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RETURN TO THE ORIGINAL LEVEL OF PERFECTION

Greetings, my dearest, dearest friends. May this evening prove a blessing for every one of you. May it give you the inspiration and the help you need to proceed a step further in your endeavor toward finding yourself.

Every once in a while it is important to restate what the pathwork is and what it is supposed to accomplish. It is important to always see this in a new light, from different angles. This path is not supposed to be taken as a cure, nor is it to be taken as a luxury -- indulged in merely because it is "interesting," because it certainly cannot do any "harm" and one's life leaves room for such a pursuit. In reality, it is much more important, much more basic. And if it be a cure, or a healing, it is that only secondarily. The true meaning of such a path is finding within the self everything necessary for the fulfillment of one's personal destiny. If this path is seen from this point of view, much misunderstanding will be eliminated.

Even my friends who are very diligent and full of goodwill in this work often overlook, or forget, or still do not sufficiently comprehend, that everything one can possibly need exists in the human being in complete and total perfection. This potential is a reality. Finding the levels where these possibilities become a reality is what the pathwork is all about.

On the physical level the existence of this potential is obvious. Your physical system works in absolute perfection when the laws governing it are adhered to. The less you observe them -- whether through ignorance or deliberate self-destructiveness -- the more you move away from that level on which physical perfection is a reality. I formulate it this way advisedly. There is a difference between conceiving of illness as an absence of perfect functioning and the concept I present to you that the level on which perfect functioning exists is right here, only you have moved away from it. Gradually, by understanding the laws and how you have violated them, health can be reestablished step by step at its original level of perfect functioning. If the usually held concept that perfect functioning "goes away" were correct, you could not possibly regain it. You regain perfect functioning only because, after moving away from it, you have come back to it. The more you have moved away from this level of perfect functioning, the more difficult it is to retrace all the points in the chain reaction of various causes and effects. It is easy for anyone to see that, as long as the laws of physical functioning were not tampered with, the physical system naturally worked in absolute perfection, giving humans strength and wellbeing.

Strangely enough, this is less obvious to you on the mental and psychic levels. There the identical laws operate. By nature, your mental and emotional life is meant to function perfectly, just as your body is. When you achieve this original level, you are "home." You have reached that place within yourself that can procure what life is meant to fulfill in you, and what you are meant to fulfill in life -- for the two are one.

This fulfillment -- in its variety and limitless possibility for fruitful experience and expansion -- is a reality that exists permanently within you. When you are unfulfilled and unhappy, you have moved your consciousness away from this potential. It is exceedingly important, my friends, to conceive of life this way. For then you will shorten the peregrinations that alienate you from the center of your being -- in which strength, possibility, wisdom and power lie, which none of you can, as yet, completely comprehend.

Before I come back to why it is so difficult for you to comprehend this point, I should like to recapitulate from a different angle what happens when you have moved away from the possibility of perfect functioning. Each concept, each idea, thought and action are both cause and energy, setting in motion a series of chain reactions. It is the nature of cause to create effect. The energy that creates the ensuing chain reactions produces the effects of the original cause, the original nucleus of energy. In the last lecture I discussed the self-perpetuating principle. The sequence of chain reactions caused by any thought, belief or action is self-perpetuating, once the original thought is issued forth.

If the original thought, or concept, is in accord with truth, the ensuing chain reactions are bound to be constructive, positive, conflictless, agreeable. They will lead to further expansion, constructiveness, agreeableness, and so on, since the self-perpetuating principle is at work. But if at any given instant, in any situation, a human being formulates a concept or intention based on error - - the ensuing chain reactions must be negative, confining, destructive and disagreeable.

Let us take any idea that you formulate. Such an idea -- whether truthful or untruthful -- will lead you to certain assumptions. These assumptions will lead you to certain actions, or to the lack of them. They, in turn, will lead to responses and reactions by others, by the world around you. Their responses will again cause further reactions within you, so that you formulate further concepts that are influenced by all these ensuing interactions. And so it goes on and on. The original misconception leads to graver error, to compounded misunderstanding, to further alienation from the truth in that respect. Each cause produces an effect. Each effect becomes simultaneously a new cause, producing a new effect -- which, in turn, must become the cause for the next effect. This is the nature of the self-perpetuating chain reaction.

When a negative chain reaction is activated, each link -- which is simultaneously cause and effect -- must be retraced. It must be understood and subsequently abandoned, so that the personality finds its way back to the original level where no conflict exists and where fruitful expansion is a reality. On this level, fearlessness, peace, unlimited unfoldment, stimulation -- all that one could possibly desire -- exist. The further removed you are, the more difficult it becomes to find the way back. As it is with impaired physical health, so it is on the mental and psychic levels. The more the laws of perfect functioning are violated, the more negative chain reactions come into being. The mental and psychic laws are as exact and definite as the laws of the physical body. They can be understood in a similar fashion and are no more difficult to comprehend or to ascertain. The physical system contains an inherent healing force that is always ready to cooperate if you only give it a chance. When you make an effort to comprehend the laws, to correct the impairment -- when you trust this healing natural force as you do your best -- this live power begins to operate. It is exactly the same on the mental and psychic levels. There, too, healing powers exist. These powers strive toward wholeness, constructiveness, expansion, fulfillment. If you allow them to operate -- by

sensing their direction and removing the obstacles that broke the pertinent laws -- these psychic healing forces will gather an ever-increasing power to sweep you forward.

The further removed you are in your mental confusions and destructive emotions, the more difficult it becomes to return to that original level. Correcting each link in the chain reaction fills people with dread. They unreasonably fear this process because it seems to exact from them something they are unwilling to give.

This, my friends, is the work of this path, briefly reformulated. If you can conceive of the pathwork in this slightly novel way, it will activate in you a new energy, a new incentive, a new insight. It is also important for you to understand that life, for anyone who wants to live it successfully, must be led according to these premises. You must find the way back to your original potential, understand the laws governing the physical, mental, and emotional systems, comprehend the perfection of the laws and adhere to them.

What is the greatest violation that leads to further chain reactions of violation, error, confusion, and destructiveness? Fundamentally, it is ignorance of this process. When you ignore the inherent potential you have, the limitless powers you possess -- literally, my friends -- to provide exactly what you need to satisfy every contingency -- this fundamental violation inevitably leads to further alienation and destruction. When you realize that no situation in your life needs to remain unresolved, unhappy, or frightening -- that you have within you everything you need to solve any problem you have regardless of what it is -- you will have fulfilled the main premise of this path. Doing so affords you the opportunity to return to a level of fulfillment humanity has moved away from over the course of many, many, many centuries. The removal may exist only in certain areas of your personality, whereas in other areas you may be in very close touch with your original level of perfection, with its dynamic life and possibilities of unfoldment. But you have brought impairments with you into this life. Not knowing that you have the possibility of dissolving them is your greatest hindrance. Strange as it may seem, my friends, even though people may be perfectly aware of these facts in principle -- as a theory and philosophy -- many times these same people fail to apply this to their own impairments. They are perplexed, hopeless and paralyzed because it simply does not occur to them that they have, within themselves, the possibility of correcting any situation that is not to their satisfaction.

You cannot activate the limitless power you have for purposes outside of yourself if you have not mastered yourself first. This means that you have to correct the impaired areas of your being. You must use the power to return to the point of your departure from the original level of perfection. You must use the power to switch from destructiveness to constructiveness, from separateness to inclusion. You must use the power to become aware of where you impair your integrity and therefore violate the psychic laws. You must use the power to let go of the pseudo-safety of hate and cruelty and change your personality into one of love for others. To make appropriate use of the powers at your disposal, first determine where you are in illusion about yourself and uncover where you are not as decent and loving as you thought. Then use your power further to change this condition. Once you have mastered yourself in this way, the power will automatically expand. Through such mastery, the realization that you and everyone else are one will become a living reality within yourself. As long as you have not mastered yourself, these words will mean nothing. As long as the self and others seem separate, a conflict of interest will appear between the self and others, which forces you to be destructive -- either of the self or the other.

Since you are one with others, either alternative ultimately affects both. Hence, the power cannot be used. To do so, a free, happy, uninhibited feeling that cannot arise out of conflict must exist.

The first prerequisite for returning to the original level of perfection, of limitless possibilities, meaningful expansion and experience, of pleasure supreme, is knowing that this level is intact within you and merely has to be activated by consciousness. But hearing the truth, even vaguely thinking it, and knowing it are not the same. This knowledge must be cultivated. The awareness that your immediate problem can be solved -- that you have within you everything you need to do this -- must be the first step in any given phase.

Often you do not want even to acknowledge this possibility. For once this possibility is truly discovered, it will reveal where and how you have violated the pertinent laws and where and how you must correct the situation. In reality, this discovery is never undesirable. It always proves to be eminently good from every conceivable point of view. It never deprives. But facing yourself requires courage and integrity. It appears as though this correcting process imposes a heavy toll. In reality, the heavy toll is exacted by shying away from meeting the total situation in total integrity. In fact, the longer you avoid this, the further you remove yourself from all that is good and peaceful, and the heavier the price you inevitably pay. You foolishly talk yourself into a hopeless situation because you hope to avoid the correction, which only seems a sacrifice.

Now, my friends, when you look at your lives, question yourselves about where you could expand more. How could you experience life more deeply and fully? How could you be freer from any sort of disharmony within or around you? Where or how could you give and receive more? When you precisely acknowledge the empty or destructive areas, when you acknowledge the possibility that within you lie the tools with which to correct the situation, then you will do what is purposeful and constructive, what is necessary. Everything else will follow suit. Then it will become possible for you to retrace the various negative chain reactions, find the appropriate laws, and change your attitude and behavior regarding these laws. You will work with, instead of against them. But as long as you gloss over your difficulties, your emptiness, or you pretend that their cause has little or nothing to do with you -- at least now -- you cannot go back to where you have to be within yourself.

The next violation of the mental law is that of false ideas. We have talked about this in many different forms. Any false concept a person has is always directly related to somehow not wanting to accept a truth about oneself. We must distinguish here between general areas of life -- of science or philosophy -- which either have no direct bearing on your personal life or are beyond your current comprehension. It goes without saying that people, in their current state of development, cannot possibly know everything. But in areas you are capable of understanding -- provided you are unblocked and honest with yourself -- any untruth you abide by in your beliefs must affect your inner and outer life, since the false belief is a product of your inner attitude. Therefore, we cannot say that a person's spiritual beliefs are unrelated to his or her emotional attitudes. Whether or not you believe, what and how you believe, the attitude with which you decide to either believe or disbelieve in a superior power -- all this is directly related to your innermost integrity, your honesty with yourself in all matters.

It is therefore correct that any misconception in your psyche that creates negative chain reactions results from your not wanting to be in truth. For one reason or another, you believe that

not being in truth is better for you than being in truth. This then results in one of those negative, self-perpetuating chain reactions.

The ignorance that all possibilities -- all perfection, all fulfillment -- already exist deep within the nucleus of the self is directly connected with a deliberate misconception about one's personal life. People often want to ignore the possibilities and powers within themselves. You do so partly because you derive pleasure from complaining and unhappiness. Partly you truly fear these powers. You fear the possibility of happiness. You fear that you may not be able to handle it. You fear the ecstasy of a perfectly lived life, as you fear death, as you fear all great experiences that take you out of yourself. This vague fear makes people deliberately embrace negativity, and -- unconsciously, yet deliberately -- violate the laws that afford them the unfoldment we speak of here. Only when you have involved yourself to a considerable degree in such a negative chain reaction, with all its pain and frustration, will you long to return, step by step, back to the point of departure through the self-created chain reaction until you reach the level of origin with all its potentials and powers. Finally, you will no longer shy away from the ecstasy of a fully lived life, where abundance, truth, love and the unlimited possibilities in every direction of your being exist. But you still have to acclimate yourself to breathing fresh air, and such acclimation is possible only when you become truly willing to give up negativity and destructiveness.

In the last few lectures we discussed how many of you are now beginning, little by little, to discover your deliberate destructiveness; how you want to be destructive, how you wallow in your desire to be destructive. This is great progress, my friends. If you do not know this, then you are further removed from the level of your being where all good exists, and you need to find this essential link. Not knowing what you feel and what you want and what you aim for makes it impossible to go in any direction. It puts you in the well-known trap, in which you are paralyzed, numb and lifeless. So, first, all your aims, desires and wishes -- constructive or not, no matter how unconscious until now -- must be acknowledged. This is an essential part of the work we are doing together. Once this has happened, you can ascertain -- as some of you have begun to do -- that you are deliberately destructive in those areas where you are unhappy. When you are aware of this, you are no longer quite so far removed.

The majority of my friends have already found this deliberate destructiveness. Those who have not still have to come to this realization. I would urge you to look at yourselves in this light. You will find that you have not yet come to the point where you truly desire to give up the destructiveness and turn to a constructive, inclusive, friendly attitude toward life and others. You still do not wish to give up self-centeredness and isolation and accept a new way of life in which you include others, build instead of destroy, in which you want to contribute, even if this means relinquishing the importance of the little ego. The desire to be with others instead of against them has to be expressed. This entirely new attitude and way of life has to be actively wanted, embraced, cultivated. It does not happen otherwise; it does not come by itself, unless the ego wishes for it.

Only then can all your fears and your sense of worthlessness vanish. Yet your destructive past tries to assert its worth by continuing to be destructive. Most of you here still find yourselves in that error. You have to work on that level. When you can make this essential decision to give up destructiveness, you will find a battle within you. You will find a greater fear of constructive unfoldment, of happiness and fullness, than of confinement and pain. This may appear preposterous, yet when you test your feelings you will find this to be so. After having clearly defined

the nature of your deliberate destructiveness, issue the following instruction into your psyche: "I truly desire to give up my destructiveness. I want constructiveness. I choose this, not by any pressure or obligation, but because I wish this to be so." You will, at that moment, find a fear. This tiny, little nucleus of fear -- still vague, hazy, unpronounced -- is what we have to bring into focus. This is the point of the chain reaction where the majority of you now stand -- or will shortly come to if your work proceeds according to the possibilities you have available at this time. Either you are already there, or you are about to discover and bring into focus the destructiveness.

Then the next point is: Why do you like to hold on to it? Why do you actually find it safer than the limitless expansion of good that opens up when you let go of destructiveness, negation, denial, negativity? What is the fear? I cannot elaborate on this point tonight, for it is a lecture in itself, but we shall go into this next time.

Perhaps some of you have something to contribute to this topic, or questions to ask, that will help lead all of you into the next link in the chain reaction. When we understand the fear you have of the good -- which leads you to cling to the negative -- then you are no longer far from the original core where all you need exists. When you can be in touch with this center of yourself, it gives you the power to master your life and unfold it to the best possibilities. So many hazy areas have to be cleared up before this point can be reached. When you do not want to see the deliberateness of your destructiveness, you are stuck. This is, basically, the most important point of this work. All others are side issues, details to work through to become acutely aware of the deliberate destructiveness and avoidance of productive, positive unfoldment.

Does anyone here have any inkling, any realization, of a fear of letting go of destructiveness, of a fear of the positive? Does destructiveness feel safer? Does anyone have a question in this regard?

COMMENT: I had an experience along these lines where I made the decision to give up my destructiveness and cruelty and enlisted my divine self. I was going along nicely until the test came, and then I just ran the other way. I couldn't face it -- and all the old negative, destructive emotions returned. I suffered and suffered; I couldn't stop it. I didn't know until now, when you mentioned it, that it was fear.

ANSWER: You are exactly at the point I discussed. Anyone else who has something to ask or contribute?

QUESTION: This is a subject with which I have struggled for a long time, and I am well aware of the fear. The only thing I can contribute here is to say that the only way I can work with it, at the moment, is through constant awareness and meditation on destructiveness and the tremendous fear of joy and relaxed happiness. Everything tenses up when things go well and I am happy. My whole body becomes almost incapable of relaxation. I get into too much activity. Even though it is outwardly constructive activity, it is destructive to happiness. I would like to know if there is anything else I can do to get out of this?

ANSWER: Yes. I would concentrate in the moment -- as you issue into yourself the desire for constructiveness, happiness, fulfillment -- and express the knowledge that this possibility exists in you. At the same time, you must become more acutely aware of your deliberate destructiveness.

For there is, of course, a direct tie between the two, as I have already indicated. To the extent that deliberate destructiveness is unconscious, and therefore cannot be given up, happiness cannot be embraced. When you comprehend your deliberate destructiveness in all its forms -- not necessarily in action, but predominantly in hidden emotions that can lead only to indirect corresponding actions as well as vague thoughts and half-conscious wishes -- when this is concisely crystallized in your consciousness, you will immediately understand what blocks you. Then the next step we are coming to will become available to you. I will go more fully into this topic in the next lecture. We may also prepare for it in our next Question and Answer session. The fear cannot be understood when the deliberate destructiveness is not conscious. This is what I advise you to work on, my dears.

QUESTION: I have become aware of this destructiveness quite recently. It is very clear to me that it is directed against my mother. I sabotage the positive aspects of life because I want to spite her and, in a way, prove to her that whatever she expects of me I am not going to fulfill. Now this is quite clear. At the same time there is a resistance to change it. When I find myself in a situation where I could do this and no longer adhere to this irrational, senseless pattern, something stops me. I am afraid of giving up something that I am not able to pinpoint, except that I know I cling to it tenaciously. It is some kind of a hope for a sort of magical transformation of my life. Maybe you can give me a little illumination about this fear.

ANSWER: Let me say now about this fear only that it is a very fundamental fear, that of dissolving. You might call it fear of death, but it is much more than that. It presents itself whenever a person is in flux, when the personality is truly vibrating in the harmony of the cosmic forces. It occurs also in other instances, but it does not always occur in what you call death. This depends on the individual's state of development. The fearful person experiences this vibration as a terrifying dissolution of self. The same fear applies to union between the sexes. It exists in any creative state in which the ego is not very strongly tied to the inner being. It is this dissolving and unifying with the universal stream of being that people fear. Such dissolving and giving up of the little self also exists in unhealthy states such as those brought about by sickness or drugs. When the ego is lost because it is too weak, it is unhealthy. But when you have gained a healthy ego, you must come to the point where you can let go of it. This letting go appears frightening. It is a question of trust. As long as you do not have a deep trust in yourself, you cannot trust the universal forces. By letting go of the little ego, you will become more of an individual and will find yourself again. The trust in the self grows commensurately with the giving up of destructiveness. The destructiveness has to be given up before you can let go of yourself. When you understand the fear, it will be easier to do this. This is, roughly speaking, the deep, inherent fear.

QUESTION: Would you say that overemotionalism is destructive?

ANSWER: Of course, everything that is "over," exaggerated, implies an imbalance, a disturbance.

QUESTION: How can we fight it?

ANSWER: Fighting implies a forcing away by suppression, and this is not real development. Real development produces a personality that does not need to be on guard, that can afford to be relaxed and confident in its own inner processes. This state can be attained by investigating the particulars of this overemotionalism. When the personality does not dare to invest natural,

spontaneous feelings in certain areas -- out of fear, alienation, deliberate and false defense mechanisms -- then, as always, an overemotionalism occurs in other areas. Nature tries to reestablish balance when the natural order is disturbed. This balance must be reestablished for the personality to be in harmony and peace. When the underemotionalism has been corrected and the individual is allowed to fill this void, the overemotionalism will cease. Both manifestations are painful, the emptiness as well as the "too much." Both these pains will turn into pleasure, when harmony has been attained.

QUESTION: I stick to a guilt feeling because I get a negative, destructive pleasure out of it. If I would let go of this, I would then feel -- perfectly irrationally -- that, being happy, I would fear death. I feel that death does not matter when I am unhappy, so I do not permit myself to be happy.

ANSWER: The moment you can recognize such a thing, you have the power to give it up. Again, this amounts to fear of death, the fear of having no individuality, no consciousness. This fear can be met only when trust exists -- primarily trust in the self. This trust cannot be established as long as the personality plays such magical, childish, bargaining and -- in the final analysis -- dishonest games.

My friends, when you want to find your way back to the inner center, to the inner motion, it always comes down to the point at which you say, "I let go." Whether the letting go means giving up destructiveness, cruelty, evasion, or any other unproductive way of life, or whether the letting go is entrusting yourself to the flow of life, it must finally come to the ability to let go. As long as you stem against it, you produce a disharmony between your life flow and the cosmic flow, of which you are part. It is like a river that is disturbed in its quiet flow by obstructions and strong counter-currents. The disturbance created in the universal flow can be eliminated only by finding this flow. It is necessary to entrust yourself to it and await what comes. It is not a giving up of personality, of individuality or consciousness -- not by any means.

You can find the truth of this statement only when you try it. When your consciousness is too tight a nucleus, this harmony cannot be established. The outer ego has become too strong. Too much trust has been placed in it, in a distorted way. Meanwhile, insufficient trust is given to other levels of personality, which function autonomously when given a chance and with which the outer ego must eventually integrate for harmonious functioning to occur. When the outer ego is overemphasized, the result is separation from the autonomously functioning center, which is constantly at one with the universal stream. This is the separation we have discussed in this lecture. When you let go and entrust yourself to the life stream, to the cosmic reality of being, when you give yourself up to it, your ego will not cease to be. It will truly be a relaxed part of that greater consciousness within you. This will mean a security in yourself such as you have never known.

Finally, it amounts to an act of entrusting yourself to the universal flow. To some of you on this path it comes earlier -- to some degree only, of course. With others it comes later, but come it must. When I say "on this path," I mean much more than this particular work in this particular group. I mean a way of life. If a life is rightly lived, it comes to this. It comes to all these awarenesses, to all these inner actions and transformations. It comes to the giving up of all the negativity that we have discussed here from so many different angles.

Now my friends, I bless all of you. May this lecture, these words help you to go the way within that needs to be trod. May it help you to realize that everything you can possibly desire is within yourself. May it help you to realize that there is nothing to fear. Let go and entrust yourself to the life stream, to the good, and to the unfoldment of your soul.

Be blessed, every one of you. Be enveloped in the strength and love and truth that can transform you, if you let it. Be in peace. Be in God!

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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