



The beginnings and the history of the Cube and the Art of Loving

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To better understand the reasons that drove Chiara Lubich to spread the Art of loving, starting among the children, we focused on one of her answers: “The world needs happiness.... Do you know what real happiness is? Try it: It is that which a person who loves, loves and loves, experiences. A person who loves is happy, and who loves always, is always happy. What can you do in the world? Give happiness, teach to love. But teach who? Your little sisters, little brothers, you father, your mother, your friends, all the children you meet”.

But how did the idea of the Cube of love started? In 1997, after Chiara Lubich summarized the art of loving in six points, Roseli Weber, a pedagogue specialized for children with special psychological needs, created a cube with the six points of the art of loving, one for each side, and gave it to a group of children and preteen at the end of a weekend spent together in Switzerzalnd.

Roseli was impressed to learn the positive impressions from the very same students and their families who liked this original intuition, but most of all, she was impressed with the many beautiful experiences they were doing at home.

Since then, the cube has had a wide spread among children and the youth, and also among the adults, rapidly diffused in many countries of the world: in the school, parishes, childhood associations, becoming an instrument to play and live at the same time.

In fact, Chiara Lubich used to say: “I think the success of this cube is because it is a game and a real thing, it is both things...”.

In this way, the cube maybe considered a ludic, didactic and educational proposal designed for the children (in materials and language), but intended for everyone: the families, schools, and groups of any kind. Its main goal is to promote positive relationships in the environments that adopt it, by enhancing the pro-social skills of the children and reinforcing those of the adults.

Given its effectiveness and diffusion, the cube has spread all over the world with numerous publications, experiences and productions with different materials and languages.

According to the activity and the objectives to be achieved, the cube has been adapted into the most varied forms, such as:

- The **Sport Cube** is an instrument conceived within the Sport4Peace Project, which aims to sensitize and promote authentic values of sharing addressed to sociability in a constructive manner among young people and the youth through ludic or sports activities. In the six faces we read: “Give the best of yourself, be honest with yourself and the others; never give up, even when it is difficult; respect everyone, rejoice with the other’s success, great goals can be achieved together.”
- **The Earth Cube™** was born as a motivational tool to promote a positive behavioral changes on a personal and collective level to keep the planet healthy and sustainable. It is based on the EcoOne Project’s lifestyle, which is an international ecological/cultural initiative spread over 180 countries. How does it work? People are invited to throw the dice, read the phrase on the face up, and find a way to put it into practice.
- **The company dice** (The Company Cube) is a simple but winning idea launched by entrepreneur John Mundell, of Indianapolis (USA), as a tool that helps to live in a practical way the values that create a work environment based on the mutual respect, commitment and shared responsibility. In the faces of the dice: "Build (relationships every day!), Help (with actions, not just words!), Share (knowledge, time, yourself!), Enhance (each person, every idea!), Be the First (to help others!), Go against the current (can be friends!). "
- And of course **the cube of the peace**.

In all these initiatives, we can identify the common goals:

- To promote relational positive experiences among those who find themselves equal or not.
- To experience relations of fraternity and promote them elsewhere
- To offer an answer to an egocentric, individualistic and indifferent culture with one that values the other person, and the relational and plural dimension of the personal growth.
- To strengthen the pro-social capabilities of the children

- To promote a positive climate in the various environments which adopt the cube.

Together, all these goals flow into the project for building a more fraternal society.

To show the fruits of the art of loving put into practice using the cube, here are some experiences of the children:

- The activity "Show us and tell us" takes place at a school in Boston. Each child arrives with a different object: who a kitten, who his "computer game", who a toy ... Alessandro brings his cube of love, shows it to his companions and explains how it "works". Everyone wants a cube, to throw it in the morning and live like him!
- In a parish of Vicenza, an Italian city, small and big live the art of loving. At Christmas, two bunches of balloons bring to the sky hundreds of notes on which they wrote their acts of love. After nine hours, the balloons land in a garden in Reggio Emilia, causing great wonder, interest and joy in the family, who calls the Parish priest of Vicenza - whose number was among the cards - to learn the art of loving.

About loving the enemy:

- (Tamara, 5 years). "When my little brother hits me, I defend myself and run away. Then I come back to him and tell him: can we do something nice together? "
- (Antonio) "In the class with Antonio there is Paolo, who disturbs him and constantly jokes with him. Sometimes he also pulls some paper balls. Paolo is really boring! Antonio is really tired of him. The night before falling asleep, Antonio rolls the cube and reads: "Love the enemy!". So, in the morning, at school, he continues to love Paolo: he lends him his colored pencils, the rubber, the pen ... "

After a few days Antonio realizes that Paolo no longer disturbs him. On the way out the school, Paolo said: «Antonio, thank you, because you continued to love me even when I spited you».

About being the first to love

- (Luca, 5 years). "I was the first to love because when my mum prepared the coffee machine, I ran to turn on the gas."

About Loving each other:

- (Antoine of Luxembourg). "Gilles lives near my house. He often argued with me. I used to go tell Mom about it, and she used to give me a cake and asked me if I wanted to take it to Gilles and make peace. I used to do it and then I was very happy. The other day we bickered again, but while I was telling mother I heard the ringing at the door: it was Gilles who brought me two sweets and asked me if I wanted to make peace. "
- (Filippo, 5): "My mother and I loved each other. My mother gave me a gift and I wrote her a note. "