FOSTERING DIALOGUE: THE POWER OF COMMUNICATION IN CULTIVATING A COMMUNITY OF AWARENESS; ETHICAL SOLUTIONS, AND A STRONG CODE OF CONDUCT.

FOMENTAR O DIÁLOGO: O PODER DA COMUNICAÇÃO PARA CULTIVAR UMA COMUNIDADE DE CONSCIENCIALIZAÇÃO, SOLUÇÕES ÉTICAS E UM CÓDIGO DE CONDUTA SÓLIDO

Fostering Dialogue: The Power of Communication in Cultivating a Community of Awareness; Ethical Solutions, and a Strong Code of Conduct.

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Abstract:

This research paper researches the transformational power of solution journalism in promoting good change and ethical solutions in the media environment. This paper analyses how solution journalism may leverage the power of communication to develop a community of awareness and foster a robust code of conduct, drawing on studies in media psychology.

Solution journalism seeks to motivate individuals to be more prosocial in their behaviours by emphasising the notion of the common good. Solution journalism strives to promote acts of appreciation, charity, and social justice via uplifting visuals, good words, and interviews with altruistic persons. These stories encourage virtues and human greatness, urging the audience to consider and align their behaviours with these principles.

This paper investigates how media messages promoting desirable lifestyles might contribute to collective motivation. Solution journalism encourages people to value others and the environment by providing stories that promote solidarity, concern for those in need, and the common good. This shift in viewpoint encourages respect for oneself and others, resulting in a more constructive view of reality.

We will emphasise the significance of constructive journalism in fostering a community of awareness, ethical solutions, and a robust code of conduct within the mass media, thereby transforming public discourse, promoting action, and fostering a more compassionate society.

Keywords: Solution Journalism, Communication, Constructive Journalism, Ethical Solutions, Code of Conduct, Community of Awareness, Mass Media, Audience.

1   Introduction

We propose the notion of a media community of consciousness to empower media individuals and organisations to practice collective responsibility towards the public and audiences and to build a more humane world by transforming social norms. Solution journalism is an emerging pillar of the media landscape that can make people more prosocial, as Sophie H. Janicke points out in her article "How Positive Media Can Make Us Better People" (Janicke, 2016, p. 1).

At its core, solution journalism is a journalistic strategy that covers not only societal issues but also potential solutions, focusing on four core assets such as - "cover a response to a problem and how it happened; provides evidence of impact, looking for effectiveness rather than just intentions; produces insights that help others respond too; points out any limitations of the response" (Hots, 2019). Civic media, a 1980s movement that stressed the role of media in increasing civic participation and resolving communal concerns, has its roots in solutions journalism. David Bornstein and Susan Davis (2010) emphasised the importance of solution-oriented reporting in promoting positive change in their book "How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurs and the Power of New Ideas". Bornstein and Rosenberg's Solutions Journalism Network[i] has been instrumental in promoting this approach and providing tools for journalists who want to use it. Karen McIntyre, Nicole Dahmen, and Meghan Sobel, three prominent figures in the field, have made significant contributions to the concept of solutions journalism. McIntyre and Dahmen's paper, "Reporting Beyond the Problem: From Civic Journalism to Solutions Journalism" (2021) and Sobel's paper, "Solutions Journalism: Investigating and Reporting on Responses to Social Problems", provides valuable insights and practical guidance for journalists interested in incorporating solutions-oriented reporting into their work.

Our reflections focus on communication inclusivity[ii]. It proposes that media makers and audiences can mutually develop a community of awareness[iii] of consciousness, build sustainable interpersonal relationships, contribute to a healthier world, and develop strategies for better communication.

"More than 90 years have passed since the first issue of Public Opinion, and more than 70 years since the publication of the iconic works by Paul Lazarsfeld, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer on the effects of mass media[iv]. Despite this, media is still commonly regarded as all-powerful, with their works being attributed to determining how public opinion thinks and acts. However, the last few decades of research in communication sciences have shown us that the relationship between media and society can only be understood if we consider that this is a dialectical and bi-directional relationship. While the media influence the societies in which they are inserted, the reverse is equally true. The media system of a country or region is the result of the action, over time, of a broad set of economic, political, and cultural agents that influence, in a decisive way, the limits of media activity, their forms of ownership and organisation, as well as their obligations towards the communities in which they are inserted and addressed" (Ribeiro, 2017, p. 13).

Philosopher Emmanuel Kant gives two meanings to the term communication. He states it is a particular "reciprocal action between the agent and the patient". He considers that "all things, as long as they exist simultaneously, have together a universal identity, that is, a reciprocal action" (Laland, 1976, p. 121). Thus, he approaches the concept of communication as "common," defining this term as something "which belongs at the same time to various subjects." It appears that Kant finds in communication reciprocity that there is a common connection that can only be established by at least two entities.

Communication derives from the Latin word **communis**, which means **common**, and communication is established when what is transmitted has an ordinary meaning for both the sender and the receiver. The same message, with the same content and medium, will have different impacts depending on whether it is emitted by one or a transmitter, as illustrated in Figure 1. The relevant variable is the form of the message to be transmitted and the different impacts depending on the receiver.
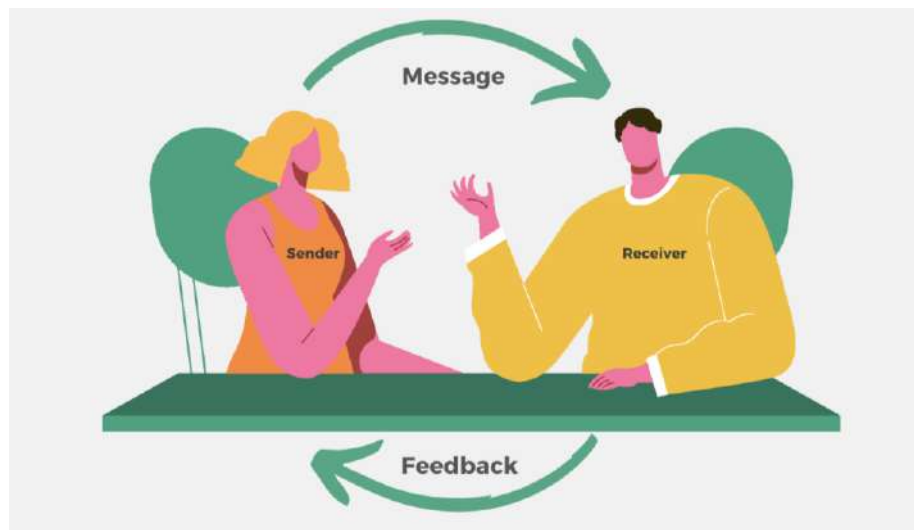
Figure. 1. Illustrating communication (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

Additionally, "models constructed by humans, therefore, are not the perfect analogue of reality; are always an interpretation of the real operated by the human mind. Moreover, since, even if alone, the individual has the possibility of dialogue, it is impossible for us not to communicate. Activity or inactivity, word, or silence all have a message value. The absence of words or observation is no exception, and we cannot say that communication happens only when it is intentional, conscious, or successful" (Teles, 1984, p. 52).

Isaac Epstein explains: "Communication involves the meaning or interpretation of messages, which will depend on the semantic dimension of the code to which it is

referred. The messages only make sense when renamed to codes; updating these occurs through these messages. The information depends only on the variety or number of possible messages covered by the code" (Epstein, 1986, p. 16).

It can be stated with precision that communication involves the transmission of messages through signs (which have the double face of the signifier and the meaning). At the same time, information depends on the organisation of signals to transmit these messages.

It should be a professional practice for journalists to understand how agents of influence and disinformation are "infiltrated" in various sectors of society so as not to fall victim to them. The main characteristics of informing should be truth or reality, communicability (clarity of language or signs and symbols used), comprehension on the part of the addressee, and informant-informed interpersonal relationship to advance humanity, understood as advancement and intellectual improvement, as illustrated in Figure 2. For communication, these elements are more accidental than essential.

Figure 2. Informing should be based on truth, communicability, understanding, and informed interpersonal interaction to advance humanity and improve intellectual development (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

It is probably because the media communicate facts and sensations, ideas, creations, passions, and affections that are not, or may not be, referred to as "media." The name "media" is not used for its supposed informative nature because it may not always provide complete information, even if based on data or events. Instead, it is informative because it refers to an existing, objective reality. Still, it is different because every reporter or journalist interprets it according to their subjective criteria, individual criteria or corresponding to the editorial line of the organ where the informant performs multiple functions.

The reported data must coincide with reality to be considered reliable and accurate. However, information is not valued like the others. At a time when our primary media, victims of memorable skids, make their examination of consciousness ... to the immense variety of potential information that devastates us all the time, we oppose a selective opening" (Bougnoux, 1995, p. 90).

As Bougnoux frames it, "the great media offer us an ideal compromise in the regulation of our relations with the world; a biased approach that prioritises entertainment over factual accuracy" (Bougnoux, 1995, p.90).

Communication stimulates direct contact and creative encounters that unite people, and information serves as a vehicle to shorten distances, bringing it closer to being one of the crucial phenomena of human life that, by its nature, consciously or unconsciously determines the lives of all peoples. We believe that its existence makes humanity more humane.

2   Communication Means Sharing[v]

The idea of sharing must be inherent, with choices, critical capacity, and autonomy, creating a shared experience or participation in the collective through various codes, systems, functions, media, and languages that allow us to interact and engage with one another. Communication is intrinsic, natural, and spontaneous to human beings. It is not limited to written or spoken sentences, signs, or codes. A kiss, a hug, and a look all communicate something. Communication is present in everything and involves an emitter, a receiver, and a channel. It is an ongoing, sensitive, and active social and individual process. As noted by Marshall McLuhan's concept of the intercommunication galaxy (McLuhan, 1967), communication is the most powerful and creative tool in the global community. It is a rhizomatic phenomenon, generating new communication platforms, media, and channels, multiplying, and becoming cultural and multifunctional.

The main objective is to promote transparency and effective communication, avoid superficial dialogue, and welcome the "Other" so they may also welcome us. This involves establishing relationships encompassing the human spirit's diverse nuances and striving to convey the world of imagination, affection, and desire. In short, we seek to understand the world of being, despite its inherent dissymmetry, and to find common ground that unites diverse attitudes under the same communicative banner (Simões, 2017, p. 38).

In addition to the above-mentioned ethical obligations, it is critical to consider the possible influence of mass media on society's values and standards. The media can affect public opinion, cultural attitudes, and legislative choices (McQuail, 2010). As a result, content creators must examine the possible repercussions of their work and ensure that it adheres to ethical norms (Ward, 2011). Mass media may help to create a more equal and inclusive society by fostering diversity, inclusion, and responsible portrayal. This necessitates a dedication to breaking down stereotypes, avoiding damaging myths, and elevating marginalised voices (Livingstone & Lunt, 2014).

Effective communication requires a strong message that engages diverse audiences and fosters interaction between the message's recipients and the agents who formulate it. To achieve this, message producers should strive to create easily understood messages with simple ideas that can be quickly absorbed like a commodity. Rather than providing detailed explanations or engaging in contradictory exercises, the message should highlight something easily acquired by the recipients, bringing them closer to the intended message. This approach promotes the transmission of agreeable messages between the sender and receiver. Journalists can create messages that are both interesting and in the public interest while still conveying their perspective. One of the primary functions of mass media is to present various perspectives on a given topic and allow the public to form their own opinions, as illustrated in Figure 3. Media makers can effectively promote social development and ethical standards by using appealing images as communication tools, drawing attention to the message within the package.

Figure 3. The media's primary responsibility is to present diverse viewpoints on a particular subject, enabling the public to draw their conclusions (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

The main objective is to promote transparency and effective communication, avoid superficial dialogue, and welcome the "Other" so they may also welcome us. This involves establishing relationships encompassing the human spirit's diverse nuances and striving to convey the world of imagination, affection, and desire. In short, we seek to understand the world of being, despite its inherent dissymmetry, and to find common ground that unites diverse attitudes under the same communicative banner (Simões, 2017, p. 38).

The paper emphasises the need for ethical consideration in the role of communication and information in the contemporary world, focusing on the actions of mass media producers, media companies, and the public, and the importance of redefining discourse.

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The focus of the message should not be on the journalists themselves but on producing content that serves the public and individuals' interests while remaining grounded. Journalists consider the specific audience when crafting a message and select words intended to be interpreted in a certain way.

Journalists must maintain a neutral, honest, accurate, and truthful posture to demonstrate credibility, as their background, personality, life history, and personal opinions can influence their choices and performance. Critical distance, fact-checking, and evidence weighing enable audiences to synthesize information and introduce corrections to subjectivity. Achieving neutrality requires dedication and a love for the truth, as achieving objectivity cannot be guaranteed.

The notion of objective journalism is often presented as either a naive utopianism, a surrender to self-advertising exaggerations imposed by marketing strategies, or a

surreptitious attempt to conceal interested subjectivism under the guise of objectivity (Correia, 1997, p. 47).

Soloski agrees that mass media makers aim to report the news objectively. Still, he notes that "objectivity does not mean that they are impartial observers of events, as social scientists do, but rather that they seek and report facts in the most impartial and balanced way possible" (Soloski, 1993, p. 47).

While it may be difficult to achieve absolute objectivity, journalists should not abandon the pursuit of truthful reporting. They should aim to inform in an impersonal, impartial, and unbiased manner, presenting events without debatable valuations or personal interpretations.

Media practitioners are guided by ethics to adhere to values of fairness, honesty, and openness, building trust and credibility among their audience (Christians et al., 2016).

The issue of objectivity, or lack thereof, has led to many criticisms of the media's ethics, with some arguing that it is used as a "strategic ritual" to validate judgments about reality (Tuchman, 1999, p. 47).

While the objectivity of research and the subjectivity of the researcher are inseparable, according to Wolton, there can be "information without interpretation of reality, and there is no interpretation of reality without the journalist's subjective work" (Wolton, 1991, p. 221). However, as Russell argues, "the desire to acquire knowledge that cannot be discussed and the certainty of the final truth tend to lead more towards arrogant rigidity and dogmatism than towards objectivity" (Rusell, 1970, p. 187). Our proposed solution is to create a community of awareness.

3   Community of Awareness

The Western world's media growth allows individuals to choose their interests based on their value system, preferences, education, and growth process. This diversification of sources allows for personal choices, ensuring a wide range of information and entertainment options. Therefore, the burden must not be placed on the nature of the supply but on human nature, as illustrated in Figure 4. It is a fact that "we" are "I", but this does not result from the heart of the offer.

Pedro Laín Entralgo considers Karl Jaspers' multiplicity of intellectual interests and his placement in the face of the concrete reality of humanity. Entralgo says,

"I discover that I am only in a strictly personal and nontransferable way — for then: I am truly myself — when I am originally arising from myself, in the act of free and unconditional decision. To be oneself, as a 'possible existence,' to be authentic, is to arise originally in freedom and freedom. In freedom, that is, breaking with all that binds me to the world. Liberty: that is, using the world to create my own being free" (Entralgo, 1968, p. 336).

Figure 4. Diversification allows personal choices based on value systems, tastes, education, and growth processes, allowing for pursuing interests regardless of supply type (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

Misrahi believes that "it is the word that orders and organises, which incites people to do, buy, and accept. The style in which it is conveyed, in which the structure of the phrase is condensed and summarised, constitutes a true linguistic creation, opposed to the development of meaning" (Misrahi, 1975, p. 89), noting that the idea of reciprocity can be lost, and that communication may no longer have its true meaning, becoming a monologue. We think that "the annihilation of being," of which Sartre speaks, can be monologue in a series of monologues where even the linguistic code can lose its true meaning. Words would not be malleable and no longer have a dialectical dimension: to understand and be understood. In this state, communication would no longer be possible. The characteristic that establishes the most important difference between man and other animals would thus be lost. In the face of the Other, concerning the world (in the multiple types of relations), the attitude of Being always contains positive and negative aspects, to which we add a nuance of subjectivity in the different connections we have with the Other. "Our moral judgment over Others is strictly subjective and relative to our individuality and desire. Each would like everyone to be like you when all are different from one another by essence" (Misrahi, 1975, pp. 126-127).

To achieve true coexistence of two autonomous and independent freedoms, we must see the Other as free and unique individuals and respect their specificities.

We live in a specific society, and as part of this "we", we gradually become aware of our identity as a free, individual, and unique being. True self-knowledge and self-respect do not require an exception where we are liberated from the actions of the "we"; it can only be an existential modification of the essential existential "we". We are both the Self and the Other: Us. Moving beyond the selfishness of the Self and reaching out to the Other is like a country crossed by a river connected by a communication bridge.

Journalism embodies our uniqueness and contributes to its practice. Journalists convey messages based on conviction, self-determination, and professional freedom while tailoring them to the audience. However, each individual in the audience interprets these messages differently, making them unique and distinct.

Figure 5. People's distinct past experiences and sensitivities impact how they receive and interpret messages. It is necessary to overcome obstacles related to the subjectivity inherent in the personality of the one who informs or the information medium in its technical and human set (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

Although we all belong to the same audience, we have different past experiences and sensitivities that affect how we receive and interpret messages. We agree with George Lakoff and Mark Johnson (2003) that words contain ideas, but we must also consider that everyone selectively processes information differently. As the creator and messenger of the information, the journalist may have different perspectives than the audience. The journalist delivers community-oriented information, not just commercially appealing content. The message should be based on an accurate understanding of the facts, the

journalist's self-awareness, and their ability to evaluate the situation. Furthermore, it is important to recognise how the message is written can have different impacts on each recipient and that tolerance and pluralism are necessary to acknowledge individual differences (Simões, 2017, p. 52).

Communication is a crucial aspect of modern society, encompassing various fields and assumptions. However, it can lead to misunderstandings and non-communication. It's essential to differentiate between normative communication, which promotes sharing and social cohesion, and functional communication, which is practical and technical in disseminating information. Despite its practical nature, functional communication is vital in modern societies.

However, due to the dominance of the global system, affective and human sharing has become impoverished, and people communicate without genuinely sharing. It would be foolish to deny the advantages of instantaneous communication today. If modern technologies allow journalists to be where the "event" is, the simpler it is technically to inform, the more difficult it is to convey effectively.

4   Language: A Precious Asset[vi]

Language occupies a fundamental place in society, institutions, and our lives. Although language is not a means of communication due to its ambiguities, redundancies, and specific traits that can hinder effective communication, it functions as the verbal expression of thought, inner or outer, and the individual's will.

Language should not be seen as an obstacle, although it can sometimes be one, like any complex concept. "In the beginning was the word," which is made possible by specific circumstances of sociability. Humans are the only beings with "by nature" the power to leave their primitive state through speech, words, and language, thus integrating themselves into the group, environment, and society.

"Humans feel the need to be understood by others. This need is initially a form of instinct used to defend themselves against a hostile environment. It is a language that is aided, a language of action composed of indicative or imitative gestures and mimetic expressions. Individuals began communicating with their bodies and other non-verbal languages, such as dance or music, to externalise their feelings and needs. It is a language that emphasises

the subject or object of one or more desires. Instantly, it can indicate the interest and need the subject demonstrates" (Teles, 1984, p. 38).

Despite its obvious limitations, the "language of the body" and traditional forms of communication used in societies have not lost their validity or importance. Gradually, as similar groups came together, languages were created, and the conventional discourse elements were developed, incorporating new words and establishing stability.

The verbal expression has made enormous progress in human communication, particularly in transmitting knowledge and developing different cultures. Language possesses powers neither technology nor other means can replace, not only in the richness of the message that a word may contain but also in its "quality of speech" and for social reasons. Much of humanity, particularly the populations of developing countries, which represent 60 to 70 per cent of the global population, transmits, receives, and conveys messages through speech.

Language, speech, and orality are valuable communication tools that promote dialogue. However, understanding their role in communication is challenging due to the diverse global languages spoken, which can be a barrier due to historical, ethnological, religious, and social factors.

Saussure emphasised that language is the most significant system of signification, but other systems like music and silent language also exist and depend on semiotic laws. The silent language uses paralinguistic elements like intonations or gestures and has an arbitrary code varying across cultures. Despite not being the only communication method, language is essential and should not be seen as a barrier but as an enrichment for humanity. However, poor knowledge and misunderstandings can still create obstacles to communication, leading to complex pre-judgments that are even more frequent and significant in the world of media (Hall, 1967, p. 113).

The quote from Hall highlights the limitations of language. Even when we use words, there is always an excess of meaning that cannot be fully expressed. This creates a space for interpretation, leading to misunderstandings if we are not careful. To overcome this, we must be open and receptive to listening to others and trying to understand their perspectives.

Rousseau's observation about the transformation of the unarmed man into the skilful man who subjugates and deceives highlights societal changes over time. While the language

may have been a tool for cooperation and mutual understanding in the past, it has also been used to deceive and manipulate others. As discussed here, integrating into society involves a conscious critique of society and an acceptance of its laws and practices.

Figure 6. Achieving a sense of integration involves recognising our interconnectedness with the world around us and understanding the various systems that shape our experience. It's a complex and multifaceted process that requires introspection and a willingness to engage with the world in new ways (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

It also requires an individual to realise that they are a part of the external world and to become aware of their codes and laws. Ultimately, integration is a personal and unique process that involves both conscious and unconscious elements.

5   Ethical Solutions

To be generous, experience positive emotions, view the world constructively and healthily, promote universal core values, and not shy away from addressing the transcendent allows for various spiritual aspects and more fruitful dimensions of human life. People in the media fulfil an important educational role, helping others make better sense of the world so they can find their place and role.

This study, like other studies in media psychology, is evolving, allowing researchers such as Oliver (Oliver et al., 2020) to believe that if people select inspiring content in different media, they are not just contributing to feeling good now but are also nourishing their instincts of compassion and kindness, values that are already basic in European culture.

The principles of deontology, professional codes, and the constraints of personal action can be useful in reinventing this new media ethics. Stephen Ward (2010) has suggested a scheme of horizontal and vertical layers, but many questions remain. The speed of information puts pressure on newsrooms to publish stories first-hand. Mass media is embracing a more partisan approach, sharing partial opinions, and expressing personal analysis freely, leading to the emergence of new types of journalism and a new definition of ethics.

Ethics is the domain of philosophy that seeks to determine the purpose of human life and societies and is a means of attaining it theoretically and practically. It aims to differentiate between good and evil, and unjust, and sustainable and unsustainable. Therefore, ethics relies on the promulgation and application of standards of good habits, such as virtues and human excellence.

The public expects journalists to offer hope and transformative solutions. Journalists can enhance their reputation by investing in solution journalism, being concerned about the impact of their news, and understanding that constructive, inspiring news can contribute to people's improvement.

Journalists should contribute to common good ethics, promoting just, harmonious, and sustainable societies and peace. They should develop openly informed strategies, aligning various goodness notions and universally accepted core values for justice.

Journalists must inevitably defend a morality of honesty, respect, and openness for people, as well as the accuracy of facts and honest analysis.

In the name of truth and human respect, the journalist, the champion of the power to question powers and ethics in the name of fundamental core values, must also question themselves. They must use the forces of their conviction and be ethically irreproachable.

Professionals working in communication and media have tremendous potential to bring about constructive societal changes through their communicative actions; as Josina Makau argues: "Communication has an extraordinary constructive potential, realised in countless contexts and ways every day around the world. [...] Through communication, the human heart expresses love, compassion, and care. Communication offers comfort, heals spiritual and emotional wounds, and fosters community building across divides. Each day, communicative acts raise consciousness, shine a light on acts of moral courage,

disrupt the forces of corruption, greed, ignorance, and tyranny, and create conditions for peaceful, just solutions to the conflict" (Makau, 2011, pp. 495-496).

This self-actualisation can occur in many ways, promoting dialogue's value for personal and societal growth. To contribute to the ethics of the common good, the formation of values, and the defence of core values given harmonious societies, it is crucial to establish ties and adopt a severe and pluralistic stance that reflects the freedom of expression and the press, with a focus on rigour and objectivity.

Journalists and media professionals must also adapt to new technologies of the modern era, prioritising their efforts in the digital world, which is a global trend and understanding.

Like all professionals, journalists are accountable for upholding ethical principles and seeking truth, even in the face of challenges and constraints. Despite editorial policies and time limitations, they must report accurately and truthfully.

The media may effectively generate consensus and promote the common good. Still, adherence to ethical values and a desire to engage in debate and discourse is necessary. Journalists must be prepared to face the whole truth and maintain their societal duties.

Figure 7. Plato's concept of a just society is fundamental in journalism. Still, sometimes journalists are like prisoners who live chained, facing a blank wall, watching projected shadows, fragments of reality and not accurate representations of the natural world (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

Plato's concept of a just society emphasises the responsibility of journalists to fulfil their duties and uphold ethical principles in their reporting. The idea of truth is sustained by critical thinking and ethical consideration, and journalists must be prepared to contribute to society's betterment.

Truth, as an endless process of contemporary inquiry and understanding of the past, requires an adjuvant component predominantly of a spiritual nature.

The nature of journalism and journalists must be oriented towards striving for perfection and realising some good, which, in Aristotle's concept, "tends in all circumstances." Like all humans, the journalist proceeds and makes choices; the central notion of ethical thinking is the notion of the good and the Just. "Defining what Good is not a moral problem that an individual can solve concerning each particular case, but a general problem of a theoretical nature that is up to the investigator of morality, that is, of ethics" (Vásquez, 1969, p. 132).

Human virtue involves rationally managing actions and incorporating senses into the scene, acquired through reason and will. Ethics focus on when to act, concerning whom, in what case, given what, and in what way. Journalists are responsible for making voluntary, virtuous, and meritorious choices.

Journalists must contribute to citizens' proper education and training to fit the situation, cultivate virtue, attend to the realities in all their aspects, and explore common sense and justice. The actions of journalists will always have a starting point to unite truth, ponderation, reasoning, and the notion of good.

> Journalists have to participate, through dialogue and seeking consensus, in the decisions and deliberations of the organisations in which they work, seeking to arrive at the notion of justice through a common denominator. Having safeguarded ethical values, one must argue, defend points of view, and submit to the dialogue regarding different conceptions of life and the constraints of universal order. This means, as Karl Otto Apel explains, that there is room for people to discuss and reach an agreement on concrete things, such as Good or Evil, Just and Unjust, Sustainable and Unsustainable, serving morality in the public space, and especially not overlooking or excluding those who are left out, like minority groups and positions, but rather trying hard to find ever more inclusive and comprehensive solutions.

6   The Code of Conduct

Deontology is the science of the duties of a particular profession. The meaning of this term is composed of two Greek words: Deon, which means "duty", "obligation", or what must be done, and logos, which means "word", "account", and "science". It refers to methodical knowledge, systematic grounded arguments and evidence, and the science of what is just and fitting for man to do, the science of duties. "A deontological code, in and of itself, always constitutes a conditioning factor of professional activity; in that, it establishes limits and demands duties" (Correia, 1997, p. 216).

Journalistic deontology faces challenges due to its diversity of codes, which are adapted to the information regimes of each country, making it a precarious and difficult field to navigate. The effect of this dispersion is greatly attenuated by the numerous convergences between the various texts concerning the dominant worries of professionals: the role of information in society, its freedom and independence, the search for truth, respect for certain limits ... The second formal difficulty is the absence of real control bodies with sanctioning powers" (Cornu, 1998, pp. 113-114).

Journalists' ethical codes emerged at the beginning of the century, recognising that journalism's repercussions extend beyond individual scope and that information must be protected and regulated. These codes aim to raise journalists' awareness of their social responsibility and demand moral, intellectual, and technical standards, promoting a free and responsible press. Kant's maxims, "act only according to a maxim such that you may at the same time want it to become a universal law," and "act in such a way that you use humanity, both in your person and in the person of any other, always and simultaneously as an end and never simply as a means," are fundamental behavioural principles for all citizens, journalists, as well as owners and (Kant, 1960). The Code of Conduct for Journalists discussed, drafted, and approved by journalists corresponds to the objective of correct practice and conduct. This objective aims to avoid the excessive use of anonymous sources, lack of rigour and accuracy, sensationalism, invasions of citizens' private lives, disrespect for people's suffering, the practice of political and ideological discrimination, use of journalistic status to promote products or entities of personal direct interest, directing transcripts of press releases or dispatches without indicating the source, and practice of extra-professional activities incompatible with journalistic activity. Such deviations are often due to "the combination of two types of crusading pressures: on the one hand, the direction and leadership to extract information that strikes competition; on the other hand, that of persons or entities outside the editorial staff who are committed to using the media according to their particular interests" (Correia, 1997, p. 162).

Journalists and communicators need to know that the code of ethics, which is consensually approved and incorporates enforcement mechanisms, is the most important professional guardian and exercise of self-regulation. Journalists can avoid becoming agents or instruments of particular interest by avoiding pressure and fulfilling their professional duties. "There are sources (and not a few...) that take advantage of the journalist's willingness to obtain first-hand information, which is why he or she is often led to accept

the rules imposed by the source. Rules often have little to do with journalistic criteria. In these cases, the journalist is manipulated by the source, who freely handles them since he or she is guaranteed that he or she will not be identified" (Correia, 1997, p. 219).

Figure 8. Reporters covering the same topic use various sources to gather information, maintain their integrity, and uphold their organisation's reputation in the public's eyes (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

In most countries, journalists are entitled to a professional title, which is a journalist's ID card that can be issued or revoked by the Journalists' Card Commission, which, in some countries, replaced the Journalists' Union. This book chapter exemplifies how the younger generation should approach journalism, although it highlights the need to be more representative of the profession. The chapter raises concerns that journalists may not be aware of their profession's code of conduct and may even be influenced by their superiors to engage in unethical behaviour. As the former president of the Deontological Council of the Journalists' Union stated, "people often prefer to please their boss instead of fulfilling their duty to provide sufficient information for responsible decision-making" (Mascarenhas, 2000, p. 10).

As we have mentioned, the code of ethics is a topic of debate since journalists are not obligated to comply legally or formally. Since the code of conduct is only signed by union members, its validity and even its name can be questioned.

If the code of ethics is understood not only as an instrument designed to establish norms of honest, professional behaviour but also as a repository of corporate rules aimed at guaranteeing, at the cost of the individual sacrifice of some journalists, the effectiveness of journalistic work, it will have slipped into the tortuous domain of opportunity and

convenience and will have lost any moral orientation or authority. "Certain journalists seem to want to make the deontological code a grossly totalitarian device that, more than just an instrument containing basic moral norms of the professional practice of the profession, to become a corporate primer to defend what has been called the 'prestige' and 'credibility' of the class" (Pina, 1996, p. 28).

The code of ethics, by taking simple rights as duties that make the class responsible, is an indispensable instrument not only for the credibility of present and future journalists but also for supporting the entire fragile and precious architecture of freedom of information in societies. Such a set of norms (there exists a diversity of denominations for the same reality: codes of ethics, codes of honour, declarations of duties and rights, codes of conduct, declarations of principles, codes of practice or rules of conduct) and the common good they serve show that deontological codes have a special meaning and relevance in the domain of professional public services and harmonious societal development.

The ethics of information, as formulated in such codes, despite having the merit of defining the relations at stake in information and clarifying the concerns of journalists with their audience, their sources, colleagues, or company, also "shares the weakness common to all statements of a moral character: it is vulnerable to declinations, according to situations and needs, which can pervert the meaning" (Cornu, 1998, p. 17).

> The very basis at stake with such codes is the issue of truth (which is never given as an absolute value, being related to the public's right to know it), freedom (which for the journalist is a preliminary to ethics), and respect for the dignity of every human person. "These fundamental values or aspects prepare the way for an authentic and consistent ethical approach. The challenge is putting ethics into practice, as a normative and critical tool, in the daily work of communication and information service" (Simões & Gassner, 2022, p. 105).

7   Conclusions

The essence of fostering dialogue embodies the transformative power of purposeful communication within a community. It intricately weaves open avenues for exchanging ideas, perspectives, and knowledge among individuals, groups, or entities, nurturing an environment where meaningful communication thrives. By creating inclusive platforms and conducive spaces, fostering dialogue transcends boundaries, manifesting in various settings from educational institutions to media channels.

This intentional practice seeks to bridge differences, resolve conflicts, and foster relationships grounded in mutual respect and cooperation. At its core, fostering dialogue

champions active listening, empathy, and inclusivity, encouraging participants to engage in respectful discourse and seek common ground. This practice cultivates heightened understanding and collaboration among individuals with varied opinions and backgrounds by embracing diverse viewpoints and facilitating open, constructive communication.

Fostering dialogue is crucial for cultivating a consciousness-focused community. While it may require sacrifices, virtuous agents find fulfilment in aligning actions with virtues. Aristotle's wisdom suggests that a virtuous community develops through education, training, and habituation of emotions and appetites. Intellectual virtues guide prudent decisions, while character virtues govern emotional responses. Habituation involves behavioural and philosophical learning, fostering a community that embodies ethical solutions, awareness, and a robust ethical code. This approach is essential for a joyless existence and a fulfilling existence.

To cultivate the virtues discussed in this book chapter, it is vital for journalists, media makers, communicators, and all individuals to understand that building a community of consciousness may require making sacrifices. However, these sacrifices should not lead to a joyless, dutiful life, as virtuous agents enjoy doing what virtue demands. According to Aristotle, a constitution and city-state should nurture virtues of excellent character dispositions of citizens through good, reasonable instruction, proper training, and habituation of appetites and emotions, essential for promoting human flourishing and living well. Intellectual virtues are necessary for gaining a deeper understanding of the world and making the right decisions, while virtues of character govern our appetites and emotions, helping us feel the right things at the correct times and respond appropriately to different situations. Habituation involves behavioural and intellectual learning and is crucial in acquiring these virtues.

In addition, we also require proper training and knowledge in ethics and practical sciences, which aim at practical wisdom (Prudence, phronesis), focusing on action rather than knowledge (Simões & Gassner, 2022, p. 116).

Masaru Emoto, a Japanese scientist, studied "The Hidden Messages in Water" (Emoto, 2004) and helped us understand "The Portal into a Different World" and the role of consciousness. Emoto urges us to evaluate our lives and guides us towards having peace and a feeling of security about our future. This understanding enables us to "purify the

water" that constitutes 70 per cent of our bodies through movement, change, and flow, as life is all about these elements (Emoto, 2004, p. 16).

Journalists should stop overloading audiences with sensationalist information, which often represents chaos, confusion, conflict, prejudice, distress, and war. Positive words can bring change by binding people together through choice, creating a universal commitment to good faith, understanding, and respect.

Figure 9. When the media broadcasts constructive messages, it can inspire a collective motivation among the audiences and encourage them to take similar actions (Simões & M. Abreu, adapted imagery, 2023).

We hope to contribute to finding a way out based on values, love, and gratitude and building effective pathways for the media of tomorrow.

Our research's next step will focus on media consumers, audiences, and the public to understand the possible effects of communication strategies presented in this work.

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[i] The non-profit organisation, the **Solutions Journalism Network,** is focused on spreading the practice of solutions journalism, which is defined as thorough, reliable reporting on solutions to societal issues. They aim to improve news media by giving more comprehensive coverage of who's doing things better and how - *solutionsjournalism.org.*

[ii] According to scholar Sara Ahmed, inclusivity is the purposeful practice of tolerating and valuing diversity. It requires identifying and validating people of all backgrounds and building egalitarian environments in which everyone feels appreciated and empowered. Inclusivity requires addressing oppressive structures and actively working to create environments where all voices are heard, and barriers are removed.

[iii] In his book "Experience and Education" (1938), famous philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey explored awareness. He emphasised the necessity of actively engaging with experiences, reflecting on them, and creating connections to facilitate proper learning. Dewey's awareness theories may also be found in his writings "How We Think" and "Art as Experience."

[iv] According to the philosopher Marshall McLuhan, mass media refers to communication and information systems that simultaneously reach many people. In his 1964 book "Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man," he coined the phrase "the medium is the message" to stress the transformative power of mass media in shaping public opinion and cultural standards.

[v] In Jurgen Habermas's work "The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere" (1962), an influential academic in the subject of communication and social theory, explored the concept of communication as sharing.

[vi] Noam Chomsky, a well-known linguist, and cognitive scientist that has constantly emphasised the value and importance of language throughout his career. Chomsky argues in his book "Language and Mind" (1968) and other works that language is a unique and necessary human skill that allows us to articulate our thoughts, communicate meaning, and participate in sophisticated kinds of communication.