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WINNER VERSUS LOSER: INTERPLAY BETWEEN THE SELF AND CREATIVE FORCES

Greetings, my dearest friends. God bless every one of you. Blessed be this lecture.

Last time we discussed the arbitrary either/or concepts that all human beings harbor. They are the very fences that hold you imprisoned. Now I want to discuss one of your greatest limitations, one of the most common either/or concepts: the attitude toward life of winning versus losing. According to this concept, being a winner means to be ruthless, selfish, to trample and triumph over others and belittle them. There is no room for consideration, kindness, or sympathy. If these emotions were allowed, one would fear to become a loser. Being a loser means to be unselfish, self-sacrificing, good, kind, and considerate. Some people adopt one alternative, some the other, but all fear the consequences of the opposite choice. Neither one of the two choices is "better" or "worse" than the other: both contain the identical misconception, and the results of both are loneliness, resentment, self-pity, self-contempt, and frustration.

When two people involved in a relationship have adopted opposing choices, the relationship must be fraught with friction to the point of hopelessness. Each resents in the other what he or she fears and fights in himself. The "winner" fears impulses of genuine affection as much as fearing weakness and desire for dependency. The loser fears the resentments and the selfish impulses because the striving for goodness according to false, limited concepts and rigid outer rules -- especially when combined with private pseudo-solutions -- may produce a need for total approval from others. Thus the "loser" may be unable to stand any form of criticism, even if it is unjustified. What these two resent most in the other is their own hidden tendency toward the opposite choice.

Most human beings harbor this false concept at least in some measure. Some experience it as a general overall climate in their life, others only in certain areas. They have a vague feeling which, translated into concise words, would be, "If I cannot have what I want, I must lose," or, "In order not to lose, I must be tough and disregard others." The latter is convinced of ultimately losing too, unless he or she is willing to sacrifice the need for human warmth, appreciation and love. This is a high price to pay, even if it were true that then one could win. But because one never allows oneself to relax, to let one's guard down, to let go, the "winner" cannot experience that the sacrifice of human warmth is motivated by a false idea. The "winner" believes that there is a chance to win at the cost of crippling one's very being. Since this is no way to victory, the negativity increases and one begins to doubt one's self, one's strength, one's adequacy.

It is of great importance in this phase of the pathwork to detect the subtle climate which causes you to assume, anticipate, and therefore either fight in an unproductive way against losing, or resign yourself to it. Do you feel you have to be the cruel one, in order not to be the poor, stupid one? Or do you resign yourself to the latter role, priding yourself on your decency, while you are

merely not daring to defy the world and the rules which seem to decree that goodness means deprivation? In both attitudes, guilt and uncertainty are inevitable. The "winner" makes strenuous demands on the self which are not only impossible to realize, but destructive for all concerned. The "loser", on the other hand, makes demands upon the world and on others to reward the self for the sacrificed happiness. Since the "loser" does not go out to obtain his or her own fulfillment, others must obtain it for him and offer it as a reward for the self-sacrifice and "goodness." This demand cannot be fulfilled.

This "win or lose" concept is tragically wrong. It is so unnecessary. It is tragic because what you deeply believe must appear to be true, since you have started out to shape your behavior according to this belief. As you know, images always appear to confirm their wrong conclusions. Whether you sacrifice human decency in order to gain your rights and fulfillments, or whether you sacrifice the latter in order to gain the former, you must lose.

The belief that only these two alternatives exist is wrong and very limiting: it is indeed possible to assert your rights and to reach out for what you want without being cruel or depriving anyone of anything. In fact, it is necessary to reach out for what you want. But when you are convinced of your limited wrong conclusion, it must make you feel guilty as you reach out for what you wish -- hence a subtle no-current will barricade the way.

By the same token, it is possible occasionally to forfeit your own immediate advantage for the sake of a loved one, without forever giving up all your rights and advantages. It is indeed possible to say yes to your own happiness without saying no to consideration of others. The more you are convinced on all levels of your being of this truth, the less conflict will there be between the advantages of the self and those of others. The more you embrace reality and widen your horizon, the more you break through the barrier which presents reality as much harder and harsher than it actually is. The either/or choices shed a dismal light on life. Both are poor and between the two it is impossible to find the right decision. Neither alternative is preferable. To discover that this kind of choice does not have to be made brings incredible liberation from guilt, unhappiness, frustration, from helplessly waiting for something that others can never provide. It frees you from weakness and dependency, from the need to belittle and to triumph over others. When this widened outlook on life is assimilated by your innermost consciousness, peace and certainty must fill you.

For some of you, my friends, it is possible to feel the subtle climate of the hidden atmosphere of either/or. Extended progress on your path has brought you face to face with the climate you emanate. Although it is very distinct, it will not be immediately accessible to your awareness until and unless you have explored the depths of your innermost self.

When you have reached this awareness and found the areas in which you take the limitation to two equally undesirable choices -- and the resulting hopelessness about winning or obtaining fulfillment -- for granted, you will clearly understand why you are unfulfilled in certain areas, why you have difficulties, and why life is so hard and so fraught with anxiety. It is this very negative, false idea creates the hardship. Bring out into the open how such a false concept of life exerts its influence on you. Translate your emotional reactions into concise words. Analyze their significance and then compare the result with those areas of your life where you are healthier and fulfilled because you are in reality.

Coming face to face with the inner expectancy of ending up as a "loser" one way or another is a crucial step in the evolution of an individual. The full realization of your limited outlook signifies a major inner transition, and the result is the giving up of the limited choice. It means knowing the truth that love and self-assertion can coexist -- in fact, they are interdependent. You can then envisage the many other choices you have on any given issue. You will then see how the truth has always existed -- that reaching out for what should be yours, without hesitancy and guilt, and at the same time opening yourself up to the other person, no longer appear as contradictions. In fact, you must then experience that the more you open yourself up for your own fulfillment, the more you embrace that of others, being willing to grant and give it to them. Conversely, the less you feel you deserve fulfillment yourself, closing up to it because of false concepts, the more you automatically prevent the fulfillment of others. You must then deprive others in order to fulfill yourself, for how can you give them the fulfillment that you feel you have no right to receive? After this particular transition, you once again experience the great truth that does away with mutual exclusiveness. From an either/or consciousness you change into one of fullness and inclusiveness.

My advice is to examine your winner/loser conflict as your general attitude toward life, as well as in specific areas of your personality. Humanity's tendency to escape reality is often not based on the fear of facing unpleasant aspects, but, just as often and on a deeper level, on people's fear of happiness, fulfillment, and fullness of living. In order to realize personal expansion and self-expression with its concomitant bliss, it is necessary to tap one's own inner resources and to find the well of divine strength deep within the psyche, with all its truth and love. Yet this seems such an impossible and dangerous undertaking for many that they pretend that life is dismal and hopeless, clinging to others to sustain and save them, rather than forfeit this false salvation. They can then flatter themselves that they are realistic, because it often appears more realistic to accept suffering and pain than to allow for constructive living and the possibility of happiness, which is all too often regarded as unrealistic. For many, it is so much harder to face the fact that life could be meaningful and beautiful, because accepting that requires the courage to look at the truth within the self.

To the degree that truth is faced and understood, you become a creator of your own life, thereby continuing the creative process of the universe. There is no limit to how far you can go in expressing beauty, wisdom, happiness, fulfillment, productivity -- for yourself and for others. To the degree that you liberate yourself from either/or concepts, fear gives way to truth, and you expand. Your psychic life processes reach out, your individuality stretches and expresses the potential beauty of life. Your readiness to express the dynamic process of life in its marvel and bliss must make bliss a reality, for you have become receptive to truth.

To realize this it is important to understand and express the proper balance between the self and the universal powers that are constantly at work in any creative process. How do they interact with the self? To what extent is the self engaged? To what extent are universal powers engaged? This equilibrium is essential for the creative process, whether this means the creation of a living being, the creation of art or science, a relationship, or the particular manner, style, and atmosphere of your personal fate. Wherever creation takes place, universal powers must be at work.

People are often confused in this respect. They sense that without these creative powers nothing of value can come into existence. On the other hand, every enlightened philosophy teaches that men and women are the masters of their fate and must create their lives in accordance with their personal inclinations. Happiness or unhappiness is the result of the personality, of beliefs,

attitudes and concepts. Again, you are confronted with an either/or: you believe that you must make a choice between either disregarding these creative powers and trusting the outer mind and will, which cannot get you very far, or not trusting the self at all, and externalizing the universal powers into an outer deity, which must let you down. Both alternatives are disappointing, because they are the result of misunderstanding, exclusiveness and limitation and result further in the inability to either trust the self or God. The balance between the self-directing mind and the creative universal powers is upset the moment the choice becomes a question of one versus the other.

In order to comprehend the proper balance, it is necessary to understand the function of both. The part of the self is to want the right, constructive thing. I do not speak in moralistic terms. I refer to any simple human fulfillment that you deeply yearn for. You are supposed to experience it, but you can't if you have been conditioned to believe that personal happiness is selfish, will extract from you a price you are incapable of paying, or which seems excessive. Happiness must further not only individual self-expression, expansion, and the inner manifestation of the divine, but must do the same also for others around such a happy person. If you manifest your inherent potential, everything and everyone you come in contact with must be positively affected. The more intense the contact, the greater the effect. This applies to happiness of every kind, not just to some socially approved forms.

A superficial desire for fulfillment is not enough. Taking for granted that you want it because it seems the obvious aim is not enough. Leaving the desire in a hazy, unformulated fog is not enough. All unconscious countercurrents, all misconceptions, must be dislodged. I have often said that the more tense and strenuous your desire, the more an unconscious countercurrent must exist. Truly and relaxedly wanting the desirable result can only happen when you find and remove unconscious reservations, limitations, doubts, and opposite desires. If you are afraid of not obtaining the desired result, you must somewhere in your psyche fear the desired result. Finding this contradiction means great liberation and a giant step closer to the fulfillment.

You may ask why you should fear happiness. You may fear the abandonment to it, or that bliss will make you lose control of yourself. You may fear the obligation accruing from it. Or, you may fear your inadequacy to obtain or maintain it. Wanting a goal does not exclude the fact that in your unconscious something says no to it. So, when I say that the self's part in the mutual interplay between the self and the creative powers is the wholehearted wanting of happiness, that is not always as simple as it sounds. How it is wanted, what soul movements accompany this wanting, has first to be determined. In order to get to this point, two factors are necessary: the first is exploring your most subtle reactions, where and why you say no to what you want most. You must know that you say no in some fashion if the result remains unrealized. The second factor is to clearly express in so many words, with your whole being, that this is what you want. Observe your inner reflexes as you do so. Are you relaxed when you express it? Do you assume that it is possible, or do you assume that it is impossible? If you can give yourself truthful answers to these questions by observing your soul-movements, you are closer to eliminating the obstructions than when you ignore them and believe yourself free from any countercurrents.

Apart from this relaxed wanting, without urgency, compulsion, tension and fear, it is necessary for the self to know the truth, as we discussed in the lecture on that subject.¹ If you wish a particular

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fulfillment and do not have it -- whether it be an overall issue, like success in a career, health, a fruitful mutuality, good friends, liberation from an inner problem, or a link in the chain toward attaining any of these results, the finding and dissolving of obstructions, of attitudes that hinder you -- you must know that experiencing the fulfillment is within the scheme of Creation. It is good and right for all concerned, and there is nothing destructive or wrong about it. You must contemplate its effects on yourself and others from every conceivable point of view in order to convince yourself that your wishing and striving for fulfillment is constructive. You must see that every generalization you have made about why you were not supposed to be entitled to it, was -- perhaps because a mass image prohibited it -- without any justification, logic, or meaning.

This conviction will strengthen your desire and will remove the false guilt which made you choose deprivation. It will enable you to firmly declare that you want to have fulfillment and you know it depends on you to obtain it. You not only want it, but know that you are going to have it and that you must have it to the extent that you remove doubt and negativity. Declare that its results must be beneficial for yourself and for others. Visualize how this will be so. Strengthen your will to remove all obstructions within yourself, all false ideas that keep you fenced in. To the degree that you are relaxed and determined in such a declaration, you approach the fulfillment, because to the same degree you are living up to your end of the bargain. With such a commitment you automatically set the creative powers in motion. This must produce results, which then justify entrusting yourself to this creative process. You then trust your ability to fulfill your role, and you trust these powers to do theirs. The more you trust, the better results you will have, so that you have more reason to trust, and a benign cycle is established.

Moreover, it is necessary for the self to summon, deliberately and consciously, the universal forces, not only to help, guide, and inspire you to fulfill your part of the partnership and to remove all obstructions and reservations, but to make the thing, whatever it is, grow. These powers can be set in motion only by consciousness. One has the choice of letting the motion happen automatically, allowing one's unconscious attitude to affect the creative life force, or one can deliberately articulate the direction in which one wants the creative force to work. The self-directing mind sets the universal forces in motion; they respond according to the direction set by consciousness. Once this is done, once the personality fulfills the necessary conditions, the universal forces take over and know exactly what to do in any given moment.

It should become clear that there is no contradiction between your being taught that you are responsible for your fate and also that powers beyond your scope and resourcefulness must complete the creative process. Compare yourself with a gardener who must prepare the soil, but who does not make the plant grow. Preparing your own consciousness is like the gardener preparing the soil. Eliminating wrong concepts is analogous to the gardener pulling up weeds. Removing your blocks is like removing rocks in the soil that hinder the spreading of the roots and later the plants. Implanting truthful concepts compares to planting the seeds. Cultivating the proper attitude and patiently waiting until the seed has taken root and can sprout compares to the gardener tending the soil, seeing that it has sufficient light, moisture, and nourishment. The gardener thus fulfills his job, calling the creative process into existence, making it possible for it to take place. But it is not the gardener who possesses the ability to make a tree out of a seed, or a fruit or a flower. If he wants a certain plant, he must sow the proper seed, but it is not up to him to accomplish the growth. There is nothing in the world he can do to actually bring about the seed

developing into the plant. A creative process is at work that requires his cooperation. There are certain conditions he alone can fulfill, but he then must let nature do its job.

You often wish for a specific result, but what you sow is the seed for the very opposite result. This causes distrust of life. Seeing how you bring forth exactly what was sown, even the negative results, must strengthen your confidence in the principle of the creative process.

The same principle prevails in the healing process of the body. When you cut your skin, you have to wash the wound so that no dirt can prevent the healing process from taking place. You tend the wound to help the healing forces take their course.

When you regard any creative process on the physical, mental, or spiritual level, you must find the same principle, the same interrelationship. There always is a period of growth, its duration depending on the kind of seed planted. It is the same on the mental level. When you plant the seed of an outcome that your innermost self cannot quite accept, or where powerful countercurrents have existed for a considerable time, then the period of incubation, of quiet growth beneath the surface, is longer than when you plant something that your consciousness is ready for. You often despair and cease to trust, because having ignored the period of growth, you have torn out the seed you have planted.

The mutual interaction between the self and the creative forces establishes a perfect balance between the activity of the self -- fulfilling all the necessary conditions -- and passivity -- letting the universal powers do their work, entrusting the self to them with a full letting go of the self in total commitment.

When you find the right balance, there will be no fulfillment missing in your life. There will be harmony in your soul. You will not be overactive, thinking you have to do it all, nor will you be overpassive, entrusting yourself to a false, externalized God, who is supposed to do the work for you. The proper balance is perfect activity in a relaxed, unstrained, stimulating, harmonious way. Perfect self-responsibility comes from the recognition that you are the master of your life and that how you prepare the soil depends on you. This goes with a proper sense of limitation of your functions and powers, and the humility to entrust the self to powers that are beyond the confines of the self. Such an attitude enlarges the self and its powers, because it uses the life force as it is meant to be used, with proper recognition of the creation which constantly takes place within you and around you.

You set the creative process in motion in a marvelous way when you know that the perfect possibility exists as a potential, and therefore as a still unrealized fact. This knowing makes it possible for the potential to be realized and for the creative powers to enter into you as you remove the wall of doubt, fear, and ignorance. There comes a point when you actually feel and experience this wall and you can slide it away, opening yourself to Creation with its manifold possibilities. This act is first feared, later tentatively tried, and then experienced as the key to selfhood. The self is realized in choosing accountability and letting go of the tightness in the mind, as you commit and give yourself fully.

Usually a reverse situation exists. The little ego is lazy, unwilling to assume the necessary responsibility or accountability, unwilling to do what must be done in order to obtain a desirable

result, to lead a meaningful existence. Where activity should reign, passivity prevails. Where the ego must let go and allow cosmic intelligence to create what is needed, it is busy, distrusting, and holding itself together in a tight knot.

When the individual re-establishes the balance, fences dissolve, and the expansion of the self becomes as limitless as you know the universe to be. You can realize these limitless potentials. This is a truth, not wishful thinking or evasion of the self.

When you meditate, my friends, embrace a truthful concept first in the outer regions of your mind as you remove the underlying obstructions and no-currents. Gradually the knowing of the truth will spread to the inner layers of your being, so that your psyche, like a beautiful flower, will unfold in the rays of the sun. As each layer is soaked through with truth, it is nourished with a new vitality flowing through the organism. In hours of deep recognition, this can be distinctly felt. Where you were first tightly laced in, you open up to the liberation and light that the infusion of truth always brings about.

Are there any questions? Is everything I said clear?

QUESTION: Not really. I've heard that when one prays over plants, they come up better than the plants one leaves alone. When I plant in my subconscious what I really want, I still feel that it can't come up. My doubt makes me feel that I cannot do it, even when I enlist the universal forces.

ANSWER: That is because you feel a loser. In the first place, let me help you understand what prayer really means. It means straightening out your own consciousness, as well as your unconscious attitudes, concepts, thoughts, and feelings. The truly integrated spirit would not need to pray or meditate. Every breath would be a prayer in that it would be an expression of the entire personality, which is at one with truth, love, purposefulness, creation -- with all the universal forces which would inevitably flow through the entire being in a most constructive way. Prayer means shaping a loose mass of hazy thoughts and concepts, of contradictory emotions. It means impregnating the self with truth, so that the individual knows the truth and the universal forces can automatically flow through this consciousness.

As to your doubt, it is important for you to establish that you are afraid of giving up the doubt. Needless to say, this is due to a wrong conclusion. But there is a very distinct reason that you feel threatened and truly endangered without the doubt. It is as though doubt were an indispensable weapon for you. Battling doubt directly in the way you have been trying, will hardly be successful, because you are too afraid of letting go of it. It is necessary to establish first that you fear giving up the doubt and, second, the specific wrong conclusion about why you do so. Ask yourself in your meditations, "Why do I want to doubt? What is it that I fear would happen if I had no doubt?"

It will help all of you, my friends to realize that you hold on to doubt because you fear making a commitment. You must understand the extent of such a fear more profoundly, with all its consequences. Committing and entrusting oneself to the universal powers -- as well as to any person or cause -- is feared because disappointment is taken for granted. So the individual plays a game, acting as though the possibility of a favorable outcome were there, but not really believing it.

The doubt is so strong that one is not even willing to take a chance. The doubt means, "I pretend to expect a maybe, but I am convinced of a no, which I am unwilling to face so that I can go on pretending." Because of the game, the fallacy of the no as well as of the maybe can never be proven. The person remains perpetually in a temporary state, on the fringes of being and living, never settling down to serious living, to confronting any issue wholly and truthfully. Such a person continually dabbles in theory, rather than putting theory into practice.

Commitment is a very important topic, for you will get out of life exactly as much as you commit yourself to, whether this means shaping and creating your life by committing yourself to the universal forces to cooperate with you, or whether this means committing to an undertaking, to a person, or to a relationship. It makes no difference what it is. If you only commit yourself with reservations, watching that you remain "safe," bargaining and holding back, life will pay you back exactly to that degree. Life cannot be cheated or deceived, ever. And this is where the person who keeps believing that one can "get by" is blind. Holding back, you hope that life will first give you a big slice, and then, maybe, you can muster the willingness to give back a crumb. You may even give much more than is constructive or helpful to others, out of the unconscious motive of cheating life, to get more from it than you are willing to commit yourself to. It does not work that way, my friends.

You fear a wholehearted commitment, because you falsely believe that it demands giving up your intelligence, your rights, your self-preservation, your ability to choose, your self-determination. That is not true. It simply means full integrity, direct purpose, no evasions, uncovered motivations, doing the thing for its own sake, without subterfuge. It does not mean blind foolishness and most certainly, it does not create helplessness in the face of abuse. Quite the contrary. Full commitment presupposes wide-awake choosing, the freedom to do so without compulsion, conflict, or guilt. But such choosing requires you to be very much aware, and you cannot be aware if you run away from yourself. General awareness is the result of self-awareness. It must begin with the truthful facing of the self, with courageous confrontation of the most ingrained emotional reactions. Then awareness of life and others grow. Through such awareness, reason, vision and freedom of choice, commitment is not a hazardous, self-destructive process, not a blind compulsion or drive, but a wonderful extension of self, a reaching out into life, toward fulfillment of self and of others. This is the real and healthy power resulting from spiritual growth. This is the self-sufficiency that does not exclude love and deep relating with others. This is the fine point of balance where it is not mutually exclusive to stand firmly and to love, to be self-sufficient and have a healthy interdependence -- be it with the cosmic forces, or with other human beings. But the commitment must exist, for otherwise you are poor and empty. Is that clear?

QUESTION: Yes, it is clear. I have even already found this in my private work. I now know that I have never committed myself really to anything, out of fear. I could feel that I can commit myself, but I fear that if I do and it will not work, I will be lost, so I do not dare to do it.

ANSWER: You see, this is precisely the reason you feel unfulfilled in the important areas of your life. But now that you observe and understand cause and effect, you have the key to change.

Your impatience tears out every seed you plant. Because you doubt, you conclude too quickly that results are negative, not allowing for the necessary time of incubation, the inner, invisible growth underground. The more complicated the problem, the more deep-rooted is the negativity

and the conflict. Therefore the healing forces have to work indirectly from link to link, until you can strive for the end result directly. Thus when you find doubt, that must first be considered, understood in its cause and effect, and eliminated before you can get to the goal you wish to attain but cannot because of the doubt. When a major fulfillment is blocked by innumerable little misconceptions, they have to be tackled one by one, otherwise the obstructions cannot be removed and working for the end result cannot be successful.

Now you are able to convince yourself of the unreasonableness of maintaining the non-commitment. You are not a prey to it, nor are you a victim of your doubt. It is necessary to take the chance of finding out the truth, even if the truth is what you fear it to be. You must love truth above all, instead of preferring a "maybe" and never coming to terms with life. If you love truth, you will also give up impatience. You will go step by step and give it time like a scientist who does the research patiently and laboriously, without shying away from effort, time, trial and error, who does not expect the greatest of all truths in a hurry. I know that you have spent many years on this; however, it is not the number of years you have labored in non-commitment and impatience, but the quality of full commitment with patient effort that alone will bring results. Neither the years, nor the amount of effort can replace full inner commitment.

The universal forces have one aim, and that is wholeness, health, unfoldment, and expression of divine aspects. They strive toward healing the place where distortion exists, toward restoring and filling the places of disability and emptiness. When the obstructions are too great, this same power is diverted and temporarily appears as a destructive downward movement. This does not mean that another, evil power is at work: it is the same benign force which was forced to make a detour. The principle of indirect growth becomes obvious, once it is fully understood. Then it can be observed at work all around you. You will not trust the growing principle any less because it requires a certain time span for the seed to become a tree, and for the creations of the mind and spirit to unfold in all their glory.

Try to work on these soul-movements with the concepts I have given you, always first finding and removing misconceptions. Do not superimpose the right concepts, but evaluate and compare, using your own thinking capacity, what is truth and what is error.

Personal fulfillment and full expansion are waiting for all of you. This is your destiny. Every one of you must, sooner or later, come to the realization that while life is what you think it is, temporarily, it is what you know it is, ultimately. This means that the potential, the possibility, even in this earth sphere, is indescribable happiness. Once this is envisaged, vast and beautiful possibilities are opened up.

Be blessed, my dearest friends. Be in peace. Be in God.

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The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
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