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IDENTIFICATION AND INTENTIONALITY: IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SPIRITUAL SELF TO OVERCOME NEGATIVE INTENTIONALITY

Blessings and greetings for every one of you here. Let the power of spirit enliven you, live and manifest through you. Then you will be in the real world and your life will have meaning. Every step you take in this direction generates new energy. You who truly want to find out who you are, and are prepared to make the sacrifice of giving up old destructive patterns of thinking and reacting, will discover the incomparable treasure within you. Then the word sacrifice becomes indeed ludicrous, for you give up nothing to gain everything.

In the last few months a powerful new energy has been generated by the efforts of each individual as well as by the group as a whole. You have set in motion something that is indeed greater than the human life you know. This has become noticeable to all who want to see and perceive. It would require a deliberate insistence to blind oneself not to be aware of remarkable progress in you; new movement in your inner and outer lives; renewal of feelings and depth of new experience. You all have become much more keenly aware of yourselves and consequently life begins to open up more and more. Similarly, this same new influx is certainly apparent in the life of the group; in the dynamics and in the feeling experiences, in the honesty of feelings and the more intimate relating among yourselves. What is more, the spiritual force is now so great as a result of your efforts and progress, that even the most skeptical among you begin to see that their skepticism is in itself an adopted defense. At this point the validity of this pathwork is no longer a theory or a philosophy. It has become a reality and an experience that can no longer be questioned.

As you become more perceptive and attuned as a result of your accelerating development, you know that the reality of spirit is much greater than that of the things you touch and see. The spiritual energy that is generated by you becomes self-perpetuating. This is noticeable in your personal lives as well as in your undertakings with others. Of course, even after making great progress you still have to deal with your defenses and undissolved negativities, your resistances, distortions, and darkness. Hence we must plough ahead in our work, to make more spiritual strength available for eliminating the negative aspects in your personality: more of the unreality, and more of the mask. As usual, these aspects must first be fully acknowledged and accepted before you can give them up. It is impossible to let go of something you do not know you have or will not express.

Once again I should like to find the common denominator of where most of you are at this time. This applies only to those who truly follow the path in all ways, with all available help. For those it will immediately become apparent that right now you find yourself at the crucial point which I shall discuss tonight. Some of you may already have made some steps to pass this point. Others may still struggle to verify this point of self-awareness, but will sense that they are on the threshold. But most of my friends are exactly at the point I shall now discuss.

Now I should like to speak about the need to be aware of your previously concealed but now conscious negative intentionality. In the past you may have accepted the theory that you, too, have a lower self, that you have faults and character defects. You may have even faced many of them and dealt with them honestly and constructively. But this is not the same as finding your negative intentionality, although there exists a connection between the latter and character defects, images, misconceptions, and destructive feelings.

It is an important fact of human psychology that whatever people fear, they unconsciously want; that whatever they experience, they also unconsciously want. The entire pathwork is based on this true fact of life. Now many of you are truly face to face with a basic negating attitude toward life: an attitude that expresses no desire to give, to love, to contribute, to reach out, to receive, or to live well and fruitfully. This may sound preposterous to the conscious mind that wishes for nothing more than any and all fulfillments imaginable. But there is this other part of the soul, in a hidden corner of the psyche, which says just the opposite. It wants to hate, to be spiteful, to withhold -- even if this causes suffering and deprivation.

Recognizing this part of the soul is of paramount importance. It need not be the major part of the self. In fact, it may be that a relatively small part of your consciousness is locked into negation, while a much more substantial part of the self strives for the opposite. But no matter how small in relationship to the liberated, positive aspects of self, the negative part holds a magnetic power over the life of the individual precisely because it is not being consciously recognized.

When full awareness of this negative intentionality surfaces, it begins to dawn on you how strong a grip this devastating attitude has on you. In spite of knowing how destructive and senseless it is, you still find yourself unable, or rather unwilling to abandon this attitude. A great effort to overcome resistance is necessary before you can accept this, at first shocking, realization about your life. As a matter of fact, much of the resistance you encounter in yourself and your companions is based precisely on not wanting to see the existence of such senseless destruction and negation within you.

But when you finally do see it, it is a blessing. You can then deal with this negation of life. There are a number of "reasons" for negativity, if we may call them that, of which you are already quite conscious. Nevertheless, you may find that you still cannot move from this point. Yet the mere fact that you know that you are the one who wants isolation, loneliness, lovelessness, hate, and spite, instead of blaming some fate that befalls the innocent you, is a key to finding the next link in the chain of your evolution.

At this point, it would be useful to make a clear distinction between negativity and negative intentionality. Negativity comprises a wide range of feelings including faults, hostility, reality-distortions, envy, hate, fear, pride, and anger, to name a few. But when we speak of negative intentionality, we mean expressly the intention to hold on to the state of negating life and the self. The mere word intention connotes that the self is in charge, and makes a deliberate choice, intending to do, act, and to be in a certain way. Now even when you own up to the destructive, cruel, and brutal attitudes, you always give an impression that you cannot help being the way you are. However when you ferret out your negative intentionality, you can no longer deceive yourself that negativity just "happens" to you. You must sooner or later come to terms with the fact that your life

is the result of your choices. And choice implies the possibility of adopting another attitude. In other words, you can truly discover on a deep level that you are free. Even your present narrow confines are the result of a freely chosen course you follow and will continue to follow until you choose to change this course.

To the conscious mind, such negative intentions may appear preposterous, but rest assured that negative intentionality indeed exists. To admit and to deal with this fact extensively and profoundly takes considerable struggle, effort, and patience as well as an inner overcoming of resistance. I do not talk about an occasional vague hint of a recognition that is then left to itself. Truly dealing with one's negative intentionality is a major crisis in one's life and signifies a basic transition. It is not something that anyone can easily come by.

Let us now look at certain fundamental stages and progressions of this transition. You can start out on such a path without any awareness of your stubborn negative intentions. As I said before, if you were to be confronted with this fact, you could not believe it, let alone feel and observe it within you. You might be aware of some faults and destructive attitudes, of some neurotic behavior and feelings, but I cannot sufficiently emphasize that this is not at all the same as being aware of your negative intentionality.

When your pathwork progresses well and you gain deeper and more honest insight into yourself you can accept more of your good as well as your painful feelings. You gain strength and objectivity. By your renewed commitment to facing the truth in yourself over and over again, which activates the purest spiritual energies, you finally come to discover your intentional negation of all the good things in life. You will find that the more frustrated you feel for not attaining what you so ardently desire, the greater your inner negative intention and the less inclination you have to deal with it. This correlation is extremely important. The same applies to doubts: the more you fear that what you want will not materialize, the less faith you have in your life, and the less connected you are with your own negative will.

That the self deliberately chooses a course of denial, spite, and hate even at the price of suffering is tremendously difficult to admit. But once this is done, the door opens to freedom, even before one is actually ready to step through it. Even before the self is ready to make a new choice, the mere availability of another road, another approach to life and to reinvesting one's energies and resources, brings hope -- not false hope, but realistic expectation.

You pin so much on false hopes, my friends -- so much! You actually invest your best energies into neurotic solutions based on unrealizable hopes or on sheer illusion. But there exists a real, realistic and realizable hope: a hope that is not bound to wind up in disappointments and disillusionments. This hope slowly but surely grows into manifest reality and fact, resulting in self-fulfillment and the realization of the best within you, and therefore access to all that life has to offer. Just think of all the potentialities life has to offer. They are endless and they are yours for the asking.

However, important as it is to discover the existence of your negative intentionality, awareness is not the same as giving it up. You who have arrived at this point have found this only to be too true. It is possible to fully recognize and admit negativity and yet not be at all ready and willing to let go of it. Sometimes it can happen that realizing a destructive or distorted attitude automatically

eliminates it, but this is not always true. It becomes evident again and again in almost everybody's work that in spite of knowing how senseless and destructive one's negative intentionality is, more than just recognizing it is required before the mind, the will, and the intention can be changed.

There are many reasons for this difficulty. Some of the major fears are: fear of the unknown, fear of being hurt and humiliated, fear of and refusal to experience past and present pain. A negative attitude functions as a defense against real feelings. Holding on to negative will direction is also the result of a refusal to assume self-responsibility, or to deal with less than ideal circumstances. The origin of this negation of life is in childhood. It is now your inner insistence on forcing your "bad parents" to become "good parents" out of guilt, using your misery as a weapon against them. Negative intentionality is also a means to punish life in general. Some of you may have amply explored, verified and worked through these feelings, reactions and attitudes, yet you still insist on holding on to them. Why?

Often it is a child's only way to preserve its selfhood. If the child's inner resistance to letting go of this intent is not maintained, the personality feels threatened: the child equates giving up the resistance with capitulation, with giving up his individuality. Many of you are aware of this and know the inappropriateness of carrying a once valid position into the present where it is no longer valid and downright destructive.

It may seem almost inconceivable to those of you who have not yet made the self-discovery that one can admit to a downright senseless, wasteful attitude that does nothing but bring undesirable results, and yet insist on maintaining it. Why does this apparently senseless refusal exist, even though you know it only causes you and others pain? It makes you miss out on living fully and joyfully and it causes you severe guilt and self-punishment. There must be a powerful reason that obviously goes beyond any of the aforementioned causes -- true as they are in themselves. Many of you are stuck at this particular point and need help to get beyond it.

What truly prevents you from saying, "I do not want to hate, I want to love. I do not want to withhold any longer, but want to give the best of myself to life. I do not need my spitefulness and truly desire to give it up. I want to reach out and give to life and receive equally the best life has to offer?" This lecture hopefully will help you further to understand this resistance.

In order to deal with this bottleneck, the question of identification has to be focused on. What part of yourself do you identify with? Such identification is not something the conscious ego chooses. Once again, it is something that must be discovered by your observing mind. In what way are you identified with the different parts of your being?

For example, if you exclusively identify with the ego -- that conscious, willing, acting part of you -- it is automatically impossible to bring a change that lies beyond the province of the ego. Inner change of the deepest attitudes and feelings of an individual cannot be brought about by the very limited functions of the ego. One must be identified with a deeper, broader, and more effective aspect of the self in order to even believe in the possibility of such a change. Any profound change comes about by the ego committing itself to wanting the change, and trusting in the processes of the involuntary spiritual self to bring it about. If there is no identification with the spiritual self, such trust and the necessary climate of unpressured positive expectation cannot exist. And if it does not exist, the person cannot even want it, for the conviction of failure would drive home the

powerlessness of the ego in too unpleasant a way. Thus it is preferable for the limited ego to say, "I do not want" than to say, "I cannot."

On a superficial level, the exact opposite situation exists: "I won't" is denied with "I can't." On a deeper and more subtle level it is reversed, simply because the ego does not want to admit its limitations, and yet the self has not found the way to identify with the spirit.

Identification can exist in a most positive and constructive way or in a most negative, obstructive and destructive way. The difference is not determined by your identification with one or the other of the various personality aspects -- as if one would be good, the other bad. Identification with any aspect of yourself can be either desirable, healthy and fruitful, or the opposite. For example, you might think, "How can it be destructive to identify with the higher self?" Or, conversely, "How could it be desirable to identify with the lower self?" I say it can be either.

If you identify with the higher self or your spirit, without truly being aware of your lower self, mask self, your defenses, your dishonest devices, and your negative intentionality, then your identification with the higher self becomes an escape and an illusion. Under these circumstances it is not at all a truthful or a real experience. It is much more like paying lip service to a philosophy you believe in on the purely intellectual level. It is all very well to know that you are a divine manifestation with potentially limitless power to change yourself and your life, that you are the very spirit of the universe in manifest form. This is true. And yet it is a half-truth when this kind of identification overlooks the part of you which needs your scrutiny and candid attention.

By the same token, identification with your lower self can be desirable or undesirable. Perhaps we can best put it this way: It is one thing to identify with your lower self or your mask self, but to observe and identify it, is another. When you are identified with the lower self, you believe that this is all there is to you. When you identify it, observe, admit, and tackle it, you do not believe that this is all there is to you. If it were, you could not identify, observe, evaluate, analyze and change it. For that part of you which is doing all this watching is certainly more in charge, has more power, and is more active and real than the part that is being observed, evaluated, or changed. The moment you identify something, good, bad or indifferent, the identifying part is more you than whatever is being identified. In other words the observer is more real and in charge than the observed. This is the vast difference between identifying something and being identified with it.

When the mask and lower self, or the negative intentionality and dishonest games are being identified, there is room for real feelings, including pain, to be honestly experienced, and the pain no longer needs to be denied. This is so because the energy no longer invested in denial will bring you to the truth. And when you can truly feel your feelings, you can then identify with the spiritual self.

The lower self should be identified; the spiritual self identified with. The ego makes the identification, but gives itself up voluntarily so that it is integrated into the spiritual self.

When giving up negative intentionality, you already experience yourself as something more than the lower self whose energies should be dissolved in their present form, and be reconverted and channeled in a new and better way. But when you reaffirm the senseless refusal to give up negative will, it is because you are totally identified with this aspect of the self. This must be so regardless of the developed aspects of yourself where this may not hold true at all. In other words,

this is not a total condition: It is not true that either a person is entirely identified with the lower self or no longer at all. You are all invariably a combination. Some aspects of the self are free and there a deep spiritual identification may be sensed; at the same time, the as yet unidentified lower self aspects and unfelt feelings partially create a climate of submersion into the lower self and the self fears this to be its only reality. A third identification can also exist this time with the ego believed to be the only valid, reliable function. This is the way people are split in regard to identification.

When a secret, albeit partial, identification with the lower self exists, giving it up appears as self-annihilation to that part of the self which is destructive, cruel, hateful, spiteful, and soon, this seems the real self. The other seems unreal -- perhaps even phony. This seems true especially when an actual phony veneer is used to cover up the reality of the lower self. Giving up hate, spite, and negative intention seems like giving up one's very being. Such apparent self-annihilation cannot be risked, even for the beckoning promise of accruing joy and fulfillment from this sacrifice. At best, whatever joy there is appears to exist only for someone other than the familiar you. What good do joy, fulfillment, pleasure, self-respect, and abundance accomplish if they can only be experienced by someone other than you? This inarticulate feeling or climate existing within you is the most difficult part to overcome -- or rather perhaps, the second most difficult part.

The first difficult part is to make the initial commitment to find out the truth about yourself. This includes mentally observing and admitting your real thoughts and feelings, experiencing all your feelings, owning up to them on all levels. Then you need to answer the question, "How am I going to extricate myself from my identification with my lower self?"

When you experience yourself as real exclusively in the lower self, to whatever degree this may hold true, you cannot give up the lower self. The refusal to do so is the misplaced will to live. You live in the illusion that beyond your most negative aspects nothing of you exists. You feel real and energized only when negativity and destructiveness manifest, no matter how much the environment curtails it and forces you to experience this energy as existing only inside of yourself. The outer deadness and numbness seem the result of having "given up" evil; but it has not been given up at all; nor do you have to. The same energy can be reconverted once you have stopped denying it.

My friends, let this sink in: Your resistance to giving up what you hate most in yourself is due to a false identification. At this point many of you are puzzled about yourselves. You do not understand why you do not want to budge from this extremely uncomfortable and undesirable inner position. You know that there is a beautiful world waiting outside. And if you deny this fact, you do so to justify your position: if all is dismal anyway, then there is nothing so strange about your state. So you often make yourself believe in a terrible, senseless universe. Or, if this is not the case, you cannot bring your belief in the good and beautiful universe to bear on the negative intentionality.

The way you are bound and frozen into this position of resisting to let go of the negative intentionality is not only obstinate and spiteful. That would be too stupid. But the obstinacy and spitefulness harden your position, so that your fear of annihilation that would follow if you gave up the lower self grows stronger and the negativity becomes self-perpetuating. You then live in a small, self-enclosed world in which the worst of you seems to be your reality.

How are you going to find your way out? The first thing to do would be to question yourself, "Is this really all I am? Is it true that my reality ceases to exist when I give up my negative intention and will? Is this all there is to me?" The mere fact that you raise these questions honestly will already open a door. Even before the answers come -- and they will eventually pour forth -- the fact that these questions are raised will permit you to come to the second stage in this progression where you realize that the part which asks the question is already beyond your assumed identity. Thus you already establish a new bridge. From there on it will not be quite so difficult to find a voice in you that answers in a new way, beyond the limited scope of the lower self which you used to protect so jealously.

Reach out with tentative questions, questions asked with good will and in good faith. This is the very first step to find your way out of your prison of unnecessary suffering. When you do this, you are no longer identified with the lower self which knows nothing beyond these confined walls and derives its identity, or reality, from being negative. Instead, you come to the point when you can identify it and be its observer. Identifying with the observer then becomes a first step away from and a first extension beyond your familiar self-experience.

Let us assume, for example, that you have grown accustomed to experience yourself as haughty, cold, and contemptuous. Giving up this attitude seems like dying. But dying into what? Dying into your true self where your real feelings and your real being are. If you are willing to feel your feelings regardless of their nature, you will know who you are. If you are not willing, you must remain that hard, stiffened, limited "self." Here lies your choice.

It cannot be claimed that when you give up your negative intentionality you will instantly experience universal bliss -- or even earthly bliss. You will experience your real feelings, some of them quite painful. But the pain will be so much easier to bear than the position you now maintain. In its flowing nature it will carry you into new and better states, like the river of life itself.

The commitment must always be to the truth of the self -- what it really feels and thinks and is. If commitment to the self is the aim, then you cannot fail to realize yourself. You will experience new depths of feelings. You will even welcome the pain for it is real and flowing. It is moving and is totally you.

The first answers you will receive to your questions may not even come from your deeper, spiritual self as yet. You may not experience magical revelations, visions, and mystical inspirations. The first answers may come from your conscious mind. Your ability to formulate new possibilities and answers and to use the knowledge of truth that is already integrated into your consciousness will feel safe and very real. At the same time, it will give you a new key to use the equipment at your disposal in ways other than your habitual old groove.

Such new thoughts may take into consideration that trying out a positive intentionality could be interesting and desirable for you. You could play at first with forming new thoughts, weighing new possibilities and alternatives in the way you set your thinking apparatus. This is an exciting endeavor and one that does not in principle oblige you to follow any course of action. It merely means giving a new scope to a very set mind. You can always exert your right to go back where you were, you are never coerced by life or anyone else. It is always your choice. This knowledge will make the apparent risk of trying out a new thought-direction seem less final. Just investigate how it

feels to set a positive intentionality in motion. As you avail yourself of this new freedom, you build another bridge to a greater expansion of the self. Little by little you can become calm, and listen into yourself. You will perceive the ever present, ongoing voice of truth and God. It will increase in intensity and frequency until you realize that you are everything that exists. There is nothing you are not, my friends. This may sound very far off, but it is not as far away from you as it may now seem.

Can you try to take this step after hearing this lecture? Maybe you can meditate together, as a group, and help each other to take this step. This step needs to be repeated many times, like the initial commitment to finding the truth inside of you. But every little step liberates more energy and makes the successive steps easier. This process could generate tremendous spiritual energy through your meditation and commitment.

You who make yourselves available to new possibilities in conceiving, perceiving, and forming new inner attitudes will experience the richness of the universe, the richness of its innermost being. New action and new outer experience stream forth from that. You who stay confined within your old possibilities must stay in an unsatisfactory condition no matter how developed you may be relative to others. There is no standing still. If you stand still you confine yourself. Only when you continue to expand can you truly become yourself.

A beautiful golden force wants to work its way through the clouds. The clouds disperse more and more. To whatever degree you take a step toward merely wanting it, the clouds become thinner. To whatever degree you hide behind negation and doubt, which are the strongest defenses against coming out of your hold, the golden sun and force cannot come through. But it is there.

Do not believe that you have to become a different person. You become the best that you already are. When you become it you will recognize it, you will experience its familiarity and you will feel how safe it is, how much you it is! It is the best of you. You do not betray your reality, you do not become something that you need be ashamed of. Try to believe this. Those who are here, let go a little. Let the light come into you and accept that reality is not all dismal. It is indeed a beautiful reality. The universe is full of love. Truth is love and love is truth. The freedom of your own spirit will be found in truth and love. Be blessed, all of you!

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What followed cannot be transcribed. It was an extremely moving experience. Strong energy was generated, which propelled a few of our friends to take this step. This led to deep feelings and crying, but we helped each other with affection and love in a deep and genuine way. The whole group was lifted up into a new and freer liberated state. Unfortunately such experiences cannot be conveyed by words. But at least we want our friends who were not present to know what is happening.

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