

UNITY AND DUALITY

Greetings, my dearest friends. May this evening be a blessing and an enrichment for every one of you here and for all who read these words. May you open your minds and hearts so you can deeply understand yourselves. And if you cannot understand immediately, some of these words may take root in your psyche and come to fruition later. Full understanding of this lecture may reach you only as you work your way through the deep layers of your unconscious where what I say here will apply.

There are two basic ways to approach life and the self. Or, to put it differently, there are two fundamental possibilities for human consciousness: the dualistic and the unified plane. The majority of human beings live predominantly on the dualistic plane, where you perceive and experience everything in opposites: either/or; good or bad; right or wrong; life or death. In other words, practically everything you encounter, every human problem, is shaped by this dualism. The unified principle combines the opposites of dualism. By transcending dualism you will also transcend the pain it causes. Few human beings transcend the dualistic plane, so most people experience only an occasional taste of the limitless outlook, the wisdom and freedom of the unified plane.

On the unified plane of consciousness there are no opposites. There is no good or bad, no right or wrong, no life or death. There is only good, only right, only life. Yet it is not the kind of good, or right, or life that comprises only one pole of the dualistic opposites. It transcends them both and is completely different from either one. The good, the right, the life that exist on the unified plane of consciousness combine both dualistic poles, so no conflict exists. This is why living in a unified state, in absolute reality, creates bliss, unlimited freedom, fulfillment, and that unlimited realization of potentials which religion calls heaven. Heaven is usually thought to be a place in time and space. This, of course, is not so. Heaven is a state of consciousness that can be realized at any time by any entity, whether a human being in the flesh, or one who does not live in a material body.

The unified state of consciousness is attained through understanding or knowingness. Life on the dualistic plane is a continuous problem. You have to struggle with the arbitrary, illusory division of the unified principle, through which things become opposites that impose conflicts. This creation of irreconcilable opposites generates a tension within and therefore with the outside world.

Let us understand this particular struggle, and therefore the human predicament, a little better. You already have, in your real self, a unified state of mind, regardless of how unconscious and ignorant you may be of it. This real self embodies the unified principle. Now, even those who have never heard of such a thing have a deep longing and a mostly unconscious sense of a different state of mind and life experience than the one they know. They yearn for the freedom, blissfulness and mastery of life that the unified state of consciousness affords.

This longing is misinterpreted by the personality, partly because it is an unconscious yearning for happiness and fulfillment. But let us understand precisely what is really meant by these words. They mean the unification of the dualistic opposites, so that there is no longer any tension, conflict, or fear. Consequently, the world becomes alive and the self is master, not in a tight, tense, hostile way, but in the sense that life can be exactly what the individual determines it to be. This freedom, mastery, and bliss, this liberation are sought after consciously and unconsciously.

The misinterpretation of this longing occurs partly because it is unconscious -- only a vague feeling deep within the soul. But even when the theoretical knowledge of such a state exists, it is still misinterpreted for yet another reason. When freedom, mastery, unification, and the resulting bliss of the unified state of consciousness are pursued on the dualistic plane, a tremendous conflict must ensue because they are absolutely impossible to accomplish on that plane. You strive for the fulfillment of your deep longing to transcend and find, deep within yourself, a new state of consciousness where all is one. When you seek this on a plane where all is divided, you cannot ever find what you seek. You will despair and split yourself further apart in conflicts, for illusion creates duality.

This happens overwhelmingly among people who are ignorant of these possibilities, but it also happens among people who are more spiritually enlightened yet are nevertheless ignorant both of the difference between these two planes and of how they can learn to transcend the dualistic plane in their practical daily existence.

When the vague longing for, or the precise theoretical knowledge of the unified plane of consciousness is misread and therefore sought on the dualistic plane, here is what happens: You sense that there is only good, freedom, right, beauty, love, truth, life, without a threatening opposite, but when you apply this on the dualistic plane, you will immediately be plunged into the very conflict you seek to avoid. You then fight for one of the dualistic aspects and against the other. Such a fight makes transcendence impossible.

Let me demonstrate this in a familiar everyday human problem, so that you can understand these words more concretely. Let us assume that you are quarreling with a friend. You are convinced, from where you sit, that you are right; therefore, immediately, the friend becomes wrong. With dualistic understanding issues can only be either/or. The outcome seems to matter more than the issue itself, for when the intensity of emotions is truly tested it often has no relationship to the issue at stake. It would rather be commensurate with a life or death issue. Although you may think this irrational on a conscious level, on an unconscious level being wrong truly means being dead, for being wrong means being denied by the other. On the dualistic plane, your sense of identity is associated with the other person, not with your real self. As long as you experience yourself only as the outer ego-self, you will depend on others. Only when you have realized the center of your being, which embodies unification, does your life cease to depend on others. Hence, a slight quarrel truly becomes a matter of life or death, which explains the intensity of emotions when it comes to proving your right and the other's wrong.

On the dualistic plane each issue ends with either life or death. Life becomes terribly important in order to avoid death. Often people fear death so much that they run into it head on. Such individuals do not escape fear of death. Quite the contrary. Their constant struggle with life,

which results from their fear and struggle against death, renders them so unhappy that they believe they don't fear death. This is an illusion as long as life is experienced on the dualistic plane, as long as one side is viewed as important and is fought for, and the other side is seen as a threat and is fought against. As long as you feel that you must win because your side is true, while the other's is false, you are deeply involved in the world of duality, and therefore in illusion, conflict, and confusion. The more you fight this way, the greater the confusion becomes.

Human beings are habitually trained by upbringing, and everything they learn from their surroundings agrees that one must fight for one and against the other of any number of opposites. This applies not only to material issues but even more to concepts. Every truth can thus be divided into two opposites, one being adhered to as the "right" and the opposite aspect being declared the "wrong" idea. In reality, however, the two complement one another. On the unified plane, neither aspect is thinkable without the other. There the complements are not "enemies" or negations of each other; only on the dualistic plane of consciousness are they so opposed. There every conflict multiplies into intricate subdivisions of the primary dualistic split. Since all this is a product of illusion, the longer the conflict continues, the less it can be solved and the more hopelessly enmeshed you become in it.

Let us now return to our example and demonstrate how this is so. The more you prove your friend wrong, the more friction exists and the less you obtain what you thought you would by proving yourself right and your friend wrong. You believe that by proving yourself right and your friend wrong, your friend will finally accept and love you again and all will be well. When you do not succeed, you misinterpret that and try harder, for you think you have not sufficiently proven that you are right and the other is wrong. The rift widens, your anxiety increases, and the more weapons you use to win the fight, the deeper your difficulties, until you actually damage yourself and the other and act against your own best interest. You are then faced with a further conflict, which arises out of the first dualistic split. In order to avoid a total rift, with all its real and imagined threats -- for real damage has begun to be wrought -- you are now faced with the alternatives of having to give in in order to appease your friend and avoid further damage to yourself, or to continue fighting. Since you are still convinced that there is a right versus a wrong, such appeasement robs you of self-respect and you fight against that. Whether you use this "solution" or not, you will be torn between fighting or submitting. Both create tension, anxiety, and inner and outer disadvantages.

Thus, a second duality develops out of the first. The first is: "Who is right and who is wrong? Only I can be right. Otherwise all is bad." The second is either giving in to a wrong that you cannot admit, for it is a total wrong, or continuing the fight. Admitting a wrong means death, in a sense. So you are faced with the alternatives of admitting a wrong, which means death in the deep psyche, in order to avoid dreaded consequences and the possibility of a real risk, putting your life at a grave disadvantage, again death, in the deepest sense, or insisting on your total rightness. Any way you turn you find death, loss, annihilation. The harder you fight for and against, the less there is to fight for and the more all alternatives turn against you. The illusion that one side was good and the other was bad has brought you to the inevitable next step on this road of illusion, which is that all alternatives are bad. All dualistic struggle is fated to lead you into further traps, which are all products of illusion.

When the road to the unified principle is chosen, soon what at first appeared as one certain good and one obvious bad ceases to be so, and you inevitably encounter good and bad on both

ends. When this road is pursued still further, no longer is there any bad, but only good. The road leads deep inside the real self, into truth that goes way beyond the fearful little ego's interests. When this truth is sought deep inside the self, one approaches the unified state of consciousness. Our example is a banal one and can be translated into many everyday issues, big or small. It can take shape as a small squabble between mates or as a conflict between countries at war. It exists in all difficulties humanity encounters, individually and collectively. As long as you find yourself in this illusory dualistic conflict, you will experience hopelessness, for there is no way out on the dualistic plane of thinking. As long as your very existence is identified with the ego-self and therefore with the dualistic approach to life, you cannot help but despair, no matter how much this despair is covered up or momentarily alleviated by occasional success with the desirable alternative of the two opposites. The helplessness and hopelessness, the wasted energy of the dualistic struggle, rob you of your birthright. You can find your birthright only on the plane of unification.

Since everything you learn from your education and environment is geared to dualistic standards, it is not surprising that you are totally attached and adapted to this state of consciousness. And even when you learn about this other possibility, you are frightened of it. You cannot believe in it and you cling to what you know. This creates a vicious circle, in that the dualistic rules and precepts, which condition you to this way of life, are themselves a result of your fear of giving up the egotistical state that alone seems to guarantee life. It appears that giving up this ego state means annihilation of your individuality, which, of course, is utterly erroneous. So, you have these dualistic rules because of your erroneous fears, and you cling to the false fears because of your indoctrination.

Before we discuss in greater detail why you cling to the painful dualistic state, despite the immediate accessibility of the unified plane of consciousness, I would like to say more about how to realize unification within yourself. The real self, the divine principle, the infinite intelligence, or whatever you wish to call that deep inner center existing in every human being, contains all wisdom and truth you can possibly envisage. The truth is so far-reaching and so directly accessible that no further conflict exists when this truth is allowed to take effect. The ifs and buts of the dualistic state cease to exist. The knowledge of this inborn intelligence far surpasses the ego intelligence. It is completely objective; it disregards the small, vain self-interest -- and this is one of the reasons you fear and avoid contact with it. The truth that flows out of it equalizes the self with others. Far from being the annihilation that the ego fears, that truth opens up the storehouse of vibrant life force and energy that you usually use to only a minor degree and which you misuse in directing your attention and hopes to the dualistic plane, with its tightly held opinions, false ideas, vanity, pride, selfwill, and fear. When this live center activates you, you begin your limitless unfoldment, a process whose accomplishments become possible precisely because the little ego no longer wants to misuse them in order to find life, as it did, on the dualistic plane.

The unified real self can always be contacted. Let us again return to our example in order to see how. The hardest act to perform, which, in reality, is the easiest act possible, is to ask, "What is the truth of the matter?" The moment you are more intent on the truth than on proving that you are right you contact the divine principle of transcendent, unified truth. If the desire to be in truth is genuine, the inspiration must come forth. No matter how strongly circumstances seem to point in one direction, you must be willing to relinquish and to question whether what you see is all there is to the issue. This generous act of integrity opens the way to the real self.

It will be easier to follow through when you consider that it is not necessarily a question of either/or, but that there may be aspects of right in the other person's view and of wrong in yours, aspects that, so far, you have not seen because your attention was not even directed to this eventuality. This approach to a problem immediately opens the way to rise to the unified plane of existence and to be moved by the real self. It immediately releases an energy that is distinctly felt when this act is done with a deep and sincere commitment. It brings release from tension.

What you then find out is always totally different both from what you hoped for and feared on the dualistic plane. You find that you are not as right and innocent as you thought, nor as wrong as you feared. Neither is your opponent. You soon discover aspects of the matter you never saw before, although they were not necessarily concealed. You understand exactly how the quarrel came into existence in the first place, what led to it, what its history was long before its actual manifestation. With such discoveries you gain insight into the very nature of the relationship. You learn about yourself and the other, you increase your understanding of the laws of communication. The more vision you gain, the freer, stronger and more secure you feel. This vision not only eliminates this particular conflict and shows the right way to straighten it out, but it also reveals important aspects of your general difficulties and makes their elimination easier through this understanding. The vibrant peace that comes from this extended understanding is of lasting value. It affects your self-realization and your daily life. What I described is a typical example of unified, intuitive understanding: of knowing the truth. After the initial apparent need for courage and the momentary resistance to seeing a wider truth than the egotistic one, your path becomes so much easier than the struggle that ensues on the either/or plane of the dualistic life.

Before you can bring yourself to the unified way of thinking and being, the tension will mount, for as long as you remain on the dualistic plane, you struggle against unification because you falsely believe that the moment you admit and see where you are wrong and the other is right, you submit and enslave yourself. You become nothing, worthless, pitiful -- and from there it is only a step to annihilation in your fantasy life. Hence, you feel that leaving your dualistic plane is the greatest danger. The tension will mount as your conflicts escalate. But the moment you are willing to be in truth, the moment you are eager and prepared, not merely to see your way, your little truth, not to give in to the other's little truth in fear of the consequences if you do not, but when you wish to possess the larger, more encompassing truth, which transcends both of your little truths, a specific tension will be removed in your psyche. The way toward the manifestation of the real self will have been prepared.

Let me recapitulate here: The two most significant obstructions to the real self are ignorance of its existence and the possibility of connecting with it; and a tight, cramped psychic state with tight, cramped soul movements. These two factors make contact impossible with the real self, and therefore with a unified state of existence. As long as you are on a dualistic plane, you must be in a constant soul cramp. You may remember how often I discussed the importance of observing your soul movements. When you fight against one dualistic aspect and press for the other, observe your soul movements. Superficially, you may lean on the apparent justification of the position you press for. You may say, "Am I not perfectly justified in combating this wrong in the world?" On the dualistic plane this may indeed be so. But with this limited outlook you ignore that this very wrong exists only because of your dualistic approach to the problem and your prevalent ignorance that there is another approach. The resulting tension blurs the view that other aspects exist which both unify what you deem right and what you deem wrong, regardless of what the wrong actually is.

This simple act of wanting the truth requires several conditions, the most important being the willingness to relinquish what one holds on to, whether this be a belief, a fear, or a cherished way of being. When I say relinquish, I merely mean questioning it and being willing to see that there is something else beyond this outlook. This brings us back to why you are terrified to relinquish the ego state, hence the dualistic, painful way of life. Why do you resist so much committing yourself to this deep inner center, which unifies all good and is instantly accessible? It is, however, beyond the personal, little considerations of the ego.

The dualistic plane is the plane of the ego. The unified plane is the world of the divine center, the larger self. The ego finds its whole existence on the plane in which it is at home. To relinquish this plane means to give up the claims of the little ego. This does not mean annihilation, but to the ego it seems to mean just this. Actually, the ego is a particle, an isolated aspect of the master intelligence, the real, inner self. It is not different from it; there is simply less of the real self in it. Since it is separate and limited, it is less reliable than what it stems from. But this does not mean that the ego has to be annihilated. In fact, the ego will eventually integrate with the real self so that there is one self, which will be fuller, better equipped, wiser. It will have more and better assets than you can imagine.

But the separated ego thinks this development means annihilation. In its ignorant, limited way, the ego exists only as a separated being; hence, it pursues further separateness. Since the limited consciousness ignores the existence of the real self -- even if it is accepted as a theory, its living reality will be doubted as long as personal misconceptions are not eliminated -- it fears letting go and relaxing its tight hold, the very soul movement that leads to the real self. This is the constant struggle of the ego until it ceases fighting against an opposite through repeated recognitions of a wider truth in every small personal issue.

The real self cannot manifest as long as personal problems are not straightened out. But the process of doing this and the first inklings of self-realization often overlap; the one furthers the other. Many of my friends can use these words to take a new approach to their problems, although there is nothing new in my words as such; however, this way of looking at your basic human struggle may help you considerably. As long as you are totally identified with your ego, you will continue to cultivate more separation, and self-idealization must be the consequence. Self-glorification and idealization seems, from this point of view, the apparent salvation and guarantee to assuage your existential fears. The ego thinks, "If everyone around me considers me special, better than others, smart, beautiful, talented, happy, unhappy, or even bad," -- or whatever specialty you have chosen for your idealized self-glorification -- "then I will receive the necessary approval, love, admiration, agreement that I need in order to live." This argument means that somewhere deep down you believe that you can exist only through being noticed, affirmed, and confirmed by others. You feel that if you go by unnoticed, you cease to live. This may sound exaggerated, but it is not. It explains why your idealized self-image is so destructive. You feel more confident when you make yourself noticed than when you make positive efforts.

So your salvation seems to lie in others who would acknowledge your existence only if you are special. At the same time, the misinterpreted message from the real self wants you to master life, but you master it on the wrong plane and believe that you must vanquish every resistance that is in your way. Each personal pseudo-solution is a way you have to eliminate your obstructions on the

way to specialness. Which pseudo-solution you have chosen depends on individual character traits, on circumstances and early influences. Whatever they are -- and there are three basic ones: the aggressive, the submissive, and the withdrawal solutions -- they are destined to triumph over others and establish your freedom and fulfillment.

Your existence seems to be guaranteed when you are totally loved, accepted, and served by others, and you hope to attain this by triumphing over them. You can now see that you are governed by a succession of wrong conclusions, which are all completely different in reality.

Of course, all your reactions and beliefs can be ascertained only when you have learned to admit them. You also need to question the meaning of a particular reaction and look behind the facade, beyond what it pretends to mean. Once you admit this, it is easy to verify that all these misconceptions govern you and rob you of the beauty of reality. You will further come to see -- not as a theory, but as a reality -- that your life does not depend on other people's affirmation of your existence; that you do not need to be special and separate from others; that this very claim traps you in loneliness and confusion; that others will give you love and acceptance only when you do not wish to be better than they are, or special or different from them. Also this love will come when your very life no longer depends on it.

When you have truly attained knowledge, your accomplishment in whatever field this may be, cannot have the effect on others that it has when accomplishment serves to set you apart. In the one case your accomplishment will be a bridge to others, because it is not a weapon against them. In the other instance it will create antagonism because you wish to be accomplished in order to be better than others, which always means that others should be less. When you need to be better through your accomplishments, what you give to the world must turn against you because you offer it in a spirit of war. When you give of your accomplishments in order to enrich life and others, you and your life will be enhanced by it because what you offer is given in a spirit of peace. In the latter case, you become a part of life. In taking from life -- and the live center within yourself -- and in giving back to life as an integral part of it, you act according to the unified principle.

Whenever you believe that "in order to live I must be better than others, I must be separate," disappointment is inevitable. This belief cannot bring the desired result because it is based on illusion. The dualistic concept is "me versus the other." This illusory belief makes the transition from the dualistic to the unified plane of consciousness so difficult, for giving up this "fight against the other" appears to imply self-annihilation. The more you fight others, the less they will comply with your demand to affirm your self and the more you will experience this as a danger equal to giving up the fight itself. So every way you turn seems to be blocked. You make yourself utterly dependent on others with your illusory concept that unless they approve of you you are lost, while, at the same time, trying to overrun them and triumph. You will resent the former and feel guilty about the latter. Both create intense frustrations and anxiety; both yield no salvation whatever.

Notice the initial disinclination to question your assumptions concerning any problematic issue in your life. The outer issue is so painful only because the inner quarrel is between life and death -- or so you believe. The fallacy of this can be established only when you dare question your reactions honestly and precisely. Even though some of you are quite accomplished in this pathwork, self-facing to a degree, you still manage to hide from issues when they become really painful and frightening. This is your very stumbling block because your shying away from what appears so

painful and frightening makes it impossible to uncover the fallacy of your hidden belief. You hold on to it secretly, born out of your dualistic outlook but the ensuing inner battle gives you the cramped inner movement that debilitates you. It paralyzes your free-flowing energies and makes the transition to the unified plane impossible. When you look at your problems in as objective and detached a way as you can muster, expressing the wider outlook of the real self, as you turn your best intent and will to the matter that disturbs you with a genuine wish for impartiality, you will first notice a shrinking back from such a desire and a more or less overt or subtle way of covering up your desire for flight. Catch yourself in this act and courageously forge on, questioning yourself further and deeper. You will then come to see that, finally, the outer difficulty is a symbolic representation of your inner quarrel where you fight for life against death, for existence against annihilation. You will see what you evidently believe is required from others in order for you to exist.

When you have arrived at this level of your being, you will be able to question your precepts that lay the foundation for this. And this is the first step to make possible the transition from dualistic error to unified truth. You will further notice that relinquishing ideals and convictions also feels like annihilation, for being wrong means dying, and being right means living. The moment you go through this movement of opening up and have the courage to want the truth, a more complete truth than you can see at the moment in whatever issue, you will come to a new peace and a new intuitive knowledge about the way things are. Something in your hardened psychic substance will have loosened up and will further prepare the way for total self-realization.

Each time you loosen up the climate in your psyche will be more auspicious for the final, total, awakening to your inner center, which contains all life, all truth, all the unified goodness of creation. Every step in this direction abandons another misconception, and each misconception represents another burden. The giving up of what first seemed like protection from annihilation will now be disclosed as what it really is: burden, suffering, imprisonment. You then comprehend the preposterous fact that you are actually opposed to leaving the dualistic life, with all its hardship and hopelessness.

Perhaps you can now understand some of this, and it will help you in your personal path. When you apply this to your everyday life, you will see that the abstract-sounding words I use here are not something far away, but accessible for every one of you. You will see that these words are practical and concrete, if only you are willing to see yourself in relationship to life in a wider truth than you are as yet willing even to contemplate.

On the dualistic plane you must have everything your way. You must win over life, over others, over circumstances. You must prove yourself to be stronger than all other forces in your life that may oppose you. Opposing you means that you lose, and losing, in the last analysis, means annihilation. That is what you are frightened of and why you are so intense in this struggle. That is why you always feel as though something much larger were at stake than the actual issue. This is why you deny the intensity of your emotions knowing that what takes place on the conscious level is not commensurate with your real reactions. If, at times, you win over the circumstances is it really enduring peace you gain? Not really, my friends.

At the moment, you may be gratified and appeased and feel safe. But how long can you retain mastery over life as you cling to dualistic thinking? Each new issue endangers you all over again, and

deep inside you know this, only you know it in the false way; you believe it to be your undoing. You must therefore constantly live in fear that you cannot always win. In this dependency you need life to move always according to your needs, or rather your imagined needs. You then become resentful of those who prohibit your gratification. You must become resentful of life, which seemingly does not let you be. The message coming from the real self says, "Your birthright is perfect happiness, freedom, and mastery over life." When you fight for this birthright according to dualistic principles, you remove yourself further and further from self-realization, in which you could truly have mastery, freedom, and total fulfillment. You seek all this with false means. They are as varied as each individual's character.

We have often discussed pseudo-solutions. If you restudy them in light of this lecture, you will understand on a deeper level what this is all about. You will see how you personally try to set up the false fight leading into more confusion and pain. The three basic pseudo-solutions are simply means for conquering life on the dualistic plane to guarantee your existence. The overt fight is not a bit more opposed to truth and peace, not one iota less aggressive than the submissive solution, whose hostility always smolders underground. In whatever way you try to win, you are dependent on others and on circumstances often way beyond your actual control and therefore doomed to failure. This futile struggle hardens your psychic material. The more brittle it becomes the less you are able to contact the center of your inner being where everything you could possibly need is found: vital well-being and productivity and inner peace, which is a byproduct of finding the real self.

The only way you can truly enter the unitive state where you can truly achieve mastery, is by letting go of the false need to win, to be separate, to be special, to be right, to have it your way. Discover the good in all situations, whether you deem them good or bad, right or wrong. Needless to say, this does not mean resignation, nor does it mean fearful giving in or weakness. It means going with the stream of life and coping with what is as yet beyond your immediate control, whether or not it is according to your liking. It means accepting where you are and what life is for you at this moment. It means being in harmony with your own inner rhythm. This procedure will open the channel to your Godself, so that finally total self-realization takes place. All your expressions in life will be motivated and lived through by the divine principle operating in you and expressing itself through your individuality, integrating your ego faculties with its universal self. Such integration enhances your individuality; it does not diminish it. It enhances every one of your pleasures; it takes nothing away from you whatever.

May every one of you comprehend that the truth is in you. Everything you need is in you. May you find that you actually do not have to struggle, as you constantly do. All you have to do is recognize the truth, wherever you stand now. All you have to do, at this time, is acknowledge that there may be more in you than you see, call upon this inner center, and allow yourself to be open to its intuitive messages to you. May you find this possible exactly where you need it most at this particular moment. Your gauge is always what feels most uncomfortable, what you are most tempted to look away from.

Be blessed, continue on your wonderful path, which will bring you to the realization that you already have what you need and are where you need to be. You merely look away because you are geared in the opposite direction. Be in peace. Be in God.

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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