inexperienced young and the operation of virtue properly speaking in a virtuous agent, when it comes to building up a clearer understanding as to what lies at the heart of *phronesis*, and why the

6.1.v. The Practical Syllogism Involved in *Phronesis* and the Requisite Acumen

Pertaining to future action, practical wisdom involves speculation about contingencies and factors that are not yet determined. The requisite experiences are those that foster the development of the kind of perception that accurately discerns motives, capacities, vulnerabilities and likely outcomes, as well as assessment of competing goods within each situation. Hursthouse notes that the *phronimos* develops a particular feel for 'situational appreciation', an ability to read circumstances and people, that has developed within a heightened attentiveness.[389] Elsewhere, she points out that oftentimes the details of the wider context are not always within our immediate reach and we need to rely on the accounts of others, which must be wisely and carefully discerned, if we are to avoid pitfalls based on rash judgement.[390]

When it comes to the 'practical syllogisms' with which practical reasoning is concerned, Aristotle notes that they have for first principles (or premises) the goals or ends that one seeks.[391] For *phronesis* to be in play, these must be sufficiently noble from the outset, meaning that a correct evaluation and prioritising of goods underlies all good deliberation,[392] even if better recognition of goods (and thus relative priorities) may and often does emerge via the process of deliberation. The conclusion to this 'practical syllogism' comes in the form of an action that one decides upon in the light of these goods, appropriate to the particulars of the situation which must be themselves rightly assessed. This means that any intermediary practical 'reasoning' requires the correct assessment of what will best achieve the end, not just at the level of efficiency but 'in the right way and for the right reasons' and so forth,[393] involving imagination and reason, foresight and memory. Part of good deliberation is the ability to correctly estimate what constitutes the right action, the right way to do it and the right time to act.[394] An element of rational and calculative

phronimos only emerges once a depth of attentive experience has been gained through the practice of much virtuous activity. See Hursthouse, Rosalind (2006) at 288ff.

[389] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2011) at 51-2.
[390] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2006) at 295-300.
[391] Aristotle, N.E., 1140b.
[392] Ibid.
[393] Aristotle, N.E., 1142b.
[394] Ibid.

acumen is essential here, and this must be combined with an authentic prioritising of noble goods over lesser ones, which is something that the virtuous are readily able to appreciate.[395] If not, it can degenerate into a type of cunningness or cleverness that can be just as readily put at the disposal of perverse ends.[396]

A deeper understanding of practical wisdom, then, is impossible without some notion, acquired by experience, as to how we are able to rank goods in a way that recognises and prioritises those that are nobler. I shall explore how the relationship of friendship plays a particularly profound role in the development of this sort of perception, as well as the way in which the same experience brings about a maturity in the ability to read both situations and persons, without which it is impossible to imagine practical wisdom operating in any significant way. Before addressing these aspects, I shall explore something of the immediate interrelationship between virtue and *phronesis* itself by way of analogy.

6.2. Practical Wisdom and Virtue – a Musical Analogy

I have noted that for Aristotle practical wisdom and virtue develop together and effectively bring each other about. He describes the characteristic activity of a human as being achieved via this *phronesis* and virtue of character. "One [of them, namely, virtue] makes the aim right and the other [*phronesis*] the things towards it."[397] One could say that virtue gives a consistent impetus toward the good and *phronesis* discerns the right parameters to achieve it. Watching horrified as a

[395] Aristotle, N.E., 1143a.

[396] Indeed, Hursthouse notes that the cunning conman and the *phronimos* have two things in common that the inexperienced youth with mere natural virtue does not yet possess, namely: the ability to read the accounts of people accurately and the ability to read the details of situations correctly (See Hursthouse, Rosalind (2011) at 295-300). One thing that clearly separates the *phronimos* from the conman though is really their answer to the question: 'in view of what' do they discern accounts or situations, seeing astuteness can be directed toward good ends or bad. Notwithstanding a certain commonality, I would also suggest that the different valuing of people within the situations can give rise to different levels of perception as to what is going on. The *phronimos* has an advantage when it comes to assessing the account of a friend, due to the shared interiority made possible by love, which gives deeper access to the other's heart than what is possible from mere external observation of their body language for example, even when this is combined with a cynical analysis of their possible ulterior motives. (Hursthouse gives some support for this view by including an aside from Anscombe regarding the absurdity within murder mysteries of how quickly people accept the account of the detective that their nearest and dearest has committed the crime, rather than think she must have made some mistake! See Hursthouse, Rosalind (2011) at 297). In any case, Hursthouse effectively illustrates that the *phronimos* needs a level of worldly wisdom and acumen with regard to the assessment of people and events and that this can only be gained through attentiveness over time.

[397] Aristotle, N.E., 1144a.

fisherman slips from the rocks into dangerous sea, someone lacking courage or know-how might stand helplessly by, offering little but empathy: "O the poor fellow. He will surely drown … someone should *do* something!" With the virtue of courage however, she is spurred on to attempt his rescue, but this immediately calls for *phronesis,* as she must quickly and intelligently discern the best course of action to achieve this under the particular circumstances. That the fisherman is a good worth saving in the first place is determined neither by *phronesis* nor virtue but stands as a given beneath this discernment. The target itself is the final cause of both the aiming and the skill of execution, and what constitutes it as a target *per se* has a more radical origin than either of these.[398]

An analogy can be made here with musicianship and technique in the art of piano playing, with musical 'feeling' corresponding to virtue and technique to *phronesis*. Without technique, the musical intentions of a performer are impotent. However deeply she 'feels' the music, she cannot express it. Her hands let her down and there is no real music to share with the listener. Conversely, without musicianship, the dexterity that should be at the service of musical nuance becomes robotic, equally undermining the composer's intentions and rendering the result 'unmusical'. Authentic musicianship and technique can develop only together and indeed, they spur each other on. Each melodic and rhythmic shape embodied in the music, each harmony and texture, calls for a certain expression which in turn requires a certain touch. The more one can refine one's touch, the more one is able to explore the expressive possibilities offered by a good instrument and put these at the service of what the music calls for; and it is precisely in seeking these out, that a performer comes even more to terms with the refinement needed in her touch.

[398] This is not to say that *phronesis* does not refine our sense of what is truly noble and thus our ability to properly prioritise. Rather, it is to affirm that there is something primordial about the orientation of the human will toward the good. Such an orientation is not chosen. The appetite for the good *qua* good is largely what the human will is, just as the human intellect can be seen as the capacity in us for the truth. We can be mistaken about what is true and come to see a fuller truth later and embrace it, just as we can be mistaken about what is truly good for us or for another or for the situation in front of us, and come to embrace a larger and more authentic picture of the good later. In general, however, we are oriented toward the good in our desire as a given. Our virtue propels us toward the good, while our practical wisdom discerns the proper way of approaching and achieving the good, proportional to the requirements of the complex situation. In other words, a more basic love of the good frames the decisions for which we need practical wisdom. *Phronesis* is framed within an overarching love for the good that is not itself determined by *phronesis.*

Aristotle makes the claim that rational choice is either "desire-related intellect" or "thought-related desire" and adds the cryptic phrase: "and such a first principle is a human being,"[399] meaning presumably that the first principle of rational choice is the human being, who is capable of rational intellect and spiritual desire. Light is already shed on this if we invoke an analogous statement for the playing of music affirming that it is "technique-related expression" or "expression-related technique," and "such a first principle is a performer."

The philosopher calls rational choice the first principle of action (as a moving cause and not an end) and affirms that for rational choice to be good, the reason must be true (i.e., grounded in how things really are), and the desire pursue what accords with it.[400] Indeed, Aristotle notes that both virtue and skill are developed through practice, as is whether we end up becoming 'good' or 'bad' practitioners.[401]

> For by acting as we do in our dealings with other men some of us become just, others unjust; and by acting as we do in the face of danger, and by becoming habituated to feeling fear or confidence, some of us become courageous, others cowardly. The same goes for appetites of anger; by conducting oneself in one way or the other in such circumstances, some become temperate and even-tempered, others intemperate and bad-tempered. In a word then, like states arise from like activities.[402]

He is clear that virtue is the 'eye of the soul' that enables practical wisdom to reach a developed state:

> For practical syllogisms have a first principle: 'Since such-and-such is the end or chief good'... and this is evident to the good person alone, since wickedness distorts our vision and thoroughly deceives us about the first principles of actions. Manifestly, then, one cannot be practically wise without being good.[403]

[399] Aristotle, N.E., 1139a.
[400] Ibid.
[401] Aristotle, N.E., 1103a-b.
[402] Aristotle, N.E., 1103b.
[403] Aristotle, N.E., 1144a.

6.3. Extending the Musical Analogy: Friendship's Role in Developing Practical Wisdom and Virtue

Along with the inter-dependence of practical wisdom and virtue, Aristotle is insistent on the notion that friendship cannot reach its fullness without both of these. Within the musical analogy, friendship naturally occupies the place of the piece of music to be played, and here one could even accommodate the various types of friendships, for not all music aims at deep or profound expression and indeed not all music is equally deserving of the effort and expertise of a talented performer. Some music is more unashamedly functional ('utility music' if you will) and some simply designed to be 'fun' ('pleasure-music') and the requirements of both of these are normally less than those for music that places sublime beauty and the communication of meaning at the forefront of its quest. More trivial music tends to need a more basic level of musicianship and technique, whereas great art music calls upon every resource the performer can muster.

This comparison is illuminating in that it analogously addresses our task of elucidating why deep friendship itself is essential if both practical wisdom and virtue are to come into their own.

It would be strange to imagine a budding performer developing either musicianship or technique without considerable exposure to music of substance. Sensitivity in performance cannot be divorced from an accumulatively acquired knowledge of musical styles, genres and eras, which builds up experientially as the performer masters her craft. One does not get a feel for a Mozartian touch, a Chopinesque *rubato* or for the delicacy required for Debussy's impressionism, through reading or hearing about them, but rather through extensive exposure in both listening and playing, all the while guided by an experienced mentor; just as "scientific knowledge of gymnastics and medicine by itself makes no one fit and healthy."[404] Subtle stylistic musical judgements and choices are called for at each moment in the unfolding of any great work. Much time and attention under significant guidance must be given to each genre and to a particular composer's output until these sorts of judgements can become second nature to the performer.

[404] Aristotle, N.E., 1143.

Even the choice of which work should be used for a particular occasion becomes an aspect of musical discernment as sensitivity develops. Music for relaxation and unwinding may not be best for formal occasions or worship and *vice versa*. The 'favourite song' of a bride or of the deceased has ruined many a wedding or funeral procession. Within the vast array of musical styles, eras and genres, a given piece can fall anywhere on a scale from the banal to the sublime, depending on how successfully the composer has synthesised expressive possibilities with formal mastery. A masterpiece holds together as a cohesive whole, while unfolding as a convincing psychological journey of human sentiment, enveloped in expressive beauty.

Here we analogously touch the issue of the noble in ethics as well as more qualitative complete friendships. The application of convincing musicianship and advanced technique by a performer will make the most of whatever music is at hand, but it is the great works, however simple or complex, that will occupy her devotion as a performer, and it is here that she can enter fully into the experience of music making. Part of musicianship in a developed performer is the ability to discern what music is worthy of her expertise and devotion. She might occasionally feel that she is 'prostituting' her talent for the purposes of income. She knows when she is being artistically true to herself and when she is simply patronising the undiscerning out of necessity. Her artistic fulfilment is linked to what is truly artistic and it is here that she blossoms as a performer and makes her wider contribution to the artistic community. We are reminded of Aristotle's insistence that in the concord of virtuous friends, they happily embark upon noble quests together and help each other flourish in what is truly noble in life. Indeed, even in the making of sacrifices one for the other, they are choosing the noble path for themselves, seen especially if the ultimate sacrifice should ever be required.

Were a performer to play only background music in a pub, her musicianship and technique cannot be expected to reach their full potential, even if she will develop adequately for the task at hand. For a performer to do justice to a Chopin nocturne or ballade, she needs a sophistication of expression and varied nuance, along with the requisite technical mastery to allow this to emerge in a way that appears natural and spontaneous. The advanced sensitivity demanded for the musical journey that is embedded in the fabric of such a work calls for the engagement of the full expertise and focus of the best performer, as well as for the deep attentive respect of the audience while such a gem is being exposed. We might happily chat over a meal while a live band entertains us from a

corner, but even the unwrapping of a lozenge in a desperate attempt to suppress the clearing of the throat can seem an intolerable intrusion in an intimate concert of classical music.

It is not the performer who arbitrarily renders some works noble and others trivial, but it is part of her musical sensitivity that she can discern the difference after sufficient experience and pay the exquisite piece of music its due. In turn she derives the greatest artistic pleasure from reaching these noble artistic heights.

Similarly, the virtuous or practically wise do not determine what is noble in ethics, but they develop a particular sensitivity to it. The noble attracts the virtuous and helps shape their priorities as well as rewarding them with a sense of fulfilment. Aristotle distinguishes the villainous from the practically wise not at the level of cleverness in foresight and execution, which can characterise them both, but at the level of the quality of the ends that they are attracted by and seek.[405] He notes in the end that the villainous cannot enjoy the deeper pleasure of the virtuous. Indeed, they could not even imagine the sort of pleasure that is taken in what is noble. They would need to be invited into this world to experience it firsthand in order to have this sort of conversion of heart. The invitation into a deeper world where the noble becomes prizeworthy, is often made through an awakening of the heart to another person who is worth loving for herself and not simply for her part in the calculated project at hand. Indeed, the famous biblical journey 'from Saul to Paul' is told as an encounter with the risen Lord, which gives Saul a new finality in love that allows him to re-orient his priorities, energies and life, without losing the great zeal and intellectual acumen that he had previously devoted to crushing the followers of Christ.

Considering classical piano and its repertoire, it would not be far-fetched to describe the characteristic activity of the performer as the business of expressing high quality music well, just as Aristotle locates the human being's characteristic activity in virtue performed well.

Yet this would not be the whole picture. It is true that there is no exquisite music without the integral combination of musicianship and technique. But nor is there any sophisticated development in musical expressiveness or technique without the world of exquisite music that

[405] Aristotle, N.E., 1143a.

summons those efforts into being. Great pieces of music are worth learning. They 'deserve' and justify the hours of labour and the intelligent attentiveness that goes into the years of musical development. As a great artistic good, the masterwork is the final cause that summons the efficient cause of a musician's labour into being.

The attraction of the friend, awakened by a spiritual love for the existent personal good, who demands to be loved for her own sake and not subsumed as an ornament in one's life or another asset in one's repertoire or collection, draws the goodness of desire that is characteristic of virtue and the practical discernment that characterises *phronesis* more and more into being over the long course of a developing deep friendship. The more these grow in the people concerned, the more beautifully their friendship can be expressed and deepen, and the more these pillars of the ethical life are able to mature and be put at the service of an abiding spiritual love.

Here, once again we see the importance of the final cause in ethics. The personal goodness of our friend not only attracts our love, but somehow 'calls' us to be consistently virtuous and practically wise. She deserves nothing less from us. There is something more significant here than merely seeking to imitate our first 'teachers in virtue', or aspiring to be like them, as one might seek to emulate one's first or most inspiring piano teacher. Julia Annas has extensively developed parallels between the learning of artistic skills and the learning of virtue, which shed light on certain formative stages in ethical education.[406] But the bridge to ethical maturity from the initial appropriation of a parental or guided education in virtue within whatever embedded contexts that one practices virtue in its early stages,[407] comes about when we come to love another for her own sake, and happily devote our energies and our intelligent discernment to our part in helping her to flourish in her best self. Here we are not primarily trying to become like the ethical models who sought to shape our characters in our formative years. And yet we possibly do become like them, assuming they have reached ethical maturity before us. We begin to inhabit the same world and breathe the same ethically bracing air, once we are drawn by the very goodness of particular persons around us to be our best selves for their sake and for the sake of their best flourishing. We note that this entails a further step beyond wanting to have the virtues for ourselves that we may have admired in our parents and first teachers, and to want more and more mastery of these, which

[406] Annas, Julia (2011) at 17-50.
[407] Ibid at 21.

Annas calls the 'drive to aspire'.[408] It is coming to see the 'why' of virtue, in the deep appreciation of the goodness of the human beings whom we allow to become our nearest and dearest. This reveals the deepest inner necessity of virtue and practical wisdom, touching upon its very *raison d'être.* Without the light of the final cause, the business of ethical education ends up too closely mirroring that of artistic education, in that it becomes governed by the exemplary cause, imitating a series of 'models' and does not go beyond the level of a 'project for one's own perfection', where one's creative ideas become the primary governing force. Aristotle is clear that the arts can be mastered by the young before the intricacies of practical wisdom are able to be. There is no shortcut to mature virtue and *phronesis* shy of the time and loving attentiveness that one must invest in a shared life with those freely and mutually chosen as one's closest friends.

There is a further dimension to be explored within our musical parallel. Music is written neither for the composer's archives nor the performer's studio. Only in performance will the full musical communion be achieved among the artistically appreciative. The primary reason for expressing musical intention is to delight the intelligence of those who behold the art, that they can enjoy the beauty and insight encapsulated by the composer and 'lived' and expressed by the performer. All art implies a communication between the artist and the beholder. The activity of noble music making is only complete when a discerning connoisseur or listener is able to intelligently receive the work of a great composer via a consummate performer. It is not enough for each to work in isolation.

There is a way too that the friendship of the virtuous opens out beyond the friends involved toward a wider communion. In seeking each other's true flourishing, they seek more than simply their own friendship. They become truth-seekers together, facing a wider world of truth than they could themselves embody. In exploring what is noble in life they do not stop at themselves. They have helped each other to appreciate the richness of human goodness, but this overflows into a benevolence toward others who are not yet their friends – i.e., toward potential friends or the actual friends of others. The composer, performer and connoisseur find themselves in a communion that is rooted in their love for music. Each appreciates it in a different way and from a different experience and yet music somehow binds them together. Something similar exists among those

[408] Ibid at 17-24.

whose various deep friendships have rendered them more virtuous, even when they have not been formed by the exact same experiences or in the same relationships. The particular goodness of each friend that drew a person out of herself has drawn her mysteriously closer to all persons. This will be explored in some detail in Chapter IX.

6.4. Practical Wisdom and Friendship

I shall now attempt to elucidate the various ways in which, as friendship develops, deepens and is exercised, it becomes the arena and cause of the maturing of practical wisdom.

6.4.i. A Widening of Outlook

Aristotle mentions in passing that:

> friendship benefits the young by keeping them from making mistakes… and it benefits those in their prime by helping them do noble actions – 'two going together' since with friends they are more capable of thinking and of acting [than when they are alone].[409]

Here we are reminded that as two people come to want the good for each other for the other's sake, they develop a greater openness to each other's outlook, which expands their own, greatly facilitating wise deliberation. The strength of one friend can at times compensate for the weakness of the other (as Aristotle implies in the case of the young) or indeed the various strengths of each, pertaining to their particular background, development, creativity, foresight and judgement, can complement one another. Friends 'in their prime' naturally stimulate each other to go further in their considerations and understanding of whatever practical matters are at hand,[410] for their lives are often shared at the level of both aspirations and the activities embarked upon to realise them. This is particularly true when neither is preoccupied with keeping an eye on her own gain, at the level of either utility or pleasure, for these two aspects of life should become readily superseded by deeper concerns and more noble considerations, when a healthier perspective is in play. Indeed, the ultimate sacrifice of giving one's life for one's friend is also the ultimate foregoing of all things

[409] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a.
[410] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1177a.

useful and pleasurable, while it somehow guards a deep preference, in the self, for what is noble and good. The higher path can be chosen in the light of a love that reaches the other for who she is and for who she can be in her flourishing. But it will never be reached so long as what is useful or pleasurable to oneself remains one's governing concern.

The closer friends become, the more naturally they tend to share problems and difficulties, and indeed the pathway to this closeness often involves the gradual revelation of the self to the other in what touches vulnerability, as was noted earlier in the discussion of spiritual love. In deeper friendship one is prepared to confide delicate matters that would be otherwise potentially embarrassing for oneself or loved ones, were they disclosed indiscriminately. Being confident of a friend's benevolence, acceptance and discretion, enables us to open up despite the sensitivity of the subject matter. Indeed, in the privileged moment when a friend discloses something of her life's struggle to us, we will often find that our capacity for acceptance and reception of her expands. Love 'kicks in' as it were, spurring us on to shed light on her difficulties or to relieve her anxieties. At the very least we can walk alongside her so that she does not have to tread the 'valley of tears' alone, even when our help is not able to be packaged as sage advice.

Sometimes it is in becoming a sympathetic sounding board that one friend enables the other to formulate and specify exactly what they are going through and a solution to a problem crystallises. Perhaps we have come to resent another's success, imagining in it some kernel of injustice that eats away at us, causing us to brood or seethe. As we explain our annoyance to a trusted friend, we might begin to realise that our story sounds rather petty even to our own ears and bears the hallmarks of jealousy. At times, the foolishness and triviality of our sentiment is exposed in the telling, and thereby evaporates. Or perhaps our friend might need to gently prompt us toward a similar realisation and the more we indignantly resist the notion that we are crudely jealous and multiply our efforts at justification, the more we see that we are in a losing battle to present ourselves as the reasonable person we would like our friend to regard us as. Admitting our pettiness to ourselves and another within the safety of friendship becomes a moment of growth.

Even on occasions when our indignant reactions are justified, our friend may help us to go beyond the injustice and see that dwelling on events does us no good. Indeed it tends to neglect the bigger picture that we all have faults and perhaps we would do better to contribute a little more mercy to

our world than a little more righteous condemnation. Whatever the scenario, a friend's listening ear and our desire to be an authentic person not only for her but in her eyes toward others, combine at times to help us make real steps toward self-awareness and thus toward practical wisdom in our relations. The gaze of the friend into our situation, and ours into hers, can add that pair of eyes that restores objectivity to bias, while at the same time remaining sympathetic and focussed on the other's true good. It can widen the lens of a truncated view that has become too turned in on itself, perhaps preoccupied with short term gain in secondary matters or seeking to avoid difficulties when these should be embraced for the sake of a nobler good.

Thus, a love that reaches another for her own sake can become a pathway to a humility grounded in realism, for we are drawn toward de-centralising ourselves in our conception of the universe. We are able to accept a bigger picture where we are not the main protagonist in an otherwise hostile world, hard done by at every turn, something which can characterise an immature outlook. Friendship of this sort facilitates the ethical business of 'growing up', of taking our place in a wider world rather than simply assuming first place in our own.

It is also true that one of the frequent joys of deep friendship is the sense that 'a problem shared is a problem halved'. Friendship where we are loved for our own sake furnishes us with the consoling reminder that we are not alone in life. This sort of companionship can answer greater anxieties in the human condition than whatever immediate worries concern us. The opposite extreme to the type of companionship that tends to relativise problems within the broader climate of optimism that love allows, is an isolating paranoia that some suffer who find themselves for one reason or another unable to accept or foster authentic friendships in their lives. The tragedy of this isolation is transformed in the fragile mind into a default of hostility. One ends up truly at the centre of the world, but of a world that is bent on one's own destruction.

Another way that deep friendship improves our realistic appraisal of things and thus safeguards and enhances true *phronesis,* is the way that it sharpens our awareness of deeper priorities and assists us in making an authentic ranking of competing goods, thus fostering right judgement. When we begin to truly love someone for her own sake, we grow in our appreciation of the depth of her goodness as a person and come to prefer her heart to the lesser goods that we tend to want to control, such as money, reputation, power or our sphere of influence over others. We begin to

realise what often death or the chronic sickness of loved ones tends to highlight, namely that love, family and friends are more important than our various projects, however worthwhile. In the face of her need, we come to see when and how we should sacrifice for someone we care about and even embrace such opportunities rather than regret or resent them. The useful and the pleasurable are happily relativised to the personal goods that in themselves call for our admiration, adherence, wonder and deep respect. Friendship has this way of expanding our heart. Being drawn to another for herself and for her own sake means that we are less likely to give an inordinate place to goods that cannot claim that space with legitimacy. The awareness of higher goods greatly aids our judgement and assessment of lower goods.

Apart from seeing more clearly thanks to the expanded outlook one gains through friendship and judging more easily the value of goods in terms of an authentic hierarchy of loves, friends help each other to follow through on the discernment of *phronesis* with concretised action. Alone we can be full of resolutions that are somehow never realised or acted upon. In sharing these, and indeed in forming them with another who is implicated on life's journey with us in a way that consistently seeks our true good, we become more transparent even to ourselves. There is an extra incentive for perseverance when we realise that to let ourselves down is also to let down the one who will genuinely grieve for us when we act in a way that is ultimately destructive to ourselves. In a climate of solidarity, especially when we are aware of being loved simply for ourselves, we are more likely to follow through on the sorts of personal decisions and commitments that are for our betterment and the betterment of our friends and loved ones. Even when this proves difficult due to external circumstances or some ongoing weakness of character, our friend is able to notice barriers and offer moral and at times practical support to us in overcoming them and *vice versa*. Realising that someone continues to care at this level, even in moments when we would normally have become discouraged, can be the incentive we need to get up again and recommence after a failure of some sort. Indeed, experiencing love from another who truly believes that our setback is not definitive, can prevent us from falling into self-pity or crippling despair. The sense that someone we deeply respect and appreciate actually believes in us beyond the limitations of the moment is one of the best remedies to the temptation to close in ourselves and let barriers become definitive. This in itself is an aid to practical wisdom, in that it prevents our pre-occupations from defining the parameters of our outlook. As friends share their aspirations and help each other to broaden or refine their outlook as to what is truly important or noble in life, they are able to help

each other navigate the pitfalls that surround authentic living, looking out for each other's true and long-term flourishing.

Aristotle notes that if one friend were to mature greatly, "developing virtue and becoming a superior kind of person", while the other still thought as a child, they could not end up deep friends, for "they neither approve of the same things, nor find the same things enjoyable or painful. Not even with regard to each other will this be so, and without that they could not be friends, since it would not be possible for them to live together."[411] Here the growth that one friend can help the other to achieve is truncated, because the gaze of one of them is not yet sufficiently lifted beyond herself. She does not properly see the wider world occupied by her friend. Even this sort of failure bears witness to the fact that letting a friend lift our gaze on things is an essential part of personal growth, expanding our clarity of outlook, which is itself a key component of practical wisdom.

Part of the way that deep friends help each other in practical wisdom then, concerns a sharing of what each regards as being truly noble, important and significant in life. Friendship is a privileged milieu for the reconsideration of one's way of looking at the world. When we are in serious disagreement with relative strangers or those for whom we have little care, it is much easier to simply 'write them off', but with a good friend we naturally seek to understand her position. Is there something she sees that we have missed? Or is there something vital missing from her outlook that we could help her to see, as she seeks to understand something in our outlook that she finds difficult to fathom at first? This is a journey that is effectively made together if the friendship is to carry into the deepest regions of each friend's life. Often, there may be a convergence in the friends' love, not simply for each other but in terms of what each holds most dear and values deeply in the world. Something in the relationship of friendship at this level has taken the friends beyond themselves in the search for truth. They do not need to agree on every aspect of this search but the fact that they both genuinely seek in life to advance beyond self-centred concerns to a deeper level of meaning, makes for a communion in the search itself that opens each to the other's outlook and worldview. In this respect, each can inform the other. Their notion of goodness somehow grows together and part of the way that they love each other for their own sake is the way in which they help each other strive for what is noble and significant in life, which in the end

[411] Aristotle, N.E., 1165b.

necessarily transcends the merely useful or pleasurable. It seems that deep friendship requires the convergence of at least some of the deep value commitments of the friends involved. Without this, a certain depth of sharing would be closed to them and the friendship would risk remaining at a superficial level.

Already we see that what is involved in friends being able to "go further together" in "thinking and in acting"[412] transcends the mere pooling or brainstorming of ideas and knowledge that might occur within utility or pleasure friendships, as they seek to refine courses of action that maximise desired outcomes in those respective fields.

6.4.ii. Attentive and Loving Experience of Each Other

Aristotle is clear that neither complete friendship nor *phronesis* can develop in a person without significant experience.[413] Indeed, we may assert that it is precisely the same sort of experience that develops both. The philosopher notes that one of the reasons deeper friendships are rare in life, compared to those other alliances that form and dissolve more rapidly, is that the former requires a great deal of shared life.[414] He notes that friendships based more on utility or pleasure are not like this "since many people can be pleased like this and the services do not take long."[415] There is no complete friendship without significant experience of the other and only through this can each friend hone her gaze on her friend's capacities, strengths, weaknesses, goals and deepest desires. For someone to enjoy complete friendship, "… he must have experience of [his friend] as well, and become familiar with [her], which is very difficult."[416] Over the course of time, the friends would have experienced difficulties together, not only in what they mutually have to face, but in regard to problems and misunderstandings that might arise between them on occasion. This growth in patience and in the ability to understand each other's capacities and vulnerabilities is a component of fortitude, for it enables us to resist premature capitulation in the face of difficulties. The underlying love one has for the other spurs the friend on to persevere with her friend and go beyond herself.

[412] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1177a.
[413] Aristotle, N.E., 1158a; N.E., 1141a.
[414] Aristotle, N.E., 1158a.
[415] Ibid.
[416] Ibid.

Such knowledge of the other can only facilitate growth in practical wisdom, both in the immediate aspect of how best to love this friend, about and for whom many decisions regarding action will have to be made, but also in developing one's perceptiveness and 'feel' for people in general. Through getting to know certain particular people very well in the climate that best facilitates knowledge of persons, namely within the acceptance of mutual love, we become 'wise' in matters pertaining to personal perceptiveness quite generally.

If we are too superficial, or if there is insufficient penetration in the love of friendship that one bears the other, what should in the normal course of events be a temporary setback can become insurmountable. This is of course a mark of immaturity. The artificial relations one can enjoy via the web seem particularly prone to superficial groupings of the apparently like-minded, and interactions can soon turn nasty as disagreements arise. At the push of a button people can 'block' one another and be free of anyone who is becoming a pest in any way, enabling one to 'move on' in the direction of apparently more 'compatible' contacts on other sites, channels or blogs, just as American Democrats and Republicans might be glued to CNN or Fox News respectively and regard the other as shameless propaganda.

In order to develop sufficient shared life together, friends have to want to be together, and Aristotle notes that this trait increases in proportion to the goodness of the person. Indeed, he puts it forward as one of the chief reasons that it is only good people who can be friends for the sake of the other person herself, "because bad people do not enjoy each other's company unless there is some benefit in it for them."[417] We can see here that a love for the other for her own sake allows us to go beyond what immediately benefits us, which is often a source of the sort of bias that obstructs true *phronesis*. Certainly, the more the goodness of the other shines out to us, the easier this bridge is to cross, yet the friendship of the virtuous is not a matter of fully virtuous people bumping into each other and deciding to become friends. The journey out of the self toward the other is precisely the air that virtue needs to breathe in order to develop and be fully itself. Regarding complete friendship, Aristotle notes that "there is nothing so characteristic of friends as living in each other's company" because while people in need desire benefit, even the blessed desire to spend their days

[417] Aristotle, N.E., 1157a.

together since "solitude suits them least of all."[418] He does not specify the reason that the virtuous are least suited to solitude, beyond the implication that virtue necessitates companions in order to come fully into its own, but again, this is not an external feature of virtue but rather intrinsic to what virtue itself truly is. The right dispositions and activity that allow human relations to reach profound levels of communion can come about only through attempting such levels of communion.

6.4.iii. Benevolence Manifesting through Action

Phronesis involves not only an unbiased and clear sightedness, and sound judgement of the matters and possibilities before us in terms of an authentic ranking of goods and loves, but also the ability to move the self from good intentions into decisive action. A failure in any of these would be faltering in practical wisdom. A person who perpetually and cautiously considers her options, weighing up the pros and cons without being able to judge their relative worth, unwilling to face the risk of decision-making, lest it limit future pathways, ends up paralysed in inertia and unable to be of practical use to her friend. Conversely, someone who, in her eagerness to be involved, rushes into judgement without stopping to ascertain clear vision, in her impetuosity and rashness ends up constantly having to back-pedal from foolish misjudgements. Then again, someone may find that her heart is divided between what she can see and judge that she should do and what suits her at more superficial levels of desire. She ends up lacking the resolve, commitment and reliability to follow through even on the sound discernment she seems to be able to make. Aristotle would characterise her as 'incontinent',[419] and she becomes someone who risks letting her friend down when she is most needed.

We can see that the more a penetrating love in friendship is able to reach the other person in who she is, for her own sake and flourishing, the more these pitfalls and deficiencies can be overcome. Once again, higher loves have the ability to draw a person out of being ruled and limited by lower ones. Friendship has not only allowed the person to judge that the good of her friend is a deeper priority than what immediately suits her own utility or pleasure, but to act with an undivided heart on behalf of her friend and carry the necessary actions to completion. There is a joy in 'being for

[418] Aristotle, N.E., 1157b.
[419] Aristotle, N.E., 1147b-1148b.

the other' due to the mutual spiritual love, that enables each to overcome the hurdles that a more selfish outlook might hesitate before. The true friend is worth the requisite sacrifices, and it is one of friendship's authentic joys to find ways to significantly benefit the other as a way of manifesting of even 'proving' one's love. Friendship actuates the inner motor of the will to joyfully embrace opportunities to go beyond the self and realise the good intentions that love and benevolence give rise to.

Without these experiences of personal relationships, where the goodness of the other becomes a higher good that one chooses for oneself, it is difficult to imagine the building up of authentic experience in one's outlook, judgement and self-command that would be necessary for *phronesis* to become a enrooted in one's practical life, consistently shaping one's ethical actions.

6.4.iv. Deep Friendship and the Development of Essential Components of *Phronesis*

Within these three great movements of practical wisdom, namely clear-sighted vision, right judgement and effective self-command, Aquinas makes mention of a number of other factors that are at play in someone with abiding practical wisdom.[420] We shall attempt to examine the contribution that deep friendship can make to these essential aspects of *phronesis.* These include the need for a clear objective memory of relevant past experiences, that they may be successfully applied toward the discernment of future action (6.4.iv, a); a disposition toward right estimation, which is the essence of cleverness in practical matters; a honing of foresight with regard to assessing the aptitude of the various possible means for achieving the desired ends; the assessment of these means in relation to their suitability under the circumstances, calling for acute circumspection (6.4.iv, b); the development of a healthy caution needed in the face of obstacles that arise from factors outside of the particular means chosen (6.4,iv,c); the counsel that a prudent agent appreciates from those who are more experienced in the matters being considered; along with a humble docility that thoughtfully considers and is prepared to take on the wisdom of others (6.4.iv.d). We shall now briefly examine the way that complete friendship tends to enhance these key components that are in constant interplay in the life of the practically wise.

[420] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 49, arts. 1-8.

6.4.iv.a. Memory and Understanding

Deep friendship that seeks the good of the other for her own sake facilitates the development of the memory and the understanding of events in ways that contribute to the refinement of practical wisdom. *Phronesis* relies on being able to astutely learn from past experiences and make use of them in our discernment and assessment of possible future action. The more we can develop a feel for the way things actually are, especially concerning people in terms of what tends to happen in personal interactions, with all the subtlety and nuance that 'reading a person' involves, the more we are able to discern wise courses of action in the future. Our repertoire of relevant and significant experience must be rooted in real memories rather than in imaginary idealism, and this includes the authentic recalling of past events, that they not be overlooked or tinged by the bias of some distorting lens.

We are naturally better able to retain what has been of particular importance to us: events that have shaped us significantly or impacted upon the people and concerns that we hold most dear. The memory is reinforced the more we tend to mull events over and also when we are able to situate and understand our experiences within a larger cohesive whole. Deep friendship brings these aspects together in a privileged way thanks to the climate of spiritual love that envelops it.

As friends either share the same experiences together or share through conversation how they have encountered different experiences, they build up over time a sense of each other's way of being and acting under diverse conditions. Being concerned for our friend's good and flourishing leads us to more astutely read beneath the surface, and this naturally facilitates our discernment of the best approach regarding future courses of action that will be for her good under a variety of circumstances. Friendship also heightens our awareness of our own manner of being within personal interactions. We see where we tend to be more easy-going or where we might be more sensitive or vulnerable, and prone to become upset. This is especially noticeable when our actions or reactions have significant impact upon our friend for better or for worse. If we inadvertently bring her sorrow or hurt, our love for her heightens the intensity with which we re-examine our motives, choices and actions, to see where we might have been clumsy, rash or inopportune. Friendship becomes the best incentive to understand the matter in order to avoid the future

recurrence of these painful mistakes. Similarly, where we have managed to delight our friend's heart for some good reason, we might reflect on this with a certain 'glow' of satisfaction, revisiting and savouring the moment, all the while noticing which elements of the events and actions essentially account for the success. The affective love we bear our friend helps us to carry these memories more consciously as something precious, and not like other collections of information. It is not the same as our passing attention to the way a swerve we made on the road may have upset the driver behind us. We can more easily dismiss her aggressive reaction as a sign of her own lack of patience or ill-temper from ill-breeding. But the more our friend becomes another self, the more we are invested in what affects her deeply. Put simply, what impacts her tends to immediately impact us. Even when we are not directly responsible for what affects our friend, we are still able to learn from it, thanks to this heightened attention, as we share, in a secondary way, in both her joys and obstacles. Our affective intention and heightened attentiveness help the variously nuanced relevant experiences to become firmly embedded in our memory and form part of an ongoing resource upon which we can draw, rendering us suppler in the future.

I have detailed in Chapter IV how our permanent intention for our friend's good helps us to prioritise deeper goods over lesser ones, and thus to see things in their place within an authentic hierarchy, rather than as a series of unrelated concerns or happenings. This naturally facilitates both our understanding and our recall. As well, one friend may explicitly help another to recognise relevant lessons that can be gleaned from the past or see the emerging or recurring patterns of behaviour that need to be noticed. These observations may be shared in the delicate conversations that can constitute a form of counsel. All of this greatly shapes our estimation of what might constitute effective and healthy choices for future action, under new circumstances. The experience of deep friendship is the privileged arena for honing our perception and our ability to read people accurately in diverse situations.

6.4.iv.b. Foresight and Circumspection

Within friendship, any practical reasoning that can contribute to the development of *phronesis* over time, functions as a bridge between two acts of the will. The primary act is situated in the spiritual love friends bear one other, manifested in their ongoing intention for each other's

flourishing and deepest good; and the second, informed by this, pertains to the more immediate day by day ends that shape their actions as they make this intention tangible.

The significant place that our friend holds in our life as another self, hones not only our memory of significant events, but our attention to what is required at the level of foresight for the future, as we develop our estimation of the effectiveness of means to bring about desired ends (requiring foresight) and the suitability of possible means given the particularity of the circumstances (requiring careful circumspection).

Here again, experience is the best teacher. One cannot 'practice foresight' in isolation as one might practice one's forehand in tennis, and the same can be said of circumspection. Both foresight and circumspection develop through the sort of attentiveness to the other that spiritual love naturally cultivates. When things go wrong in friendship, good intentions are always a mitigating factor, but if clumsiness in interpersonal dealings persists, a barrier to the growth of the friendship can emerge. Indeed, should a person never seem to learn from careless mistakes with regard to her friend, one might begin to suspect an underlying lack of love. We naturally assume that an authentic love in friendship will eventually attune us not only to what is best for our friend but also how to most effectively bring this about in authentic ways, and this will take into account both the immediate goal and the best way it can be achieved under the circumstances.

Anyone who has travelled widely knows that unfamiliarity with a new culture or language can lead to the temporary misconstruing of subtle social cues. To be able to 'read between the lines' regarding turns of phrase, gestures or body language can be a subtle art. We meet those from time to time who for one reason or another are considered to struggle with 'social skills', or who lack the 'filter' that prevents them 'saying out loud' what others might occasionally inappropriately think to themselves. Not everyone can seem to read people well. But for a general 'feel' for people to develop healthily, it would normally flow out of the more refined 'feel' we have developed for particular people that we care about and deep friendship is the privileged arena for this to best occur.

With attentive experience we come to realise when our friend's 'I don't mind' means just that or should rather be translated as 'don't you dare!' We can discern whether the appearance of shyness

here or reticence there reflects a need for us to encourage confidence or assistance from us to escape and withdraw. Affective knowledge opens the way to anticipate when our friend is best left alone to work things out for herself or when she would benefit from, or be receptive to, constructive advice. When is her sharing of a problem simply venting and when is it a genuine plea for help? Would a subtle correction right now be timely or misplaced? In the light of the bigger picture, is this the moment to stand one's ground or to give way? Would the offering or seeking of a favour be the right thing to bring up at this point, and if so, what sort of favour would be appropriate and in what way?

The reciprocal nature of friendship means that we learn experiential lessons from two directions. It is one experience to accidentally hurt a friend with a thoughtless word or gesture and this can be distressing enough. It is another to be on the receiving end of this from a friend, which is something that can hit home with particular force. Similarly, we can enjoy trying to anticipate what would genuinely enhance our friend's life, but it can be particularly humbling and moving when we are caught off-guard and struck by her intelligent or creative thoughtfulness in our regard, as she finds just the right word or gesture for the moment, reinforcing us in that spiritual love that makes friendship such a privileged place of joy in our lives. And between these extremes there are any number of approximate successes or partial failures where good intentions come partially unstuck and miss the mark of right or best action. Friendship renders our hearts attentive in both directions. We are more vulnerable to the action of our friend toward us and more sensitive regarding ours toward her. We care more either way. This makes the experience of friendship such a fertile training ground for the development of foresight for future discernment.

6.4.iv.c. Caution

Another quality that develops alongside deep friendship is the desire to protect our friend against any outside factors that threaten to undermine her, and this in turn sharpens our practical wisdom, in terms of our attentiveness to what is required in the moment. Friends naturally 'look out for each other'. They 'have each other's back'. Where we might stay out of the business of mere acquaintances, with a friend we may feel free enough, or even a responsibility at times, to offer cautionary advice in the face of lurking dangers. We might be particularly wary of someone else trying to take advantage of our friend's good nature or be acutely aware of her weakness in a

certain area and so be vigilant not to pose undue temptation. We do not always help our friend by advocating the easy option, as a mere pleasure or utility friend might do, suggesting for example that she cannot really diet while she is on holiday or while she has people staying, or while there is a function on at work, and so forth. Encouraging a friend to postpone resolutions that are important to her under the guise of making life more pleasant might at times be to undermine her temperate clinging to some nobler good that will benefit her more profoundly. We might also be able to readily spot those who act out of jealousy or competition with our friend and have a sense of who in her situation can or cannot be trusted. Our eye to our friend's happiness means that we can take a wider view of the situation and help to head off negative influences from external sources. We are again touched to be the recipients of cautionary advice, moved that someone really cares what happens to us and about our long term good. This can be distinguished from the sort of advice that characterises those in mere pleasure or utility friendships, regarding the intentions of others. A person who looks on another for some sort of possessive gain (be it useful or pleasurable) might be quickly suspicious of the motives of others who show her friendly attention, seeing them as competition for the prize that they have their eye on. Once again, the person of practical wisdom who truly seeks her friend's good in each situation is best equipped to spot the difference case by case.

6.4.iv.d. Docility

So far, we have concentrated our examples on the way friends become attuned to each other and develop their practical wisdom in the other's regard. Docility is particularly relevant where friends pool their foresight, circumspection and caution as they embark upon worthwhile endeavours together. In as much as one has some particular competence to offer the other, they naturally tend to become each other's counsellors. The mutual trust that builds up in the climate of knowing that each friend is consistently 'for' the other's true good, makes each more docile to the other in considering her view and advice, than might be the case among mere acquaintances or even workmates. Knowing and respecting each other's respective competencies, they happily cede a sort of authority to each other, where the other's particular experience, expertise or wisdom warrant it. Deep friendship tends not to be caught up in egoistic jealousies that can arise when someone feels their own idea has been slighted or superseded or does not want to admit that someone else has a better way, as can sometimes occur among the members of committees of do-

gooders. Friends have nothing to prove in this regard. They happily allow each other to have the satisfaction of leading the way in whatever area each person excels. At the same time, they can tell by knowing each other so well where the other is not speaking from a place of authority, however well meaning, and relativise certain opinions that are perhaps coming from a lack of maturity or experience, even within their friend's undisputed benevolence.

VII

FRIENDSHIP AND THE VIRTUE OF FORTITUDE

Having examined the way that deep friendship lends itself to the development and refinement of practical wisdom, which is that element of reasoning that must give form to every virtuous choice in life, it would be illuminating to examine friendship's impact and formative power on a specific virtue itself, and for this purpose, I have chosen fortitude by way of example.

To this end, it will be instructive to briefly summarise the virtue of fortitude in general from an Aristotelian perspective, before seeing how friendship strengthens its significant components: notably the love for noble goods; the confidence and magnanimity needed in contexts where fortitude calls for decisive action in order to limit an encroaching evil; and the patience, perseverance and constancy required, when practical wisdom discerns that endurance is the better path.

7.1. Fortitude Itself

Aristotle affirms that bravery reaches its fullest and most praiseworthy summit facing the ultimate test, where, encountering significant adversity and for the best of reasons in 'noble circumstances', a person has to stand fast in her commitment to the good, risking even life itself. Fortitude is relevant whenever the noble path requires clinging to a higher good from a position of vulnerability, in such circumstances where to choose to relinquish it, even for the sake of relief from the considerable pressures involved, would amount to something base and ignoble.[421]

Without this vulnerability, where the agent is capable of suffering significant injury or loss due to the adversity before her (with death of course being the ultimate expression of this), it is not meaningful to speak of fortitude.[422] Even if in general she does not often face this ultimate challenge, only in so far as she is prepared to sacrifice something significant with respect to life's

[421] Aristotle, N.E., 1115a-1116a.
[422] Pieper, Josef (1966) at 117-21.

goods that she rightly esteems, and undergo at least some partial 'death to self' for the sake of the higher goods involved, can she occupy the province of fortitude.

The apparent dilemma posed within acts of fortitude is linked to the close relationship between fear and love. Our fears betray our vulnerabilities, which are often linked to our loves and are in some ways their flipside. When something threatens what is dear to us, we tend to react with force. Our cares motivate our response, and this can be propelled by various feelings, be they grave concern, indignation, anger, a sense of urgency or various manifestations of fear. Interestingly, indifference robs both love and fear of their power and where love is said to 'drive out fear' it refers to the way that higher loves relativise lower loves and thus the lower fears associated with losing them. For someone brave, it would be intolerable should fear, even of impending doom, be allowed the last word. Rather, such a person is spurred on by her higher prizing of whatever nobler good is involved and the only fear she will permit to prevail is that of losing this good.[423] A necessary precursor then to authentic fortitude is that one's loves are in proper order, so that the love for the nobler good may never be swamped by any natural fear that might attach itself to the loss of lesser goods. Should this occur, it would betray the fact that in reality one values the lesser good over the noble, which would be something base and foolish.

For the person of authentic fortitude, not only is the nobler good held in higher esteem, but the lesser must also be appropriately valued. It would not be brave to be prepared to forego one's life for a noble cause, should one happen to despise or disparage that life, due to some underlying despair or self-hatred; as if, wanting to throw one's life away in any case, one sought a noble cause for which to do so! Indeed, with regard to the virtuous person, Aristotle points out that the opposite tends to be the case: she prizes her life all the more, not simply as a good in itself but as an intactness that allows for the blossoming of the virtuous activity, friendship and contemplation that for her make life worth living and to which attach pleasure and fulfilment without qualification.[424] For the virtuous, life is a wonderful vehicle for *eudaimonia,* and it is against this backdrop of a great love and appreciation for life and its goods, that the brave person is able to

[423] This latter concept, in a Christian context, lies at the heart of the classical formulation 'fear of the Lord', which is effectively a "fear of losing the Lord out of love for the Lord." The psalmist declares that "fear of the Lord is the first stage of wisdom," which reflects the notion of wisdom as the right ranking of loves and thus of goods. To put the possible loss of the Lord as one's chief concern effectively puts one's highest love first.
[424] Aristotle, N.E., 1117b, N.E., 1156b.

maintain her preference for what is noble in the face of significant threat, undeterred by the possibility of other losses.

Similarly, we could not properly speak of fortitude even were someone prepared to forego a life that they greatly esteemed, should the cause for which they would suffer not be of a high enough value. Someone who risks life and limb in the pursuit of foolhardy thrills, such as speed around dangerous corners, is not rightly admired as brave. She is more to be pitied, as one who values shallow excitement over the great good of life itself.[425, 426]

The right assessment of the goods involved then is a vital component of authentic fortitude. Assumed in all of this is that certain goods are indeed noble enough to warrant a preparedness to face either actual death or some smaller death or loss for their sake. Fortitude is meaningful if it is right to prioritise certain goods above the value one rightly places on one's physical life and thus to allow one's commitment to these goods to take on a more ultimate aspect. The sense of honour that we afford those who have made such sacrifices tends to support the human consensus that this is so.

The way that such a commitment is executed under various scenarios comes within the province of *phronesis* to determine. In general, the possible manifestations of fortitude fall into two broad categories, namely those where we might act decisively in order to limit the scope of impending evil, which we might call 'attack' or where the best path in the face of the calamity taking hold is a resilient endurance. Attack is related to a specific set of circumstances and endurance to another, which is why Aristotle regards fortitude as a kind of double mean, finding its right place in regard to two different emotions, namely confidence and fear, either of which can be felt falsely in two broad directions (excess or deficiency).[427]

7.2. Confidence, Magnanimity and Anger When Fortitude Calls for 'Attack'

Confidence is particularly relevant when the situation calls for some sort of attack in order to limit the encroaching danger. Someone rash or overly optimistic might, at least at first, show an

[425] Aristotle, N.E., 1115b.
[426] Pieper, Josef (1966) at 120
[427] Aristotle, N.E., 1117a-b.

unrealistic *bravura*, resulting either from underestimating the dangers or over-estimating her own ability to conquer them; while someone timid or unduly pessimistic might lack the requisite confidence to stare down the approaching evil and act decisively so as to limit its power.

When fear dominates, an all too narrow concern for self-preservation in some immediate sense risks taking hold, to the loss of a greater intactness or integrity, and we are tempted to seek an escape that overly compromises our authentic commitment to the good. A person of fortitude is in one sense 'fearless' and in another sense she 'fears things rightly'. Her fearlessness concerns the fact that the fear of losing lesser goods does not even seem to feature in the equation when she is faced with upholding a nobler good. The mother rushing into a room ablaze with fire, or diving off rocks into dangerous sea, in order to save her little daughter, does not hesitate for a moment to battle with the sort of internal sentiments for self-preservation that would normally accompany the contemplation of a fierce blaze or a choppy sea under less drastic conditions. She is worlds apart from the rash dare-devil who loves the thrill of taking on fire or dangerous seas for the fun of it at the best of times, or from the coward who shrinks from the heroism required in an emergency, to simply watch in horror as her child disappears beneath flame or froth. Her child in this moment is all that matters to her and she does not hesitate to risk her own life in order to save her. If she had to significantly wrestle with herself in such a moment, it might be a sign that her actions count more as continence than as bravery. Furthermore, we can see how Aristotle might affirm that she finds the prospect of not acting under such circumstances to be unthinkable or horrific, and in this sense we could say that what she does fear is the ignoble or dishonourable life that would be her lot, had she failed to act in the moment that counted due to crippling cowardice.[428] Her decisive action might belie that she has a right approach toward honour and shame. The more she is a person of fortitude, however, the less any of this need consciously occur to her. The higher love involved spurs her on and she fortifies herself in the face of dreadful danger in order to preserve her commitment to this good. If interviewed afterwards, she might claim that her actions are "what anyone would have done under the circumstances"; as well as being "the only courageous or decent thing to do." It is enough for her to say "it was my daughter" to justify her action. We could note that by extension the fully brave person would be prepared to act similarly for the daughter even of a stranger. Here we would assume that such a person has, through life's experiences,

[428] Aristotle, N.E., 1117a-b.

discovered the deep value and dignity of human life in itself, though even this would presumably have occurred due to contexts where that discovery is most accessible, namely among those that she holds most dear. This presumption is not strictly provable, and all we can do is appeal to a sympathetic self-reflection on the reader's life and thus hope for corroboration, case by case.

A second aspect involved when the right response to an evil is to limit it by way of some decisive 'attack' action in the realistic hope of success, is that of magnanimity. The courageous person has a certain generosity of heart, a largesse of soul, with regard to the gift of self for another for a higher cause, which underlies her remaining undiverted and undaunted by the very real difficulties at hand. In moments of adversity, what she holds dear can indeed prove itself to be truly 'dear' in the second sense of the word: that is, costly or expensive; requiring that for it, she be prepared to risk or lose something of great value that touches her very person. Pieper points out that the same pun can be made in other languages: with the word '*cher'* in French, '*cara*' in Italian and '*teuer'* in German all carrying both the connotation of the beloved and of the extent of the cost love for her might incur.[429] What is precious can well end up 'costing one much'.

Relevant too is the use one makes of the passion of anger in such circumstances, which can naturally arise in the face of injustice, particularly when one's loves are threatened. So long as this anger is tempered and proportionate and does not degenerate into some sort of blind fury or disproportionate revenge-seeking rage, it can add to fortitude's legitimate momentum. A righteous indignation can help a person follow through on the commitment to a well-reasoned attack aimed at reducing or eliminating the evil that threatens significant goods. This helps to carry the brave person over the threshold of commitment to committed action in a way that keeps an eye firmly on the prize, and so allows one, at the same time, to look the pain that might have to be endured squarely in the face on behalf of the good to be defended.

7.3. Patience and Perseverance when Fortitude Calls for Endurance

When the evil cannot be vanquished by attack, however, or when attack under the circumstances would do more harm than good for one reason or another, endurance becomes the mode of authentic fortitude; and this in fact poses its ultimate test. Here, what the brave person has to suffer

[429] Pieper, Josef (1997) at 154.

might be all the more severe, in that it could occur over an extended period of time and to an extent that might potentially overwhelm her very being. In such cases, evil is not simply immanent, as when we seek to reduce its scope by attack. Rather, it has well and truly taken hold, and the brave person is the one who bears up with patience and perseverance at the level of her spirit, clinging to the valued good, at least in her heart. Aristotle considers this the ultimate expression of fortitude for it shows the character of the brave even when evil overwhelms their physical capacity to conquer. This strength of soul that achieves another sense of victory by enduring (as seen historically in the Christian conception of martyrdom for example) demonstrates more than ever the deep autonomy by which a human person is able to maintain a resilience of spirit that does not allow itself to be broken from the outside, even as her body might be. Within the dynamic of fortitude, this autonomy is not something simply exercised for its own sake, like a kind of stubbornness. It is taken up as the full possession of a self that is oriented to self-gift, and so toward what finalises the quest of the human spirit for happiness more deeply, and this may even be considered worth the sacrifice of one's life.

Here we could consider the example of the Franciscan friar, Maximilian Kolbe (1894-1941), who was deprived of food and water for three weeks and then lethally injected with carbolic acid at the Auschwitz concentration camp. Kolbe had volunteered to take the place of fellow prisoner, Franciszek Gajowniczek, who was one of ten men chosen by SS-Hauptsturmfürer Karl Fritzsch to be killed in response to what the officer thought was the escape of another prisoner. In fact, the missing man was later found drowned in the camp latrine.[430] Kolbe stepped forward, asking to endure the punishment in place of Gajowniczek , who had made a desperate plea for clemency for the sake of his wife and children. Before this final ordeal, Kolbe already had an impressive history of courageous action. He was one of just a few friars who chose to remain in what was a thriving monastery after the outbreak of the war in order to turn it into a temporary hospital.[431] He rejected the chance to sign the *Deutsche Volksliste*, which would have given him the protection of a German citizen, due to his German ethnicity.[432] He sheltered refugees and hid over 2000 Jews from the Nazis at the Niepokalanów friary, from where he continued to publish anti-Nazi German publications, until his arrest in February of 1941.[433] At Pawiak prison and during his subsequent

[430] https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/maximilian-kolbe.
[431] Czeslaw Lechicki (1968) at 29.
[432] Ibid at 297.
[433] https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/maximilian-kolbe.

time at the camp of Auschwitz, he continued to act as a priest for which service he received repeated beatings and lashings.[434] Even during the three week attempt to starve him to death, Kolbe led the other men in song and prayer in an effort to boost their morale and fortify them for their last journey. The serenity with which he accepted his fate bespeaks of the bond of deep friendship that his faith allowed him to sustain, with Christ, who, in the spirit of Christian charity he was able to love in the person of his neighbour. Gajowniczek later recalled:

> I could only thank him with my eyes. I was stunned and could hardly grasp what was going on. The immensity of it: I, the condemned, am to live and someone else willingly and voluntarily offers his life for me – a stranger. Is this some dream? I was put back into my place without having had time to say anything to Maximilian Kolbe. I was saved. And I owe to him the fact that I could tell you all this. The news quickly spread all round the camp. It was the first and the last time that such an incident happened in the whole history of Auschwitz. For a long time I felt remorse when I thought of Maximilian. By allowing myself to be saved, I had signed his death warrant. But now, on reflection, I understood that a man like him could not have done otherwise. Perhaps he thought that as a priest his place was beside the condemned men to help them keep hope. In fact, he was with them to the last.[435]

We could also consider the biblical example of Luke's account of Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane,[436] where Jesus prays to his Father that he might be able to escape the 'cup' of his coming passion and death on the cross if at all possible, yet chooses regardless to cling with resolve to his bond with the Father's will. Verse 44 contains the detail:

> being in agony, he was praying very fervently; and his sweat became drops of blood, falling to the ground.

[434] Kluz, Ladislaus, (1983) at 188-9. See also: http://www.auschwitz.dk/kolbe.htm.
[435] Treece, Patricia (1982) at 171.
[436] Lk. 22,39-46

The strength of resolve involved in fortitude does not lessen human sensitivity to the loss of the very real good that will be incurred by the suffering entailed. With fortitude, even though the lower loves may still be so highly valued that consideration of their loss is deeply traumatising, this does not result in the relinquishing the nobler good that orients one's higher love. It is worth noting that this example is punctuated by a further form of suffering, where Christ has to deal several times with the disappointment that his three best friends are unable to offer him the consolation of their solidarity, by staying awake with him for an hour while he endures this trauma.[437]

This raises the question as to whether a person needs to take pleasure in the exercise of fortitude to be said to fully possess the virtue, as might be the case with generosity or temperance. To give reluctantly, for example, is a sign that one is not yet fully generous. One may be more in a state of what Aristotle calls 'continence', rather than full-blown virtue.[438] In the case of fortitude, Aquinas makes an important distinction: fear and dread along with spiritual and physical sorrow can accompany the losses that may or will be incurred through the act of fortitude in a certain situation and these can be intense.[439] At the same time, it is possible that there is a sort of serenity of spirit and even a joy taken both in the virtue, which is good in itself, and the higher end or nobler good for which the virtue is employed, seeing one is glad that one does not relinquish union with this good in order to escape what is awful in the ordeal. Aquinas is happy to say that the suffering may at times outweigh the joy at the level of feelings, and so reinforces something that Aristotle notes about the feelings that accompany fortitude: it is not necessary for a brave person to perceive his delight, though at another level he is happy to withstand a terrible evil. Rather, it is enough that he does not become sad.[440] Here sadness is distinguished from sorrow, in that it connotes an element of despair and spiritual defeat. The person is sad who is in fact overpowered by the evil at hand and succumbs to it at the level of her spirit. This is not the lot of a person of fortitude, even if she has to endure the loss of her life in her persisting spiritual commitment to the noble good at hand.

External action alone is never enough to assess virtue. As well as having the right emotional response with regard to the exercise of the virtue, discerning right reasons through practical wisdom is essential to render the activity authentically virtuous. Aristotle in fact gives five

[437] Lk. 22,39-46; Mt. 26,40-4; Mk. 14,32-41.
[438] Aristotle, N.E., 1104b-1105a; N.E., 1149b-1150a.
[439] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 123, art. 8.
[440] Aristotle, N.E., 1104b-1105a.

examples where people may appear brave but in which, for one reason or another, they fall short of the underlying *phronesis* that allows fortitude to be fully itself. He notes that 'citizen-soldiers' might face death in battle simply because they are compelled to by authority, or because they seek to have honour or to avoid shame in the eyes of their peers or society.[441] This is not necessarily bad in itself, but the virtue exhibited is not fortitude. Perhaps their actions arise from other virtues, such as a honour or obedience to legitimate authority. A professional soldier might be regarded as courageous, whereas in fact he does not fear due to his superior training, skill or equipment. On the other hand, pain and danger might cause someone's blood to boil, motivating what seems to be an impressive fervour in attack, though this might be more akin to how some animals in trouble choose 'fight' over 'flight' or certain small children rage against the confiscation of their toys. Similarly, the passion of anger could drive a person bent on revenge to act forcefully in such a way that other considerations become clouded. Or someone with a strong track-record of winning or someone whose estimation is obscured by excess of alcohol might well exhibit over-confidence in a moment of threat. Finally, those ignorant of the real dangers involved can give the appearance for a while of bravely standing firm, at least until a deeper realisation of the real situation sinks in. In each of these scenarios, the commitment to the noble good is not the determining factor leading to resilience, and the requisite sense of vulnerability is lacking or in some way obscured.

Having outlined the essence of fortitude, we are in a position to examine certain specific formative aspects that deep friendship brings to the development of this heroic character trait.

7.4. Love and the Noble Good in the Light of Deep Friendship

From this outline, it is already clear how much the development of fortitude is linked to that of love. That what is noble be preferred and loved above lesser goods is essential for this virtue to take root.

One might expect that even in the sphere of goods that are loved primarily for what they bring to us, the refinement of taste in an Epicurean sense can constitute a sort of precursor to the development of the values that underscore real fortitude. In matters of quantity, less and more occur on a simple mathematical continuum, whether it be regarding discrete values (as when we

[441] Aristotle, N.E., 1116a.

might count 2, 3 or 4 cows say) or continuous ones (as for example with 2-4 litres of milk or kilos of beef). But for matters of quality, certain continuums, especially those that pertain to beauty and the arts, are perhaps better seen as a progression from the trivial to the profound. Indeed, in such cases knowledge of what is profound tends to be the measure of the trivial. If one knows what it means to enjoy deeply expressive music in its universe of nuances, one might still tap one's toes to a tacky wee ditty but never be under the illusion that musical beauty and profundity is something entirely subjective. Given that we tend to defend what we cherish when it comes under attack, we could posit that whatever helps us to develop an authentic qualitative sense of nobler goods over lesser ones paves the way for fortitude by way of precursor. Fortitude begins to emerge and grow in relevance whenever the goods under threat are worthy of love for their own sake. The matter, though, is subtle, because it can often be that lesser goods carry greater symbolic import than their immediate worth might suggest and so touch upon deeper values that may be worth a more costly defence.

In the artistic realm, sublime beauty that draws us toward a deeper contemplation of the goodness of things, might, under adversity, be considered something worth jealously defending, particularly when it becomes symbolic of a people's heritage and culture. Connoisseurs are particularly attuned to a sense of potential tragedy should magnificent estates or gardens, heritage buildings or great works of art become threatened by some encroaching barbarism. Defence of artistic goods can be called for in lesser conflicts than outright war: locals might band together against the perceived unjust aggression of town planners, for whom efficiency seems to have become the only value; connoisseurs might stand firm against calls to stop the 'elitist' state funding of a symphony orchestra; parishioners might oppose a new cleric who wants to put an end to their choir singing Palestrina in order to "attract the youth". Someone might protest against such limitations simply because of her personal attachment to the particular goods under threat, or this might be part of a deeper reason: such that human life itself is ennobled by maintaining and promoting the possibility of noble goods that are accessible to all. The threat to cut down a local tree might upset us simply because we are fond of it, or because it is iconic of the area, giving it character. Our stand might be broader still, given that the character of a place, when rooted in shared life and heritage, could be considered something worth defending as a point of principle. Similarly, pleasure friends or utility friends might rally together in defence of something that threatens their immediate

enjoyable activity or common project, and in the process be taken up in something deeper, taking umbrage at the implied decline of a 'way of life' symbolised by such pleasantries or enterprises.

Once we go beyond the artistic sphere to human relations, and in particular with deep friendship where we have come to love the very being of 'another self' whose flourishing is willed for her own sake, we cross the border that separates the merely useful, admirable, enjoyable or even inspiring good from still nobler ones that are worthy of love for their own sake, and so of finalising our hearts to some notable extent. For friends, family and 'country' (which represents the whole *milieu* that allows for and supports the thriving of qualitative amical human relations) someone might be prepared to die. What's more, under the right conditions, such a stand would be considered honourable, worthy of the ongoing tributes and memorials established by survivors and maintained by future generations.

It is the very passage from regarding a good loved passionately as something 'for me', to be possessed for its enjoyment, to a good loved 'in itself' with a spiritual love for the other's sake, that we start to approach the truly noble good beyond the refined goods of Epicureanism and thus move into the realm of fortitude as a virtue. If our own world remains essentially self-centred, we might put up a fight to effectively preserve our possessions, even if these include the limited way we see other people, but this is perhaps more akin to the tantrum of a child who is asked to put her toys away because it is bedtime, than the nobler stance of one who might defend 'play' in itself for all that it offers the human spirit, from a world that she believes is prone to be subsumed by single-minded attention to work, efficiency and endless production.

Indeed, when goods loved 'for me' obscure our commitment to goods that should be loved 'for their own sake', the virtue of fortitude is undermined by lesser attachments and we succumb to disproportionate fears. Cowardice is often propped up by overattachment to secondary things. Without a developed sense of spiritual love for a noble good, we can pull back from defending it, fearing anything from the loss of reputation or status, to the repercussions that might limit our livelihood, or our likelihood to receive certain benefits and so forth, should these be at stake. What precisely carries the courageous person beyond these limits is the strength of a love whose ecstatic nature has truly made her 'leave herself for another'; a love whose union is one of adherence and

mutual beneficence, rather than of an assimilation that subsumes the good as an adornment in her own universe.

Both passional love for a 'good for me' and spiritual love for a 'good in itself' can be zealous and fervent. The more intensely we prize our possessions the more jealously we might guard and defend them, and this will be the case among the non-virtuous, whose greed might give rise to a particular force of commitment and combativeness. But something else characterises the fervour and zeal found within the love of deep friendship. What we primarily will is the other's true good and the more our heart is set on this, the more we tend to be galvanised and engaged when something significantly threatens her. Such a stance has no connotations of selfishness even though we are thoroughly invested in the good of our friend as in our own, and our friend is indeed 'another self'.

The more our love for the other is focussed on her flourishing, the less we can remain passive observers in her moment of dire need, and the more we will be prepared to stand firmly alongside her in solidarity, even when there is no other way we can help. The goodness of a deep friend, whom we have found to be worth loving for her own sake, is also worth the sacrifice our valued possessions, should a serious evil threaten to envelop or overcome her. We rank her true personal good above our non-personal goods, however pleasurable or useful, when the matter takes on vital importance. We have seen in Part I the power of spiritual love to help clarify and purify other loves, assuming and integrating them within a higher finality, rather than simply suppressing them temporarily, until their reassertion might occur in some dysfunctional 'flare-up'.

Not every act of fortitude involves standing up for our friend of course, but because the friend is a good so close to our heart, who in her own right is noble enough to warrant sacrifice on our part, our love for her becomes part of an education in what is noble, important and ultimate in life. Our interactions in times of hardship can become the arena where we 'practise fortitude' in smaller ways, helping us to develop this character trait to such an extent that we can reliably 'call upon it' without hesitation when the stakes are high.

As well as standing up *for* the friend, there is the possibility that our commitment to the truth and to the friend's deepest good might necessitate at times that we stand up *to* our friend. Aristotle's

asserts his preference for the truth over his loyalty to his friend and mentor of twenty years, Plato, when he takes public issue with Plato's doctrine of forms, as much as it pains him to do so.[442] It is noble to love one's friend, but one must love the truth more, should the two come into conflict in a significant way, and this in turn helps to maintain the authenticity of our love. This reinforces the fact that one of the highest services a friend can offer her friend is to help her to grow in the understanding of the truth, whether speculative or practical. Having the courage to challenge a friend when her error is an ethical one can be a matter of special delicacy and involve all the finesse that practical wisdom can summon. We must be prepared to love our friend even more than our friendship, in that we might risk losing the latter, painful as this would be, should she not be able to receive the light that we discern she vitally needs at a certain moment for her true flourishing. I was told once of a bridesmaid who was faced with the choice as to whether she should inform her best friend, days before the wedding, that her fiancé, while drunk, had attempted a sexual liaison with her, pledging that she was the only true object of his love. After refusing him, the bridesmaid asked her own boyfriend what to do, and he framed the problem as we have stated it: "which do you love more, your friend or the friendship?" She chose the friend and immediately lost her wedding invitation.

7.5. Confidence in the Light of Deep Friendship

Aquinas mentions three sources of confidence, which is a vital component of both the magnanimity one needs in order to strive after greater things that are difficult to obtain and the hope for success over any obstacles that might be in the way. The first involves a person's estimation of her own capacity and ability to conquer under the circumstances, and the other two pertain to the trust she can have in the help of someone else, either because of the faith she places in their word or promise of support, or for the trust she places in their character and consistent benevolence toward herself.[443] That this should bolster confidence assumes that the person relied upon for support is rightly assessed to be able to be of real help in the matter.

Deep friendship strengthens all of these contributories. Realistic self-assessment of our capacities and abilities is greatly aided by our friend's ability to penetrate the surface and appreciate us in

[442] Aristotle, N.E., 1096a.
[443] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 129, art. 6.

our goodness, whether that goodness is actuated or still in potential. This can help us to come out of our shell and take the risks needed for growth. Left to ourselves, we might at times be crippled by self-doubt, but if our friend, whom we trust and respect, can see the seeds of greatness in us, we can rise to this expectation. This is not a blind belief in the other despite all evidence to the contrary! It is the inner eye that is able to realise that obstacles are not the last word and that we indeed have within us the sort of goodness and strength that can be awakened to prevail in adversity.

The ongoing belief one friend has in the other can be a great source of refreshment when we begin to tire due to encroaching hardships or become discouraged or frustrated at setbacks. A friend can help us get up again after a fall without unduly wasting time wallowing in self-pitying post-mortems, asking, 'what happened?' or 'how could I have been so stupid?' She can be an encouragement to look forward rather than backwards and to regain composure and perspective.

This can also be the case when there is no fault on our part. We can easily become gripped by the injustice of being misunderstood and mistreated and this can become a crippling cancer if it takes all our focus and energy up in internal protest. A friend can encourage us toward forgiveness if this is possible or at least away from an unhealthy wallowing, and remind us that the faults of another should not hold us back from being our best selves. Another impetus toward fortitude emerges where we do not want to falsify the faith that our friend calmly and consistently places in us that our inner strength and goodness can prevail over this adversity. The last thing that we want to do is prove our friend wrong for believing in our goodness! There is an incentive here, not in how it might make us look should we abandon ship, which could come from a less noble concern such as vanity, but rather in not wanting to let down the one we love by letting ourselves down. That the other is another self strangely spurs us on here. We might be prepared to capitulate in more desperate moments when left to ourselves, but the self we are less prepared to abandon is the 'other self' of the friend, who still cares for us when we are tempted to give up on ourselves. She herself is invested in us as 'another self' which makes our own self worth preserving all the more.

It is possible too that we come from a starting point of over-confidence, where we are inclined toward the unrealistic overassessment of our abilities or to underestimate the dangers and limiting factors that are involved within the situation. The realism of the authentic love found in friendship

can also be an antidote to this distortion. Mere acquaintances or colleagues or even pleasure or utility friends might well notice these sorts of tendencies in us after a while, even to their annoyance, but see it as beyond their business or prerogative to help us grow past them. A deep friend is more pained however that we continue to live in unrealistic illusions that themselves pose barriers to our authenticity and to our actual ability to cope in trying circumstances. Knowing that our friend knows us so well and has 'been there' for us throughout certain of our personal struggles, and especially because this has taken place within a climate of love and acceptance rather than annoyance and judgement, makes us able to face up to reality when we see ourselves somehow reflected in her eyes. This knowing and loving mirror that looks back at us in both understanding and realism, acceptance and challenge, whether or not it is emphasised by specific cautionary words or counsel, can be exactly what we need to return to earth in moments where we are tempted to become rash or swept up in imprudent fervour. Should actual words of counsel or caution be needed, we are also more likely to receive them from a trusted friend than from someone that we fear is judgemental, jealous or simply a lacking in the knowledge of who we really are. The patience and constancy of a good friend is a powerful component when facing up to certain weaknesses and fighting against them, especially those involving deep inner conflicts such as addictions, which are forms of slavery to lower goods over higher goods. Left to ourselves, it can be hard for a long time to even admit that there is a problem and we can easily imagine that we have the internal fortitude to overcome it alone. A loving friend can provide precisely the objective eyes we need to realistically assess our situation, enabling us to reach out for the help that we would rather not need.

Should we be inclined toward haughtiness, and thus to a reluctance to accept help or correction lest it imply weakness, a friend might look for subtle ways to assist us that do not at first emphasise our neediness. We can learn through patient friendship in this regard that it is not the end of the world were we not to appear totally self-sufficient and in control. We have a friend who is able to accept, love and help us in weakness as well as admire us in strength. This in the end helps us to be less rigid and self-reliant and more open to the possibility of being strengthened by another. The friend too is in a position to judge when we are occasionally in need of a firm rebuke to wake us up in this regard. Discerning this is part of the practical wisdom that shared life in love opens up between friends.

We can also apply to ourselves lessons we might learn through trying to help our friend. Her lack of openness to our assistance on certain occasions may have frustrated us, and through this, we might be more able to recognise the signs of similar resistance in ourselves, when the shoe is on the other foot. As friends become more assured of the authentic benevolence that they bear one another, the more they grow not only in mutual gratitude and appreciation, but also in the ability to allow themselves, in an atmosphere of amical trust, to become vulnerable and able to receive help from someone who genuinely cares for their wellbeing, when this becomes required. As much as one hates to be a burden, yet with truly close friends, one can admit when one is in genuine need without embarrassment. Indeed, in such cases, we give our friend the delight of being a support to us, a useful and loving presence, and we are able to live in the humble gratitude that there is someone on this earth on whom we can always depend. A deep friend does not take such reaching out as an imposition, but instead takes real joy in being able to exercise the sort of generosity and benevolence that keep true friendship authentic under difficult circumstances.

7.6. Magnanimity in the Light of Deep Friendship

A vital part of fortitude is the magnanimity by which we strive for great things with a generosity of spirit that rises to challenges, and this normally implies a position of strength and abundance. Yet Aquinas reminds us that inasmuch as the magnanimous person has need of another, it is part of her excellence to have others at hand who can come to her aid.[444] Here deep friends take pride of place. They do not waste time protesting their independence as if reliance on another from time to time were a reason for shame or some intolerable admission of weakness. Indeed, it is a part of a healthy realism to know one's limitations and to make provision for them, especially by pooling resources with others so as not to allow problems to become needlessly overwhelming in the name of a temporary impression of strength, self-sufficiency or independence. Of course, the same friend is all the more eager to be that rock of support for her friend when the roles are reversed. The magnanimous person prefers to be the one going beyond herself for the other in ways that are even heroic should this be justified, all the while maintaining the utmost respect for her friend in a delicacy that in no way belittles the one she is trying to help by implying any hint of condescension.

[444] Aquinas, S.T., qu. 129, art. 6. Reply to objection one.

Part of sharing life intelligently together in the benign atmosphere of friendship over an extended period of time, is the way in which the friends come to appreciate the subtleties of each other's capacities and needs, strengths and weaknesses. The manner in whey they support each other is naturally refined over a sustained period of mutual benevolence, as they share life, providing the spiritual love that they bear one another continues to animate their mutual attentiveness.

We have mentioned above, when examining the influence of friendship on practical wisdom, the observation of Aristotle that two can go further than one in both seeing and acting.[445] This is particularly pertinent when the actions concern the need for strength and resolve, perseverance, patience, confidence and magnanimity, as is the case with acts of fortitude in the face of significant adversity.

We are familiar with sayings such as 'a friend in [times of] need is a friend indeed'; or 'in times like this we really find out who our friends are'. Those who stand by us in difficulty in a certain way 'prove' their friendship. They are not merely 'fair-weather friends' or 'well-wishers' in hardship. They are friends 'in deed', whose actions follow through on their benevolent words. 'When the going gets tough, the tough get going' and this resilience is all the more touching when it is from a friend on our behalf, as she makes our problem her own and readily sacrifices time or resources to take firm steps toward helping us resolve a difficult matter. Even just to have this kind of support brings immediate relief and gives the impression that 'a problem shared is a problem halved' whether success is immediately forthcoming or not. That the friend sees us as 'another self' means that our difficulty becomes her own and this solidarity boosts our internal resolve and our confidence in being able to overcome.

By contrast, it can be particularly hurtful when someone who is presumed to be such a close friend seems to 'run for cover' and 'save her own skin' when we face adversity. Should she seem to abandon us as we are maligned or wrongly persecuted, this can be experienced as a deep betrayal, which is an injury that is particularly hard to bear. Underlying this is the expectation that a true friend stands firmly with her friend in difficult times. We do not expect this from hobby or project friends, but it is part and parcel of deep friendship and one of its characteristic marks. As we

[445] Aristotle, N.E., 1177a.

previously noted, Aristotle points out that it is only deep friendship that provides a remedy for scandal, for the true friend knows the character of her friend and does not easily succumb to rumours or gossip.[446]

Deep friends are particularly sensitive to the importance of being people of their word for one another. A promise made to a friend is particularly sacred and can be waived only under extreme circumstances, when a greater unforeseen good makes its demands felt. Deep friends strive to be reliable for each other and there is no greater test for this than when one friend needs the other to stick up for her, as unreasonable forces mount against her. We are confident that we can trust our friend's word, for we know that she is true in her choice of us. Her love for us does not fluctuate with the occasion. She is prepared to sacrifice when necessary and indeed she has chosen us for our own sake, relativizing other goods in our name. In the mutuality of deep friendship, we have done the same for her, and this in turn strengthens our trust in her, for we know that we would not dream of letting her down if it were in our power to prevent this and we naturally trust in the mutuality of this unspoken commitment in friendship. We are determined to be trustworthy for our friend. Even when there is no explicit promise of support in a particular matter, we can be confident in the good character of our friend and her ongoing benevolence toward us, in such a way as to count on her support when it will be needed. Experience of her constancy over time reinforces this, as does our mutual commitment toward her. We would be sad to think that she did not place this same trust in ourselves as a default assumption and we joyfully reciprocate when we have the privilege of exercising our friendship in such a way as to be a rock of support for our friend in need.

Aquinas presents magnanimity as the stretching forth of the mind to great things that are difficult to obtain and so it is especially related to the sort of hope for success that needs to characterise the virtue of fortitude whenever a greater good requires defending against some encroaching evil.[447] Literally it refers to a largesse of soul or a generosity of heart that comes from a position of abundance or strength, and is prepared to face real difficulties for the sake of the noble good at stake. The focus and heart of a magnanimous person is not on superfluous matters but on great action, though of course what constitutes greatness is also relative to the capacity of the person

[446] Aristotle, N.E., 1157a.
[447] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 129, art. 1.

involved. Such a person gravitates toward being beneficent and generous. She prefers to be of help than to be in need, though this is not due to some small-minded haughtiness that resists any admission of weakness or dependence when this is realistic, but rather though a generosity whose default is to seek the best way to benefit one's loved ones and those in genuine need where she can be of real help. Her desire to excel in the perfection of gratitude makes her keen to pay back favours in ways that exceed what was offered. Indeed, she regards blessings and abundance as the happy means to go further in good intentions and to realise great good for the authentic flourishing of those for whom she cares.

Clearly, the ecstatic character of spiritual love, where we are prepared to go out of ourselves for the sake and flourishing of the person we love, clearly helps to develop this largesse of mind and heart. The more we care for our friend, the less we hesitate to embrace requisite sacrifices on her behalf if these will genuinely benefit her, and this in turn expands our preparedness to put ourselves out for other noble goods worthy of defence should they come under attack. This can be seen in particular with regard to the responsibility that parents naturally have for their children, for whom there is also an instinctive bond of care that can reinforce the spiritual love that they bear them, but it can already be present between the parents themselves, based on the deep friendship that they have freely embraced, and which often grounds the parental bonds.

Further, the vulnerability of heart that we develop toward our friend increases our sensitivity to her time of need and hence our resolve in wanting to be strong for her and reach out beyond ourselves when the situation arises. Interestingly, this taking on of the friend as 'another self' at the level of vulnerability tends to shift our focus from more trivial matters concerning ourselves. The more we are taken up in the need of another for whom we care deeply, we become less caught up with the little slights or annoyances against ourselves, less petty and self-pitying. We get a sense through love that the 'real problems' of the other overshadow our secondary ones. To spend the day complaining about the little inconveniences that came our way would be a sign that our priorities and heart are set on smaller matters and that we struggle to get past ourselves in a way that someone who cares deeply for another finds natural. Indeed, the magnanimous person is typically thick-skinned when it comes to what others say or think about her, all the while being sensitive and attuned to the needs of others in their vulnerability. Her sense of injustice and expressions of indignation are far more other-centred. This development of character is first of all

honed with regard to close friends, where the empathy and sense of 'other-selfdom' becomes a propellant to go beyond ourselves for the friend in her struggles. Practical wisdom, once again only gained from experience, will help us to best judge how to respond in each particular instance. It will not always be that our friend is a victim of injustice and we must come to her aid. Sometimes we might need to challenge her to face up to her own mistakes and take responsibility for actions that have not been a reflection of her best self. "You are better than this." Here friendship naturally provides the needed climate of unconditional acceptance that is able to facilitate this sort of growth and render the odd correction more palatable.

Deep friendship especially makes us aware of the horror of allowing what is base and shameful to enter our sphere of activity, in that such things often become the source of letting down the very people for whom we have the most care. Any acts that fall short of justice with regard to a friend, such as dishonesty in words or possessions, taking advantage of someone's good nature and so forth, become unthinkable in the light of the love and commitment one has toward a dear friend. Such actions would place superficial gain above the substantial loves and goods of our life and reveal a pusillanimity of heart.

It is interesting to note that fear often lies at the root of dishonesty. The first lie a child might tell is typically designed to get her out of trouble and avoid facing the wrong she has done. This may even involve deflecting the negative consequences by falsely laying blame on her nearby brother or sister. Trivial fears betray trivial attachments. Friendship helps us to realise that embarrassment is not the worst evil in the world. With a greater maturity we realise that it is far worse to betray someone we care deeply about, by lying to or about her. This kind of dishonesty implies a separation that authentic friendship finds intolerable, even if the friend is unaware at the time that we have cut ourselves from her by cutting her from the world of truth that we should rightly inhabit and enjoy together. The acts of reconciliation among friends, necessitating as they do humility and transparency, prepare us well to maintain our commitment to the good when encountering more significant dangers than simply the losing of face. In strengthening this character trait, we are placed in better stead for our dealings with those who are outside our circle of close friends. Magnanimous aspirations make one less susceptible to cowardice, because timidity is linked to placing too high a value on external goods, meaning that one is prepared to abandon justice or

virtue for their sake. For this reason, the magnanimous person is typically open and honest, unperturbed by the sorts of fears that often underlie the concealment of the truth.

The direct opposite or deficiency with regard to magnanimity would be pusillanimity or small-heartedness, where we shrink from scenarios in which upholding the good would be difficult, underplaying our hand and settling for a sort of minimal goodness. We might typically choose to 'mind our own business', even where we could have made a real difference regarding goodness in the world. All the while we might 'tisk-tisk' from our arm-chair, as though it is always the case that "someone (else) should do something about that". Deep friendship engages us too much for this sort of complacency to endure. We can rise up out of our 'comfort zone' only when we have found something worth loving beyond comfort and the more this higher love takes hold, the less these attachments preoccupy us.

At the root of pusillanimity might be an underestimation of our true capacity, from misjudgement or ignorance, or the lack of perspective that leads to an overestimation of the power of the encroaching evil. An exaggerated fear of failure might also arise from being overly concerned with our own reputation, especially if it is the source of our sense of self-worth or security. Or we might simply think that the sort of greatness that is called for in the situation pertains to others and not to ourselves. Deep friendship has its own way of taking us beyond all of these limitations. We have already addressed the way that it boosts confidence and renders self-assessment more realistic, as well as how it takes us beyond smaller fears due to higher loves. In addition to this, is the fact that through deep friendship, one lives in the more secure universe of true acceptance by another. One occupies a climate of being understood, appreciated, valued and loved by someone significant who is equally understood, appreciated, valued and loved. This gives rise to a certain immunity to the misjudgements or casual dismissals of others and increases our resilience when it counts for taking up matters of real significance. A developed notion of goodness takes us beyond shallower forms of recognition. The more that the experience of deep friendship is able to refine our priorities and our appreciation of personal goodness, the more we are protected from becoming overly enamoured by more trivialised forms of attention.

Due to the difficult aspect of enhancing the significant good at stake, magnanimity is linked to what is rightly held in honour and helps moderate our approach to honours. Specifically, it expands

the desire to be heroically virtuous for another's sake or for the sake of some noble good, and thus to be ourselves honourable and praiseworthy. It makes us less susceptible to empty flattery or to shallow praise or honour that is unrelated to virtue. The magnanimous person has little regard for position, status or the desire for one-upmanship, and none at all should these come at the expense of compromising a higher good. This is because she has a clearer idea of what is truly important and worthy of admiration.

Friendship can even help to develop a certain discretion with regards to one's good acts. We can be affronted if some little effort to help acquaintances goes unnoticed or without acknowledgement, but for a deep friend, this is far less likely, partly because we do not assume a default of ingratitude in any case, and also because it is simply not our focus to be thanked as we act for her own true good. There are times where we wish we were not thanked, for the expression of gratitude for certain trivial acts of help can be seen as a distancing, as if we were still at the level of acquaintances and she did not really expect us to 'be there' for her. We would hope that she could 'presume' on our help above all, for we are close and there is no question of imposition. It can even be a source of satisfaction if we work out a way that our help is so discreet that she does not even suspect we are behind it.

The magnanimous person is not a 'virtue signaller' or some sort of righteous show-off. She is not a social climber, furnishing her political or social career by being seen in the 'right places', making the right sorts of contributions and so forth, busying herself with every rotary club dinner, making sure everyone knows that she volunteers on the board of hospice and does her one day a week for St. Vincent de Paul. Thus, she is not overly concerned with 'networking' in order to secure favours, nor with boasting to impress others or win position. She is discreet and unassuming in her own greatness and so is most at home among virtuous friends, who are not concerned with trivial flattery and hypocrisy, which is the currency of the smallminded as they try to get ahead in life. The seeking of honours, particularly divorced from authentic virtue, is a caricature of magnanimity, where a person who craves the spotlight of a glorious reputation, rather than receives it incidentally as a true light shone on her character. It would mean that one's heart is set on something less than noble goods themselves, as if the latter were not their own reward. Inasmuch as friendship develops our sense of noble goods and prioritises them over lesser goods, it contributes to this greatness of spirit that in turn favours the development of authentic fortitude. A

person who gives too much prominence to lesser goods is inordinately saddened when they are threatened or inordinately happy to obtain them, perhaps at the expense of an objectively higher good. Thus, such a person is more likely to be given over to flattery or the opinions of others with similar distortions and taken up with fears when lesser goods are threatened.

The magnanimous person will find virtue itself to be enough motivation for something significant or heroic and might react to recognition as if this were commonplace: “It was the right thing to do”; “It’s what any decent person would have done.” In this sense, magnanimity is a crowning note that attaches itself to every virtue, in that it regards virtuous activity as something that should be heroically sought. Heroism is particularly relevant, though, to the virtue of fortitude, for it especially concerns clinging to the noble good in the face of the ultimate trial and with the possibility of the greatest loss. The drive of the magnanimous person is not to be regarded as virtuous, though she may well seek to enjoy the authentic *eudaimon* life that characterises the virtuous, who are capable of goodness in abundance. But such an ambition is not self-centred, as we shall discuss later in detail. It is in fact the life that necessitates the great blessing of deep friends with which to share, who themselves help one go further in virtuous activity.

With a spiritual love that seeks the true flourishing of the other for her sake, it is natural that a deep friend will delight in the other’s magnanimity and provide every encouragement for her friend to strive toward being her ‘best self’. This happens more easily within deep friendship than between mere pleasure or utility friends, who are more susceptible to jealousy, should benefits become disproportionate, as we noted in chapter II. With pleasure and utility friendship, there is an unspoken equivalence at play where each expects a similar return for their investment in whatever forms the basis of the friendship, all the while being happy to facilitate that sort of benefit for the other. Spiritual love does not impose the same limitations or conditions. When we love another for her own sake, we delight in her flourishing in matters that are truly important, even when her progress well exceeds our own. It becomes a source of joy and admiration to see her embrace the noblest goods, even at times especially amid great effort and sacrifice.

7.7. Patience in the Light of Deep Friendship

Patience is a particularly important aspect of fortitude when it faces its ultimate act, that of endurance, on such occasions that the realistic hope of victory through attack is not possible or advised.

Patience prevents someone from becoming inordinately sorrowful because of the evil that cannot be foreseeably overcome. In the greatest adversity, the act of clinging to the nobler good might mean that one has to endure prolonged suffering or even death. The patient person preserves a certain serenity of mind in spite of the injuries that result from faithfulness to the noble good. Through patience, a person's spirit does not become broken by grief or by the loss of greatness.[448] It is a remedy against a destructive self-pity, which can lead to despair if one succumbs to fear regarding the losses still to come and surrenders all hope. In this context we do not speak of confidence linked to the hope of overcoming the evil at hand, but rather in the sense of maintaining our conviction for the noble good that we cling to, preferring it over any competing lesser goods that might have to be foregone in its name.

Here the moral support of a good friend can make all the difference. She can genuinely admire and commend our efforts to uphold the noble good, assuring us that we are doing the right thing, all the while remaining sympathetic to our plight and not making light of the sacrifices involved or the suffering incurred. Her heart can go out to us in what we have to endure, while equally upholding and reinforcing our sense that it is worth it in the end. In moments where self-pity or gloom at the injustice besetting us threatens to darken our perspective, she can help us to lift our sights. Once again, due to the mutuality of friendship, we learn these things from two directions. It can be our friend's resilience in adversity that inspires our admiration and commendation and increases our desire to reach out to her in some way as our heart for her causes us to taste something that she suffers in her spirit. We develop experience of what it is like to be a true friend when the other is in difficulty and what it is like to have a true friend in our own struggles.

When we love our friend for her own sake and not for what we can gain from the situation, we see more clearly how to best help her to maintain her morale in these times of struggle. We walk in

[448] Pieper, Josef (1966) at 129.

solidarity with her, reassuring her of our love and helping her to take the more difficult road that nobler love requires under the circumstances. In doing so we bring a form of immediate strength and refreshment to her, in that she does not have to face the added anxiety of isolation in such a terrible moment, which can be an even worse suffering than the one at hand.

Should we ourselves have to suffer for a greater truth or noble good, the knowledge that those we hold most dear and whose goodness we deeply respect are aligned with us, can give us a greater sense that a stand for what is good and true is indeed worth it. We come to understand that there are two senses in which we do not stand alone: not only do we have their loving support, but we gain a clearer perspective that a noble stand is not simply a personal position we take for ourselves, as in '*chacun son truck'*. It is invariably a stand for others and for what is important in life, and thus for the whole community, present or future. It may even be a stand in respectful memory of those who have gone before us. The love of our friend who consistently upholds us in solidarity can bolster our resolve and help us maintain the inner serenity of patience in the greatest adversity.

It can be that both friends find themselves embroiled in the same difficulty, as with spouses who have to face some deep problem in the family, such as the ongoing serious illness, condition or struggle of a child. Adversity can potentially be a source of division in that it can push people to their limits and reveal a lack of character when there is little prospect of relief in sight. Where love has not taken deep enough root, there can be a strong temptation in at least one party to abandon ship and flee the ongoing struggle. But it can equally be a time of great growth and a deepening of their unity, mutual love and commitment as they face the obstacles together in a spirit that seeks to alleviate each other's suffering and bear more of the brunt of the burden themselves where possible. Here they can refine the way they value one another in their respective strengths, which they pool in the service of their love of some common good, as well as respectfully carry each other in their respective weaknesses. This is not exclusive to couples. A deep friend can walk alongside her friend in such difficulties and make considerable adjustments to her own life in order to 'be there' for her friend, tangibly manifesting her support throughout the ordeal her friend faces.

The right way of showing support and sympathy in times of trial can be a delicate matter that requires practical wisdom to discern case by case. There can be an immature temptation in friendship to highlight the injustice our friend is suffering as a way to increasing our bonding. We

might like to show that we are more appalled at whatever is happening to her than others are, especially if it is some other friend of hers that has let her down or is mistreating her. There may be mixed motives here, where genuine sympathy is tinged with a sort of competitive spirit, as we subtly establish ourselves as the real friend in the situation by highlighting the falsity of others. This can do our friend the disservice of locking her into her bitterness and hindering her possible reconciliation with the offending party. It can also prevent her from achieving the objective gaze on matters that she may need in order to humbly seek her own part in the breakdown of relations and at least seek forgiveness for that.

With practical wisdom however, the sensitive and intelligent support of a faithful friend can make all the difference. Here friendship becomes a comfort and an inner source of joy. The circumstances of the adversity themselves are not objectively enjoyable and indeed it would be perverse to enjoy them as such. But joy is the fruit of an underlying union of love. In the face of hardship, a friend becomes an unflinching support for her friend, bringing inner comfort and increasing the possibility that a serenity of spirit that characterises patience in extreme moments might prevail. The friend who is assured of the love of her friend grows in her resilience to endure the worst however long it persists, without succumbing to destructive self-pity or to the sort of wallowing that easily ushers in despair.

7.8. Perseverance and Constancy in the Light of Deep Friendship

The encouragement and perspective that deep friends can sustain each other in, with regard to the inner serenity needed in facing ongoing hardship, can be equally applied to perseverance and constancy, which are vital components of fortitude under its mode of endurance. Perseverance refers to persisting in a good act that is difficult to maintain over an extended period of toil, and constancy refers to being unwavering and undeterred by additional difficulties that arise from outside factors. Aquinas notes that it is the endurance of difficulty arising from delay that makes perseverance praiseworthy.[449] As time goes on, there is more risk that the fear of weariness or failure might overcome us, especially when additional obstacles from other sources crop up that threaten to ‘add insult to injury’. We might cope admirably for a while but the prospect of the difficulty having no end in sight can be a source of discouragement and tempt us to despair,

[449] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 137, art. 1-3.

declaring in desperation: “I can’t face it anymore.” Something else goes wrong which becomes “the last straw”. It can be disheartening to observe this breakdown of spirit in a close friend and we redouble our efforts to be that pillar of strength and place of refuge for her that we know that she needs. This sentiment resonates in the popular hit “Lean on Me” by Bob Withers with its famous chorus: “Lean on me, when you’re not strong, and I’ll be your friend, I’ll help you carry on…”[450] We may have witnessed a friend admirably battle with cancer and have a period of remission only to receive the discouraging news that it has returned with a vengeance and she has to face the whole thing again or worse. The love and support of close friends here can be an essential part of finding the inner resilience to keep going. Indeed, at the end of one’s life when there is little that one can practically do for another due to the breakdown of the body, it is often love for those nearest and dearest that keeps someone going, and especially the love that she can still offer in her spirit, whether or not she can tangibly manifest it, as well as the love that she herself receives as comfort and consolation in her last moments.

A friend takes great joy in being able to be a rock of support for her friend and draws consolation and strength herself in being able to call upon her friend in her own times of need. One is saddened to learn of a friend who concealed a great need that we would have been perfectly willing to help with. We want her to know that we are more of a friend than she might have feared in not wanting to be a burden on us. There is a type of acquaintance to whom it might be embarrassing to show our need, but we would hope that our friend knows that our friendship goes deeper than that and we would gladly come to her aid.

This mutual upholding that each deep friend can be for the other is an antidote to the hardness of heart and bitterness that can creep in when we have the impression of being ‘up against the world’, battling alone and being misunderstood or misjudged at every turn. The climate of understanding established by deep friendship; the ability of our friend to see beyond the immediate obstacles in front of us; her desire and belief that we can hold on and triumph in some way over the adversity,

[450] Hopkins, Adrian and Crispen, Nick (2009). The full lyrics read:

> Sometimes in our lives we all have pain, we all have sorrow, but if we are wise, we know that there's always tomorrow. Lean on me, when you're not strong and I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on. For it won't be long ‘til I'm gonna need somebody to lean on. Please swallow your pride if I have things you need to borrow, for no one can fill those of your needs that you won't let show. You just call on me brother, when you need a hand we all need somebody to lean on, I just might have a problem that you'll understand. We all need somebody to lean on. If there is a load you have to bear that you can't carry I'm right up the road, I'll share your load. If you just call me, call me… if you need a friend.

at least at the level of our spirit; all become an essential strengthening of our persistence in our conviction for the good in moments when fatigue and the prospect of failure might have otherwise tempted us to give up or lose hope.

VIII

THE EGOIST OBJECTION TO EUDAIMONISTIC VIRTUE ETHICS

Aristotelean ethics and indeed the eudaimonist versions of neo-Aristotelean virtue ethics that have emerged in modern times have been criticized by various authors as being unacceptably egoist or self-centered. The claim is that if the agent's *eudaimonia* (happiness/fulfilment/well-being) is regarded as her overarching end for action or as her central criterion for ethical discernment, then the agent does not truly act for another's sake in any full-blown way. Thus, at best, her reasons for acting become overly self-referencing. At worst it might be implied that she would only choose to act for another when the action in question happens to coincide with her own welfare or flourishing. At other times she would be in danger of making less than ethical decisions, as she sought to prioritise her own welfare over what should be considered as higher goods, and especially over what might be the more pressing concerns or needs of others.

Christopher Toner mentions a number of these objections:[451] Thomas Nagel believes that Aristotle's position fails to accord due value to the claims of others;[452] Harold Arthur Prichard claims that it reduces ethics to the business of 'self-improvement';[453] Kant finds the principle of one's own happiness to be objectionable as an ethical criterion and to constitute an obstacle to a truly altruistic outlook.[454]

Toner distinguishes the charge of 'egoism' from within a broader category of 'self-centredness', of which it is a subset. He argues that if the agent's welfare remains central to her own desires, as her primary or overriding goal, then her outlook may be regarded as 'egoist'. What he calls self-centred though, is more extensive, in that the agent's goal might still be fundamentally for herself, but in a way that is less immediately self-regarding than egoism, such as when she is chiefly concerned 'to be a hero or a leader' or even 'to be a good or excellent person'. In these cases, she may well confront situations where she chooses to sacrifice something of her immediate welfare

[451] Toner, Christopher (2006) at 596.
[452] Nagel, Thomas (1986) at 195-7.
[453] H.A. Prichard (1995) at 45-6.
[454] Immanuel Kant (1993), 4; 442.

for another's good, consistent with the impetus contained within virtues such as fortitude, justice or charity, but by Toner's definition she technically remains self-centered so long as she did so *because* she sought to be 'a certain kind of person'. The suspicion of the objector is that even in cases where the agent seems to act for the sake of others, under such a perspective, she ultimately acts for herself.

We should immediately call into question the notion that, because the desire to be a good or excellent person refers to ourselves, it is somehow self-centred. In normal parlance, to be self-centred connotes a defect of character. If we were told "Sally is self-centred," we might imagine that she is overly pre-occupied with her own projects, comfort or advancement, at the expense of more important matters. Perhaps she lacks an attentive or objective enough eye on other legitimate and relevant considerations. We might expect some follow up explanation such as: "She just does whatever suits her… she won't lift a finger to help, unless she gets something out of it…" and so forth. But it would be surprising if the person criticizing her followed up with: "She is always trying to be a good person and do the right thing."

Self-centredness in this common, pejorative sense is an obstacle to practical wisdom, truncating and distorting one's vision, and thus negating the realistic gaze on events or people that is necessary for truly wise judgements. It effectively reduces others or other competing goods to whatever place they might occupy within the realization of our own personal ambitions. In negating practical wisdom, this kind of self-centredness must also in the end negate authentic virtuous activity, seeing that it is only by exercising practical wisdom that virtuous intentions can 'hit their mark' and be realized in virtuous actions, as we have noted. Those committed to virtue ethics are particularly committed to refining practical wisdom as their chief *modus operandi* when it comes to ethical growth. Its seems particularly ironic to accuse them of the sort of personal bias that their dedication to practical wisdom seeks to uproot. A virtue ethicist seeks the humility to not fall victim to ego bias. To call the very rooting out of ego-bias a form of ego-bias, however, would be to effectively halt ethical development in its tracks.

Further, one assumes that the reason that objectors bother to voice their suspicion that eudaimonistic virtue ethics is intrinsically self-centred or egoist, is to expose the inherent flaw in such an ethical approach, in the hope that it be abandoned in favour of better approaches that are

not crippled by ego bias. This would rely on someone coming to her senses along these lines: "Oh, there I was thinking that I wanted to be a virtuous person, and in that, real happiness would lie, as opposed to the illusory happiness associated with more self-centred priorities, such as what simply best serves the advancement of my wealth, fame, status, power or comfort. But now I see the irony in my position. My aspiration was really about me and what *I* wanted to be and thus it fitted the very definition of being self-centred. Now, I do not want to be the sort of person that is self-centred. I want to be the sort of person that is 'other-focussed' and who chooses the best good in a situation, regardless of what suits me at a more superficial level." Alas, she is back to square one. It becomes clear that if we take all statements of the nature: "I want to be the sort of person that..." as being intrinsically self-centred, we risk robbing the term of its meaning.

8.1. Welfare-Prior and Excellence-Prior Eudaimonism

Let us return to the egoist objection, which, as Christine Swanton notes, seems to persist and recur under different guises and "more sophisticated forms," despite the various approaches that have been put forward to answer it.[455] One such approach, favoured by both Toner and Micah Lott[456] makes use of Anne Baril's distinction between what she calls 'welfare-prior eudaimonism' and 'excellence-prior eudaimonism'. These present different views of what it means for the agent to flourish.[457] Welfare-prior eudaimonism equates flourishing with the agent's own welfare, which could potentially run into conflict with her commitment to other goods, including the good of others. Excellence-prior eudaimonism is on a surer footing in this regard, viewing the agent's flourishing as more closely aligned to her commitment to being 'a good person'. Jeffrey D'Souza seems to be in this trajectory, arguing that the virtuous agent only seeks *eudaimonia* in the sense of seeking human good *qua* good, by which he means that the virtuous agent comes to realise that the two goals are equivalent. For him, the virtuous agent has for her primary motivation the desire to be good for the sake of human goodness.[458] Thus, in the normal course of events, her orientation toward virtue and to her own flourishing would constitute the same orientation. Toner and Lott argue that eudaimonistic virtue ethics needs to be a species of excellence-prior eudaimonism to successfully escape the egoism charge, whereas Baril herself does not advocate this.

[455] Swanton, Christine (2015) at 112.
[456] Micah Lott, (2016) at 366-7
[457] Anne Baril, (2013) at 512.
[458] D'Souza, Jeffrey (2017) at iv.

Baril points out that an essential insight is lost if virtue ethics were to simply equate *eudaimonia* with 'living as a good or excellent person' and abandon welfare-prior eudaimonism.[459] For Aristotle, the life of genuine virtue and virtuous activity is precisely the life most beneficial to the agent herself. All other things being equal, this is the life which best corresponds to her welfare in the deepest sense of the term, and thus to the best way in which she could arrange her life. In a similar way, being the life that is objectively best for her, it is the life that affords her the most pleasure without qualification.

In other words, Aristotle effectively argues that it is part of ethical maturity to recognize that the virtues, far from being simply an imposed set of conventions that society has developed in order to better function, actually enroot us in the kind of life that fulfils us and allows us to flourish, by realizing our deepest potential for goodness and happiness. Our embracing of virtuous activity as a norm of life not only makes the world go well, it enables us to be the sort of persons we would wish to be and would happily embrace being. For this reason, Baril urges eudaimonistic virtue ethicists, when seeking to respond to the egoism charge, to be careful to preserve the essence of welfare-prior eudaimonism, because the ancient and important insight that one's true welfare is indeed bound up in one's authentic goodness of character needs to be preserved. Thus, she encourages taking a fresh look at answering the objection.

We note here that Baril herself is not concerned to sketch this new approach. She merely outlines factors to be considered. Indeed, she highlights the complexity of the problem by pointing out yet another layer of the egoist objection that virtue ethicists need to face, one that touches on the very reason one might embrace a life of virtue in the first place. It would seem that in order for virtue ethics to be classed as eudaimonist, it would need to prioritise the happiness of the agent, either in its direct ethical discernment of specific actions or as a background good, for the sake of which a life of virtue has been embraced. And in either case the objector smells a rat, fearing that at whatever level *eudaimonia* emerges as an ultimate answer to the 'why' questions of ethics, it uncovers a problematic egoism that in fact undermines genuine virtue at its root. If *eudaimonia* is the reason for embracing virtuous activity in general, it seems that the agent who is committed to

[459] Anne Baril (2013) at 512ff.

virtue ethics still ultimately acts for herself, even when she imagines she is acting for the sake of someone else.

8.2. The Motivation of the Virtuous Agent

Hursttouse and Foot deal with the egoist charge by pointing out that *eudaimonia* does not tend to constitute the main reason for acting in the ethical discernment of the virtuous agent.[460, 461] Indeed, it may not feature in her thinking at all. Hursthouse notes that:

> the virtuous agent is just "the agent with the virtues" and it is part of our ordinary understanding of the virtue terms that each carries with it its own typical range of reasons for acting. The virtuous agent acts as she does because she believes that someone's suffering will be averted, or someone benefited, or the truth established, or a debt repaid, or… thereby.[462]

We have noted above that there is a way of speaking that implies that virtue need not appeal to something beyond itself for justification. To say: "I did that because it was the honest/generous/courageous thing to do," often suffices. By it, people understand that there is something valid in choosing to do what preserves one's own integrity and goodness. This does not mean though that this preservation of ethical intactness constitutes the only reason one acts.

We could just as easily appeal to the situation of the person we helped, for example. If someone were to ask us: "why did you dive into the ocean?", it is enough to explain: "... to save the little boy who fell off the rocks." By contrast, the response: "... in order to be happy," would seem out of place, not only because it is the wrong kind of answer, but also because it is not an accurate description of the normal conscious thought and motivation that emerges in such a moment. There is nothing wrong with wanting to be happy and nor is there anything incongruous in thinking that a happy life would include being the sort of person who would respond appropriately to a child in dire need, but in the midst of the actual crisis, such considerations do not come to the fore. Another answer that might sound odd in the above situation would be: "... because I always wanted to be a

[460] Hursthouse, Rosalind and Pettigrove, Glen (2018).
[461] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 95.
[462] Hursthouse, Rosalind (2017) at 465.

brave person." However legitimate such a desire might be, in the emergency mentioned, one expects that the virtuous agent acts for sake of the child and not for the sake of her own character development.

Thus, it is not even, as LeBar suggests, that the virtuous agent has two sets of reasons for acting: one based on her *eudaimonia* and the other in right response to the goods around her.[463] *Eudaimonia* does not tend to enter the equation as another consideration alongside other reasons to act, such as from the virtues themselves or from our desire to maintain important relationships in their integrity. And yet *eudaimonia* can still remain a legitimate and even ultimate aspiration of the virtuous person. When she gets home, she might reflect on the whole incident and among other things, take satisfaction in the fact that she was able to live up to her general aspiration to be courageous through what had happened that day. In other words, her virtuous actions are congruous with her aspiration to happiness, in a way that a failure in virtue would not have been. She might view failures in virtue as letting down not only the persons involved in the situation where her virtuous response would have assisted them, but also letting herself down, in failing to maintain and enhance her own integrity.

8.3. *Eudaimonia* and Virtuous Living

Like everyone else, the virtuous agent wants to be happy. And perhaps, thanks to her experience of virtuous living, she understands more than everyone else that being a good or virtuous person is indeed central to a happy and fulfilled life. One important reason for this, is that a life of virtuous activity helps us to sustain relations of quality such as deep friendships, that give life its savour and enable it to be happy. Indeed, these very relations provide much of the impetus for the maturation of virtue and practical wisdom in the first place. But none of this means that for the virtuous agent, concern for her own *eudaimonia* replaces the normal reasons for acting that present themselves, be they concerned with the needs of others or one's personal bonds with them, and so forth.

Further, it is not entirely accurate to see aspirations to *eudaimonia* and to virtuous living as two components that must compete for the agent's attention, especially if the kind of world we live in

[463] Micah Lott (2016) at 364, referencing Le Bar, Mark (2013) at 256.

turns out to be one in which people are fulfilled in virtuous living. Even with welfare-prior eudaimonism, it is perhaps only a narrow conception of one's welfare that would see it conflict with more virtuous courses of action. With Aristotle's conception of the relation between virtue and *eudaimonia*, one could say that there is not really a question of preferring one's welfare over one's moral obligations, as certain versions of the egoist objection imply. Under a narrow notion of welfare, someone might not dive in to save the boy at all, because she has good personal reasons for not getting wet that day. Perhaps she is on the way to an important job interview! But this sort of egoistic response is far from the action of a virtuous agent, and the example comes across as immediately unrealistic when considered from that point of view. It fits better as illustrating how a non-virtuous person might prefer her own welfare over what is truly demanded in a difficult situation. This would thus be in contrast to 'what a virtuous person might do under the circumstances', which as Hursthouse points out is one of the valid considerations in the discernment involved in virtue ethics.[464] The virtuous person would not consider herself ethically intact if she were to prioritise the intactness of her appearance, albeit for a good shot at career advancement, over the life of a child. If pushed to put this in terms of her own welfare, she would see that she is not better off for having gone to the interview uninterrupted. She would not ultimately consider such a compromise to be in the interests of her own welfare, though none of this constitutes her primary motivation in the moment. She, in fact, forgets herself in the moment, for the sake of the child in need, and considers this "the only decent course of action" or indeed, "what any decent person would have done".

Hursthouse has noted that there certainly are times in life when the agent faces a crisis, for example in the form of a non-resolvable dilemma, from which there is no way to emerge unscathed. Here there is no pathway the agent can choose that will safeguard her *eudaimonia*.[465] Such an agent might, for example, have to give up her life rather than significantly betray a friend or compromise her commitment to significant truths. She is not happy in any immediate sense to be giving up her life, but neither would she be happy to maintain it at the cost of betraying her loved one or compromising an important truth. This is not a case of virtue trumping *eudaimonia*, but rather, a realistic facing of the fact that, through no fault of her own, the virtuous agent has been robbed of the conditions that would normally have permitted her enjoyment of the eudaimon life. The sort

[464] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 29 and 35.
[465] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1996) at 63-87.

of choice she might make in this situation is not so much for or against her own *eudaimonia,* which in any case is no longer possible, but rather to play no role herself in perpetuating any prevailing injustice or in undermining her own integrity. She may not be able to enjoy the blossoming of the eudaimon life, but in another way by maintaining her commitment to the nobler good, she witnesses to the goodness of such a life in an heroic and honourable way. In this sense there is a certain fulfilment and peace in remaining in deep integrity of soul, even while integrity of body may be stolen from her through no fault of her own.

8.4. The Reason to be Virtuous – Why Save the Boy?

But what of the deeper objection mentioned by Baril, regarding the reason to be virtuous in the first place? Have Hursthouse and Foot merely pushed the problem back one layer, by noting that the agent does not tend to consciously act for the sake of her *eudaimonia*, when performing a virtuous action? Does not the agent primarily understand underneath that the only truly happy life is one that gives adequate place to ongoing virtuous activity, and is this not the reason she has adopted such a life? Let us return to our example of saving the boy drowning at sea. We explain that we dived in after him in order to save him, expecting this to satisfy any query regarding our motivation. Should our interrogator press on and ask why we would want to save the boy, we might at first be baffled and unprepared. Were we to attempt an answer, we might focus on the boy's intrinsic worth, perhaps struggling to improvise a discourse on the dignity of human life. Here, we could appeal to the human potential for knowledge, creativity, love, virtue, relationships or indeed happiness, to say that the boy's life is well worth preserving. All the while, however, we would be disconcerted by the notion that our interlocutor needs these sorts of things to be spelt out. Is she some sort of alien visiting our world? Has she not noticed what goes on in the business of living? Is she limited by some sort of syndrome that prevents her transcending her immediate self? Or is she playing a philosophical devil's advocate to probe the deeper and more fundamental questions such as "… yes, but why be moral?"

Our search for a deeper rationale for our actions need not focus exclusively on the boy himself. We could just as easily make an empathetic appeal to his predicament or even to that of his close associates: "How would I feel, were I drowning and someone noticed me but failed to act?" Or perhaps, "how would I feel if a person who could have saved my son simply watched as he

drowned?" These sorts of appeals naturally arise in human discourse. It would be odd if they were met with the response: 'Oh I see, so it's projection. You're really just thinking of yourself!' This would be even more baffling. Does this person not grasp the way we are as human beings?

Similarly, we might have said: "well, I couldn't live with myself if I did not try to save the boy." This perhaps implies some bond of common humanity that we would not want to betray, especially in the case of a vulnerable child in desperate need. If this became the "gotcha!" moment, where the questioner exclaims: "Aha! So it *is* all about you!," we might be tempted to abandon the conversation as irretrievable, unless we had the patience and energy to take the claim seriously enough to warrant entering into another layer of the conversation on the basics of decent human interaction.

8.5. *Eudaimonia* Linked to Excellence of Character.

To expose the problem of making a generalised egoist objection to Aristotlean ethics, let us briefly recall how Aristotle links happiness and virtue in the first place. He effectively takes for granted that we all seek happiness. His *ergon* argument is an attempt to show that authentic happiness is in fact intrinsically tied to goodness of character.[466] Indeed, coming to realise this is a step toward ethical maturity. The egoist objection takes this very link as undermining, as if the mere desire to be a good person or the insight that virtuous activity is an essential component of a happy and fulfilled life necessarily reduces our good intentions or virtuous activity to selfish pursuits. Yet the very objection betrays an underlying belief that there is a better way to seek the good and to be a good person. In other words, to seek to be a good person or realise the good cannot be intrinsically selfish.

Effectively the egoist objection takes up a tension that everyone is familiar with, and which the virtue of temperance addresses. We speak of the tension between lesser goods that suit us in some immediate way, such as facilitating our comfort or advancement, and the higher demands of spiritual love, which draw us out of ourselves toward persons for their own sake. This tension is then extended so that the happiness that naturally accompanies the exercise of our spiritual love for the sake of a close friend comes across as an egoist pursuit. Lurking underneath, is perhaps

[466] Aristotle, N.E., 1097b; N.E., 1102a; N.E., 1103a.

that notion that some sort of detached altruism is in the end 'higher' than any spiritual love that enjoys the loved good and maintains a place for the happy union with such a good. In this perspective, only what serves some abstract or ideal good is considered to be genuinely higher.

The linking of excellence of character to a fulfilled life shows, in fact, a maturity of outlook, compared to less reflective approaches that might situate human happiness in more immediate secondary goods. Aristotle's insight is that what makes us good *qua* human also fulfils our nature and is an important part of what constitutes human happiness. To be happy is in some ways to 'know ourselves fulfilled', as Aquinas notes when exploring the notion of God's own beatitude in a theological context.[467] Indeed, Aristotle's position here could be restated as follows: "you know how we all seek what is good for us in some way in everything we do, and we all want ultimately to be fulfilled and happy? - well, it turns out that what we are really seeking through all of this is the full and overflowing life of virtuous activity." There is an analogy here to the moment of light experienced by a young person as she realises that the parental guidance that she had been accustomed to receiving as restrictive and limiting, was all the while oriented toward the authentic development of her own practical wisdom and thus to her true autonomy. As this develops, she finds herself better equipped and indeed freer to live her own life in a wise manner, than if she had been constantly indulged in her more immediate childish whims in the name of freedom.

If anything, Aristotle's insight moves us in an anti-egoist direction, drawing up the little goods that we all daily seek, which could in themselves potentially lock us into egoistic pursuits, and directing them toward more ultimate goods that touch upon the very good of our character and the nobility of our lives. Part of the ethical journey is the development of practical wisdom, allowing us to take our place in the wider world of virtuous activity. Here, the bias that would come from an undue egoism is gradually eradicated in favour of a gaze on reality that is prepared to order our loves in the direction of nobler and deeper goods.

Effectively Aristotle argues that to be a good person is not to abandon the seeking of a good life, but rather to refine our notion of goodness through practical wisdom, so that higher goods are seen and appreciated for what they are and preferred over lower. To be ethically mature includes a

[467] Aquinas, S.T. II-ii, qu.26, art. 1.

realisation that the best life, the life 'complete in itself and lacking in nothing', the life 'worthy of choice for its own sake', *is* largely constituted by a life of authentic virtuous activity, discerned by practical wisdom from within the complexity of life's circumstances. The egoist objection strangely reverses this discovery and turns it on its head. It effectively says: "Oh, so underneath, you only pursue a life of virtuous activity in order to be happy? Isn't that the wrong reason to be virtuous? And don't wrong reasons themselves undermine virtue? Don't you know that to act for yourself when you should be acting for the sake of another is exactly the way that potentially virtuous acts are ruined?" It is like saying that the desire: "I want to be an unselfish person" is a selfish desire because it has the word 'I' in it!

8.6. The Force Behind the Objection

Having said this, one must not be tempted to trivialise the force of the egoist objection. We need to examine it more closely in order to discover the source of its pervasiveness. There could indeed be cases where someone's desire to be a virtuous person never gets off the ground, because she never discovers that another person is worth loving for her own sake, rather than for 'what she brings to my life'. Thus, her ethical aspirations might never surpass a programme of self-improvement or a series of goals aimed at constructing what she imagines will be her own perfection. If the desire to be a certain type of person is pursued by embracing a set of prescriptions in order to fulfil what we imagine to be involved in such a life, then we would be doing no more than putting on a type of clothing in order to become a type of person, as a child might don the costume of her favourite super-hero. We might look for a charity to support on the basis that 'good people support charity' or resolve to be faithful to a future spouse on the basis that a good person would never cheat on her partner. These notions fall more into the category of ideals and when they end up constituting the ultimate reasons for an agent's ethical actions, we get the sense that, however well-intentioned she might be, she is still in ethical immaturity. She responds more to what she wants to make of herself than to the goodness of those around her. Her ideal may indeed be a good one, but so long as she is unable to discover someone's goodness for their own sake, she remains ethically adolescent.

In the light of my analysis of 'other-selfdom' earlier, I could even say that at the root of such a person's problem is the fact that she has not yet transcended the *modus operandi* of human work

or art, where the idea, or the exemplary cause or model legitimately plays the principal role. To enter fully into the arena of human ethics, she needs to develop an authentic response to goodness around her, and allow real existent goods to attract her beyond the realisation of her projects or the fulfilment of her own ideals. Someone might equally reason in her youth: "I want to be the sort of person who gets married and has a family one day. Now, whom shall I marry?" This sort of thought is not wrong, it is simply immature. It emerges at a preliminary stage, before we have met the person whose goodness will attract us beyond our preconceived ideas; including the idea of what makes for a good life. Hopefully by the wedding day, the person will have more reason to go through with it than the fulfilment of a long-standing desire to one day be wed.

8.7. What Difference Does a Friend Make?

In this light, we see how illuminating it is to put the spotlight on deep friendship, as Aristotle precisely did in Books VIII and IX of the *Nicomachean Ethics* and in Book VII of his *Eudemian Ethics*. We have seen earlier that in deep friendship, each friend loves the other *for her own sake* and in a way that is consistent with her true flourishing, and this necessitates the development of practical wisdom and a life of virtuous activity in order to be sustained. One could say that each friend at this level comes to be at the service of her friend's *eudaimonia,* and becomes so linked to her friend that now her own *eudaimonia* implies that of her friend's. This is neatly captured by the notion that the friend has become another self, as has been discussed at length. Indeed I have argued that virtue itself needs the *milieu* of deep friendship if it is to come into its own. It is not a matter of self-development exercises. We need to discover another as loveable in herself and develop the practical wisdom to intelligently live out the commitment we make to this love. This in fact is the remedy for self-centredness or ego bias, just as it is the prerequisite to a maturation within deep friendship.

In deep friendship, two aspects of *eudaimonia* come together and mature: the enjoyment of a fulfilling life and the aspiration to be a good person. Deep friendship greatly advances us toward the realisation of these aspects. Indeed, friendship, virtue and fulfilment are really co-constitutive and co-sustaining. We happily put ourselves at the service of another's flourishing and fulfilment, and in seeking to facilitate this as best we can, we become better people. We seek to be part of what constitutes the true good for our friend. At the same time we realise that her own life of

virtuous activity plays a key role in her flourishing and so we happily facilitate and encourage this, whenever opportunities arise. And all of this happens in two directions thanks to friendship's reciprocity. We are fulfilled both in this sort of giving and in this sort of receiving.

8.8. The Musical Analogy Revisited

It is interesting to revisit our musical analogy in the light of the egoist objection. A talented budding pianist of 10 years of age may find that she has sufficient dexterity to traverse the keyboard at a speed so as to easily impress her peers. Enjoying their adulation, she might seek to learn pieces that will best show herself off, often sacrificing attention to detail or musical expression, inasmuch as she is even aware of the necessity of these components. She prefers to butcher a virtuosic Chopin etude, rather than tackle a simpler Mozart sonata, which to her does not seem to 'have much in it'.[468] A more seasoned performer might fondly observe this young pianist racing through some work that is beyond her and muse: "Ah yes, I remember when I thought I was amazing and that the main point of music making was to gain a fan base! Little did I know back then the depth of beauty and meaning that each piece and composer wanted to communicate."

When she is a little older, the young pianist might find herself facing examinations and competitions. These are designed to present a milieu in which young performers can strive to perfect their pieces and perform them in formal settings. Here attention to detail, technique, musicianship and confidence need to come together in a unified whole. But the secondary aspects of being scrutinised and judged by the examiner or adjudicator, or of pitting one musician against another as if music were a form of sport, can take over in the minds of young performers. They may think that the reason they learn their pieces at all is to 'gain distinction' in examinations or to win competitions. Other students may seek to escape from these sorts of pressures, preferring to play music only ever as a form of relaxation when they are alone. As valid as these various aspects of music making are, they do not yet reach the fullness of the musical experience. In the world of classical piano, it is not until the musical and technically accomplished performer can 'live through' the deep musical journey embedded in the great works by their composers, with the

[468] The concert pianist Artur Schnabel once remarked that Mozart sonatas are "too easy for children and too difficult for artists." See Johnson, Paul (2013), chapter two.

generosity of spirit to share this joy with those who listen, that the musical experience can realise its full potential. Yet showing off to friends, entering exams and competitions and playing at home for relaxation are all valid parts of the journey toward musical maturity.

This analogy highlights the importance of not shunning less developed stages because they are not yet the full experience. Were we to condemn the 10 year old who proudly exhibited her apparent virtuosity in front her friends, she may become discouraged and leave the whole enterprise behind. Should we shun exams and competitions as not a 'pure' enough an arena for music making, then we would be 'cutting off our nose to spite our face', depriving young people of legitimate arenas in which their music can develop. Nor should we chastise the one who plays for her own relaxation for not being generous or confident enough to share her music with others! The imperfect is more a stepping stone toward perfection than a barrier to it. What takes the young student beyond thinking that music is primarily a way to gain adulation or status, or to even to relax, is when she 'falls in love' with the music itself. She discovers that embedded in the notes on the page is something of great beauty and depth that is begging to be realised. There is also no contradiction between her increased appreciation for the music itself and her own aspiration to be a great performer one day. The more she understands and appreciates the music, the more her aspiration can be purified. She wants to be great in service of great music because music is a worthy object for her striving: it deserves to be played well. The music 'cries out' for this mastery, and she finds, having within herself the requisite talent to achieve this, almost a 'call' or vocation to do so. Alongside the effort she must put in, is also the wonderful enjoyment that accompanies being in the service of such a beautiful art. She is no longer seeking to merely revel in her achievements, either privately or publicly, as she may have done at a younger age. At the same time, her enjoyment and appreciation for the full musical experience is so much more than the 'buzz' she got from those heady days of showing off. She lives through something that she senses is profound, whether or not she can express it in words. Her devotion to the music and her own enjoyment are not at all in conflict. They grow together and purify each other.

Similarly, the pursuit of virtue and excellence should not be shunned simply because a person has not yet grasped their full place and significance in life. To do so would be to leave no place open for ethical education and guidance. The aspiration to be virtuous, or to be a good and excellent

person, or a decent person, and so forth, is an important part of growing up, and as Julia Annas notes, "we cannot understand what virtue is without understanding how we acquire it."[469]

The aspiration to be happy is also deeply embedded in us and characteristically accompanies our attraction to a multitude of goods at many levels from a very early age. It also sweetens our perseverance in the face of goods that are difficult to obtain. Yet, happiness or personal excellence simply as goals will never be enough in themselves to get us across the divide between self-seeking and the world of a mature response to the goodness around us, and particularly the goodness of those persons around us. Deep friendship plays an indispensable role in facilitating this discovery. Spiritual love is ecstatic precisely in taking us 'out of ourselves' toward someone else. As we have explored, the intelligent re-ordering of priorities in light of this love may lead us to see our friend as an end-good, worthy of re-orienting our lives, and culminating in an amical choice that is deep and permanent. The sharing of life that ensues in this context, enables us to uniquely develop our practical wisdom and virtue in service of this love. As this happens, it is not as if we 'grow out of' wanting to be a good or excellent person or even grow out of our desire to be happy and fulfilled. But we realise that being a good and excellent person is not an isolated goal, like making a good or excellent cake. It is something that must be embraced intelligently, moment by moment in an ongoing way, especially for the good of those we love around us. Happiness and fulfilment become more the overflow of a life well-lived, than the primary motivation for each action or decision.

Before a deep friend enters our life, we might already have the true insight that life would be better should it include such a person. As we develop this kind of friendship, we might notice that our life is indeed richer for the experience and that our own happiness has been enlarged. The more this friendship grows and deepens, the more we genuinely come to love the other for who she is, in her very life and being, wanting her to flourish in ways that are best for her. And we enjoy and are affirmed by her reciprocity toward us in this regard. The deeper our friendship, the more we can come to appreciate friendship. While this renders the whole dynamic joyful, it does not make it selfish.

[469] Annas, Julia (2011) at 21.

If we turned around in the middle of this journey and announced to our friend: "The reason I became your friend was that I had no good friends and I thought life would probably be better if I had at least one," then we would undermine the budding friendship and show its immaturity. And yet, in pursuing such a friendship, even at first for lesser reasons than an appreciation of the goodness of our friend, we might come to discover her deeper goodness. The journey to ethical maturity involves this discovery, causing as it does a re-orientation of our lives, away from any ego-bias that easily takes hold, so long as we have not yet discovered someone for whom it is worth sacrificing lesser goods.

Yet, in becoming such a friend, we may legitimately and explicitly rejoice in the unique happiness that such friendship brings and unashamedly enjoy it. Friends know that life is so much better because of their friendship. There is nothing wrong with sharing this sentiment with each other. It is part of the overflow of the whole experience. It explains why Aristotle is able to open his discourse on friendship with the affirmation that "without friendship, no one would choose to live, though he had all other goods,"[470] without feeling the need to establish this fact.

It would not be wrong to note that deep friendship brings a new dimension of happiness and fulfilment to our lives, just as it would not be wrong to note the happiness that a life of virtuous activity brings.

Nor is it problematic to desire such happiness as a preliminary to developing such a life, or to will this continued development as it occurs. When it comes to the ethical education of our children, it would certainly not be wrong to encourage their own development within the world of friendship, practical wisdom and virtue, for the purposes of their future flourishing.

One could make a further parallel here in considering the contrast and connection that Aristotle insists upon in regard to utility and pleasure friendships versus deeper friendships. As noted earlier, utility and pleasure friendships certainly involve mutual benevolence, but in such a way that one always has a reflexive eye on the benefits one is also receiving. Should the mutuality cease and things become one-sided, those friendships are soon dissolved. Thus, there is an identifiably

[470] Aristotle, N.E., 1154a.

'egoist' element here, and this is one reason why Aristotle does not consider virtue to be essential in maintaining these sorts of friendships. Such relations can and do exist in plenty across the whole spectrum of virtuous development. It is only when we reach the other person's goodness for her own sake, loving her in her being and life and wanting to be a true good for her in her authentic flourishing that friendship escapes this egoist aspect. Notably it is precisely here that virtue becomes indispensable, in order that such friendships can mature and be sustained.

It seems, then, that the egoist objection is able to gain traction so long as we speak of virtue and *eudaimonia* in isolation from deep friendship and other significant relationships. For if we do speak in this way, concern for virtue can indeed seem principally rooted in a concern for one's own perfection or character development. Yet in the light of deep friendship, a lack of virtue is unthinkable as it would be destructive to the love that we dearly wish to preserve and enhance for the sake of the other. And because it is framed within the discovery of another for her own sake, in her own right and precisely because of her own personal goodness, objections based on some supposed underlying selfishness are out of place. If anything, such a love is arguably the only way to root out the priority for self-concern that naturally permeates our activities in a state of personal and ethical immaturity.

Effectively the egoist objection gains its footing from a legitimate tension that everyone is familiar with, between the satisfaction that lesser goods afford us at a more possessive passional level, and the demands of a love that is more oriented to self-gift and that takes us out of ourselves toward someone for whom we would happily sacrifice. This tension is then transferred onto the enjoyment that accompanies all love, including this very love as it emerges in deep friendship, as if what we get out of the friendship becomes the main thing, and the friend is somehow secondary. This effectively reduces all friendship to 'pleasure friendship' and then finds fault in this for effectively not being spiritual or 'outward looking' enough! Hidden under the surface is the notion that the only high love is one that is totally altruistic, where the person loving is somehow 'disinterested' in any joy that might come from the union of hearts. Effectively all enjoyment and fulfilment engender suspicion of selfishness. It is perhaps to project what C.S. Lewis calls the *agape* of God's love from fullness onto human love. It seems to betray a puritanical streak that in fact misses an important component of human fulfilment, and which is precisely the insight that Aristotle has insisted upon from the outset: that pleasure without qualification can be taken in the embracing of

something truly good in itself. In other words, goodness of character and human fulfilment are intrinsically linked. But the glue that binds them is deep friendship, where persons discover each other as truly loveable in themselves, while being for each other a source of great joy, savour and fulfilment.

Our response to the egoist objection, then, is a far cry from the solution offered by Jeffrey D'Souza - a solution which he calls the "altruistic account of motivation," where the virtuous agent ends up "valuing objects and persons only insofar as they participate in [her quest for] human goodness".[471] This seems more neo-Platonist than it does neo-Aristotelian, in that it is closely aligned to using friends as 'stepping stones' on a journey toward 'Goodness-in-itself', the contemplation of which dispenses with the 'need' for further human communion, even if along the way one acquires some sort of human perfection in goodness.[472] Certainly D'Souza's solution fails to capture the insight that Baril sees more ably preserved under the banner of welfare-prior eudaimonism, namely that "human fulfilment and happiness" and "human goodness and virtue" (and to which I add "human deep friendship") are in fact different descriptions for what is effectively one and the same path.

The fulfilment and enjoyment that deep friendship brings to our lives in no way undermines the reality that each friend is loved for her own sake. It adds another layer of appreciation to the whole affair, complementing the joy of union and the delight that we already take in her person and in her flourishing. We are, after all, the recipients of the same love that we impart to the other. Yet the journey to deep friendship remains the journey out of the egoism that situates us at the centre of our world, to the discovery of another who surpasses us and who calls for a love that is at once ecstatic and receptive, incarnated in a life of benevolent activity wisely undertaken for her sake.

When virtue develops and matures in the service of such love, it is beyond the egoist reproach. Closeness or enjoyment in no way lessen the value of such love. Indeed, a detached altruism is not necessarily more heroic or nobler. Rather, there is a very real possibility that it is the outgrowth or overflow of the practical wisdom and virtue that have been able to develop within the climate of the ongoing mutual personal benevolence for the sake of the other that characterises deep friendship. It is to an exploration of this possibility that I now turn, in the next chapter.

[471] D'Souza, Jeffrey (2017) at iv.
[472] Plato, Sym., 210a-212c.

IX

THE LEGACY OF DEEP FRIENDSHIP FOR A WIDER ETHICS

Introduction

Here I shall sketch several ways in which the experience of deep friendship, in developing the ethical self, bears fruit beyond the immediate relationship of the friendship itself, potentially impacting relations further afield. Something of the influence of deep friendship on the development of practical wisdom and virtue has already been explored. But it is not simply the case that a deep friend draws us out of ourselves so that she can become the true focal point of our benevolence and love and *vice versa.* Inasmuch as the experience serves the development of our ethical self, it has obvious immediate repercussions for future relationships and interactions with others, whether or not they concern close friends. If deep friendship is able to hone our sensitivity to the capacity of another within a variety of situations, as well as our appreciation of the nuance and subtlety of virtuous activity in contexts where our knowledge of another is at its height, then it necessarily serves a development of character that has wide-reaching implications for our future interactions, either close or casual.

There is more to say here than to state the obvious fact that virtue developed through deep friendship serves all manner of human interactions, though this is already significant. The sort of friendship that prioritises the true flourishing of the other has a way of making both parties more outward looking and indeed, more appreciative of human goodness in general. Unless the situation is distorted, the friends are not locked into some closed inter-dependent reality that somehow absorbs them to the exclusion of others. Spiritual love, far more than possessive passional love, which it tends to purify, is not by its nature exclusive or jealous. It is not lessened in the sharing.

At an immediate practical level, deep friendship potentially opens us up to specific individuals within our friend's wider orbit, particularly to those whom she finds dear. In addition, it leads to a deeper appreciation of human potentiality, dignity and agency, which in turn helps to reinforce the natural empathy and compassion that already exists whenever we extend a healthy self-love in an outward looking direction. These two aspects shall now be explored in some detail.

9.1. The Influence of our Friend's Heart for Others

Aquinas, writing in a theological context, uses the paradigm of friendship inspired by Aristotle as an entry point into his discussion of the Christian virtue of charity, which for Aquinas is a graced and infused 'supernatural' virtue, whereby the Christian's deep friendship with Christ overflows to all those for whom Christ has a heart (which for Aquinas means any living creature capable of sharing heavenly bliss, from angels through to enemies!). This vast topic need not concern us here, except insofar as Aquinas makes analogous parallels to the way in which deep friendship operates at the natural level. In replying to the objection that Christian charity cannot be a form of friendship, seeing it extends to one's enemies, whereas friendship requires reciprocal benevolence, Aquinas writes:

> Friendship extends to a person in two ways: first in respect of himself, and in this way friendship never extends but to one's friends: secondly, it extends to someone in respect of another, as, when a man has friendship for a certain person, for his sake he loves all belonging to him, be they children, servants, or connected with him in any way. Indeed, so much do we love our friends, that for their sake we love all who belong to them, even if they hurt or hate us; so that, in this way, the friendship of charity extends even to our enemies, whom we love out of charity in relation to God, to Whom the friendship of charity is chiefly directed.[473]

The union of heart and the practical concord that deep friends develop can lead them to be more attentive to each other's outlook and priorities, and thus toward developing a greater openness to those for whom their friend has a special concern. Our friend's appreciation for the goodness of someone else can at times lead us into situations of benevolence with people who as yet have no direct relationship with ourselves. This flows from the trust we can have in our friend's sound judgement, which is particularly possible where we consider her to be a person of practical wisdom and virtue. Through our trust in her, we become prepared to open our door to those for whom she cares or seeks to help. We end up welcoming and, in a sense, fast-tracking such persons into a

[473] Aquinas, II-ii, qu. 23, Art. 1. Reply to Objection 2

level of intimacy or support that we would normally have reserved for those with whom we have developed first-hand knowledge and love.

9.1.i. Someone Our Friend Loves Deeply

I shall consider here various levels of connection between this third party and our friend, beginning with someone our friend loves deeply. It may not always be easy for us to see what it is in our best friend's partner, for example, that made her fall in love, but were we to play the devil's advocate for very long we would risk undermining our own friendship. The sentiment: "I love you, but I cannot stand your fiancée" might potentially lose us a wedding invitation. Normally we seek to discover the good in this person from the outset and try to establish positive personal links. After all, our friend appreciates the unique goodness of this person and we do not consider that our friend, who also appreciates our goodness, is a person of particularly bad taste!

The same is true of someone's children. New parents typically become so enamoured with the latest addition in their lives, that their baby easily becomes a sort of conversational magnet, drawing all potential topics toward itself. Where parents of toddlers meet for example, stories abound of little Jack or Jill, who is at once so advanced in insight and development as to be an emerging genius, or is all the more endearing for being so incorrigible in misdemeanours. (Even as they get older, we sometimes hear that the reason they play up or fail at school is that they are far beyond the other children, and their mediocre teachers are inept at engaging them.) As with driving a wedge between fiancées, sentiments such as "Don't get me wrong, I love you, but your children are beyond the pale," tend to pose a barrier to deeper union with our friend.

Deep friendship for the person tends rather to increase our openness to all whom they find loveable and dear. This may come relatively easily when things are going well. Getting to know a friend's spouse or family is generally a pleasant affair and we naturally start to look out for them after a time, offering advice or assistance on occasion when appropriate, or finding avenues of help to address any needs that our friend might share with us in their regard. "Little Jack is struggling with maths? Oh, I could tutor him now and then, or I know someone really good who can"; "Jill has no way of getting to the airport? I'm free tomorrow - I could take her."

9.1.ii. In Good Times or in Bad

But it is possible that a daughter of a friend is going through some adolescent rebellion and is in a phase of being particularly nasty to her. We are distressed in seeing our friend at a loose end, yet the answer is not to turn on her child, though we do not bear her the same affective bond as we do our friend. We understand that our friend wishes to restore and enhance her relationship with her daughter. Any advice or help we might offer must respect this desire in the heart of our friend. To say: "Why don't you just cut her off? It will be one less mouth to feed!" would likely be met by a horrified rebuke, just as if we joined in and started reinforcing what a terrible person the daughter is. Then her mother might say: "Oh no, she's alright, she's just going through a phase" and stick up for the child, for underneath she believes in her child's potential beyond the current struggle. To quickly dismiss her daughter would be to miss our friend's heart. We do not have to love what our friend loves, but we can gain a deeper understanding of the interplay and complexity within situations, from knowledge of her heart. In this way, the love within deep friendship can help us develop a more tolerant or merciful approach toward someone we may have been tempted to reject or dismiss.

Similarly, a friend may be going through a turbulent patch in her marriage as her partner abuses alcohol. False friends might be quick to counsel splitting up and "getting on with your own life" as "he is not worth it" but a more attentive friend would not want to offer such advice rashly. Stepping in somehow, finding a delicate way to help him find support if the occasion arose, would be to extend a love to him as an extension of our friendship with her. It may even be that our capacity for patience and mercy in his regard is increased due to our concord with our friend, whose primary desire may well be to overcome the obstacles and restore her relationship with her husband.

We note that extending this practical benevolence (as 'good-willing') to those who are dear to our friend, does not mean necessarily that they will reciprocate, and we will end up friends (*simpliciter*) with their child or spouse for example. In a way we are not loving the spouse or child directly for their own sake in these instances, but our benevolence toward them is for the sake of our friend. For the sake of our friend, our *phronesis* is put in the service of finding the best ways to assist someone whom she holds dear. When it comes to helping our friend directly, thanks to

the love of deep friendship, we may have privileged access to her outlook, thoughts and feelings, but here our discernment of what to do or offer is enlightened more by our friend's privileged gaze on the situation of someone she loves.

9.1.iii. Strangers

When we look for the best way to help someone on account of her closeness to our friend, we could be said to be indirectly loving that person, though our love derives its impetus and strength from the bond we have with our friend. This can extend even to those who are strangers to us. Peter is contacted by his friend Olivier, with whom he lived for four years in France, because one of Olivier's best friends, François, is coming to New Zealand and will be in Auckland for a few days. Olivier assures Peter: "François is wonderful, you'll love him", and asks Peter if he might look out for François for a few days. Peter offers to re-arrange his schedule to host the visitor. He shows him around, takes him out to dinner, and makes sure that he has an enjoyable stay, allowing François to discover more of the attractions and benefits of the city than would normally have been possible in a short time. Peter even entrusts François with access to his house while he is at work and with the keys to his car.

Here Peter is extending the hand of friendship to a stranger, again, not for his own sake, but on account of the real friendship and testimony of someone whom Peter has come to deeply trust.

9.1.iv. A Cause Dear to a Friend

But not everyone our friend wishes to reach out to is particularly close to her, or is someone for whom she can really vouch as having a virtuous character. My friend Sally runs a soup kitchen in town and is approached by a man who needs to get to a *tangi* up north in a hurry, but who is inept and distraught at the prospect of getting himself there. Sally knows that I travel that way regularly and asks if I wouldn't mind taking him on this occasion, though it is a bit of a detour. Here the person I help is not particularly close to my friend and is a stranger to me, but I know that Sally has a particularly charitable heart and I have come to admire the work that she does. I agree to her request because helping this person is somehow important to her, even though I may not feel any particular tug at my heart strings, let alone any personal responsibility to get him to the funeral.

After all, as much as I can feel natural empathy for someone who has lost their loved one and naturally wish them well, I do not generally provide an intercity funeral chauffeur service for complete strangers.

9.1.v. When our Friend Loves our Enemy

Because Aquinas is chiefly concerned to shed light on the Christian theological virtue of charity, he goes so far as to say:

> Indeed, so much do we love our friends, that for their sake we love all who belong to them, even if they hurt or hate us.[474]

This seems to push the boundaries of the love between friends to the limit. If someone hates us, it implies that they in some way want our downfall. They are an enemy of sorts, rejoicing when things go wrong for us, and perhaps even working against us on occasion. To discover that someone like this is dearly loved by one of our close friends can be disturbing. We might be in the process of decrying them to our friend, when it is revealed that our nemesis is close to her. We might hesitate and soften our condemnation. Alternatively, we might attempt to persuade our friend that her friend is rotten to the core! Yet our friend knows a different side of the culprit. She may even put forward other considerations that end up softening our own stance. Our love for our friend challenges us to rethink what could have been our hasty dismissal of this person. Were we rash and unfair? Could she have some goodness in her after all, or indeed have the potential to undergo a change of perspective and heart, given that she already loves someone dear to us?

So far, the example only includes a softening of our heart toward our enemy based on our love for our friend. Is it possible to arrive at a true benevolence toward our enemy for the sake of our friend? Can we come to will the flourishing of an enemy because of the love borne her by our friend? It is important to note that a wise benevolence wills the true good for the other, and in the case of our enemy this may well entail that she undergo deep changes on her part, especially with regard to her outlook and intentions, given that a hateful stance is usually also self-destructive,

[474] Aquinas, S.T., II-ii, qu. 23, art. 1.

even as it wills the ruination of another. Clearly, one does not simply will that the other's plans come to fruition, for the enemy's plans may not be at all for the objective good of anyone concerned. Rather, we might bring ourselves to will that our enemy flourish in the truth and in what would be truly good for her, which effectively includes that she abandon her stance of hatred. Loving one's enemy is not loving her enmity.

9.1.vi. Extended to Someone 'Wicked'

The next question to consider is whether or not the love in deep friendship can 'overflow' into a love for someone 'wicked', in the Aristotelian sense of the word: that is, for someone who cultivates vice and tends to shamelessly rejoice in it. Are there cases where we would reach out in love to such people for the sake of our friend? This case is harder, because at the natural level, Aristotle maintains that character friendship is not possible with such people, casting serious doubt upon whether our friend can have a deep friendship with someone truly wicked in the first place.[475] However, it is also possible that other bonds closely tie our friend to the wicked character in question, especially those of family. Family bonds are interesting because, at least in the case of children, they tend to form while the person is still full of potential for goodness, however truncated the development of their qualities may later become, due to adverse experiences or bad choices.

Aquinas, when looking theologically at the question as to whether supernatural charity extends to the love of sinners, draws the distinction between the person and the evil that they do. From a Christian perspective, the person herself is never theologically irredeemable, even until her dying breath, and thus remains lovable. She is not loved *qua* sinner, however, for her evil actions and dispositions are not lovable, and nor are aspects of her personality that delight in these, which are thus deformed.

> …it is our duty to hate in the sinner, his being a sinner, and to love in him, his being a man capable of bliss; and this is to love him truly, out of charity, for God's sake.[476]

[475] Aristotle, N.E., 1159a; N.E., 1065a-b.
[476] Aquinas: S.T., II-ii, qu. 25, art. 6.

Aristotle has a version of this in considering whether one should break off a friendship with someone who was at first a good man and then turns bad. He warns against cutting the relationship too hastily:

> If they are capable of being reformed one should rather come to the assistance of their character or their property, inasmuch as this is better and more characteristic of friendship.[477]

Here an original friendship is presupposed. In Aquinas, it is enough that a person is 'capable of bliss', that is, of redemption and the eventual sharing of the 'beatific vision', to qualify them as a candidate for supernatural charity.

It is as if love's proper object is only toward what is healthy or good, so when one loves a sick person, it is not insofar as they are sick, but insofar as something remains that is not yet corrupted by the disintegration, and thus is good beyond the sickness. When a person is dying for example, sometimes all that remains is her will or intention to love, and yet this is the very thing that deep friends tend to prize most highly, as the spiritual 'core' (*coeur*) of the person. With the love of someone wicked, as with the love of enemies, our intelligence would need to penetrate to something good and thus lovable in the person, despite their deformed outlook and will. Our attempt to do this might end up being something of a metaphysical exercise, in that we need to find what might still be good about their *being*, without being able to find much to commend them in respect of their immediate qualities.

Usually the wicked still have something of self-love underneath, though to the extent they are wicked, they are also 'divided against themselves' as Aristotle notes,[478] given that their objective flourishing is something they consistently act against. One could imagine a serial killer finally shot by police, lying in the street and whimpering for help. There can still be a sense that there is a person here worth helping, someone whose life began with the same potential as any other. The analogous theological sentiment might be along the lines of "there but for the grace of God go I."

[477] Aristotle, N.E., 1165b.
[478] Aristotle, N.E., 1166b.

I suggest that if at the natural level, the witness of a strong parental love may furnish me with reasons not to dismiss my friend's 'wicked' child, there seems to lie open a path toward extending this to the unknown wicked.

In examining the way that deep friendship can open our heart in benevolence and mercy toward those who are dear to our friend, be they potential friends for us, or simply strangers to us, or even people whom we would have regarded as enemies or who are bent on vice, we see the seeds in deep friendship toward an openness to a more global benevolence. It will be useful now to trace other contributories to this expanded outlook below.

9.2. Deep Friendship Increases our Appreciation of Human Potential and Dignity

Introduction

Already at the level of human making, great artistic achievements show forth the creative potential of a human being at some area of mastery. Yet the mutual conscious choice of one another in love and the shared life that allows each friend to manifest her intention to be an ongoing personal good for the other, bring a level of fulfilment and happiness to the human heart that is beyond that achieved through even the greatest artistic projects or ornamental enjoyments, however rich, beautiful or satisfying these may be. With deep friendship, a new kind of summit is reached, when it comes to qualitative experiences of goodness in human life and this has repercussions for our appreciation of human potentiality and dignity.

As has been noted, even the joy taken in artistic achievements implies, for its fullness, some element of shared life and appreciation beyond the fond admiration someone might have for her own work or even that which admirers or fans may have toward the artist. Human art and making serve the building up of the human milieu, and dispose it toward facilitating a flourishing human life. When all is going well, they establish the surroundings and ambience that are conducive to the higher ends of human activity. As wonderful as human artistic achievements are in themselves, at a deeper level of life they are at the service of human acting. Afterall, "without friends, no one would choose to live though [she] had all other goods."[479] And underpinning the shared life of

[479] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1170b.

deep friends and inseparably tied to it, as we have seen, is the development and refinement of practical wisdom and the enrooting of virtuous dispositions and activity, whereby such amical intentions are rendered authentic, stable and realisable day by day. Friendship, *phronesis* and virtuous activity are co-constitutive, not only of each other, but also of the *eudaimon* life, in which each plays an indispensable role.

As the friendship deepens, the friend is appreciated as a noble end-good, capable of anchoring and reorienting lesser goods and loves. But in discovering the nobility of a particular human person in such a personal way, we discover a new nobility that potentially characterises all human life. We not only grow in appreciation of 'what' a human person is, but also grasp something of 'why' we are, in the sense that we come to understand what ennobles and fulfils life and renders it more meaningful. Thus, we come to respect the dynamic of the development of deep friendship in others, whether we have any involvement in their lives or not and this becomes an important ethical consideration.

It is clear from the previous analysis that what we consider to be noble has direct bearing on our *phronesis* and fortitude, as well as many related virtues, such as magnanimity and patience. Similar observations could be made regarding temperance, generosity or justice, and so on. Here I shall consider how this deepening of *eudaimonia* in those who allow themselves to truly become a 'good for one another', enhances their appreciation of the human potential for goodness in general, widening an appreciation of both human dignity and agency, enhancing empathy and compassion for relative strangers and giving impetus to a sort of universal friendliness, that presumes good will until proven otherwise, as a sort of default in human interactions.

9.2.i. The Human Spirit's Orientation Toward Fulfilment is Revealed in Deep Friendship

Deep friendship not only helps to form the ethical self, which remains truncated so long as a person occupies the centre of her own world, but it gives human life a sense of metaphysical orientation with regard to the heart's spiritual striving. Without deep friends we are effectively restless, as characters moving from one project or pleasurable experience to another, unable to find a home, however high quality or good our projects or pleasurable pastimes might be. To be recognised for

one's talents by admirers, however gratifying, is only a shallow substitute for deep and lasting friendship, as is the admiration one might have for oneself for cultivating the higher pleasures as ends in themselves.

As friends awaken and enable in one another a desire for self-gift, their friendship becomes a place of stability, where both parties can flourish in a climate of acceptance of who the other is, as well as in the benevolence of helping her to become all that she can be, as she increasingly flourishes. Without this anchor, life is comparatively adrift, and we seek to fill the vacuum in various ways. But hedonistic indulgence tends toward despair; epicurean dilettantism is prone to longer-term boredom; and even the stoic sense of duty risks degradation into the empty self-satisfaction of either 'resting on one's laurels' in the company of other superior do-gooders, or succumbing to outright disillusionment or cynicism as one realises that duty or altruism is not a particularly effective rallying cry among the next 'selfish generation'.

Without the means to transcend more limited goods, these pathways tend to converge on the same question: "what's the point?" which perhaps reflects a deeper truth that is easily acknowledged on the day of a funeral: namely that deep friendship *is* precisely the point around which meaningful lives are oriented, and nothing short of it profoundly satisfies the human heart. Certainly, in the face of terminal illness or death, when unfinished projects or enjoyable pastimes no longer vie for first place in our lives, it is our relationships of deeper love that most clearly come into relief, and stand out as the chief component of a life well lived. There would be something grossly inadequate about a eulogy that merely had the ring of a belated C.V., listing the work achievements of the deceased, however impressive. Similarly, if the most we can say of Aunty Selma at her wake is that she faithfully kept up her subscription to the A.P.O. as long as she could, or was often amusingly found inebriated by mid-afternoon, or regularly did her bit for Greenpeace collections before her legs gave out, our hearers could be forgiven for feeling somewhat deflated. Deep friendship gives a sense and orientation to one's life, whether in its practical dimension linked to the usefulness that each can have for the other; in its pleasurable dimension around the enjoyment of good things together and of each other; in the deeper ethical dimension of virtuous activity which serves both the friendship itself and all relations beyond it; or in the contemplation of the noblest goods, which virtuous friends can encourage and facilitate in one another.

As Aristotle notes:

> …what is the use of such prosperity without the opportunity of beneficence, which is exercised chiefly and in its most laudable form toward friends… [Friendship] helps the young, too, to keep from error… Those in the prime of life it stimulates to noble actions – 'two going together' – for with friends men are more able both to think and to act… the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality… we think of the same people that are good men and are friends.[480]

I have outlined the way in which deep friendship leads to the actuation of human potential on many levels. Thanks to our friend, our capacity to love is increasingly drawn into a dynamic state of loving; our potential for ethical development is able to flower into stable states of virtue and into virtuous activity that is placed in the service of this love; and even our creativity can be focussed around artistic activity that renders the milieu of daily life more conducive to the exercise of such qualitative and worthwhile relationships. Just as our friend's goodness is able to draw our potentiality into act, so we happily accept to take on the responsibility of being this source of personal goodness and actuation for her in our turn. Each friend brings to the other what she cannot bring to herself, which gives to each one a privileged experience of both potentiality and act in love from two directions.

This 'friendship dynamic' constitutes a first-hand education into the scope of the human potentiality for ethical and personal goodness and even at times for greatness. For those who have tasted it, there is no going back: the good life is unthinkable without deep friends. This type of friendship plays a vital role in rendering life meaningful and maintaining it in meaning. Friendship becomes so tied to life's savour and to any realisation of *eudaimonia,* that the thought of its absence even calls the point of life into question: "… without friends, no one would choose to live, though [she] had all other goods."[481]

[480] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a.
[481] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a; N.E., 1170b.

The experience of deep friendship necessarily affects how we look upon our fellows, whether they are casual friends at the utilitarian or pleasure levels, or indeed acquaintances or mere strangers. We come to appreciate that the world is not simply a collection of entrepreneurs, trying to navigate the separate boats of their projects in the chaotic and threatening seas of human interaction, or coping with life's inevitable disappointments by forging pockets of pleasant experience together. We do not simply co-operate in order to find the path of least resistance or harm, so that the maximum number of people might achieve their goals and exercise their efficient freedom. Indeed, as Pieper points out, it is not the worker-day week that constitutes the point of human life, so that the weekend is merely a space to regain the strength to face it again. Rather, the worker-day week sets up a more qualitative leisure that needs for its depth and richness a sense of inter-personal communion.[482, 483, 484] So long as others remain mere satellites in our quest for advancement or enjoyment, something fundamental and indeed ultimate about human goodness, potentiality and dignity is missed.

We may not need deep friendship in order to appreciate that the human being is a social animal by nature, given that this readily emerges at lesser levels of co-operation, such as those needed for survival or for the development of useful or enjoyable pursuits. But when we discover that another person can become a place of rest for our spirit, and *vice versa*,[485] around whom we would happily orient our life and order our voluntary activity, and for whom we would embrace opportunities to become an ongoing good, we appreciate deeper dimensions of the human thirst for fulfilment. These in turn carry immediate ethical ramifications, beyond the province of the particular friendships that helped give rise to these insights.

In this light, it does not become unreasonable to assume that every human heart somehow thirsts for someone who is capable of welcoming, understanding and accepting her; and that each in turn has the potential to 'carry' another intentionally in love. With the fullness of the amical experience, it becomes clear that the capacity for deep acceptance and mutual benevolence at the level of life and being is a vital part of a flourishing human life, as is the preparedness to prioritise someone loved precisely as 'another self'.

[482] Pieper, Josef (1998 B) at 27-36.
[483] Pieper, Josef (1999) at 18-21.
[484] See also Aristotle, N.E., 1177b.
[485] Philippe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 302-95.

The love that typifies deep friendship, in assuming lower loves without suppressing them, gives shape to our sense of what is noble and ultimate for any human life, illuminating our practical wisdom, which in turn renders our virtuous activity authentic day by day. Our horizons expand in terms of what we regard as essential and necessary for a fulfilling life, and this spills over into a deepening of wonder, and even reverence for the potential of each human life, whatever its current state of realisation or actuation. We could notice, for example, that a world set up to facilitate amical relations is indeed a well-established and civilised world; while circumstances, patterns of life or tendencies that systematically undermine or prevent these are deeply problematic at a societal level, no matter how productive or efficient they might seem to be in other ways.

9.2.ii. Appreciation for the Depth of Human Potential for Goodness Opens Deep Friends to Others

Aristotle affirms in the *Metaphysics* that 'potentiality' is a term relative to the 'act' to which it refers. Indeed, our understanding of any given potentiality depends on our understanding of its corresponding act, and, furthermore, potentiality relies on what is already in act in order to be actualised.[486] Certainly, if an individual entity lacked the potential to see, she would never actually see. But standing behind this, for Aristotle, is a deeper primacy of act over potentiality. Without the existence of what is visible and the experience of seeing, for example, we could not properly grasp what is even meant by the phrase the 'potential to see'. We would never know the extent of the human potential for musicianship, were it not for great musicians who have realised it. Nor would we develop ourselves proficiently as musicians without the world of music in act or the presence of other musicians, who help to actuate this capacity in us. It is not simply that musicians produce music. At a deeper level, it is both music and musicians that produce musicians.

We glimpse the appreciation of the human potential for goodness in the way that parents often regard their new-born. Questions arise spontaneously when contemplating their baby: what lies ahead for this little one? What will become of her? The task of finding oneself responsible for a new dependent little life is not without its daunting aspects. Parents are often all too aware that they will need a careful and discerning practical wisdom in order to equip this emerging person

[486] Aristotle, Met., 1045b-1052a.

for the pitfalls and dangers that she will no doubt have one day to face. At the same time, the open-ended future holds forth untold hope. Will she enjoy, or take to, this or that art, science or sport? How will her nature or temperament unfold? How will her character develop? Indeed, how can we help her to become her 'best self', someone whom we would be proud to have launched into this world? How can we best facilitate her growth in lasting and essential qualities, such as honesty, humility, magnanimity, generosity, courage, a sense of justice and authentic love? Equivalently, we could ask how best to equip her for good and lasting friendships that will allow her life to be happy.[487]

The responsibility of parenting a particular child naturally serves as a catalyst to bring these sorts of questions into sharper focus. Standing behind such hopes and fears is the level of understanding of human capacity and values that the child's parents have been able to reach. The more their own relationship has become a deep friendship, or the more they have known deep friendship in their lives, the more their aspirations for their child will include nothing less. Their own deep friendship contributes to their appreciation of what fulfils a human life and their high estimation of such a life. It also increases their awareness of the contingent nature of things and the vulnerabilities of human persons. Their own maturity in virtue has attuned them to the many subtleties involved in not 'missing the mark' and their refined practical wisdom will now be put in the service of the education of their own child, to ultimately facilitate her own growth in practical wisdom.

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[487] The book, "The Wonderful Things You Will Be" by Emily Martin, that the First Lady of the United States, Melania Trump, chose to read to children at the 2019 Easter Egg Roll, clearly illustrates the wonder of parents for the unique individual in their care, as well as their aspirations for her with regard to her growth in virtue and artistic exploration.
The text reads:

> When I look at you and you look at me, I wonder what wonderful things you will be. When you were too small to say "hello." I know you were someone I wanted to know. For all your tininess couldn't disguise a heart so enormous, wild and wise.
> This is the first time there has ever been you, so I wonder what wonderful things you will do. Will you stand up for good by saving the day? Or play a song only you know how to play?
> Will you tell a story that only you know? Will you learn what it means to help things to grow? Will you learn how to fly to find the best view? Or take care of things much smaller than you? I know you will be kind and clever and bold, and the bigger your heart, the more it will hold.
> When nights are black and when days are grey, you will be brave and bright so no shadows can stay. Then you will discover all there is to see and become anybody that you would like to be.

See Martin, Emily Winfield (2015). (We can assume that the aspiration that the child can 'become anybody that [she] would like to be,' presumes the development of wise judgement on child's part, given the development of character implied in the rest of the text, rather than the affirmation of the ability of the child to construct herself into anything she would like to be, good or bad.)

Stepping outside the realm of this immediate responsibility, the underlying appreciation of the goodness of human life that is brought about and significantly enhanced by qualitative experiences of friendship contributes profoundly to one's ethical outlook with regard to acquaintances and strangers. For example, the time-honoured and universally accepted norm that the life of a fellow human being is not the sort of thing that can be snuffed out in the name of expediency, is surely rooted in the grasp of human dignity and potentiality that qualitative relations makes possible. This being, who is not only capable of flourishing in creativity and in appreciation of beauty, or of contributing to useful goods for the enhancement of the life's milieu, but who is also capable of developing deep friendships, of embodying virtuous activity and authentic love, of pursuing truth and goodness wherever they may lead, of freely using her autonomy for another's good: this is not the sort of creature that one may readily dispose of in pursuit of one's own projects or advancement. The sense of value that one places on human life is linked to one's appreciation for the human capacity for goodness. This capacity does not begin as an abstract concept, but is understood only from a reflexive gaze on its act, that is to say, on the experiences which give rise to the greatest realisation of human goodness in life, and here friendship must take pride of place as an experience that reveals what is noblest in the human spirit and thus that toward which human capacity is in fact oriented.

Certain individuals may at times significantly stand in the way of our desires and plans, to the point where we might vent our frustrations in private with those closest to us. But if we were to add to such conversations that we have serious plans for the other's downfall, whether in livelihood, name, well-being, or life itself, any decent friend would be taken aback. We would have stepped into a space of narcissism and overly relativized the world to ourselves. Such a move is unthinkable for someone who has a keen appreciation of the depth of human goodness and of the human potential for goodness that deep friendship makes possible.

Thus, there is a strong argument in favour of the dignity of the human person that can be made drawing upon the logic of final causality, where the human potential for fulfilment becomes one of the premises. The human person is teleologically oriented toward the sort of fulfilment that is achieved, at least in part, in the union of deep friendship, where each friend becomes an end-good for the other, worthy of love for her own sake. This is not simply a capacity, but a *telos*, i.e.,

something that, all going well, is *meant* to be achieved. It is not simply that a person is of value once she enjoys *eudaimonia* and thus has her potential for goodness significantly actualised. Rather, the fullness of being-in-act shows the hidden promise of being-in-potential. Certainly, those who have reached this sort of maturity are precisely the ones thanks to whom we can grasp the glorious capacity contained within the human spirit. The human being is in fact the 'animal capable of *eudaimonia'*. We could say that *homo sapiens* is teleologically oriented toward becoming *homo amicus* and *homo felix*. In other words, one of the purposes of 'being human' is to 'be in deep relations of mutual benevolence' and thus to 'be happy'. The experience of friendship is the experience of something '*teliotatic*' (i.e., having the character of an ultimate end), which provides material content for *eudaimonia* as fulfilment and deep happiness. This in turn sheds light on the dignity and potential of all human beings, whether or not their potentiality has so far crystallised into act.

So long as life's deepest goods remain at the level of utility or pleasure, the sense of the meaning and value of human life is similarly reduced and relativised to such concerns. Longer term this pushes toward despair. In the face of approaching death after extended illness, for example, the curtain is drawn on being useful or pleasurable. Mere utility or pleasure friendships naturally tend to fall away at such times and become empty of value. One might receive certain passing sympathy from these sorts of friends, but we understand that they are not really 'in it for the long haul' and nor would we expect them to be. With the love that characterises deep friendship, however, the weakness of the body or the lack of ability to incarnate love in gestures or activities, in no way reduces the intention of love that the person bears her dearest friends, even from her state of advanced weakness. Nor does it impact upon the amical choice to be always for the other's good. Indeed, precisely because in deep friendship the friend is not loved in function of her usefulness or pleasantness, the friendship tends to remain strong until the last breath, as family and close friends treasure the last possible moments of presence that they can have. As tragic and painful as it is to witness the decline of a friend's health and of her bodily integrity, there is something marvellous about the triumph of the human spirit under such circumstances. The strength of the love between the dying and those accompanying them in friendship can be in its own way something of beauty and depth, amid what is in many other respects a horrible moment. We could note too, that in such moments it is not uncommon for family and friends to have nothing but the

highest praise for hospice workers, for example, who have gone the extra mile to ensure that these last moments of encounter between those whose mutual love is deep can be of the highest quality.

In such times we realise that when love reaches the other for her own sake, it endures in its essence, even when it is highly compromised in its exercise, due to circumstances that are beyond anyone's control. The heart and intention are no less for the body being weakened and unable to express them. This opens even the direst moments of dying toward becoming sublime manifestations of communion, which while always painful, due to the physical and mental suffering involved, along with the suffering implied by the pending separation, can nonetheless become profound moments of love that are ultimately treasured.

9.2.ii. Empathy and Compassion

The appreciation for human potentiality and dignity has implications for the development of empathy and compassion, which are powerful motivators in reaching out to others beyond our immediate familial or amical circle.

There are many circumstances in which there naturally arises a sense of responsibility to act in the face of the human need in front of us, even when the person concerned is a relative stranger. On seeing a four-year old crying or shaking in the middle of a mall, having lost her mother and thus all sense of security, we might feel compelled to respond. "We'll find mummy darling. Come on, let's ask the mall people if they can find mummy for us through the speakers." It would seem cruel to leave the little one in such a traumatised state, when we could easily alleviate it by acting for a brief moment *in loco parentis.* Similarly, should we witness a car hitting the median barrier on a motorway and overturning, we would stop to see what assistance we could offer, regardless of our lack of expertise, especially if we are the only person on hand. Even if we can do no more than to be present, we know that such an offering is not useless, for to suffer alone is far worse than to be accompanied compassionately in suffering.

In certain situations, failure to act means that we will afterwards occupy the stale position of finding that we were cowardly or small-hearted, which may come with a sense of guilt or shame. We are naturally horrified by stories of people passing by on the busy streets of New York or

London for example, ignoring a brutal assault in broad daylight. When everyone presumes that someone else will deal with a serious problem and rationalises away what we assume should be a universal instinct to help our fellows in dire moments, we are rightly disturbed. If we can blame people for not helping when we hear of it, which we tend to do, or feel guilty ourselves for not 'stepping up' and 'stepping in' on such occasions, it implies that we sense a real responsibility for one another under certain conditions. So long as the situation is being dealt with by someone else, we can of course 'mind our own business' and 'not interfere'. But short of protesting: "why doesn't so and so (the government, the church, the police, the health board, the social workers, the 'system' for example) do something about that?" we find ourselves pulled toward taking some compassionate action for our fellows, particularly when it seems clear that it will make a difference.

The 'golden rule' "do unto others as you would like them to do unto you," in some ways sums up what lies at the core of empathy. On hearing of or witnessing a tragedy, we naturally imagine what it might be like to be in the other's shoes and our heart goes out to them.[488] Sometimes this translates into a desire to give practical assistance, and depending on the severity of the situation, this may be accompanied by a sense of having a responsibility to do so. In any case, we imagine what we would appreciate someone else doing for us under the circumstances, and what sort of difference such support would make to us. We weigh up the factors involved to determine whether we are in a position to be that supportive fellow in this instance. This can be coloured by any happy memories that we may have of the times that others have reached out to us unexpectantly in order to lighten our load. It is in times such as those that we tend to speak of our 'faith in human nature (or humanity) being restored'.

Clearly this sense of what we would appreciate under similar conditions is informed and enhanced by past experience of good human relationships and interactions, whether while growing up in a caring family or from the various levels of friendship to which we have been accustomed. If empathy is strongly related to stepping into the shoes of another, then it has a particular relation to experiences that highlight the other as 'another self'. It is effectively the ability to see the other

[488] Key here is not the literal substitution of oneself in place of the other, but a putting of oneself 'in the other's shoes' and circumstances, including what might be their reduced capacities, strength and so forth. I might not want the world to rush to my aid when I trip over while crossing the road, but were I also an elderly frail grandmother, things might be different.

in general as potentially 'another me'. This is equivalently a generalisation of the ability to see the other as a potential deep friend.

Bonds of family already tend to establish an 'us' where lives are deeply intertwined, and this becomes especially important when things go very wrong. Deep friendship includes the voluntary establishment of strong bonds of connectedness and mutual responsibility in love, whose worth is proved in difficult situations as we have described. It involves the ongoing and profound choice to significantly view the other as 'another self'. We have noted above that the impetus and desire to help a friend in difficult times becomes second nature as the friendship deepens.

The more such an attitude becomes a disposition, as we become accustomed to living in a way that fosters and develops deep friendship (which, as Aristotle notes "is a virtue or akin to virtue," precisely in this respect),[489] the more we are accustomed to making wise and fairly spontaneous assessments concerning the "how, when, why, what, to whom, and how much" of what would be a generous response.[490]

What is more, we become accustomed to the humbling gratitude that comes over us whenever a friend chooses to assist us in a way that makes a real difference. No matter how close we are and how many times this has happened, we are always aware that the other "didn't have to do that," and that she has indeed "gone the extra mile". If not, a cloud risks covering the friendship as one begins to feel that the other "is taking advantage". Such a suspicion is hurtful precisely because that is the last thing a close friend would ever want to do to her friend. When things are healthy, an element of surprise and gratitude accompanies being given assistance, and there remains something refreshing about the spontaneous intervention of a friend on our behalf whenever the need arises. Each occasion reinforces the joy of deep friendship and our sense of our friend's deep goodness.

When life is consistently lived in this way, it becomes all the easier to extend the friendly hand of support to someone with whom we have no immediate personal bond, and yet whose need has touched us in some way. Acts such as the simple gesture of slipping someone money who

[489] Aristotle, N.E., 1155a.
[490] Aristotle, N.E., 1106b.

discovers at the counter of a dairy that she has forgotten her wallet; or accommodating the needs of a hitch-hiker beyond the scope of our intended journey; or going out of our way for a disoriented, tired or hungry tourist; are in fact deeply rooted in the extension of what occurs naturally between deep friends. We literally 'extend the hand of friendship in advance' to someone we assess as being genuine, before any such relation with them might justify that level of assistance.

Because we are the sorts of beings who thrive on good friendship, and particularly from the deep solidarity of knowing that there is someone whose default position is benevolence toward us and who is always 'oriented toward our good', we are also the sorts of beings open to spontaneous 'friendliness' and expressions of solidarity. This insight gives us a sort of unspoken 'permission' to occasionally step out in the direction of relative strangers and take the risk of getting involved in a benevolent way, where we think the situation calls for it. It also inclines us to welcome such advances when they come our way from someone unknown. We bask for a brief moment in the "family of humanity" and appreciate the sentiment behind Schiller's "*An die Freude*," immortalised in Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," when someone pulls over on a country road where we have stopped to enquire: "Are you right there, mate? Do you need a hand?"

What reveals our capacity for friendship are actual friendships, but once we grasp this capacity we are able to view strangers as potential friends or at least as the actual or potential friends of others. We see human beings as beings-in-relation, and the more we appreciate the goodness, quality and beauty of our best relations, the more this capacity becomes something that we can deeply respect and honour in others.

The experience of passing friendliness that in itself seeks no longer-term engagement, reflects on one level the bonds of our common humanity, but with human beings, this is not something that is purely instinctive, as it may be for dogs who seem to engage in the joy of reunion whenever they pass each other, for example. For humans, this recognition of our kind is highlighted and informed by our experience of the mutuality within deep friendship. In other words, with the 'sea-change' of rationality, we realise that our connaturality with other humans is rooted not simply in our common physicality and biological ends, but in the intellect and the will with their more 'spiritual ends' that touch truth and goodness. The extent to which we appreciate this potential,

will reflect the extent to which we have been informed by the quality of its act. The experience of the love within deep friendship, then, is a form of education in human dignity. We consider ourselves to be part of a collective, for whom friendship is one of the greatest goods and so for whom friendly support is a great consolation in times of difficulty.

As cities burgeon and people become increasingly dispersed and disconnected from their neighbours, it can be that a default of fear and mistrust replaces one of natural friendliness. Tourists will speak of the delight of staying in small villages, where they get to taste the real life and hospitality of locals, who still manage to exhibit a refreshing openness to strangers. It is a far cry from finding that one has no effective strategy to even get the attention of the pre-occupied or self-preserving passer-by in Parisian or London streets long enough to even attempt to ask a simple direction. Yet even in that situation we continue to reach out, because underneath, it seems a reasonable bargain for those who have enjoyed decent human relations, that if we can break through the surface barrier with a smile or some other manifestation of good-will, perhaps in body-language or voice, we will eventually meet the person behind the public mask of supreme busy-ness. We may be able to briefly re-open the presumed door into the common-room of amical humanity, that has become temporarily jammed due to the fear of an unsavoury element who too often take advantage of the good will presumed in human interactions in order to exploit others.

9.2.iv. Human Agency

It could be argued that the experience of friendship in one's life is not actually necessary for an empathetic or compassionate outreach in times of difficulty, on the grounds that one can make the simpler and more direct jump from the natural concern and pre-occupation each person tends to have for herself onto another, perhaps out of an appreciation of the goodness of our own human agency, without passing through the intermediary of the experience of deep friendship. This is perhaps at best a partial truth, because the human potential for agency is something that is known only reflexively from the experience of human acting. The potential for agency comes to be appreciated the more we look back favourably on acts that have brought elements of satisfaction or goodness to our own lives or to the lives of others. Our assessment of the goodness of human agency is related and proportional to the qualitative level that that agency has characteristically reached within our experience.

It is true that we can already have some appreciation of the goodness of 'who or what we are' from the satisfaction we take in successful projects or from friendly relations at the utility or pleasure levels, not to mention from the good familial relations that have hopefully characterised our upbringing. But without the experience of deep friendship, even within the family, our highest experience of agency risks being rooted in appreciating our own efficient will for achieving goals, projects and enjoyable pastimes, along with the practical co-operation of other like-minded agents. When that is the case, our level of empathy and respect for others also risks being truncated and remaining exclusively at that level.

We might respect the 'rights' of people to arrange their lives in such a way as to maximise their creative exploits or their own enjoyments, providing they do not interfere with the similar rights of others. In the normal course of events, that might often be enough to keep most people out of each other's way, while still allowing a limited openness to helping strangers when the situation calls for it. Our respect for the uniqueness of others may be simply rooted in appreciating our own interiority and the centrality of ourselves to our projects and pastimes. This is already a good, as Aristotle reminds us, for none of us would choose even to possess the whole world, if it meant losing our own identity.[491] We have a natural attachment to the uniqueness of our own being and would not trade it, whatever the gain, and this overflows into an appreciation of the uniqueness of others, at least at this level of autonomy and interiority. We can love about ourselves that we are indeed rational beings, able to interpret ourselves and our world and forge our own path.

Yet without deep friendship, and the co-requisite developments in virtue and *phronesis*, the sense of our own agency would struggle to develop beyond a sense of our efficient freedom. We have already noted that no project, in the sense of human 'making', however much we love it, gives us the fulfilment that comes when love is able to be returned. Indeed, no project of this kind can take us beyond the world of our own mastery to discover a personal goodness worthy of being adhered to in love without being possessed.

[491] Aristotle, N.E., 1166b.

Our very sense of what and who we are increases as our various potentialities are realised. What is special about our agency comes more to the fore through reflection on our higher quality acts. It is true that artistic mastery and freedom already reveals something truly wonderful about human agency. But deep friendship expands our notion of freedom, beyond simply what I am able to create, or even do to satisfy my desires. It does this chiefly by broadening our desires to include the good of another for her own sake. As our natural self-love opens out toward someone else, whom we embrace with equal commitment and consistency, human agency emerges as even more noble. We realise that our freedom is enhanced, the more we are able to make a free personal gift of ourselves.

In this light, virtuous activity is the oxygen of human freedom, and deep friendship, which is its natural milieu and goal, is precisely what enables us to be more fully ourselves. Thus, it is the privileged place where an appreciation of human agency can be most enhanced.

Discovering that the goodness of another is capable of becoming an 'end-good' for us, and that in reciprocation, we can become precisely that for her, significantly expands our appreciation of human uniqueness and dignity. We do not simply love our friend for her capacities. It is her goodness in act that attracts us. Our friend is utterly unique and irreplaceable in her being, and her love for us reveals that the same can be said of ourselves. If there is no one like my friend, there must also be no one like me!

We see too, through deep friendship, that human autonomy is not an end in itself, but more the starting point for a deeper freedom to be fully oneself, thanks to love. Efficient freedom is ordered toward a deeper personal freedom where human beings can find rest in each other, while happily being 'for' one another. Our projects are relativised by this level of fulfilment. The efficient freedom by which we carry out our creative endeavours is oriented toward enhancing a milieu most conducive to the flourishing of relations of self-gift.

We are indeed rational animals with human agency, but the wonder of such a thing cannot be fully discovered outside the 'resting place' of deep friendship. Humans, while being a species, like cows or chickens, also form a community of utterly unique characters, and the particularity of deep friendship underlines this as few other experiences do. Strangely, our uniqueness comes more to

the fore the more we are authentically connected to one another in bonds of friendship. We are more ourselves as members of one another.

When we reach out to a lost little child in a mall, it is partly because we cannot bear to leave a little soul in trauma. We know the value of being consoled, we know the difference a consoling adult can make for a child, but we also know that that little one should not suffer in that state if we can help it. That child is made for happiness and not for trauma. Her potential is for completeness not disintegration. In her vulnerability she is in need, like all of us when we came into the world, and those little 'helps' will educate her, for she will realise that she is not in fact alone (which is the very source of the trauma), but that other adults care as well. In the separateness of our busyness we can take time when it is important to show our common bonds. Thus, the child will begin to learn that we are all connected and that, at least in principle, we all want the flourishing of everyone else, even if we are not personally involved in it.

For similar sorts of reasons, one might smile or give friendly acknowledgement to a small toddler and her parent, as if to say: "Hello darling" to the child, or "lovely child" to the parent. The child is not yet fully indoctrinated into a fear of strangers, and still looks out at the world as an adventure playground full of potential friends (if not outright admirers!). She may still be in a phase where she is used to eliciting love simply by existing and smiling, and we would rather not be the one to put a stop to that.[492]

Reaching out to adults as if they are already friends in some ways carries an air of restoring innocence to the earth. It takes the risk that people are worth trusting. It says rather than 'respect has to be earned' that respect is a default position, which in fact has to be lost! The human race as a whole is such a good that its potential should be realised. Deep friendship in act (that is, as actually exercised through the ongoing sharing of life and not simply in ongoing dispositions of benevolence that may never get realised), deepens our appreciation of the goodness of a human being and of human life itself, which in turn heightens our appreciation of the goodness of human agency and potentiality. Refining our appreciation of at least one wonderful human being, helps

[492] Later, of course, she may well withdraw into that 'clinging' phase, where she realises that not all adults are as interested in her or as benign toward her as her parents tend to be, but that is another stage in the education of her prudence!

us to appreciate the wonder of each human being. It is the experience that pushes us on toward a global good-will in favour of all those who are oriented in their very being to be fulfilled in deep friendship.

X

BEYOND ETHICS - LIGHTS FROM DEEP FRIENDSHIP ON METAPHYSICAL AND METAETHICAL EXPLORATION

In this chapter, I shall suggest ways that an ethical exploration of deep friendship can potentially shed light on the metaphysical question of the existence of God as it arises in natural theology and on the metaethical question of the grounding of human virtues within natural normativity, as developed by Foot and Hursthouse.

10.1. Deep Friendship, Metaphysics and Natural Theology

10.1.i. Possible Contribution to Natural Theology

The activity of contemplation of the deepest truths for their own sake, and particularly of the divine ground of reality, is for Aristotle the highest actuation of our intellectual faculty and it carries with it the most authentic pleasure.[493] He sees mature contemplation as an intellectual virtue in the speculative realm (i.e., something primarily ordered to attaining knowledge of the truth for its own sake rather than to discerning what would be a good course of action). We have seen that virtuous friends, who necessarily value and prioritise nobler goods, can already be a great encouragement and help to one another when it comes to making progress as truth-seekers. They are able to offer solidarity to each other in difficulties, encouraging one another to persevere whenever obstacles arise; and they can happily share insights and excitement when personal breakthroughs are made. In wanting each other to flourish, they naturally rejoice in one another's progress and victories, while finding subtle ways to come to each other's aid, should they see failure looming through the temptation to succumb to laziness or discouragement.

But there are more direct ways in which the experience of deep friendship itself can enter the trajectory of truth-seeking, particularly touching the fundamental question for Natural Theology, namely the question of the possible existence of God. There are at least two aspects in particular where reflection on deep friendship can inform authentic philosophical exploration in this field,

[493] Aristotle, N.E., 1098a; N.E., 1177a.

and without attempting to develop these in an exhaustive way, we seek here to outline these possibilities as an aid to future study. The first concerns the way that philosophical reflection on deep friendship can help us to refine our notion of goodness *per se*, which seems to be an essential component of any meaningful philosophical approach to the question of the existence of God. The second aspect is the way that an understanding of deep friendship can contribute to our grasp of the primacy of act over potentiality, which is one of the most important insights for both Aristotle and Aquinas, allowing them to approach the question of the divine philosophically as "Pure Act".

10.1.i.a. Deep Friendship Contributes to our Notion of the Good *per se*

Any traditional notion of God seems empty if divorced from a consideration of what might constitute goodness in itself. We can speak in the abstract about the possibility of an 'evil god' but serious enquiry concerning the philosophical exploration of the existence of God in the Abrahamic 'theist' traditions, takes for granted that one is referring to a God who is in some way the fullness, source and ground of goodness. From a human standpoint, however, any grasp of what might constitute goodness *per se* would need to be reached through analogical reasoning across a spectrum of the experiences we can have of goodness in the world, even as we intellectually strip away the limits and parameters that any particular mode of experiential goodness might imply. It is here that deep friendship takes on unique significance, as it presents a certain experiential summit regarding the power of personal goodness to attract and fulfil the human spirit, and bring to human life a level of happiness and fulfilment that would be otherwise unattainable. As has been noted, this occurs insofar as friends are able to allow the love that each one awakens in the other to crystallise into an ongoing mutual choice of one another, in an intention of life that carries them beyond their own individual plans, projects and preoccupations, for the sake of their friend. Here one's friend truly becomes 'another self' and an end-good capable of reorienting one's activity and life.

The power of this experience is all the more highlighted when we consider its painful flipside so poignantly felt in the tragedy of the death of a particularly close friend. Here we are made acutely aware of the limits of love in the face of the limitations of being. We have noted that spiritual love, when it blossoms in an intention of life and a mutual amical choice, carries with it a sense of permanence and stability, with potentially unlimited openness to growth, through the sharing of

life. But with death, one is forced to confront the fact that the desire, intention and choice that deep friends have and make for each other somehow exceed what the limitations of their being can ultimately sustain. As much as the choice to 'live for the other' implies permanence, the love in deep friendship is not enough to hold the other in being or to significantly prolong her life. The aspirations of our love collide with the limits of our being. Those united in deep friendship might become increasingly one in intention and heart, but they remain two in being, and this division can end up being a source of wounding. Nowhere is the distance between being and intentionality more keenly felt than in the rawness of the death of someone for whom we have chosen to live. The very fulfilment and richness that this friend has brought to our lives, in being another self, whom we have discovered as irreplaceable in her unique being, makes the separation and the sense of finality associated with death all the harder to bear.

This tension has philosophical significance and is relevant to the way that deep friendship points beyond itself, raising real metaphysical issues. Both poles of the experience need to be considered together. On the one hand we cannot neglect the immense positivity that deep friendship brings to our lives. While always grounded in real contexts, friendship itself transcends culture, time and place, and seems to answer deep yearnings within the human spirit regarding actuation and happiness. The dear friend brings to her friend what she cannot bring to herself, calling her beyond her immediate self toward the joy of personal union. We have seen that while the activity which manifests friendship is multiple and exhibits great flexibility, the fixed point of reference is the friend herself. As a 'permanent' end-good, she anchors our ongoing intentions of love and benevolence. Death appears on this horizon as an intolerable rupture. The relation that demands to be permanent and seemingly inexhaustive is revealed as necessarily temporary, at least in its exercise, and we must painfully acknowledge that not even our love is enough to bridge this gap. Death robs us, appearing as cruel and final, not in the sense of the final cause, linked to fulfilment, but rather as a disintegration and a termination. It is an unravelling, appearing as a 'dead-end', with which the deep love within friendship seems destined to collide.

Both sides of this 'gap' need to be given their full weight. Were we to focus only on the factor of disappointment, we might be tempted to abandon the quest for fulfilment in love altogether, as something that is somehow doomed from the outset. We might instead seek a path of 'enlightenment' that allows us to evade the pain of this rupture. Alternatively, we might gloss too

quickly over the devastating separation by attempting to celebrate immediately some possibility of future reunion, whether ushered in by faith and hope, or simply by a blinkered optimism. Similarly, one might seek refuge in some sentimental notion or symbol, imagining for example that "there is a new star shining down tonight," or that from now on, whenever I see my friend's favourite bird, the *tui*, she is somehow coming to visit me and making her presence felt.

Has not the perennial dissatisfaction that lies at the heart of frustrated love found its way into the famous preamble of Buddhism? It is argued in the tenet of its first 'noble truth' that whatever we find desirable in this life turns out to be *dukkha,* or ultimately unsatisfying, especially in the face of death.[494] There the proposed solution centres around the eradication of the troublesome or doomed desire, via a pathway that negates the veracity of the sense of the self, from which the desire stems. Yet this sense of self would also seem to be an essential component of deep friendship. In the quest for detachment, the unitive aspect of love is replaced by a sort of 'compassion' that seeks to accompany another on her journey at least long enough for her to become sufficiently detached herself. With this understanding in play, where all attachment is effectively unhealthy and a source of suffering, compassion becomes the impulse toward helping others to be free of it. In a certain way, if deep friendship really is a partial source of fulfilment and happiness in human life, then in classical Buddhism, one seeks to be 'happy not to be happy' or 'content not to be content'. For the Buddhist this involves the deeper metaphysical question concerning the veracity of self itself. Perhaps the consolation in eradicating the "I" and the "you" that would seem to be essential components of any "I love you," comes with the claim that with full enlightenment, we realise that even metaphysical separation itself is somehow illusory.

On a different plane, one could mention the dissatisfaction with life that characterises forms of the 'Argument from Evil' posed by atheist apologists against the existence of God. Is it a coincidence that many of the philosophers who ushered in modern atheism over the last two centuries suffered the wounds of the loss or absence of significant loved ones at tender ages, and struggled to move beyond acute feelings of the perceived injustice of it all? Nietzsche, for example, who at the age of five lost his father and at the age of seven, his two year old brother, would embrace Schopenhauer's tenet in opposition to Socrates, that the purpose of life was suffering and not

[494] Somaratne, G.A. (2016) at 109-136.

learning, and later come to despise Christian morality as repressive and humiliating.[495] Voltaire, who subscribed to God as the 'intelligent designer', wrote in his poem after an earthquake had destroyed Lisbon that he would henceforth give God his respect, but reserve his love for the universe of struggling humanity, who do not seem to be protected by a benevolent God.[496, 497] (*"Je respecte mon Dieu, mais j'aime l'univers").* Vetter and Green in a study of 350 members of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, found that half of the younger atheists had lost one or both parents before the age of 20.[498]

A large number of this group also described themselves as unhappy in childhood and adolescence.

Indeed, Pargament has suggested that:

> it may be that although the majority of individuals turn to religious explanations at the boundary conditions of life, a smaller number find belief in a personal, loving God impossible to square with events such as the death of a parent at so young an age.[499, 500]

Love, at least in its aspiration for permanence and ongoing growth seems cheated by the brutal facts of life, and this can become such a scandal for our spirit that some come to reject the existence of an almighty and benevolent Deity on its account. The presumption is that God should value deep friendship at least as much as we do! We might reason that if our own love were metaphysically 'substantial', which is to say identical with our own being, so that we had the power to hold life in being, then our failure to do so on behalf of the most valuable, *vis à vis* our dearest friend would render us culpable and immoral.

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[495] Wicks, Robert (2018).
[496] Voltaire (1977) at 500 ff.
[497] Michele Novotini and Randy Peters suggest that a dynamic model can often be observed, where in the face of tragedy, the reaction is first to blame God, and then, after attempts to suppress this, move to emotionally distance oneself from God before ceasing to believe altogether. See Novotini, Michele and Peterson, Randy (2001).
[498] Vetter, G.B. & Green, M. (1932) 179-94.
[499] Pargament, K.I. (1997) at 161. John Koster takes a psycho-historical look at four great atheists, Darwin, Huxley, Nietzsche and Freud, arguing the case for a neurotic denial of God. He notes similar experiences, where each one is a weak and submissive son who ends up 'shaking off' both his 'earthly' and 'heavenly' father. See Koster, John P. (1988).
[500] Paul Vitz, himself an atheist, attempts to counter the Freudian 'projection theory' that religious belief is motivated by the desire for security, by applying the theory of absent or defective fathering to numerous historical exemplars of atheism, pointing out that Nietzsche, Russell and Sartre lost their fathers early, while Hobbes, Voltaire, Feuerbach, Freud and H.G. Wells all had abusive or weak fathers. See: Vitz, Paul C. (1999).

Both Buddhism and atheism then, derive some of their initial persuasive force from noticing the 'gap' between love and being, which is particularly pronounced as love's aspiration for permanence, which deep friendship fosters, is dashed against the brutal rocks of approaching death. Atheists sometimes boast of being courageous realists, able to look life in the eye and accept that there is nothing looking back. Having noticed that there is something half-empty in the glass of human friendship, they deny that there could exist a being who could satisfy friendship's potentially infinite thirst.

But an exclusive focus on the dashing of hope risks missing the original grounds for hope itself, and the question remains as to whether either Buddhism or atheism can take adequate account of what is positively revealed about goodness and being through the experience of deep friendship. It may well be that the experience of deep friendship, in unveiling a *telos* for the human spirit at the level of fulfilment provides the key to transcend the very limits it so poignantly highlights. To see how this might be the case, we need first to consider the second metaphysical aspect that reflection on deep friendship highlights and brings to the fore.

10.1.ii.b. Deep Friendship and the Primacy of Act over Potency

I mentioned that for Aristotle (and subsequently for Aquinas), God is approached philosophically as the being who is Pure Act.[501] Effectively, God is seen as the ground that stands behind all being-in-potentiality, drawing it ultimately into act.

Deep friendship occupies a rare place in human experience, when it comes to glimpsing the power of act to finalise potency, in that it involves the highest level of goodness available to human experience, namely personal goodness. Within a deep friendship, not only is the potentiality of each person at the level of love realised and actualised, thanks to the existent personal goodness of the other, but each person in this goodness becomes act for the other's potentiality, attracting and finalising their capacity for love, and constituting a source, at least in part, of the other's fulfilment and happiness.

[501] Aristotle, N.E., 1177a-b.

In his *Metaphysics*, after an extended exposition of the distinction between substantial being and being-that-inheres-in-another (which he calls 'accidents'), Aristotle turns to the distinction between being-in-act and being-in-potentiality, showing analogously across multiple levels of being, that being-in-potentiality is actualised and finalised by being-in-act.[502] Not only is potentiality ordered to act but it is drawn into act by what is in act. In this sense, the oak-tree is prior to the acorn and the chicken to the egg; just as the visible in act finalises our potential to see. Our capacity to know (our intellect) is able to become increasingly actualised as a 'state of knowing', due to the 'true' in reality, which grounds it as act. Similarly, our capacity to love (our will) is able to become increasingly actualised and drawn into a 'state of loving', due to the good in reality, which stands as act, grounding our loving. We have seen in Chapter III that the levels of love (instinctual, passionate, romantic, affectionate, or spiritual) are determined by different levels of goodness in act, to which they correspond (e.g., sensitive, idealised, personal), with personal goodness founding our deepest experience of love for the good, and giving rise to a love that seems potentially unlimited as it is drawn increasingly into act. Thus, as a person faces the limits of being in the person that most actuates her capacity for love, happiness and fulfilment, a series of questions concerning what grounds both life and goodness naturally emerge: Is love and therefore life something of a cruel joke that is ultimately illusory, preparing our hopes only for dashing? Or could there exist an ultimate end-good, capable of fulfilling the seemingly universal quest for happiness that friendship itself signposts? Is the happiness in deep friendship enough to render life meaningful, even if it seems destined to be abruptly and prematurely truncated, if nothing lies beyond it? Or could the ontological loneliness represented by the fact that no friend is capable of ultimately fulfilling her friend's seemingly infinite desire to love, itself point toward a deeper ontological fullness? Does the experience of deep friendship, which already awakens us to a personal goodness in our friend that we can approach but never master or possess, constitute the privileged mode by which we can approach a goodness that is necessarily beyond the human capacity to even experience, much less to master or comprehend? Regardless of the answers, which are by no means self-evident, it is clear that the experience of deep friendship has the power to raise ultimate existential questions.

[502] Aristotle, Met. ix.

It is not our aim here to establish a deductive or syllogistic 'proof for the existence of God' through deep friendship, and we cannot conceive of such a venture being successful. We simply note that, should there be a rational pathway to the discovery of an ultimate 'source' that grounds and actuates limited goodness at the level of being, final causality based on attraction to the good surely offers its best footing. Already, at the heart of the rich experience of deep human friendship, we see the power of the good to attract, well beyond its comprehensibility. Indeed, this is intrinsically linked to the human experience of the eudaimon life, in that it sustains a sense of human fulfilment that is not possible without it. Throughout this work I have noted that the power of such a good is strong enough to naturally shape the quest to be an ethical human being, drawing a person toward the love of another for her own sake, as 'another self'. As an experience, deep friendship constitutes a summit on the 'mountain range' that is human formation in personal goodness, radically advancing our notion of the good and demanding a respect for the other in her otherness that refuses assimilation or possessiveness.

Deep friendship, then, precisely for what it positively affirms and for what it reveals as limited and partial, turns out to be a vital piece of any metaphysical puzzle that poses and points to the ultimate ground of being or goodness. That piece may be summed up in the depth of the discovery of the power of goodness to attract and fulfil the human spirit.

Should it turn out that the human quest for love without limit is indeed provoked by the hidden attraction of a Friend *par excellence*, who as Pure Act gives limited goods their ultimate orientation and meaning, then there would be a new philosophical application for the poetical biblical injunction: "Taste and see that the Lord is good."[503] For one may come to 'see', via an intelligence that penetrates into goods known only through attraction, something that is in fact beyond one's immediate ability to 'taste' at the level of human experience. That is to say, what *can* be 'tasted' in the tangible goodness of a dear friend, who increasingly actuates our capacity for love and happiness, while sustaining within us an appetite for the permanence of spiritual love, draws us toward contemplating something that would otherwise remain inaccessible, namely Goodness in Pure Act, which the theist religious traditions call "God". In the purity of the love within deep friendship, one comes to see the hand of the Friend *par excellence.*[504]

[503] Psalm 33 (34).
[504] "Blessed are the pure in heart, they shall see God." Mt. 5,8.

Thus, in more ways than one, the experience of deep friendship has the potential to give new impetus to philosophical contemplation. Beyond the encouragement deep friends give each other in the pursuit of the sublime, it proves itself to be a worthy subject for both ethical and metaphysical reflection and constitutes the best bridge from the self toward an authentic attainment of the other. It takes us furthest in our respect of another 'as other', while uniting us most closely to that other, as 'another self'. Thus, as an experience, it reveals something mysterious about spiritual fulfilment, captured in the little prayer famously attributed to St. Francis of Assisi:

> O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love, for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned and it's in dying that we are born to eternal life.[505]

The notion that the one who is prepared to 'lose herself' in love for the sake of another will find herself, may be more than a pious sentiment based on a claimed source of 'revelation', for it is deeply embedded in the freeing experience of deep friendship, which possibly explains its power to readily resonate with so many.

10.2. Deep Friendship and Metaethics: A Possible Light for Natural Normativity

In Chapter I, I outlined Foot's metaethical project, which traces a consistency in the evaluative structure of goodness across living beings, be they vegetative or animal, non-rational or rational, with the purpose of providing a natural grounding for the character traits that we have come to see as virtues. I left the topic 'in the air', as Foot herself does when she wrote:

> To determine what is goodness and what defect of character, disposition and choice, we must consider what human good is and how human beings live: in other words, what kind of living thing a human being is.[506]

[505] Renoux, Christian (2001). This prayer is possibly written by Fr. Esther Bouquerel (1855-1923), the founding editor of the magazine *La Clochette*, where it first appears in print in the December 1912 issue. It was greatly popular during World War I and World War II and came to be falsely attributed to St. Francis over time.
[506] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 51.

Hursthouse develops Foot's work by seeking to articulate a clearer structure for the evaluations of ethical naturalism. Following Foot, she builds the case from the bottom up, starting with plants, specifying that they are evaluated as good in themselves with regard to (i) their parts (e.g., leaves) and (ii) their operations (including reactions) (e.g, taking in water). Further, they are evaluated as good in the light of two ends:

> They are good according to whether they are contributing, in the way characteristic of such a member of such a species, to (1) individual survival through the characteristic life span of such a member of such a species and (2) continuance of the species.[507]

Hursthouse summarises thus:

> Thus, for plants we evaluate *two* aspects – parts and operations – in relation to *two* ends. A good *x* is one that is well fitted or endowed with respect to its parts and operations; whether it is thus well fitted or endowed is determined by whether its parts and operations serve its individual survival and the continuance of its species well, in the way characteristic of *x*s.[508]

When it comes to animals capable of enjoyment and pain, Hursthouse expands the evaluation to take into account the sensitive/emotional life of which animals are capable to differing extents, incorporating emotions and actions. Here she proposes two additional ends, namely:

> … iii: characteristic freedom from pain and (where appropriate) characteristic pleasure or enjoyment, [and, for social animals] … iv: the good functioning of the social group.[509]

She summarises her position as follows:

> So… a good social animal [of one of the more sophisticated species] is one that is well fitted or endowed with respect to (i) its parts, (ii) its operations, (iii) its actions, and (iv) its desires and emotions; whether it is thus well fitted or endowed is determined by whether these four aspects well serve (1) its individual survival,

[507] Hursthouse, Rosalind (1999) at 198.
[508] Ibid.
[509] Ibid at 198-9.

> (2) the continuance of its species, (3) its characteristic freedom from pain and [its] characteristic enjoyment, and (4) the good functioning of its social group – in the ways characteristic of the species.[510]

Hursthouse distinguishes between the normal pain an animal should feel in a damaged body part, for example, which is part of its survival mechanism, and uncharacteristic pain that might be experienced in chewing, for example, which would be called a defect.[511] Whether with Hursthouse we should call "characteristic freedom from pain" an end, though, is not so clear. If something is wrong with the body to the extent that it causes severe discomfort where usually there is none, this would not imply that freedom from pain is somehow an additional 'end' for animal life. The absence of uncharacteristic pain is a sign of the healthy functioning of the animal or of the disposition of its surroundings to its life. That the animal's actions and emotions are oriented toward maintaining its healthy functioning is a reiteration of the 'end' of the survival of the individual and does not introduce new ends. Hursthouse' insight is perhaps better expressed by saying that animal sensitivity and affectivity is put at the disposal of the two biological ends that all animals (including humans) share with vegetative life.

Concerning the "good functioning of the social group," Hursthouse points out that, for example, a wolf that did not hunt with the pack would be defective, as would an animal that did not join in the characteristic play of its kind, or recognise its own kind in a characteristic way, or join in other group activities that are characteristic of its kind.[512] She suggests that the good functioning of the social group enables members to live well with respect to their other three ends.[513] There can be ways in which certain animals have characteristic emotions and desires and are in that respect healthy examples of their species. Hursthouse notes that a healthy animal should want to eat and reproduce and that the lack of these desires could indicate a defect, just as an animal who did not have characteristic fear in the face of danger may be in some sense defective. Once again, this seems closer to asserting that the emotional life of an animal and its instinctive orientation toward the characteristic cooperation exhibited by its species, may be better viewed as the *modus operandi*

[510] Ibid at 202.
[511] Ibid at 200.
[512] Ibid.
[513] Ibid at 201.

or means by which the biological ends of the survival of the individual and of the species are obtained, rather than as new ends in themselves.

Having presented higher animals as having these four ends, Hursthouse then examines the situation of human beings, who enjoy the benefits of acting from reason. Here, we note that she includes the distinctively human activity of forming loving relationships as among our characteristic enjoyments.

> Without honesty, generosity, and loyalty we would miss out on one of our most characteristic sources of enjoyment, namely loving relationships; without honesty we would be unable to co-operate or to acquire knowledge and pass it on to the next generation to build on. And it has long been a commonplace that justice and fidelity to promises enable us to function as a social, co-operating group.[514]

While not denying that some further category of ends might exist for human beings, Hursthouse is unable to find any that spring forth in the specific light of rationality.[515] Indeed, she argues that because human rational activity ushers in hundreds of *sui generis* ends, it would be a mistake to try to identify specifically human ends:

> …if ethical naturalism depends on identifying what is characteristic of human beings as a species in the way their pleasures and pains and ways of going on are characteristic of the other species it seems doomed to failure. 'The way' human beings live varies enormously from place to place, from time to time, from one to another.[516]

I believe that Hursthouse has made a hasty move here that amounts to a wrong turn. It is true that when it comes to the daily ends of human activity, there is an unmanageable multiplicity, but in terms of the specifically human behaviour that the 'sea-change' of rationality has ushered in, we have already noted that there are three broad categories of activity that, since antiquity, have been distinguished by their type of ends, namely: 'human making and artistic endeavours', 'human

[514] Ibid at 209-10.
[515] Ibid at 217-8.
[516] Ibid at 219.

acting and personal relations'; and the 'human endeavour to understand and know the truth for its own sake'.

Deep friendship and truth-seeking for its own sake in particular constitute more for human beings than can be adequately summed up by the notion of our "characteristic enjoyments" or what serves the "good functioning of our social group," even if they greatly contribute to both of these aspects.

This is particularly evident with regard to deep friendship. When only enjoyment or good social functioning are sought, friendship need not progress beyond the level of pleasure or utility, and thus, carries no particular necessity for a depth of virtue, as Aristotle notes.[517] Deep friendship can exist when the deep enjoyment that it undeniably brings does not constitute its ultimate end. Indeed, both pleasure and utility are revealed as secondary once friends discover in one another someone lovable for their own sake, capable of grounding an intention of life and a stable amical choice that prioritises their flourishing as if it were one's own.[518]

Regarding natural normativity, deep friendship emerges as the defining experience when crossing from animality to rationality. If "humans need virtues as bees need stings," it is because we need to be able to sustain this sort of friendship, not in service of biological ends, pleasure or utility, but because a new interpersonal end is in play: the flourishing of our friend for her own sake. Indeed, even the great array of *sui generis* human artistic ends come to be put at the service of cultivating a milieu that is conducive to the flourishing of these deeper human relations. Here, a mature ethical life becomes necessary and develops, and it is precisely here that we experience a greater degree of fulfilment than would otherwise be possible. What's more, when virtue is developed or exercised in order to help the other flourish, it becomes instrumental in augmenting one's own flourishing, because the flourishing human life includes, as an essential component, the life rich in the exercise of the virtues.

[517] Aristotle, N.E., 1156a-1156b.
[518] As an aside, I could add that contemplation undertaken for enjoyment would be more akin to the 'Epicurean' cat contemplating the cosy fire, than to gazing upon ultimate truths for their own sake. Contemplation is equally undermined if its main end becomes practical and situated in the good functioning of the social group. This is, of course, not to deny that truths contemplated for their own sake might have secondary applications to practical life, as I have discussed earlier.

This approach is in stark contrast with that of Stephen R. Brown, who seeks to defend ethical naturalism by arguing that Hursthouse' four ends for higher animals (including humans) are proximate ends in service of an over-arching end that he takes from post-Darwinian science, namely the continuation of certain genotypes or evolved traits (which defines reproductive success according to this view).[519] While Brown does not find this end to be 'good in itself', he adopts what he considers to be a neo-Aristotelean approach to argue that, because it is our chief end, it must be good.[520] He then proposes that the goodness of virtues is derived from the goodness of this overall end as if moral goodness can be solely assessed against biological ends. His conclusion is particularly revealing:

> In seeking a natural ground for the moral judgements of others, we have ended with something else than we might have wished for: something natural, but not clearly good, except that it is our natural end [i.e., the continuation of our DNA as reproductive success]. It might be the case that, for morality to do its job, so to speak, it must be held to be objectively grounded - even if it is not. A transcendent sort of grounding might seem to provide a deeper grounding than one immanent in transitory and contingent human nature. But this is all the naturalist has.[521]

If Hursthouse' additional ends are not high enough to capture the essence of deep friendship, Brown's reduction of their value to their effectiveness in enhancing the communication of DNA undermines the value of all friendship! The biological end put forward by Brown or the biological and social ends put forward by Hursthouse fail to grasp the unique significance of the interpersonal end implied in deep friendship that the sea-change of rationality has made possible. As rational animals, human beings do not cease to share certain biological ends with plants and non-rational animals. Yet the transmission of DNA, the survival of the individual/species, the promotion of

[519] Brown, Stephen R. (2008) at 117. Brown argues that there must be a single over-arching end, or we would be left in an unmanageable multiplicity of proximate ends. This neglects the possibility that there can be overall biological ends alongside an overarching personal or rational end. Furthermore, to situate our ultimate end in the transmission of DNA and affirm, by that fact, that it must be the basis for the assessment of goodness in us, is an inversion of Aristotle's *ergon* argument, to which it appeals. Aristotle seeks out our highest function in what is distinctively human, according to our highest faculties and would never settle for what is in fact basic to all life or the lowest common denominator, as the ultimate end of our life. Emer O'Hagen highlights similar problems in a recent review. See O'Hagen, Emer (2008).
[520] Brown, Stephen R. (2008) at 121.
[521] Ibid at 122.

good-functioning or utility, and even our characteristic enjoyments or pleasures, are not high enough ends to become the criteria for assessing the goodness of the character traits known as the virtues. At the level of proximate ends, we are capable of an infinite multitude of activities. Some of these serve our biological ends; others achieve something useful or pleasurable in the moment; and others still serve our deeper interpersonal ends. Some may indeed serve all three at once. But what is clear is that the higher ends are not contained within the lower, even if the lower ends can participate in the higher.

I propose that the experience of deep friendship is the missing piece of the puzzle for both eudaimonistic virtue ethics and natural normativity. Throughout this study, I have traced the importance of the final cause in ethical analysis. I have argued that it was the motor by which Aristotle's philosophical analysis of ethics was chiefly propelled, allowing him to distinguish the arts from the crafts in artistic endeavours, and indeed human making from ethical acting. It is what led him to affirm that *eudaimonia*, virtue, deep friendship and contemplation all function in some way as ends that we seek for their own sake. I have traced, through Philippe's analysis, the way in which close friends become true end-goods for each other, through the mutual conscious embracing of an intention of life and an amical choice, enveloped within a climate of spiritual love. Final causality allowed us to make sense of the notion that such a friend becomes another self, all the while putting the egoist objection to eudaimonistic virtue ethics to flight. At the heart of these insights is the recognition that a close friend comes to occupy the place of an end-good in our lives, orienting and shaping our voluntary activity to the point where it would be unthinkable to reduce her to a means toward other goals, be they social or biological.[522]

Careful attention to the place and structure of deep friendship in our lives goes a long way toward answering the problem posed but not answered by Foot, namely, how human beings come to an authentic prioritisation of noble and truly worthwhile goods.[523] Indeed, if ends are the first premises of practical syllogisms, as Aristotle maintains, then deep friendship itself is something of a first principle of virtuous action.[524] Just as the music of Debussy, Chopin, Mozart or Bach, call for a world of expression and technique to be realised in a masterful way, so too does each

[522] Phillipe, Marie Dominique (2005) at 195.
[523] Foot, Philippa (2001) at 110.
[524] Aristotle, N.E., 1140b.

friend, truly loved for her own sake, call for a universe of virtue and practical wisdom, if she is to be loved with real finesse and deep authenticity. And because it is within the wonderful world of reciprocity that this reality comes to fruition, what is truly fulfilling in both being loved and in loving comes within the province of each person involved.

It is my conviction that an ethics of human character and flourishing could be equally approached under the banner of ‘an ethics of deep human friendship’ as it can under ‘an ethics of virtue and practical wisdom’. Indeed, the close interrelationship between deep friendship, virtue and practical wisdom warrants a re-examination of our approach to virtue ethics, with an eye to anchoring it firmly in the human experience that most allows virtues to come into their own, while being itself central to a happy and fulfilled life.

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