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THE MEANING OF THE HUMAN STRUGGLE

Greetings and blessings, my dearest friends. May this lecture help you in the tremendous human struggle to find fulfillment and meaning in your life. The human struggle is so immense because you have to cope with the disconnectedness of your consciousness. The reality you experience as a human being is only an infinitesimal fragment of total reality. Because it is relatively so small, it lacks context. When consciousness is not connected with the deeper meaning of things, life must be a struggle. This applies to every human being, to some degree at least. For even the most aware individuals have periods when they, too, get lost in the maze of their own disconnectedness.

The problem is that the very mind at your disposal, with which you try to grasp and comprehend, is itself as fragmentary as the reality it is supposed to transcend. This seems indeed an insurmountable hurdle. Thus, the struggle is really: How can you expand your perception, your consciousness itself, so that it can grasp the meaning behind the manifestation?

You invariably mistake the manifestation for the root cause. You must learn laboriously, through your personal growth, to discriminate between cause and effect, reality and manifestation. This deeper, and always liberating comprehension of life, can be attained only through personal self-confrontation, never through theoretical speculation.

You must begin with some general concepts that are absolutely necessary to eventually open locked doors, for how can you expand your consciousness unless you try out some new and wider-reaching possibilities? Scientists come to new findings the same way. They form radical assumptions, to which they temporarily give serious consideration. If their hypotheses turn out wrong, they have lost nothing. They put them aside and try other alternatives to reach deeper understanding. When they find the truth, their hypothesis becomes an experiential fact. The development of human consciousness is no different.

In the course of these lectures, I have occasionally mentioned the creative substance. But whatever I say can never describe the marvel and the truth of it. Words sound hollow in comparison with the reality. Yet my attempt to verbalize some aspects of creative substance may be just what some of you need at this time in order to experience its truth -- at least as much as humanly possible at any given stage of personal development. So let me try, once again, to find words that can convey a particle of this source of all life.

Creative substance is the most powerful energy. It is the most fertile life stuff imaginable. Its malleability, its responsiveness to creating mind, is as infinite as the universe itself. Whatever consciousness can conceive of and express in thought, feeling, and will-direction, creative life stuff molds, forms, builds. To know and experience this is to be connected with the process of creation,

a process which is ongoing and available to all living creatures. To know this is key to the human struggle.

What consciousness determines, the life stuff "obeys" like clay in the hands of a sculptor. The only difference is that the life stuff is a living, moving, energetic process, containing its own immutable laws. Creative life substance is as alive as the consciousness that molds it.

The sum of an entity's consciousness -- which includes all levels of unconscious attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and will directions -- forms life experience, which then appears to the disconnected, unaware human being to be haphazard destiny. When you start on the road of your evolution, this haphazard fate is ascribed, on the most primitive level, to the equally haphazard will of a deity, far removed from the individual. When development proceeds, and divine, creative spirit is no longer perceived as an entity outside the individual, but a power to be found within, the haphazard fate you fear is your own unconscious. The powerful currents and attitudes that still elude the conscious perception evoke as much fear in a human being as the strange, removed authority figure of a punishing god. Your path from that stage on must deal with establishing the connection with your unconscious and thus regaining genuine control over your destiny.

The stages in-between these two poles -- ascribing one's fate to a removed God, and being connected with one's previously unconscious processes -- are varied. One of them is, for example, materialistic blindness, where only what is seen and touched exists, while all occurrences outside one's control seem like coincidence or luck. This is essentially not so very different from the concept of the removed god who willfully determines people's fate, even if this god is credited with love, compassion, and wisdom. The point in both instances is that one feels helpless and not responsible for one's own experiences and destiny. In fact one is utterly oblivious of the what and how of its causation.

To discover the what and the how is perhaps the most significant turning point in the evolution of an entity. This discovery makes the difference between suffering and peace, between helplessness and self-determination, between infantile dependency -- be it on another authority or on chance -- and autonomy, between living in fear and living fearlessly.

As you who are seriously involved in this pathwork know, the road is not easy. It means learning many new attitudes, new aspects of yourself. Above all, it means overcoming ever-present resistance to adopting new ways of dealing with life. It means breaking down old structures and establishing new ones. It means unifying erroneous splits in concepts on an emotional level and dismantling untruthful unifications. The search, the venturing forth, must never be relinquished, or you will fall again into the old despair of being disconnected from inner reality. The despair may have been unconscious in the past and may have manifested so indirectly that it could not be recognized, but as an entity grows, such unconscious, displaced emotions become keenly conscious, although, at first, one ignores their deeper meaning.

At this point, whenever you experience a fate you cannot understand, perhaps you no longer blame the outside world -- God, fate, life, chance, or other people -- but you are equally frightened of your own unconscious processes. The greater the disconnection, the less reality your unconscious seems to have. You just cannot believe that something at work within you grossly contradicts what you consciously want and believe in. The deeper the disconnectedness, the more

the manifest world, the effects, seem the only reality. Nothing else exists for you. Only as you gradually become more aware of your inner world, as a result of recognizing certain attitudes, reactions, and emotions for what they really are, does the inner world become more real.

This inner world, with all its destructive attitudes, its primitive reasoning, its self-defeating will directions, must become as conscious as your positive attitudes and will directions. Paradoxical as this may seem, the more this happens, the more secure and unified you become. The more the split comes to the surface, the less painful it is and the less conflict it produces. Fewer undesirable experiences come your way. At that point, you clearly see that your personal, undesirable experiences result entirely from this hidden conflict between two irreconcilable attitudes, one side of which is hidden from you so that it has greater power to mold the creative life substance. When your consciousness has no opportunity to deal with the inner conflict between the two opposite strivings, you are inexorably drawn into an undesirable manifestation.

The next question that arises is, why do you not permit yourself to know the counter currents, the conflicting sides that remain below your surface consciousness? If you let yourself become conscious of them you could indeed create beautiful life experiences for yourself. What then prevents you from indeed wanting positive experiences, fulfillment, pleasure? Offhand you will say, especially when you are new to this path, that this is ridiculous. You will be convinced that nothing in you blocks positive experiences -- hence factors outside yourself must be responsible. Those of you who have explored yourself a little deeper have become aware -- at first only fleetingly -- that it is truly you who reject the fulfillments you desperately long for and think you really want.

There is a good way of testing yourselves, my friends. That is, when you speak deeply into yourselves, with conviction and determination, words such as these: "I want to expand my life. I want to experience total love and pleasure supreme, without negativities or blocks. I want to give myself completely in love. I want to have health, fulfillment, and abundance in every area of life. It is possible to have such a rich, good life. I am willing to give to life as much as I wish to obtain. I do not want to cheat life by secretly wanting more than I am willing to give. I want to shed all falseness, all selfishness, self-centeredness, negativity, and destructiveness, no matter how hard this may at first seem. I want to shed all illusions I have about myself, for this is the price for leading such a rich life, and I am willing to pay it. I want to overcome the false shames, prides, vanities that make me hide behind pretenses, and the subtle inner dishonesty in which I am too self-indulgent to face myself and change, and choose rather to "suffer," with a vaguely complaining attitude, thereby destroying the forces of creation at my disposal and not fully living my life. My own happiness will contribute to the well-being of others. I am willing to shed my ego defenses and all negativity, to give and receive the best. I am willing to accept difficulties along the way, for I know that in overcoming them I will become receptive to the goodness of life. I am willing to grow from my difficulties rather than childishly complain about them, as if someone else had given them to me. I will overcome all self-pity and exaggerated fear because I know that they are only manipulative tricks of the childish mind to avoid accepting life as it is" -- only in that spirit will you discover the true nature of life, not its distorted manifestations, which come from your own negativities.

When you say such words and listen very carefully to the response of your innermost self, you are absolutely bound to register reservations. The more finely you are attuned to your inner responses, the more distinctly you will hear your inner reservations. These reservations may take the form of disbelief: "Oh, it is not possible to have what I want. That is merely wishful thinking."

When such a response comes through, reply to it: "No, it is not wishful thinking, since I do not want it handed to me as a magical gift. I am willing to pay the price. I am willing to involve myself deeply in living fully, giving as much as I wish to receive. I am willing to give so much to life that I am willing to face unflattering, undesirable truths about myself, even at the apparently greatest expense, that of parting from my illusion of how I would like to be."

If you make such declarations to your innermost being, you will no longer deceive yourself by pretending that this is unrealistic, childish magic -- which was only a pretense to avoid facing that you are not really willing to pay the price. You will experience the inner resistance, you will finally be able to acknowledge it and understand its significance and its ramifications. You will see that your doubts about the possibility of establishing a full, rich life for yourself, about having these powers and resources, are really a cover for your reservations about becoming involved, exposing yourself to hurts, to honest, deep interaction, to giving up pretenses and defenses and any kind of destructiveness. You will see that you do not really wish to be so deeply involved with life that you will face yourself in all honesty and challenge what life reveals to you, and change where change is desirable.

Unless you tackle your reservations about your involvement with life, about your willingness to give to and receive from life, to facing and changing what needs to be faced and changed, and unless you acknowledge these reservations and profoundly face their significance, you cannot make your life fuller and richer. You have to see fully how these reservations, your basic reluctance, are the reason for your darkness, for the difficulties of your fate, which you are so apt to ascribe to circumstances that seem to have nothing to do with your innermost being.

If you can assume responsibility for the undesirable occurrences in your life, no matter what they may be, by establishing your own resistance to expansion, you have made a major step toward the removal of these blocks. As you continue -- and this is the pathwork -- you will increasingly experience the truth of the following words, which are still only a theory for you: "The life stuff that surrounds and permeates you is the most potent energy imaginable. It is the most malleable, most creative substance. It is subtle matter, invisible to the physical eye, but this does not mean it is unreal. It is no more unreal than atomic energy, which cannot be seen with the human eye either. The life energy is more powerful than any other energy the human mind has yet discovered. It forms life and every aspect of human fate. It forms all occurrences. It is the sum of all manifesting consciousness that forms this material world.

No matter what other people's consciousnesses produce in your surroundings, your life experience is solely determined by what you produce. What you produce then determines whether a mass occurrence will affect you or not and how it will do so. The mass occurrence is never in itself the final explanation for a personal fate. It can be only a contributing factor to what you have already produced. If, for example, you have not freed your innermost psyche of fear, negativity, defenses, hopelessness, unrecognized and mischanneled anger, a mass catastrophe will include you because this is the image you have set up. When you are in connectedness with the roots of things, you will no longer use the mass occurrences, which seemingly affect all people indiscriminately, to rationalize away true self-responsibility, self-determination, and positive involvement with life.

The life substance is so responsive, so bubbling with explosive energy, that it is immediately affected by the molding power of consciousness -- the total consciousness, including the one below

surface awareness. When I say immediately, I mean that the substance responds at once to every movement of consciousness. But this does not necessarily mean that it manifests immediately. In most cases, what you build now manifests somewhat later. It becomes your fate in the future -- either near or far, depending on the unification and strength of creative energy formation, of countercurrents that must first be detected, worked through, and eliminated. And what you experience now is the result of what you built yesterday, last year, decades, or even centuries ago. The immediacy exists, nevertheless, for each thought, feeling, attitude, and will-direction affects the substance that forms life experience.

Not only conscious and unconscious concepts create. So does the feeling tone, the climate of your inner being. If your thoughts are productive and positive, but the feeling tone is depressed and negative, if in your feelings you are unwilling to accept the possibility of happy expansion, then this indicates that there are hidden layers of consciousness that contradict what you may pay lip service to on the conscious level. This is why the exploration and confrontation with the finest nuances of your innermost being must be made.

In simple terms, the life struggle is the struggle between the ultimate reality -- its goodness, its richness, its beauty, its joyousness, its unending possibility for blissful expansion -- and the dark, constricted, hopeless negativity and destructiveness. To put it in even simpler terms, the struggle is between good and evil. All religious philosophies of all times have postulated the same basic truths, which must be brought to humanity over and over again. But since these basic truths become redundant and eventually empty words, they must be brought back in new forms, clad perhaps in a new terminology, fitting to the present society.

There is a new consciousness coming into this world. It is beginning to spread. It is the consciousness that perceives the wider reality behind the apparent, fragmented reality at your immediate disposal. This new consciousness is produced by beings whose development and connectedness is more profound than those of the average person. They may be few, but their power is much greater than you can imagine. The spreading of this new consciousness is also helped along by what may be undesirable in a different frame of reference, namely the glimpses that the taking of drugs have revealed. Damaging as it may be for many individuals to take drugs, especially when it is done for the sake of escaping life and its struggle, from an overall point of view the glimpses gained have revealed a greater reality beyond the surface of life. And, in spite of individual damaging effects, on the whole, a new influx has swept the world with direct and indirect consequences that cannot yet be measured in human terms. You know, my friends, that I discourage the taking of drugs for many reasons. But it is possible that something that is undesirable for an individual still has an overall balancing effect in the scheme of things, ultimately contributing to faster development.

It is always up to the individual what to make of something. You can choose to make a one-time drug experience an incentive to speed up personal development, or to indulge in it as the ultimate escape. Nevertheless, on the whole, more and more people, even those who have used this as an escape, change their perceptions, and this heralds a new dimension of being. Almost always, the deeper meaning of mass occurrences, no matter how apparently desirable or undesirable they may be, can be evaluated only much later -- perhaps centuries later, when an overall, objective, unbiased picture is available, where aspects can be seen that are unrecognizable when one is too near to see the whole.

The human struggle is fought between the constructive and destructive attitudes -- I will not say "forces," for the word "forces" seems to imply that we are dealing with two sets of forces. In reality destructive attitudes are merely distortions and limitations that consciousness has suffered in the process of losing its connectedness, or "knowingness," if I may coin this word. As the knowing of ultimate reality was lost, destructiveness set in proportionately. Now knowing must be recaptured. To recapture knowing with the unknowing mind is, of course, the struggle, which can be allayed only when you are willing to listen to your subtle emotional responses and train yourself to no longer gloss over them and take them for granted or deny their existence outright. You have to do this with the guidance of qualified others, for, of course, this cannot be done alone. Your hidden deliberate negativity must be recognized and paid attention to. It is the direct key to how you create negative fate, to how you mold the life substance. When you disconnect yourself from your wanting to be negative and to experience life in a limited, undesirable way, you become truly helpless.

The pain of human existence is disunity within yourself. It is never a fate that someone else imposes upon you, or something anyone else can do to you, or something vague that in a sense "life" does to you. It is your own inner disunity that is painful. There the dualistic split reigns, and your positive attitude is constantly obstructed and fought by indwelling negativity and destructiveness. No matter how much it may appear that your suffering has nothing to do with conditions within yourself, it must nevertheless be so. It is only a question of your finding out.

Wherever negativity exists, disunity -- hence pain -- exists too; this may seem strange to you, but it exists to the degree the self is already embarked on a positive road as well. In individuals whose destructiveness is totally dominant in their manifest human personality, no pangs of conscience exist. A temporary negative unity exists instead. Cruelty, brutality, selfishness -- the truly criminal nature -- can find a certain distorted peace and unity. Only when the eternal spirit has freed itself sufficiently to create a conscience will disunity manifest on the upward scale. Thus very undeveloped individuals are unified, however temporarily and precariously, in their evil state. This negative unification must be split asunder at a certain point of evolution in order to eventually reestablish unity in positiveness. The in-between state is the disunity, where one aspect of the personality strives toward love, truth, integration with the whole, and comprehension of ultimate reality, while the other side strives toward separateness, destructive aims, fear, hate, and blind assumptions that never open doors to the light. The pain of this disunity ultimately becomes an incentive to increase the will toward overcoming the negative side and strengthening the positive side. This effort then leads to the new, greater consciousness, where a higher unification is established.

Most individuals, with the exception of the few who pursue such a path as yours, are not aware of their own destructive strivings. They have managed to look away from them and do not notice in what devious ways their destructiveness manifests. I might say that even those of you who are very actively engaged in your work of self-confrontation, every so often overlook how and where your destructiveness manifests. You do not see how indirect manifestations affect you and how you still tend to blame circumstances outside yourself for negative experience. In reality, negative experience comes exclusively from the destructive side of your inner split. The more consciously and deliberately you fight it, the more successful you will be in establishing unity within, and

therefore in creating a wholly desired and desirable life experience which makes you more deeply aware of fulfilling yourself.

When the destructive side conflicts with the side striving toward true fulfillment and positive expression, very often the destructive side needs a good cause in order to find an outlet for itself, for legitimate hostile feelings and activities. This is why you often see individuals who become very combative and militant for a good cause. They are no longer in a position where they can guiltlessly express their destructive impulses for an overtly destructive cause, such as crime in any form. They need genuine good causes, which then serve as an outlet for a strength and a power the positive consciousness does not yet know how to deal with. This strength and power is put in the service of evil, but the total personality rejects evil. Thus a compromise has been found in using negative feelings for a good cause.

The next, more desirable state is achieved when these negative feelings are no longer repressed and therefore need no outlet. Then the good causes can be embraced without serving as outlets for negative feelings, for repressed hostility, because the hostility is then dealt with in a much more direct and self-accepting way. This is the difficult juncture where many people stumble again and again. Even those of you who work so diligently and with such goodwill stumble again and again over the difficulty of not knowing how to fight against your negativity, how to accept it in the right way. For both fighting against and accepting can exist in both constructive and self-defeating, distorted ways. The latter way widens the split and the pain of disunity.

Fighting against the destructive side must not be done by denying what exists until you no longer know that it exists. You need to fight by summoning up all your energies to a courageous recognition of the negative forces within you, even if they manifest so indirectly that they seem harmless.

What are these indirect manifestations of negativity? Let me name a few: lack of energy, anxiety, depression, hopelessness, illness, frustration, failures, feelings of inadequacy, pleasurelessness, listlessness. All these are indubitable signs that there is a destructive force in you that you still have not recognized and acknowledged fully. It is not understood or accepted and you still cling to it because you consider it a defense you have no intention of giving up. This is why you deny it. You can never free yourself from a negativity which you do not first accept as existing in you. And you cannot succeed in knowing it unless you truly want to give it up.

Once you choose to confront your negativity you must acknowledge its indirect manifestations and see this destructiveness as quite deliberate in the secret regions of your inner self. Test your reactions to see whether you really want to give it up. Ask yourself if holding onto it may not have a great deal to do with your unhappiness, with your difficulties and your unfulfillment. Could you truly feel fulfilled, with all your dormant potentialities realized, when destructiveness still exists in you and is tenaciously held onto -- so much so that you do not even wish to know of it? When you feel a strength growing from tackling and challenging the self-produced difficulties, you will experience an inner growth, an inner, involuntary movement that follows indirectly, as if it had nothing to do with your deliberate efforts. This happens when you are reconciled to rooting out every vestige of evil, of negativity, of destructiveness in feeling and behavior.

Do not be afraid to recognize it, my friends, for your fear to do so is infinitely worse than your negativity itself. Recognize, acknowledge, and accept it. Only then will you find a way out. Only then do you reconcile the right way of fighting your evil and the right way of accepting it. The latter helps the former. In fact, without acceptance, the fight cannot be effective. To make this fight productive, to create proper self-acceptance that does not deteriorate into self-indulgence, you must take a very systematic approach. First, strengthen your will for the recognition and elimination of all negativity. Commit yourself to wanting it and request inner help. Say this to yourself in so many words, very concisely and decisively. Then listen to your own inner answer. Do not gloss over the inner answer, or the first vague feeling of resistance. Acknowledge it very articulately. Realize that the resistance means you do not want to let go of the negativity and you hide this truth from your consciousness. Speculate upon the effects of this fact and make the hidden intention more conscious. Then consider the possibility that this condition is largely responsible for all you want to change in your life. Do not stop the search for the connection between your suffering, your unfulfillment, your unhappiness, and your inner refusal to give up persisting negativity. Only when this is worked through, when you see the connection clearly and obviously, when you have subsequently overcome all resistance and have a totally positive response to your efforts and investment in the elimination of negativity, will you experience the truth of what I stated in this and previous lectures: that you have the power to create the most desirable life experience you can think of. You will know without a shadow of a doubt that the constructive life force is available for you without limits, expanding into forever new areas of joy and pleasure, as greater inner strength and more resources manifest.

Whenever and wherever you have doubts regarding your fulfillment, your possibilities to create a new and better life experience, you should look with a discerning inner eye for the corresponding inner negativity that does not want to yield itself up. If this lecture is truly used and put into practice, it will become a very substantial instrument for passing through a bottleneck you may have felt obstructing your further progress. Use this approach very precisely.

May you all carry with you new material and an inner energy awakened by your good will, by your increased understanding that leads you to a decision about a new approach to your complaints: "I want to seek the cause in me rather than in others, so that I become free to love and live. I will take the apparent risk to do this, and thus establish self-respect, courage, honesty, strength, and positive energy patterns." If only a germ, only a particle of these words is carried away from here tonight, this has indeed been a fruitful evening.

Be blessed, all of you, my dearest friends, so that you become the gods you potentially are.

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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