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CONFLICT OF POSITIVE VERSUS NEGATIVE ORIENTED PLEASURE AS THE ORIGIN OF PAIN

Greetings, my dearest friends. Blessings, again, for each and every one of you, for every step, for every effort you undertake on your road to liberation.

In this lecture I will bring together much that we discussed recently. You will easily see the connections. But first, as a preface, let us take a look at the meaning of pain and its real cause. Pain is the result of conflict. It occurs when two opposite directions exist in a personality. The direction of the universal creative forces is toward light, life, growth, unfoldment, affirmation, beauty, love, inclusion, union, pleasure supreme. Whenever this direction is counteracted by another, a disturbance is created. It is not the disturbance itself that creates the pain, but the imbalance and a special sort of tension caused by the opposite direction. This is what causes the suffering. It is very important to understand this, my friends, in order to follow the rest of this lecture.

The principle I explain here holds true on all levels. It is indeed ascertainable on the physical level. The physical system, like all other systems or planes, also strives toward wholeness and health. When a disturbing force pulls in an opposite direction, the pull of the two directions creates the pain. You can tell that this is what actually causes the pain because when the struggle is given up and the individual lets go and gives in to the pain, the pain stops. Many people have verified the truth of this principle. The moment that the struggle between two opposite pulls is relinquished and the existence of the negative direction is accepted, pain must cease.

When the disturbance is fought against ineffectively, and the personality wants health, it negates that it also wants non-health. Since the striving for non-health is repressed and ignored, the struggle toward health becomes all the more tense. That is the origin of pain. If the personality were conscious of wanting non-health as well as health, the struggle would cease instantly, for the former wish cannot be maintained; only the latter can. It is the unconsciousness that creates a gap between cause and effect. The cause is the negative wish; the effect, the disturbance in the system. The two pulls continue and pain comes into being.

But when this process is fully understood, and the temporary, still unavoidable consequences of the negative wish are accepted, one can let oneself go into this now existing pain, and the pain must cease. This is not necessarily a destructive way of embracing pain, or a masochistic, self-punishing element that in itself harbors and perpetuates a negative wish. It is a full acceptance of what is -- with that, pain ceases. It is the principle, for instance, of painless birth. It is the principle of non-struggle. It is the principle that Jesus Christ explained when he said, "resist not evil."

When the struggle is too fierce on all levels, death sets in. Death may also be a result of having given up the struggle. This applies to the physical plane, of course. Therefore, physical pain ceases when tension ceases -- and this happens in death.

On the mental and emotional planes, something similar exists. When the struggle is fully understood and accepted as a temporary manifestation, as an effect -- accepted as such without finality, and yet with awareness of the rightness of these consequences -- the mental or emotional pain ceases. This does not happen when the negative is wanted, for as we have seen, this wanting merely creates the new direction, contrary to the original, positive one. Nor does this happen by forfeiting the affirmative principle, but by understanding the now. Then mental and emotional pain cease, just as physical pain ceases when the opposite pull is abandoned. All this is verifiable and has been verified the world over. All of you who are on a path of self-realization have, at least occasionally, experienced this.

On the spiritual plane, my friends, it is different. For the spiritual plane is the cause, while all other planes or spheres of consciousness are effects. The spiritual plane is the origin of the positive direction. It does not, and cannot, contain a negative direction. The negative direction creates, and is created by, various attitudes incompatible with the origin of all life. The spiritual plane is unity itself, therefore conflict, opposing directions and, consequently, pain are unthinkable and illogical there.

People who are free from conflict and pain must be in unity. They can be in total unity only when they follow the unbroken line of the positive direction of their life forces. If it were possible for an individual to fully want the negative, pain too would cease. But this is not possible, for the real self is attuned to the real world of absolute constructiveness. This is the final reality, so it is nonsensical to even imagine that anyone could be in unity about any negative aim. Life, in its essential and profound character, cannot ever be negatively oriented. Negative orientation cannot be anything but a distortion. Since underneath the distortion the real continues to exist, it sends forth its effects, regardless of the overlays of distortion and the strength of the momentarily existing negative orientation. Since the human being and life are one, nobody can ever be fully negative. Whenever there is some negation in one's makeup, tension and conflict must exist, and so must pain. The negative direction is opposed to life, and nonlife cannot ever be totally desired or even envisaged as being free of conflict, for it makes no sense.

It is very important to understand, my friends, that the negative can be desired only by one part of the personality, never by the whole of it. There will always be another part of the psyche that violently objects to the negative desire, so that pain must result. On the physical as well as the emotional and mental levels, it is possible temporarily to accept the negative as a passing stage, in the understanding that it is the effect of an inadvertent cause and a mere momentary disturbance. In this understanding and acceptance one ceases the struggle. One accepts the negative without finality and with an objective, non-indulgent attitude. But on the spiritual plane, which comprises the total being, total life, the origin of all, this is impossible. The total being cannot ever totally want the negative.

Pain and suffering are always the result of the pull on the personality by two tendencies which are the life and the anti-life directions. They can also be called the direction of love and the direction of hate, isolation and fear, or the positive and negative directions. The outer layers of

personality must suffer as long as unity is not achieved. Unity exists exclusively in the full reality of the cosmic creative principle. It is exceedingly important, my friends, to understand what I am saying here, for this understanding must open new doors.

A number of my friends have crossed a major threshold on their path in the discovery and awareness of where they themselves desire the negative. Now this is an exceedingly important new phase. It makes all the difference for an individual to be or not to be aware of his negative desires. There are, of course, degrees of awareness. It is possible to be aware of them casually and fleetingly. It is possible to have gained one important insight into their existence but to dilute this awareness. The more the awareness of a deliberate desire for the negative exists, the more you will be in control of yourself, of life, and the less you will feel victimized, helpless, and weak.

When an entity is not aware of its deliberate desire for the negative, the suffering must be infinitely greater than any suffering or pain that can ensue when one is aware of having wanted it oneself. Lack of such awareness must create a psychic climate in which the individual feels singled out as a victim. It is inevitable to feel helpless when one lacks the awareness that the effect was self-created. Separation between cause and effect in one's consciousness must create confusion, doubt, and hopelessness. The moment awareness of the negative desire has been attained through the painstaking struggle of this work, you at least know, my friends, what causes your outer difficulties and unwelcome situations. Even before you are capable of giving up the negative desires, because you do not yet understand the reason for their existence, merely knowing that you have created the undesirable manifestations in your life will render you a freer person.

Those of you who have made these initial inroads to awareness of the negative desires must be careful to extend this awareness and to link it with the unwelcome manifestations in your life. This essential step must not be overlooked. For it is indeed possible to be aware, to some extent at least, of a negative desire and nevertheless ignore that this negative desire is the immediate cause of any number of manifestations in your life that you strenuously struggle against. And that is exactly your pain. You struggle against something that you have yourself induced, and continue to induce, while, at the same time, there must always be the pull toward the light, toward wholeness, toward loving, inclusion and constructiveness, toward beauty and unfoldment. Your denial of the direction toward wholeness and your oblivion of this denial -- not knowing that you want two opposing things at the same time -- confuses and pains you. What is required for an entity to reach this awareness can easily be understood.

Those of you who have caught the first glimpses of your negative desires have gained a new strength and a new hope. For whenever this awareness is alive, you see, at first as a principle and as a possibility, how your life can be when you no longer have the negative desires, even though you do not yet know why and how you insist on the negative desires and why you harbor them in the first place. But merely knowing that you have them and, subsequently, connecting them with the unwelcome results must give you new hope and a new outlook.

Those friends who have not yet gained this awareness should try their very best to find their negative desires. On the surface the majority of people cannot imagine how they might harbor destructive desires. Even some friends who have been on this path for a long time may as yet be unable to feel their destructive direction. Meditate and truly want to find what is in you. This is even more difficult when a person busily denies those aspects in life that leave something to be

desired, and does not want to face missing something, suffering from something. This kind of denial of what you really feel and miss makes it impossible ever to bring real fulfillment into your life. This denial still exists in a few of my friends who have been doing this work for a considerable time.

So ask yourself, "Do I have, do I experience, everything to the maximum of my potential? What disturbs me possibly more than I admit?" That would be the first question, a pertinent question for those whose tendency is to escape from their unfulfillments, to deny them, to gloss over them and falsify their situation. And then, of course, there are those people who are only too keenly aware of their suffering and of what they miss, but they are disconnected in themselves from the mechanism that wishes the negative result.

The work on this path continues with becoming aware of deliberate negative desires, or of the avoidance of positive results, which amounts to the same thing. It is, as you can see, an essential milestone on your whole road of evolution. It constitutes the difference between feeling like a helpless straw in the wind, a little forgotten tool in a vast universe, and feeling one's self to be self-governing, autonomous. The principle of cycles or circles -- whether benign or vicious -- is always the principle of self-perpetuation. Autonomy is positively self-perpetuating, set in motion by reality consciousness.

Again, this can be ascertained on your path. When you come to a certain degree of insight into your psyche, you see how the positive and negative attitudes are self-perpetuating. Take, for example, any healthy, positive attitude. When you are outgoing, constructive, open, inclusive, all things go easily. You do not have to work hard at them. They perpetuate themselves. You do not even have to spend energy on any deliberate kind of meditation. By themselves, your positive thoughts, attitudes, and feelings create more positive thoughts, attitudes, and feelings. These, in turn, create fulfillment, productiveness, peace, and dynamism. The principle is exactly the same in negative situations. The self-perpetuating forces, in this instance, can be changed only by this deliberate process which sets something new in motion. Such pathwork process accomplishes just this.

It is further important for you to understand and visualize that the spheres of consciousness operate exactly according to the directions that we have discussed. In other words, to simplify a bit for the sake of discussion, there is the positive principle and direction. This is the sphere of reality, the sphere in which there is unlimited self-perpetuation in whatever respect consciousness is aware of the existence of such wholeness and inexhaustible abundance. Incidentally, I want to interject here that the principle of self-perpetuation which I have explained on a spiritual level exists in identical form on a scientific plane. This principle can be found in chemistry, in physics, in practically every field of science. It should therefore be easier to accept than if it were a phenomenon that had not already been found in human material realms.

The personality level that wants the negative and pursues that direction creates a new world, or psychic sphere, covering the original positive one. Images and forms -- the product of attitudes, thoughts and feelings -- create this negative world. There are many variations, degrees, and possibilities, according to the strength of the negative desires, the awareness of both positive and negative desires, and the balance between the two. You may gain an inkling of this by comparing your own change in awareness with your previous unconscious denial of positive experience, or even

your direct desire for the negative. You will see that this difference constitutes another sphere of consciousness, a different world, with its own distinct flavor and atmosphere.

The physical, material world you live in manifests the positive, the negative, and presents a combination of the two. All these exist in and outside of you -- in timelessness and spacelessness. You can and must reach these worlds within your psyche by becoming acutely aware of them. They are a product of your own self-expressions, of your various spheres of consciousness. You must go through them, layer by layer, within yourself. Where you are relatively free from negative desires, it will be fairly simple and easy to grasp, to feel, to experience the world of truth, where all good exists and is self-perpetuating. Therefore there is no need for struggle, for doubt, for fear, or for deprivation. In these areas you will find that you fearlessly open your heart to the positive, dynamic experience, which moves eternally toward further unfoldment, greater happiness, more inclusion. You do not stop this movement with your fearful mind, holding it in check and bringing it to a standstill. These spheres are there; they not only exist deep in your psyche where you can sense the eternal life of all existence, but they manifest in your outer life. To become aware of them is also useful, so you can compare them properly.

And then, of course, there is always the main problem, the area in your psyche where the fear of the positive, hence its negation, exists. Consequently, deprivation and suffering manifest in your outer life. You must fully experience this sphere within your consciousness so you can transcend it by transforming yourself. You must live it through, not by denying it or struggling away from it, but by seeing and accepting it, learning to understand its nature. This is what is meant by going through it. When it is affirmed and ascertained as a temporary reality, only then can the underlying world of self-perpetuating good be reached, where you no longer have to reach and grasp and want, but know that it is already yours, even before you have attained it.

Whenever you are separated from others, from your fellow creatures, you must be in the negative world, in a self-perpetuating negativity that you sow through your destructive wishes. You must therefore suffer because you deny and ignore the full significance of the thus evolving struggle. The struggle varies from individual to individual, and with a given individual from phase to phase, and even at times from hour to hour, because at different times different directions come up. They alternate in predominance at any given moment. At one time one direction is more on the surface and the other more submerged; at other times they change.

So there must always be in you an unceasing struggle in which one side strives toward wholeness and union with your fellow creatures in many different ways, toward love and understanding, toward consideration, toward giving and receiving. But always there is still this other side that negates and denies the former direction, that fears and resists it. Therefore a particular pain exists, and the greater the denial, the greater the pain. Do not forget that it is impossible to completely want isolation, withdrawal, and separation. If it were possible to fully want this and be wholly reconciled to its results, there would be no pain. But it is not possible totally to ever want this. One can only want it to a large degree. And therefore, the larger the percentage, the stronger the pull in the opposite direction from health and union -- hence the fiercer the pain.

The pain is aggravated by the struggle that sets in with the other person. For do not forget, my friends, that it is painful enough that you want and do not want, alternately, to relate and love on the one hand, and to hate, reject, and withdraw on the other. It becomes infinitely more

complicated when this conflict is multiplied by a second individual into whose parameters you enter, and who wages a similar fight within.

Both the positive and negative directions are attached to the pleasure principle. It is this attachment that makes it so difficult to give up the negative direction and change. The positively and negatively oriented pleasure principle tears you apart. It inflicts pain on you by itself, but it does not exist in you alone. It also exists in those with whom you are involved in this conflict, and about whom you cannot decide whether or not to love or to reject them. If they were perfectly in balance and free from such an inner division, they would surely be unaffected by your struggle. Their harmony with the universal forces and the high degree of awareness would protect them from negativity and the resulting tension between the positive and negative pulls. If it were possible, for the sake of argument, that such an evolved being could enter into a relationship with an ordinary person who is racked by this fight, the latter would still be in pain because of his or her own division. But how much more complicated it becomes when the other person is in a similar position, for then the struggle is not twofold, but a compounded fourfold one. Imagine the many mathematical possibilities that arise from such a situation, with all their psychological consequences of misunderstanding, misjudgment, and hurt, which, in turn, create further negativity.

Let us imagine two people, A and B. A momentarily expresses the positive direction toward union. B is frightened of it and therefore withdraws and rejects A. Consequently, A again becomes convinced that the healthy soul movement toward union was risky and painful and so reverts to the negative and the denial. Since this is so painful, the negative pleasure principle attaches itself to it, making the pain more bearable. A will then revel in the negative situation. In the meantime, the pain of isolation in B becomes unbearable, and B ventures out while A is in a dark hole. Now, this goes on and on, sometimes in crass opposition, although sometimes there is a fleeting meeting. At times A's positive direction meets B's negative one; at other times they are reversed; at still other times, both negative currents are out, both withdraw or antagonize one another. At still other times, both temporarily venture into the positive, but since the negative principle still exists in them, the positive position is only tentative, so uncertain, so fearful, so divided, so defensive and apprehensive that these negative emotions about the positive direction produce negative results sooner or later. These are then attributed to the positive venture, rather than to the problematic emotions about it. It is inevitable that the negative direction must again take over after such periods of mutual positiveness, until the negative, destructive, and denying side is fully understood and eliminated.

The negative, the denying and destructive direction would not be as fierce and as difficult to overcome if the pleasure principle were not attached to it. You then come into the position of not wanting to part from the precarious pleasure you derive from indulging in destructive feelings and attitudes. This may evolve subtly, insidiously, and inadvertently when an individual starts out with the healthy and constructive direction.

Let us take the following example, which might prove useful for all of you. Suppose, on your road toward self-realization, you gain strength and self-confidence. Where you felt uncertainty and guilt as you experienced friction with another person, you now experience a new inner calm, certainty in yourself, and a strength and resilience you never knew existed. In the old way, you might have responded submissively to assuage your guilt, or with hostile aggression to assuage your self-contempt for your uncertainty. Whatever you did, however you responded with your negativity and self-doubt, you were attached to the negatively oriented pleasure principle. You enjoyed your

woes. Now, you have progressed. You experience yourself in a new way. Instead of choosing the nagging self-doubt, you gain insight into why the other person behaves that way. For the moment this objective understanding sets you free, makes you strong, gives you more objective insight into yourself and into the other person. In other words, the self-perpetuating principle of insight and understanding has been set in motion.

But then the still existing, because not yet fully recognized, negative pleasure principle attaches itself to your understanding of the other person's negativity. You begin to talk yourself into dwelling more and more on that person's faults and blindnesses, and you inadvertently begin to enjoy this. You do not immediately distinguish between the two different kinds of joy. The first comes when you see with detachment what exists in the other, and this sets you free; the second appears when you pleasurably indulge in the other's wrongness, and this blinds you. What you first noticed in the other you build up until the old negative pleasure principle has reappeared in a new guise. This is where you lose your harmony and freedom because you again indulge in the negative pleasure principle. This is an example of how insidiously this can happen whenever the old roots still exist unobserved.

Here, my friends, the continuation of the path becomes clearer and more concisely defined. You have the immediate tools to set out and discover what I explained here. Now, are there any questions?

QUESTION: It seems this whole lecture was for me. Whenever I come to see the pain and hurt in another person, I immediately bring out the negative, the hostility and rage, and I am blinded by these negative feelings. I cannot see anything positive or understand the struggle in the other person. Although I pray and want to let go, I am still "sitting in the hole."

ANSWER: Are you aware that while you indulge in the negativity you enjoy doing it?

QUESTION: Yes, I am.

ANSWER: The next step would have to be a very simple one, my dearest friend. Issue and express the thought, "I want to give up the negative. I want my pleasure to be attached to a positive situation. I want to be constructive. I want to give my attention to this situation and be governed by the most constructive forces." Do this in a relaxed and light way, enlisting the subliminal force within yourself to help you do it. Do not try to do it by sheer outer power, for with that outer power you cannot succeed. Your outer mind can only issue such a constructive intent, and with that it sets up a positive movement, which then begets a positive self-perpetuating cycle. If you are not yet willing to do this, the work must proceed very simply and easily. Where and why do you believe that wanting the negative is safer for you than wanting the positive? You hinder yourself from wanting the positive. If you cannot stop this process, there must still be reasons you have not understood, and they must be unearthed.

QUESTION: Irrationally, I fear that I may be taken advantage of and lose my integrity. I have a slight feeling that this is not true, but I can't see exactly how.

ANSWER: In the first place, you must truly want to see that this is possibly a wrong conclusion. The feeling of helplessness or powerlessness is again the self-perpetuating principle at

work in that you have given up self-government when you allowed yourself to be taken over by the negative force. Therefore it does not occur to you that you have the possibility of governing yourself.

For instance, the moment you say, "I decide that I do not want to be in negativity or hang on to misconceptions, such as these," in that moment you take command. Then, further, if you say and mean, "I do not have to be a slave to decisions that do not come from me because I am constructive. What I want is up to me." You will then experience that the more constructive your desires are, the freer you become and the easier it will be to determine independently what you will or will not do. Others will not be able to impose their will on you, hence your integrity will be preserved and increased in exact proportion to your active desire to be constructive and to give up the pleasure that is attached to a negative situation.

What has weakened you was that you lost awareness of your negative desires. You had repressed, denied, and hidden them, having superimposed false positive ones. Hence you lost touch with yourself. Had you been aware of the negative desires, you would not have been able to let them grow so strong. But even if you had done that, you would not have become helpless and powerless. In reality, your weakness and helplessness is never due to the stronger will of the others. It exists because you are swept away by the self-perpetuating force of your negative desires, which you have consciously ignored until now. This lack of control makes you unable to imagine how to take command.

Now, you, with your conscience and your spirit, cannot take command consciously to fulfill your negative desires. This can happen only with positive desires. When you issue such positive desires, you will become stronger, more self-governing and less helpless -- and therefore no one could take advantage of you, because your free decisions to take action will be made in absolute consciousness of what you are doing, and why.

It is because of the gnawing guilt -- inevitable when negative desires exist whether or not one is aware of them -- that you allow yourself to be taken advantage of. The guilt makes you go overboard in complying with the demands of others. It is exactly because of the negative direction of your desires that you do allow yourself to be taken advantage of; that you are uncertain, uneasy, and weak about any of your rights -- only because of that! Were you free from the destructive desires, you would not feel guilty, hence you would not need to atone. And you could very easily, kindly, and without any defensiveness -- when it is the right thing and when you really want it -- say no, and not give in to demands being made upon you.

So, the reality is exactly the opposite of what you think: positivity will set you free to have integrity, to defend and assert your rights, while negation and destructiveness must weaken you and make you defenseless. When it is as yet impossible to issue the desire to be constructive and positive, assert that this is where you are. See yourself being in the negation and destructiveness and set out to find what further undetected cause slumbers behind this resistance. Arrayed behind it there may be more fears of a deeper nature still needing to be unearthed.

QUESTION: I usually concentrate too much on studying the negative aspects, centered on the father image. I have asked myself lately if by doing so I have been hiding something that is

deeper in me and that I don't want to look at. I concentrate on this mixture of a father image and a concept of maleness. I think I miss the main point by analyzing too much of this.

ANSWER: There is in you a feeling that you do not want to assume the male role. Have you become aware of this feeling?

QUESTION: No.

ANSWER: Well, this is it. Awareness of it will come, first, maybe indirectly, by deducing certain manifestations, and subsequently by bringing out the emotions. Consciously, there is the great desire in you to be a strong man. You even go overboard and exaggerate this image of masculinity. This overcompensation would not exist if you were deeply ready to assume the male role, if you would not refuse it. There is this fear that you may be inadequate to fulfill this role; there is the fear that demands will be made upon you when you assume it. Also, there is in you a spitefulness toward life, toward society, with which you say no. There is an envy in you of the feminine sex, for on that level, they seem to have it easier. You resent the effort required of you to fill in this conscious male image. You believe that this is what you should do, and you resent that it seems to be expected of you. Maybe you expect it of yourself. Nevertheless, this is what you think you ought to do and be -- and you resent it. It is important that you find the exact opposite of the conscious striving, meaning the passive resistance against your male role. You fear it, deny it, do not want it, and spitefully refuse it. When you become aware of that, you will have found the point I have just discussed. Then you will be aware of your main negative desires concerning your identity as a man.

QUESTIONER: Yes, I went over this point last year, but I have completely overlooked it lately.

ANSWER: This is what happens so often: a finding is made and it is then shelved, as though this would suffice. It is not by any means changed or eliminated. In fact, you have only scratched the bare surface. It is often necessary that one work on other aspects for a while before one can return to the fundamental problem.

Be blessed, every one of you. Receive this warm stream of love that is all around you and transcends every one of you. Open yourself. For this love is truth, and this truth is life. And this life is yours for the asking. The courageous steps all of you undertake here have a meaning. They are not senseless, they are not useless, my dearest ones. May you always know this. Every admission of something negative that exists in you contributes more toward the universal process of wholeness than any other thing imaginable. So proceed this way. Be blessed. Be in peace. Be in God!

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