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## SELF-LIKING: THE CONDITION FOR UNIVERSAL STATE OF BLISS

Greetings, my dearest friends. Blessings for every one of you here and all my friends who are working on this path of self-realization and liberation. Many of you are making progress. Tonight I will talk about the very thing many of you most need to hear at this time. Listen with your inner ears as much as with your outer ears.

The universe is so constituted that each individual creature is capable of being in a constant state of bliss. Bliss is not just a theoretical possibility: it is humanity's natural state of being. It is the natural law. An individual who is not in a state of bliss is in an unnatural, disturbed condition. It is important for you, my friends, to grasp and appreciate this fact.

The bliss I speak of is not a vague promise for the future in this life or in a life beyond the physical state. It is possible right here, right now. Its attainment does not depend on some complicated feat or on a state of perfection foreign to your present way of being. It does not depend on outer events or on anything having to be different. People believe that if only this or that were different then nothing would stand in the way of their happiness. But total happiness is possible immediately as you are now.

Humanity unconsciously knows that a state of pleasure supreme is everyone's birthright, and everyone constantly strives for it. Whether or not the individual is capable of realizing that this striving is misdirected does not alter the fact of its existence. Once you learn to search in the proper direction, you will find what you seek. I shall now discuss two aspects of this search.

Arriving at the blissful state one consciously or unconsciously seeks depends directly on one's self-esteem, the ability to like oneself. The equation always comes out even: to the exact degree self-liking exists, happiness exists. When self-liking is missing, the psyche is inhibited from experiencing its natural state. This in turn alienates you from universal forces and sets up a barrier preventing you from becoming part of the cosmic forces, which are bliss. It does not matter whether the failure to like oneself is based on valid or on invalid reasons. Both present equal obstacles.

A reevaluation of one's concepts is part of the process of self-realization, since people often dislike themselves for the wrong reasons. I have pointed out before that a fine inner mechanism regulates the psychic processes, so that justified reasons for self-dislike, when not consciously recognized and come to terms with, create false guilts and exaggerated standards of perfection. It is therefore always a violation of personal integrity that prevents the personality from coming into its own -- whether or not it also causes false guilts. This inner mechanism is exact.

No self-deception or conscious denial can eliminate the effects of self-dislike. The most enlightened human beings still ignore the importance of this fact. In our past work together we have discussed many of the specifics that impair integrity and therefore self-respect. Any path of self-realization must deal with the most subtle unconscious soul movements and attitudes because their effect is greater than most individuals even remotely sense.

Self-realization and liberation are determined by the individual's free decision to adopt natural, universal laws and standards, taking full responsibility for this decision upon oneself. This means being true to the natural laws that work in life and in the individual -- as distinct from allegiance to handed-down values, superimposed standards or cultural mores. Such a liberated state of mind differs drastically from one that automatically adopts opinions or standards without question. The automatism that allows most people to take conditions and laws of life for granted prevents autonomy of self. This automatism is widespread and affects more areas of life and personality than you can imagine, my friends.

We have discussed the effects of mass images and mass impressions. Most of you think of the crass issues that developed people begin to question and wonder about. None of you are aware of the issues within yourself that require a fresh new approach. When you take any law for granted that is not a universal law of life you close the door to the universe.

Often the most rebellious human beings are most impregnated with mass opinions and false limitations, considering them inevitable laws of life. They might not rebel against life so much if they did not believe they had to bow down to something inevitable.

It is tragic how much waste and unnecessary hardship exist because of allegiance to unnatural laws. The differences between natural laws and the mores of civilization are frequently quite pronounced. Sometimes the natural and unnatural laws are so similar that they seem identical. Yet it makes a world of difference whether one abides by standards of conscience in the free spirit of self-choice or acts in blind obedience. The words may sound the same, but the flavor of the psychic processes, their inner climate and attitude, is totally different. When the natural law is different from the human law, the difference becomes even more obvious.

Those who deny themselves the experience of spontaneously discovering independent, self-responsible concepts by which one can conduct a meaningful life are not acting from mere laziness or fear. It is always a violation of integrity. As long as one thinks fear is the obstacle to self-responsible inner conduct, the fear will not vanish. But when one begins to see that personal integrity is affected by the refusal to seek answers independently, an innate decency and desire to be truthful often provide the incentive that had been lacking.

Now, why is integrity damaged when an individual refuses to come to autonomous conclusions about life's rules? Blindly taking limitations and laws for granted is always a matter of cowardice. Lack of courage induces an individual to rote repetition of handed-down moral codes. People may accept handed-down laws because they are afraid of the consequences of questioning them, of conflict with other people's opinions. After the honest examination of motivations one cannot help realizing that simple opportunism plays a dominant role on an emotional level. To obtain approval or admiration from others, one sells out on a truth one shies away from naming.

Freeing the real self is impossible as long as conditions hostile to truth prevail in the psyche. Wherever ready-made opinions are echoed -- whether or not the person is aware of this -- an opportunistic violation of personal integrity occurs. This does not mean majority opinion is wrong. The observations apply equally to rebellious opinions of a minority group. A blind, unquestioning, emotionally colored motivation, which outwardly seems courageously defiant, may be tainted with cowardice and opportunism.

The laziness of not thinking through an issue is never just laziness per se. It is always tainted by cowardice, a conformity to a specific group of people the individual believes he or she desperately needs and cannot afford to antagonize. A special temptation strengthens the tendency to forsake independent inquiry and the forming of one's own concepts in harmony with the natural laws of life. All the world pronounces the mores of society good and righteous, while the natural laws inherent in one's being are often ignored. People who follow the human laws receive homage for their goodness and righteousness. Such praise is tempting. It appears to work like a balm on the sores of self-doubt and self-dislike. But this medicine treats only the symptom, never the root of the problem. When the real reasons for self-dislike are removed, the courage to be oneself grows in proportion. Many times the real reason for self-dislike is, at least partly, the cowardice to sell out the truth for the convenience of being approved of by others. The so-called medicine and the poison are frequently the same.

When people begin to crystallize the questions they are to ask, to probe deeper and come into real awareness, then action is not what matters most. What is of primary importance is knowing. Action may still be difficult to take because not enough courage has been mustered. But you are in a state of truth about yourself, no longer in self-deception and no longer unaware. You are nearer the self, nearer to the universal truth, nearer to the source of all bliss and fulfillment.

Knowing the natural law of evolution, even when you are not yet able to live by it, establishes freedom and truthfulness as the inner climate of the psyche. Knowing, therefore, as it immediately affects the evolved being's state of pleasure and joyfulness, is primary. For you must respect and like yourself to the degree you no longer gloss over and take for granted those apparently unquestionable "self-understood" aspects of life. In this knowing, self-liking is established and, with self-liking, so is the capacity to partake in the universal bliss, which is a natural condition.

The second aspect I want to discuss is transcending the now. No matter where you are, my friends, no matter what your present condition or circumstances, no matter how you feel, if you face the now thoroughly and do not run away from it, then it yields a wealth of beautiful energy, life substance and joy. In the now you can find exhilaration and bliss, peace and stimulation, a deep sense of purpose that will lend meaning to all you do -- inwardly and outwardly. Pleasure supreme lies in every fraction of life, provided you do not escape from it -- perhaps by pushing yourself to be what, at this moment, you are not. It does not matter what your mood of the moment may be. If you feel alienated from your self, if you feel disconnected, anxious, depressed, hopeless or bored, there is in this very moment, through this mood, your nucleus, your now. If you face this now, experience this mood, whatever it is, and transcend it, you will not have to wait for a distant future, for a different state of being, for a state of perfection. You are in the life force and life substance of your immediate now. You are in bliss, in a moving stream of evolutionary growth. On a deep and subtle level that is usually covered up you cannot help but like yourself. It often seems the most difficult thing for a human being to do, and yet it is the easiest.

No matter how many times you may have heard words like these, your habits are deeply ingrained on both counts: First your automatic response is to take things for granted without questioning them; second, you run away from the mood of the moment. On both counts your aim is to avoid contact with yourself.

Both being true to the natural laws and transcending your now are essential for being in the live center of your real self, where all good exists in immeasurable power, forever and ever. This power waits for you to wake up to its reality. Deep in the center of yourself all wisdom is constantly available. In this center life eternal manifests right now.

Any one of you would be surprised to see a list of all the things you still take for granted. You blindly accept as inevitable many laws and precepts that are by no means natural. Examine yourself from this point of view. You will rid yourself of many ideas you believed were indispensable; you will discover natural laws and find the courage to pay allegiance to them. A new courage and integrity will be born in you.

The need to be like others is not the opposite of the need to be special and better than others. They are two sides of the same coin in the world of duality. To the extent you merely conform by taking for granted what others say, you believe in laws that are not natural -- explicitly as well as implicitly -- you believe in laws that are not natural and in facts that are not inevitable. You are compelled to prove your specialness and to set yourself up in a place of pride. The cowardice that feeds conformity is the same as the pride that feeds superiority. Both can be shed only when one has the courage to question apparent inevitabilities and the humility not to have to be better. That is the freedom that opens the gate to the real self. And it opens the gate to the universe.

With courage and humility it is easy to question what one feels, where one is, why one reacts in the way one does and why the reaction exists in the first place, instead of leaving all this in the confusion of a vague, foggy climate. The fog alienates you from the live center of being in pleasure, from life as a natural state of exhilaration, wisdom and eternal good. Vagueness and not looking at your pride and cowardice prevent you from reaching this natural life. Each moment can therefore be owned up to only when courage and humility exist. The courage to question the handed-down codes, the courage to look at every and any truth within the self, and the humility not to have to be special and perhaps, if necessary, for the sake of truth, to dispense with approval by others.

My friends, each moment offers a richness, a perfection, a fullness, no matter where you are, no matter what your predicament. When you find yourself in some unfortunate state, know that you are in transition, under pressure only to reach a different state. You cannot grow when you simply strive away from what you are now. Such striving is an error, a misunderstanding based on denial of what is. When the present is fully acknowledged, pride and cowardice will drop away without effort.

Cowardice, in its compliance and conformity, self-negation and denial of truth, opportunism and betrayal of cosmic reality, results from pride. To let go of the need for others' approval requires humility. The courage one needs can be attained only when humility exists. You will not betray your real self, you will not violate it when you let go of the need for admiration, the need to be singled out in some way.

Now, my friends, are there any questions?

QUESTION: You speak about the people who want to be better than others, who want to be special. But how about those who feel that they are not as good as others?

ANSWER: It is the same duality, two sides of the same coin. People who genuinely feel their value never need to prove themselves better than others. Only those who doubt their value need to do so. I began this lecture by saying that self-liking is the key to a state of bliss. Here is the vicious circle: The more you sell out, the less you like yourself, the greater your need to receive approval to assuage self-doubts. The greater your attempt to have others give you what you yourself can effectively supply, the more you are driven to betray your truth.

One can escape from the vicious circle only by working on a path of self-finding. Each moment of discontent is alive with answers for you. If you look for the answers you transcend the now and experience the truth of the universe, which is that every fraction of life is infinite bliss.

QUESTION: I ask for someone else, whom I want to help....

ANSWER: At these levels one cannot help others, except by showing them a way, and then always provided they are willing. Unfortunately, most people would do anything, go anywhere, rather than look at the self. Self-scrutiny frightens them, and they frantically try to avoid it.

When an entity is ready to look where the looking will yield real answers, help must come. But no one can help another to be in the now, which presupposes the absolute and primary desire, "I want to look at the truth in myself." Anyone in the pathwork who pronounces these words daily, particularly at moments of discontent and disconnection, will experience amazing results. "What is it now that I do not want to look at?" When an individual raises this question, answers will come forth in exact proportion to the sincerity and strength of the wish. Otherwise, there is no answer, my friends.

This applies to those who have not yet begun to discover the depths in the self that need to be explored in the light of consciousness. It also applies to those who are effectively engaged in such pathwork. They, too, may have blind spots. Perhaps they persist in overlooking what needs most to be faced as they overconcentrate on aspects that they have already confronted. Perhaps the truth that gets overemphasized lends itself well to covering up other truths the person is not ready to see. No matter how much growth occurs, people fail to utilize moments in their life to the fullest. They let troubles stand unexamined, preferring to stay on the surface, never reaching the nucleus of the disturbance. The disturbance may be accepted in a false spirit of inevitability, taking for granted what need not be.

Each moment contains indescribable wealth, my friends. The human mind lacks the equipment even to remotely conceive of it. Consider the science of atoms, which has shown that the smallest known particle has power to destroy vast areas of human habitation and millions of human lives. The same particle has power to affect human life in positive ways equal to its destructiveness. Your attitude determines the direction this power takes. The human race begins to be aware of the power of the smallest. The concept is new and strange to human thinking, which heretofore has measured power in terms of size, in other words, that big things can yield great

power and small things have little power. With the science of atoms, a revolutionary reorientation has begun, forcing human beings into recognizing that power is not a matter of size, but rather of quality. With this new concept, the truth of a new dimension begins to open up.

It is exactly the same with the now of each moment. Each fraction of time, of existence, possesses a power that surpasses the power of the atom. This spiritual power surpasses all physical manifestations. The infinitesimal fraction of life can be utilized when you examine the nucleus of power in its negative manifestations and see that this same energy can be used positively.

Humanity is oblivious to its potential. It assigns power to outer circumstances and material factors, not to the energy of the now. The truth is that each now is charged with immeasurable life force, an energy that can be released when the obstructions to the now are removed. Focus your attention on it and you will discover inconceivable riches and powers. Already the first inklings will astound you. You do not have to wait for tomorrow. You do not even have to wait for a different state of existence. The desired tomorrow, or the desired different state of existence, will come as a result of meeting this moment in truth.

QUESTION: The expression "seeing yourself in truth" seems to have lost its meaning because a lot of people use the expression and claim that they see themselves in truth -- yet I know they do not. An expression is often used in such a way that it loses its real meaning. Could you clarify this? Does it apply to areas where people don't want to face the truth about themselves?

ANSWER: This is, unfortunately, the fate of all truth in the human realm, and it goes beyond the limitations of expressing spiritual truth in human language. Language can lend itself well to concealing, displacing and deceiving when you use the right words yet avoid the real issues. No expressions in any language guarantee avoidance of subterfuge and self-deception. Only the profound sincerity of the inner will to be truthful with the self can avoid distortion. The human tendency to run away from the self prompts the use of language in ambiguous ways. One can generalize about "the truth" while avoiding specific truths about oneself. This is how a truth can eventually become a cliché. That is why I restate and reformulate the same truths in different words.

All I can add here is that one cannot be in the universal, general truth, the dynamic truth of life, unless one is in the truth of one's self. And that includes the truths still difficult to look at. A person who refuses to face what seems most difficult is not in a truthful state. There are always areas one resists looking at that offer opportunities for self-deception.

It is essential to say to oneself again and again: "I want to look at everything, even the areas where I am most resistant." Then, and only then, can all the difficulties, all the apparently insurmountable obstructions dissolve so that things fall naturally and effortlessly into place and a meaningful life establishes itself.

The universal stream of life brings harmony where disharmony existed, meaning where waste existed, fulfillment where frustration existed, pleasure supreme where pain and deprivation existed. But the courage and humility to be in total truth about the self must be cultivated and summoned -- daily.

"I am not afraid to look at whatever it is, even if it is something I do not want to see. I request the divine wisdom and power within me to help me to see what I most need to see, so that I can change as I need to change." Make this your daily prayer and you will liberate the real self from its shackles and attain the blissful truth of the universe.

QUESTION: I want to ask about a strange and frightening experience I had lately. When I feel particularly liberated after certain clarifications and register a surging feeling of the life force in me during meditation, I have the sensation as though my genitals were lifted off me. I feel a new hope, but at the same time there is fear contained in this new hope. What can you tell me about this?

ANSWER: This experience is an expression of greater progress than you can perhaps appreciate at this moment. As a result of the great understanding and truth you have gained and certain changes in your inner being, you have released life power that was hitherto paralyzed. This induces the hope, where before you felt hopeless, that you might someday experience aliveness and pleasure and exhilaration. At the same time, all this has brought into the open a misconception lodged deeply in your psyche: that if you give vent to the live energy in your body, you might be endangered, particularly by the loss of your genitals. This misconception occurs frequently, which does not alter its real threat to you. The child in you is governed by this misconception, and it is responsible for many of your difficulties. Finding the source of the misconception within yourself -- not as a psychological theory, but as a personal conviction -- will eventually enable you to see that it is false. When you fear the hope that opens to you, it is because you still believe in the threat: Your misconception is that the hope of new life simultaneously contains danger. Your conflict seems to be: "Should I stay the way I am and become lonelier and more separated, or shall I take action and perhaps perish?" This is the state in which you inwardly find yourself. It can be resolved only when you truly understand that the misconception is a misconception. The pain will vanish, for the pain results from the misconception and the ensuing conflict.

QUESTION: As to living in the now and seeing what is there, I have discovered I always need reassurance. This has made me aware that I am hardly ever living in an unselfconscious way. Everything is always geared to obtaining this reassurance. I live in order to be what I would like to be, not what I am. Can you help me with that?

ANSWER: Your need for reassurance is based on doubt that you count, that your intrinsic values are sufficient. You fear that your own opinions are not valid, so you need confirmation or reassurance by others. Any unreal needs have an addictive quality; the more one needs them, the stronger unhealthy striving becomes and the further one gets from the inner source of all solutions. Also, the more one gets used to it, the more one thinks one needs it.

When you go into the moment, ask yourself what particular reassurance you want. Then ask yourself where you are unsure. The uncertainty underlying your present truth must be brought out. You will then find that a cowardly opportunism exists wherever you shy away from your truth in relation to universal truth. This opportunism based on fear may easily be covered up by apparent rebellion.

This discovery is already the first layer of the moment. Knowing this enables you to go to the next layer, which is exploring the doubt that seems to need reassurance. Where do you, perhaps,

forsake a natural law and not even wish to know it, so as not to endanger yourself by opposing what you fear the world expects of you? Do you understand?

QUESTION: Yes, I think I understand it quite well. Now, supposing my doubts and need for reassurance concern my masculinity. How does this apply to what you said about the natural law as opposed to complying with the expectations of the people around me?

ANSWER: You forsake the natural law by not trusting in the benign nature of your feelings. You cut them off. There is deep in you a mechanism that says, "No, I will go no further. I let myself go as far as I have because it is pleasurable, but I will not risk allowing my full nature to take its course." You do this partly because you fear the world's censure, and partly because of a misconception similar to that of our friend who asked the last question. Your fear is not as strong, but you also feel threatened by natural feelings in yourself and you pay allegiance to a world that seems to say one should not trust these feelings. You deny the universal forces within you. You want to play it "safe."

Think deeply about all these things, my friends. Try to apply what you have learned. Approach yourself with courage and humility and something will open up in you. A fountain and wealth of wonderful strength, the love and wisdom of the universe will become available to you. Be blessed, my dearest ones, feel the love and the truth as they are always here. Be in peace, be in God!

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