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COMMITMENT: CAUSE AND EFFECT

Peace, blessings, and love for all of you, my dear ones. The hard work, courage, honesty, and humility of this pathwork have brought you, in proportion to your investment, fulfillment and peace. Many of you are now actually in the position to experience how your problems resolve -- something you have always doubted in your hearts. You now form closer and more authentic relationships with those around you -- and this is particularly noticeable within the group as a whole. It took many years of labor to make this possible.

Wherever peace, fulfillment, light, hope, and trusting closeness to your intimate friends are lacking, take it as a gauge that something in you is amiss. This gauge is so exact! You will experience your life circumstances and your inner state in accordance with the advancement you have made on your own inner path. There is no truer measurement.

You can never measure yourself against others. Where you are now may be just right for you. It may be exactly where you have to be. When you know this, you will feel bright and hopeful. Others who find themselves at the identical inner crossroads may lag behind on their personal path. They may not accomplish the plan they have come to fulfill in this incarnation. Therefore they will be in strife -- with themselves and/or others. The only reliable and realistic gauge of the fulfillment of your life plan is how you feel about yourself, your life, and those around you.

Tonight's lecture will start where we left off last time. It is the sequel of the last lecture and is supposed to help you a step further on your path -- particularly in respect to coming out of the recently uncovered negative intentionality.

You must continue to bring out your negative intentionality; to admit it honestly and openly. But a number of you have already done so sufficiently and are now ready to give it up in exchange for positive intentionality.

The key for many is a complete understanding of commitment on the one hand, and cause and effect, on the other. These seem unrelated to each other and to negative intentionality, but they are all intrinsically connected.

Let us first discuss commitment. What does commitment mean? You use this word again and again, without really understanding and exploring what it means. It means, above all, a one-pointedness of attention; giving the self in a wholehearted way to whatever the commitment may be. If you are committed to give your best to whatever you do, you will focus on all aspects of the subject. You will not shy away from investing all your energies, all your attention. You will use your faculties of thinking, of intuition, of meditation. In other words, you will use your physical energies, your mental capacities, your feelings, and your will to activate the as yet dormant spiritual powers to

make the venture constructive. This requires a holistic approach that can come only when the will is unbroken by negative counterforces. In order to be fully committed, no negative intentionality must exist.

Commitment exists in every imaginable undertaking. It does not apply only to great and significant ventures, such as your spiritual path of self-evolution, which is the most important undertaking in life. It also applies to every mundane little task. To the degree you are committed, what you do will be pleasurable, free from conflict, and rewarding. It will be one-pointed in direction; it will have depth and meaning; it will be successful; and it will bear the stamp and feeling of blessedness.

If you give an undertaking your all, and no less, it can only be rewarding and satisfying. But this is comparatively rare. Usually people give only half of themselves and are then confused, vexed, and disappointed when the result is accordingly incomplete.

Here is where cause and effect comes in. When the effect is not recognized as the result of the cause set in motion, which in this case is a half-commitment, a split exists in the consciousness producing all sorts of negative chain reactions. Your confusion will first breed a sense of helplessness and injustice. If you are not aware that you commit only a part of yourself to a venture, while another part says no, and if you disregard that the undesirable outcome is caused by this, then you cannot help feeling embittered. You cannot help feeling that the world is a haphazard place, without rhyme or reason. You will consequently become frightened, defensive, distrustful, grabbing, anxious, and ruthless. Instead of changing the counterforce that eliminates full commitment, you will use the energy to push others aside or withdraw into failure and passivity.

Disconnectedness between cause and effect, that is, between lack of commitment and frustration, creates the need to seek the wrong kind of adjustment. Whenever there is lack of commitment, negative intentionality must be operative.

Most of my friends have recently begun to explore their negative intentionality, the area within that very deliberately says, "I do not want to give the best of my feelings, my efforts, my attention, my honesty, or whatever it may be. I will do whatever I do because it is expected of me, or because I want the result without paying the full price, or for some other ulterior motive." I hardly need to emphasize how important such an awareness and admission is. It is the key to understanding further indispensable connections. The awareness is not sufficient in itself, however, if you fail to establish the link between cause and effect. It is quite possible to be aware of the negative intentionality and still fail to establish the link in question.

Many of you who are committed to this path have begun to admit some negative intentions, some deliberate withholding and spiteful attitudes, at least to some extent. A few of you have acknowledged to the full extent their negative intentionality, but so far only very few of you have become aware that the aspects of your life you deplore and suffer most from are direct effects of causes set in motion by your negative intentionality. You still ascribe the undesirable suffering to other people's wrongdoings, coincidence, bad luck, or even some unfathomable "problem" within yourself you simply have not yet grasped.

This is a most important point. I would suggest that you all explore what makes you most unhappy in your life. What do you suffer from? Do you suffer from an overt condition, such as unfulfillment with a mate, or lack of the proper mate? Ask yourself: what is your intentionality in this respect? When you can verify that indeed a voice in you says, "No, I do not want to give to love, to the relationship, to the opposite sex my best," then you will find your suffering explained because you have drawn the link between cause and effect.

If you have no financial security, look inside to find the negative intent that says, "I do not want to be able to take care of myself, because if I do, I let my parents off the hook. Or I may be expected to give something that I don't want to give." It is necessary for you to understand how your negative intent brings the result, regardless of how subtle and covert it is, hidden, perhaps, beneath a tense, striving for fulfillment. Such overactivity may deceive you, and you may think that this should suffice to bring about a positive result, while you continue to disregard the power of the hidden negative cause. Even if you are already aware of the latter, you may still negate its importance. If you are not aware of it, this is as good a time as any to start exploring the inner regions of your mind where you may harbor the clue to the undesirable effect.

Are you frightened? Are you insecure? Do you feel inadequate? Do you feel an inexplicable anxiety and tension? Do you suffer from guilt feelings which you cannot explain and try to talk yourself out of because the manifest guilt seems -- and on a certain level is -- totally unjustified? Do you deplore your weakness, your lack of self-assertion? All these are effects of some negative intentionality, my friends, that is deliberate on a level that must be totally brought out into the open. For example, if you harbor spite, stubbornness, rebellion, malice, hate, pride -- all of these traits must make you feel guilty. Such guilt may find its outlet in an artificial, unjustified guilt as I have explained many years ago. Guilt must also lead to self-destructive acts; it must cause weakness, anxiety, lack of assertiveness, and all the ills you would like to be free of. You can be genuinely free of them only if you make the connection between them and their cause, the negative intention, so that the latter can be given up.

By not being aware of this connection, you will find yourself in the position of a persecuted victim. The stronger your disinclination to admit the negative intentions, the more you will capitalize on that position, always hoping that your resentful, blaming self-pity and helplessness will "convince" life, others, fate, to give you the desired outcome that only a positive intentionality can bring about.

But positive intentionality requires commitment: total, unequivocal commitment. If you are unwilling to invest yourself in that way, you seek the result through illegitimate means. This, of course, fortifies the guilt. The guilt increases the fear of meeting yourself in honesty, so that you convince yourself more and more that outside factors -- or harmless, as yet unknown inner factors -- are responsible for your unfulfillment. And so the vicious circle continues.

Some of you have a momentary glimpse of the negative intentionality, and this is progress. But you tend to forget about it all too soon. You disregard its impact; you fail to draw the necessary connections. Then you go on your way again.

Some of you, as I said, have admitted the desire to hold on to destructive attitudes; to hold on to hate, revenge, vindictiveness, for example. Yet, even so, you are not yet able to see that this

intent has definite consequences in your state of mind, in your attitude to yourself. And it must bring unwelcome effects from others to you. No matter how hidden you keep the negative intentions, no matter how strongly you seem to express positive attitudes that are also present, the former affect your actions and expressions toward others much more than you realize. Quite apart from that, the negative intent inevitably affects their soul substance, and thus their unconscious perceptions.

The average person's perception will remain on the unconscious level, so that an unconscious interaction takes place in addition to the conscious exchange. It is the former that breeds rifts and troubles that often seem mysterious to the parties involved. Confusion, self-blame, deadness of feelings, are examples of responses which bring forth the as yet unexplored negativities in the other person. So the negative interaction continues to go on and on. Only the spiritually mature individuals are able to make the unconscious perceptions of negative intentionality conscious -- and that is a blessing. They will avoid the deadly confusion that otherwise arises. They can deal with the situation.

When you can truly see cause and effect relationships in your life, not only will you be motivated to give up negative attitudes and intentions and to institute positive ones, but you will gain emotional and spiritual maturity. Maturity is to a great extent the ability to put together cause and effect. This ability also indicates the degree of awareness you have reached in your development.

Take, for example, an infant. When an infant experiences a painful physical sensation, it is incapable of bringing together cause and effect, because it lacks cognition. The pain-producing agent is completely blotted out from its consciousness. The infant merely experiences the effect -- the pain.

When the infant grows into a young child, it begins to be capable of inferring cause and effect when they occur close together. Suppose the small child touches fire and burns itself. It will comprehend that the fire is a cause and the burning sensation an effect. It learns a lesson of life: if it wishes not to experience the painful burning sensation, it must avoid touching fires. Here, cause and effect are close together. It has obtained, with this lesson, its first degree of maturity on the road of human development.

This same child cannot yet comprehend cause and effect relationships which are further removed from one another. But an older child can realize, for example, that a tummy-ache is a result of overeating indulged in a few hours earlier. In this case, comprehension of the longer-range cause and effect relationship implies that a further degree of maturity has been reached.

The older, or rather the more mature, you become, the greater will be your ability to draw connecting links between cause and effect that are less obvious, less visible, and longer-range.

Emotionally and spiritually immature people are not sufficiently aware to be able to trace cause and effect relationships realistically. They are incapable of, or rather disinclined to, recognize that their experiences, as well as their state of mind, are a direct result of certain causes. They neither see that past actions bring effects, nor that inner, covert, hazy attitudes have their inexorable results. They may search in all sorts of directions for the cause and the answers -- maybe even

within themselves. But if they cannot bring together the cause and the effect, they will go around in a circle, and not in a spiral, which is the true movement of the path.

The cause and effect relationship seems broken to the human consciousness from one lifetime to the next. Only as awareness increases on such a path does the spiritually mature person grow sufficiently to sense, and later even to inwardly know, important connections between causes from former lives and effects in the present life. The inner knowledge that explains key points of one's life in a deeply meaningful way is a revelation that must be earned through growth. It is totally different from the knowledge a psychic gives you about former incarnations. Inner knowledge comes about organically.

The ability of clairvoyants and psychics to predict the future, however, rests on the ability to see causes within the soul, whose inexorable, lawful effects cannot fail to materialize. This process is so often misunderstood. It is believed to be a supernatural, mysterious manifestation. All sorts of erroneous philosophies arise from this misconception. One of them is the idea of predetermined fate.

The gradually increasing ability of connecting cause and effect, the maturing process, and the growing awareness that are involved in it, bring such peace and light! It may at first be very uncomfortable for you to see how you create what you deplore; how, if you wish a different life experience, you must give up what you ferociously hang on to. But once you perceive and accept the beauty of these laws, the sense of safety and freedom that arises is beyond words. This knowledge conveys, like nothing else ever could, in what a safe, just, loving universe we all live.

Cause and effect relationships between this life and previous lives must also be established by inner attitudes. What seems like a fate beyond one's control -- for example, where one is born, as what, how one's face and body look, what one's talents are, will be sensed as self-caused and self-wanted, sometimes wisely, sometimes destructively. Exactly the same principle of cause and effect works in what seems to be fate and in what happens within you right now, in this lifetime. You have both positive intentionality and negative intentionality within you. Each necessarily creates entirely different experiences and states of mind. Why should this principle change when the entity changes its vehicle? The principle is perfect and needs no exemption, interruption, or alteration.

I recapitulate: The more you can link cause and effect, the more maturity you have. The more awareness exists, the more positive attitudes and positive intentionality are fostered and, proportionately, the greater your peace and fulfillment. Universal, ever-available abundance becomes realizable in proportion to your awareness. Lack of peace and fulfillment always connotes lack of awareness of cause and effect linked with negative intentionality.

Our path -- and those like it -- can be subdivided into the following stages: You first struggle to explore deep inner layers, which consist of misconceptions, negative intentionality, residual pain. With each individual the approach varies; one and then another of these aspects needs to be examined. The inner path requires moving back and forth. There are, of course, more aspects to be explored, but the primary purification consists of dealing with these three. When misconceptions can, on the innermost level, be exchanged for truth; when negative intentionality is being exchanged for positive intentionality; and when the individual no longer defends against experiencing pain, a substantial step of the initial purification has been accomplished.

Negative intentionality is a defense against experiencing pain. Misconceptions are a result of both. So there is an intrinsic connection among these three aspects. Maturity also lies in the ability to experience what one has produced, without fighting it. The mature soul makes itself light and receptive to its own innate feelings and fully savors them. This is the only way evil will cease to exist. All defenses harbor evil. It is obvious in any type of negativity, and it results from misconceptions.

Every individual's task on the evolutionary road is to eliminate evil, to transform it back into its original state of pure energy and loving, truthful consciousness. Many lifetimes are required to accomplish this phase of purification.

Evil produces pain, and the fear of and defense against pain produces more and worse pain, as well as more evil. You can experience the illusion of the defense the moment you fully open yourself to experience the pain -- and I do not mean here the false pain. There is a pain that is in itself a defense, as you all know -- an unbearable, twisted, bitter pain that stems from a forcing current that says, in effect, "Don't do this to me, life." It lacks the mature willingness to let be what is. In experiencing real pain, you stop controlling, manipulating, hiding -- the pain simply is. You approach the state of being -- with all its peace and bliss. Some of you have tasted this already, and more of you will do so increasingly, until you shed all defenses and are thus free to adopt positive intent: to express the best in life.

False, defensive pain contains bitterness, self-pity, resentments -- thus it destroys peace. Real pain is peaceful because you assume full self-responsibility without self-manipulation. Neither do you say, "Poor me, all this is done to me," nor, "I am hopeless, I am so bad that I can never exonerate myself." Both these attitudes are untruthful -- and therefore part and parcel of evil.

Undefended, real pain opens doors, brings light, and exposes the core of the self, with its resiliency, creativity, and depth of feeling and knowing. When the soul has learned to make itself available for what life offers, even if it is occasionally pain, it does not need negative intentionality. When residual pain has been worked off, current pain should it come your way, is experienced for what it is -- without denial or exaggeration, without imposing artificial interpretations on the event. Then no misconceptions, no negative intentionality, no evil, no suffering can exist. This state brings the end of fear: no more fear of death, fear of life, fear of being, fear of feeling, or fear of experiencing the height of universal love which is, strange as this may seem, people's greatest fear.

In the second major phase in the evolutionary progression the soul learns to acclimatize itself to universal bliss. To the degree evil exists -- misconceptions, defenses, negative intentionality, refusal to experience one's self-produced pain -- bliss is unbearable. But even when the soul is free from evil, at first it still requires strengthening to withstand the enormous power of the spirit. Its blissful, pure energy is so strong that only the purest and strongest can live comfortably in it. This truth can be recognized to some degree within your own human development. It has happened to all of you that you can no longer bear bliss, pleasure, ecstasy, happiness. You feel more comfortable in greyness. The power of the universal spirit is incompatible with the slow-moving energy of evil, defense, unexperienced pain.

This is why now, in these gatherings, due to your development, you first respond to the pure influx of spiritual power with crying. You are all gripped by strong feeling and it first elicits tears in you. It brings out as yet unexperienced residual feelings of sadness, longing, pain. But while you experience these, you already feel the liberation, the spiritual nourishment, the joyfulness, the exaltation and the love that are poured forth. In the past, these were merely words. Now they have become a reality as a result of your honesty in exposing yourselves in truth to each other. This fortifies the bond of love and your ability to sustain the strength of the blessing and the force given. It is thus quite logical that you first respond to this force with crying. Later, a new joy will manifest within you. Inklings of this new joy are already there, for even now you feel very differently from the way you used to. Your very tears open the channels of joy.

Some of you, who are still too tightly defended, will not let the force come in yet. You make yourselves hard and "safe." But your continual openness to the power of the spirit, as well as honestly exposing the temporary truth of evil within you, will eventually make you strong enough to let go and become able to feel and be real. But do not, by any means, justify your defensive hardness by judging and doubting. This is your greatest defense against who you really are and what you really are. And what a folly it is! For you deal yourself out of life and then complain.

So I say to you, my dear ones: Surge forward on this road of exploring. Admitting your negative intentions, your spiteful, deliberate withholding. Then make the next connection. Investigate what you really dislike in your life. What would you like changed? Make the bridge between these two aspects: the withholding and the unfulfillment. This will give you an additional impetus and motivation to want to feel the old, yet unexperienced feelings -- pain, longing, sadness, fear. When you are totally committed to feeling what is in you, you will become free and truly alive. As you let go of the defenses, you will make the transition from the false pain of complaining bitterness to the real pain that is soft, melting, and joyous -- yes, joyous. The real pain carries the germ of real life. The seed will soon germinate in your consciousness and bloom when you take the first step of commitment to your feelings and to experiencing life without holding back. How joyful life could be for you -- if only you gave up your stubbornness. How warm and rich could be your ties with others, your positive relationships.

I say to you, my friends, a great responsibility accrues from being incorporated into the great plan. Every one of you, who pursues this path carries such a responsibility. Such responsibility is never a burden; it is the greatest privilege a human being can ever experience. Nothing could make a person more happy, more fulfilled, and more free. It is a hallmark of immaturity if one's attitude toward responsibility is considered a burden and an unwelcome, undesirable constriction. The more mature you become, the more you see that freedom and responsibility are interdependent and inseparable. You can never be free when you do not feel responsible.

The unhappiness you breed with your negative intentionality is not only your own, but is also what you exude and give out to others. Whether you know it or not, it must make you feel rightfully guilty. For whenever you are negative and withholding, you are not only unloving, but you actually deprive or hurt others. This may not take place on the level of actions, but, as I said before, it is every bit as tangible, and even more so, on the level of invisible interaction, when the other person is not intuitive and not aware enough to grasp what is happening.

The physical level of action is only the result; the inner reality is the cause. An apparently good action often has disastrous results because it is undermined by covert negativity. On the other hand, an apparently very bad occurrence may be a blessing when the underlying motive and the inner attitudes are in truth and positive. The unmanifest levels are much more real and incisive than the manifest level. Hence, your negative intentionality, even if it does not appear as an overt act, has the dire consequences of hurting and depriving not only yourself, but also others.

If the others are sufficiently free of their own defenses, they will experience the hurt because they are aware. They will experience it cleanly and therefore it will leave them unscathed. It will be a momentary hurt, and it will not add to the repressed residual pool. But those who still have to battle within their own masks and defenses, with their own negative intentionalities, experience a bitter pain, a new rejection, even though they may not be actually conscious of their reaction. It is up to them, whether to make the pain conscious and go on from there on their path of development, or to choose to fortify, justify, and increase the old defensive and negative pattern.

I say all this to you, my friends, because your responsibility is growing with the good work you are doing; the impact of everything you issue forth grows likewise. The more you advance, the stronger the impact of your remaining negativity becomes. This is another spiritual law, about which we shall talk another time.

The progress of this group as a whole creates a new positive energy that transcends the work itself. The work has visible results, but the invisible benefits surpass your comprehension at this stage. Your commitment to what you are doing, the help you give to each other, is very beautiful. Realize that you thus fulfill spiritual responsibility. On an invisible plane, both the positive and the negative actions and attitudes also have commensurately stronger impacts and effects now. Realize this and let it be a help and incentive!

I come full circle and close this lecture by saying: Commit yourself wholeheartedly to your truth, to giving your best, to giving up the negative intention, the spiteful withholding. Now that you see it, do want to give it up and let God within you help to create the opposite positive attitudes. The blessings are truly immeasurable. Perhaps this lecture, as a sequence to the last, will help you again a step further to make new positive commitments. Whenever you find another trace of still lingering negative intentionality, make the corresponding positive commitment. Elicit in this way a new spiritual energy that will bring you forever greater blessings.

I will leave you, so that you can work a little among yourselves. This is so wonderful. It brings you closer together; it generates a pure and strong energy. You can easily feel this to be so. You help each other; you expose yourselves and accept each other. Thus, by expressing openly your hate, you become genuinely loving. From this forever greater blessings must and will arise. When you are troubled, seek the truth and all will be well. Be blessed, my dear ones. The love of the universe envelops you.

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