

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Upon general request, we issue a part of the last Question and Answer session as a lecture. Those present felt that because of the universal usefulness of the topics, the transcript should be made available to all who could not attend in person.

Greetings, my dearest friends. May your questions and my answers to them bring you the blessings, the help and strength that are indeed available if you reach for them, if you avail yourself of the possibilities that exist for you. For only too often human beings believe themselves to be bound, paralyzed, helpless and unable to move in spirit, in mind, and therefore in some way also move with their physical being. This heaviness is perhaps the most difficult barrier to overcome. Once the first attempts are made and the initial inertia overcome, it ceases to be difficult. It is but a moment, as it were, of gathering yourself and letting go of something that seems to keep you invisibly bound. When you perceive and meet that moment, declaring that you do not wish to remain in this position, something can happen within yourself. Now let us try together to make this "something" happen. Wherever you find yourself stuck, it is possible to move out. For those of you who cannot avail themselves of the possibility to receive help even here, it will be more difficult to move. Such inertia requires more willpower, more meaningful mental work and activity.

Now let us begin with your questions.

QUESTION: I find myself facing a repeating problem, which is the feeling of being unacceptable -- by girls, especially. I worked on this in the past but it still seems to be very strong in me. I would like to try and understand the origin of this. I know my mother's role is important here, but I don't think that is all. I'd like to get to the bottom of it and see what it is.

ANSWER: You are quite right that it is not all, but it did begin when you were a child. Later on, when you ceased being a child, your reaction to what took place, to the sense of deprivation and unfulfillment in you, made you withdraw from your feelings and made you turn them into a negative force. In other words, it is not so much that an actual rejection took place, but your childish misunderstanding of the conditions made you interpret them as a personal slight. You became very angry about it all and wanted to hit back at those who seemed to have frustrated you -- primarily the woman. Mother is represented, of course, in all women.

On your path, you begin to come face to face with your images. That is, you begin to feel how you emotionally react according to them, you experience their reality, you connect with them, as opposed to before, when this was not the case. Certain emotional experiences come out from the depths of your being, but it is just the beginning. I do not mean that many more different realizations must be made, or new and different negative emotions faced. It is more a question of the qualitative experience of what you already know in principle. It is the beginning of becoming

more intensely aware of what is in you, for you are still frightened of facing the reaction you have to feeling frustrated and rejected.

If you feel unacceptable to girls, it is only because you do not accept yourself. This is not only because originally you felt you were not accepted by your mother, but mainly because of your reaction to that. This was -- and still is -- the wish to hurt. It is a response, an automatic reflex reaction and, as that, it is blind. This makes you feel so guilty, so bad and unacceptable that you cannot imagine that anyone can love you. In this inner battle you cannot win. You do want to hit back at the entire female sex, all of "mother" in the whole world, for not loving you, as it seemed to the little child. You want to repay all women for not gratifying your need. You secretly feel an impulse to be so bad that you must bind yourself into inactivity, into holding back, into non-movement toward the world, toward girls, toward your own best feelings. This is where you are inwardly locked in battle.

The more you face these feelings, the more you allow them to come out into your consciousness -- without judging yourself, yet knowing that they are destructive and understanding why they are there, as well as knowing that they do not have to stay in you -- the sooner you will dissolve them. The more you go through these feelings -- not by acting them out but by facing them, feeling them, expressing them in the way you have learned to do here -- the more you will genuinely lose the urge to hurt. It must be that way, because this is natural. If nature is not squashed, if "good behavior" is not superimposed over a seething pool of anger, fear, anxiety and all sorts of guilt feelings, conflicts and confusions -- such as wanting closeness and fearing it, therefore becoming more deprived and consequently more frustrated and more angry -- then nature must manifest in its full beauty. The more you hold in check the negative reactions and confusions by covering them up, denying their existence, the less you can cope with them and the further you must alienate yourself from your true nature. As you learn to go through this process and gradually lose the fear of what is in you, you diminish the force of the impulse to hurt. You understand that such impulses are conditioned reflexes, that you are not fundamentally bad and different from others because of them.

I cannot sufficiently stress the difference between an apparent freedom from cruelty, the wish to hurt, violence or vindictiveness, and the genuine freedom from those emotions. The former is a pretense. The latter is the truth. You attain it in exact ratio to facing the very impulses you feel most guilty and ashamed about. Then you will no longer be frightened of the other person, because you are no longer frightened of your own destructiveness. You thus enter into a benign circle. When you no longer wish to hurt, you will no longer take for granted that you will be rejected. Therefore you will not be angry and frustrated and will, eventually, even begin to give out of your good feelings. The more you can connect your fear of others with the secret wish to hurt, the less this wish will exist. Do you understand that?

QUESTION: Yes, I do. You seem to be implying that I have sadistic feelings toward women. I may also have to face the feeling of unacceptability more than I already have. Is that true?

ANSWER: I would put it this way: When you can fully face the sadistic feelings, without the threat and terror you still experience about them -- although not as strongly as you did in the past, because now you are aware of them and can talk about them -- then you will understand much

better why you have them in the first place; that you are still a valuable person in spite of their existence; and, last but not least, that their existence in you not only does not protect you or is favorable for you, but is the very means that continually reproduces the rejection and frustration. In other words, you will connect the feeling of unacceptability with the newly-faced sadistic impulses. That connection is the important thing. When the connection is not an intellectual, theoretical understanding but an actual emotional experience, when you are truly affected by the causal connection of unacceptability and sadistic impulses, then you will be on the way to truly coming out of this prison. This is the prerequisite. Gradually, the sadistic impulses will lessen and the feeling of acceptability and self-liking will grow. It will grow not only because you lose the sadistic, primitive impulses, but primarily because of the courage and truthfulness with which you approach them. The decency to face up to what seems unfaceable must produce healthy love for the self.

This, my friends, is always the way it works, in whatever respect: Whoever begins to face and accept and intelligently deal with the hitherto unacceptable, proportionately increases his or her self-respect and sense of adequacy. You increase your strength and resourcefulness, your free energy flow. This begins to operate even before the negative condition has ceased to exist. The attitude one adopts to what one dislikes about the self -- secretly or semi-consciously or, at times, even quite consciously -- is what induces the change in how one feels about oneself. A reasonable attitude to what seems "unfaceable" means a sense of proportion, not exaggerating and not denying, not whitewashing the self, nor dramatizing oneself into an all-bad human being.

All this often takes place on an unconscious level and what remains on the surface is a vague feeling of being unacceptable, without quite understanding why. Unconsciously, you feel you have no redeeming feature, while on another level you blame everyone else and the whole world for your misery. The ambivalence is that while you feel, "I am so bad that if the truth were known I would be shunned, so I must keep the secret, even from myself," you also express the attitude that "the world is horrible, everyone is bad and against me, it is everyone's fault but my own that I am miserable."

The feeling of unacceptability cannot cease as long as its cause remains unconscious. The moment it becomes conscious, reason can be applied. Your sense of fairness will then be directed at everyone, also at yourself. You will respect yourself more and more for going through a process most people shy away from.

Is all that clear?

QUESTION: Yes. But will I have to meditate about it?

ANSWER: Yes, nothing could be more helpful than meditation to really get through. Again and again, the resolution must be made that one wants to go all the way, that one wants to face the whole truth about the self, without shirking the slightest or the worst aspect. Again and again, the mind must formulate such intents and elicit the help from the supreme intelligence, deep within the self. Say words to that effect, if possible every day, such as "I want to face the truth, I want to let come up whatever is in me. I want to let out what there is. I have the courage and honesty to do this. I request help to guide me. This is what I decide to do. I will not run away from myself. I will not deceive myself. I will stop living a life of self-deception" -- which everyone does to the extent he or she feels discontented with life. To the extent life begins to open up with light and hope and

fullness and a sense of "life is good," to that extent one has practiced truthfulness. Such meditations have a most powerful and immediate effect. This goes for everyone, of course.

QUESTION: I would like to ask a question that relates to the problem just discussed. In what way is his problem, as you just described it, different from the one that I am facing now. Or in what way is mine different from his?

ANSWER: It essentially is the same problem -- as it exists in so many people. What varies is the degree, the way it manifests, how one covers it up. The difficulty here is that these forces, these cruel impulses are so contradictory to the image people have of themselves and of how they feel they should be, how they want to be, how they present a different front to the world. The difference of how you human beings want to be and how you really are is tragic only as long as you ignore that your fundamental nature is so much more wonderful than any ideal and false presentation of it could be.

The discrepancy between what you partly are and what you pretend to be -- also to yourself -- is one of the most severe stumbling blocks holding up progress. If you can overcome this obstacle, nothing can stop you from becoming your real self. The obstacle stems from the fact that, as a child, you would not have been accepted had it been known that you harbored feelings and thoughts of a nature that was less than saintly. If such impulses would have been known, you would have been gravely punished. The child had to deny them to remain safe and secure and retain the parents' love.

As time goes by and you grow up, you adopt the same attitude the parents had. You feel you cannot accept what they did not accept. You are under the misconception that only you harbor such impulses, except for some very bad people. No one who is at all valuable has such impulses. What is, perhaps, most important here is the unconscious -- or perhaps only vaguely conscious -- fear that these unacceptable impulses, desires and emotions are your true nature, that in these forbidden emotions your true personality is revealed, that this is the ultimate you. This is the greatest stumbling block, the fear that blocks you, for, quite naturally, you do not want to accept that this is who you are.

When you truly understand that these cruel impulses are not the last and final reality about your hidden self, you will have the courage to go all the way. They are temporary; they are distortions; they are the result of something that happened to you once upon a time, so that all that is great, wonderful and beautiful in you began to be distorted and inhibited. In other words, the inhibition of the beautiful vital forces caused the distortion. This happens over and over to the entire human race -- primarily out of ignorance and fear, out of distrust of nature, not out of initial malice, though malice may be one aspect of the distortion. A general ignorance has also influenced those who were responsible for your upbringing: they discouraged the best in you without knowing what they were doing. Because of it this best has turned into something destructive -- at least in part.

If you truly understand this, and if you can meditate and request from your creative innermost being -- the superior intelligence that dwells in the depths of you -- to help you truly understand and experience how what was best became distorted, then facing your destructive side will not be the horror it now seems. You will see that it is neither the ultimate reality of your character, nor

something that you have to reject entirely. For in this destructive, sadistic side resides a power which is, in itself, creative. Once you have the courage to experience the power in its negative aspect -- so that no one is harmed, not by acting out -- then you will know, as a personally felt experience, that this very same power, or force, turns back into the beautiful thing it was before it turned destructive. Then you will be unable to feel so guilty and self-rejecting about it; nor will you feel the urge to deny, to embellish, to justify and to project onto others what you cannot accept in yourself.

There is no single part of your being that you need to reject as such. And I mean any of you, of course -- everyone. Even the most destructive aspects are, in themselves, components of something beautiful and highly worthy. You have to give them a chance to transform back into their original state of beauty. This requires that first you allow it to emerge in its destructive way and that you take cognizance of it. If you reach for that understanding in your meditation, the tremendous resistance and inertia will vanish. The inertia itself will turn into a wonderful new energy. But to get to this point you must first dwell on this thought with an intellectual understanding. Further, you must want to make this understanding more complete and reach for it by eliciting the powers within that can help and inspire you. If you follow this procedure, you cannot fail in your endeavors. Then you will see the truth of these words.

When I show you the way to self-realization, as I do now, I once again wish to make clear that you should never accept anything as dogma. You are invited and advised to give yourself the chance to confirm the truth of my words by putting them into practice. You have nothing to risk and nothing to lose.

The truth of all life is that your innermost being, your real self, can unfold only when you go this way. That innermost being can manifest only when you cease to be frightened by the involuntary processes, when you can let go and allow to unfold from within you whatever is there, even if it cannot be immediately controlled with your mind and will. Then, and then only, will you activate that which can bring you fulfillment in life. This fulfillment is your true heritage. As long as the apparently unacceptable is not met and transcended in the sense I presented to you, the intense delight, the supreme pleasure life can be, that your own body and soul can give you, must remain inaccessible.

QUESTION: I had a similar question in mind about being afraid to let go. Is the answer to my question not also covered by what you just said? It seems to me that way.

ANSWER: The same could be said to everyone. These are universal factors, no matter how personal they may seem to each one of you. Only the emphasis and degree vary from individual to individual. The chain reactions, the levels of projection vary.

In your case it works this way: On the level where my two friends who asked the previous questions wish to hurt the female sex out of anger, frustration and revenge, the sexual force has entered into this urge. Thus sexuality and the wish to hurt have temporarily melded into one stream. In your case rage, anger, cruel instincts are there, but not so much sexualized. You have turned all this cruelty and anger against yourself. What is more sexual is the masochistic element. On the one hand, you need to express the anger and rage and want to let it out -- this is the natural urge. On the other hand, you fear to do that. In this sense your pressure is a different kind of pressure. But

fundamentally the same applies to you as to everyone else -- especially what I said about the fear that the self is ultimately bad, and how this can be proven to be a false assumption.

What also vary, almost infinitely, are the assumed characteristics to deny and cover up the basic fear of oneself, and also which attitude is sexualized. All these aspects, and many more, cover up the fundamental similarity which is that one fears the self to be unacceptable as it is and therefore hides it, even from oneself. Thus, the treasure that the self is -- one's true worth -- must remain hidden as well. Therefore, answers to such questions apply to everyone.

It is extremely regrettable for all those friends who are also on this path and do not come to the question and answer sessions that they do not choose to witness these meetings. Thus they don't avail themselves of an additional aspect of help that is far more important than they want to realize now. They would often find new light, new strength, new insight, and therefore new hope. They would find a way out that may not be open to them now. They truly shortchange themselves by not taking advantage of this.

QUESTION: I am now allowing myself and others total freedom. The effect has been staggering. It is like being on a new planet. I think that taking this step is necessary for me at this time, as I believe it will lead me to my salvation. However, two moods have set in at different times. One is a divine feeling of freedom and bliss. The other is a crushing feeling of anxiety, guilt and insecurity. What more can you tell me about this state of being?

ANSWER: I shall be glad to comment on it. But first of all, to avoid any possible misunderstanding, I want to clarify that by total freedom you do not mean license to act out destructive impulses. Some people may misunderstand. You mean by freedom to permit the other person, as well as yourself, to be the self. Not granting this freedom, in a subtle way one wants to force others and the self to be what one is not, to feel what one does not feel, to act contrary to one's own inner, momentary truth. The child makes such demands on the parents, it wants to possess them and is thus possessed, as in "Mother, you must do what I want, otherwise I am lost." Your new freedom no longer acts and feels according to such dictates. And that is a tremendous milestone on the road from infancy, childhood, adolescence, into maturity.

As to the problem of the occasional recurrence of anxiety, it is natural and understandable. Such a transition cannot be made in one sweep. There is the old, childish, fearful self, geared to the old mechanisms of false self-protection. When these mechanisms are given up -- in this case, the forcing-current, the holding on -- no wonder the system reacts first with fright and alarm. It requires a period of re-orientation, of forming new methods of operation which are more realistic and constructive. Gradually the old, undeveloped side of the personality will gain confidence in these new modes of operation. Whenever the individual does anything that is contrary to the old restrictions and measures, anxiety must arise. Whenever the sexual force is allowed its free flow, the first instant reaction will be to restrict it -- and that in itself causes anxiety.

When we go to the most fundamental level on which this problem can be directly resolved, instead of dwelling on the in-between levels, we find the intense fear of letting your inner being be. Let it be as it is, rather than trying to be as you think you should be, or letting neurotic layers of your personality mix in with superimposed perfectionistic standards. Neither one of these ways is the good way. Both are coercive, both deny the real, the spontaneous, the free, the natural, which alone

can bring meaning and fulfillment, gratification and bliss. Perversely, humans fear nothing as much as the very essence of themselves, the very truth that alone is their salvation. You harken to everything but the truth of yourself. You try so hard not to be yourself; the harder you try the further away you get from peace and wellbeing and the more confused and anxious you must become.

This generality also applies to you particularly, my friend. If you do not fear to follow through, you will experience shortly something new evolving out of you whose existence you never expected. This something will be clear and strong. It will not know submission, and yet it will not be a compulsion to have your own way. It will let you be free and thereby find a wide open world in which you will find many possibilities and reasons for self-respect. You will feel the transformation from anxiety to pleasure, as you no longer deny the anxiety, nor force it away by artificial means. But you must be prepared that your conditioned reflexes cannot be re-conditioned so quickly. Whether you consciously intend to or not, your soul substance makes you react in the old way of pulling back from unpleasant feelings. Do not lose patience with yourself. The moment you become aware of this old habit pattern, you have a way out -- and little by little a new habit pattern will be formed.

Nothing seems to require as much courage at first as partaking in the pleasure supreme which creation is and which the created entity is destined to experience, if it is not interfered with and is not distorted. You have to muster courage again and again, by deliberately instructing your still unwilling and tentative unconscious: "I let go, I let myself be in pleasure. The possibility for it exists in me, I reach for it, I claim it, and I want to fulfill all conditions to make it a reality. Whatever stands in the way -- all violation of my integrity, all untruthfulness and role playing, all cowardly defenses, all self-centeredness that makes me treat others differently from the way I want to be treated -- I intend with all my being to face and change."

Such meditations set up a powerful force. As you put such intentions into practice, you will permit yourself happiness, you will not cringe away from the delight life is in its essence. You will no longer feel obliged to submit to senseless rules of restriction. The moment you let be what there is, you will find yourself -- which is a treasure, even if what manifest first is distasteful to you. You will find bliss, the universal state of being. This does not need to wait for a life after death. It is available at any minute, in any human being's life, right here and right now. But you must be realistic and expect fluctuations. They must be calmly observed. Such a major transition can never be accomplished in one sweep. Speeding up the process to connect with the dissenting, fearful side -- the side that resists the liberation -- is so much more effective than repressing it and then becoming impatient and putting pressure on oneself.

This is a new beginning of a new phase and there is, indeed, a beautiful vista to behold. A new land must open up when one gets to this point -- a state that usually seems unattainable and hopelessly far away. But it really is not. It truly is not! Is that clear?

QUESTIONER: Yes it is. I just want to say one more thing about this. I have tried those dialogues with the child in me, and that has helped me a great deal. In this way I can easily act maturely on the outside and just speak to the child inside.

ANSWER: Yes, that is a very good process, which I have suggested a long time ago but, unfortunately, people forget it. It is good at this point to remind all of you: Do not repress that child. Nor do you need to completely identify with it, for you are not only this child. Therefore, encounter it and talk with it. See it manifest and listen to it, then you can speak without pushing, without coercing. Just see its expression for what it is worth.

Continue your question.

QUESTION: After I could grant freedom to others -- that they did not have to do what I wanted -- I made this remarkable discovery of being free myself, of allowing myself full pleasure. I have no more anxiety about that.

ANSWER: Oh yes, you have. On deeper levels of your being you still have the fear of pleasure. There still is anxiety about allowing yourself full pleasure and full freedom. This word must be properly understood. It is not license. Only one who is fully self-responsible is capable of utilizing the freedom creation has granted all beings. For example, when people shift the blame for their present unhappy state on any other factor than their own unconscious processes, they are not self-responsible, no matter how subtly and covertly this may be done. There is a mechanism in the psyche that directly connects this displacement with the prohibition of pleasure.

The more childishly you hang on to a parent substitute, making him or her responsible, wanting to be taken care of and refusing the consequences of your own actions and decisions, the more you want to have your cake and eat it too, the less you are able to utilize the great freedom. You incarcerate yourself within imaginary fences and entangle yourself in conflicts that make life become one big trap. Then the meaning of the word freedom is no different from expressing destructiveness and acting out of rebellion and spite.

Only those who stand on their own two feet on the deepest and the most material levels of life, will step into the great freedom of finding every possible fulfillment available. That freedom is so staggering -- and, perhaps, first even frightening -- that the child shies away from it, preferring the pseudo-safety of restriction, inhibition, dependency, pleasurelessness. When that state worsens, the suffering becomes unbearable -- for nothing can remain static. One either enters into a healthy state and then the positive effects increase and unfold infinitely, or one remains stuck in a destructive, erroneous state and then the negative effects become worse and worse. The immature believe that self-responsibility means confinement. Of course, the exact opposite is true. Confinement is the result of insisting to be taken care of. You are beginning to glean some of this new freedom, although it is still frightening.

QUESTION: Can you say something about this blissful state? I understand the anxiety, but this bliss is almost unbelievable.

ANSWER: It is. However, it is almost impossible to put such profound truths of existence into language. I shall try. Words cannot do it justice and will make it sound trite. What I will say is that usually, when you hear of such things, you think of another world, a different, spiritual world. In reality it is not so. True spirituality is not a state up in heaven. This misunderstanding is, in a sense, a tragedy because it creates a split and thus makes spiritual self-realization impossible. As

long as human beings separate earth from heaven, body from spirit, you cannot experience the true bliss of unity.

The blissful state of spiritual realization combines the spirit, the mind, the emotions and the body. In the middle of the body is the solar plexus. For years and years I have spoken about this. Right in that region, right in the body, all bliss exists -- not as something unphysical, but as something that must be felt within the body. If you expect spiritual bliss as something away from your body, you find yourself on a way of duality and error, of conflict and dissension.

A nucleus of energy will make itself known, right in the body. It comes from the real self. Its intense reality makes the truth of all these teachings a profound experience that cannot be denied or thought to be illusion. It is this truth and reality that is so reassuring and so hopeful, no matter what relapses may occur. When compressed energy dissolves and flows through a person's entire being, one enters into this blissful state.

Compressed energy is the result of holding back, of fearful denial of what is. The dissolution of this compressed energy is the result of the process I so often describe, in so many ways. The more the self is met, the more aware you become -- first of the compression that feels almost like a foreign body, as I said before. As you acknowledge this foreign body and meet it in the right way, it begins to dissolve. And this opens up paradise on earth. There are many, many degrees in which the fluidity of energy, of spiritual matter and substance, of thought and feelings, can be experienced. The degree depends on the state of growth. First people fear this fluid state more than anything. They think they must make themselves compact; they hold on to this compactness as if it alone could guarantee life. It is only when the compactness becomes too painful that they may reverse the direction and set out to make the compression fluid again.

This experience makes you one with the universe. It is totally safe. Everything feels home and peaceful and so intensely pleasurable that it is almost like a physical taste in your mouth. The bliss also comes from the fact that you know you can cope with any situation because you do not have to have your way, because you can lose without suffering -- or if it is painful at first, the pain is not the end of the world and you know you can meet it. Thereby it ceases to be pain. You begin to see and perceive in an entirely new way. Whatever you experience will have a new tone and a new flavor, a new color. You will never have to fear any longer, because you now know that all the treasure of life is embedded in you, all truth, all wellbeing, all answers to all your problems and questions.

There are two basic aspects of self-realization: the knowing of truth and the feeling of pleasure. Both are equally important and both should be cultivated. Some schools of thought concentrate on one aspect, others on the other. Each may think their approach is the true and only one. Both together, combined, form one whole.

As I said in the last lecture, everyone knows, or senses in their depths, that this state could exist. Do not ever resign yourself to thinking that it is impossible to attain. It is indeed possible. This blissful state of total delight exists in your memory, my friends, and it can be attained in this life only when the individual becomes capable of love and union with the opposite sex. For this relationship combines all functions and potentials, it leaves out nothing if the relationship is truly deep and whole, if there is no shallowness and restrictive compromise. Once the afflictions have

been overcome, the possibilities of expansion of the real self, the degrees of pleasure and delight, the degrees of more creative unfoldment, are infinite.

Be blessed, my dear friends. Be in God.

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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