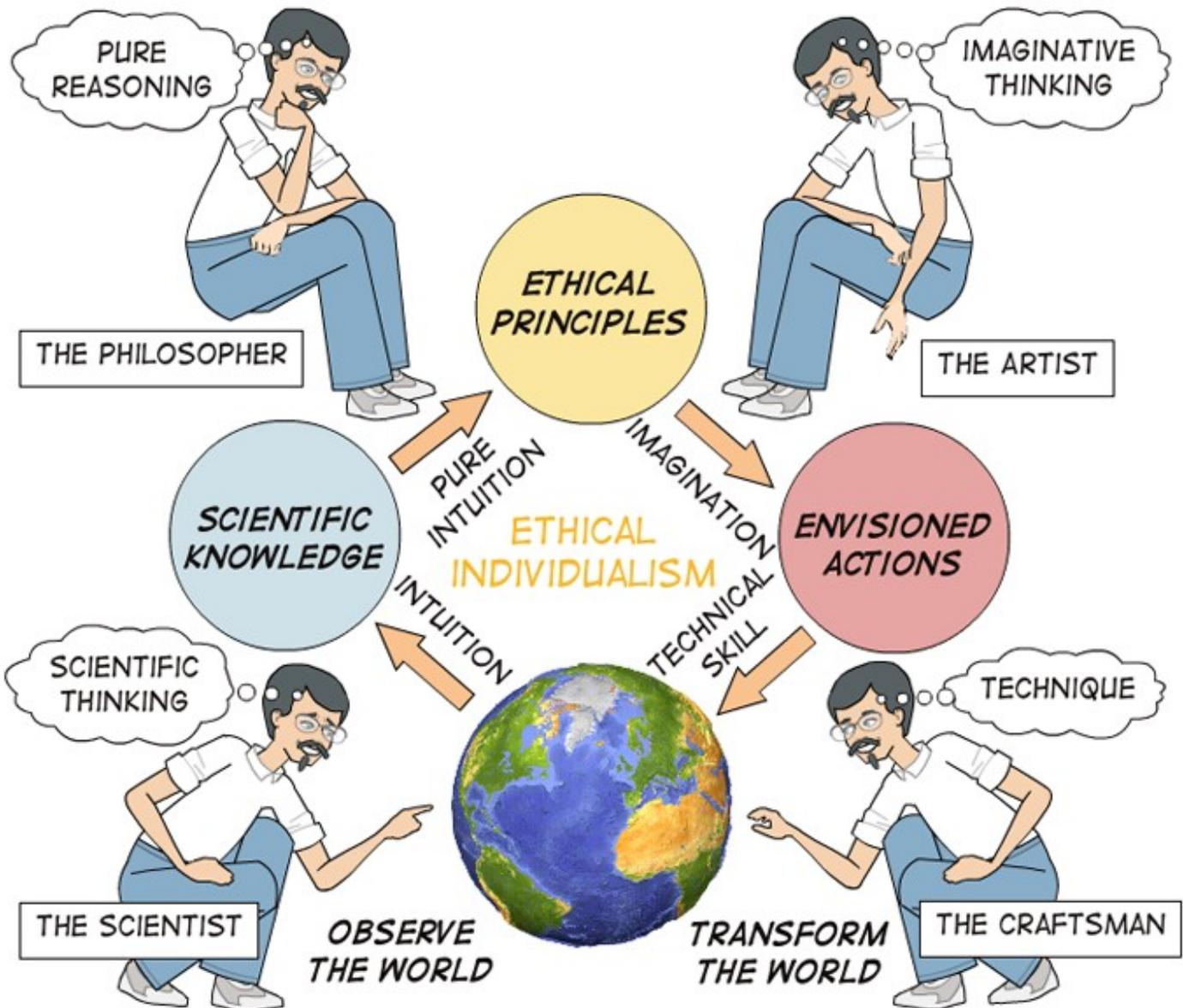


Ethical Individualism



Ethical Individualism was described by Rudolf Steiner in 1894, in his *Philosophy of Freedom*. While Rudolf Steiner was born a clairvoyant, but he was not born an Ethical Individualist. He had to train his thinking to become one, just like anybody else will have to do. Steiner developed his thinking through an education in mathematics, science and philosophy. We have plenty of knowers. And we have plenty of doers. But the one who matters the most is the knowing doer, the one who acts out of knowledge. This is the Ethical Individualist.

The Ethical Individualist feels a part of each life situation he meets. But does not allow himself to be determined by it. He acquires knowledge of a situation by using the method of science —observational analysis— to discover the laws at work.

The Ethical Individualist knows how to think scientifically.

He also uses thinking in regard to ethics.

The Ethical Individualist sees a certain value in all ethical principles.

And always asks in each case whether this or that principle is the more important.

To select an ethical principle, he uses the method of philosophy —conceptual analysis.

The philosophical method uses universalized or generalized concepts of things rather than the specific details.

This prevents outside influences from controlling the thinking.

The philosophical method works with pure concepts.

By thinking in pure concepts, knowledge is acquired by means of pure reasoning alone.

Pure reasoning intuitively selects the ethical principle to be applied.

Developing the ability to enter into pure reasoning is the key element in becoming a free thinking Ethical Individualist.

The Ethical Individualist is capable of rising to the level of pure reasoning.

At this level the conduct of the ethical individualist is not predetermined by his own character, or by an external authority.

The action is not a stereotyped one that merely follows rules, nor is it one that is automatically performed in response to an external stimulus.

Instead, it is an action determined purely and simply by its own ideal content.

The Ethical Individualist carries out a deed that originates within himself.

It is a free deed!

But before a universal ethical principle can be realized, it first needs to be imaginatively translated into a picture of a specific action.

This requires having imagination.

By creating idealistic imaginations he envisions a goal to strive for.

People who merely preach ethical codes without being able to turn them into a plan of action are morally unproductive.

The Ethical Individualist is imaginative and innovative.

The world the Ethical Individualist wishes to transform is already living according to certain principles and laws.

Such as the laws for understanding the world and its people, found in ecology, sociology, and psychology. Violating these existing laws that hold things together may cause unnecessary disruption.

To avoid disruption, the Ethical Individualist studies the general scientific knowledge in his field of work.

With this knowledge he arrives at the best way to skillfully implement his idealistic imaginations.

He transforms the world without violating the natural laws already in place.

The Ethical Individualist acquires the technical knowledge needed to successfully carry out his goal.

The Ethical Individualist strives for sublimely great ideals because they have become the content of his own being.

They are his intuitions and are the driving forces that empower his will against all obstacles.

He wants them, because the translation of his intuitions into reality is his highest pleasure.

He does not regard his ethical task as a matter of duty, but rather to follow his love for the deed.

The Ethical Individualist is completely self-empowered.

In "The Philosophy of Freedom" Steiner describes the three essential capabilities he calls ethical intuition, ethical imagination, and ethical technique.

--Ethical Intuition is the capacity to intuitively select an ethical principle for a particular life situation.

--Ethical Imagination is the capacity to imaginatively translate a general ethical principle into a specific picture of the action to be carried out.

--Ethical Technique is the capacity to transform the world according to one's ethical imaginations without violating the natural laws by which things are connected.

Those who aspire to become a self-empowered Ethical Individualist, find ways to train their mind in scientific thinking, pure reasoning, creative imagination, and acquire any technical skills needed in their field of work.