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## CONTACT WITH THE LIFE FORCE

Greetings, my dearest, dearest friends. Blessings for all of you, present and absent. Blessed are your further efforts on this path, now and in the times to come.

This past working year was one of the most crucial on your path, for most of my friends individually, and for this group as a whole. Many of you are keenly aware of this fact. So, may the coming weeks be for all of you a time of consolidation of past work and preparation for future work on your inner path of liberation.

In tonight's lecture I should like to discuss, once again, the life force. As you know, each time I discuss a topic we have treated previously, it is done on a deeper level, and it is possible to give you more material because you are better able to absorb and utilize it. It has a more immediate meaning for you. What I said about this topic before was then only a beautiful theory to you, but many of you today are able to see that this is not merely a theory or an abstract philosophical principle: it is a key to how life can be truly lived.

Let us recapitulate certain aspects of the life force. The life force is profoundly intelligent. Its intelligence is always available, always present and ready to be applied not only to great, important issues; this super-intelligence "deigns" to express itself on supposedly unimportant issues if it is called upon. It does not differentiate between important or unimportant, big and small issues. It pervades everything when it is allowed to do so. One of its most striking aspects is that there is no conflict contained in it. The limited human mind is often confronted with alternatives in which something is good on the one hand but bad on the other; favorable for one person but unfavorable for another. When this is the case, you are not in truth; you are separated from that aspect of the life force which can give you access to the vast intelligence which knows of no disadvantage in any way or for anyone concerned: it is deeply right from any point of view. Its advice leaves in you no trace of doubt or uneasy feelings; rather, it gives you the peaceful knowledge that all is well, increasing your feeling of security about yourself and life.

This vast intelligence is available for every one of your smallest cares and concerns. It is forever ready to respond if you choose to request its service. It never pushes itself on you, but it is there, ready, at your disposal. It is up to you to be in contact with it. All it needs is your awareness of its existence and your desire to make use of it, concisely formulating your questions and aims. When these aims are hazy and vague, when you are lost in a fog of confusion, the life force cannot penetrate to you. Your effort to arrive at clear formulation and exact awareness of your problems, confusions, split motivations, and limitations is necessary, as well as your reaching out for the life force, requesting its help. The pathwork is specifically preparing you for that.

Even when you believe in this principle, you are often under the wrong impression that you have first to reach a certain stage in your development, resolve your conflicts and attain a great deal of spiritual knowledge before you can be in contact with the life force. You think that the day after tomorrow or next year, it will descend upon you, like a gift from heaven you have finally earned. This concept is completely wrong. You do not have to be perfect to be tuned into the life force. It can happen right now, provided you clear the confusion of your present feelings, thoughts, and moods. You do not even have to clear up confused concepts: all you need is to realize that you are confused and to reach out to the vaster intelligence to help you.

If you live in the now, you are in tune with the life force. If your now is confusion, depression, and stagnation, and you face these feelings fully, formulating their existence without the slightest evasion -- while you also acknowledge that the very presence of such feelings indicates error -- and you simultaneously wish the truth to manifest within, the negative feelings dissolve and truth begins to enter.

Being in tune with the life force is the same as being in contact with God, the same as living in the now. This can happen only when you are in contact with yourself. For you and the immediate now are one -- you at this moment, which may be different from you in the next moment. For you are no flat, one-dimensional creature, but dynamic and many-dimensional. You consist of infinite possibilities and changes of outlook, attitudes, feelings, and thoughts. Your tendency to petrify a pleasant outcome because this seems an easy solution, an insurance against an apparently insecure future, makes you falsify truth. It makes you hold back.

The more you become aware of all the hidden levels of your being, the more you are in contact with and possession of yourself, that is, the more you are capable of living in the now, for you no longer need to run away from what is; consequently, the more you are in contact with the life force. Being in contact with yourself, you gain a greater understanding of the inner causes and outer effects in your personal life, and you can understand this principle as applying to all of life. The better this is understood, the more security is gained, and the more you are in real control of your fate. You then know that you are safe and not ever dependent on something beyond your capacity. The vibrant feeling of being wholly alive, in stimulating peacefulness, fills you even while you still experience the negative mood -- anxiety, depression, lifelessness, or whatever it may be.

It is as though two levels of your being would begin to meet through your seeking the truth of the now and requesting the greater truth of the life force. Little by little, you become more aware of the reasons for your negative moods. You forget less and less that the answer and explanation exist in you. You assert this fact, requesting understanding and help to correct false concepts -- not waiting for tomorrow when this will be done for you, but doing it now yourself by letting the infinite intelligence manifest in yourself. The slightest trace of guilt about still not being further developed, the self judgement that you should no longer have negative feelings, cause you to struggle away from the now, which makes contact with the self, and therefore with God, impossible.

The attitude of acknowledging that you are in illusion at this moment incorporates many qualities and soul movements necessary for being in tune with the life force. It indicates humility and proper self-evaluation. It means that you can stop struggling, because you are engaged in fighting illusion -- the appropriate kind of fighting -- rather than fighting illusion with illusion, which

cannot be successful. You must fight illusion with reality, even if your present reality is illusion. The clear acknowledgement of this fact is then reality; denial of your illusion is further illusion.

The work of self-confrontation gradually leads to this attitude. If you take the additional step and assert your desire for the eternal presence of the life force, with its much greater wisdom to take over, you can never again be helpless and lost. The vibrant life force will flow through you -- not in rare moments, but more and more as a steady companion. It will be your way of living and being. You and the life force will be one and inseparable.

The beauty of creation is that reality is happiness. This happiness is easy; there is no struggle about it. The tragedy of human beings is that they so arduously struggle against happiness by fearing truth and holding onto misconceptions. Liberation as a result of this path, the shedding of shackles which keep you enchained -- what could these words possibly mean? If facing truth and reality were more difficult -- which obviously you are unconsciously convinced of -- if it were true, for instance, that self-responsibility and adulthood are more painful than the position of the child you so ferociously defend, then a breakthrough on this path, a coming into your own, would never be felt as a joyful liberation. Instead, it would seem like entering prison.

If one's resistance, one's no-currents, existed in order to prevent something disagreeable, they would be understandable and justified. But the tragedy is that one often struggles with all one's might against that which makes life easier and happier, more agreeable and safe. Yet people believe the opposite, acting as though the pathwork expected them to undertake a venture in which they might perish, and can be pried loose of their resistances only with the greatest of difficulties. This is the sad irony. They are so blind that what is their advantage seems like a disaster, and what is their disaster seems like safety.

Once more: If divine truth and reality were not all good, happy, and advantageous, many of my friends would not have experienced liberation and ease following a breakthrough, following the overcoming of resistance. This fact is important to contemplate, because it is the proof that there is nothing to fear in God's world, in letting one's own organic development proceed, in not halting it artificially. Most of you have made enough progress to know that what you leave behind is unnecessary hardship, and the growth you move toward, the new way of life you adopt, is much easier than what you so tightly hold on to.

Whenever you are aware of resistance and can pinpoint your exact misconceptions and confusions, you have already won, because then you have the tools, and you can safely trust them to work -- you know that from past experience. Once you know you are confused, you can meet the confusion. This is living in the now. But when the confusion is not conscious, when it can be denied and unpleasant feelings ascribed to other factors having nothing to do with you, you do not even know this is illusion and can do nothing to eliminate it. It is then that you fight against the happier, easier, fuller life and hold onto unnecessary hardship. People's unconscious conclusions claim that it is to their disadvantage to grow and to their advantage to remain static. This fundamental misunderstanding about life causes untold pain. Without this senseless falsity so much suffering would be avoided. Men and women would be vibrantly alive in the immediate now. Whenever this is so, there is peace and, at the same time, vibrancy; there is stimulation and serenity.

As I have mentioned in the past, the struggle against truth results in split concepts. Human beings often conceive of life as being stimulating, but they feel they must pay for this stimulation by giving up their peace of mind. If they want peace and serenity, they feel they must sacrifice their dynamic, stimulating life, they must stagnate and be secluded. These false alternatives lead to a false choice, for whatever is chosen is based on wrong assumptions. The conviction of having to make do without an aspect of life that every individual is meant to enjoy -- either peace or vibrancy and interest -- will bring an unnecessary deprivation of either the one or the other aspect of the life force. In this conviction, people condition themselves so that whenever they are stimulated they will register anxiety, and whenever they are in peace they will be bored. The moment you are aware of being in error, that it does not have to be that way and is that way only because of your wrong convictions, you fully face the now, your own now. And then you may find further aspects responsible for the wrong conclusion that cut you off from the life force. As you realize that the life force combines two apparent incompatibilities and begin to reach out for the possibility of enjoying both favorable aspects, you will experience the truth that everything good is possible if you allow yourself to experience it and remove your false limitations.

So many similar misunderstandings exist which prevent human beings from the blissful, enlivening, peaceful experience of the life force, apart from one's personal images and misconceptions. So often the great spiritual truths, in particular, seem contradictory. If you formulate such confusions, you have already overcome them because you have brought forth your desire to find clarity by acknowledging your present confusion. Clarification is on the way and will soon fill your being. But only too often one is unaware of such dormant, smoldering, festering confusions and apparent contradictions.

Let us now discuss some of these apparent contradictions which prevent you from being in contact with the life force and, therefore, from happiness. A deep misunderstanding for many comes from the fact that all truth teachings postulate that free will is responsible for one's fate. Divers religions and philosophies may word this fact differently, but it all amounts to the same thing. Psychology also talks about the necessity of self-government and self-responsibility. At the same time, spiritual teachings postulate that human beings, with their small selves, with their little minds, cannot succeed without calling on the vaster intelligence for guidance and enlightenment. This seems like a contradiction, but only as long as underlying problem areas remain unrecognized and therefore unchanged.

As long as you struggle against standing on your own feet, you will cling to an authority outside yourself and rely on an externalized God to take the place of a benign parent, rejecting the need for self-responsibility. Concomitantly, as long as you need such an authority, you must be disappointed and rebel against it. In this rebellion, you often reject the idea that a vaster intelligence than your own can guide you. You fear giving up the small self will and its selfishness, not entrusting yourself to the vast power at your disposal. These inner deviations, ignorances and misconceptions, the insistence on a childish way of life create the contradictions.

The moment you give up resisting, two apparent contradictions unify into one whole truth: By shouldering self-responsibility, by realizing that you alone are the creator of your fate, by understanding the causes and effects of your life, you actively seek enlightenment through the greater intelligence that exists within yourself. You put the little mind aside -- not blindly, but in order to let the bigger mind manifest. This does not mean absolving yourself from self-

responsibility, rather, you are responsible for opening the door, not to an outer deity -- for another person, as it were -- who is supposed to take the burden of adulthood away from you, but to the vaster self, which forms an integral part of your psychic personality. This self is kept from manifesting as long as confusion exists, but when awareness dawns, the vaster self begins to fill the consciousness with its truth and its power until the integration is complete and there are no longer different levels of functioning. Then mature self-responsibility and entrusting oneself to God, asking for His help, become one and the same.

Without awareness it seems as though one should not want to govern oneself in order to let God govern one's life. In awareness, however, self-government and accountability for one's actions, thoughts, and feelings are seen as prerequisites for the greater intelligence to manifest. The little self will stand in the way of mature self-responsibility, and often must be given up so that the person can assume proper self-government. It is the same way with God's will and self-government. Self-government does not mean self will. When the greedy, childish self will is given up, self-government and entrusting oneself to cosmic intelligence become interdependent instead of mutually exclusive. Self-responsibility and self-government do not mean arrogant overestimation of the little self. In fact, gradually the larger self takes over altogether. This is the integration we speak of on this path.

If God is looked for as a substitute for mature self-responsibility and accountability, true contact with the life force cannot possibly exist. When you want an outer authority to substitute for you, then all your faculties are paralyzed. It is the smaller mind with its immediate outer will that must take the first step in order to open the inner will and contact the larger mind. It is the outer will that provides the initial momentum to open the door to, and then become part of, the vast limitless power that gradually enables you to truly master life, as these split concepts begin to mend through your widened understanding.

Spiritual teachings postulate that you are supposed to be happy, and that it is God's will for human beings to live in joy. At the same time, on a path such as this one is taught that God must not be sought in order to strengthen one's childish desire for magic, to encourage the equally childish greed for everything one wants when one wants it, or to indulge in the wishful thinking of the child incapable of giving up the desire for utopia. Why do we then take such pains to grow out of this childish state when, in the same breath, you are told that God wants your happiness? Is this not another contradiction? The greedy child wants happiness, too. The great power of the life force is supposed to make all things possible. Is this unlimited power not in contradiction to the aim of this path which reiterates the necessity to give up the desire for magic? Whether or not you have made such confusions conscious, they often exist, and it is important to draw them to the surface.

So let us consider why one must be free of the childish desire for magic and be able to accept the self-produced misery instead of cringing from it. And let us examine why it is equally true that a human being has every right and possibility for happiness. You see, my friends, the desire for magic represents the wish to avoid the consequences of one's actions; such desire denies self-responsibility, liberation, and true mastery over one's fate, and therefore precludes the bliss of being in the life force. You greedily demand happiness in order to have your way and avoid the imagined annihilation of your cherished images and misconceptions. Now, these fears are founded on false ideas, and one must find out for oneself that these ideas are false. One must learn finally that one does not perish even if the most feared event happens. Misery is never caused by the feared event itself, only by one's attitude. As long as one is tied to the wrong idea that an outer event -- be it

rejection, criticism, or loss -- can cause suffering, one is in illusion. This seeming contradiction will split a concept. When one realizes that the fears are unfounded, and the threat is not the event itself but the attitude to the event, one learns to let go of tight currents and give up one's self will and the compulsion to obtain gratification, while being fully aware of the right to be happy and calmly striving toward fulfillment on all levels of life.

Before we go on, are there any questions at this point?

QUESTION: If something terrible happens, let's say the death of a dear person, how can unhappiness not be there?

ANSWER: Here lies such an important misunderstanding. Just because you feel you ought not to be unhappy, you struggle away from the now, therefore from yourself, and therefore from contact with the life force. Your attitude is either that of a greedy, self-willed child who demands the fulfillment of all its desires, while fearing the opposite, or you harbor the false idea that a spiritually evolved person should be so developed that he or she is never unhappy, never puzzled or upset. Often, you carry in yourself a combination of these two aspects, for the misunderstood spirituality is a product of the greedy, fearful, weak, dependent child. The less the person is willing to lose, or give up if need be, the weaker he or she becomes, and more dependent on circumstances outside one's control. This kind of person becomes more insistent on some outer event to prevent the catastrophe which, as he mistakenly believes, will overtake him. Therefore, the struggle against what is now produces greater misery than the event itself.

If none of these unhealthy aspects existed, one would live through the pain and grow out of it. The more one learns to do this at the moment, the sooner the apparent opposites coalesce and the full experience of the painful moment will become bliss. One then reaches beyond the illusion of opposites. If you quietly acknowledge, "I am now unhappy, but at the same time I know that in this unhappiness I am somehow not quite in truth," you enter into peace. Yes, you are unhappy at the moment because of a loss or disturbance. Nevertheless, peace comes into you when you fully acknowledge your feelings and assert the fact that some of these feelings are an outcome of illusion, although you are not yet able to change the illusion.

Your desire to change from illusion to truth, while acknowledging all your negative feelings -- the outcome of your illusion -- will make you stop running and struggling against what is. Gradually, a new understanding will arise from the deepest recesses of your soul that becomes accessible through your desire to tap divine truth, the life force in you. As more peace and vital new insight fill you, unhappiness and happiness become one. Because you cease struggling against the now, you are in the now. You gradually experience that it is your attitude to an event that causes happiness or unhappiness, never the event itself. This discovery liberates and induces strength and security. It puts you into contact with the life force.

A fundamental and very frequent misconception in the human psyche says that unhappiness is a virtue. To correct this, I advise this meditation: "My happiness cannot possibly detract from another person's. However, my unhappiness adds to theirs." This meditation will help you to develop a strong, full yes-current for your happiness. It is often so difficult for humans to understand that when they believe themselves to be confronted with alternatives where one thing seems good and another bad, or where they see one person benefiting and another being damaged,

that is not so. Whenever you are caught in such a predicament, you may be sure that you are entangled in a wrong concept.

Whenever you are in truth, my friends, there is no such thing as a decision that is good on the one hand and bad on the other. It must be good all around, for everyone concerned. That is the rightness of divine truth, that is the wonder and beauty of it. When you truly comprehend this and are confronted with decisions but cannot see how to arrive at this rightness, you may then request this truth, putting your small mind aside and allowing the larger intelligence to enter. Open yourself to it. Admit clearly: "As long as I believe that any decision must result in disadvantage or harm to any of the parties, I know I am in distortion. I wish to be in possession of the divine truth, where decisions are right and harmonious for all, and be able to feel this deeply. I cannot see it yet, therefore I am in untruth." In this way, you know and fully face the now, you do not run from it while at the same time you are calmly wishing to be enlightened. The combination of facing the now without struggling against yourself and desiring the greater truth will make it possible for the life force to fill you with vision, wisdom, and strength.

Does anyone here have an idea why it is really no contradiction that it is your birthright to be happy, while you must be able to accept an unhappy now, relinquishing self will and greed?

COMMENT: Often we don't know what is good for us. What one wants with one's little mind may not be what one would really want if one were more developed.

ANSWER: Yes, that is true. Any other ideas?

COMMENT: I think we often can't get the fulfillment right now. We are impatient and want it immediately.

ANSWER: I think the now has nothing to do with it.

The desires of the smaller and the larger self may be different, but often they both are the same and what the smaller self desires is not necessarily wrong. The question is the how. The little self is under the illusion that it must perish if its will is not fulfilled. This creates fear, as well as additional negative emotions. It is these negative emotion and attitudes that make the expression of the little self wrong, not the nature of the wish itself. If the real self issues a wish, it expresses itself without fear because non-fulfillment will not seem to annihilate it. Consequently, further negative emotions will not be created.

In addition, I would like to say this: the apparent contradiction is that man has to be able to give up what he wants to gain. In this giving up lies the necessary soul movement for being in contact with the life force. The soul movement is of crucial importance. In it lies the truth that neither an event nor the fulfillment of a particular wish can bring happiness. In the relaxed giving up lie all the emotions which are a byproduct of truth. In a disharmonious soul movement contact with the life force is impossible. Soul movements are always a result of attitudes. Sometimes one needs merely to concentrate on one's attitudes, and harmonious soul movements automatically follow. At other times, it is useful to observe the soul movements themselves and approach them simultaneously from two directions. All false ideas create disharmonious emotions, which create tense, harsh, rigid soul movements. Truthful concepts create relaxed, warm, positive feelings and flexible, harmonious, rhythmic, organic soul movements. For example, the fear that non-fulfillment

of a wish is annihilation, creates a must. Whenever there is a must, it is contrary to the slow, harmonious waves of the life stream, or life force.

My dearest friends, when you now look back on the work of this path, on the lectures and on your development, you will see that it was all painstakingly built up to lead to this point: the mending of split concepts through the proper soul movements. This, in turn, enables you to be in possession of the immeasurable wisdom, energy, and peace of the life force.

To be in harmony when outside circumstances work according to your wishes is not really harmony because you are dependent on these circumstances beyond your control. Even if life works well for you now, you must be in deep, possibly unrecognized, fear that it may not always be that way. But when you realize that you have the resources to live in dignity and self-respect and are not wholly dependent on any event outside yourself, then you are truly in harmony. Then you have come into your own. Then you make use of your birthright and begin to control your fate. Then the available abundance will be open to you, will give you all the many fulfillments you cannot even dream of, surpassing even the greediest self will of the childish self.

This is why pride, fear, self will, greed, childish dependency, and refusal to stand on one's own feet produce soul movements which must run counter to one's self-interest. The conditions produced by these soul movements increase the fear of unfulfillment because you then believe it is the outer event and not your attitude that produces the misery.

Being in contact with the life force is possible even while you are still in illusion, provided you are aware of it, and provided you assert this fact and express your desire for contact with the life force. Then you will be helped to eliminate obstructions and taste the vibrant, dynamic life force. Every cell of your physical and emotional organism will be filled with this stimulating and peaceful experience. You will taste real security, looking forward to every moment, knowing joy through fearlessness. You don't have to wait for perfection in order to experience this, if you can approach the imperfect, limited self in the truth of the moment. In this way you eliminate your imperfections much more effectively than by struggling against them.

Working this out in a more personal, specific way, is the program to follow on the path now. Once again, merely hearing the words will not be enough. With the help of your personal sessions you will all learn, step by step, to come into full possession of the meaning of these words, feeling the vibrant truth of the contact with the life force, with your real self, with God.

Most of you are now ready to learn the technique of fully living in the now. In order to do so, it is necessary to be aware of the many levels of emotional reactions. As long as so many unconscious or half-conscious reactions remain hidden, you are oblivious to the depths and the realities of your being. All you experience as real are the most shallow, superficial, material outer levels, because you are so unaware of what you really feel and think that you cannot live in the now. But sufficient progress has been made in the group, and sufficient awareness gained, so that the now can be looked for and seen, the soul movements can be adjusted, and contact with the life force becomes possible.

Now, are there any questions?



QUESTION: If you want something very badly, but there is fear, pride, and self will, then is that a counter-current and you can't get it?

ANSWER: I would put it this way: Whenever a no-current exists, there must be a false concept, otherwise there could not be a no-current. Simultaneously, the false concept creates fear, pride, self will, etc. Instead of pushing against a no-current, assert its presence, assert the fact that it is based on false ideas, assert your wish to be helped in understanding the aspects that led to this state, without frantically pushing against it. This is living in the now; it is the only effective approach to inner disturbance and disharmony, putting you immediately in touch with your real self, with the life force.

QUESTION: How should we think of God?

ANSWER: Do not think of God as a person in human form. Think of a tremendous power, continuously creating life in a purposeful way. Look around and open your eyes. In all branches of science you find aspects of the universal intelligence and power. In all manifestations of nature you find it. In the very complex physical, mental, emotional organism of the human creature lies the proof of this intelligence and power. God is not a disciplinarian; God is beyond good or evil. People often cannot conceive of God, because they can think of God only in human terms. Human beings, before they can come to a wider understanding, have first to give up their concept of God as a small disciplinarian whom they want and fear and who should act as a substitute for a parent. They want such a God because they are too afraid of tackling life by themselves.

As I have pointed out again and again, before the true God-experience can occur, you all must learn to stand on your own feet, and perhaps shelve your search for a while. Do not declare "there is a God" due to false guilt and the misunderstanding of human relations, if you are not certain. Neither declare "there is not," because your outlook is blurred by your hopelessness and confusion about life and about yourself. At such a time, it is healthy to say, "I do not yet know," without guilt and without defiance. And as you find yourself -- and this is always how the path must start -- as you find your real, true self, the rest is given to you. It comes by itself. It is a natural understanding that comes when you learn what you need to know about yourself in order to live successfully. Finding God cannot be done by discussing theories on an intellectual level. Keep the problem shelved, my friends, keep yourselves open, but find yourselves first. This is all that matters. For then you will come into the truth from inside, from your personal experience, rather than accepting postulates or enigmas out of fear, obedience, wishful thinking, or the desire for dependency and reward, through rejection of self-responsibility. In fact, the wishful thinking has to go, the childish greed be given up. All attitudes which make you cling to a false God-image need to be changed before a true God-experience is possible. Every desire for escape must disappear first. Then the experience is built on a rock.

And so, my dearest friends, I bless each and every one of you. Rejoice in the knowledge that the reality of yourself brings you into a harmonious relationship with life. This becomes more and more a proven fact in your everyday lives, not merely a hope in some vague future. Go on in the search of facing yourself in utter truthfulness. For, when you do that, everything else is given to you. Be blessed, all of you, be in peace, be in God!

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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