

Piotr Mamcarz

Faculty of Psychology
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

Imelda Chłodna-Błach

Faculty of Philosophy
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

Agata Poręba

Faculty of Psychology
The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin

Free Will in the Trap of Determinism

EXISTENTIAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS

Free will is one of the most essential attributes of the human person. It is the basis of our functioning in society, the validity of a law, politics, moral, scientific, and religious life. Making free choices is the fundamental factor that distinguishes us from animals, which are guided by instinct and impulses, and from human-programmed automatons.

However, on the issue of freedom of will, important questions have been raised since the beginning of philosophy: is a human being free to make choices or decisions? Aren't we limited by bio-physical matter, the structure of our bodies, or at least by social, and cultural rules? As Jozef Bremer notes, "The problem of free will, which is well-known from history and present in contemporary considerations, is born at the meeting point of two opposing beliefs: our subjective, personal, colloquial experience of freedom and the appeal to objective, the scientific conviction of the prevailing determinism in the world." Discussions on this topic have been going on with varying intensity since ancient times, and

there is still no generally accepted answer. Therefore, it can be said with certainty that this is one of the fundamental philosophical problems. Today, in addition to the humanities, social sciences, formal sciences, legal sciences, and natural sciences, the issue of free will is also dealt with by neuroscience (i.e. neurophilosophy, neuropsychology, neurotheology or neurolaw) and artificial intelligence sciences. This article will show two perspectives—on the one hand, the philosophical one, which explains what free will intrinsically is, points to the ultimate rationale justifying its existence, while on the other hand, the psychological one, shows the relationship between psychosomatic determinants and the unlimited noetic dimension of existence.

Thus, the purpose of this reflection is to answer the question: what is the relationship between external and internal determinants and the structures of the deep Self that have free will?

Determinism versus indeterminism

When analyzing human freedom, we are inclined to ascribe indeterminism to it, because freedom cannot be subject to coercion, i.e. external determination. If the processes of the will are to be free, they cannot be determined by anything but the will itself. John Duns Scotus took the position that the will itself is determined by nothing but the self-determining will: “for the will is determined by no other cause than itself.”¹ The will is not determined by the knowledge of the good, even if it is the highest good. Duns Scotus recognized the primacy of the will and its autonomy. In his opinion, reason takes a subservient attitude towards it. Today we can find threads of indeterminism as a manifestation of freedom in Sartre’s existentialism, as well as in Whitehead’s processualism. Indeterminism, i.e. the absence of

¹ Duns Szkot (1506), Venetiis, II d 25, q. un., n. 22. On this issue see Koszkała (2019).

all determination in action, is not freedom, but only a random way of acting, if it exists. Understanding freedom as indeterminism is an attempt to identify freedom with chance, understood precisely deterministically—as the absence of determination from within and from without. As Mieczyslaw Albert Krąpiec notes, “the exclusion in the process of action of determinism so understood is a denial of existence itself, including the existence of freedom.”² The absence of a determined source of action is, thus, the absence of action at all. For there is no determined, i.e. real, source of action. Thus, if an action is considered undetermined, it supposes a variety of sources overlapping without any determination. This is just “chance,” not a rational explanation of action, no explanation of the fact of action. And this is not freedom of action.³

An alternative interpretation of the fact of experiencing freedom is variously understood as determinism.⁴ Freedom here is merely unawareness of different forms of determination. Supporters of this position assume that the course of events in nature is guided by immutable laws, that is, the same cause, under the same conditions, causes the same effect. Because person is part of nature, he is subject to the same laws. His actions are determined by various factors: what he inherited from his ancestors, socio-economic conditions, psychological conditions, and the

² Krąpiec (2004): 20.

³ Krąpiec (1997): 32–33.

⁴ As we read in the *Universal Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, determinism (Latin *determinare*—to separate, limit, determine) is a view that accepts the dependence of later states in the universe on earlier ones (pre-determination determines succession); the basis of physical, biological, psychological and sociological theories that postulate unambiguous prediction of phenomena; in methodological terms: the principle of explaining regularities in physical, biological and psychological events, as opposed to accidentality; the opposite direction of indeterminism. See Mazierski, Zięba (2001): 511. One classification of ontological positions on free will is that which distinguishes: 1) strong determinism; 2) compatibilism; 3) libertarianism; 4) strong incompatibilism/strong indeterminism. Compatibilism and libertarianism affirm the existence of free will, whereas strong deter-

omnipotence of God.⁵ Hence we have various forms of determinism. In the history of philosophy, there are three sources of determinism: divine will (theological determinism), blind fate (fatalism), and laws of nature (natural determinism).⁶ Robert Kane points besides still to psychological and logical determinism.⁷

Determinism functions in either extreme or moderate versions. The extreme concept is associated with mechanistic materialism (La Mettrie, Holbach, Helvetius). Its adherents completely deny freedom of the will and proclaim that the human will always follow the strongest motive (the influencing cause), which consequently leads to the questioning of person's moral responsibility. Today this view is represented by behaviorism, especially as interpreted by B. Skinner, who considers human behavior "beyond freedom and dignity." In the moderate version, determinism assumes that the human will is subject to the law of causality and its acts are always conditioned by something, and whether we can speak of freedom of will depends only on the type of factors that affect decisions.⁸

Free will can be interpreted as a type of determination characteristic of the human person, but the difference from other types of determination is enormous. As Stanislaw Judycki notes: "It is impossible, starting from a given character and circumstances, to predict how a given person will act (or think) in a given situation. Determination, which is free will, does not allow either strict (logical) universalization, or even inductive universalization with the degree of strictness that we deal with in the physical world. The kind of universalization allowed by the determination of free will can be falsified in each case."⁹

minism, strong incompatibilism and strong indeterminism are positions that deny the existence of freedom. See Rojek (2019): 24.

⁵ See Pawlak (1998): 159.

⁶ Bremer (2013): 45.

⁷ See Kane (1998): 8.

⁸ Pawlak (1998): 159.

⁹ Judycki (1997): 358–359.

To summarize this part of the discussion, it should be noted that on the one hand, we are witnessing a clash between deterministic and indeterministic positions, but on the other hand, we are still aware of our freedom and our free action when we know that I can—I don't have to, I want to. It is part of the essence of free will that there is a kind of determination specific to the human person of various types of mental events and (through the body) physical events. Therefore, human freedom is not reducible to either indeterminism or conscious determinism. Therefore, to explain the nature of free action and the essence of free will, it is necessary to look at and interpret from the philosophical side the entity structure of the human person, as well as the essential factors that we are aware of in the process of decision-making, free acts. This is because the nature of free action depends on the entity structure of the human being.¹⁰

Structure of human existence

It is usually said about the freedom of the human will, but in essence, it is about the freedom of person, because “the will is only a non-self-contained element of the human structure. The concrete human being acts with reason or without reason, in a free or unfree manner. It is a person who is an entity whose authorities and properties are the reason, will, and modes of action.”¹¹ Therefore, to clarify what human free will is, it is necessary first to look, from the perspective of freedom of action, at the structure of the entity that is man, since freedom is a mode of specifically human cognitive and aspirational-desire action. Both of these aspects—cognitive and desire—must be clearly shown, so that against this background the mechanism of human choices can be shown as the mechanism of precisely human freedom. In

¹⁰ See Krapiec (2004): 24.

¹¹ Krapiec (2002): 269.

addition, the action of free will—engaged in various areas of human life—becomes clearer when we look at it from the perspective of the purpose and justifications of purposeful action.

In the analyses outlined above, we will use the method inherent in classical philosophy, which aims to explain facts given to us in pre-scientific cognition. This explanation consists in giving such rationales, the negation of which would be a possible negation of the facts, or the basic claims of the system. To analyze the phenomenon that is free will, it is necessary to look at the characteristic properties of human nature.

One of them is adventurousness. It manifests itself not only in the very structure of human being but also in the way it acts. In intellectual cognition, adventurousness manifests itself in the possibility of both true and false cognition, while in volitional pursuits it takes the form of desires that are effective and ineffective, good and bad, spontaneous and free, as well as slavish, characterized by necessity. As Krąpiec stresses, “If adventurousness is an essential feature and even a constitutive moment of human being, then this very character of adventurousness will also appear in all human acts, and especially in the specifically human act we call free choice, decision. Thus, the very structure of adventurous human beings provides the basis and proper perspective for judging our free actions and their nature.”¹²

It is with human adventurousness that the various limitations in the sphere related to the functioning of the human will are connected. It is related to the matter that person needs to act, to become aware of himself, that is, to gain self-knowledge through matter organized to the dignity of the human body. The special place where the laws of matter find their expression are the acts of human nature, through which person expresses himself/herself as a human being. Attention should be paid here to the human body, which is attributed to the spirit and its affairs. However, as organized by the human soul, matter brings a great deal of natural determinism into the realm of spirit. Person is a

¹² Krąpiec (2002): 271.

complex entity, that is, one in a multiplicity of co-constituting elements. This unity is the result of single existence, it is grounded in a single act of existence-life. This life is a single existence, related to the human soul, through which, as through form, the whole human being exists.

Since person is a single entity, all his activities are characterized by unity. This is because they originate from a single “center”, “from me”, and aim at the unity of being—“me.” Thus, on the one hand, we have a structural multiplicity, because of which volitional action is multifariously conditioned, has its free and determined sides, and is both free and unfree. However, this multiplicity should not obscure the functional unity of desire and volition. Thus, to understand the essence of “free choice” or “freedom of the will,” one must keep in mind the unity of function and the various foldings of the action taken by person, due to its structures and sources. As Krąpiec notes, “Because of these very different structures, desirous action is variously conditioned, it has its free and determined sides, and is therefore in various aspects both free and unfree since it is the action of a single being with a complex structure and at the same time an adventurous being whose beingness finds its concrete expression in acts of decision.”¹³

Turning to the issue of human will, it should be noted that it can be viewed from two aspects: 1) general—then the will can be understood as a specific way of acting, a manifestation of one’s “personality” and a manifestation of the nature of our self; 2) strictly philosophical—when we analyze the entity nature of human rational aspirations, actions, ultimately determining the formation of person.¹⁴

¹³ *Ibidem*: 274. Karol Wojtyła called the moment of the act of decision the self-determination of myself as the author of the action. It is conditioned by a cognitive process in which I experience that I possess myself within me (self-possession), and then I experience that through my will I control my acts of wanting and not wanting, and so I experience self-control. See Wojtyła (1969): 120–125.

¹⁴ Krąpiec (2002): 282.

Analyzing the will as a manifestation of human activity, cannot be reduced to some simple and primary psychic element. For it is a synthesis of the most diverse mental states: imaginations, ideas, inclinations, desires, and biological-unconscious attitudes, that is, factors that make up the characteristics of human behavior. Will, understood in this broad way, becomes an expression of a person's personality.

The will, on the other hand, in the strict sense, is a spiritual-psychic striving for the good, organizing rather than excluding various sensual-desirability tendencies that must sometimes be overcome for the sake of the intellectually perceived good.¹⁵ It is directly linked to intellectual cognition, together with which it builds the spiritual, personal face of a person. The person—through cognition and the will, which ultimately organizes itself in decisions—is constituted as a psychic personality. A will that is guided by the good of things is referred to as a “right will” (Latin: *recta voluntas*), as opposed to a depraved, or enslaved will. As such, the will reacts to the good itself but does not read its nature. For it to make a free and proper act of decision, it must be supported by reason. Reason reveals to it the nature of the good (whether it is a useful or decent good), while the improvements (virtues) gained cause the will to make the right acts of choice and become precisely the right will—a will guided by the true good of things. However, the will itself, as such, is “blind.” It is the will that has the “power” to shake us out of passivity and direct us to action. The reason, on the other hand, is that power makes it possible to read the nature of this good and present it accordingly to the will.¹⁶

Following St. Thomas Aquinas, we can distinguish between two types of acts of will attributed to an intellectually perceived good: a) naturally emergent acts; b) commanded acts. The first have the will itself as their immediate cause (these are so-called “voluntary” acts). An example of such an act is love, which can

¹⁵ *Ibidem*: 283.

¹⁶ See Maryniarczyk (1998): 199.

take different forms depending on the good toward which it aims. In addition to such acts, there are acts commanded by the will as the causal cause, and performed by other human authorities, such as reason or motor authorities.¹⁷

The will in its acts that emerge voluntarily cannot be subject to coercion, because these acts flow from an internal source, from the will itself, and remain in the will itself. Therefore, no one from the outside can command voluntary internal acts of the will. Freedom of will (freedom of action), therefore, applies only to internal decisions, that directly emerged within ourselves. No concrete goods (not even God) compel the will to necessarily want itself. This kind of freedom can therefore be defined as the will's dominion over its acts concerning any goods that are not infinite.¹⁸

Free-choice mechanism

At the outset, it should be noted that this choice is made by person, but not with all his powers. Those mental sources of action that are inherent in person as a human being take part here in the first place, and they ultimately determine the freedom of human decision. These are the acts of the intellect and will. Since the human act has primarily two characteristic features: it is conscious and performed with a sense of greater or lesser freedom, it is an act of coupling of the intellect and will as the ultimate factors determining the human face of our decisions (this does not mean, of course, that only these two psychic authorities are present in the act of deciding).¹⁹ This raises the question of whether the intellect determines our will.

The acts of intellect and will are intertwined, forming a single whole in the decision. Thus, every intellectual indication of cer-

¹⁷ Krapiec (2008): 823.

¹⁸ Krapiec (2002): 286.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*: 288.

tain contents corresponds to some type of consent, choice—the will. Reason must present to the will some entity content in practical judgment, since the will is incapable of cognition, and nothing can be willed if it is not first known. This intellectual indication of content is especially important in concrete decisions that concern the choice of means to realize a previously chosen goal. Here we are dealing with the realm of practical life, in which person makes concrete intellectual cognition to act, to liberate from himself a unique and unrepeatably act. This type of cognition in the Peripatetic tradition was called “fronetic” (prudential). Its purpose was to guide and determine to issue a decision to perform this particular act and not another. It is a cognition that corresponds to variable individual decisions, situated in the context of individual-variable circumstances.²⁰ Through the act of fronetical cognition, we determine ourselves to act. It is a practical judgment about the existence of an entity that we are to make—as its causal cause. In making a moral decision, person chooses a practical judgment, through which he determines himself to act or not to act something; through action to the real causation of something that does not yet exist.²¹

This moment of self-determination is at the same time the moment of “free choice” of some specific measure assigned to the realization of the overall goal of human life. At the moment of this choice, a cognitive act is at work, which takes the form of a practical judgment prescribing what to do and how to do it. Ultimately, then, determination always flows from the intellect. The will and our choice (the act of will) always follow the practical judgment of our intellect, determining us to act this act. Despite this, it is free, for it decides which practical judgment of the intellect is to be that final judgment—ultimately determining us. As Krapiec notes, “The will can interrupt the process of intellectual search and command: this is what I want. It chooses for itself the last judgment and determines itself by the cognitive con-

²⁰ Ibidem: 289.

²¹ Ibidem.

tent of the last practical judgment. Thus, in the case of a person who is to act, self-determination occurs. It must occur if any action is to emerge in man. It is person, however, who determines himself/herself by employing his rational powers of reason and will. And the fact that he has determined himself in this way, and not otherwise, is regarded as the moment of person's freedom."²² Everything, therefore, that man comes to know, that appears to him as good, can be rejected by him, because there is in himself a desire for the infinite good, which makes it so that, in the face of every finite good, there is no concession in the human will as to loving and choosing the good. The human will is therefore free—it can, not must, choose.

Here it is important to distinguish between two types of freedom of will: freedom of choice and freedom of action referred to in the specialized literature as *libertas specificationis* and *libertas exercitii*.²³

Freedom of choice is the lack of determination to want a strictly defined object, and therefore the lack of necessity to choose some object of desire (even God). Freedom of action, on the other hand, is the actual performance of the act of wanting something.²⁴

Existential crisis

Based on the above analyses, explaining what free will is from a philosophical point of view, let us now look at the way a person behaves—in the context of his sense of agency, and freedom—from a psychological perspective. Person's spiritual nature, in its pursuit of freedom, encounters various limitations: the first arising from the physicality of the body, and the second from psychological regularities. Person as a person has the possibility for

²² *Ibidem*: 290.

²³ See Cawdrey (2012): 95; Knuuttila (1981): 247.

²⁴ Krąpiec (2002): 286.

self-transcendence and self-transgression, which allows him to transcend his conditioning. The completion of human transcendence is a precisely free decision, accompanied by individual responsibility. Acts of decision involve the acting subject, constantly shaping the human personality.²⁵ However, many times a person is unable to take responsibility for his life, and external stimuli are the determinants of his behavior.²⁶ Hence, he succumbs to the influence by giving up his freedom in favor of schemes that reduce his life to simple, repetitive, and undemanding patterns of behavior. The person loops the decision he has made, which leads to the formation of automatisms. They are a kind of defense mechanism that blocks deep unsatisfied needs arising from the depths of existence (including the meaning of life, values, freedom, and love). Unfortunately, narrowing subjectivity to cause-and-effect (stimulus-response) systems leads to internal conflicts.²⁷ As a way of coping with the lack of coherence, the person creates a system of laws and rules that give him an illusory sense of control. As long as he sticks to the rules, he does not perceive the negative consequences of decisions that deny existential freedom. More importantly, in this arrangement, the person shifts the responsibility for negative affective states and deteriorating mental functioning to non-subjective factors. The person, instead of growing in freedom (self-determination, intrinsic control) loses it, becoming increasingly extrinsic. More and more, he has to move away from the deep Self, which interferes with the functioning of the schema-centered person, by sending messages that contradict (conflict) with the decisions currently being implemented and executed. This inner voice begins to shout louder and louder for the subject focused on his schemes and patterns to stop and resolve current conflicts, but often this voice is suppressed through so-called escape behavior (alcoholism and other addictions or risky behavior). A person loses inner coher-

²⁵ Chłodna-Błach (2020): 89.

²⁶ Ogletree and Oberle (2008): 102.

²⁷ Popielski (2008): 13.

ence, which consequently leads to the disintegration of the existential foundations that the subject has ceased to care about, dealing only with the reinforcement of mental constructs.²⁸

Unfortunately, over time, these constructs become non-functional or the person does not have the resources to continue to sustain them, hence a severe crisis occurs, the main symptom of which becomes anxiety. It has a destructive effect and is capable of destroying the strongest pattern or scheme, thus leading to the breakdown of functioning structures. The person becomes increasingly helpless, as he loses the “paper-made” tools for managing himself. He or she withdraws from life and activity in favor of trying to cope with fears and anxieties, which further intensifies the internal anxiety, leading to a feedback spiral.²⁹ In an attempt to restore stability and a sense of control, the person spends a lot of time and resources analyzing the causes of his negative state, reinforcing it all the more. Despite his many efforts, the person cannot reconstruct the patterns that were lost under the avalanche of negative psychosomatic sensations. The longer he wanders, the longer he looks for the cause in external factors, i.e. factors that are not related to his choices and responsibility.³⁰

All attempts to cope on one’s own with the onslaught of thoughts and growing conflict are ineffective, as the subject’s attention is directed toward rebuilding the mental structure based on a residual pattern, in the belief that if he recreates it, everything will return to “normal.” Over time, the “pain” associated with the accumulation of problems and the feeling of helplessness in solving them, in many cases, becomes the stimulus to seek help from specialists.³¹ Unfortunately, many times as a consequence, it leads to self-destructive behavior (including eating disorders, alcoholism, and self-harm), as well as suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts. Anxiety engulfs individual exis-

²⁸ Hoffman et al. (2015): 7–9.

²⁹ Barzeva et al. (2020): 2.

³⁰ Overholser (2005): 370–372.

³¹ Sabbadini (2019): 323–324.

tential dimensions and narrows a person's mental space causing chaos.³² Fertile ground for such an individual is the lack of meaning in life, unclear structure, and meaning of the value system, low level of spirituality, as well as low self-esteem, identity, and affective disorders. Thus, personal subjectivity demands to be freed from the influence of determinants (decision laws, patterns, schemes) that constrain it, inhibiting its growth and development.³³ The following will be a case study based on material obtained from psychotherapy sessions. Excerpts have been shared with the written permission of the client. To ensure full anonymity, personal information has been removed.

Case study

Ms. Agnes is 28 years old and works for a multinational corporation. She came forward due to a strong sense of anxiety, which, in her own words, "[...] doesn't let me live." The condition has been increasing since she was hit by a car at a pedestrian crossing (over a year ago). As a result of the accident, the lumbar part of her spine was damaged, which consequently led to paresis in her lower extremities. Although her physical condition has improved and she can walk short distances independently, she "[...] constantly thinks about what happened to me and what I lost." Unfortunately, she didn't decide to seek psychological help sooner, because, she says, she thought she could manage on her own "as usual." Because she has always loved social interaction, it became most acute for her that her condition would prevent her from interacting with other people. She even goes as far as avoiding relationships with loved ones, as a result of her fear that those she interacts with will notice her mental problems and judge her negatively. She finds that she does not accept herself in this "new situation." She expresses a strong longing for all the schemes and

³² Mamcarz (2013): 47.

³³ Frankl (2021).

patterns she has built up over the years, and as she says “[...] the accident destroyed that for me.” She spends most of her time trying to rebuild those constructs that previously gave her a sense of control and agency. Currently, she declares “[...] I don’t know what to do anymore, I keep sitting and thinking about what happened, and the longer I think the worse it gets. Still, this anxiety takes the joy out of my life. I used to be constantly with people: meetings, parties, outings, and now I don’t want to meet people.” Negative emotional experiences are also accompanied by somatic symptoms such as severe headaches, lack of appetite, difficulty sleeping, and a constant feeling of fatigue. A multi-stage medical diagnosis ruled out a physical basis for these symptoms, which also provided an argument for entering psychotherapy. In the interview, Ms. Agnes, when asked about her self-esteem, stated that she had never accepted herself because “[...] unfortunately, I don’t look like a model.” Before the accident, she accepted her body, but only conditionally, such as after beauty treatments or when men complimented her. When asked about the criteria for evaluating herself, she stated that “[...] after all, it is known how a woman should look, after all, on the Internet and on every TV channel you can see what everyone likes.” When the question was asked, “What is the meaning of your life?” she, unfortunately, could not answer for a long time. After a long moment, she replied “[...] now I don’t know,” and began to tell what goals she pursued before the accident, which de facto filled her sense of life. She was mainly focused on professional and social goals. She wanted to be promoted so that others would look up to her, she wanted a new car that would, as she admitted “[...] give me the joy of driving fast,” and to find a partner who would “[...] take care of me and take care of my needs.” On the question of values, the situation repeated itself, as when asked about her hierarchy, she could not answer. After elaborating on the question, “What is most important to you in life right now, what are you driven by?” she replied, “So that I could return to my life before the accident, which was arranged.”

It is clear that the person is stuck in the past or future temporal perspective, to which he devotes his time, attention, and

resources, while he is unable to realize his existence in the present. Added to this is a learned externality. Ms. Agnes declared that good interpersonal relations have always mattered to her, and it was important what people would say. Moreover, she was influenced by cultural and social stimuli on a cause-and-effect basis. When someone said something about her, it directly affected her cognitive-affective state: “[...] I get angry very often when someone says something about me, not the way I would like[...].” But also when things didn’t happen her way: “[...] it always has to be the way I want it to be, everyone in the company knows that[...]; [...] I’ve always followed the principle—by dead bodies to the goal (laughs).” A form of extreme perfectionism is often the basis for not accepting oneself. A person punishes himself for not meeting the exorbitant criteria constantly imposed and ultimately adopted from the socio-cultural environment.

The accident shattered the schemes and patterns built up over the years, as they do not fit what the person sees now, nor the current reality. But unfortunately, the person now has to confront all that he or she has put off until now in favor of safe functioning based on automatisms and simplified behavior patterns. The accident also triggered a turnover in the structure of the value hierarchy, which also set in motion the stagnant systems, as suddenly “health comes first.” And since the foundation for the previous patterns were other values, such as “work,” “social status,” and “car,” hence the patterns lose their applicability in this situation. The period of struggle for health and rehabilitation was the time she had to devote to herself, and thus attention was redirected from what is external to what is deep inside, resulting in the opening of a “Pandora’s box”—years of hidden, disordered existential issues and unresolved conflicts.

Despite the strong discomfort, Ms. Agnes tries to function based on partial schemes, which leads to insecurity, especially because she does not have a set direction in which she would like to go because of what she had she “received” from the environment. Very often, the person does not perceive his or her participation in shaping his or her existence and places the responsibil-

ity on the environment. Later, when experiencing a crisis or trauma (e.g., a car accident), she places the responsibility for what happens to her on the situation (e.g., a coincidence) or the people involved (e.g., the driver). In the internal narrative, it is the external factors that come to the fore, to which the subject cedes power, giving up her needs because she doesn't feel up to the discussion (e.g., low self-esteem, lack of a stabilized multidimensional identity, lack of a sense of meaning in life) or because of her unwillingness to accept responsibility for her life.

Existential psychotherapy and logotherapy methods were used to support Ms. Agnes in her recovery. The approach adopts an integral concept of the human being. Each dimension of existence requires hygiene and training to develop or sustain high performance. To work effectively with the higher dimensions, it is necessary to stabilize the work of biological systems. This can be attempted through pharmacology or by using the client's resources through systematic physical hygiene tasks. The most important in a situation of internal crisis are diet and sleep since constant stimulation of the brain (including analyzing, interpreting, operations on cognitive representations, and experiencing emotions) leads to a rapid decrease in energy. Hence, a person should stabilize the frequency of energy intake and the time at which he gets up and goes to bed. If a person does not sleep long enough and eat regularly, negative states will worsen because there will be a lack of resources to sustain the functioning of the body and mind, which can lead to self-destructive actions. Another important element in physical hygiene is to take care of physical activity, which, of course, in this as in any other case, should be selected according to the individual's capabilities. Ms. Agnes decided to start going to the swimming pool, which was consulted with the attending physician. If regularity and regularity can be introduced in this dimension, this can be interpolated to the mental dimension.

On the mental dimension, training has been proposed to focus attention, which is responsible for distributing resources and strengthening self-narration. In the first case, attentiveness

(keeping attention on one point for a certain period) is also exercised, while in the second case, the ability to formulate clear internal executive messages (meta-reflection on conscious decision-making). A key developmental task, in this case, turned out to be day plans and life goal mapping. The plans were to be prepared from day to day in written form. Ms. Agnes was to write down everything she wanted to do in the evening (she wanted to and did not have to). The deterministic approach is often characterized by the use of “must,” “must,” and “should” in the narrative. Very little space is left for wording with the word “want.” It is in this task that the person is given the tools to manage himself in time and the use of resources for the implementation of the set, specific activities. The structure of this plan is determined by the person himself, defining it in a hierarchical or chronological arrangement. Ms. Agnes adopted a chronological arrangement. The mapping of life goals takes place on the temporal line of human existence, where the person marks what he would like to achieve in the next 5-10 years, respectively. Of course, it is the person participating in therapy who defines the time frame. It is important to define each goal precisely, and then determine what specific personal actions will lead to that goal. The final stage of this training is to discover one’s own needs, set strategies for action and implement them, and learn to make the best use of one’s resources. On the spiritual dimension, the most important and difficult exercise for Ms. Agnes was answering the question about the meaning of life. In addition, she was asked to list values in a hierarchical arrangement and characterize them. An important step in defining the meaning of life was to refer to the Absolute and stabilize the relationship with this internal construct on the foundation of a logical, coherent story for Ms. Agnieszka of the origin of the world, which she described and accepts.

Ultimately, Ms. Agnes consciously began to make acts of will in the form of decisions, taking responsibility for shaping her existence. The importance of external factors (including determinants, situations, and influential persons) was minimized, and

attention and resources were redirected to the realization of one's own developmental goals, which are following the accepted sense of life, anchored in a constituted, coherent and constructive vision of the universe (theological-philosophical-anthropological concept). Negative psychosomatic symptoms subsided, including various forms of anxiety. She accepted who she was and what she experienced, and thus focused all her attention on being "here and now," rather than defining herself through the prism of the future or past.

It is worth noting here that determinants do not have enough power to change the functioning of a person as a free being if the subject person does not give them by an act of free will (conscious or unconscious) his consent. In the process of attribution and internalization, a person creates a cognitive representation, to which he gives certain qualities and characteristics, introducing particular sets of data into its structure. Such a package can be created from scratch, or in a difficult situation a person can modify currently held patterns or schemes. This applies only to mental creations built in the process of individual development. The structure of the deep Self is not so susceptible to external and internal factors, as it is often a reference point regardless of what the person builds on it. External and internal stimuli can exert a variety of influences on a person, but never without the person's participation able to determine it, and thus shape it.

Conclusions

Considering the above analyses, both from the point of view of philosophy and psychology, it is impossible to agree with the theses of extreme determinism in any edition (theological, psychological, materialistic, or naturalistic) that freedom of the will is only unconsciousness of necessity. First of all, because this freedom is experienced consciously and the act of consciousness is not unconsciousness of self. To reject the fact of freedom, one would have to negate the fact of consciousness of freedom.

Rejecting this fact, however, necessarily leads to the affirmation of absurdity. In characterizing free will, it should be noted that it is the kind of determination that is spontaneous (not passive, as in the case of physical determination), moves in the realm of self-consciousness (it is not a “blind” causal or intentional determination), in the realm of the rational (it does not function linearly, as does causal determination) and the valuable.³⁴

However, since the operation of our reason takes place in a material (not purely spiritual) environment, each of our free acts always has aspects and a “slave” side. This is because person uses sensory cognition, without which he would not be able to form concepts and judgments. The sphere of human emotions also comes into play here, which supports acts of will, manifested in the form of willingness. For this reason, our decisions are not at all perfect acts of knowing and willing, due to the material sphere being in constant motion, passing away. So we must also be aware that the same circumstances in which we made less free and more erroneous decisions will never be repeated.

In conclusion, it should be said that authentic freedom is dependent on the will of person. In other words—we are free in our actions to the measure of the person. Freedom is a way of realizing our humanity.³⁵ Thus, the role of education for freedom is so important, as well as the role of existential psychotherapy and logotherapy—that is, preparing people to make decisions with increasing independence from material determinants. Everyone by nature (under his structure of being) has the authority through which he can develop toward freedom and independence from various forms of necessity. This is done by performing conscious acts of free decision-making so that we can master the mechanism of self-determination more and more fully, and thus develop more and more fully as persons open to the Absolute (ultimate good). The separateness of the will, as the power of human rational desire, is discovered in acts of “self-determina-

³⁴ Judycki (1997): 364, 366.

³⁵ See Kowalczyk (1995): 131–142.

tion.”³⁶ It is in these acts that person decides on various actions in which he transcends (transcends) biological determinants. This manifests itself not so much in “mastering” nature, but in “elevating” it, “ennobling” (sublimating) it. Person can do this thanks to the reason and will at his disposal. It is only necessary to skillfully release and develop this power.³⁷ From a philosophical perspective, virtue ethics is meant to serve this purpose, while from a psychological perspective, therapy is based on methods that also recognize the spiritual realm of human existence.

Nevertheless, training in mere skills or working with a person focused only on his biological-psychic sphere does not yet guarantee full freedom of human actions and deeds. It must be done in the context of understanding the ultimate goal of human life, which is precisely the highest good, the Absolute. This ultimate goal becomes the main motive for our voluntary choices. It directs our actions towards development, taking into account, on the one hand, existence and personal insufficiency, and on the other hand, self-awareness of transcendence concerning the world of things and persons. Therefore, it is so important to look at the human person integrally—from the perspective of both biological, spiritual, natural, and supernatural, because only such an approach guarantees the full success of therapeutic actions. ■

Free Will in the Trap of Determinism. Existential Support for People in Crisis

SUMMARY

The article concerns the issue of free will. Two perspectives will be presented—a philosophical one, which explains what free will essentially is and points to the ultimate causes justifying its existence, and a psychological one, showing the relationship between psychosomat-

³⁶ Maryniarczyk (1998): 199–200.

³⁷ Maryniarczyk (1999): 191.

ic determinants and the unlimited noetic dimension of existence. The aim of the reflection, therefore, is to answer the question: what is the relationship between external and internal determinants and the structures of the deep 'Self' possessing free will? The article also presents a case study in which a person in an existential crisis is analyzed and provided with psychological therapy.

Keywords: free will, determinism, anxiety, self-determinism, existential crisis, logotherapy

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barzeva S. A., Richards J. S. Meeus W.H.J., Oldehinkel A.J. (2020), "The social withdrawal and social anxiety feedback loop and the role of peer victimization and acceptance in the pathways," *Development and Psychopathology* 32 (4): 1–16.
- Bremer J. (2013), *Czy wolna wola jest wolna? Kompatybilizm na tle badań interdyscyplinarnych*, Wydawnictwo WAM, Kraków.
- Cawdrey D. (2012), *A Biblical Response to Superstition, Will-Worship and the Christmas Holiday*, Puritan Publications, Coconut Creek.
- Chłodna-Błach I. (2020), *From Paideia to High Culture. A Philosophical Anthropological Approach*, Peter Lang, Berlin.
- Duns Szkot J. (1506), *Opus Oxoniense*, ed. Ph. Bagnacavallus, Venetiis.
- Frankl V. E. (2021), *Lekarz i dusza. Wprowadzenie do logoterapii i analizy egzystencjalnej*, Publisher Czarna Owca, Warsaw.
- Hoffman L., Vallejos L., Hoffman H.P., Rubin S.A. (2014). "Emotion, Relationship, and Meaning as Core Existential Practice: Evidence-Based Foundations," *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy* 45: 11–20.
- Judycki S. (1997), "Wolność i determinacja," [in:] *Wolność we współczesnej kulturze*, Redakcja Wydawnictw KUL, Lublin: 355–367.
- Kane R. (1998), *The Significance of Free Will*, Oxford University Press, Oxford–New York.

- Knuuttila S. (1981), "The Emergence of Deontic Logic in the Fourteenth Century," [in:] R. Hilpinen (ed.), *New Studies in Deontic Logic: Norms, Actions, and the Foundations of Ethics*, Reidel Publishing Company, Dordrecht.
- Koszałko M. (2019), *Natura woli, wolność a konieczność. Stanowisko Jana Dunsza Szkota na tle koncepcji św. Augustyna, św. Anzelmą z Canterbury i św. Tomasza z Akwinu*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk.
- Kowalczyk S. (1995), *Liberalizm i jego filozofia*, Katowice.
- Krąpiec M. A. (2002), *Ja-człowiek*, Wydawnictwo KUL, Lublin.
- Krąpiec M. A. (2004), *Ludzka wolność i jej granice*, Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, Lublin.
- Krąpiec M. A. (1997), "Natura ludzkiej wolności," [in:] *Wolność we współczesnej kulturze*, Redakcja Wydawnictwa KUL, Lublin: 31–39.
- Krąpiec M. A. (2008), "Wola," [in:] *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, A. Maryniarczyk (ed.), Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, vol. 9, Lublin: 822–825.
- Mamczarz P. (2013). "Prawda jako czynnik leczący w psychoterapii," *Sztuka Leczenia* 1–2: 41–50
- Maryniarczyk A., "Człowiek – istota otwarta naprawdę i dobro," [in:] *Człowiek w Kulturze*, 11 (1998): 185–201.
- Maryniarczyk A. (1999), "Wolność na miarę człowieka," [in:] *Roczniki Filozoficzne*, vol. XLVII (2): 179–196.
- Mazierski S., Zięba S. (2001), "Determinizm," [in:] *Powszechna encyklopedia filozofii*, A. Maryniarczyk (ed.), Polskie Towarzystwo Tomasza z Akwinu, vol. 2, Lublin: 511–517.
- Ogletree S. M., Oberle C.D. (2008), "The Nature, Common Usage, And Implications Of Free Will And Determinism," *Behavior and Philosophy* 36: 97–111.
- Overholser J. C. (2005), "Contemporary Psychotherapy: Promoting Personal," *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy* 35 (4): 369–376.
- Pawlak Z., "Problem wolności we współczesnej kulturze: refleksje filozoficzne," *Studia Włocławskie* 1 (1998): 157–168.
- Popielski K. (2008), "Noetyczne Jakości Życia i ich znaczenie w procesie bycia i stawania się egzystencji," *Chowanna* 1: 9–25.

Rojek K. (2019), *Wolność w kontekście determinizmu. Analiza porównawcza teorii N. Hartmanna i R. H. Kane'a*, Wyd. UMCS, Lublin.

Wojtyła K. (1969), *Osoba i czyn*, Polskie Towarzystwo Teologiczne, Kraków.