

*I(me) or Us?*



*Thesis by Jevgenijs Carenoks*

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## Introduction

*“Beauty is mysterious as well as terrible.  
God and devil are fighting there,  
and the battlefield is the heart of man”*

© Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky

*To be honest with you, dear reader, this thesis is a mean to make something clear for myself. As a man, I am looking for the way to organize my life. What does it mean to organize life? I guess I am looking for the way to understand my goals and to be empowered to reach them. Goals I choose are: To be myself, to be a good friend, family member, student, artist, college, being a Human (simple word that implies such important meaning for me: to take responsibility of this world, its future and people around), to find real happiness. This are my choices, choices that are not made on logical base, they are based on believe that I cannot put in words. Of course, I could try to define it like Deep feeling of absolute truth. There would be no question, no thesis, no need to learn how to live if I naturally would not doubt this feeling, I doubt I understand it. In this case doubting-is living life by own understanding and own organization. But what does it mean to organize life?*

*For sure it is impossible to organize life without an aim and means, important choices should be based on them, and otherwise what is the meaning of life and its beautiful happening with a man?*

*I decided not to go to deep in to the meaning of life, so... What do I think of life with goals? I think it is conscious life, meaning it is life where you are aware of what you are doing.*

*Choices in conscious life also could not be done without deep meaning, without the reason. I am looking for deep reason to live moral life. Why choose morality, and good attitude towards others? I mean as I described earlier I would like to take responsibility for others.*

*Why? Is it happiness? How is it happiness if I am not others, how morality, something that is the care of others not of you is happiness?*

*I want to understand it.*

*The doubt is there when you try to live the right way. What do I mean by the right way? There is definitely the right way described in Holly scriptures for example in bibles Commandments. I cannot answer with real explanation of why it is so, but I feel it is right. This feeling is an object of understanding itself; somehow, I can understand what is right and what is not. I can give this thoughtless expression with no difficulties. But I doubt this feeling. Have you ever doubt yourself doing right way? I guess everyone did.*

*Where does it come from? I should always reason this right way in order to be myself. Constantly reasoning makes individual more aware of him. Finding this awareness of me adds reverse feeling towards right way. My realization was that there are two parts of I (me): part that feeling doubts in a right way and a part that does want to change and believes in a right way. It is like I want to be an individual and to stay a part of society in the same time. This is a huge topic and it is dealing with free will; choices man does and is both philosophical as psychological. Most important this topic will bring out the question of “how morality could lead to happiness?”. Many artists, writers, philosophers and physiologists are dealing with this issue. As a lover of Russian classical literature, I found roots of this topic in a novel by Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky “Crime and Punishment”. In this novel main character is dealing with fundamental questions of morality in extremes. We are going to see step by step where does the main character of the novel finds borders of his free will. I will*

*answer the question” How Rodion Raskolnikov (main character) finds his happiness?” And I will leave my comments that touch or sometimes go across this topic to open it up more widely for me and you reader. I am going to jump in to the depth of the story as well as in the depth of myself, touching ideas that should be mentioned. Sometimes I will try to answer questions, sometimes I leave them open, as I am where I am and I don’t know all the answers. Dear reader, hope you are ready to go on this journey with me.*

*Briefly I am going to introduce you to the author of “Crime and Punishment”  
Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky.  
It is a normal procedure to describe someone’s past to understand him.*

### *Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky*

*Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821-1881) was a Russian novelist, journalist, short-story writer whose psychological penetration into the human soul had a profound influence on the 20th century. I think it is important to mention some moments of his biography, as he has put a lot of himself in to the novel.*

*Dostoyevsky was born in Moscow, as the second son of a former army doctor. He was educated at home and at a private school. Dostoyevsky was introduced to literature at an early age. From the age of three, he was read heroic sagas, fairy tales and legends by his nanny, Alena Frolovna, an especially influential figure in his childhood. When he was four his mother used the Bible to teach him to read and write. His parents introduced him to a wide range of literature, including Russian writers Karamzin, Pushkin and Derzhavin; Gothic fiction such as Ann Radcliffe; romantic works by Schiller and Goethe; heroic tales by Cervantes and Walter Scott; and Homer's epics. Although his father's approach to education has been described as strict and harsh. Dostoyevsky himself reports that his imagination was brought alive by nightly readings by his parents.*

*Shortly after the death of his mother in 1837 he was sent to St. Petersburg, where by desire of his father he entered the Army Engineering College. Dostoyevsky's character and interests made him an outsider among his 120 classmates: he showed bravery and a strong sense of justice, protected newcomers, aligned himself with teachers, criticized corruption among officers and helped poor farmers.*

*In 1846 he joined a group of utopian socialists. He was arrested in 1849 and sentenced to death. The sentence was commuted to imprisonment in Siberia. Dostoyevsky spent four years in hard labor and four years as a soldier in Semipalatinsk. He was living with 200 other people in small barracks. Classified as "one of the most dangerous convicts", Dostoyevsky had his hands and feet shackled until his release. He was only permitted to read his New Testament bible. In addition to his seizures, he had lost weight and was "burned" by fever.*

*This imprisonment left a big impact on author. Dostoyevsky returned to St. Petersburg in 1854 as a writer with a religious mission. He writes his major works “Crime and Punishment” (1866), “The Idiot” (1869), “Demons” (1872) and “The Brothers Karamazov” (1880). Dostoyevsky's oeuvre consists of 11 novels, three novellas, 17 short stories and numerous other works.*

*Many literary critics of that time and nowadays critics rate him as one of the greatest psychologists in world literature.*

*Literary modernism, existentialism and various schools of psychology, theology, and literary criticism have been profoundly shaped by his ideas. His works are often called prophetic because he so accurately predicted how Russia's revolutionaries would behave if they came to power.*

*Dostoyevsky's works explore human psychology in the troubled political, social, and spiritual atmosphere of 19th-century in Russia, and engage with a variety of philosophical and religious themes His works are popular and answers many questions now. Berdyaev writes in "The Philosophy of Dostoevsky", Dostoevsky has opened a new spiritual world back to Human, his spiritual depth. Dostoevsky well understood and deeply felt the need for personal, unlimited no external "necessity" irrational human freedom.*

*Dostoevsky himself admitted that he never knew limits and was giving himself opportunity to express his irrational freedom.*

*Here I want to stop for a while and share my feelings with you. Going true Dostoevsky's biography, you find that his life was full with ups and downs and difference was quite high. I can imagine he was living to extremes, completely dedicating himself to everything he was passionate about. I find it astonishing. I cannot understand what does it mean or how does it feel. I never was completely disappearing with all my being in something. His attitude does not let me go. Looks like he was never afraid of anything. I can think of it like allowing yourself be free from any outside frames, to let out everything that appears in you. In this case, it would raise strong emotions, any emotions, even the worst: anger, hate, anxiety, sadness. I see emotions as unpredictable power. I feel it is so important to be free, but to live with such powerful and unpredictable emotional force. I lose my speech when I try to imagine it, to put it in to words. What does it mean to be so unpredictable? One example I could bring, I have the same speechless feeling when I think of universe... All the planets, small and big particles moving in a cosmic dance, still unpredictable still powerful and somehow everything stays in its own place. Such a balance should exist in the person who is living to extremes. What were Dostoevsky's thoughts and believes? There should be a meaning, strong meaning for universe to exist like that, the same implies for a man living to extremes- just my thoughts. It is scary to stand this unpredictability. Extremes have no limits, or the limits of extremes are beyond of our understanding. You cannot see exactly what it is before you do it. Like love, unlimited love can bring so much good experiences; unlimited hate can bring a lot of horror and sorrow. This both feelings can switch. I know for sure I am afraid to be so unpredictable. I cannot say predictable is good for me either, till some extends I know what expects me and I feel save. But somehow it is against my nature. It is against my nature not to be free and not to be open towards everything. I can imagine in universe everything is possible and that is a part of balance it carries.*

*My compliments to Dostoevsky, as he awarded almost all of his heroes with passion, unreasonable desire for freedom and he believed that such freedom can be put to the limit, but can be put by a man himself, this limit - a deep feeling of love for another human being or for God.*

*Why is it so important to know the base to go on with the novel?*

*After reading the novel you can see the clear connection of main hero with the author. Dostoevsky has a strong personality and intelligence that was raised in him by his parents. I think parents play big role in build of personality, childhood with the sum of all impressions in it is guided by parents. My own childhood is something I still refer to when I need to choose a pattern how to act/react. Maybe to make it clearer it is like I am "I", meaning that something did not change in me from the time I remember myself. To see my connection with this thesis: I should write autobiography.*

### Me

*I am a 25 years old man from Riga, Latvia. I was raised with my mother and grandparents. Father left us when I was 4. I don't remember him. My mother was working a lot and I stayed with grandparents. My grandmother is an excellent cook and she took great care of that everyone in the family is never hungry; with grandfather we played chess and went to countryside. Later mother moved to Ireland to keep earning good money. I visited her during summer vacations. School was in a friendly neighborhood. I was living with grandparents till the end of my school. When I finished my school, I moved away from home country to Netherlands. I moved with friends and first year we were living in Arnhem. We had great time, as it was first time we were living by ourselves. Later on, alone I moved to Amsterdam and started to study at GRA. In the end of my 1<sup>st</sup> year of my education I had lonely times and was depressed. During my studies on 1,5 year I took academic year break, lived in temple, traveled around Europe with a tent. I restarted my education at GRA and now I am finishing my last studying year at Ceramic department.*

*It is difficult to write autobiography. Memories bring unpredictable feelings. Somehow, I am afraid of feelings. Feelings have control over me. It is even more uncomfortable with feelings from my memories. You know, you can feel so different about remembering the same thing, for example I might laugh of something that was not pleasant at the time it happened. It is not predictable in totally different-double way. At the other side memories are all we have. Why? Can you imagine seating in the dark room with no outside information? The only thing you can look at is your memories (as well as imagine or thought, but this both are not the topic now). I would like to raise a point, that memories are real thing, memories are not the concept or idea, it is something that has some kind of material feeling, my memories are part of me. Touching memories is impossible, but I make my moves in life from the memories or experiences I had, my memories could be a starting point-fulcrum. Putting in other words memories are the bricks in the house of our life. Everything we do in our life becomes a part of it in our memory. This moment of me going with you on this journey will become a memory as well. Witch feelings will it bring? I don't know, but hope it will be a strong and useful brick in your life.*

## Crime and Punishment

*One of the famous novels of Dostoevsky is "Crime and Punishment". The criminal story is an occasion for reflection on the social circumstances and ideas pushing the person on a crime, as well as the opportunity to show what complex "chemical" processes take place in people's souls. I would like to tell you briefly a summary of the novel that you could follow conclusions. Dear reader, to understand my view, reflections, thoughts and comments on topic of morality in connection with Dostoevsky's novel (that is a topic by itself) I am asking you to be patient and aware.*

*Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished student, conceives of himself as being an extraordinary young man and then formulates a theory whereby the extraordinary men of the world have a right to commit any crime if they have something of worth to offer humanity. To prove his theory, he murders an old, despicable pawnbroker and her half-sister who happened to come upon him suddenly. Immediately after the crime, he becomes ill and lies in his room semi-conscious for several days. When he recovers, he finds that a friend, Razumihkin, had looked for him. While he is recovering, he receives a visit from Luzhin, who is engaged to Raskolnikov's sister, Dunya. Raskolnikov insults Luzhin and sends him away because he resents Luzhin's domineering attitude toward Dunya.*

*As soon as he can Rodion Raskolnikov goes out and reads about the crime in all the newspapers of the last few days. He meets an officer from the police station and almost confesses the crime. He does go far enough in his ranting that the officer becomes suspicious. Later, he witnesses the death of Marmeladov, a minor government officer, who is struck by a carriage as he staggers across the street in a drunken stupor. Raskolnikov assists the man and leaves all money he has to the destitute widow. When he returns to his room, he finds his mother and sister who have just arrived to prepare for the wedding with Luzhin. He denounces Luzhin and refuses to allow his sister to marry such a mean and nasty man. About the same time, Svidrigailov, Dunya's former employer, arrives in town and looks up Raskolnikov and asks for a meeting with Dunya. Previously Svidrigailov had attempted to seduce Dunya and when Raskolnikov had heard of it, he naturally formed a violent dislike for the man.*

*Raskolnikov hears that the police inspector, Porfiry, is interviewing all people who had ever had any business with the old pawnbroker. Therefore, he goes for an interview and leaves thinking that the police suspect him. Since he had met Sonya Marmeladov, the daughter of Marmeladov the dead man that he had helped, he goes to her and asks her to read to him from the Bible the story of Lazarus. He feels great sympathy with Sonya (who had been forced into prostitution in order to support her family while her father drank constantly). In her suffering, she becomes a universal symbol of morality for Raskolnikov. He promises to tell her who murdered the old pawnbroker and her younger sister Lizaveta who was a friend of Sonya.*

*After another interview with Porfiry, Raskolnikov determines to confess to Sonya. He returns to her and during the confession, Svidrigailov is listening through the adjoining door. He uses this information to try to force Dunya to sleep with him. She refuses and Svidrigailov kills himself later in the night.*

*After talking with Sonya, Raskolnikov fully confesses to the murder and is sentenced to eight years in a Siberian prison. Sonya follows him, and with her help, Raskolnikov begins his regeneration.*

*The whole story is built on freedom of choice, on human relationships, experiences and attitude towards life and values in it. True the novel we go with main character (Raskolnikov) as Dostoevsky put a lot of thoughts of this young man in to the text. So that you can see life from his point of view.*

*In this novel author asks the fundamental question what are the borders of human freedom, showing rebellion like an opposite of morality. Completely different forces. There should be the way to define them. I would say rebellion stands for destruction and morality stands for maintenance. I like that Dostoevsky is writing about extremes in extreme forms it is easier to understand complete nature of both morality and rebellion. They are so different, but still connected like two ends of one stick. Both could be chosen by human as a way of living.*

*We always make choices and as I mentioned before they are made on our understanding of happiness- values. I would like to touch this topic. Let's say values are like roots of choices we make. Desire to reach certain happiness comes from understanding of values it implies. I am wandering on how to define values, how they exist, appear, change and reborn in us? I am not sure I will answer all these questions; Dear reader, let me try to touch this topic as deep as I can. I will try to understand nature of values by existing example.*

### Questioning value of Love

*I would like to reflect on how it is in me. I don't want to go in too personal, but still let's describe such a value as LOVE. In general it is a big topic so let me keep it short. "What is love?" we will shorten till "How do I love my small neighbors in this big world -animals?"*

*I have always liked animals and I guess there are not many people who can say opposite. How does this value of love projects? I like to feed, to pet them, watch them, eat them. I use to say I love them in this regard. Is this part of my love that I eat some of the animals? I say it automatically and I use this word "Love". Other actions involve joy with them, eating involves their death. I understand it is a little bit pulled together but I still do say I love them. I never asked myself a question "What kind of love is that?" ...Maybe there is something in this topic that I never payed attention to.*

*In my neighborhood- there is a children farm. It is a good place to bring children to see animals, to play with them. Anyone can come and pet pigs, chickens, rabbits and other animals, feed them and experience good feelings, but than what changes if after person comes home and eats chicken soup? It is contradictory in the way. I know I would never hurt my pet. And I guess I am not involved in the process of killing those I eat, but when I think about it. You know- I still enjoy the result of this action when I eat meat. In this regard, maybe feeling of love is not towards animals, it is towards everything that makes personality happy, towards good feelings. So, to say tiger loves antelope and hunts it all day long. Excuse me, If you tell me I am an object of love- I don't want to be "loved" this way. I don't want to call this behavior as Love. Somehow this practice of "love" is different from what do I mean by Love. The difference is in how I want to experience it.*

*How do I see Love?*

*I imagine Love as care of others with a fool passion with an understanding of what is good for them. I want to experience care and to provide it. I want to exchange this kind of Love. How come the value in practice is so different from theory or image it implies in me? I do not really know, but somehow this value transforms. As there is this gap between theory and practice. I want to know what this gap really is. Unfortunately, I cannot see it well in me. For several reasons, I am used to see myself as I am and it is difficult to reflect, I still will try but, Dear reader, let's keep examining this topic true "Crime and Punishment". Let's be sure*

*there is a gap between theory and practice as not only me but also main hero of "Crime and Punishment" have this gap. I would like to jump in to this gap of a main hero of the novel with you dear reader, to understand its nature.*

*Raskolnikov who moved to the big city with best intentions: planning study, to finish his education and to become popular, to become an important man in society, to support his mother and sister that stayed in his hometown. During his stay in the big city his life was not as he imagined, living in extreme poverty he "elevates" his ideas, he decides the moral values are wrong for him. Lead by his new theory Rodion Raskolnikov commits a terrible crime - the murder and he does it as he thinks in the name of good. Dear reader, we are going to examine his theory and try understand its transformation in to practice. Let's simply try to grasp what we understand is the cause of all his actions.*

*I think the first that you reading the novel (or short summary) are that he is a young man and as any young man he has to prove himself that he is not an empty space. As well we can see that he moved away from home and he was left alone in this big city that is new for him. Alone he should organize his life*

*Did loneliness played big role in his changes and in crime he committed?*

*I don't think the reason of crime was staying alone. Being alone is not harmful. Quiet often in our life path we stay alone. As it is considered in many traditions man even should live alone when he is ready. I am familiar with one of that kind of traditions and would like to share it in more details with you as I think reflecting on it we could understand more about Raskolnikovs actions.*

### Ashrams

*In Vedic tradition is mentioned 4 steps of life (Ashrams): Brahmacharya (student), Grihastha (householder), Vanaprastha (retired) and Sannyasa (renunciated). This ashrams resembles the logical order of living. It is so good explained knowledge that could be seen elsewhere in traditions we carry. I could see it like a natural law to some extends. We could find it reflection in Western society as well. There are kinder gardens, schools, universities, then work, than pension, only thing is not so clear in western organization of life is Sannyasa. When person the gradually reaches Sannyasa, last ashram -he leaves his family, staying alone he dedicates his life to higher meaning. When you don't have material duties all your attention could be directed to find God.*

*Ashrams are telling about age connected duties we have, as each stage of life has different goals to reach. Being a student- you must get best education, being a householder- you must support your family. Being Vanaprastha you need to take less care of your duties and responsibilities. Being Sannyasa –you need to find God. You cannot change ashram if you are not ready. As you can see in life sometimes it takes longer to learn lessons at one ashram and person stays for a second year as in school.*

*In this regard Raskolnikov is a young man, still a student, that belongs to Brahmacharya ashram. He stayed alone. He didn't finish his education and instead of trying again he decides he wants to escape his duties, his desires to support his family are strong and good and he needs to satisfy them. This idea came to him being alone; he did not share it with anyone do.*

*I can think he does not want to finish his education at university and he does not want to become a householder to make an order in his life by natural way as well. Maybe ideas, theories appear in his head because he feels something goes wrong, not by natural way. And*

*his theory is as rebellion against this feeling. So, to say his theories are a way to escape his duties. He chooses not to feel this uncomfortable feeling and solves it in a rebellion way, with revolution. I think that escape desire played some role in his behavior.*

*Sometimes I am thinking of myself that I should finish university quite some time ago and my decision to take my academic year break was a step against my duties of bramacharya. Sometimes we want to break free from duties. And somehow it is natural. But I find it interesting that I could explain it to myself as a right choice back then. I knew there is time needed for me and I just went away to prove it. And it sounds right. You know Raskolnikov also explains himself his choice to commit a crime. He brings logical reasons. One of the explanations is that he is going to help his family and to save Lizaveta from this grumpy old woman. He finds a way to deal with a crime he is going to commit, building a theory that proves he is right. Theory that he examines with committing crime. Dear reader we are going to see his idea and its influence on his life.*

### Theory and Dharma

*Raskolnikov cannot give up his ambitions and he follows a theory that gives him a “fast” way to handle his situation. “What do you think; would not one tiny crime be wiped out by thousands of good deeds?”- Raskolnikov thinks. Author describes main character as nervous and bad dressed young man. He does not see or feel what is happening with him. Raskolnikov is losing connection with reality constantly remaining thoughtful.*

*In a novel, before the crime Rodion Raskolnikov published an article, where he opened up his way of thinking. He wrote that all men are divided into ‘ordinary’ and “‘extraordinary’”. Ordinary men have to live in submission, have no right to transgress the law, because, don’t you see, they are ordinary. But extraordinary men have a right to commit any crime in a name of good deeds and to transgress the law in any way, just because they are extraordinary. In order to understand what does it means to be extraordinary we must define what kind of law it is they can break.*

*As I mentioned before I think he is looking for justification not to do his duties in regarding his ashram (position) and raises a theory to prove he is right. But how is it a law to do duties accordingly ashrams? I mean why to organize life that way?*

*It is considered that ashrams are helping person to succeed the aim of life. That’s might sound as a big topic, but it is necessary to touch it. Dear reader let me try to explain it in depth.*

*Raskolnikov breaks one of the commitments in bible- he kills a human. This is the break of the law of another kind. If we talk about responsibility this could be the most irresponsible action from point of view of morality and social life. I want to say that nobody can benefit from this action. He did not become happy; his family did not become happy and people around (society) did not become happy. He tried to benefit from this action. To benefit from others is called stealing. Let me explain, I mean stealing in a brother way. I believe stealing is not only when you take something, but when you do not give something. If your actions did not make anyone happier-you steal this possibility to do effort that others benefit from your actions. I hope it is more or less clear, it is so difficult to put it right, so I would like to share some ideas on it from perspective of Vedas. Because the point of view I cannot put in words is well*

*described in this old scripture. I will refer to public speech Alexander Hakimov about Dharma in Moscow on 9.2008*

*He describes that no matter of situation and position in life every human has Dharma. It is like a law for everyone. Dharma has many meanings and translations. It could be translated as the ultimate quality of something. For example, Dharma of salt is being salty; dharma of a tiger is to hunt. Meaning of this word implies to everything, Dharma explains nature of everything. It is considered to do your dharma means to be yourself. There is a strange conclusion if that is so: We could say Dharma of murder is to kill and it is right. If you steal –you are a rubber. And you can change your dharma for other dharma by changing your actions. But Dharma as it is cannot be changed. I hope you are still with me. I am telling you about it because this term implies to human form of life in general. According to Vedas human form of life is special and has its own dharma that is to be unlimitedly happy. You might think-Wow! Dear reader, let's try to understand and open this topic a little bit more.*

### *Unlimited happiness*

*So how happiness could be unlimited? There is no such a thing because it does not sound real. I am interested how much happiness can a person get. For example, if I eat a cake I will feel good, for some extend become happy, and I would like another piece to become happier and another one, but then after 10 cakes my stomach will hurt and I won't feel happy anymore. Believe me I tried- no success. In the way of satisfying myself I am limited. If I will be smart enough I can control myself and define what is good for me. So, happiness in general has connection with understanding what is good. I think that is important knowledge. It should imply understanding or to say knowledge about future (to know what will be the process of reaching happiness); knowledge about past (not to make the same mistakes again); and knowledge of this moment to know where you are now. What this knowledge does is that it helps to make a right choice. When you are aware of your past of this moment and what your future will be- you can choose your way to become happy. I don't want to go to fast, but on a deep level I feel this understanding of knowledge is important. When I put it in words –I can see that it has logic behind it. So, with understanding we could choose what is good for us and examine happiness on eternity.*

*Dear reader let's take another example like medicine. To prove this understanding. If I am sick- I eat medicine in order to get better. Right? Most of the time it is not tasty, but by past experience or doctor's suggestion or by manual on a package I know that if I eat it now than I will get read of my disease and become happy later. So reaching happiness could look as unpleasant process. I guess in order to make it happy process you need to understand it is process you need to go true. Than you can swallow this unpleasant pill and be happy with it. Understanding is so important. If a doctor would not tell me or I did not had knowledge about the right medicine I could eat a wrong one and it would make me feel even worse. I think the same implies for unlimited happiness. So how to find it? In order to find unlimited happiness, we need to find someone who already reached it or find what was it for us in the past or read a manual of how to become happy. Somehow like that. Off Course that are my thoughts about it and you might question it.*

*So let me open this topic even more. Raskolnikov built his own theory. By the example above we could understand that to get knowledge is important and we could see that making theories is not among 3 ways to get knowledge. If I think more than for me: theory is more*

like a question and answer that could be right but could be wrong as well. So to say *In Vedas* it is described that the process to be happy is to make everyone else happy. This sounds as the principle of high morality. I know it might sound strange, Dear reader, you might not agree with that. But let's take it for now as I will show by example that in some way it works for a main hero of the novel.

How we described earlier you can know about something you did not experience from someone, who has experienced it. In the novel, there is a hero whose name is Razumihin. To some extent I could say he is a happy man. And as he has experience being happy he could share knowledge of how to reach it. Razumihin finished education and started to work, he translates texts from one language to another. He was enthusiastic to get married and to become a great man by hard work. Razumihin from Russian language could be translated as "with wisdom". And in the novel, he had a small, but so important role- he was suggesting Raskolnikov to get better, to work a little bit. He offered to do some translations that he could not finish himself as a job to Raskolnikov. There was a reason that he offered him a job to do. And at the moment he was doing it he was compassionate to Raskolnikov, worried about him, but he was happy to help him.

Raskolnikov was not working and living on money he was receiving from his mother. He did not want to work, to change his patterns. Raskolnikov did not listen to "wisdom full". Being in his miserable situation or better to say in this miserable state of mind where he did not want to accept what his friend was telling him. He could only please himself with illusion he can do good true sorrow of someone else. So to say Raskolnikov did not accept help. I assume he did not listen to his friend, to his feelings that was not letting him to commit murder, he did not had the knowledge or understanding in what is human Dharma is or what is the way to reach it. I want to raise this point that for some extent not finding this understanding he grasp an idea of committing a crime. As a free man, he had to choose his way to live. How so ever there was a doubt in every move he was making. Again this doubt comes from the theory that is not a clear answer. That doubt could be seen when he positions himself in this world...

Raskolnikov was concerned with the question: "...Am I a louse like everybody else, or a great man. Am I a scared nonhuman or human the right to have?" Caught in the grip of his ideas, he identified himself "extraordinary". In the novel is mentioned that Napoleon Bonaparte is one of the extraordinary people. Napoleon -master of the "nature" and powerful man: no treachery, no conscience, no prejudice. "The real ruler - whom everything is permitted, smashing Toulon, make a massacre in Paris, forget an army in Egypt, spend half a million people in the Moscow campaign and finished with pun in Vilna, still he is the idol - and, therefore, everything is allowed to him." But, despite the fact that Raskolnikov justifies this idea of his theory, he couldn't put it in practice straight away; he did not immediately decide to kill. Inside the soul of the hero comes internal struggle. "Right way" and "Doubts" were in a fight. On the one hand, he was convinced of the truth of his theory, on the other hand - cannot transcend (here I mean transcended to lower degree) his own conciseness, feeling of something is wrong.

However, he believed it is the weakness that he must overcome and as human who has a freedom of will he felt a desire to use this freedom. He decided overcome his inner morality. Part of his I(me) that stands for dharma (truth) was defeated. The goals were more important than the means to reach them. And the old woman's murder is conceived as a vital test of his theory. He did it knowingly, shifted his human nature, but as if against his complete desire, as fulfilling someone else's prescription.

Can you imagine what was happening with him? It is difficult to kill, even when I imagine it someone doing it I feel bad. I lose my power and sorrow comes on me. For the main

character, it was a difficult decision. He was constantly looking for more reasons to justify his actions, even after the crime for some time he could not admit that he did wrong, he just felt more worried, he got sick and looked like he was getting crazy. Rodion Raskolnikov lost this battle and made a step against himself, against his own happiness. Could it be the aftereffects of misunderstanding of certain things, could he change his way if he knew his Dharma and knew the way to reach happiness? I guess it is not so white and black. I doubt the only reason was to prove his theory of him being extraordinary and his possibility to go over the laws. I don't think the lack of knowledge is the only reason.

Dear reader, I would like to add another point of view. What helped Raskolnikoiv to make step towards this war between morality and theory of it? Raskolnikov is a human being, social being and it is important to analyze circumstances he was trapped in.

### Power of Circumstances and Possibility to choose

Now we are going to touch topic of a social man. Man expects the understanding and recognition of his identity, he feels the need for love. Raskolnikov did not had it. He is aware of his alienation in society and experiencing it as a feeling of isolation. Raskolnikov is in a situation, where he stays alone in the city full with drinkers and rubbers, he cannot stand it. Somehow, he does not want to change and meet his old friends. The fatal feeling of injustice is in him. He transforms this feeling on outside world in hate and disgust. He starts to change his relationships with friends, he stopped take them seriously. As a Young man who was expelled from the university because of poverty he felt deducted from intelligent people. The only source of his material existence was the money sent him by his poor mother. Raskolnikov inhabits under the roof of a large house, in close and low closet, like a coffin, in complete isolation, avoiding all contacts. He has no job, only friends he had he forgot and did not pay them a visit for a long time. This condition is very irksome for our main character, and leaves a negative impact on his ailing mind. As our surrounding is a part of us. He suffocated in a stone bag of hot, stuffy and dusty town. He was crushed by St. Petersburg, the big city of "half-mad" people, where were a terrible heat and a horrible stench. It is surrounded only by beggars, alcoholics, disrupting the evil in children. Watching this city and society, Raskolnikov sees the rich oppress the poor, that life is full of poverty and despair. He is among the worst of the people. And he begins to hate and exclude himself from this society. Having less friends made him making this amount even less and less, not to act opposite.

He lives among horrible people. Dostoyevsky's Petersburg is the city of unrelieved poverty ; "magnificence has no place in it, because magnificence is external, formal abstract, cold". Dostoyevsky connects the city's problems to Raskolnikov's thoughts and actions. The crowded streets and squares, the shabby houses and taverns, the noise and stench, all are transformed by Dostoyevsky. Rodion Raskolnikov did not move from his understanding of the city or interests he had. Instead he is looped on problems he has and ideas he is doubting. His surrounding is full of it and it is easy for him to stay in this mind set. The more he hates the environment the more it becomes unpleasant to him. You can see in example, Raskolnikov hate people that follow the same theory as he is, they are not pleasant to him, and he feels the same towards his theory, so he turns his feelings of. He cannot help it, only think he can see is world true the lance he putted on.

When I think about it I can make parallel that mind is like a city. Having so many passages, streets, doors. I like to wander around the city not having exact plan. Sometimes I have this attitude in my mind. Just wandering around, imagining something, getting lost in districts that

*are far away from my peaceful home. How lost can I get sometimes in there and forget about reality. But coming back to Raskolnikov that got lost in these long and crowded streets of his mind for long period...*

*At some point Raskolnikov was not coming back after he got mothers letter, which spoke about future his sisters Dunyas weddings with Luzhin and about Dunyas humiliation in the family of Svidrigailovs (it is not clear what exactly happened). Both cases were not something he wished for his family, so he could not accept this injustice. The most of all he could not accept that he could not help them. Disappointed in life he did not see the possibility to live real life. How important to have someone around.*

*I can imagine this situation- being alone in the new city. I felt alone when I moved to Amsterdam and it was the worst feeling ever because the surrounding has such important impact on a person. I received a debit I couldn't pay in the same time. I was feeling I can not help it. All this together was pulling me down emotionally. As I mentioned before example with the cakes, there was no cake that helped me. There is no such a cake to help at all.*

*Dear reader, somewhere deep inside I needed to understand that my attitude towards what I have should be changed. What exactly should be changed I did not know. It was difficult to overcome what I thought of myself. You know it is easier to think who you might be than who you actually are. Truth is somehow less nice than our imagination of it. Such an illusion. How to come over it? How to start changing? To see truth, you need other people opinion around you. Otherwise it is not possible to learn that changes in your life have to be made- I think. Raskolnikov had no close friends that he was looking association with, who would understand him and helped him.*

*Sometimes I can do as Raskolnikov I can forget how surrounding is important. Or to say I can ignore it, go with the flow of my imagination. Everything happens itself, I take things for granted and this behavior has consequences. The less you have desire to do effort being with someone else- less people will be around.*

*When I was in my depression in Amsterdam I accidently found a video of meditation, I never did it before. After first try I felt so different and I stated to read and experiment with it more. After few days, I met a new friend, who came from Latvia to Amsterdam and he also was interested in spiritual practices. Then I met his friends and so it went. And my life changed, I started to have interesting people around me and we shared many happy moments. Sadness passed away as problems which I had. It does not mean my debits disappeared I just started to work to cover them. I started to live my life again. If I reflect on what happened back then now – I had the same problems, same position and same mentality. Only when I changed my interests –everything slowly started to change.*

*You know, when you think of something specific only- you see it everywhere. The same worked for Raskolnikov when he thought that everyone was suspecting him in a crime. Because he thought that it was like that for him. What we think and whom we associate with creates our reality.*

### Knowledge and Information

*Dear reader here I would like to bring something I found inspiring regarding the topic of changing your life. I will start from far away. As you could notice I use examples from Vedas. I would like to explain myself.*

*As I doubt everything could be considered as knowledge because of its practical use. I don't want to convince you in a religion. I just find religion highly integrated in morality. I actually think religion is like a manual for how to become happy. As in nowadays there is so much information and it could be taken as knowledge, rarely it touches the topic of unlimited happiness. I think every day amount of information multiplies. Most of the information appears in theoretical shape as to say. Let's suppose that modern scientists are creating theories in order to understand this world and its qualities. I am not sure that I can say it like that but there is difference in theory and knowledge, we discussed it earlier. Dear reader, don't understand me wrong but I am going to try and call religion –science of living because it is explaining important ideas about the world and the relationship with it from a moral way.*

*you could say that what is stated in scriptures does not have scientific proves. And I agree.. To some extend modern scientists cannot prove their theories as well. I guess we understand that these both are standing for different knowledge but still I want to pull this point that science of living is a knowledge because Religions like Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism are more than 2000 years are used in practice. I think knowledge as any theory that is stated in scientific world should be examined by time. Time could be as a definition of knowledges quality. I think only by time of practice information could become a knowledge. That is why I use scriptures as example.*

*Dear reader I would like you to go true something I found in Thora, it is a knowledge I am going to use in regard to possibly understand changes in Raskolnikovs life. I would like to bring out as much practical information I could. The most practical in this topic is to find out the way to change for our Young hero.*

#### *Four factors of the Kabbalistic concept*

*In the book of Michael Laitman I found that there are 4 components always existing in life according Thora*

*1.First one is Base, it is the primary material of creation, from which everything arose. Base has constant properties and is eternal like a spirit. For example, wheat grain rot in the ground causes a new same species wheat germ. Grain rots - outer form completely disappears, just as our body is decomposed in the ground, but the basis remains and gives a new escape, just as our soul is forced to be born with a new body to be putted on it. It is a statement and to prove it logically I can, but also i can prove it logically. The proof i would choose is my own body, it is not the same as it used to be 15 years ago. Still the body is not the same, it is more mature, bigger, stronger, I use to call myself «I», I used to say «I» 15 years ago as well. I never change even if the body is. Most probably this «I» or the soul is the base.*

*2.Second component is- Constant properties of the substrate. What does it mean? It means that grain will never take the form of other cereals, such as oats, it takes the form of wheat. Of course, you say there could be different quality! There are some changes in the amount and quality of new shoots, which depend on the environment - the soil, fertilizers, moisture, sun - however, form the basis of wheat (that is essentially the same), it does not undergo any changes.*

*3.How do you think what is the third one? It should be something that goes zooms out again. We already touched it describing second component.*

*It is The properties that change under the influence of external forces. Under the influence of*

*external factors that can change shell essence. Grain remains a grain, but its outer shape varies and depends on the environment. Additional external factors joined to the point and with it gave a new quality due to the influence of the environment. This may be the sun, earth, fertilizers, moisture, rain - with respect to the grain, or a society, group, books, teacher - with respect to the person.*

*4. Last one is Changes of the external forces. Man needs an environment that is constantly evolving and the impact on human development. A person developing affects the environment, causing it to rise, which in turn again raises the person. Thus, the person and its environment are growing in parallel.*

*These four factors determine the state of all creation. And even if a person is spending years in research, it is still not enough to be able to change or add to what is given to him by these four factors. To some extent no matter how we act or think that whatever we do, whatever we have gained - everything is only in these four factors. And any addition is only quantitative, specific to a greater or lesser degree of reason, while the quality is absolutely nothing to add. It is considered that after all these factors forced determine our character and shape thinking. Dear reader, let's put it in practical way, other words:*

- 1) The essence of being a Human- the person cannot change.*
- 2) Laws, which are changing his essence - a man cannot change.*
- 3) Dependence on external factors - a person cannot change.*
- 4) Environment, from which it is totally dependent - person can change.*

*By this theory (before we practice it for long period it is still only a theory for us) person can influence his environment, which determines his future state.*

*This statement determines what person can change and what he needs to accept. It works in a spirit of famous prayer:*

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things, I cannot change;  
courage to change the things I can;  
and wisdom to know the difference.*

*Dear reader let's look at reactions main hero gained when he stayed in his situation and did not want to change. As the main hero is not trying to change his surroundings this would help us to see the difference between how he was and how he became after he decided to change. As well we are going to examine theory we talked earlier.*

### Repercussion

*His isolation continued with the fall of his theory. There was an unforeseen circumstance - a fatal accident - the murder of Lizaveta, that came back home earlier by accident. After killing the old woman, and her sister he turned himself into the category of people that Razumihin (his old friend) don not belong, nor sister, nor mother, nor Sonya (girl he fell in love with). He cuts himself off even more from the people he knew, the people who loved him and could help. This makes it difficult for him not only to live in peace, but just to live. Therefore, spiritual struggle of the hero becomes more confusing, Raskolnikov still believes in the power of his ideas and despises himself for being weak. At the same time, he suffers from the inability to communicate with his mother and sister, thinking of them is painful, don't mention how painful is to think about the murder of Lizaveta (one he had intension to save from old lady*

money lender). It is like he made a fatal mistake and there was no escape but as admit it. In the beginning, he putted himself as Napoleon, fighting for something, in this case it was several things: proving his theory, Money, saving Lizaveta. By his theory Raskolnikov must turn away from those for whom he wishes well. He bears the thought that his theory similar to the theory Luzhin and Svidrigailov (not positive heroes of the novel, extraordinary people) he hates them, but is not eligible for this hatred. He understands that their theory is similar to his- no moral principles exist for them and for him as well.

"My mother, my sister, I love them. Why now I hate them, I cannot stand them besides me? ..." The monologue shows the horror of his situation: human nature is faced with his superhuman theory. His human nature is crying loud. He cannot stay close with his family, because of the guilt that takes over him. He was not fighting for good- that was his deep realization. It is the start for him to change something in his life.

Raskolnikov, confessed to the murder and hitting hard labor, remains in a state of alienation from the world and people around him. His thought continues to walk around the old arguments about the benefactors of mankind, can endure a crime, and he is suffering because was not strong enough and came with a confession, but in the same time he was doubting his theory from a practical way. The elevation of his life path has started.

### Doubting as it is

As it was sad in the beginning, there is a part that doubts and it is something that could bring you away from a "right way", but still it something that makes you come back. Raskolnikov started to doubt his initial ideas of rebellion. If to say doubt is a boomerang that always comes back. Doubt make you feel worried, still even doubt has its place in our life it is to come back on the right way. Nobody wants to feel worried it is an unpleasant feeling, it brings so much stress and if you do not know how to handle it or change what brings this stress- you can lose your mind.

So, this doubt was also coming to him when he met Sonya and changes started to happened to him after confessing to her. Let come a bit closer to this moment

### Elevation of Raskolnikov

Raskolnikov meets Sonia and falls in love with her. In the way as we mentioned before this principle of changing association worked out for Raskolnikov. Sonia - highly moral, deeply religious woman. Sonya understands every human being as a soul that struggles with life.

She believes in the deep inner meaning of life, she did not understand the ideas of Raskolnikov, his meaninglessness of everything that exists. She feels a deep sense of compassion towards the Raskolnikovs actions.

She sees all over the predestination of God, «...I believe that from a man nothing depends...». For her truth is - God, love, and humility. The meaning of life for her is the great power of compassion and human sympathy for the man. She is opposite of Raskolnikov, that passionately and ruthlessly judges the world because of his hot rebellious personality. Because of association with Sonya slowly changes start to take place in Raskolnikovs life. He moves to Siberia, where he is as a prisoner, Sonya left him bible that he reads, Sonya comes to see him every day.

In the end of the novel Raskolnikov realizes his crime(sin) and punishment. Dostoevsky writes: "...Standing above the river, he could not understand, he did not realize, but he felt this premonition of the future could be a start of change in his life. His future Sunday, the future of a new outlook on life..." Indeed, it is not understandable what can prevent a person,

*free being with no limits in moral sense as Raskolnikov not to think of suicide. But the fact that Raskolnikov was not able to commit suicide means that within these seemingly logical arguments of his theory perfect lie was hidden. It means he has moral values.*

*I mentioned that Raskolnikov goes from a state of alienation through the love of Sonia. When they met, he realized that he must tell Sonia he has murdered Lizaveta because he felt it is a start of deep relationship. It was hard for him, still he did it. Raskolnikov repeats his desire to tell Sonia who murdered Lizaveta. He says that the murderer aimed to kill and rob the pawnbroker and only murdered Lizaveta owing to her unexpected arrival. He still tries to prove his theory to her.*

*But Sonya asks Raskolnikov "what he has done to himself". She sees this situation differently. She understands the consciences of Raskolnikov's actions on a different level and she opens the view on his actions for him from another perspective. Sonia promises to follow Raskolnikov wherever he goes. She is in love to Raskolnikov and forgives him and loves him as a child who made mistake. At some point, she is like an angel or better to say as a mother to him. Dear reader I compare this love with mothers because I think mothers love is purest love in the world. Mother never asks something back from a child, she just gives him love. If a child asks for matches and benzene she does not give it to him, because she knows what is good for a child. She cares of child development and that is the highest expression of love. Coming back to Raskolnikov How did he changed?*

*Feeling her love and care Raskolnikov trusts her and takes her so close and listens to her as to someone who wishes him good. Having fulfilled Sonya's request to admit that he made a crime Raskolnikov slowly stated to grasp understanding, he understood that he killed himself. By association with his angel. After Understanding the moral and religious laws with impossible anguish, he feels that the violence committed by him on his moral nature, is a greater sin than the act of killing. It is a real crime. Raskolnikov became very clear and understandable after this inner conviction and it was opposite of how he was while keeping his theory alive.*

*He starts to use his freedom in different direction. Being free sometimes takes to be under your own moral principles.*

*Hero was carrying his anguish with murder. Long time he did not understand that one person is not able to change the life's of all mankind. That one should not deal with the whole system, the community, surrounding and for sure not with one greedy old woman. At some point, he had narrowed down perception of life. One should deal with himself. He became not only a prisoner in Siberia, but a prisoner of his guild.*

*Author compels Raskolnikov painfully survive the collapse of the Napoleonic dreams and abandon individualistic rebellion, changing it for patience. That was the heaviest think to do. Hero came to the threshold of a new life, which united with oppression and the suffering. He took right medicine for him.*

*New existence for Raskolnikov starts with his love for another person.*

*It is not described in the novel, but you can understand that he is going to become happy. Seeing his attitude changed you can understand where it will lead him to. Moral life was full of duties. As you can see he is getting more aware of life and of his situation, he starts to gain knowledge.*

*Dear reader, here I have to add that morality that was seeded in him by Sonya started to grow. I hope there was enough explanations and realizations that could support my point of view. What was not sad, have to stay silent till it's time for me to say it. I hope you had a good time. I am going to bring you to conclusion, dear reader.*

### Conclusion

*The common theme of Dostoevsky's works is human freedom. As a natural and social being, Raskolnikov, of course, follows his egoistic, including class-group interests, tends to personal selfish happiness and benefit. At the same time, as a person he is able to proceed from the universal moral law. Personality has an ability to follow the moral laws contrary to his natural and social conditioning. Man, in his behavior chooses to act as a free human being. Thus, to become happy man needs to know how to become happy.*

*But human freedom, as freedom to stay, rather than another kind of necessity, must inevitably include the arbitrary freedom of pure caprice, irrational, "stupid Wish" and it could go against human himself. In order to reach unlimited happiness moral values are needed. Being totally free man is losing the opportunity to become happy. The borders that morality implies are not laws from outside, this laws person should build himself from inside.*

*Sometimes arbitrariness is the condition that the moral choice is not forced, but really free is needed. Only in this case the person is responsible for his behavior, which, in fact, means to be a person. Thus, the original form of the freedom of human acts as a pure autocracy of I(me).*

*Coming to the real of life and living it. Human nature can be rationalized only by himself in the order of natural laws, that could be unpredictable. As an example of universe I have raised in the beginning.*

*But the only solvation for finding an unlimited happiness is to act accordingly to your true understanding of the world. This understanding is the only thing you can improve during your life. So you have to look for it in order to understand how to reach happiness. Not by the idea or theory that is always a theory, but by knowledge. Never ending experience of good and evil in the heart of every man will be lifelong battle. The view on necessity of changes could be transformed with association.*

*Dear reader, as an artist I would like to add something else to conclusion that I made. When we were going true the text of my thesis. You could find my connection with the topic. I don't hide it. I would like to share the feeling this topic implies in me. Most of all I would like to add how is this connected with my artist's life.*

### From artist of the thesis

*Dostoevsky is known for his existential mood. is something we did not touch so far so I will touch this a little bit here. Existentialism is a philosophical movement that opens up the idea of free will to new level. It became quiet famous after Dostoevsky, as he was the first one to ask question of how far person can go in his freedom. Being a free man I asked this question and I found that there should be a limit. Because the nature of things as law can be bent by the cost of knowledge itself. Existentialism means responsibility. In the way, it is what I am aiming for in this life. As I mentioned before I would like to take this responsibility and it is a responsibility of other kind, you cannot take it as to say. Responsibility is something you develop within yourself by putting true values and executing them in practice. I cannot state this is the only way to understand it. But it is something I come across when I try to organize my life.*

*Dear reader, Artwork I am going to create this year is connected to topic of my thesis. It has many layers. I think is worth to explain some of them. My work reflects on the emotional state of my experience of freedom. My inside on the topic of morality as on a law that has to be recreated in me. Another part of my work is a desire to create an existential experience within the viewer. I found this idea of bringing art to a level of experience last year. As if you know my work with shadows (picture is attached). I like the idea of recreating feelings I experience. The one I am going to recreate now is fear. As I have always experience fear of unpredictability. The choice of my media is ceramics and pottery as I have developed relationship with this technic. On some understanding my art piece could be seen as a monument to this act of making ceramics, struggling with ideal shape. I am looking for the way to transform it, avoiding and showing at the same time all the heaviness material brings with itself to artwork. Heaviness of a ceramic piece attracts me and scares me in the same time. I like to think I can give life/ possibility to change to this material (ceramics, not clay). Monument it is because I also feel that my path as an artist should change it direction. As an understanding of art as a tool to be popular by easy means changed in me I would like to do art for a reason of relaxation and deeper dialog within myself. I am going to recreate this playful feeling in the process of working with this piece.*

*Thank you for following me in this journey.*



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