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FALSIFIED IMPRESSIONS OF PARENTS: THEIR CAUSE AND CURE

Greetings, my dearest, dearest friends. God bless each one of you. Blessed are your works, your thoughts, your endeavors, your lives, and even your mistakes. For they too may become the great keys to freedom and reality and love.

Once again, let us talk about love. Let us remember that anyone without love is withering away. The love you receive is not the most important, you need the love force in your heart; it is your spiritual life-blood. This is the driving force -- in a good and healthy sense -- that gives meaning to life. Without the love-capacity your life will be empty, meaningless, shallow.

You all know, and some of you may be very much aware, that deep down in your soul you have a craving to be loved. When this craving reaches your awareness, it is often confused with your capacity to love. However, the two are entirely different. A human being can often be consciously aware of his or her need to be loved, and yet the heart is devoid of loving. For the greater the need, the more it is possible that you are still self-involved, withdrawn, fearful, anxious, bound, and blind to the other person. The more you are in anxiety, bondage, and dependency, the less you are able to love and to open that inner channel through which the life and love force can flow and lubricate your soul, so to speak. Without this force, inner drought cannot be prevented. This dryness of soul makes you feel that your life is senseless, regardless of the worthiness of your activities. Only when this channel to love is unclogged will you become free and fulfill your personal needs.

I have shown you many ways to unclog this channel. These processes are thought by some of you to mean something other than spiritual development; you call it psychological search. Again and again, you make the error of believing that the spiritual and the psychological are two different approaches. Forgetting these terms for the moment, you will understand that without resolving so-called psychological problems, you cannot become fully capable of loving.

Let us now approach your love capacity from still another angle, one we have touched upon in the past only in a cursory way. We all know that the child's first impressions come from its first environment, in which the parents or their substitutes predominate, including anyone who plays an important role in the child's life. Since the child's capacity to evaluate is limited, its emotional experience gleaned from the parents is very distorted. In the crassest case, the child may emotionally experience the parents as either good or bad, strong or weak, admirable or despicable. But even if the experience is not so extreme, the child focuses only on certain aspects or tendencies of the parents, while the rest of their personality is not even noticed. These limited impressions falsify the picture. The image you carry of them, often unconsciously, may be quite contrary to your intellectual view or opinion, but it nevertheless influences your actions and governs your reactions to life, to others, and to yourself. It also clogs up the channel that enables you to love and experience others in their reality, while you are centered in your own real self, which is your reality.

The child's fragmented impression of reality causes distortions which influence the way you relate later to others and to yourself. You can be sure that there is a connection between the most problematic area of your life and your perception of either one or both parents, or someone else in your early surroundings. A certain impression of another person or persons is imprinted upon your soul, and you continue reacting to others from this fragmentary and falsified imprint.

The remedy is first to become aware of what you really feel about all members of your family, or others who were important to you. Analyze this feeling impression and compare it with your intellectual view. Then begin to consider whether your impression of them is perhaps just a fragmented, limited aspect of a whole person.

When you feel hurt or angry about one or both parents, do you, in your anger, perceive them as groping, vulnerable, blind, and troubled humans? Or do they take on an awesome, strange, fixed, and therefore almost inhuman form in your emotional life? Do they seem artificial, robot-like, lacking the complexity of the human personality? Think about the term human being and what it really means. Does it not mean a variety of often contradictory aspects? Can a person be -- if you must choose these terms -- good in one way and bad in another? Can he or she be reliable in one way and unreliable in another, both selfish and also unselfish?

Yet the child in you does not perceive that. For the child, it is either one or the other but never both. Therefore you still do not perceive the reality of your parent the human being. You may know perfectly well with your intellect that people can be both good and bad, but emotionally you cannot experience this truth, particularly not with regard to your parents. Your emotional experience is always an either/or, and therefore you are not in touch with the living, dynamic complexity of the human being who was closest to you. It is most important for your own sake that your impression and experience of this person be as realistic as possible.

As long as you are still living with a falsification, you cannot cut the tie that keeps you from experiencing freedom and independence. You are also kept from loving, from finding your true strength. Oh, you may have managed very well in many ways, but where this tie is not dissolved by seeing the reality of your parents, you will continue to have problems that could be resolved only by unraveling this knot.

The first step is to become aware of your distortions. Ask yourself: "How do I experience my parents? Do I experience them as human beings in their contradictions, their blindness, their often conflicting, mixed motivations?" Does the person you may have feared and hated most when you were a child, perhaps still exist in you as one who is invulnerable and cannot be hurt, just because he or she hurt your vulnerability? This phantom creates havoc in your life, my friends.

After making the revisions which constitute the second step, you can become a free human being. But how do these revisions take place? Begin by asking yourself: "What were they really like?" Try to understand them in the fullness of their being. Understand their lives, their inner and outer struggles, their own childhood -- from whatever you know about them. What made them what they were, what were their own hurts, fears, and frustrations? Understand them as one mature human being tries to understand another, with as much detachment and objectivity, and consider as many facets of their being as possible, not just those aspects that have, unfortunately, singularly

affected you. Your seeing only certain traits and leaving out others because you were not affected by them always dehumanizes the other person.

Even if you glorify a parent, he or she still becomes inhuman from your exaggerated overglorification. Your fixed and static view, due to the fragmentation of what they really are, becomes monstrous. It is not alive, not real. Everything you have experienced from those limited traits in them which to you constitute the entire person may be factually true. But the larger truth is missing. Your monster lacks the totality of the whole human being. You cannot understand those traits that have hurt and affected you unless you see the wholeness of the person. The understanding will dissolve the still hidden hurt and anger, setting you free, and unclogging the channel to loving.

You often resist revising your images of your parents. You may feel disloyal and guilty if you stop glamorizing an adored and idolized parent. You feel it is your duty as a child to continue to do so. Not glorifying your parent may be equated with disrespect, contempt, resentment, or hate -- in your unconscious mind, of course. Beneath this glorification there may be fear, and, under the fear, hate. Protecting yourself from facing this hate can mean maintaining the exaggerated glorification, not only because the world seems to demand it of you, but also because you may need this very parent -- however symbolically and in a displaced way -- even now.

Maintaining your glorified image of a parent can also be a sign that he or she may have been the source of the only love, acceptance, and security you have ever known. Therefore, to your unconscious mind giving up the glorified image of the parent is tantamount to losing all the love, acceptance, and security you have ever known. By devaluing the parent you rob yourself of the only value you possess. No wonder you resist revising your image of your parents.

By the same token, you may have an equal interest in holding on to a hated image. Why would you want to do that? It may be your very protection against yourself. If the parent remains bad in your eyes, then the slight and hurt he or she has inflicted on you becomes nullified, as it were. You fear -- erroneously of course -- that if you accept the parent's humanity and therefore let go of your insistence that the hurt inflicted on you was unjust in the extreme, your own value will be diminished. There are also other ways of holding onto the hate; they have to be found and experienced by each one of you in your individual work.

It is so much easier for the child in you to have everything well ordered. A reality, which is flexible and contradictory, for which there are no fixed rules, is something the child in you would rather not cope with. So it may seem much easier to cling to your fixed impressions, where each person fits into a niche. Each impression becomes then a static image, which gives you a certain unreal sense of order and security. You think you know where you are. However, the price you pay for this precarious order and security is so much bigger than what you can even try to estimate now.

When you begin to revise your impressions of people in your early environment because you want to see them with a mature attitude and understand them in their reality, you may find a certain fear and resistance to do so. Focus on it, and realize its significance. Understand that the resistance is the very indication that in it lies a deep and important key to your life and many of its problems you probably never thought could have any connection whatsoever. Only after you come to terms with your resistance by strengthening and fortifying your will, and by asking in prayer and

meditation to see the truth about your parents, will your resistance gradually weaken. There is no better way to pray than using your current resistances and stumbling blocks in a most specific way.

Psychological work is simply finding out the truth about yourself and others. I have pointed out to you many times that you cannot see the truth in others if you do not see the truth in yourself. At certain stages on this path, however, after a certain amount of truth about yourself has been brought to consciousness, truth must also be approached from the other side. That other side is the desire to see the truth about others, your parents and siblings, for instance. This is another way to gain more truth about yourself. The desire to see the truth about others -- their lives and personalities in their whole dimension -- will give you insight and understanding about your own life and all that governs you, paralyzes you, and puts you in conflict even now. Needless to say, this understanding is the prerequisite to your ending these unproductive patterns.

Your next thought may very well be: This is easily said, but not easily done. Apart from your own resistance, you may not have the necessary information and knowledge about parents or parent figures to revise your image. They may be dead, and even if they are still living, and you can contact them, there may be certain things you cannot possibly discuss with them. So how can you revise your image and correct your falsified impressions? If you truly wish to do so, you will succeed; of this you can be sure. You may find a way to learn more about them, with an entirely new attitude. You may seek out a contact that will reveal certain information about their lives, and other aspects of their personalities you have never seen or known, so that they become more human for you. Eventually, after you have freed yourself to some degree of the old tie, you may even bring yourself to communicate, in a spirit of truth, with a still living member of your family with whom you might never have considered communicating. By trying to understand their problems, your own hurts are bound to diminish. First, however, you may have to become aware that a hurt exists.

What if the parents are no longer alive? Often there may be someone still near you who might have a different slant to complete the picture for you, even by adding his or her own, but different, distortion to the whole picture. It may be a sibling, another relative, or a friend. But in addition to this, you need still another approach, so you will have the courage to take the necessary steps. This approach is the sincere will to know, manifested in prayer, to which the answer will come. God's ways are so wonderful. If you are willing to want to understand what made them the way they were, and what was their motivation for much you could never understand, comprehension will come to you in most miraculous ways. Even if there is absolutely no one left who knew them, incidents will occur to you that you had never before evaluated in a true light. Perhaps you will remember certain aspects of their lives of which you had been told, but which you disregarded and excluded from your perception. All of a sudden these incidents will take on a new meaning, enabling you to evaluate their personalities in a different way, with the detachment and objectivity of one uninvolved human being toward another. As you begin this process, your entire outlook will gradually change. The facts of your experience will not be eliminated, but the experience will take on a different meaning and thus set you free.

However, right now you have to be aware of what you feel, how you experience your parents, and how you have been hurt, although on the surface you may have a veneer of indifference. The desire to see the truth has to be cultivated. Determine first whether or not you inwardly desire the truth. As long as you reject a truth -- any truth -- you will be in bondage to confusion and unreality. You do not have to force the issue, but in an organic way your resistance will weaken, provided you

do not keep pushing the matter away. If you can acknowledge to yourself that you wish to maintain a falsified picture and that you do not wish to know the truth, the rest will come by itself.

If you say, "I cannot find out," ask yourself whether you do not really mean, "I do not want to." Even if you think you cannot, make yourself wholly open for the desire to understand the truth. Without truth, there cannot be love. And without love, there cannot be truth.

Try this new approach, and your life, your problems, your relationships will take on a new meaning, my friends.

Are there any questions regarding this subject?

QUESTION: When parents give the child an unreal, or perhaps real, feeling of rejection, the child feels unworthy of love and therefore establishes a pattern of self-rejection. How does one work through this, even if one sees one's parents in reality?

ANSWER: It happens naturally and by itself. The moment you understand your parents, the sense of rejection will disappear, even if they were cruel to you. In understanding what made them cruel, you will see it as their problem, and you will -- perhaps for the first time in truth and reality -- know that this had nothing to do with your own worth. So far you know this in your intellect only; emotionally you will feel unworthy as long as you feel that your parents rejected you because of your unworthiness. Due to this sense of unworthiness, you are unable to establish constructive patterns that will give you reason to feel secure in yourself now. The destructive patterns constantly confirm your unworthiness. You are thus unable to get out of them until the basic understanding that your parents' real or imagined rejection of you had nothing to do with your worthiness is reached.

In the child's perception, the parents are powerful super-creatures. It does not occur to the child that they are human beings groping to solve their own problems and struggling with their own puzzlement about life. When this truth is recognized through real inner understanding, the sense of their rejection of you must disappear. It may have happened frequently in your life that you first felt rejected or slighted, and later through a variety of circumstances you became aware of certain elements in the situation you had previously ignored. The moment you realized the significance of these, you no longer felt rejected. You understood that they had nothing to do with you and your worth. The facts remained the same, but you no longer interpreted them in the same personal, self-diminishing way.

It is exactly the same with your parents. The moment you experience them in their living reality -- at fault, surely, but now understood in their dynamics -- the impression and reaction must change in you. This does not mean you have to understand them completely, or know everything about them. One never does, even about people one is close to. But with your new understanding you destroy the limited, rigid, robot-like image in which you emotionally experience them. Then they become alive. You will understand at least some of their difficulties. You will see that they could not have acted any other way, considering who they were at the time -- just as you could not have acted otherwise in the past, although you may now recognize your error. The moment you have this understanding, the original rejection by them will no longer cause you to reject yourself.

Your question is important. However, in the last analysis, the only way at one stage of your development to heal this self-rejection is to know beyond a shadow of doubt that it was never you who was rejected. The hurt inflicted upon you, due to their blindness, irresponsibility, and undiscovered powerful currents of frustration and hurt, had absolutely nothing to do with you, but was a result of their groping, pathetic, human struggle to live which, when viewed from the larger picture of human development, seems so valiant. Do you understand?

QUESTION: I understand. Still, when a child is set in this pattern of self-rejection and has lived his life in this way, he is twisted and distorted, and loves the rejection rather than the love. The mere fact of recognizing one's parents will not resolve this kind of conflict.

ANSWER: I do not say this is the only answer. There is never just one solution. You have learned many other aspects of this pathwork that are of equal importance -- and they all have to be experienced. If self-rejection can be cured by other insights, and destructive patterns changed to constructive ones, so much the better. I still say, however, that distortion of truth affects you, and therefore it ought to be remedied. For the very problem you cite, this topic is a most essential one. The moment you experience the important people of your early environment in their human reality, you will no longer need to practice self-rejection. You were attached to it only because the child in you believed there was nothing else. But the moment you perceive that you were not rejected because you were unworthy, you no longer have to cherish your self-rejection. Do you understand?

QUESTIONER: I will try.

ANSWER: Yes, you have to try. You see, there is often such a strong resistance to knowing the reality in this respect. Your "this would not help my problem" is one form of resistance and amounts to saying, "I have no way of gaining understanding about my parents." I tell you, even if you now believe it will not help you in this or that particular problem, approach it in a spirit of truth. In your prayers, say, "Even if I do not understand why it will help me, I just want to see the truth as far as I am capable of it." If you work toward the understanding and recognition of your resistance to removing this wall, you will soon see for yourself what it will do for you. You do not even have to understand intellectually now how this could change your self-rejection. Just approach it from the spirit of truth -- truth about the people who happen to have been your parents.

QUESTION: Would you care to elaborate on the psychological aspect of the fourth commandment?

ANSWER: Yes. As usual, there are many levels of interpretation, but I assume you brought this up in connection with our topic. The fourth commandment is so often misunderstood, and much harm has come from these misunderstandings and superficial interpretations. In this case, forcing and guilt make love and honor into something compulsive that destroys real understanding and subsequently real love and honor. In blindness, you cannot respect and love when almost all you see may be undeserving of such love and respect. When you squash the early impressions of the parents and superimpose artificial, compulsive love and honor, you are even further from true love and respect. However, the real meaning is exactly what I have said. See the truth. When you do so, you respect the basic human being in everyone, regardless of their many aberrations and blindnesses.

QUESTION: But how long will it take for humanity to derive the real meaning of the fourth commandment? We usually have to learn for a whole lifetime in order to correct such mistakes or distortions.

ANSWER: How long will it take for people to correct any distortion of truth, not only of this particular one, but of any other divine truth that has reached humanity? Any truth can be distorted, you know that. When humanity has progressed sufficiently in its development, this will no longer happen. In order to get to this place, the error has to be recognized and dissolved. Self-awareness must increase and then, little by little, the distortions will vanish. You seem to believe that the distortions have to disappear before you can develop awareness. It is just the opposite: the distortions exist because of your relatively low level of awareness. As such, the distortions themselves contain the remedy, for without them you could not come to perceive truth. I said this so often, and I say it again.

From a spiritual point of view, which is our vantage point, one person who gains inner truth in the sense of this pathwork has an infinitely greater influence on the entire cosmic development than do millions of people in error. This may sound like an incredible statement, yet it is utter truth, my friends.

QUESTION: Just a comment in connection with our friend's question of how long it will take. I have lived with children in neighborhoods where I saw delinquent parents, who were fallen, or drunkards, yet the children had reverence for them, through acceptance and understanding. And I have seen children from well-kept homes who were pampered, but did not have such understanding.

ANSWER: Of course this is possible. An otherwise delinquent parent may have a special quality to give the child something it needs. Also, the child may have been born free of this particular problem so that, organically and naturally, it perceives the truth. No distortion exists here. But it is also possible that such reverence is unhealthy and false. If it comes from fear, guilt, or wanting to appease so as to be protected, then that has nothing to do with the real understanding we are talking about.

Do not begin by trying to love and honor what seems impossible for you now. Begin by simply wanting to understand. The rest will take care of itself. Such understanding may often come much later in life. Then, after understanding has been gained, the sting of fear, resentment, self-negation, and self-rejection will vanish. And that is the real honor and love that one human being can have for another, no matter how erring the other person may be.

QUESTION: I have a question from a friend who is absent. The need for pseudo-protection originates in the creation of an image. Can this need still persist after the image has been dissolved, and thereby contribute to the creation of a new image?

ANSWER: Of course this can happen; this is what often happens in faulty or insufficient psychological treatment. Certain levels are reached, certain patterns dissolved, but one does not go deeper. One leaves well enough alone, and therefore the root, which remains embedded, may create another destructive pattern or image. So it is always a question of the right procedure: get to the roots slowly but surely on the next level. Then, of course, this pattern will be stopped and

prevented from ever recurring; then a constructive, realistic pattern can be established and the love channel can open. There is no more need for defenses; the individual is open to life, to living, to loving.

QUESTION: Could you comment on the Lord's Prayer, particularly the words, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven"? Could you tell us what "on earth" and "in heaven" mean?

ANSWER: Earth and heaven are not geographical descriptions of life here and now, nor of the life to come in the hereafter. They mean levels of your personality, which automatically include any state of life -- the physical as well as the nonphysical. The symbol for earth might be interpreted in many ways: earth may be your outer life, the material life, physical life, physical actions and outer facts; in short, everything visible. For earth is visible for you, while heaven is invisible. The symbol of heaven, therefore, is all that which cannot be seen or perceived with the outer senses. It means your inner actions and reactions, your thoughts and feelings, your motivations, your soul and spirit. It means the psychological, emotional, and spiritual levels of your being -- those which cannot be seen. You may act outwardly in the right way, but inwardly the motivations may be selfish, vain, unloving, and cowardly. One may conform to all the rules and regulations of Church, society, and public opinion, and be faultless in conduct, but whatever goes on in the soul may be very opposite to divine law. That place is heaven, the kingdom within of which Christ spoke.

If you are inwardly pure, inwardly open, and inwardly fulfill the will of God, perhaps sometimes at the expense of outer approval from society, you are being true to yourself, then you have the integrity, courage, and humility to stand up for what you really believe, you are doing the will of God. If you ask for this in your prayer, fully aware that this may be what He wants from you, then you do the will of God in heaven, and automatically also on earth.

QUESTION: In this connection, is it not rather significant that the first seven words of Genesis, in Hebrew, contain the words "heaven" and "earth" just as in the Lord's Prayer? An interpretation of the word heaven, hashomayim, shows it is composed of the words that mean fire and water. Can you tie this together?

ANSWER: Yes. Primitive humanity always took everything literally, and still does. Only through development will humanity see the deeper meaning which will make so much more sense. The meanings of fire are: the fire of life, living, loving, enthusiasm, healthy activity, spiritual endeavor, courage, conviction one stands up for, strength that makes life a meaningful adventure. Water represents the emotions: the flow, the state of being, a healthy passivity. Both healthy activity -- fire -- and healthy passivity -- water -- are processes of purification. Both fire and water can be cleansing processes, and both are needed for an integrated, healthy life. Both are forces in the universe, which you tap, or tune into, by establishing truth in your soul. The combination of these two forces brings you into harmony with the state of being which would mean heaven.

QUESTION: Could you talk about masochism?

ANSWER: This has been discussed in previous lectures and looked at in our work. If the entirety of the lectures is understood, and the method of our work is followed through, you will automatically understand the tendency of self-rejection called masochism. To recapitulate briefly, I would say that self-rejection may in some personality structures create a more active process of

masochism. Self-rejection in itself is masochistic. But it is a question of degree. As I have said before, if the sense of one's unworthiness is stronger than the corresponding healthy forces, the only pleasure derived from living is found in pain. I still do not mean physical masochism; it may manifest only on a psychic level, and never physically. When it does manifest physically, it is in a very advanced state.

Since pain through rejection seems the only certain thing that one can rely on, one clings to it and does not want to give it up. Healthy pleasure seems hopelessly unattainable. In other words, masochism is a giving up. If the ego is too weak to prove the world wrong, as it were -- if the person is unable to assert his right to live, love, and to have pleasure -- masochism is the result. The world seems to deny your right of selfhood, and you give in, agreeing with the world, and make pleasure out of pain in a very wrong, unhealthy, self-defeating, and life-defeating way. Giving in and going with the stream, as well as fighting, are healthy processes, but both can be distorted.

Many other elements, too numerous to consider now, are also present. This core can, however, always be found. Until this core can be experienced through extensive self-finding, rather than just listening to my words describing a concept, many other levels have to be explored. On more superficial levels you will find that self-punishment is due to guilt. The self-destructiveness derives from a certain inability to cope with problems, or the inner desire not to cope with them. All the processes of the images we have discussed and found are really processes of masochism, because the images, whose patterns embody a negative tenet that produces a painful result, are inherently self-destructive. If this is enjoyed on some level of the psyche, then we are dealing with masochism, no matter how unaware of the enjoyment or satisfaction one may be.

The real answer can never be found in concepts, no matter how true. Such concepts may be helpful indicators to open the way so that you may experience the truth yourself, but this is all they can be. That is why so often when questions of this sort are asked, there is a feeling of letdown and disappointment with the answer. One expects liberation from the answer -- and no answer can ever give inner liberation. Inner liberation can come only from experiencing these words as truth -- and this can happen only as a result of breaking through your inner resistance step by step. Your path will always lead exactly to where you resist most. If you have the courage to face this and cope with it, you can indeed shorten the process. However, if you shy away from going there, you are bound to make detours, and have to come back to this point of resistance at a later time. Perhaps by then the resistance will have given way, since the unnecessary pain you encounter when you are not in the process will weaken it.

So again I say to you, my friends, examine where you find resistance accompanied by the desire to avoid looking at it. That is the very point, the very threshold you must step through at one time or another before you can become free to unclog the love channel and live a productive life in which you feel useful and know that yours is a meaningful part. Only by tackling what you most want to shy away from will you find the door behind which lies the answer. I cannot emphasize this strongly enough.

QUESTION: In connection with this, I have found that I have always shied away from sex. And I have further discovered that I feel it is a crime. As I went deeper, I discovered that, in reality, sex is pleasure. So I found that for me pleasure is a crime. And so, all along, I have sabotaged

pleasure and joy. Now although I see this and know it, I don't know what to do about it. Can you give me a hint?

ANSWER: Yes, my dear. I believe the next step will give you the answer why you have rejected pleasure. You will then find that you reject pleasure because you reject yourself. I repeat that the knowledge alone will not be sufficient, it has to be experienced in your emotions. The continuation of this work will finally bring you this awareness.

Now, why do you reject yourself? The answer will derive partly from recognitions you have already made, which you will then tie up with this new understanding. Your rejection of happiness, joy, pleasure, life, and love is in reality just a rejection of yourself. This is exactly what I discussed tonight. Begin to investigate what kind of human beings your parents were, as well as others in your family.

QUESTION: In seeking to communicate we must resort to words, of course, and unless we get to the meaning of them, they are lost. The word masochism was used. Along with it comes the opposite term of sadism. Modern schools of psychology rather use the word "algolagnia" to refer to both sadism and masochism, calling one positive, the other negative. How do you regard this?

ANSWER: This is perfectly true. There cannot be one without the other. Both are one current of inflicting pain. The so-called sadistic person inflicts pain on others as a protection for the self -- a pseudo-protection of course. At times, the very same person may find it against his interest to do so. He may then come into conflict with his surroundings; or he may find it to his disadvantage because he fears losing the person he needs, whose love and protection he wants. So he will invert this force that exists in him due to unresolved negative tensions. He cannot simply dispense with it at will, something has to happen with it -- either it goes out to another person, or he directs it to himself. Only the dissolution of this force will stop the sadistic and the masochistic current.

So these two forces are really one and the same. The only difference lies in the direction. In what direction they are used makes very little difference, in the last analysis, because if you hurt someone else, you must eventually hurt yourself. And if you hurt yourself, you must eventually hurt someone else. This is so because this current derives out of blindness, and it must make you blind. Since this current derives from a lack of understanding it will cause you to lose your own capacity to understand. The only difference is in timing -- who is affected first. The secondary reaction is then a delayed one.

Psychology has used certain terms to describe this infliction of pain. Spiritually it is absolutely true that there is this current of cruelty, and no matter toward whom it is directed in the first place, it takes its toll eventually on all concerned. It is very shortsighted to believe that masochism indicates a better character trend than sadism.

I bless each and every one of you, and all my other friends everywhere. May you perceive deep in your heart and mind what I said to you tonight, and may it give you courage and strength to pass through the closed door within yourself, so as to gain light, safety, freedom, and a productive life. It is right there for the asking, so much closer than you think. All you have to do is extend your hand and relinquish your old pseudo-safeties. Be in peace. Be in God!

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