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OVERCOMING NEGATIVITY

Greetings and blessings for everyone of my friends. This lecture is a continuation of the last one, in which we discussed the importance of mind, of consciousness, with its creative aspects and powers. We were also talking about negative creation -- an ongoing process in every human being.

If you were not negatively involved with creation, you would not be human, you would not live on this plane of consciousness, which expresses a particular degree of development. Human beings are, in general, free to a degree, so that they create quite constructively also. But negative creation is still continuing in the human psyche. This means that it is humanity's task on this earth to struggle out of its negative creation and become more and more free from the snares of negativity. This is not easy, for the fascination with any creative process takes hold of a person, so that he or she wants to remain in it. Thus a person becomes involved with any number of vicious circles simultaneously, which seem difficult to break. It is my task now to help you step by step to loosen the hold of your negative involvement in distorted creative processes.

I shall continue with the specific aspects with which the pathwork is particularly concerned. Many of you begin to find within yourselves the truth of your own negativity, and you can even acknowledge that your negativity is deliberate and see how you hang on to it. Reaching this step is of tremendous significance. There is no greater difference conceivable between human beings who know that they create their own fate, know that they wish to be negative no matter how undesirable that is, and yet retain this attitude, and those who are ignorant of this fact. Anyone who is on a path that genuinely leads to the realization of the universal self must come to this personal insight. Otherwise the path one takes leads to illusion and deals merely with theoretical speculation or alienated idealization and not real live experience.

Since you are human, my friends, every one of you creates negatively. Your deliberate negative attitudes and feelings, which you do not want to give up, are a creation. To believe that your unhappiness and your suffering are inflicted upon you by others or by life is utter folly. It is insanity to believe that any unhappiness can accrue from something outside of or other than the self. You may have known this theoretically a long, long time, and paid lip service to it. But there is a world of difference between an intellectual assent and the clear-cut realization that you indeed create negatively, that the very unhappiness you deplore and render others responsible for is caused by negative attitudes you actually enjoy and want to maintain. If you ascribe your frustrations, your unfulfillment, or your pains to society you are completely wrong. This does not mean that the ills you see in society do not really exist. They do. But they could not affect you if you were not deeply, and still unconsciously, contributing to those very ills you so much deplore. You do it precisely by your negativity which you still continue to express in your private life.

This truth may be hard to believe when you are still at the very beginning of such a path as this. But once you are seriously involved in it, you must come to see that it is just that way. You are never an innocent victim, and society itself is but the sum total or product of your and many other people's constant negative production and creation. This realization is at first shocking and painful, but only as long as you remain unwilling to give up the negativity. If you will not give it up you do need the illusion that others do it. You hope to come to bliss without meeting that aspect in you which makes reaching bliss impossible. You hope to become a truly self-accepting and self-respecting human being without giving up what truly impairs your integrity. Thus you live the illusion that others are doing it to you, whom you can then blame for victimizing you. This is one of the famous and very frequent games of pretense that have been uncovered by many of you in various forms. Once these illusions and cheating intentions are abandoned, the realization of your own creative power -- constantly at work, though perhaps still mostly negatively -- is as wonderful a revelation and liberation as it was at first a shock.

I would like to discuss the various steps of working your way out of the maze of your own illusion and negative creation in which you seem to be so inextricably and inexorably caught. Evidently, the first step must be for you to find, determine, acknowledge, accept, and observe your own negative attitudes, destructive feelings, subtle lies, intention to cheat, and life-defeating spiteful resistance to good feelings. All these are examples of negative creating. Those of you who work very personally and dynamically toward your own growth have come in some contact with this deliberate negative production. But it is important that you become even more aware of it, more detachedly observant of it. This comprises the first step.

The second step is that, deep inside, you question your particular feelings and reactions to this negative production, and your own deliberate and chosen intent. You will then see that you like it, find some sort of pleasure in it, and do not wish to give it up. The pleasurable aspect of creating applies also to negative creating. It is absolutely necessary that you feel this and admit it. Even though you understand in general, vague terms that this is destructive and somehow wrong, you still are captivated by the perverse pleasure of your own negative production. This acknowledgment is essential. Without it you cannot grow out of suffering, nor can you reach the spiritual selfhood you long for.

The third step is to painstakingly work through the exact consequences and ramifications of your negative production, without glossing over any detail, any effect, or side-effect. The realization and precise understanding of the harmful effects on you and on others must become very clear. It will not do if you assuage your guilt for your negative creation by telling yourself you only harm yourself. It must be seen that you cannot harm yourself without also harming others, no more than you can harm others without also harming you. This is not a law from retribution of a vindictive authority up in heaven. It is so because you are all, we are all, they are all, everyone is the one universal self. So what happens to you must happen to everyone else and vice versa. It is unthinkable that anything that adversely affects you does not affect others as well. Self-hate, for example, always manifests also as the inability to love, or even the compulsion to hate others. This is only one example. This is not a theory; you will discover its truth, but only as you actually work through these steps.

The third step also consists of seeing that the pleasure you derive from your negative production is never worth the exorbitant price you pay for it, because all you deplore most in

yourself and in your life experience is a direct result of it. You sacrifice joy, peace, self-esteem, inner security, expansion and growth, pleasure on all levels of your being, and a meaningful and fearless existence. All this and more can never be worth the perverse pleasure you derive from your negative creation.

See how your negative creation affects others. Some deep part of you knows this quite accurately and justifiably feels guilty for it, makes you hate and punish yourself and rob yourself of the real satisfactions of life. You will come to see that guiltless living can only exist when negative creating is given up. Even the sincere and serious desire to do so will bring relief.

Still another aspect of step three is to reach for the understanding that the pleasure you derive from being destructive in your feelings and attitudes is not what has to be given up. In fact, the same pleasure will be transferred to positive creation, where you can expand joyfully and guiltlessly without paying the heavy price you now pay for negative creation and sacrificing your very life -- which is no exaggeration. Exact working through of cause and effect, and seeing results and connections, is what makes wanting to give up negativity possible. It is not sufficient to be aware of being deliberately destructive. It must be admitted that you do not want to give this up. You must see what price you pay. Doing so, you will become experientially connected with the cause of your negative creation and the effect it has on you. This bridge must be established. See very clearly that what renders you most unhappy: your anxieties, your worries, your self-dislike, your insecurities, your discontent with life, your frustrations, your sense of wasting yourself and life, your hurt and your pain, are all direct effects of deliberately wanted negative attitudes.

At step two you are still separated from the effects. You may see that the cause is your destructiveness and admit it, but you do not yet see the connection with all you deplore in your life. The connecting link between cause and effect is still absent. As long as this connecting link is not established, you cannot really want to give up the negativity. You must see the heavy price you pay to be truly motivated to want to give it up. It is not enough to give it up because you ought to, knowing that it is somehow wrong or detrimental to you or others. Such vagueness will never do the trick. The specific link must be established, which is perhaps easier than coming to step one or two. The most difficult is to reach step two: to be fully aware of your negative creating by destructive attitudes of your own choosing. There is a world of difference between such a state of awareness and the state before it, when you projected your unhappiness outside, blaming the world, blaming others, and not seeing the cause in you. Thus, step two is of the most incisive importance. It means knowing your power, your selfhood. For to the degree you see the negative form of the creative process in you, to that degree you gain an inkling of what you can do to produce beautiful life experiences. Step two may be the most difficult to reach; it certainly constitutes the most drastic change in self-perception and the perception of life processes. But working through step three is equally important, for without it the motivation to change is lacking. However, step three is not half as difficult, and never meets up with as much resistance as step two.

When you begin to discover the same fascination with creating in a positive way as in the negative, but this time unmarred by suffering, guilt, fear, and self-blame, the world opens up before you with such beauty and light that there are no words to describe it. You will taste the freedom of being creator of your chosen life.

To facilitate the discovery of this connecting link of positive fascination with creation, you will need to recognize the unobstructed, unconcealed destructiveness and negativity behind facades of various kinds. For many years we have discussed and worked on the pretenses, the defenses, the games and ploys, the idealized self-images, the specific forms of denial you seek in order to conceal your destructiveness. All these masks are hypocritical. They always display the opposite of what you reject and dislike in yourself. These coverups are actually infinitely more insidious and damaging than the actual destructiveness itself. For once you face the naked destructiveness, you confront a truth in yourself, which gives you an honest choice of your future direction. But when you are still involved in the coverups, the roles and the games, you cannot get at the core of your disturbance. Your suffering becomes worse; you become alienated from the cause of your condition, and therefore you feel increasingly more disconnected and hopeless.

In order to hide from others -- and primarily from yourself -- you produce something that appears to be the opposite of what you wish to be hidden. The role becomes like second nature, but it has nothing to do with you. It is merely a habit you cannot shed as long as you are unwilling to look behind it. It is of specific importance that you disillusion yourself concerning the image you project into the world and of whose genuineness you try arduously to convince yourself. The artificiality of this role you indulge in must be unmasked. It always appears to you to be good in some way, even if only by pretending you are a victim. But you must analyze it exactly and comprehend it in detail to see that it is none of what you pretend it is. It is never good. You are never that innocent, nor are others that villainous. But, on the other hand, nor are you so hopelessly bad and unacceptable as you meanwhile believe you really are underneath this role. For the role conveys the opposite, not only of what you actually are, but also of what you believe you are.

Yet the pretended role contains the same aspects you so busily try to conceal. If you hide and your role is that of being persecuted by the hate and unjust accusations of others, in this pretense lies the hate itself. The front or the role is never innately different from what it covers. It is a hating attitude to pretend being a victim of the hate of others. This is only one example. The game itself must be exposed not only to reveal what it hides, but also to lay bare its actual aspects and what they really mean. The negative creative energy is totally involved in this presented image. I suggest that you take some time now to identify the various roles you have chosen. Name these roles in simple sentences that describe what they are meant to convey. See if you can detect how the role which is supposed to be quite angelic is as destructive as what is concealed behind it. Indeed, it could not be different, for you cannot hide the energy of soul currents, you cannot make them different by pretending, no matter how busily you try to make a charade out of your life.

The role or game you adopt in the illusion that it eliminates your deliberate destructiveness is the first layer that must be confronted. Then you can begin to take the steps I have outlined. Sometimes these steps overlap.

The more insight you have into the absolutely losing game you play with life when you hold on to the false role that covers up destructive attitudes, the more you will be motivated to give up all of this. You will strengthen your will. This will lead you to the fourth step, which is the actual process of recreating soul substance. By your meditation, by prayer, by formulating deliberate thoughts of truth about this entire matter and impressing them onto your destructive psychic material, recreation begins and continues as you become more adept. First you need to discover again and again your will to be hating, unforgiving, punishing, resentful, and hurt. You will become

aware of your attempt to exaggerate and drag out old injuries, to quite deliberately punish others for what your parents did to you or what you think they did to you, and of your refusal to see their failures as anything but a deliberate act of hate against you. When you then perceive that it gives you pleasure to dwell on all this within yourself and not change your outlook and attitude, or your feelings, you can begin to recreate. When you see the falsity of your pretenses, you can then remind yourself to want to see what is underneath your particular facade of blame and victimization, in whatever guise it may appear.

Your feelings of being injured first appear as quite real and it requires deeper probing to discover that they are not real at all. They are cultivated habits. So are the roles you play. Each objective acknowledgment of your pretenses -- the pretense of your role and the pretense of your sustained injuries as the cause of your negative emotions toward people and life experience -- enables you to want to be in deeper truth, to abandon those falsities and to meet life with real and honest attitudes. The issuing of this intention and the calling upon the higher powers in you to help you is step four.

Another part of step four is to ask a concise question of your innermost being: "What approach can I use to live my life without a pretense? How does it feel to bring forth better ways of responding to life's experiences?" In answer to these questions something new will evolve. In this re-creating process healthy, resilient, adequate, and truthful reactions will come easily from your real nature, which needs no concealment. When you re-create, formulate your sentences very concisely. State that what you do does not work, why it does not work, and that you wish to operate in a different way. These sentences, if they are truly meant, have great creative power. They can be meant, and they will be meant when you fully comprehend the harm you are doing while remaining in your old attitudes.

These are the steps of purification in the deepest and most vital way. Purification is unthinkable without going through these four steps. Purification is also unthinkable without receiving active help. It is too difficult to do alone. It is utter illusion to hope -- consciously or unconsciously -- that facing these aspects of your being can be avoided, skipped, bypassed or whisked away by some magic "spiritual" means. Self-realization, self-actualization, reaching your spiritual center -- or whatever name you wish to use to describe the goal of all living -- cannot occur unless you face your deepest negativities and hypocrisies, and your deliberate intent to be negative and destructive, spiteful and resentful; often you will even forgo your own happiness just to punish someone from your past. To see this seems painful at first, but it will prove liberating.

Those of you who have not yet made these self-discoveries will come to it. You can prepare for it. For you cannot allow happiness into your soul or eliminate the pervasive guilt you seek to explain away by false guilts unless you go through these steps. No matter how much you now believe that others or life's caprices deprive you of what you desire, it is actually you who do this. For you can let in what life is always ready to give you so richly, once you make room for it in your consciousness and your self-creating. Many are the people who want to reach spiritual heights but who harbor the unexpressed illusion that to face what I am discussing here can be avoided. They run from pillar to post, and whenever they are confronted with their own unpalatable truth, they run away. The imaginary need to run proves so illusory. There is no need to run away from yourself.

Whenever destructive attitudes remain unfaced and untouched, you live in painful ambivalence. For you cannot ever go in one direction when you want to be negative. There is always the real self clamoring for ultimate reality and pulling in the opposite direction. Unification of inner direction can only happen when the personality is truly and genuinely constructive without hidden destructiveness. And can you perceive the pain of being torn apart by going into two opposing directions? This struggle is more painful, confusing, and paralyzing than anything else that goes on in the human psyche.

In order to reestablish the being you were long before this earth life, before you became involved with negative creating, and to reexperience yourself as that eternal you which you essentially and ultimately are, you have to consider and test the possibility of positive creating. You will then see that to create positively is really so much more natural and easy: it is an organic process. Negative creating and destructive attitudes are artificial and contrived, even though you are now so used to them that they seem more natural. The positive is effortless. Offhand it seems that to abandon the negative that has become so much second nature to you is too great an effort. It seems too great because you still believe that by giving up negativity you create a positivity that is something completely new. If this were so, to create it would indeed be quite impossible in most instances. But the moment you realize that the positive creation is already there within you only covered up, and that it can unfold and reveal itself the moment you allow this to happen, abandoning negativity becomes a relief from a heavy burden that has pulled you down all your life -- and in many lives before this one. While you hate, distrust, take a dim view of things, or prevent a favorable outcome by expecting the worst, the ability already exists in you to love, trust, and know that life is good and can be trusted. All this, and more exists within you already, and needs only to be allowed to surface like the sun coming out from behind the clouds. You will see that it is possible to feel this positive undercurrent. Simultaneously you will experience the deep joy that permeates the entire being of any person making this discovery.

When we say that God is within you, we mean precisely this. Not only is the greater consciousness with infinite wisdom of the most personal order available to you at whatever moment you need it, not only are there powers of creative strength and energy, feelings of bliss, joy, and pleasure supreme available to you on all levels, but also, right underneath where you are ill with your negativity, a new "old life" exists in which all reactions to all possible contingencies are clear, strong, and entirely satisfying and right for each occasion. A resiliency and creativity of reacting already exists now behind the false roles of pretense, beyond the grip of destructiveness. Underneath your outer deadness a bubbling aliveness already exists. At first it will shine through at moments only. Eventually it will manifest itself as your steady inner climate.

Before you can live in this steady climate, you will have to go through two basic phases that deal with the negativity that humanity is still involved with. Most human beings find themselves still in the first basic phase of negativity. This phase is initiating negativity. The second phase is responsive negativity. In the first phase you automatically react to situations with the destructive pattern you have adopted after some traumatic experiences in early life. You maintain negative responses which at one time in your childhood you could not avoid producing, and which were then, under those circumstances, even life-preserving. But when the same responses are repeated in situations later, when there is no longer cause to use them, then such responses are not only "neurotic"; they are also initiating negativity, quite regardless of whether the other people involved

act like your parents or not. The four steps I explained in this lecture are all destined to deal with this first phase.

The second phase deals with the negativity that is merely responsive. When individuals have freed themselves from initiating negativity and are clear in this respect, their reactions are positive whenever others do not react negatively toward them. But the negativity still flares up reactively, as a result of their responding to the negativity of others. You may say this is perfectly natural; for that matter, everything or anything is "perfectly natural." But this is still not the purified state. It is not the state of truth. To respond in that way to the negativity of others is still an action based on illusion.

There is a better way to respond. Even though the other person may indeed unload a great deal of unjustified hostility on you, it is an illusion to fear it and set up your negative defenses. You can depend on yourself much more adequately without withdrawing, without becoming in any way defensive, without becoming destructive with your own feelings. There is no need to see life as bleak and hopeless because someone acts destructively toward you. Therefore this responsive negativity must also be straightened out, but this can be done only after the initiating negativity has been wiped out. The vast majority of the human race are still in the first phase. Whenever the slightest thing goes against your grain, whenever you experience any degree of frustration, you tend to bring in your original reactions of negativity. You even do this, in many instances, as a precautionary attitude, just because you might experience frustration, delay, criticism, or the negativity of others.

I think most of you can sense the importance of this lecture, especially if you use it as referring to your own life instead of a mere theoretical discussion. Then it will prove of vital significance in your personal evolution. Be blessed. Love and strength are given forth for everyone here.

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