

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 237
1996 Edition
January 14, 1976

LEADERSHIP -- THE ART OF TRANSCENDING FRUSTRATION

My most beloved friends, I greet you with divine blessings. It gives me the deepest joy to once again help you in your great endeavor to reach the security, the peace and the ecstasy of your innermost soul: the source of all life, the source of all being. We are gathered together for the immense purpose of bringing into this realm of matter and duality a new vibratory force and a new unity of consciousness. The importance of this, in terms of evolution, as well as in terms of your own development, cannot be measured in human concepts. I can only ask you again and again to tune in to the deeper meaning of your path and of the community you are in the process of creating. Feel the importance of this endeavor.

We speak constantly about the importance of opening up, of giving up your defenses, your brittle hardness with which you think to protect yourself. In the open, vulnerable state you fear the pain of negative experiences that may come to you from outside. At the same time you also realize now that beauty, love, truth and wisdom can also be taken in from the outside, and that as long as your defenses are intact, you also prevent yourself from taking these in. This explains why you often experience that life or people actually give you the best and most longed-for gifts, but you find yourself unable to take them in.

However, opening up works in two directions -- not only toward the outside world. When you open up, you also make it possible to let out what comes from the deepest levels within. Because the negativities are in themselves a more subtle protective layer that obscures the perfection of your inner being, they must surface first. But beyond them, the most positive, creative reality that you are can and will emerge when you commit yourself to be fully open and undefended.

You erroneously assume that in this open state you cannot protect yourself against abuse. Nothing could be further from the truth. Only when your higher self functions, when you are free from self-serving, selfish attitudes, when you are true to your inborn integrity and decency, when you follow the divine laws of the universe -- which are laws of justice, truth, wisdom and love -- can you be strong enough for real, genuine protection, assertion and confrontation. Only then can you be free from guilt, and therefore from anxiety and insecurity, from confusion and fear, which are the only reasons for not being able to defend yourself against abuse.

When you speak and think of opening up, of dropping your defenses, conceive of this act not only as directed toward the outside, but also -- and more importantly -- as an opening inward. Have the courage and faith in your deepest perfection, so that you can trustingly allow the overlayers of the lower self to emerge, in order for you to recognize and transform them.

Anyone developed enough to be capable of pursuing such a demanding path as this is also capable of immense fulfillment and joy -- and of leadership! In this path we are creating new leaders

in many fields, in many directions, in many ways. The purification you undergo makes you truly capable of genuine leadership. Now let us discuss the meaning of leadership in the truest sense. What is your attitude toward leadership -- leadership shown by others as well as your own?

You have many conflicting attitudes. Let us look at them first. Primarily, you envy leadership in others. You are also competitive, but you often conceal this feeling from yourself and then become resentful. You are quite efficient in creating cases that are supposed to substantiate and justify your very unjustified feelings and thoughts. You reactivate, often unnecessarily, your old, already obsolete authority problem. Anyone who is a leader in the truest sense of the word becomes your enemy and you believe that it is true that the leader is out to punish and deprive you.

Since you envy the leaders, you also want to be a leader. Yet in this childish, undeveloped part of yourself, that is often allowed to overshadow the developed part, you do not want to assume the responsibilities that go with leadership. You have here a very painful conflict and a dichotomy. On the one hand, you resent and envy leadership and battle against it in others; on the other hand, you want it for yourself without fulfilling the basic prerequisites. Then you resent the truer leaders for "taking it away from you," or for not "giving you" the prerogatives of leadership. You make no movement toward or commitment to assuming the attitudes that constitute leadership. You can perhaps begin to see, my friends, the absurdity of this position. Yet it is an extremely frequent one, and once you are aware of it in yourself, you will not find it difficult to recognize it when it emerges again in you or in others around you.

There is still another conflicting attitude here. You want a leader for your own benefit, someone who is so strong and powerful and benignly disposed toward you, and exclusively concerned with your lower-self desires, that you can indulge in every destructive action or attitude without facing the consequences. This great leader, more like a personal, biased god, is supposed to magically alter the life stream and life's laws for your benefit. This figure should give you all the privileges without "demanding" from you love, giving, a sense of responsibility, fairness, integrity, and so on. When you examine the significance of some of your reactions, you will easily see that I do not exaggerate. This is a quite accurate description of your irrational demands that you busily try to justify.

You have your terms for this phenomenon. You call it "transference," of making this super-figure your parents. But terms easily become labels that lose their meaning. In any case, as long as you do not fulfill the natural prerequisites for leadership in your own right, in whatever fashion, you have no right to envy and resent leadership in others. Your cases have no justification.

If you do not first assume leadership for your own life, you will naturally need a leader who takes on the governing of your life. No one can exist without leadership. You are then like a boat without a rudder. Someone must lead your life, someone must govern it, so if you do not choose to do so, others will have to do so to a degree. On a neurotic level, you will ask for this leadership in ways that cannot be given to you. You will also ask for the freedom and the privileges which only self-leadership can confer. So you want others to lead you where it is convenient for you, but you will also resent them for it. Thus you are torn by many conflicts.

The question is, are you still in such an undeveloped, immature inner state that you require others to lead you? Or are you perhaps becoming ready to be a leader in your own right? You can

start with your own life, and from there go on to take the full responsibility for your planetary citizenship, for being a bringer-in of the New Age. Your leadership can take many different forms. but it must begin in apparently invisible, unnoticed attitudes toward yourself and your immediate environment, with very simple little steps, above and beyond the self-responsibility we usually talk about and work with again and again.

I should like to explore here a few other such attitudes. Often, my dearest, most beloved friends, I see you stuck in attitudes that you truly have outgrown. That is very damaging. When you have not outgrown a childish, negative attitude, but you are dealing with it, then the harm is not great. When you are still battling with it, learning about it and its ramifications, discovering it on ever deeper levels, including the variety and subtlety with which these traits can manifest, then you are exactly where you need to be. But all too often you disclaim the truth that you are indeed much further in your development and no longer in a position in which you have to act out again and again attitudes that belonged to you years ago, or even perhaps months ago. In terms of spiritual measurements, these months are lifetimes, yet you insist on holding on to your old habits and stay where you no longer belong. You do not consider that you may indeed have outgrown your jealousies, your competitiveness, your ungivingness, your selfishness, your lack of concern, your unlovingness, your blaming, and your resenting others for the results of your own ungivingness.

You are now well in the position of recognizing such negativities, but you often fail to question yourself, do you really have to be there still? My words may sound as if you had not moved and developed and grown. You have grown so much that many past negativities no longer exist, while greater honesty and self-awareness do exist. As a consequence there is much more love among you than ever before. But precisely because of this growth the remaining stagnancies have heavier impact and more serious repercussions. This is a law of growth. Can you perhaps now make a different choice whenever the old negative reactions still recur?

Now let us discuss what leadership means. You envy and resent leadership so much because you act as though others, who are in a position of leadership, deprived you of something or imposed something on you that is unfair. You act as though you were being prevented from executing your own capacity to be a true leader. Above anything else, a leader, in the best sense of the word, has to want to give unselfishly. Unselfish giving must exist truly in your smallest acts. It is not enough to be unselfish in theory, while you continue to practice pettiness, ungivingness and selfishness in your everyday life, and even deny or project these negative attitudes on others. If you do not want to give unselfishly, you cannot assert your leadership. If you give grudgingly and unwillingly because you pretend it is demanded of you, it cannot be called giving.

In another sense true giving is demanded of you, for if you want the privileges of leadership -- and there are many -- the price is giving. The laws of life and creation always "demand," if you will, that they be obeyed because they have been created in perfection. Yet you act as if this were an unfair price, and you are full of outraged rebellion and resentment, for which you often manage to find justification. You give only begrudgingly, with ulterior motives, second thoughts, calculating inner bargains, leaving little back doors open. That is no longer giving, and therefore it leaves others and you empty. When you take the next downward step and ask, "You see, I gave, and what do I get from it?" you negate that your giving was ever genuine in the first place. Thus you cunningly reinforce your resistance to giving.

Giving is a very simple act which includes also the thought and the intentionality behind the act. In true giving, you state: "I want to be an instrument of divine reality to enrich the world through the divinity that wants to express itself through me. I want to do this not for my ego aggrandizement nor for any other ulterior motive or advantage." That thought, that attitude, will actually bring you many advantages. It will give you the self-esteem and also the feeling of deserving and claiming the abundance you desperately grope for in faulty ways. That attitude must prevail as an underlying, overall and all-permeating inner climate. Then jealousy can no longer exist. The other person's giving and values can never detract from your own; you will know this and experience it.

If your giving is faked, neither anyone else's giving, nor life's abundance can be received by you. At the same time, other people's true giving, and the appreciation, the abundance in material and emotional goods they receive for it, will fill you with envy. That in itself can be a measurement of where you are in regard to true giving. True giving is an act of love, of course. And if you do not love and if you do not wish to learn to love, you cannot fulfill your deepest yearning.

While you may be praying to be able to give and love, you may yet be blind to the areas where you demonstrate the opposite toward your fellow-creatures in subtle little ways. Leadership in its real sense is built on the love of true giving and on the true giving of love. Nothing can go wrong when that attitude exists. Perfect balance will be attained in all the many dichotomies and conflicts, in all the apparent difficulties of decisions your dualistic life seems to consist of.

Another quality extremely necessary for the leadership that is awaiting many of you is the ability to be impartial and objective. That ability is still often lacking in you, my dearest friends. You refuse to see your personal stake and desires in an issue and you build justifications around your personal, tainted desires. You claim objectivity and impartiality when this couldn't be farther from the truth. If you lack this ability, the next best step that will bring you toward the more advanced state of objective detachment -- and that in fact is already a manifestation of that state to a degree, as well as an indispensable prerequisite of it -- is the awareness of the partiality, the admitting of it, and thus disqualifying yourself from arguing the case in question. Admit how you bend reality according to the emotional colorations of your desires. By now, as a result of your practice in self-honesty, this should be possible for most of you. Your pathwork trains you for this highly advanced state of honesty and fairness. You can, by now, quite easily admit how you have a stake in certain assumptions and do not want to believe differently. And you may also claim that you are nevertheless objective. That is not possible, my friends. For when you are blinded by self-interest and self-righteousness, by resentments and demands, by fear and guilt, by coveting and jealousy, by all sorts of negative feelings and thoughts, your assessments are not, and cannot be objective.

It is truly a sign of greatness to know that you are, in this or that area, full of disturbing, turbulent emotions, full of conflict, and cannot therefore form an opinion. By doing so you take a great step toward your liberation and toward developing the capacity to become a trustworthy, reliable leader. It is the only way to form valid assessments of others, to be objective. A leader must have this greatness. But your stake in explaining and fashioning distorted reality is a tremendous hurdle. And if you have already attained, in some manner, a position of leadership, you can be toppled by the lack of this impartiality. Not admitting it, and claiming that you are free from personal stakes in proclaiming your opinions makes you very vulnerable. You must then guard and defend an unrightful position of leadership.

The ability to know your coloration of reality and then to voluntarily disqualify yourself is a sign of maturity and greatness that will indeed bring you to an ever-growing capacity to perceive reality as it is, to know it and state it without fear, and be true to it, even if it may expose you to criticism. Strength, self-trust and security come as a result of the honesty to know and admit when you are not impartial and do not wish to be. We may state it thus: you can have the objectivity of knowing that you are not objective.

Another quality of leadership is the willingness to risk exposure and criticism. If you fear and guard against it, and yet grab for leadership because you like its advantages, the power and prestige, then again you defeat the purpose. You create a painful conflict in yourself and you create frustration. True leadership cannot exist under these circumstances, for which you may then again blame the outer world and those who, at least in some respects, have rightfully attained leadership, whether you want to admit and see this or not.

If you cannot bear the momentary pain of being misunderstood, criticized -- rightly or wrongly -- then you do not have the firm foundation necessary for a true leader. Leadership means constant risk. If you do not wish to take the risk, and are full of jealousies, resentments, and rebellion toward those who assume the responsibilities of leadership with all that this implies, how can you make a case for yourself?

Still another absolutely essential quality of leadership that the infantile personality lacks and is unwilling to even consider is the proper attitude toward frustration. We have discussed this before, but I still see many of you being blind to what is going on within, not acknowledging your anger and fury when something does not go your way. I want to spend a little more time on this all-important topic.

True unification and wholeness of the personality can only come when the dichotomy of frustration versus fulfillment has been conciliated. Now how can it be conciliated when one side of the duality is fought against and the other grabbed at? If you have a very strong "I must have it" for what you desire and simultaneously an equally strong "I must not have it" for its opposite, you are in a state of painful duality. You erroneously attempt to reduce the tension of this painful state by pressuring life into giving you the fulfillment of the desire by eliminating all frustration. Thus you never learn how to transcend frustration so it can no longer occur. Of course this attempt must remain futile and you only become more frustrated. You can be sure that as long as you experience frustration you have to learn from it.

What kind of approach would be fruitful toward frustration and would eventually lead to its transcendence? When I speak of transcendence I do not mean a false transcendence of making yourself so disconnected from your feelings that you do not know how tense, anxious and desirous you are. I mean a genuine transcendence that is highly alive, conscious and dynamic, full of feelings that flow harmoniously with the stream of life. There are some steps in the attainment of this state.

The first step on this particular ladder would be the following attitude: "If what I experience is painful or undesirable, I will trust it anyway; I will trust my faculties to bear it, to relax into it, to learn from it, to handle it and make the best of it. I will learn a lesson from this particular frustration and will not act as if it were a catastrophe. Perhaps it is not a catastrophe, perhaps

something good can come from it." That very open attitude is the first step that will bring you almost at once into a new state of greatly reduced anxiety and greatly increased security. For your anxiety is fostered by your dependence on something that cannot be and by your assumption that you have to manipulate reality around you to suit your most infantile misconceptions and unreal needs for instant gratification. You feel that everything has to be exactly according to your momentary, very limited vision -- a vision that is totally cut off from the sequence of cause and effect in your life and in universal life.

The first step is to make room for relaxing your reaction of utter disgust and outrage about frustration, your fear and anger about it, and to challenge and question this reaction, to consider it as being possibly faulty and erroneous. Thereby you can make room for new faculties to emerge in you that can allow things to unfold, to find a new strength and wisdom to deal with something that does not bend according to your selfwill. This attitude gives immense self-confidence and self-reliance that constant obedience to your selfwill could never confer on you. This is a very important first step, my dearest ones, that leads to a much more beautiful one.

The next step on the ladder of learning to transcend frustration is the active, deliberate and renewed search for the meaning of any particular frustration. What does the particular frustration you are dealing with at this time have to teach you? For, as I said, and I deliberately repeat it, there is no frustration that does not contain a joyful, valuable, liberating lesson for you. Most of the time you are completely unwilling to consider such a possibility. You are so bent on battling the occurrence of frustration that the lesson gets lost and you pass by a valuable high mark on your path, an opportunity. So you create the necessity for such opportunities to inevitably repeat themselves. They must come, no matter how you battle against them. The more you battle against them, the more rigid you will become, the worse the frustration will appear, the more the frustrations will grow in intensity and significance until they overwhelm you. Through being overwhelmed there may be a chance for you to discover you have created the illusion that frustration is an enemy. The overwhelming experience has the capacity to loosen up the tightness against frustration and consequently against all of life.

Frustration is a friend, my friends. You can make it a friend by courageously and intelligently wishing to explore its meaning and allowing it to be your teacher and your therapist, as it were.

This will bring you to the third step on this ladder, which is the discovery of the meaning. For him who knocks, the door shall be opened; he who searches must find. The answer, the meaning, will always astound you. The realization of how necessary this lesson is, what you gain from it in new strength, wisdom, liberation, will already alter your outlook toward frustration, so that when another such lesson comes you will be much less afraid of it, much more confident of its meaningfulness for you and much less resistant to repeat the steps. It will give you a new trust in life and a new vision of the consciousness behind all things, even behind the frustration. This is obviously a substantial step toward conciliating the dichotomy of frustration versus fulfillment.

The further step on the ladder brings you into a much deeper, more subtle and more radiant world. When you have passed the previous steps, you can begin to practice something very beautiful. You know, at least theoretically, that the reality of God exists in every fraction of second in time, in every fraction of measurement, in every fraction of experience, in everything that is, whether it be an entity, a being, a creation, an object, an experience. Divine reality in its great joyous

truth and aliveness and meaningfulness and purposefulness lives in everything that is, that ever was, and that ever will be. I have said these words before. I deliberately repeat them here, for they apply to frustration as well. As you approach frustration through the steps I have proposed here, the point of the frustration will narrow; you will perhaps be able to focus into it in a meditative attuning, and let yourself fully experience that point of frustration, after you have learned the lesson it has to teach. And flow with it, go with it, accept it, embrace it. Completely reverse your attitude, from rejecting to accepting it. And what you will experience will surpass your imagination. You will discover in its deepest one-pointedness the divinity of life, the divinity of a particular frustration. And it will no longer be a frustration. It will become the highest fulfillment imaginable, much more so than the fulfillment you craved for, away from the frustration.

That, of course, my beloved friends, is the point where you have overcome frustration, where you have mastered and truly transcended it -- not on the mask level through the false way of denying your frustrated feelings, but truly overcome it. Not only will you no longer fear frustration, not only do you now know that you can deal with it, that you have the equipment and the capacities and the resources and the creativity to do so, but you will also have utilized it as a beautiful lesson and found the divinity of it, where all is one, where there is God and fulfillment within the frustration.

This is your road, my friends. This is what many of you now need on your path. I am not saying that every rightful leader, in the positive sense, has totally transcended frustration in this way. But I will say that to the degree true leadership exists, the attitude toward frustration is fairly mature and realistic and no longer a feeling of outraged insult.

At times, my friends, you still go around complaining about this or that unhappiness or unfulfillment, choosing not to connect with those very attitudes. They are the creators of your unfulfillment and frustrations. With your unwillingness to expose yourself to the possibility of being frustrated, you confine your life to very narrow limits and make yourself unnecessarily vulnerable in a brittle way. When you free yourself of the impediments of selfishness, of the insistence to never experience frustration, of unlovingness and ungenerosity, of ego aggrandizement, of jealousy and resentments, when you give up your lack of impartiality, your bias and one-sidedness, then you have removed major obstructions to your fulfillment.

Happiness means many things. It means all the things I have discussed here. When you have come home to your own resources, to your own inner greatness because you have learned the lessons, you must be in one way or another a leader. Leadership does not always take the form of visible outer manifestation. It also exists in more subtle ways. In fact, it almost always begins in subtle, unnoticeable ways. But you will be an authority in your own right in the best sense of the word. You cannot have true authority unless you reconsider the attitudes I have mentioned, and your jealousies and envies appear as the painful illusions they are. Still all too often you take them seriously, you do not acknowledge them as illusions and you justify them; you act as if others who have more authority took it away from you.

So I implore you, my dearest friends, be where you really can be now. Shed these unnecessary attitudes. You have already acknowledged and faced some of them and it is time to let them go. Let this lecture deeply go into you. Heed it, use it, make it the help it is meant to be. You have nothing but joy to expect from doing so. Your goodwill, your serious attempt to become who you are already in this respect, is now truly possible. You think that the person you can be has not been

born yet, but he or she is already waiting to be released when you let go and open yourself up to what wants to emerge from within you. It is only the outer, separated, obsolete part of the self that still takes such dominance because your willful personality allies itself with it, rather than with what is so much stronger and so much more real and ready to emerge into manifestation.

Let me part from you -- in manifestation only. For I am always here, close to you and loving everyone of you dearly and deeply, as we all do in our world, who are so concerned with the beautiful creation you are part of. So I say, be blessed, rejoice, and have faith that your life is a glory and will be a more and more glorious fulfillment. Be blessed my beloved ones.

Edited by Judith and John Saly

For information to find and participate in Pathwork activities world wide, please write:

The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
Visit: www.pathwork.org

The following notices are for your guidance in the use of the Pathwork® name and this lecture material.

Trademark/Service Mark

Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

Copyright

The copyright of the Pathwork Guide material is the sole property of The Pathwork Foundation. This lecture may be reproduced, in compliance with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy, but the text may not be altered or abbreviated in any way, nor may the copyright, trademark, service mark, or any other notices be removed. Recipients may be charged the cost of reproduction and distribution only.

Any person or organization using The Pathwork Foundation service mark or copyrighted material is deemed to have agreed to comply with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy. To obtain information or a copy of this policy, please contact the Foundation.