

The right quantity of space

The space surrounding us is nothing but a further metaphor for an individual's basic strategy, and in this regard it is by no means a case of the more the better, or vice versa.

To a degree, the way such space is organised is no different from the way a person organises his own body. The forms of houses and cities also reflect organisations peculiar to the nervous system. So the first real question is to find out what, physiologically, the right quantity of space for ourselves is. And this goes as much for the volume of our body and breathing as for the apartment we inhabit, the city we choose to live in, and so on. We may feel suffocated in an apartment that is too small, but we could find it impossible fully to occupy one that is too big, and so have to leave some rooms uninhabited. Moreover it costs effort and money to clean and keep tidy.

The same metaphor may equally well be applied to our body: do we manage to occupy it all, to keep it well organised and in good working order? And do we have enough space to realise ourselves in it or must we force our personality to adjust to its dimensions?

Theoretically the right quantity of space – and body – is that which proves to be more functional and reassuring from the physical point of view, namely what makes us feel better as a result of it. On the other hand, if someone has undergone a psychological trauma or has risked being seen taking space from others, he quite often develops a need for broader limits: he is given little space, feels that his own natural space is being invaded and reacts by wanting to have more. For each of us the critical amount of space, namely that most suitable, effective, efficient, and harmonious for our own equilibrium, is defined also by traumas, personal history, basic needs and our own life strategy.

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