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SELF-FULFILLMENT THROUGH SELF-REALIZATION AS MAN OR WOMAN

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

To fulfill one's life, one must fulfill one's self. Self-fulfillment or self-realization takes place on many levels and in many different areas of one's life. In order to fulfill yourself, you need to find your primary vocation, develop it, grow in and through it, and cultivate it in every possible respect. You also need to find and develop all your potentials -- your individual assets as well as all the general human potentialities with which every living human being is fundamentally endowed. It requires building up the personality and integrating the parts which are free from obstructions into the rest of the personality. In order to do that, it is essential to find and transform the destructive aspects of oneself which obstruct true fulfillment. This is what is meant by self-fulfillment.

All who fulfill themselves contribute something to life. They enrich life not merely by using their vocational abilities but also through their ability to relate to other human beings and have fruitful contacts with them. As self-development proceeds, barriers fall; fear of others, and fear of oneself in connection with others vanishes, and therefore true relatedness becomes possible.

Self-fulfillment also means something much more specific. Humanity consists of men and women. Human beings cannot reach self-fulfillment if they do not fulfill their manhood or their womanhood. This must be the primary aim on which everything else is hinged either very directly or indirectly, which is why I want to discuss this subject in more detail.

These lectures are predominantly destined for those of you who follow this path of intensive self-development, and are meant to affect those areas in you which are not accessible unless such a path is taken. Hence, many of my friends feel an inner echo and an understanding of these words which go beyond a mere intellectual and theoretical grasp of the subject. Sometimes this understanding comes only a bit later, when the necessary layers of consciousness become free. However, all those who do the deep inner work on their path can sooner or later make use of these lectures in an entirely different way than those friends who merely listen and read the lectures. This difference is distinct and real, but can be ascertained only when you know both kinds of understanding. When the inner experience of truth is lacking because self-development in its vital form is not practiced, these lectures may appear either as merely interesting or self-evident material, or far-fetched theory. When you allow yourself to be deeply affected inside your being, then hearing the lecture is a helpful experience that enables you to further transcend yourself, to understand your problems in a more profound way. Self-exploration makes forever new layers of your psyche accessible to your awareness. The lectures are directly aimed at these layers as they come up.

No path of self-realization can exist without bringing forth one's attitude toward one's own manhood or womanhood, and one's approach and attitude to the opposite sex. Many a different

path is taken when a person wants to skirt around this issue, hoping it can be avoided because it is so unpleasant to look at; even the most obvious signs coming from the psyche are disregarded. The greater the resistance to openly face a problem, the more important is it to do so.

You all know the common fact that all human beings possess both masculine and feminine traits. But there is still so much lack of clarity, so much confusion regarding this topic among almost all human beings. There are some people whose conscious concepts are quite reasonable and truthful, but unconsciously almost all human beings harbor some distorted ideas on this subject. These distorted concepts create fear of the other sex and fear of not fulfilling one's proper role as a man or a woman. Such fears are quite naturally barriers that prevent relating to the opposite sex, which is one of the important aspects of self-fulfillment. Relating to other human beings is always a gauge to one's own inner freedom and integration. The relationship between the sexes, which is the most intense form of human communication, is therefore even more influenced by inner conflict and strife.

When a barrier exists to the opposite sex, a similar barrier must primarily exist to oneself regarding one's own sex. When a man fights against his own masculinity and is confused about it, a barrier is created which makes him fight against women. The same applies, of course, to a woman. Age-old misconceptions handed down from one generation to the next have a tragic influence on humanity, particularly in this respect. People either consciously or unconsciously reverse the facts into exact opposites; whatever is healthy, constructive, and good appears as undesirable, and vice versa. Hence their attitude toward themselves is distorted in this respect, and their entire value system suffers from unrealistic reflexes. To be more specific, if the drive toward union is experienced a priori as something wrong, it will inevitably discourage the healthy striving of the soul, so that it will be confused about the union of its masculine and feminine sides and will feel isolating separative tendencies as being more constructive or mature than the unitive drive. Hence one fears all natural impulses toward union. One fears the self which produces the impulses and then, as a protection, one creates a barrier to the opposite sex. This not only separates man from woman, but it splits the great cosmic force within, separating affection from the procreative urge. When human beings experience the sex force as something wrong, regardless of how unconscious this feeling may be, they must fear their own sex, fear themselves as men or women. They must distrust themselves in this respect. They can never afford to be free and spontaneous; instead they constantly hold themselves in check. How can true overall growth occur with such inner timidity and lack of freedom? How can an entity learn an all-encompassing love which knows no barriers?

The universe strives toward union in every possible respect. All the forces of nature and all the forces within the human being reach out toward union on all levels of being. But where there is error and blindness, fear must come into existence and consequently this universal flow must stop, and thereby evolution is halted.

One of the tragic human conflicts is that human beings desperately yearn for their fulfillment as men and women through union with their counterparts, and often equally desperately they flee from union in unreasonable fear. This fear, without which the tragic conflict would not exist, is unnecessary. It is as though nature constantly showed that the happiness of self-fulfillment is a part of life which cannot be denied and should not be squashed. But humanity in its blindness and false modesty does not understand. It misinterprets this benign voice that invites it to follow its blissful destiny, and often ascribes it to "the devil's temptation." As long as human beings cannot

discriminate between what is constructive and destructive, they must be in a tragic and unnecessary conflict that obstructs their self-realization.

Life speaks so clearly, but human beings, impregnated with false concepts, do not hear or see. For example, my friends on the path experience again and again that whenever a real insight or deep recognition is made, a surge of new strength and energy, joy of life, hopefulness and brightness come forth. And also, specifically, the erotic element manifests in this experience; it is an integral and inseparable part of the life force. So whenever you gain truth about yourself, a channel opens within you, tuning you into this life-giving force. Only when misgivings, apprehension, and the old, as yet unresolved problems regain an upper hand, will this channel close up, leaving you once again separate. Then stagnation and gray hopelessness set in again. But when you move in truth, you are enveloped by and permeated with the vibrant, life-giving force that knows no barriers and no fear.

When you ponder this phenomenon, you must come to the realization that what I say here is truth. If truth brings eros, and eros brings union, and these three make fear, distrust and insecurity disappear, life's unity is plain to see and the untruth of concepts which have bred separateness becomes evident. If you truly meditate on this topic you personally will make some very significant recognitions.

The world harbors many untruthful ideas about what is specifically masculine and feminine, making it even more difficult to overcome the basic fear of transcending oneself in union with the other sex. Each sex feels unfairly put upon and resents its own supposed disadvantages, competing with the other sex for its advantages. Hence men secretly envy women for their privileged position of not having to fight to quite the same degree as the man has to in order to survive. A man feels that his responsibilities are heavier, that his failure to be successful is much more indicative of his personal failure and that more is expected of him. Women, in turn, envy men their privileged position of having greater freedom, of being considered by the world as the superior sex. But these envies and resentments are superficial in comparison with the deeper fear of losing oneself.

Many distinctions between the sexes are arbitrary and unrealistic, but there are also some which are true and are wholeheartedly embraced by the healthy person. The more these true distinctions are embraced, the smaller is the barrier between the self and one's sexual role and, consequently, the more complete the union with the opposite sex. Such lack of anxiety, lack of distrust and absence of barriers sets a healthy flow in motion which causes the entity to come out of itself and be capable of the true relatedness which makes the distinctions and differences disappear. In rare moments of bliss, this can be experienced right in this life on earth. The disappearance of distinction between the sexes is not to be confused with its distorted counterpart in which men become feminine and women masculine. You all know that every divine truth can be distorted; so it is here. Fear of one's own sex and therefore of the opposite sex leads one to level off the difference by diminishing one's own masculinity and femininity and assuming the traits of the very sex one fights against. However, embracing yourself as the sex you represent -- and consequently becoming more able to embrace the other sex -- makes you more masculine or more feminine, unifies you through acceptance, understanding, strength, love, and truth.

To recapitulate: the fear of losing himself is the main barrier a man puts up against his masculinity. He fears self-loss not only because the necessary discipline of fulfilling his responsibilities in life appears as a disadvantage and sacrifice and therefore as loss of self. He also

fears having to let go of himself in a full relationship. It seems to him that his discipline will have to be given up, which he considers perilous. Therefore, he is confused by thinking that he has to choose between discipline and the ability to let go of himself. In his fear and misconception, he uses both in the wrong way. He holds on where letting go would be productive and harmonious and he refuses discipline and self-responsibility where this would be functional for his self-realization. If one is out of kilter, one's entire inner balance must be upset. To the degree a man learns to be responsible for himself in the true, deeper sense of the word, to that degree must his fear of letting go of himself disappear; then letting go of himself and disciplining himself both function in a unifying way. Any person who remains isolated behind barriers also practices both these inner activities of discipline and letting go, but in reverse, which necessarily impedes self-fulfillment.

The same fear applies to a woman, but from a different angle. A woman fears the apparent helplessness of giving herself up, of surrendering herself. She thereby defeats her femininity and in the end becomes more helpless and dependent. The more control she exerts, and the more false discipline she uses in order to prevent the dreaded self-loss, the weaker and more dependent she becomes on other levels of her personality. She either becomes emotionally dependent in her excessive need of being loved and approved, or mentally dependent in order to excel over others, or even physically and materially dependent. Her resourcefulness as a human being suffers to the degree that she defeats and discourages the functioning of her femininity. So she, too, fluctuates between discipline and letting go of herself, exercising both in the wrong way and thereby prohibiting her self-fulfillment. When a man refuses responsibility, not only in his vocational or everyday life, but more specifically in his emotional life, out of fear of carrying too great a burden, he burdens himself more and simultaneously isolates himself from all that his spirit yearns for. When a woman refuses the apparent helplessness of self-surrender by exerting an artificial and unhealthy control, she becomes even more helpless, while at the same time isolating herself and forfeiting her destiny. For such is the spiritual law.

In a healthy state, the two primary aspects of discipline and of letting go -- they might well be termed as the prototypes of masculine and feminine aspects -- exist in both sexes but are arrived at from opposite sides. When a man accepts his full responsibility on all levels of his being, with all that this entails, he can then let go of himself without danger. When a woman does not out of fear, pride, and self-will fight her destiny, she must gain the strength and selfhood which give her full security in herself. She finds herself by losing herself. He loses himself by finding himself. And they are both the same!

When discipline and letting go of oneself occur through wisdom, truth, strength, freedom, and love, the result is unity and self-fulfillment. Harmony with the universal forces is established; continuous supply of the life force regenerates and unifies all levels of the personality. When discipline and letting go of oneself occur through blindness, weakness, fear, lack of inner freedom, and error, the result must be separateness and stagnation.

These two principles might be visualized as the primary motivating cosmic forces of the human entity. It all depends on the manner in which they are used. The disharmony caused by the misuse of these forces creates unrest and inner worry. For the deep knowledge that the soul cannot fulfill itself to its maximum potential, that it is missing out on what is available for all beings, can never be entirely squelched. It is only a question of understanding the inner message.

These words are, of course, very theoretical and abstract; just reading or hearing them merely opens you up to a philosophical concept. But when you are seriously engaged in doing the pathwork, you will fill in the gaps by deep personal experience of how these words apply to you, in what way, and why. Many of my friends have already made very important recognitions in this respect.

The masculine and feminine principles of discipline and strength versus self-surrender and letting go of the self meet in the last analysis and become one. Each becomes the other and each helps the other to integrate more fully and harmoniously. Through healthy strength, flexible discipline, and mature self-responsibility the entity becomes strong enough not to fear self-surrender, and wise enough not to do so indiscriminately. Through healthy, relaxed openness and outgoingness, the personality finds the strength and discipline required to live productively in union, by living self-sufficiently as an individual.

To begin establishing this benign cycle of interflowing movement between the masculine and the feminine principles, you have to determine your specific fears first. This is not always easy, for they are so hidden. They manifest subtly and yet distinctly once you begin to be aware of them. Try to ascertain to what extent and in what respect you fear and resent the role of your own sex, and therefore avoid contact with the opposite sex. Examine what you believe are the injustices, which you unconsciously exaggerate in order to hold on to yourself, so as not to risk the danger of self-forgetting. This is a much more fundamental aspect of the problem than the more superficial rebellion against sexual injustice. Try to reach the level of awareness in which a much deeper fear of losing yourself exists. Once you are aware of it, you can truly examine and overcome the obstructing fear which divides you within yourself.

You may well argue that it is justified to be on guard. Aren't many people out to take advantage of one's love, or one's need to love and be loved? Doesn't self-forgetting create stronger needs which may be frustrated? Does this not mean more intense pain when rejection occurs? The answer to the first question is yes. It is true that many people are too childishly selfish not to abuse openness and outgoingness, especially if the latter is blind and comes from wishful thinking. The answer to the other two questions is no. Healthy involvement does not bring more pain than isolation. Fulfilling one's needs only partially does not make them more stringent than when they are denied altogether.

There is a never-failing key to this problem however, which, when used, will eliminate the conflict. It makes possible to use cautious wisdom while not having to hold on to yourself and thus restrain your best qualities and outgoing forces. Once you have found and used this key, your life must change drastically. The key is the willingness to see the reality, even if you do not welcome it.

If you are unaware of your needs or their intensity because you have displaced them, this blindness to them must make you equally blind to other people around you who are supposed to fulfill your needs. Using this key is nowhere near an insurmountable feat. It is very possible to utilize it. Becoming aware of your needs and their original direction and force directly leads you to an awareness of how much others are capable or willing to fulfill them. If you can face these facts, being able to first stand the possible frustration of your will, then wisdom and perception of truth will forever be your guiding lights, showing you to what extent it is reasonable and productive in any given instance to have expectations, and therefore to let go of yourself. Basically, most human

beings fight, often blindly, against four inner conditions. These are: (1) the lack of awareness of real and specific needs; (2) the extent and urgency of such needs; (3) the frequent lack of awareness of specifically who is supposed to fulfill the needs and in what particular way, since all the original desires have been displaced; (4) the extent of the ability or disability, the willingness or unwillingness, of the other person to satisfy your needs to the full extent. Because you do not have clarity on these four points, your relationships become fraught with friction, with misunderstandings, with hurts, with real or imagined rejections. This must lead to withdrawal in one form or another. Yet, if you are aware of these four aspects, even if only to a partial degree, you will become instantly capable of evaluating the interaction between yourself and the others in question. The intensity of your need may not be automatically diminished, but to the degree that you are aware of your need, it will become bearable. As it becomes bearable, you no longer need illusion and wishful thinking. You can look the truth in the face and accept what is, no matter how imperfect or how far it is from what you wish at present. Your blind needs issue blind, unconscious demands which are often quite impossible to fulfill. The moment you are aware of your need, you can also envisage the fact that someone else may be personally unsuited for filling your need and you may relinquish your demands. No longer displacing your needs will generally mature you sufficiently to be able to tolerate frustration if need be. This discipline of self-awareness and the self-responsibility of facing the real situation makes you grow; it inevitably increases your self-respect, self-liking, and gives you a sense of security in yourself.

Apart from the frequent unreasonableness of unconscious excessive demands on your part, it may also happen that your demands are in themselves quite reasonable, but other people may be driven into a different direction and are incapable of fulfilling them. This has nothing to do with rejecting you. Once you truly see the truth and gain the insight into these interplays, the freedom you will have gained cannot be measured in words. Your ability to observe yourself and consequently others in a spirit of objective detachment, ascertaining trouble spots without guilt or anger, is the healthiest way conceivable of practicing discipline and self-responsibility. In this way you can face the reality of the relationship in question and your fear will vanish. If you can accept a "no" without becoming an angry or hurt child within yourself, then your independence and self-respect should consistently grow and give you sufficient security to truly let go to an extent that is the appropriate and healthy one at any given phase of your life. The limits, however, are not set by mechanisms of fear and distrust, but are simply one's presently active potentials in this respect. Your present readiness to tolerate the frustration of your will and to relinquish it if need be, together with your ability to face what is, rather than closing your eye in wishful thinking and persisting in applying a forcing current because you do not wish to give up your will, as well as your capacity to objectively evaluate the unreasonableness of your demands, will open the flow of true relating.

So, my friends, let us briefly recapitulate: self-fulfillment is dependent on fulfilling yourself as a man or a woman. Both manhood and womanhood can only be fulfilled by recognizing your barriers to and fears of the full functioning of your manhood or womanhood. This recognition will make it clear that the barrier to the other sex must go. In order to accomplish this, determine and experience the extent of your fear or your holding back which are a result of your blindness and unwillingness to objectively evaluate others and yourself. Even those who are most actively engaged in the work of this path and have made most remarkable progress are as yet utterly unaware of the strength of their unreasonable demands and commands that, like the rest of humanity, they issue into their surroundings. It is all so easily rationalized, covered up, explained away. But if you can only bear to look at the raw demands you issue forth, if you can just face that, my dearest friends,

you will no longer fear the demands others make on you because then, and only then, can you cope with them. If you can look at these raw demands of yours with a little laughter at your childishness, you can begin to evaluate the situation in relation to reason, justice, and fairness. A large step will be taken forward if this capacity is acquired; a step leading directly to freedom from fear, distrust, insecurity, isolation, separateness, and stagnation. Such objectivity must open the door to full relating and living, to that immeasurable happiness which every individual human soul so desperately yearns for.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that you need to look at your demands without excuses. Then you will be able to withstand the demands of others. Do you not know that your unconscious excessive demands make you prone to the unconscious excessive demands of others? And these two forces make a real relatedness absolutely impossible. For as long as lack of awareness of one's own needs creates excessive one-sided demands, disappointment and fear must create a barrier of separateness. Follow through this sequence, my dearest friends.

Are there any questions?

QUESTION: Our demands are so hard to find. We all know that we have them, and yet it is very hard to find what they are.

ANSWER: It is not as hard as you think if you approach it in the following way: Whenever there is friction between you and others, look at your naked feelings by asking yourself what you expect of the other, what you would want, or what you fear that they would demand or want from you. If you look at confused, disturbed, and disharmonious feelings, you must dare to let out the irrational and have the courage to allow your unreasonable inner child to manifest on the surface. To the extent you can do so, you will gain information about your innermost self, unadorned by superimposed rationalizations. In this way you will find your demands and be able to subsequently come to terms with them. Face your anger about the fact that your demands often remain unfulfilled. Also face your apprehension of other people's demands on you which may vaguely feel like a stream rushing toward you. The more you realize what your own demands are, the better you can cope with those silent, subtle currents of demands flowing toward you which in the past have made you compulsive, guilty, confused, and wavering.

A disharmonious mood will so often yield information about unconscious needs and demands, either your own or those of others you feel you cannot cope with. Sometimes both occur. It is impossible to cope with something whose existence one consciously ignores and only feels it as a dull, vague force. The minute you can pinpoint in clear-cut terms what you previously did not dare to acknowledge because it was uncomfortable or beneath your dignity to do so, you will become strong and capable. The procedure is simple, provided you take the daring step to own up to your unreasonable feelings and requests, your unfair demands, and your childish selfishness. Let the irrational voice reach your surface awareness. View it with a little distance and detachment and a maximum of honesty. You are all so indoctrinated with a compulsion to cover up this little voice. Relatedness, the true flow of union, is determined directly by the following chain-reaction: facing the selfish, greedy child within you brings liberation, dignity, and strength which, in turn, makes it possible to relate in the most satisfying way. Thus you will truly become men and women, each fulfilling the destiny of your own sex.

The factors discussed in this lecture appear to be far apart from one another. On the one hand, I discussed self-fulfillment in a cosmic sense; on the other, I spoke about the immediacy of the selfish child dwelling to some extent in all individuals. But these two aspects of human life are so interwoven, so interconnected! Only when you honestly face this inner little child, as it truly exists, can it begin to grow beyond itself and into its spiritual potentials. Its growth will enable you to dare take personal risks. You will no longer have to hold on to self-protective behavior in the pseudo-safety of isolation. However, you cannot risk revealing yourself if you cannot trust others. How can you trust others if you do not even know what they ask of you and what you ask of them? And how can you trust yourself if you persist in blinding yourself to your real needs, to your demands that come from the childish voice within you that keeps demanding more, angrily and endlessly? Only when you know this aspect of yourself can you trust yourself. Only when you perceive reality around you and in others, at least as far as your needs are concerned, can you come to terms with reality and trust your ability to do so. When you are capable of enduring the frustration of your will with equanimity and harmony, you can indeed trust life, and therefore you can relate well to others and fulfill yourself. What is more, you are then equipped to find the partner you need because your eyes are open. You do not keep them deliberately shut because you prefer to cling to a rosy illusion due to your unwillingness to tolerate frustration. So, my friends, look at this inevitable chain reaction.

It would be useful if my friends participated more actively in the discussions following the lectures. That you do not do so is to your detriment. Even if you have not reached these specific levels of awareness in your private work, it is possible to study the lectures and determine when you are confused and in what respect you remain unresponsive. Determining this will prove very revealing for your immediate problems. When you come with a question about something you do not really understand, the answer may help to open the way. Even if there is no personal inner response to something said in a lecture, that should not in the least deter you from participating; quite to the contrary, it should furnish you with material for participation.

Now, my dearest friends, study, meditate, and try to assimilate in your work the material I have given to you. Even if you can experience these words only to a partial extent, what you gain can still mean the beginning of a new life as well as a new inner understanding of self-fulfillment. For only when you are fulfilled can you contribute to life in the true sense of the word. People can contribute to life through their work, but this still leaves something to be desired. Some spark of aliveness will be missing if the self is not fulfilled. For this is indeed the life-flow without which all actions, all contributions to living remain somewhat stale.

Be blessed, every one of you. Receive love and strength from the universal forces which are all around you and deep within you, if you but tap this source through doing the inner work of such a path as this. Be in peace, be in God!

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