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FINDING TRUE ABUNDANCE BY GOING THROUGH YOUR FEAR

Greetings my dearest, dearest friends. Blessings for every one of you, and blessed be this new year. May it be crowned with success in your endeavors for spiritual growth.

People are often confused by apparent contradictions in spiritual teachings. We have discussed this a number of times, and I always point out the common denominator which brings together two apparent contradictions and thereby eliminates an either/or situation.

Tonight's topic is a fundamental one for your approach to life. Every one of you can find substantial help in this lecture if you think deeply about my words. They will answer questions whether or not you were aware of these questions within yourself.

There are two philosophies about life and spiritual reality which seem completely contradictory. One says that the spiritually and emotionally mature person has to learn to accept the difficulties in life. In order to cope with life, people have to accept what they cannot immediately change, what is beyond their direct sphere of influence. It says that lack of acceptance breeds disharmony, anxiety, and tension, increases the difficulties, and destroys peace of mind. The ability to accept the inevitable -- such as death, or other acts of destiny -- is a gauge of maturity and denotes a well-rounded personality.

The other philosophy says that nothing negative need be accepted, that all hardship, even death, is unnecessary. It says that there is no destiny other than the one human beings mold for themselves, and that they, whenever they decide to, can mold a new destiny in which they no longer suffer. It postulates that true spiritual awakening is marked by the realization that suffering does not need to be accepted, that the universe is open, that immeasurable abundance is available for all human beings right here and right now.

These are apparent contradictions. Not seeing the absence of contradiction in these two approaches must lead to confusion in your mind, whether or not you are aware of it. You have undoubtedly found both approaches in all great spiritual teachings, as well as in my own lectures.

Now, my friends, why are these two approaches not mutually exclusive? Where is the common denominator that unifies them? The key is the element of fear. If you want happiness because you fear unhappiness, happiness remains unreachable. If you want happiness for its own sake, and not because you fear its absence, nothing will block its attainment. And this is an enormous difference.

As long as you have fear, it is sometimes inevitable that you experience what you fear in order to lose the fear. If fear can be shed by realizing the truth that there is no reason to fear, then it is

not necessary to experience it. But you are often incapable of this insight, so you must familiarize yourself with the feared circumstances until they lose their threatening aspect.

As long as you want the positive mainly because you fear the negative, your fear barricades the way to the positive. The planet Earth, this sphere of consciousness, is characterized by the desire of the positive not for itself but for the fear of its negative opposite. Let us examine a few of most human beings' fundamental desires.

We will begin with the great duality of life and death. This will give you a better understanding of a lecture I gave a few years ago, in which I spoke of life and death as being two facets of the same process.* I said that you must learn the ability to die, that you will do so by acceptance, and by that acceptance you will learn that there is nothing to be feared -- in fact, that there is no death. I also said that the person who fears life must fear death, and vice versa.

It is impossible to truly love life as long as one fears death. This can be constantly corroborated when observing human reactions. The more a person lives with gusto and joy, the less he or she fears death. The more people shrink in fear from death, the more they cling to life, not because they enjoy life or because they are dynamically related to it, but in order to avoid death. Such people really do not live at all. Fear of death and dying prohibits one from living, and only by deeply living can you learn that life is one unending process, and dying is a temporary illusion. If one clings to life because of the fear of death, life will not be meaningful, nor can it be pleasurable. Needless to say, this is, as always, a question of degree. Since hardly anyone is completely free of the fear of death -- otherwise they would not be incarnated in this sphere of being -- there is hardly anyone who truly lives. But some are relatively free from this fear and therefore live meaningful and pleasurable lives.

Since it is almost impossible for the average soul to realize that death is not to be feared, it has to go through cycles and cycles of embodiments, one after the other, learning to die until dying is no longer a frightening experience. When the fear of dying is overcome, life eternal is possible; as long as it is feared, dying must be gone through.

Another great sin of the human being is the wish to be in control. Consequently, the person fears being out of control. While spiritual teachings postulate that death is unnecessary, they also claim that the truly evolved individual is master of the universe, and that he or she alone controls destiny. The human soul strives toward this goal. But as long as there is a fear of losing control, the individual must learn the ability to relinquish it, to flexibly adjust. The fine balance between steering one's ship through the river of life and the ability to let go must be learned. The more one fears letting go, the greater the imbalance of the soul movements, and consequently the greater the loss of the final control over destiny. The tight control one grabs at is a pseudo-control that merely increases tension and anxiety. It prohibits peace and confidence in the self and in the life process. The only way confidence can grow is entrusting oneself to what seems the "unknown," by giving up the tense holding. Such letting go eventually results in full mastery without the fear of losing it, for the person now knows that there is nothing to fear.

Human beings are not yet capable of immediate control over self and life. They still have to temporarily accept certain limitations within the self which create an undesirable destiny. Denying these limitations by sheer outer will that comes from fear, must make the situation worse.

Acceptance of one's temporary limitations and, consequently, of the results, does not mean resignation to tragedy and suffering. It merely means going through a phase of lesser expansion, comfort, and bliss, accepting responsibility for this state, and thereby overcoming the dread of it. Such an attitude will open the door further.

Because the human being is, in its highest evolutionary state, in control of his or her destiny, the ability to give over in trust to greater forces must be at least potentially present in every individual. In fact, only by doing so can a person become one with these forces. When one refuses to relinquish control, it is out of fear and distrust. Thus that which is most benign, which is power, liberation, bliss, is blocked.

A further fundamental human aim is pleasure supreme. All these aspects -- eternal life, control over one's destiny, pleasure supreme -- are deeply inborn, instinctive spiritual aims. The psyche instinctively knows that these are both its destiny and its origin and therefore it strives to recapture them.

If you desire pleasure because you fear pain or the absence of pleasure, the door to pleasure remains closed. Once you have learned that the absence of pleasure is not an abyss of darkness to shrink from, fear will no longer prohibit your fulfillment.

Every aspect of living follows this principle. If you desire health in a spirit of fearing sickness, you prevent health. If you fear the aging process, you prevent eternal youth. If you fear poverty, you prevent abundance. If you fear loneliness, you prevent real companionship. If you fear companionship, you prevent self-containment. So it goes on and on.

The great enemy is fear, and the best way to meet and conquer this enemy is first to ascertain, admit, and articulate it. This approach will diminish fear to a considerable degree and open the way to further measures for ousting it. Of course, the desire to do so must, as always, be clearly expressed in one's thinking and intentions. However, if you struggle against fear out of fear of fear, this will be difficult. Therefore, the calm admission and the momentary acceptance of it will do more toward its elimination than fighting against it would.

A long time ago we discussed that the three major stumbling blocks in the human soul are pride, selfwill, and fear. The more the soul is unified, the more it can reach the basic point of unification when encountering inner divisions. The same applies to this triad. Pride and selfwill are easily overcome when there is no more fear. If you are not afraid to have your dignity impaired, there will be no need for false pride. And if you are not afraid of being controlled by factors beyond your influence, you will have no need for selfwill.

Fear is the great locked door which prohibits you from entering, right here and right now, into all that is immediately available the moment fear is uprooted from your heart and soul.

This is what your life is all about, my friends. This is what the human sphere of consciousness, with its repeated incarnations serving as schools of experience, is all about. And this is what our path here is all about: the discovery that fear is unnecessary.

When you hear the admonition that it is necessary to learn acceptance, you always interpret it as having to accept an ultimate fate of suffering and deprivation. The advice to learn to let go of control implies to you that you have to release yourself into an abyss of danger, pain, and hardship. This is why fear increases, and so does tense reluctance and stubbornness. You shrink more rigidly from your liberation, your life eternal, your bliss. In truth, acceptance must bring you to the realization that you are called upon to have that which is most desirable. Giving up control -- the little selfwill -- will finally prove to you that this step releases one into a new freedom, into something positive and desirable, so there is no longer any need to fearfully hold on.

When the soul is sufficiently experienced and deeply impressed with the truth that there is nothing to fear, the human personality suddenly comes to a point of realization in which acceptance is no longer a risk, for it embraces the entire benign universe. Then it is no longer a question of having to go through the fear in order to rise above it. Then one is prepared for all the fulfillment, the abundance, the bliss and pleasure supreme in a liberated life, and in the life eternal, with all its dynamic, joyful aspects. All that the human heart desires is immediately available when one has overcome fear.

When you realize this truth, it is the liberation your spirit has been waiting for. It is as though your spirit exclaimed, "Oh, that's the way it is! Why did I not see this wonderful simplicity before? Why did I plague myself with all the unnecessary hardship?" And you step out from your confinement. The world becomes your own!

But where the soul is not yet ready, it still has to learn that there is nothing to fear. It does so through being involved in a world that expresses this ignorance -- for only through such a real involvement can the ignorance of the truth that there is nothing to fear be broken through. The self must discover the truth that even what hurts is never quite what one fears.

You all have had this experience, my friends. When you anticipated a certain event, how many times did you find out that, after having gone through it, it was not half as bad as you had feared?

This leads us to the important fact that the main element of fear is not a particular undesirable factor or event, but the unknown quality about it. Now, it is possible to fear something one already has experienced, either consciously or unconsciously. But while experiencing something in a state of fear, all faculties and perceptions become dulled. The truth of the experience is not fully registered, assimilated, or perceived. The fear blurs one's view and one's capacity to evaluate it objectively. So it is very possible to go through an experience in a certain frame of mind and come out with the impression that this experience was not the way it really was, but rather as one had expected it to be.

That is why the soul requires so many repetitions until it can rid itself of fear, particularly in the experience of dying. Let me assure you, my friends, that the trauma of being born is an infinitely greater one than the one of dying. Yet a peculiar mass image exists about dying, which is deeply impressed on all souls who come, again and again, to the earth sphere. When an individual goes through the liberating event of shedding the material body, this mass image produces such fear that the person is too anxious to be able to register the reality of the event of dying in full consciousness.

In addition, the conscious intellect ignores the true facts of dying, but meets an unknown element, and the fear of it half-anesthetizes the act of perception. Hence the truth cannot impress itself upon the soul. What is experienced becomes hazy, due to a very low consciousness at the moment. The little that has registered is easily forgotten, for memory is also dependent on a free state of mind, uncluttered by fear, prejudice, and misconceptions. The little the soul does remember is soon blotted out by the strength of the mass image that again overwhelms the individual.

It happens frequently that an individual registers at the time of transition a feeling like, "Oh, is this what it is? How wonderful!" Yet the mass image cannot be blotted out unless the truth can be experienced in full consciousness, and fear barricades such a full experience. With each repetition, a little more of the truth penetrates until, slowly but surely, the soul rids itself of fear and becomes relaxed about the transition -- as relaxed as you are about going to sleep at night, or about starting a new and as yet unknown phase of your life you look forward to without qualms. Dying is produced by the fear of it. It becomes superfluous and ceases to take place when the fear of it vanishes.

The same principle applies to many other aspects of living. Wherever fear exists, it produces the circumstances one fears. These circumstances are, at the same time, the only way to convince the self that the fear is unnecessary.

The more an event is known, the less it is feared. Although a vicious circle exists in which fear dulls the senses, every vicious circle can be broken. You may argue that actual pain can be very much feared. But, my friends, think about it: pain is inordinately feared only when one does not know where it will lead, when one suspects something dangerous in it, such as a serious disease and finally death. If you know that the pain will not threaten your safety, you can bear it in a relaxed state of mind and thus it ceases to be pain.

When you meet your fears and squarely acknowledge them, it is important to understand, and specifically ascertain, the unknown element about them. Then you have a chance of making that element a little less unknown. In certain instances, its unknown character may be completely eliminated, while in others you may consciously accept the fact that some element must remain unknown for the time being and yet simultaneously accept the fear.

Where there is uncertainty about what the future will bring, there is fear. Nothing one truly knows, even the greatest difficulties, are really feared. In order to make the unknown known, the feared unknown must often be entered into -- just like the experience of dying. But this must, by no means, be construed to mean that you should be looking for negative, painful experiences.

When you open your whole psyche to positive experience, without a trace of fear of the negative, then the unknown must become more and more known; life becomes more and more fulfilling on all levels.

Now, my friends, are there any questions?

QUESTION: Is this the only sphere in which one goes through the experience of death as we know it?

ANSWER: This is so. In other spheres there are other experiences, equally important for the evolution of the soul.

QUESTION: Are only those who fear death incarnated in this sphere?

ANSWER: That is one reason for drawing souls into this particular sphere of consciousness. But if a person is afraid of dying, that fundamental fear leads to other soul conditions and is connected with a great number of other erroneous concepts. They are all interconnected. As I have said before, being afraid of dying is also being afraid of living -- of the unknown elements of both. When such fears exist, there must be misconceptions and erroneous imprints in the soul.

When fear constricts the soul, the human being is incapable of entering into and becoming a part of the cosmic life force which gently guides to fruition and which wants to envelop him. He struggles against the cosmic force as though it were an enemy, but in reality the enemy sits within, a product of false fears, misconceptions, and unnecessary limitations. It is because of these limitations that people turn against themselves and, in spite of a part of their spirit continuously striving for their birthright of fulfillment, another part actually strives for nonfulfillment, pain, and deprivation. The great danger falsely believed to be unavoidable seems less threatening when it is quickly brought about by themselves. At least it is then no longer unknown. But avoidable negative experience has a bitter taste. Negative experience courted out of fear and error is much harder to bear than negative experience that is a result of still lingering limitations. One does not rush into the latter voluntarily. It requires deep insight into the mechanics of one's inner life to even discover this, but only with such insight is it possible to stop the destructive repetitive process.

When you learn the rhythm of your life, when you no longer struggle against, rush into, forge ahead blindly, thereby disturbing the natural rhythm, you will become part of the great cosmic powers with which you can play, which you can guide, and thus you become truly master of the universe.

QUESTION: What do you mean by spheres?

ANSWER: Spheres of consciousness, spheres of being. Where entities with a similar state of consciousness flock together -- and they do so according to immutable law -- their overall consciousness can be referred to as a sphere. From the point of view of space, a geographical area may be indicated in this way. From a spiritual viewpoint, time, space, and movement are all expressions of particular states of consciousness. This is why it is difficult for an entity geared in three-dimensional thinking to comprehend utterings of a consciousness that comprises more dimension, and also unifies these dimensions into one greater consciousness.

Therefore, when spiritual spheres are discussed, the danger is that people begin to think of them in oversimplified terms of geographical areas, located somewhere in outer space. Although it cannot be considered untrue that the entire physical universe is inhabited -- all space, all time, all planets, all stellar systems -- the real universe, with all its myriads of spheres, is within the self. This does not make the existence of many more spiritual worlds an abstract idea, however. They are reality, just as each planet is a reality and exists both within and without.

Now, when I speak of entities with comparable overall development, this must not be taken literally. It cannot be denied that there is considerable difference in development among human beings, and so of course among entities of other spheres of consciousness. Yet they all have certain points in common, in spite of great differences in perception and comprehension between older, more developed spirits, and younger ones, relatively new to this state. But they all can fulfill themselves better by flocking together; this is why they are drawn to make up a so-called sphere.

QUESTION: I can't visualize a sphere. Could you give an example of another sphere?

ANSWER: In a different lecture, I explained that conditions on the earth sphere are an exact expression of the sum total of the consciousness of all human beings inhabiting it. This also comprises, of course, individuals who do not at this moment reside in a body, but belong to this sphere by their overall development and who will reincarnate again here. I explained that all the beauty on this earth, in nature, and in that which is created by man and woman is a direct expression of those inner qualities which are in harmony with the universe. Conversely, all strife, such as war, poverty, quarrels, difficulties of all sorts, sickness and dying, are the expression of humanity's confusions, its state of consciousness which clings to destructive emotions. In other words, the earth, with its conditions, favorable and unfavorable, the greatness and the pettiness, is a direct result of all the consciousnesses which inhabit it. All that can be called a "sphere of consciousness." Other spheres express the sum total of all consciousness, too. If the overall consciousness is higher than this one, conditions are accordingly more harmonious and less difficult. In a sphere where the general level of truth-perception is higher, it is inevitable that the circumstances that arise will be less limiting.

QUESTION: Do we reincarnate into the same sphere?

ANSWER: Yes, until you have learned to overcome whatever disharmony and error the present state of consciousness expresses. From all I have said in the past as well as in this lecture it is obvious that as long as consciousness is not raised to a higher degree of truth-perception, a new sphere cannot be created for a particular entity. For an entity's environment and inner state of consciousness are one and the same.

You are not reincarnated into the same sphere because any deity "sends" or "commands" you to do so; this is accomplished by a process of attraction and repulsion, according to law, that is like the laws of chemical bonding. You must not imagine that first the sphere exists and then the entity is incarnated into it. It is the other way around. The sphere is a result of your thinking, feelings, attitudes, and general state -- the sum total of your entire personality. The sphere expresses you. If you express different qualities, you are no longer drawn to this sphere, but to the sphere where the majority of beings also express your stage of development.

QUESTION: Are other spheres also physical?

ANSWER: Human beings make too arbitrary a distinction between physical and non-physical. A human being consists of many layers, and each is matter of a special density. The higher the consciousness, the finer the consistency of the matter. But this does not make them formless or their existence less real.

According to people's beliefs, they will be drawn into spheres of more physical -- that is, denser -- matter, or finer vibrations. If the entire thinking is still geared to a very superficial and materialistic plane, the matter the entity produces for the vehicle of its spirit will vibrate accordingly. The denser the matter, the greater the ignorance, error, misconception, prejudice, limitation, and darkness -- hence, the greater the suffering.

When humans realize that their real self is not just in the body, their perceptions will widen and the matter of their entire soul substance will become much finer and more sensitive to truth. The result will be a greater sense of reality.

It is extremely important for all of you who work on this path to find where you fear the negative and therefore grab for the positive alternative. When you find the areas of fear, and see how you want the positive for negative motivations, you will be able to accept the rich abundance of life with a raised head, as a free person. It is this soul movement that makes all the difference.

The soul condition of fearlessness produces the conviction that nothing negative is ever necessary and that the human entity's fate is bliss, unfoldment, and dynamic life. And where such conviction exists, outer facts must follow suit. Shrinking away from a feared alternative and wanting the positive alternative because of that, makes the latter an unreachable illusion. This may explain to many of my friends why a number of doors have remained closed for them, in spite of much progress and insight. However, it requires an extended awareness to notice the existence of fear, and to be aware of the fine differentiation between wanting happiness for the sake of happiness, or wanting it in order to avoid unhappiness.

I have discussed general aims, but your specific desires, with the fear of their opposites, have to be ascertained in your personal work. Nothing is too big or too little, important or unimportant, when it comes to the human psyche. For anything that may appear to be an insignificant aspect is, in the last analysis, connected with the great questions of life. When you find these elements, new doors will open to you, my friends. Even before you can shed the fear itself, ascertaining it and knowing what it means must make a great difference in your attitude to yourself, to life, and to the particular desire that has remained unfulfilled because you have overlooked the shift in motivation. This is an all-important key.

Don't overlook either that the presence of a fear of the negative does not necessarily annul a healthy wish for the positive for its own sake. It is absolutely possible -- in fact, it is frequent -- that a healthy wish exists simultaneously with the distorted motivation.

Once you put your finger on the fear, you can directly treat it in your meditations. This will make a great deal of difference on your path. It can be a solution to many problems that have remained stubbornly locked so far. The mere realization, "I cannot step out into freedom because I want freedom not for itself, but because I fear to be imprisoned," will bring liberation a great step closer. If you realize that you cannot be free because you fear unfreedom, in that realization greater freedom is yours. This may sound complicated and quite paradoxical, but if you deeply think about it, you will understand how true it is.

Blessings for every one of you, my friends. May these words lift your spirit and bring you nearer to the light of truth, to the reality of love, to the unending bliss of spiritual existence. Be in peace, be in God!

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