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MORALIZING -- DISPROPORTIONATE REACTIONS -- NEEDS

Greetings, my dearest friends. God bless all of you. Blessed is this hour.

In the last lecture I discussed the importance of becoming aware of your emotions. I spoke about the neglect of emotional development in general. I now wish to focus on what you may expect to find once you allow your emotions to reach surface awareness.

Once you stop repressing your emotions, you will find not only definite individual negative emotions, such as hostility, resentment, aggressiveness, and envy, but also certain psychological conditions. It is important to recognize their existence and their significance. Are they real? Are they mature? When you ask these questions, you will understand how they breed the negative emotions about which, consciously or unconsciously, you feel so guilty.

Let me discuss three such conditions. The first is a tendency to moralize -- with yourself and therefore also with others. Often such moralizing does not appear outwardly at all. In fact, outwardly the very opposite may appear. But inward moralizing exists to some extent in all human beings. We have already discussed this in connection with the idealized self-image, and with the excessive demands and expectations you have of yourself -- and therefore of others. But we have not discussed such perfectionistic expectations from a moralistic viewpoint. For if you expect impossible standards of yourself, moralizing is a necessary result.

I wish to show you how such moralizing stifles the living spirit of the good and the true to which you aspire; how it makes you arrogant and intolerant; how it prohibits the humility of self-acceptance and therefore keeps you from liking yourself. Without this, self-respect is impossible.

All this can be found in your emotions. It is one thing to understand theories, but it is altogether different to experience these tendencies within yourself. Only exploring the depths of your emotions and clearly understanding their significance will make it possible to change these harmful tendencies. This moralizing tendency may exist in many subtle forms, even in those who appear outwardly quite rebellious against all moralizing laws and rules. Whatever words you use to describe this phenomenon, discovering its presence definitely indicates progress. I shall take up this subject in more detail now and show you connections you would not have understood before. This applies also to the other two phenomena -- disproportionate reactions, and needs -- that I shall also discuss.

What is the meaning of moralizing? Offhand you may ask, "What is wrong with it? Aren't we taught not only in religion, but in all philosophies, the importance of goodness, decency, righteousness? Shouldn't we adhere to these rules? Don't we need them? Without them, we might not be such good people." It is true, as I have so often already stated, that humanity is still far too

undeveloped to live without outer laws. When it comes to conduct, such laws serve as protection and are necessary. But it is altogether different to expect yourself to be quite free of negative impulses and emotions and to reject yourself because they exist. This nonacceptance of yourself as you still are induces you to hide what you disapprove of and causes you to have a stringent, rigid, moralizing attitude about yourself whenever a crisis brings the negative out.

It is one thing to know that you are far from perfect. It is another to forbid yourself to feel what you cannot help feeling at any given time and then dislike all of yourself for it, as you so often do, even though you may not be conscious of it.

As long as your "right" conduct is motivated by stringent self-moralizing, based on "good or bad," your goodness or righteousness is not genuine. It does not come from natural insight and inner growth but from fear: the fear about your imperfection. Therefore, such "goodness" is ineffectual, unconvincing to yourself as well as to others. It is a compulsion, not a choice. And you cannot be in reality when you are compulsive, for reality cannot be evaluated in the extreme terms of good or bad. When these terms cease to apply to anything but very crass issues, the borderlines become subtle and hazy. The issue is no longer capable of being settled by quick judgment about what is good or bad. Then the truth can be found only deep within yourself, instead of in the rigid laws and rules you borrow because you are too insecure to delve into your own soul. But since you don't dare to find the truth there, you adhere to ready-made rules, and the moment you do you moralize.

Any kind of goodness that comes from this tendency is always a poor and shallow imitation of the real goodness. Only because you are too insecure to trust yourself do you think you need rules and regulations to govern you. Moreover, you cannot lose this insecurity because the rules and regulations are mostly so inadequate that you are left with nothing to hold on to. This creates another vicious circle.

In other words, if you do not trust yourself, you have to borrow a rigid structure of morality in order to protect yourself from your untamed instincts. You think that the alternatives are either acting out these untamed, destructive impulses, or living according to the rigid outer rules. In reality these are not feasible alternatives at all. The healthy, constructive solution is inner growth that must eventually make you outgrow destructive impulses. But where this cannot yet happen because you simply are not that far developed, you need not act out those impulses but should simply take note of them. You can then see them without falling into the error of picturing yourself as all bad. Exaggerated self-condemnation is connected with the second condition we shall discuss, namely, disproportionate reactions. One imperfection has the power to color your entire emotional experience of yourself. This is not an intellectual, conscious judgement, but an emotional reaction.

This extreme, negative view arising from certain negative instincts or feelings causes an inordinate fear. The more you fear your imperfections, the more stringently you will moralize. The more demanding the standards of your idealized self-image, the more rigid your superstructure will be. But this is not your real nature. Alienation from yourself is both the result and the origin of this predicament. Rigidity, fear, insecurity, intolerance -- all these exist in you because of this self-alienation. And this self-deprecation is then often projected on others.

Your idealized self-image is created not only for winning love and approval from others -- as you believe it will -- but also serves to protect you from yourself.

Wherever immaturity and emotional disturbance exist, so does rigid adherence to rules in some form or other, which always brings moralizing in its wake. This phenomenon may often be difficult to detect. It may also exist only in certain isolated areas and manifest very indirectly, requiring a keen eye for detection. My advice is: do not labor to find this phenomenon by an artificial and intellectual process. Yet, be aware that it does exist in you, expect to find it sometime, and your work will lead you to it, sooner or later. You will then become fully aware of it and see how and where in your inner life it holds true.

Verify how you despise yourself for not living up to perfection; how you do not accept and like yourself because unsuspected negative trends exist in you. Instead of trying to whisk away such emotions, learn to accept yourself in spite of them. Learn to see your real values in spite of your destructive trends. It is the only way. Your attempt to do away magically with what still exists in you leads to repression and therefore to a false self-image. It leads not only to self-deception, but to alienation from your real self by borrowing ready-made rules. This condition produces the moralizing attitude and all the rigidity that is tied up with it.

The rules and regulations you substitute for your real self may not always be general. They vary according to personality, background, early teachings, circumstances, and temperament. What one person may consider wrong and unacceptable, another may not.

This moral structure actually takes the place of the self: you trust in rules rather than in yourself. This is a very shaky trust, for such rules may often be inapplicable to certain real situations. You may often have to grope when you find yourself not knowing what is right. However, if you cannot accept yourself as a human being, fallible and often confused, then this unavoidable confusion has the power to disrupt you completely. You may attribute the disruption to the situation itself, but in reality, it stems from your attitude about yourself. You will always want to find the final solution at once. And this urge is dictated by the false belief that you prove yourself unworthy if you admit that you do not know the answer, or simply have negative, undeveloped reactions.

So the first thing to learn on this path now is the ability to accept not only your fallibility but that you often do not know the answer. If you learn this and at the same time still like yourself, then slowly but surely your emotions will mature and your reactions will change, and a healthy trust in yourself, in your natural, spontaneous reactions, will follow. You will become more lenient with yourself and will no longer need perfection as the only basis for respect.

If it is difficult for you to let go of the super-structure of fixed rules, it is only because you cannot accept your human fallibility. I purposely refrain now from showing you how the healthy, mature, and flexible person will handle confusions and the desire to do the right thing. This would produce only a forced, insincere response on your part. Instead, you should first learn to accept your imperfection without losing faith in yourself. Many of you now feel so unhappy whenever an issue is foggy and your known rules and regulations cannot apply. You first have to discover what bothers you most. This, in itself, is not such an unpleasant situation; it is rather the role that you play in it, falling short of your ideals, which require that you always have perfect reactions and that

you instantly know all the answers. When this proves impossible, beneath your bitterness and self-pity you fail to forgive yourself for this imperfection. You moralize with yourself. You find yourself "bad," "wrong," even though you may not consciously admit to such opinions.

This subject needs intensive work. Some of you have begun to discover certain aspects of it. For some, the discovery has evolved naturally. Others are not quite that far yet, but certain insights will lead to it, so be watchful. Detect where you have an unforgiving attitude that makes you moralize with yourself for falling short of perfection. Discover where and how you use preconceived and fixed rules to guide you, rather than your own inner conviction, arrived at through thorough investigation of the situation and your role in it. Perhaps for some of you the first steps will be merely to become aware of an inner rigidity and intolerance with yourself and others. From there the road leads to further insight. It cannot be repeated often enough that many a depression and despair is based on expectations of yourself that are impossible to attain.

Let us turn now to the second topic: your disproportionate reactions and exaggerations. I have previously mentioned how you often over-dramatize yourself. But in the past I referred mainly to crass outer manifestations, particularly as applied to certain personality structures. But this aspect also exists in people who are outwardly very undramatic about themselves. In other words, this tendency may not show. Yet, on some level of emotional reaction, such exaggeration always exists.

When you learn to allow your emotions to come to surface awareness and then determine their significance, you will not only find negative feelings you had been unaware of, like the moralizing attitude. You will also discover how you experience your reactions and the reactions of others quite disproportionately to their real value. Again, some of you have already discovered as a result of your work that such exaggerated emotional reactions exist. You have begun to sense, at least to some degree and in isolated instances, how overly strong certain reactions are, relative to reality. This applies not only to negative but also to positive or favorable incidents.

This dramatizing is based on the childish view of the world as either all good and happy, or completely bad and unhappy. You have not yet realized to what degree this attitude still exists in all of you, even those of you who have made some discoveries along these lines. This either/or attitude is the basis for emotional disturbance, immaturity, and ill-health, but it especially creates the moralizing attitude and the disproportionate emotional reactions, although consciously and outwardly this need not be apparent.

For instance, a little compliment, in itself unimportant, can save the day for you. A passing approval may make all the difference in your mood. By the same token, any little criticism or disapproval may completely spoil your mood. It may plunge you into depression and ill humor. The former disproportionately raises your self-confidence; the latter disproportionately lowers it. There are many other examples, but you will have to discover these reactions in yourself as you learn to take your emotional reactions out of hiding. In either case, you rise and fall by one single aspect - whether true or false -- of how another person thinks or feels about you. In the first case, emotionally, you experience yourself as wonderful, good, perfect, lovable, faultless. In the second case, a little criticism makes you feel no good at all, at least in the eyes of the other person. This is so hard to detect because intellectually, as you well know, it is all nonsense. Whenever such reactions do appear, you stifle full evaluation of them. You ascribe your strong reactions to other factors that are not half as responsible, or you simply ignore whatever made you react that way. You

quickly repress and displace the true origin of your feelings and so move away from reality. You no longer see yourself in relation to the world around you in the light of truth.

The connection between disproportionate emotional reactions and self-moralizing is quite evident. Both are based on an either/or attitude, as well as on your own stringent standards and demands of yourself, which develop out of your nonacceptance of being merely human. Thus approval and compliments make you feel that you are living up to your own expectations. They make the world seem good and right and beautiful. In such childish either/or attitudes, this is it, this is final, until your next disillusionment. And since the world is good and beautiful, you can be what you think you should be. On the other hand, disapproval, criticism, or failure are also final. Now, the world is all black and bad. You are unable to live up to what you think you should be. The one fault distorts your whole vision and you are now all bad, hopeless, and consequently, crushed. Thus you are incapable of taking criticism in a constructive way. Yes, you may make the outer gestures and appear to do so, but your inner reactions belie the appearance.

It is often said that one sign of maturity is the ability to take criticism and frustration in a relaxed, constructive way. Mature people can do this because they are in reality. They do not expect the impossible of themselves and therefore accept themselves as decent and likable without being perfect. They therefore know that criticism does not make them all bad and all wrong.

The work on this path now calls for awareness of what you really feel, letting out your true emotions and reactions. Without that you cannot ever find what prohibits your true growth. This work demands that you discard the outer mask of appearance and that you muster the courage to admit to such childish reactions. The more strongly you hold on to perfectionistic ideals of yourself, not willing to give them up, the more you will resist displaying your emotions where it would be constructive to do so.

Again, the procedure is simply to let these emotions come out without trying to change them, because you cannot do so as yet. Simply recognize their existence in you and learn to accept yourself. This will do more for genuine self-respect than all the forceful, insincere strivings for an idealized perfection that is not the true aim of growth. By the mere act of repeatedly observing your reactions, their strength will lessen. You will become capable of observing such emotions without self-contempt and therefore without repression and without self-moralizing. The nagging, mostly unconscious suspicion that you are incapable of being what you believe you really should be will subside because you begin to accept yourself. Needless to say, this suspicion is well founded, only you do not accept the impossibility; you still battle against it. As this suspicion and your anger with yourself subside, you automatically build on real, safe ground -- on what is feasible. Your self-confidence will therefore grow in proportion to your self-acceptance. You will base your often unconscious opinion of yourself on what is realizable, possible, and feasible: thus you are secure. When you based your self-respect and self-liking on standards that were unrealizable, impossible, and unfeasible, you were insecure. You can be secure only when your expectations accord with what is feasible.

In other words, when criticism comes your way or your will is frustrated because of your own or other people's failings, you can accept it in a relaxed way. You know that your whole being is not at stake, that actually only one aspect of you or your life is in question. You will then come to trust yourself, knowing that you are capable of taking criticism with flexibility and are able to learn from

it. Thus criticism will not crush you; rather, will give you new insight into yourself and others. Hence, you will not fear criticism, nor frustration, nor failure as if they were a plague against which you constantly have to guard yourself.

Such defenses are destructive in themselves, as you well know. Without these defenses, your soul will be open and relaxed, always providing you with a perception and inner experience of reality. With such a foundation the inevitable outcome is real, secure self-confidence and self-respect, not their counterfeits. Rigid, perfectionistic standards prohibit making mistakes, receiving criticism, experiencing failure. They point to your fallibility, which you do not want to accept. Something in you, deep down, knows perfectly well that you are not perfect and that you are bound to make occasional mistakes, receive criticism, and fail to have your wishes met. If you deny this inner knowledge, you deny the truth and try to base your life on false foundations. If you accept this knowledge, you not only accept truth, you base your life on something that can give you real security. When you react appropriately to your own humanness with all its failings, you build on a rock. When you deny it, you build on sand. Your security and self-confidence are based on these alternatives. To observe these emotional reactions means to observe your immaturity. Only by doing so will your maturity grow.

And now we come to a third condition you will find when you observe your emotions carefully. And that is the all-important subject of your needs. As you progress in reaching deeper levels of self-understanding, I can show you a few more links between these various tendencies that, in the past, could be discussed only as unconnected trends.

First, let us briefly recapitulate what constitutes a need. A need can be something actual and real or it can be something quite imaginary and unreal. Let me give you an example of a real need in the physical realm. If you have not eaten for a while, you definitely do need food. If you do not get it, you cannot survive. So this is a real need. By the same token, you can have a false need for food. If your body has received all the food it needs to remain healthy, but if a craving for something inessential persists, then you have a false need. Although this false need manifests on the physical level, it comes from an emotional and/or spiritual disturbance or mismanagement.

On both the emotional and spiritual levels, real and unreal needs also exist. If a real need is neglected due to inner disorganization and mismanagement of the entire human personality, a false need will appear somewhere. Unreal needs always have the form of compulsiveness and craving. Mismanagement will make people helpless and dependent on others to have their needs fulfilled.

The difference between children and adults is that children are actually dependent on others for all their needs. They are incapable of supplying their own needs. The truly mature person can do so. In a mature person, an unfulfilled emotional need does not necessarily mean this need is false; it may well be real. But some inner block must have made it impossible to obtain fulfillment of this need. Everyone is endowed with the requisite capacities to fulfill all needs on all levels. If the personality does not function in a healthy way, some of these capacities will be paralyzed or incorrectly channeled.

Since humans tend to be underdeveloped in the emotional arena, it is logical that their unfulfillments are primarily emotional. But such emotional underdevelopment may also manifest on other levels, so that physical or spiritual needs may also originate from emotional disturbances.

When one neglects to satisfy one's real needs, illusory or imaginary needs must appear. These should be regarded as symptoms of a real unfulfilled need.

Offhand, you may say that an inordinate need for approval is in itself unreal. This is not necessarily so. To a certain degree every human being needs occasional approval, let us say, in the form of encouragement. If an inordinate, and therefore unreal, need for approval exists, that is often because the real need for approval, encouragement, success has unwittingly been forfeited. But instead of resenting the world for not supplying the desired approval, people who work on their emotional growth will try to discover how they have shortchanged themselves of the satisfaction of a legitimate need.

The first step, as always, must be to become aware of your needs. Your path will help you to become aware of that by bringing out your emotions at this point. Once that happens, once you can feel the emptiness caused by an unfulfilled need and can pinpoint it, you can set out to understand why you have denied yourself what you truly needed. You have to reconcile yourself to knowing that awareness of your needs, real and unreal, will not immediately fulfill them. You will first have to learn to live with the frustration of an unfulfilled need. You will see that that is possible and that you can still be quite happy and still have self-respect. This is the ability to take frustration with the mature attitude that unfulfillment is not an abyss. Only with this attitude can you then find why and how you caused this unfulfillment. This is a slow process. If you approach it with the perhaps unexpressed attitude that immediate improvement must occur in your life, you will make it impossible to find what you need to know about yourself.

As you proceed in this direction, you will become aware of your needs. Then you will learn to distinguish between real and unreal needs by discovering that real needs can be borne, while false needs have an excessive and compulsive force. Because of this you often repress them; they are so strong that when they are denied, they make you feel as if you were dying.

Now let us find the link between the two emotional aspects previously discussed and the unfulfilled needs. First, you can surely see that all three share the common denominator of the childish either/or attitude. It is impossible to withstand the frustration of an unfulfilled need if you regard the frustration as a permanent state. In that case you feel that nothing good and favorable can ever be experienced. Children feel that any momentary situation is permanent. And your childish emotions, despite your intellectual understanding, still feel that way. You exaggerate the importance of your current situation. You are permeated with a momentary lack and you know nothing else, emotionally.

Second, an unfulfillment points to your imperfection, to your vulnerability as a human being. Your perfectionism does not allow for this. The more you are engulfed in this emotional deviation, the more you repress your real needs, the awareness of your unfulfillment, and the constructive search derived from it. Therefore unfulfillment increases, regenerates itself, and becomes more stringent.

Let us take the following example: To the extent that you are incapable of giving mature love and affection, you will have a compulsive need to receive love and affection. Or if your need for

approval is inordinately strong, it is in proportion to your disapproval of yourself. Because you cannot live up to your stringent standards you continue to moralize with yourself.

It is very important that you become aware of your needs. You cannot do so through the intellect. You can do so only if you allow yourself to feel. As you learn to do so, you will be amazed to discover what needs you have. You will then evaluate what has kept you from fulfilling your own needs. The more you gain real insight into this, the less stringent the false needs become and the more capable you become of fulfilling your real needs. Needless to say, this lessens your dependency on others and consequently increases your self-confidence.

You will find trust in your own strength and resourcefulness in handling your difficulties. But all this necessitates first accepting yourself as you are. It is self-evident that in thus entering a benign circle, negative emotions such as self-pity, helplessness, hostility, guilt, and resentment are bound to decrease until they finally disappear.

These three issues of moralizing, disproportionate reactions, and needs, remain to be found and experienced emotionally, my friends. You should experience the depth, width, and far-reaching significance of these emotions. Then, and only then, will you enter into a benign circle, after having broken a vicious one.

QUESTION: What is the difference between moralizing and righteousness?

ANSWER: It depends how the words are used. It is a matter of interpretation. "Righteousness" is often used, for instance in Scripture, as doing the right thing and being good. But in more recent times, this word has taken on a different meaning for many people. When they use it, they think of self-righteousness, of the very moralizing character I have discussed. In fact, this usage is appropriate because righteousness is often actually self-righteousness because it stems from the wrong attitude we have just discussed in detail. It is a different way of saying that a false goodness, a forceful, insincere one, produces a moralizing that many people rebel against. Genuine goodness, coming out of real growth, will never have this effect on others.

QUESTION: What about the people who let their emotions guide their lives without recognizing the ethical laws?

ANSWER: I must say that I expected this question. In the first place, let us distinguish between morality and moralizing. These are not the same. In the second place, I never proposed that people should act out their destructive impulses. It is one thing to be heedlessly and ruthlessly destructive, and another to want to be a saint; to be superhuman and not accept your undeveloped side. Accepting it does not mean approving of it or acting it out. Accepting merely means that you know without anger that these negative aspects still exist in you, that you are not above them, but you are not disliking yourself for them. Such self-contempt is connected with expecting too much and therefore with moralizing.

I might add here that the very people who fling their immorality into the face of the world -- perhaps because they cannot distinguish between true morality and self-righteous moralizing -- are often those most strongly afflicted with a sense of guilt. It may not show; they may displace their

guilt by even stronger acts of immorality. It would lead us too far astray now to go into this in detail. Perhaps at this point the answer can best be summed up by saying that your still existing, actual immorality, which you are unwilling to face, makes you moralize with yourself and others.

It is very difficult for you to judge another person's state of mind and emotion. You cannot read someone else's mind, but the more developed your intuition is, as a result of freeing yourself of your obstructions, the more you will sense it. This intuition cannot come out of knowledge because you can never have sufficient information about these things. However, in an intuitive way you will feel a certain tolerance and lack of anxiety about your own failings and those of others.

As you develop this moral sense in yourself, you will perceive intuitively where others stand. You will finally come to the point where real morality is alive and flexible in you, and you will then dispense with the practice of false, rigid moralizing. Whoever thought that my discussion contained the message of discarding moral codes has not as yet understood its meaning. But in health and maturity, these existing codes become your own. By following them blindly, you take the spirit out of them and turn them into something lifeless and untrue. Do you follow what I mean?

QUESTION: No, I don't. It seems to me that you used in your lecture, before the question came in, the word "moralizing." Now, you used "morality." It also seems to be that what you now term "moralizing" has a different flavor from what you previously called "moralizing," or "self-righteousness." How can I know when something is right or wrong if I do not compare it with something, like for instance, the Sermon on the Mount, or the golden rule? Is that too rigid a rule?

ANSWER: In the first place, I distinguished, in answer to the question, between living morality and lifeless moralizing. Moreover, I explicitly stated that all truths brought to mankind by the great ones in history remain true. Whether or not they remain genuine or become falsified depends on humanity's inner state of being, your emotions and mind. Merely living according to these great truths indicates neither false moralizing nor true morality based on inner growth, which is based on the real self. The underlying motivations and emotional forces at work indicate that. In many sayings of Jesus, as well as in words of other great teachers, you will find words in support of this lecture. These teachers used their own terminology, fitting their time, but the basic meaning remains the same.

A great part of your question is already answered by the foregoing and when you study it quietly, you will see it. I do not want to be too repetitious now. Let me repeat only this: the more you need rules, the stronger the signal is that you do not trust yourself. All the truth ever proclaimed and outwardly taught lives in you. If you do not dare to go deeply enough into your real being, you will never come to that part of you where you discover it for yourself and thus make it a living reality. You will thus continue to remain dependent on the observation of outer rules. No matter how true and beautiful these rules are they will not be alive and true in you. In humanity's insecurity, in the fear and denial of human imperfection, people borrow what was once alive and could again be alive. They need only the courage to become themselves, to let go of the rigid structure of what could and should be alive within the self. Do you follow what I mean?

QUESTION: Well, I do and I don't. For instance, if I steal apples, how can I know that I steal if I have no way of comparing this act with another act of not stealing?

ANSWER: My dear child, if you would never in your life have heard that stealing is wrong, you would still know, as the adult person you are, that you are taking something that belongs to another and that this is unfair to the other person. Even people who are not on a path of self-development and growth would know this if they questioned how their actions affect others. Taking account of oneself in relationship to others is bound to bring the knowledge of what is right and wrong. This is exactly what I am trying to say: Awareness and taking account, thinking further about cause and effect, will always yield what is right and true.

QUESTION: But about moralizing, you said that everything is a rigidity.

ANSWER: There is deep misunderstanding here. You now seem to believe that I implied every moral act is moralizing and rigid. All I invited you to do is to find where these tendencies exist in you. You now believe that you should abstain from right actions. This is not so. What you should do, however, is to find out about where you harbor superhuman expectations, standards you cannot really live up to in your emotional being, and about your nonacceptance of yourself as a whole because of your disapproval of these trends. This is the moralizing I'm talking about. Moreover, such moralizing seldom applies to crass issues, but rather to the subtleties of human relationships where matters cannot be evaluated simply in terms of good or bad. Moralizing also manifests when, emotionally at least, everything is experienced as either good or bad, right or wrong.

Because you disapprove of the social or immoral instincts you still harbor, you deny their existence inside of you. And this denial leads to moralizing. Your confusion arises from feeling that awareness of your immoral instincts will lead to acting them out. You are also confused because you think that disapproval of your immoral impulses means disapproval of yourself as a whole. Now you may certainly be unaware that you believe this, yet it is true for every one of you. Your stringent need to be free of any imperfection, of any immoral instinct, makes you hide it. You feel, "I should not be like this," and whenever such imperfections trickle into your consciousness, you do not forgive yourself. You hate and punish yourself. All this may be unconscious to a considerable degree, but that does not mean it isn't so.

You should pinpoint this tendency, but this does not mean letting go of all the moral standards you have lived by. Eventually, you will live according to these moral standards out of new motivations, desires, and reasons. And this will have an entirely different effect upon you and others.

Your approach to this subject brought the entire question into a different area -- that of doing. I was not discussing action. When it comes to feelings, your own emotional attitude toward yourself, the prerequisite of self-respect can be based only on truth. Now the truth is that you are not yet as perfect as you want to be. If you cannot accept yourself as you are, in spite of the instincts you disapprove of, you cannot grow out of them.

I might sum up the inner process this way: "If I have destructive instincts, I am horrible and cannot like or respect myself. Since this is too painful to bear, I must look away from my destructive impulses and hope that by my looking away they disappear." Do you now understand a little better?

QUESTION: Yes, I do. But I still don't see where moralizing comes in.

ANSWER: When one judges a whole for only a part, then moralizing occurs. When the whole becomes "black" due to partly "black" trends, or "white" for that matter, then moralizing occurs. When issues are experienced in terms of good or bad, moralizing occurs. There is so much leeway, so much else that has nothing to do with either black or white.

Save your other questions for next time. I have given you much material. If out of this material you have sufficient questions for discussion, and you so wish, I shall gladly put in a question and answer session next time.

Be blessed, each one of you, in body, soul, and spirit. May the renewed strength you receive, mainly due to your efforts, enable you to know, accept, and like yourself.

Be in peace. Be in God!

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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