

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 212  
1996 Edition  
June 1, 1973

## CLAIMING THE TOTAL CAPACITY FOR GREATNESS

Greetings, my very dearest, most beloved friends, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters. Again a working season draws to its end. But each end is a beginning, as each beginning is also an end. These are the endless cycles, the waves of the infinite flow of the river of life. If you are within the flow, you grow and expand more and more into universal oneness. If you obstruct the flow, you accumulate the force and energy which manifest as blocks of pain and suffering.

At each beginning and end of a working season I give something like a map or bird's eye view of the phase you have left behind, to make you ready for the phase to come. These maps give you a better understanding of the progression. No new phase is possible without the preceding one. No step can be skipped. Year after year of our cooperation these maps have proven to be exact and timely for most of you, while others may catch up later. But that is all right. Always, of course, a few fear and resist so much that they deliberately obstruct their progression and natural organic movement and therefore experience unnecessary fear and pain. But on the whole, this is the way we work together.

At the start of this working season I announced that the winter would be dedicated to the beginning of "transforming work." Transformation of negative consciousness and energy becomes possible after you finally allow your negativities to surface, accept them, and take full responsibility for them. A vague and general awareness of destructive and evil intents does not suffice for the transformation work to take place. The negativities must be fully seen, in all their details; fear and shame of them must be overcome; hiding and camouflaging or whitewashing must have stopped; exaggerated self-blame must be relinquished. What is necessary is to simply and honestly own up to the full force of devilish attitudes and to all their puny details. Only this act will free you. The act is by no means a morbid or self-negating process, however.

Some of you may still wonder why so much emphasis on the negative is necessary for genuine spirituality to be reached. Some of you may have tried other approaches, hoping to bypass this highly unpleasant task, but real solutions cannot be reached, nor can integration occur in those other ways.

The fruits of your hard work in this first unpleasant phase are beginning to be reaped. A number of you have succeeded this past year, after arduous work with negative matter, to effect true transformation. The founding of the Center has helped greatly in this particular aspect of the work.

The phases of transformation are not exactly divided. They overlap. In one area you may have faced the negative aspects, removed blocks, and be ready for transformation work, while in other areas there is grave distortion and destructiveness untouched so far by your conscious awareness. In still other areas you have gained full purification and are clear and free. This is why it

is difficult to judge whether total self-purification has been achieved or not. Only complete dedication, watchfulness, awareness, readiness to dismiss wishful thinking and restrain pride will protect you from illusion -- and the pain of disillusionment.

The specific manner of the pathwork offers wonderful protection. The closeness you have developed, the intimate knowledge of yourselves that you share with each other, the perceptiveness so many develop increasingly as a result of your progress, the greater honesty and courage that gradually become second nature -- all that is indispensable help. One important gauge of the pathwork can constantly be used to determine your state: what is your life manifestation telling you? How rich and full is your life? How much are joy, peace, and abundance increasingly open to you? How much less are you afraid and reluctant to meet and expose the deepest regions of your innermost self? When you encounter inner blocks in momentary crises, how fully do you travel through them to find yourself more fully you? These questions when honestly probed, will lead you to the truth about your progress. They will tell you whether or not you are stuck, whether you deceive yourself -- perhaps hoping that you can avoid dealing with certain unpleasant inner material.

On the whole, all of you have traveled far since last year. You are in a different inner place and you know it. Many of you find yourselves for the first time connected in a way you never believed possible and doubted could really exist, in spite of having given lip service to the words you have been hearing from me for years. Many of you believe truly and deeply for the first time that inner problems can indeed be fully resolved and the problematic self can become healthy, whole, and renewed in a vital way. The number of friends reaching these stages increases steadily and they help transmute the energies of new friends joining the pathwork. Momentum, courage, faith, proof and conviction are vital components, affecting those who witness what is happening to you and bathe in your environment.

When you reach stages which heretofore you have only heard described, you also gain courage to go deeper, into still hidden layers of covert evil. There is always the spiral configuration: level upon level, until the circles in the spiral become smaller and smaller. As they become smaller and gradually converge into one point, the way becomes increasingly simple. The simplicity at the final turn of the spiral is love. This simplicity means little when the circles in the spiral are still large. Then everything is complicated by the multiplicity of the ego's separation from the oneness. In that state of separation, the word "love" is empty of feeling and experience, a word merely bandied about. Worse, it is misused and one speaks about love when many other things are meant that have little or nothing to do with real love. When you experience fully the inner meaning of love, you will know that everything is contained in that word.

To recapitulate briefly: previous phases of our work dealt with your ability to face negative attitudes, faults, distortions, destructiveness, impurities. Last year was the true beginning of transforming negative substance -- both energy and consciousness -- into positive substance. Both these aspects of the work will, of course, continue. The second phase, now increasingly possible, will lead to claiming your own: to claiming your full, total, unique self, your hidden greatness. Tonight's topic is about claiming what is truly yours.

In a recent lecture I outlined some typical manifestations of states and experiences in which the little self merges with the divine self. I observed that there are many other such manifestations, some of which I would discuss at later periods. This is one of them.

It may seem peculiar, but it is a fact that human beings have a reluctance to let themselves truly be what they could be. Of course, an overgrown ego makes its claims constantly, overtly or covertly. But when it comes to your real greatness, you become inhibited, ashamed, afraid -- you hold back what you could be, what you sense you already are. What is this strange wall that holds you back from being who and what you are, from being your best, your greatest, most wise, generous, loving, creative, self-assertive, unfolding, aware, courageous, humble self, with all its innate dignity and nobility? You are all of this and more. You have your own specific turn of mind, talent and intelligence; you have something utterly unique to contribute to life and creation. God manifests in and through you in a special and individualized way, totally different from all others.

Now what makes it seem so difficult to claim your greatness? When you become your full self, in the best sense of the word, you are apparently two opposites at once: you are unique and special, while at the same time you are not at all special. You are like everyone else in the sense that each one of you is a divine manifestation. All of you have fundamental divine qualities and also faults that obstruct them. The faults may vary in intensity and emphasis. You may differ in your development, in your openness and willingness to be in truth. But all of you manifest as egos and must go through the same fundamental struggle to transcend the ego. You are unique in the way God can manifest through you when you remove your obstructions, when you allow your specific greatness to come forth. Everyone is a genius, for everyone is God.

For the little ego that claims ego specialness this is not welcome news. The little ego wants to be superior, above all others. The Godself makes no such demands. What obstructs real greatness from flowing forth are the claims of the little ego which wants to tower above others, needing admiration; needing to compare and compete and subdue others to prove itself superior. This is the particular evil that has to be ousted. This particular evil brings a Pandora's box full of many other attitudes which create shame, suffering, and many other destructive evil patterns.

You may well say, "I only wish to be more than others because I feel less than nothing." But how about trying to reverse this premise? Would you really feel less than nothing if you did not need to be so superior? I venture to say, no. Would you be envious, jealous, petty, self-serving, spiteful, manipulative, malicious, denying others their own Godself -- in short, loveless -- if you did not wish to set yourself above others? Your God-consciousness and the other person's God-consciousness are never in conflict. Only the ego, in its separated state, is in conflict because of blindness and limitation. The ego is not one, it is divided, and often in conflict and contradiction. The God-consciousness in you is One. The Godself does not push for recognition. It recognizes itself and is sufficient unto itself.

Another obstruction to the realization of your own ultimate unique beauty, greatness -- your genius -- is your fear of still existing evil within yourself. All fear is ultimately the fear of that. When the real nature of this fear is denied and projected onto other persons, outer events begin to manifest that seem to justify one's fear of others. The nearer you come to transcending fear the more you have to meet the self -- and overcome your reluctance to do so. The fear creates a tremendous wall and is a much greater obstruction than the evil itself. I have said this many times. This kind of fear has much to do with wanting to rise above and shine in the eyes of others. The claim of the little ego, translated into words, cries out: "Admire me, I am so much better than you. Love me for it." Which, of course, is the ultimate folly.

The fear of evil within is superfluous, because the evil is really distorted beauty and love. The devil that resides in everyone was initially an angel. How can you confront this devil? All of you have made substantial progress in this respect. You reveal, you expose, you admit, you acknowledge, you take responsibility to an ever greater degree. This is why transformation occurs and the deepest, most persistent problems become resolved with ever greater frequency. But wherever there is still fear, ego-pride is always partially responsible. This ego-pride is connected to your ignorance of the nature of the devil in you. Not only do you believe that this devil is the final, real you, but you also believe that the devilish part of the self is intrinsically foreign and other than divine. This is ignorance.

I would like to invite you now, my friends, to make room in your consciousness for the idea that this very same devil, with all its cruelty, malice, dishonesty, pettiness, hate and fear is essentially an angel. Allegorically and symbolically, Lucifer was an angel of light. He turned into Satan. It is the evolutionary task of all separated entities to bring about a re-transformation: from Satan to Lucifer, from darkness to light. This process takes place within your psyche, my friends.

The devil is your fear. The fear is guilt for the hateful, malicious, cruel ways of the mind, for feelings that always in some way are expressed also in actions. Only when this guilt is faced, when the pain of it is fully experienced, not rejected but traveled through, can guilt and fear dissolve. Then the angel reveals itself. Then you are infused with warmth, love, confidence, soft flow, joy, and creative expansion. This process takes place, again and again, until all evil matter is transformed. You will then no longer believe that you give up anything -- except the struggle when your mind still wants to hold onto being negative. The illusion is that you lose something. I often have said that so much energy is trapped in evil, an energy that you do not wish to be without, even though you do your utmost to squash and deny it in its present state. When you go through the process of the genuine transcendence of evil, you gain back all the forceful vitality that you had to inactivate in order to avoid the evil. You lose nothing; the gain is enormous.

If you can learn to open wide your arms, your consciousness, your positive will to the devil in you, in faith and fearless confidence in the inner guidance, you will in reality dispel all fear. There is no illusion here of escaping and cheating. You do not overcome, you do not oust or separate yourself from anything in you. You meet your demons full face. Then they will dissolve and their original nature will be revealed. Fully embrace this devil in the idea that the devil is an angel. The power and vitality of this devil can indeed, by your own turn of mind and consciousness, become a glowing light force of beautiful creative verve, love and energy, of supreme wisdom. The puny, jealous, separative consciousness of the devil, constantly battling against the beautiful laws of life, will spread wide open. And I say to you: the stronger the devil, the stronger the angel. For the strength in essence is the same. Allow this thought to take root in you, and you will fear much less. You will be less inclined to hide and whitewash and be a-tremble of your own evil or devil.

Approach your devil with the ultimate of courage and faith and crystallize out of it your beautiful angel. This is the transforming work. It will take place in ever-increasing measure. No one can claim his or her birthright and genius, and make a unique contribution to life, who does not fearlessly meet the inner devil and expose it.

Only in this way can you reconcile opposites, transcend dualities. Each duality, each mutually exclusive opposite you meet as an obstruction, is a sign that you are still divided. You are split off from your deeper consciousness, split off in fear, pride, selfwill, ignorance, greed, and hate. These same aspects can be reversed: fear becomes faith and trust; pride humility; selfwill a supple, resilient, flexible giving-in, going-with attitude; and a finely attuned flexibility to flow with your rhythm of life. Ignorance becomes awareness, perception, understanding and wisdom; greed a special kind of trust that lets you reach out and know there is abundance for you in every way. And you will have abundance, so that greed will be ludicrously superfluous. Most significantly, your hate will turn into your power of love.

No one finds peace and inner fulfillment, joy, wholeness, security, and the intrinsic genius to add to creation who is not dedicated to a cause outside the self. This is not therapeutic ploy; you must not force yourself in a dutiful way to be dedicated and selfless, in order to collect desirable rewards of glowing health and fulfilled living. But it is something you ought to understand clearly and use as yet another signpost to where you are.

Once again, you should admit honestly whether you still see fulfillment in life as a totally selfish and self-serving enterprise in which everything is supposed to be geared to suit you. If you explore your fantasies in this respect you will see exactly where you are. It is important that here, as in all other matters, you be completely honest. If you see that there is no genuine desire in you as yet to serve a larger cause, to forget the little self-interest, at least some of the time, for the sake of larger issues, then you should understand your loneliness, your disconnectedness, your fear and guilt and inability to realize your talents.

You must know that you have the innate capacity to be self-forgetful, but that your little ego thwarts this natural state. Maybe you hold onto misconceptions that will prevent you from wanting to go beyond yourself. Perhaps you believe that dedication to a cause beyond your little ego implies masochistic suffering and deprivation, poverty, and frustration of personal fulfillment and needs. As a matter of fact it is the other way round. Only when you can truly give to creation, when you make your unique contribution in a selfless spirit, can you also feel entitled to be fulfilled, to experience abundance in all ways. If you feel inhibited and reluctant to claim this full self-expression, it would be good to look at your selfishness, your lack of interest to add to the universe. You may conceal this inhibition under a pseudo-selflessness which may, in fact, be more selfish than overt selfishness. It may be part of your mask, your need to appear good in the eyes of others.

Many of you have begun to dedicate yourselves to a greater cause. It is an organic process that develops as you face the self-serving opportunism and vanity of your little ego. You grew into a more developed state and now feel the fulfillment that comes from giving to creation or serving a spiritual cause. You may not have specifically connected your increased peace, joy, liberation, creativeness, with the fact that you are more interested in giving something of yourself to the cause of helping other souls advance to higher states of inner truth. Perhaps by making this connection now, you will be further encouraged in the right direction.

Once again we can observe two circles, one vicious, the other benign. When you stay in fear and hide from the inner evil, you cannot claim your total, wonderful egoless self. You remain selfish, concerned only in a negative way with little ego interests, puny advantages, and unwillingness

to give to life. Thus you become more and more impoverished, unhappy, embittered, and feel justified to withhold, give nothing -- and the vicious circle continues.

As you transform the vicious circle into a benign circle, almost inadvertently you are led naturally to an attitude of selfless giving. It is never a sentimental giving in to neurotic and unhealthy demands. It is true giving. And in giving to others, you cannot escape giving to the self. For in reality, as you find out increasingly, the attitude to the self can be no different from the attitude toward others, and vice versa. Thus giving to a larger cause is the greatest self-enrichment imaginable. Life cannot be cheated. Your life speaks the truth to you about this and other matters.

Giving to a cause beyond the little ego is the supreme satisfaction. Deprive yourself of that and you cannot know peace, joy, fulfillment, self-esteem, the deep sense of deserving the best that life has to offer. The correlation is exact: to the degree you offer generously and trustingly the best you have to give to life, allowing God's will to be done, to that degree will you feel entitled to open your arms wide to receive the best life has to offer. To the degree you hold back in puny fear that this might damage your self-interest, to that same degree must you hold back from receiving life's riches. There can be no mistake. A finely calibrated mechanism in the deepest regions of your psyche works in absolute perfection. When your giving to life becomes so whole that you are deeply willing to forgo the little vanities for the sake of the greater truth, with the sense of responsibility that this is necessary, then the abundance of your life will surpass your present understanding.

When this group came together, you were all separate islands, each one concerned with his or her own little suffering, completely walled off from your inner self and consequently, of course, also from each other and from life. You were unwilling to give to life. Only recently do many of you find that this still holds true to some extent. But you make this discovery as you are already devoted to giving of yourself to a cause beyond. You are engaged in the most noble cause an entity can be active in, the purification and healing of souls. In this way do you contribute in the most vital way possible to the great evolutionary plan.

Every single soul who comes nearer to the threshold, who finally passes this threshold, releases untold energies of beauty, wisdom, strength, love, truth, creative resourcefulness, entering into the experience of oneness, and thus affecting, directly and indirectly, zillions of other entities. Just try to figure out mathematically how each changed attitude in you profits those around you. Each attitude of constructive giving is an immense, beautiful and vital living force in the universal scheme, affecting endlessly what is. I once gave this analogy: if an object is thrown into water, waves form in circles spreading wider and wider. These waves never end. They only seem to end where the body of water ends. But if the body of water were as endless as the universe, these waves would never end. So each idea, intent, and thought you form, motivated by unselfish devotion to universal truth, love, faith, expressing a desire to contribute to life according to the will of the All-Consciousness that permeates all life, is an endless wave that never never ceases; that has its effects long after you have lost any remote inkling of it in your conscious mind. You activate new creation, you set new psychic events in motion, which have an inexorable effect on life and on you.

It is therefore of utmost importance that you know what tremendous effects your thinking and intentionality have, the positive, as well as the negative. Your loving thoughts to the universe, your surrender to the divine creative intelligence in you is as real and effective as your spiteful withholding in lack of trust.

The venture you are now engaged in gives you a wonderful opportunity to help others. The work of purification you do must in some way be transmitted to others. Your giving can take many forms. You will do it in your own unique way. Your inner creative intelligence must make the decision for you, for only you know how you are best suited to contribute. What you can determine with your conscious mind is the intent, the wish to surrender your will, the desire to activate that in you which is greater than your ego, in order to increase the strength of your group and add to the light it already is. The more honest you are in this respect, the clearer will the muddy waters become. If you are honestly aware of your self-serving, you are a step nearer to truly selfless giving.

Why can you not claim your greatness? Because the little self is constantly on the lookout for its own little advantages. These personal gains may be material; they may manifest in pride, the need to show off and gain admiration from others; the need to look better than you secretly believe you are. When you free yourself of these attitudes, it will be easier for you to claim your true self with all its capacities, potentialities and uniqueness. You will allow yourself the abundance that you now may experience only in limited ways and at the price of guilt. You will be appreciated, simply because it is no longer your aim to be appreciated. You will no longer be ashamed of being the best you can be. Holding back from being your best will loosen as you detach from self-serving, as you release the stingy withholding from life, the spiteful non-givingness, as you come out of the hypocrisy and hiding of the little ego. You will lose your fear of the evil inside, aware now that the feared evil contains the essence of the good. Within every devil slumbers an angel that wants out.

If you lack humility you cannot allow your greatness to come forth. But in humbleness there will be no need to restrain your greatness. There will be no pushing, no proving, just a quiet inner knowing. It is then entirely unimportant and unnecessary that others recognize you. They will come to recognize you when you no longer need it and insist upon it. It is the little ego that needs recognition and has no sense of proportion. It is the little ego that gropes in the dark and fights in all the wrong directions.

This series of lectures is coming to a close -- which does not mean, of course, an interruption of our contact, now that your Center offers such wonderful opportunity for work. What I suggest to you, my friends, is that you visualize for yourself a new state of greatness in humility, without ego, without needing to prove anything, without comparing yourself positively or negatively with others. Visualize yourself as unafraid of the worst in you, knowing that the worst will transform into the most beautiful, wise, strong, loving force. It is in hiding that the worst in you becomes puny and dangerous. By exposing it, you make it possible to envisage your new potential.

In the next Question & Answer session, we will discuss many important subjects. Prepare your questions about the two topics: children's upbringing, and the prospect of making a sanctuary for animals and plant life in the Center. The answers will be important beyond the present scope.

I bless you now and tell you once again that your work and your growth is an ever-increasing beautiful energy form in the spiritual world. If you could see the beauty you would be astounded. If you could truly perceive the value and significance of what each one of you is doing, you would know a deep joy.

And you will know it, sooner or later, even while you are still in the body. You will inwardly experience it and it will make you stronger and more responsible. You will become more conscious instruments, each in your own beautiful, perfect way, each being a little piece that completes the whole. In this whole one does not function without the others, rather, each individual makes his or her own unique contribution. There is no need for jealousy. Self-proving is never necessary. When you know that, you will also know your unique greatness, beauty, and wisdom.

Love permeates all your undertakings. Every step of the way is meaningful and significant. Your life is very valuable. You are all blessed. Be in peace!

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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The Pathwork® Foundation  
PO Box 6010  
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA  
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