

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 172
1996 Edition
March 28, 1969

THE LIFE ENERGY CENTERS

Greetings, my friends. Blessings in the form of love, strength and understanding are coming forth; to the degree that you generate these within you, you shall be able to perceive and accept the blessing that is streaming into you.

Tonight's lecture will continue the topic I started to discuss last time, that of the energy centers of the human structure. There is a great deal to say about this. We shall divide the discussion into three parts. The first will deal with what determines the functioning of the energy centers. The second part will deal with the specific function of each center. The third will deal with cultivating these centers and with practices to open the clogged-up channels leading to them.

You must understand, my friends, that this very pathwork, the development of your courage to look at yourself in truth -- which is not half as easy as one believes before one starts -- is the most essential aspect of such a practice. For any kind of practice that is mechanical, that deals merely with exercises of concentration, breathing, and so on, cannot possibly fulfill its purpose. So the basis of growth is always to expand your vision, your consciousness of the truth of yourself and your relationship to the universe, and therefore of universal law and creation.

What determines the proper function of the life force in the human being, and hence of the energy centers, can be understood only if we gain a view of the entire structure of the human personality. For this, some recapitulation is necessary. The life force is the creative force that enlivens the whole universe. It contains all life elements, all potentials, every possibility for life expression. This is such a powerful force that it must be adapted, so as not to explode an organism whose consciousness is not yet sufficiently strong to accept the total power. Each living organism therefore possesses special centers that convert, assimilate and balance the power that streams into it. The centers of a human being are infinitely more differentiated and complicated than those, say, of a blade of grass. This is because the human being has proportionately more possibilities for varied self-expression than the blade of grass.

As I said, the life force streaming into the organism must be metabolized, distributed, and adjusted. Otherwise, the force would be too strong. If the human consciousness is divided and in conflict -- if on the one hand it is ready to metabolize more varied power, yet on the other hand it is imbalanced and disturbed -- the centers close up. They become clogged. The process of self-realization thus also means opening up the centers.

The human physical body is just a crude reflection of the real body, that is, the spiritual, eternal body. In the latter, all functions and organs are infinitely more refined than in the physical structure. This body of the eternal being cannot, of course, be seen with the human eye. It is nevertheless much more real than anything that can be seen with the eye. This body has several

cruder outpicturings, which reflect the various levels of consciousness that exist when an entity is not yet unified with its spiritual self. The physical body is the crudest, most temporary outer manifestation, expressing the level of consciousness that is most alienated from its source, the spirit being.

The centers exist in perfect form and function in the spirit body. There they are visible organs, as the heart and kidneys are visible organs in the physical body. The various other subtle bodies also contain these centers, but already altered in their functioning, according to the degree of disunity with the spiritual structure. In the physical organism the centers can be detected only indirectly: The glandular system reflects them and is determined by them. But the opening or closing of the centers, their smooth functioning or congestion, can be clearly experienced. The effect has distinct physical marks. However, the centers themselves are not visible to the human being.

Now, what determines the smooth functioning of the energy centers -- and therefore proper assimilation of the life force? It depends entirely on the state of consciousness. Since consciousness is the origin of all that is, consciousness must also determine the most important system of life functioning. Every belief and idea determines a person's feelings, reactions, attitudes, and expressions into life. It is inconceivable that an individual could be unaffected by or indifferent to a deeply ingrained idea. And I do not mean merely conscious ideas and opinions. Even more important are the unconscious ones, because they cannot be reoriented. An individual who is what we call self-realized -- whether still in the physical body, or having already transcended the body state -- is in truth. She or he does not know everything but has an open mind and is free from misconceptions. No false beliefs create fear, defensiveness, destructive emotions. Someone who is in truth perceives the benign nature of the universe. He or she is open, joyful, without a trace of apprehension, and therefore can expand in a harmonious way. In this light, unintense, undefended, relaxed state of body, mind and feelings, the centers are open. They allow the life force to flow smoothly and freely, and the centers distribute the right kind of energy into the organism wherever specific aspects of the great force are needed. There is no clogging, no blocking, since there is no fear. And fear cannot exist if there is no negativity or limitation of concept.

The more you develop and grow, the more you become aware of how each mistaken idea creates destructive feelings and limited concepts of self and life. We have spoken for a considerable time of the importance of the dualistic world view as opposed to a unified world view. A dualistic state of consciousness is one that perceives life always in terms of either/or, good or bad, this or that -- one to the exclusion of the other. The whole human sphere is indoctrinated with this error. This is difficult to understand for someone who has not yet entered deeply into his or her innermost being. When you have done so to a considerable degree and have therefore overcome some fundamental blocks and illusions about yourself, you will find out how the universe and its possibilities expand for you. Where before you were convinced that you had to lose, that you had only unsatisfactory choices, as you grow in integrity and objectivity you eventually come to a state where you lose nothing. When the duality of the false, childish greed and false, self-limiting sacrifice give way, fullness of experience arises.

The proper functioning of the life centers is impossible when the human being is still involved in the dualistic conflict. Perhaps the most basic dualism -- as discussed elsewhere in different contexts -- is the question of morality versus pleasure, selfishness versus altruism, self-deprivation

versus depriving others. The whole concept of good and evil stems from this arbitrary, unnecessary, and mistaken concept of life. All human civilization, almost all philosophies, are poisoned by this basic split in the human consciousness. My friends, as long as you believe that you have to choose between being good or obtaining your advantages, you must be in a terrible conflict. You will be free from conflict only when you realize deep down that by depriving yourself you ultimately deprive others, that by obtaining your real advantages -- not the short-sighted, childish ones -- you ultimately also benefit others.

To reach this wider state of consciousness, it is first necessary to understand your deeply ingrained conviction of limitation, of having to make decisions of self versus others; to reach such understanding, you will first experience just such situations, in which it truly seems unavoidable that you must give up one for the sake of the other. For according to your belief you must also experience. Your belief creates the condition. Thus, false belief must be proven true until one begins to perceive the relationship between belief and experience. If you accept that your inner, "invisible" belief creates the predicament of having to balance your advantage with that of others, you will have to deal with these self-created, limited conditions and handle each separately, with intelligence, whole investment and integrity. No fearful sentimentality must blur your view to your rights. No childish greed must rationalize your self-centeredness. You must see and overcome both tendencies; you thus will make many decisions, each different. Once, you will forsake your own advantage because you see that what is on the scale does not warrant self-gratification. At other times, you will waive altruism because what is on the scale does not warrant self-deprivation. Each loss will soon be discovered to be illusory.

Increasingly, you will be governed by true considerations, not by fear of disapproval, by dependency on another's good opinion, by fear of frustration and inability to stand non-gratification. You thus will develop the vision that there is truly no division between your fulfillment and interests and those of others. In the long run it all merges. The underlying truth conciliates both sides.

You cannot reach this state of consciousness cheaply. It requires your whole investment and involvement in every issue, no matter how apparently insignificant. In that way, you transcend dualism, and consequently fear, greed, a sense of deprivation and anger, with all their derivatives. More and more, your consciousness perceives, experiences and obtains the limitless abundance the universe has in store for all creatures. The first step must be knowing of its potential existence.

As long as you live in the basic human conflict, the split consciousness, you must believe that you have to deprive yourself to be a decent, loving human being. Is it not natural that such a predicament induces feelings of resentment, frustration, anger, self-hate, guilt? And is it not natural that such feelings close up the streamings of healthy energy flow? When emotions tighten up because of such negative feelings, the physical structure must eventually also tighten up. The tightness of the centers, in body and spirit, always reflect emotions of fear, anger and guilt.

This fundamental duality creates the chain reaction of negative emotions, limited concept, conflict between self and others -- hence limitation of experience. A state of consciousness sets in that subtly but definitely prohibits your expansion. As you become more aware of yourself in the course of self-confrontation, you also begin to detect those subtle little reactions that indicate how you prevent yourself from expansion and delightful experience. You detect your fear of using your potential to the utmost.

Any limited idea of your possibilities is a result of such a chain reaction. The real human sickness is the failure to use your full potential to create good life. As you hold back your potential to expand, to make better conditions, to experience deeper feelings of delight in every way, you continue a vicious circle. The result must be frustration and limitation, which you then assume to be the nature of life -- at least as far as you are concerned. This deepening conviction increases negative feelings, tightens your defenses, closes the centers. As long as you feel obliged to make the tragic decision between goodness and joy, morality and pleasure, self-interest and love, you cannot ever fully decide, and you become so confused and disturbed that you react blindly and rigidly, without quite knowing what governs you. The greatest "sin," if we want to use this word, is ignoring your potential -- setting yourself unnecessary fences beyond which you think you cannot go.

How does all this affect the specific centers? To understand that, we must first learn the meaning and function of each center. Here I have to repeat some of what I said in the last question and answer session, so as not to break the continuity.

The first center is the sexual center, located at the base of the spine. When I mention sexuality, I mean something that goes beyond limited genital pleasure. It comprises the whole extending of personal love to the opposite sex; it is the individual's capacity to experience pleasure on all levels -- physical, emotional, mental, spiritual -- without a trace of apprehension, tension, tight greed or separateness. It is the capacity to undefendedly give and receive. It is, most certainly, the ability to give yourself over to the involuntary feeling processes, without the ego needing to stay in control. It implies a trustful, accepting attitude toward one's unconscious, with all its responses and movements. As you all know, this kind of trusting openness is most difficult for all human beings. But if it is attained, the sexual center will be open. It will not be clogged up by the ego's need to be in control.

How can you react trustingly when your consciousness and perception of life are geared to deprivation and thus negative feelings, which you must fear to expose? Therefore the center must be closed partly or completely. Hence you actually do experience deprivation, because the full flow of the life force, with all its life-bringing, health-promoting, energetic faculties cannot be quite activated.

The second center is in the solar plexus. Its opening creates a connection with spiritual wisdom, with the consciousness of universal being -- and therefore enhances general love feelings. For when you are in truth, you love. The opening of the sexual center enables you to experience the ever-present, ongoing process of creation and ecstasy with a beloved other human being. The opening of the solar plexus channel connects you with the ongoing, ever-present truth and goodness of ultimate reality. Occasionally you can sense this ongoing real life. It usually happens when you truly love and have thus transcended the dualistic struggle, or when you discover, often in apparently insignificant events, your inner truth where before you had not seen it. The spirit of such discovery is then in accepting, not rejecting, self and life.

The perception of the ongoing life process in its infinite marvel of greatness, wisdom, love and pleasure is an altogether different perception from the usual one, which is, "I must attain a new state." Such attainment would be impossible if it did not already exist on another level of reality. What you have to do is discover the existence of a different state by first considering its possibility. Thus you must think of all states of bliss as existing already; all wisdom you ever need as existing

already; all harmonious attitudes and the realization of your power and creative potentials as existing already -- and see yourself separated from it all by a wall. You must remove this wall. But the ongoing process of another life is already there. In your good moments, my friends, you are aware of this. You are aware that you have contacted another dimension of reality in which there is utter peace and joy, all questions are answered, life is eternal -- and there is nothing to fear. It is only when you are disconnected from this reality and begin to doubt or forget it that you find yourself in strife.

Pleasure supreme without a trace of anxiety is an ever-existing reality in you -- right now. All that separates you from it is your lack of knowing it, your fears and apprehensions -- your own permission, as it were, to experience this reality. Similarly, the ever-alive and appropriate wisdom that you need at any given instant of your life is already there. You are merely separated from it by not knowing its existence, by identifying with other sources of wisdom that are at best poor substitutes. These may be your intellect; your unexplored emotions, which are merely reactions to unexplored attitudes; other people's dictates over you; or all these mixed up together. Often you desist from establishing contact with this channel, even when you have already experienced its immediate availability, because you are afraid of the good feelings that result from its deep wisdom. You do not want to open up all these channels and centers and let yourself flow in unison with the universal cosmic movements. You are too afraid and angry to do so. The fear and anger must be made conscious. Also, your fear of disappointment, your lack of courage to be happy, hold you back from expanding into that realm of reality where you find solutions for everything.

In the solar plexus is the center that connects you with the supreme wisdom about anything you ever need to know, or ever could know. Such deep wisdom removes fear and makes love flow.

To avoid confusion, I want to interject here that the centers have some subdivisions, or counter-reflections, which might sometimes be interpreted as separate centers. For example, the center at the base of the spine has other projections, or concentration points, in the pelvis and genitalia.

The next center is in the back. Its faculty is will. Now, so far, we can see that we have dealt with three basic human functions: feeling, knowing, willing. If harmony exists between these three functions, there is perfect interplay and no weighting of one at the expense of another. The will center is also the center of the ego, aggression, self-assertion, backbone and self-responsibility. All these attitudes are centered in and come forth from the back. This center has two subdivisions -- one in the nape of the neck, the other further down, approximately between the shoulder blades. They both are reflections from one center, which is located more "internally" in the spiritual body, perhaps somewhere in-between. It is reflected in the physical body primarily in these two places.

If the ego is not fully developed and healthy, this energy center is underactive. The energy does not flow smoothly through. If the ego is over-tight, anxious, too rigid and self-willed, again the energy does not flow smoothly. Some personalities find it expedient to dramatize the weakness and thus attempt to make an asset of it. Others counteract the fear of a weak ego by overstressing pseudostrength. Both attitudes may result in similar problems of the body and mind. Tensions in the back distort and congest the smooth flow of energy.

Let us examine for a moment how a weak ego influences the functions of the two aforementioned centers: If you are weak and dependent, you must be fearful. Hence, you must lack the courage for the great experience of living, for the deeper wisdom that transcends the ego. The weak ego makes you hold on so tightly that you cannot open up for what lies beyond its scope. To trust, love and be happy, to let involuntary processes do their part in the business of living, requires strength. Perception of the greatest reality of life is hindered when the ego is not flexible and strong. It has to be independent without believing it is the only function to count on.

The next center is in the throat. This center's specific function is the capacity to take in, ingest and digest, assimilate and accept. A rigid individual, whose inner unconscious problems create havoc, rejects a flexible, accepting attitude toward life, unexpected developments, people, and his or her own unconscious inconsistencies and predictabilities. The weak back and ego, the lack of independent self-responsibility, have a counterpart in a rigid front that refuses to take in or swallow anything. Such people fear being gullible because deep down they refuse to be independent. Craving approval more than having the integrity to be true to the self, such people fear their own lack of backbone and consequently cannot accept and deal with much of what life brings.

The next center is between the eyes. Oriental philosophy puts great stress on this center. It is often called "the third eye." This center is a preliminary manifestation of spiritual wholeness and fulfillment -- total realization of the divine self, which is expressed in the center at the top of the head. The center between the eyes possesses a vast capacity to visualize, to see, to comprehend. If the previously mentioned centers are open and flowing in harmony, spiritual vision and perception come that give an entirely new outlook on life, the universe, the self -- everything that is. The opening of this center heralds the total integration expressed in the center at the top of the head, which combines all. When this occurs, one knows there is no limit and all is one.

Of course, my friends, the opening of each center requires a great deal of work. It requires a total change of your consciousness, by which I mean, perhaps even more, the opening up of your unconscious. Often your conscious being has the right knowledge but is not sustained by your unconscious perceptions and reactions. So the work is long and concentrated. But it becomes joyful from a certain moment on, after the main resistances are overcome. And you can overcome them only by becoming fully aware of them. When the resistances finally give way, your expansion becomes mainly a joyful expression of living.

One more word about the dualism that wrecks a person's inner faculties to cope with anything. I say this for the purpose of helping you grow out of it, so that your fears and defenses can begin to relax deep within you. The first step must be to become aware of unconscious fears. This is, as you who work on this path well know, not as easy as it sounds. But once you are fully aware of them, you have to find a way to let go of the tightness your fear creates. This can be done only when you accept instead of resist.

But what should you accept? Deprivation, unfulfillment, sacrifice? Religion has taught this for centuries, for millennia, because it misunderstood the meaning of acceptance. It is true that you must accept, for when you say, "I must have this and must not experience the other," you are in a state of tight, anxious defense. You are in an insurmountable struggle. This is perhaps the hardest lesson for the human being to learn. How can you give up the attitude "I must" without giving up

on your happiness? This kind of giving up is so easily confused with negativity, resignation, and even masochistic self-denial.

Religion's postulate that the good person must sacrifice is an error. The original meaning has two facets. The first is that selfishness must sometimes be overcome if what is at stake for the other is more important than what the self can gain. Those who feel love will often experience such acts as not at all depriving, but such love cannot develop in a climate of fear and coercion. The second, even more important facet concerns the attitude of letting go, which every genuine spiritual visionary has tried to convey to humankind. Only in the mind's duality does letting go imply, "I must relinquish what I want." Beyond duality, this is not so. If you can learn to let go without relinquishing your fulfillment or self-realization, you might indeed have to accept that a specific manifestation of your desire cannot now be fulfilled your way. This is because your limited inner concepts and closed-up energy centers prohibit expansion. You still suffer from the results of your past attitudes and must temporarily accept them without giving up altogether. If you let go in a sense of fearful, resigned, obedient, sacrificial deprivation, you remain in duality. The untightening movement can be only temporary. But if you can let go in a spirit of trusting expectation, your necessary momentary loss will soon turn out to be a gain. You make room for new and different possibilities of experience if you do not insist on a limited form right now.

If you learn to let go trustingly, you transcend duality. You come out of the struggle between fear and deprivation on the one hand, and tight holding on in guilt and anxiety on the other. If you can let go in the trusting spirit that says, "If I cannot have it this way, perhaps there is another way; if not now, later," you will lose your fear, tightness of centers, and sense of loss. Then the life forces will bubble and surge through your entire system -- physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. They will work in full harmony, functioning the way life is destined, which is utter bliss and forever greater expansion. Then the energy centers will function in harmony and will dispose of the waste energy that is now held within your system. There can be no more toxic psychic poisoning than undisposed waste material of energy that should leave the system. You know this principle holds true about everything else -- food, water, air. It also applies to the metabolism of energy and mind material. All that functions as it should must be constantly renewed, disposing of waste material and gathering new material.

Try to digest some of what I have said here. Study these words, make use of them, make them your own. Let it be an incentive that life can be so very different from what it is. What you experience now at its best is only a small token of what still lies in store for you. The difficulties you experience are a kind of disease, as it were, and unnecessary; something that can certainly be eliminated, if you learn to understand its meaning. And that is, of course, the most important thing. For the majority of human beings experience their difficulties as if they came to them by accident. Saying, "This is life" prevents the consciousness from seeing the difficulty as a vital expression of the self, no matter how much it seems to be inflicted upon the self from the outside. It is never so. And to the degree you can understand your life experience as an expression of that part of yourself you are not yet familiar with, you will truly overcome the obstruction to your happiness.

You all need help to do this. The victory, the liberation, the surge of joy and peace that come from this realization are incomparable. No good that comes to you from the outside, because others happen to act according to your will, could ever be as peace-giving and joy-bringing as the full understanding of your difficulties. That is indeed the transcendence and evolution of your

personal being. Then the joy will expand forevermore, and life will become more and more as it is meant to be, as it already is, in the dimension from which you are still separated in your consciousness.

Be blessed, all my dear ones here. The love of the universe, the love that is here, encompasses and envelops all of you, wherever you may be.

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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