

Pathwork on
Getting the Love We Long For

Pathwork Lecture 69 *The Folly of Watching for Results While on the Path; Fulfillment or Suppression of the Valid Desire to be Loved* offers a beautiful 5-page overview about our unconscious and rightful longing for being loved and shows how we go astray as we substitute other desires for our longing to be loved. These never satisfy. It also speaks to the need to let others not love us, if that is where they are with us. Well worth the read.

31	<p>... The second subject I wish to discuss tonight is connected with the creative and legitimate desires that are often suppressed and the problems this brings on. In the last lecture, before we recessed for the summer, I presented the general ideas. Now I want to give some specifics which are universal and apply, at least to some degree, to everyone.</p>
32	<p><u>The desire to be loved exists in every human soul.</u> This desire in itself is not only legitimate and healthy, but it is also in its own way creative, or it leads to being creative. For the lack of love can lead to a paralysis of the soul's creative forces. In order to fulfill the soul's longing to be loved, the human being often chooses a wrong way. This is so partly because the longing is unconscious. As long as it cannot be dealt with in the light of reason and reality, it functions abortively and therefore creates frustrations. Now, why is this desire so often unconscious? Let us first examine the reason.</p>
33	<p>The child's desire for love is limitless, but it is made to feel that such a desire for exclusive and limitless love is wrong; therefore it feels guilty about it. It is true that exclusive and limitless love is unrealistic, its desire immature. The wrong conclusion of this lies in thinking that desire for love in itself is wrong. The right conclusion would be to feel, "The type of love I wanted so far is wrong; it cannot be. But I have a right to long for being loved. This can happen, provided that I, on my part, learn to love in the right and mature way."</p>
34	<p>So, the first misunderstanding in this respect is that the longing for being loved is something to be ashamed of. Thus the longing is buried. Because it is buried, many unfortunate results and consequences come into being.</p>
35	<p>You may think, "With me, this longing is not buried at all. I am completely aware of it." You may indeed be aware of the longing to some extent. But even so, you are only partly conscious of the inner sadness, the unfulfilled longing, and of your struggle within to cover up the sadness and to fight for a substitute for the love you lack. The fight wears you out, and it causes reactions that defeat the very end you wish to achieve. Each one of you, in your own way, needs to see how this applies to you, how and where you can link up your own conflicts with this universal struggle.</p>
36	<p>In spite of your shame about your yearning for love and your subsequent</p>

	<p>suppression of it, you cannot silence this clamoring voice completely. The voice is there, but it can only express itself in a devious way, which is responsible for your not getting the love that you yearn for. But you do not yet know that. You believe deep down, "It is wrong for me to seek to be loved. I have no right to be loved, I am not worthy of it. That is why I do not get it." But the voice that can never be stilled goes on fighting in its own erroneous way, with the very attitude that is bound to make you less lovable. If you were to give up this wrong way of searching, you would realize that the real you can be loved and will be loved. The vicious circle would be broken.</p>
37	<p>Now, what is this wrong way? You substitute for your desire to be loved the desire to be approved of, to shine, to be better than others, to impress people, to be important. Somehow this seems less shameful. Thus you go through life constantly proving yourself. The substitution can assume various other forms. People may have to agree with you, to follow in your footsteps, or, you may have to prove to them that you agree with them, that you conform with public opinion or the opinion of certain people, or what you think their opinion is -- and that is not always the same. All these and many others are mere substitutes for your longing to be loved.</p>
38	<p>The frequent tendency to conform, to be the "obedient child," is part of this conflict. The entire topic of forming one's own opinions -- which we have examined before -- is part of this conflict. Many people have a little of each of these tendencies manifesting within certain environments, and other tendencies coming to the fore with other kinds of people. There are many more substitute trends for the longing to be loved, but I cannot possibly enumerate all of them.</p>
39	<p>Within yourself the situation looks like this: You are unaware of the original desire. You are, at first, even unaware of the substitute desire -- the fight to prove yourself. Sooner or later, in the course of this work, you are bound to become aware that this constant tendency to fight for approval exists in you. As yet you are unaware of what it covers. Those of my friends who have reached this particular awareness, or are about to reach it soon, will find it very useful to realize what is behind it all. The compulsion to prove something exists in everyone, only the degree varies. As long as you do not understand the nature of this compulsion -- after you have verified its existence in you -- you cannot see any solution and will be unable to give up the compulsive fight. But with the help of these words you will search in the right direction, so that you not only <u>know</u> in your intellect that the sadness of your unfulfillment exists, but you will also <u>feel</u> it -- and that is good. You will then realize that your fight for approval, to prove something or other, makes you self-centered, proud, arrogant, superior -- or unhealthily submissive, which is bound to make you resentful. All this struggle contributes strongly to the adverse result of people not loving you, whereas you <u>could</u> be loved if you were free of the entire layer of substitution. If you allowed yourself to feel the original longing, not being afraid of the supposed "humiliation" and "weakness" this desire implies, nor being afraid of</p>

	<p>feeling simple sadness that will never have an unhealthy effect on your soul, you will contribute greatly toward your fulfillment. You will realize that it is not you who are too inadequate to be loved, but that the substitute layer that you artificially concocted is the problem. You will then not wallow in damaging self-pity, but will grow sufficiently to shed those tendencies that prevent you from receiving what you should.</p>
40	<p>Moreover, you will realize that your fight is completely useless. Nothing that is inauthentic can ever bring success. And a superimposed layer, covering an original wish, is never genuine. Even if you succeed temporarily in getting what you fight for -- admiration, approval, whatever it may be -- it will leave you unsatisfied and with a bitter taste. You are bound to be disappointed, for you cannot ever get it to the degree you reach for, it cannot be permanent, and cannot come from as many fellow-humans as you wish. But, above all, you cannot get fulfillment because it is not what you really desire. Your frustration and unhappiness always has this conflict at the roots.</p>
41	<p>You fight as though your life is at stake -- inwardly you do. You need to recognize this conflict before you can find the original desire to be loved and the sadness that you are not loved as you could be. Think how very frequently it happens that your emotions react disproportionately when someone disagrees with you. But if you are deeply convinced that someone loves you with all their heart and kindness, manifesting it with warmth and tenderness, the disagreement does not matter. Each one of you will be able to recall such instances. That should serve as a proof that my words also apply to you.</p>
42	<p>After you recognize these emotions in yourself, you will understand that you are fighting for something you do not really want and that you can never get commensurately to the desperate intensity of your struggle. Find specifically how this fight to prove something, or yourself, in one way or another, brings out the worst in you. What exactly is that? The recognition will be less painful and much more liberating than you think. For you will then understand the reason why you were not loved as much as you wished and will see that it was not because you are as you are, and cannot help it. This will encourage and strengthen you, rather than the opposite.</p>
43	<p>To recapitulate: Deep down you believe that you are unlovable, and this is what you are so afraid of facing that you set up a tight resistance against going deeper into your soul. It seems the ultimate shame to you that you want love in the first place, and that you cannot get it -- which is what you believe. It is much easier to face shortcomings than to discover the unconscious conviction that you desire love but are not loved in the manner and in the measure of your wish. Your psyche knows very well how to distinguish between healthy, mature love and unhealthy, immature, dependent and weak "love" which is not real love in the way your soul yearns for it. The psyche discounts the value of the latter, but does not realize that you make it impossible to receive the mature love you yearn</p>

	for by resorting to the false remedy of substitutions.
44	This shame is so great, it is often the real abyss that you shy away from. It is responsible for so many of your conflicts and resistances, as well as for your various faults. Yet to step into this abyss will soon prove liberating, refreshing and exhilarating, after you have overcome your initial fear and shame.
45	You see, the desire to be loved, in itself, is entirely creative, if stripped of the childish exclusiveness and one-sidedness. Only the way you go about making this desire come true is unrealistic, unhealthy, and damaging, not the desire itself.
46	Are there any questions at this point? QUESTION: Would you now describe the right way of going about it?
47	ANSWER: Yes. The first step is to become aware that this desire exists in you, and to what extent. You must become completely aware to what degree you are dissatisfied in this respect. You also have to become utterly aware of the substitution. You have to experience the emotions which constantly fight for approval. You have to become aware of the compulsion to prove whatever it is you want to prove at any given instance. When you arrive at this self-awareness, not just a few times, but can see how this entire complex of feelings constantly operates in you, you can begin to deal with it. But the everyday reactions, the many subtle little ways in which your emotions express themselves, have to be fully experienced first. Concentrate on this "proving" in your daily review and self-observations. It must be examined, analyzed, and brought into awareness more and more. You will be surprised how great and beyond expectation the extent of this conflict is. Each time you observe these reactions within yourself, you will understand a little better what is behind them. You will ask yourself why it is so important for you to prove yourself in this or that way. Why should it matter so much that people admire your intelligence, or your success, or whatever it is you set out to prove. You will also detect that subtle little tendency which strives for conformity with others; you will discover the weakness embodied in this trend and begin to understand its cause. All that has to be explored and experienced in your emotions. You will inevitably find behind this entire facade your desire to be loved.
48	You may not necessarily desire the love of the people you want to be approved by; there may not be a specific love object in your life. But the desire to be maturely and rightly loved persists in you, submerged by your fight for approval, for proving yourself, for impressing the world. You will then understand what you really fight for. And that, broadly speaking, is the first important phase in this area of development and growth. I cannot emphasize enough that the intellectual knowledge of all this means nothing. You have to experience your emotions in this direction step by step.

49	<p>During this process you will learn to let go of the fighting current to prove yourself. Your emotions will learn to give up the useless and exhausting inner fight in which you indulge in a pastime that brings you nothing but trouble. In the measure that you let go of this fight you will experience liberation and a new strength. You will feel that you have shed a cumbersome burden you need no longer carry.</p>
50	<p>As your fight for proving yourself diminishes, you prepare the way for real, mature love. Your maturing mind will make you understand that the only kind of love that <u>is</u> love is the kind that is given to you freely. First you will allow other people to not love you if they so choose. That may make you sad, but it will never make you tense, or compulsive, or intense. This sadness will be free of self-pity and it will not be a real hardship for you. Therefore it will not make you unpleasant. Inwardly, you constantly want to force others to love you. The outer cover is the approval, but in the last analysis you want to force people to love you. And forced love is no love. The child in you does not see that. But as you recognize these currents, you will detect the current within yourself that says quite clearly, "you <u>must</u> love me." Weaker persons with unhealthy motives of their own may appear to give in temporarily and obey your command. But such a response can only leave you empty and disappointed, since it is not what you are really striving for and it cannot be had as long as the forcing current is not dissolved. For the strong and mature soul cannot be coerced into submission. It functions only in freedom. Moreover, you will never really respect the person who obeys this command. You will respect only the person who loves you freely. However, you can have the chance of experiencing this free gift only if you don't force it. You can never experience the free gift of love as long as the forcing current operates undetected by your consciousness. Thus you first have to let people free by permitting them not to love you, if they so choose. That does not mean you have to be happy about it, but face the sadness and it will not harm you. The reward will be tremendous if someone then offers you his or her love freely. You will then understand that <u>you</u> had been denying yourself the chance of receiving the only true and valuable love that exists. Please, my friends, do not misunderstand. When I say you force others to love you, I do not refer to any conscious action on your part. I am speaking of your emotions. If you translate your emotional reactions to people, you will see that it amounts to that.</p>
51	<p>You will learn how to make the generous gesture of giving freedom to others not only to be wrong, or to disagree with you, or to have weaknesses which you may not approve of, but also not to love you. If you are conscious of your original desire, and then of your frustration, and then of what you do in your frustration, and then of the forcing current in you, you will clearly see that only by this process do you forfeit the free gift of real love -- and not because you are not good enough. Then you are on the road upward.</p>