

Pathwork Lecture 117: Shame: A Legacy of Childhood Experiences, Even Favorable Ones

1996 Edition, Original Given September 20, 1963

This lecture is given in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Version** of the lecture, and in that sense this is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and I ask you to ponder the words for your own interpretation. I did this Devotional Version so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry -- **devotionally**.

The blessings to me in developing this version have been truly profound, and my wish is that this Devotional Version will be a blessing to others. ***I invite you to slowly read and ponder this version of the text – with an open heart to experience the Guide’s Presence and Love emerging from among the words such that the wisdom comes to live you.***

For clarity: The original text is in bold, sometimes italicized. [My adds of commentary/clarification are in brackets, italicized, and not bolded.] To learn more of my Devotional Version and to access the few lectures I have done in this way, go to <http://www.garyvollbracht.com/quotes/pathwork-lectures-expanded-versions/> Gary Vollbracht

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03	<p><i>Greetings,</i> <i>my dearest friends.</i> <i>Blessings for all of you.</i> <i>Blessed be</i> <i>• your efforts,</i> <i>• your progress, and</i> <i>• your life as a whole.</i></p> <p><i>May tonight's lecture again help you</i> <i>advance a step forward on your path.</i> <i>Perhaps it may also</i> <i>encourage some new friends</i> <i>to enter this path.</i></p> <p><i>This lecture is primarily destined</i> <i>to reach inner areas</i> <i>ready to be uncovered</i> <i>in deep self-exploration.</i></p>

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04

*Your every effort,
even if at the moment
you feel*

- *discouraged or*
- *hopeless,*

*must be
crowned with success
if you persevere.*

*What may now appear
as defeat*
will soon prove to be victory,
[and further, the apparent defeat will prove to be]
an absolutely necessary experience.

Please remember,
*when you go through a
difficult period, that
the difficulty*

- *is not caused by this work, but*
- *[rather is caused] by your unresolved problems
that still exist.*

*Remind yourself that
awareness is the key –
becoming aware of
what is in you
at the moment.*

*My friends,
you are not yet
sufficiently conscious of
what really bothers you.*

*If you realize this [i.e., if you realize what bothers you, or realize that you are
not aware of what bothers you],
you will know how to proceed
in the right direction.*

*You will not be in despair,
because you will*

- *see the missing link and*
- *cease to be*
 - *confused and*
 - *lost.*

05	<p><i>Tonight I should like to discuss <u>two specific topics.</u> At first they will seem unrelated, but they are not, and we shall <u>establish their connection.</u></i></p> <p><i>The first topic is <u>shame.</u> This was discussed in the past in certain connections, such as the</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>shame of the higher self, or</u></i>• <i><u>shame of certain shortcomings.</u></i> <p><i>I now will focus on this topic from a <u>very specific perspective.</u></i></p>
06	<p><i>When you pursue this path, you <u>discover certain areas in yourself</u> that you are <u>ashamed to acknowledge,</u> <u>even to yourself.</u></i></p> <p><i>What you may be ashamed of <u>may be</u> <u>faults,</u> <u>but</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>not always</u> and</i>• <i><u>not necessarily.</u></i> <p><i>You may be as ashamed</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>of <u>very legitimate needs</u> as you are of faults, or [ashamed]</i>• <i>of <u>assets,</u> for that matter.</i> <p><i>First you are not even aware that <u>such shames exist</u> [i.e., shames of faults, needs or assets].</i></p> <p><i>It takes a <u>considerable amount of</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>time</u> and</i>• <i><u>effort</u></i> <p><i>before you become aware of <u>those facets within yourself</u> you are <u>deeply ashamed to face.</u></i></p> <p><i>You <u>cover these facets</u> with a <u>pretense</u> that is the <u>reverse of your specific shame.</u></i></p>

07

*Slowly but surely,
as your pathwork progresses in the right direction,
you learn to admit the shame
to yourself,
but are not yet able
to reveal it to others.*

*When this phase is reached [i.e., when you are able to admit shame to yourself],
a certain amount of
self-deception
has been eliminated.*

Whatever your

- personal particular shame, and
- consequent pretense

*may be,
varies.*

*But whatever it is,
when you come face to face
with such an aspect,
it takes a considerable amount of

- struggle and
- courage

to admit
what so far
has been inadmissible.*

*When the struggle [against admitting
such a heretofore inadmissible aspect of yourself to yourself]
is overcome,
a significant amount of

- inner freedom and
- ease

has been reached.*

*Such a struggle
rarely culminates in
one ultimate victory.*

*[Rather] The process may have to be repeated
because usually the psyche
is not ready to face
all its pretenses at once.*

To the degree you

- stop pretending to yourself, and
- face what you had regarded as too shameful to admit,
you will feel emotional
 - ease and
 - comfort.

*Those who have reached the point
of such self-admission*

- can exactly pinpoint*
- their shame,
 - their pretense,
 - their self-deception.

They have indeed

*reached a major step
in self-realization.*

They are way ahead

compared to those

- who are as yet unaware of their own
 - shame and
 - pretense and
- who therefore believe they are not hiding anything.

08

But then there is a further step.

This next step will give you a wonderful opportunity to measure your liberation.

[This step is to examine the question:]

How freely

can you discuss your shame with your helper?

The degree of

- ease and
- emotional comfort

with which you can do this indicates your inner freedom.

	<p><i><u>This important mark on the path</u></i> [i.e., sharing your heretofore shameful aspects with your helper] <i>is often bypassed,</i> <i>and then you gradually forget</i> <i>the <u>significance</u></i> <i>of <u>what you had admitted to yourself.</u></i></p> <p><i>As long as the <u>partial admission</u></i> <i>is <u>not fully explored,</u></i> <i>the <u>pretense continues</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>toward the <u>outer world,</u> and even</i> • <i>toward the <u>self.</u></i>
09	<p><i>I should like to give</i> <i><u>specific advice in this respect</u></i> [i.e., in respect to your only partial admissions of your faults and to your not sharing them with your helper].</p> <p><i>First of all,</i> <i><u>keep your attention alert in this direction</u></i> <i>[i.e., notice what you are <u>not sharing</u> with your helper].</i></p> <p><i>The <u>first stage on this particular road</u></i> <i>within the path</i> <i>is to <u>become aware of</u></i> <i>what you have so far</i> <i><u>hidden from yourself.</u></i></p> <p><i>When this is done to some degree,</i> <i>ask yourself if</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>you have <u>utilized such findings,</u> or whether</i> [instead] • <i>you have <u>allowed them to become hazy again.</u></i> <p><i><u>True liberation</u></i> <i>cannot come in <u>half-measures.</u></i></p> <p><i>Making the</i> <i><u>conscious recognition</u></i> [you have just realized more fully] <i><u>half-conscious again</u></i> <i>is due to the specific reason, my friends,</i> <i>that you <u>may not yet be</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i><u>ready and</u></i> • <i><u>free enough</u></i> <p><i><u>to express to another person –</u></i> <i><u>your helper –</u></i> <i>the <u>shame that you have</u></i> <i><u>finally admitted to yourself.</u></i></p>

	<p><i>And because you <u>cannot</u> <u>make yourself admit it</u> [i.e., admit your shame to your helper], you <u>becloud it again</u>. <u>The recognition</u> [of your shame] <u>becomes foggy again</u>.</i></p>
10	<p><i>It would be</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>much better</u> and</i>• <i><u>vastly more constructive</u></i> <i>for you to <u>admit to yourself</u>,</i> <i>"I <u>can't yet bring myself to</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>reveal</u> and</i>• <i><u>discuss</u></i> <i>this or that <u>aspect</u></i> <i>of my <u>personality</u>."</i> <p><i><u>Do not force yourself</u>,</i> <i>because then</i> <i><u>your anxiety</u></i> <i>will cause such a <u>strong counter-current</u></i> <i>that the <u>benefit</u> may be <u>lost</u> and</i> <i><u>you would present</u></i> <i>the <u>aspect you find shameful</u></i> <i>in a</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>slightly distorted</u>,</i>• <i><u>untruthful</u>,</i>• <i><u>colored</u></i> <i>way.</i></p> <p><i>Hence the <u>gain</u></i> <i>would be <u>questionable</u>.</i></p> <p><i>This would make you</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>feel guilty and, in turn</u>,</i>• <i><u>breed new problems</u></i> <i>in the <u>relationship</u></i> <i>between</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>yourself</u></i><i>and</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>your helper</u>.</i></p> <p><i>This is <u>more harmful</u></i> <i>than the <u>free admission</u>,</i> <i>"I am <u>not ready to reveal myself</u>."</i></p>

	<p><i>In this <u>admission</u> [to yourself that you're not ready to reveal yourself to your helper]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>you are <u>honest</u>.</i>• <i>You do <u>not use too much force</u>. Then</i>• <i>you do <u>not breed</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>guilt</u> and therefore</i>• <i><u>resentment</u>.</i> <p><i>This is <u>infinitely better</u> than</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>speaking out of a</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>dutiful</u> and</i>• <i><u>harried</u></i> <p style="text-align: center;"><i><u>self-discipline</u>, [in other words,]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>doing something</u></i> <i><u>you are not yet ready for</u>.</i>
11	<p><i>Ascertain in</i> <i>your <u>daily review</u>,</i> <i>"This or that factor</i> <i>brings me <u>embarrassment</u>.</i> <i><u>I feel too uncomfortable</u></i> <i><u>to discuss it</u>."</i></p> <p><i><u>Come to terms with it</u>,</i> <i><u>instead of neglecting</u></i> <i><u>to face the significance</u></i> <i><u>of your lack of freedom</u> [brought on because</i> <i>you cannot admit such and such a part of you].</i></p> <p><i><u>Find out</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>where you stand</u>,</i>• <i><u>how far you have come</u>,</i>• <i><u>what remains to be accomplished</u></i> <i><u>to gain your freedom from</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>shame</u> and</i>• <i><u>pretense</u>.</i> <p><i><u>Come to terms with your</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>restraint</u> and</i>• <i><u>inhibition</u>, and</i><i><u>tell yourself that perhaps</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>in a week</u>,</i>• <i><u>in a month</u>,</i>• <i><u>in a year</u>,</i><i><u>you may get to this point</u>.</i></p>

*But in the meantime observe yourself
and perhaps,
little by little,
without forcing yourself,
you will reveal
more than you thought you could.*

*At the beginning
you will be*

- uncomfortable and
- anxious,
- embarrassed and
- inhibited,

*but each time
it will become easier.*

*As you gain inner comfort
while freely expressing
what seemed to be so shameful,
suddenly you will see that
your entire shame
was an illusion.*

This is your yardstick of liberation.

12

*I advise all of you
to think about
this specific part of the path.*

*Are you aware of
what you are ashamed?*

- If not,
you will need to find it.
- If you are,
to what degree do you tackle the issue?

*Take it into your self-confrontation,
by yourself,
and probe deeply,
bringing out the issue
that causes your shame.*

***Do not try to find
immediate***

- reasons and
- answers,
- explanations and
- justifications

[behind or for your shame].

*[Rather] **Simply admit**
those aspects [of yourself]
that cause you shame.*

Write down in

- exact and
- precise
terms

- what it is [specifically that causes you to feel ashamed] **and**
- why you feel you need
to be ashamed [about that specific aspect of yourself].

***The usual answer is that
you are afraid of
appearing***

- less in the eyes of others,
- less
 - lovable and
 - respectable,

inviting

- belittlement and
- humiliation.

***Find how this general observation
applies specifically to you.***

***Then challenge yourself
to confront the issue
of discussing it openly.***

***Observe the increase of inner freedom
as you succeed,***

even if only to a small degree at a time.

Maintain your awareness.

***Do not force
your self-revelation
unduly,***

though some courage may be necessary.

*If you decide to wait [and not reveal this aspect of yourself],
do not forget the issue;
continue to observe
your daily reactions [to life situations]
from this angle [i.e., from the angle of being ashamed
to reveal these aspects of yourself].*

You may be sure that your

- deep-rooted
- unresolved

problems
stand in direct relationship to

- your shame,
- your inhibitions and
- your daily disharmonious feelings.

13

*Each private session [with your helper]
gives you an opportunity
to open this particular door a little further.*

*Each time
you will find it easier
to discuss
what was formerly inadmissible.*

*After each session,
note your reactions,*

- how far have you come,
*compared to previous occasions,
in revealing yourself, and*
- how much you still
 - falsify and
 - present a different front,
if ever so subtly?

*Perhaps a good way to begin
would be to discuss with your helper
how you still*

- have restraints and
- feel that you are as yet
 - unwilling or
 - unable
to give them up.

*In this way
you touch upon
the general area
of your shame,
without as yet
going into details.*

This may

- prepare the way and
- create the proper climate.

*It goes without saying that
what is "inadmissible" applies
much less to
certain facts in your past life
that you do not wish to be known
and much more to*

- an emotional pretense,
- a falsification of personality.

The latter is infinitely

- more important and
- more damaging.

14

*You cannot begin to know
how important this approach is for*

- your progress and
- your inner health.

*I also advise those of my friends
who are helpers
to be aware of this factor,
not only
in themselves
but also
as an issue in those they are helping.*

*They should remember that
to the degree they are still unfree in this respect [themselves],
they cannot expect
the freedom of self-revelation
from those whom they help.*

	<p><i>It is so <u>important</u> to remember <u>not to whip yourself with self-condemnation</u> <u>if you do not succeed,</u> <u>but to quietly observe</u> <u>where you stand.</u></i></p>
15	<p><i>Those who claim that there is <u>no</u> area within themselves <u>they cannot</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>freely</u> and• <u>comfortably</u> <u>discuss,</u> <u>have not found it yet.</u> <p><i>They do not see to what degree <u>they still live in</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>inhibition</u> and• <u>self-deception.</u> <p><i>If you discover that you are not as far as you thought, <u>this should not</u> <u>make you uneasy.</u></i></p> <p><i>If you go about your self-discovery in the way I advise,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>accepting your present state</u> and• <u>working on it in a relaxed way,</u> <u>there need be</u>• <u>no compulsion,</u>• <u>no guilt,</u>• <u>no impatience with yourself –</u> <u>only acknowledgement of</u> <u>your good will.</u>

16

The second topic

*I wish to discuss
is something we have looked at
only in a fleeting way so far.*

*For a long time,
in this work to*

- understand and
 - resolve
 - images,
 - misconceptions,
 - distorted unhealthy attitudes, in short,
 - everything breeding problems in your life,
- we concentrated on*
- unhappy,
 - painful
childhood
 - events and
 - conditions.

*We found that they [i.e., these painful childhood conditions]
were responsible for
creating psychic conditions
damaging to your self-unfoldment.*

- Hurts and
- frustrations
in childhood
*have been recognized
as the cause for
deeply embedded problems
in the personality.*

*Now [as our second topic in this lecture]
I would like to shed light
on the exact opposite.*

*Apparently [i.e., factors that are apparently]
• favorable and
• positive
factors in childhood
*can be equally responsible
for inner distortions.**

17

*Offhand, this may appear
quite impossible,
for it seems so much the opposite
of what is currently believed.*

But let us look a little closer at this subject.

*You may note that I said
apparently
favorable conditions.*

Your evaluation of what is

- good
or bad,
- constructive
or destructive,
- right
or wrong,

*is often tied in with
what is momentarily*

- pleasurable
or unpleasurable, or with what
- conforms [to]
or is contrary to
- temporary,
- superimposed
values.

You may deem something

- constructive and
- good

*because it seems pleasant to you,
but you may also say yes to something
unpleasant
because it conforms to the*

- superimposed,
- arbitrary

*value system
you often follow.*

18

*I sometimes mention the
difference
between*

- *eternal values*

as opposed to

- *temporary values.*

*Temporary values
may remain the same for centuries,
but that does not make them
eternal;*
*they are temporary
if their essence is
non-eternal.*

They [i.e., temporary values]

- *come into being
because of the needs of
a particular civilization and*
- *remain
because of humanity's limited ability
to grasp eternal values.*

*The temporary needs
are dictated by
the conditions of a specific society.*

- *Social,*
- *economic,*
- *political
factors play a role, as does*
- *geography, as well as the*
- *type of spirit
predominantly incarnated
in the society.*

*For example,
values differ drastically
in a patriarchy
from those
in a matriarchy.*
*They differ
in a monarchy and
in a democracy.*

	<p><i><u>Many other factors</u> also contribute to <u>make up</u> the <u>value system of a society.</u></i></p> <p><i>Due to people's inclination to <u>laziness</u>, they</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>blindly follow what is established, and</u></i>• <i><u>retain values long past</u> their <u>temporary usefulness.</u></i> <p><i><u>People's</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>self-alienation</u> and</i>• <i><u>lack of independent thinking</u> make them <u>cling</u> to <u>what is handed to them.</u></i>
19	<p><i>This is why it is <u>so important on this path to</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>question everything you</u> • <u>accept</u> or • <u>reject</u> and • <u>find your own reasons for doing so.</u></i> <p><i>This is the <u>only way</u> <u>eternal values</u> <u>can be found.</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>Each case,</u></i>• <i><u>each incident,</u></i>• <i><u>each issue</u> <u>must be</u> • <u>tested</u> and • <u>probed,</u> • <u>questioned</u> and • <u>sincerely answered</u> <u>from the depth</u> <u>of one's own convictions.</u></i>

*They [i.e., each case, incident, issue]
must be deeply examined.*

Only then

can divine attributes be

- found and
- accepted –
 - *not because everyone says so,*
 - *not because [of] societal standards,*
 - but because
one finds it to be true oneself.

The

- divine attributes and
- eternal values
are unchangeable in themselves,
but their application
keeps changing.

*It is the exact opposite
with temporary values.*

Temporary values often ignore the eternal ones,
but even when temporary values
appear to result in the same outer actions
[as actions coming from the eternal values],
their climate is very different.

20

- Love,
- truth,
- wisdom,
- courage –
what is
 - good and
 - constructive
 - *in the long run,*
and therefore
 - for all concerned –
are the sole criteria
of eternal values.

*These [eternal] values
are not accessible
through blind acceptance.*

Eternal values

- *may seem pleasurable
while going against
the temporary value system, or*
- *they may be unpleasurable
yet conform to
the temporary value system.*

However, if you

- *act according to true [eternal] values
only because they [i.e., only because the eternal values]
conform to the temporary value system and*
- *remain unaware of the eternal values,
you will not be at peace with yourself.*

• *Any personal*

- *choice and*
- *decision,*

• *any*

- *action or*
- *emotional*
 - *direction or*
 - *attitude,*

is dependent on

whether or not

*the decision [choice, action, or emotional direction]
derives from*

- *one or*
- *the other*

value system.

There is no formula.

You cannot

come into selfhood by

- *adhering to*

unexamined values,

but [rather you can come into selfhood only] by

- *examining,*
- *feeling, and*
- *living according to your own perception.*

Then you can say,

"This is the way it is."

21

*The treatment of children
has undergone a
drastic change
in your society
in recent times.*

*Until a relatively short time ago,
• restriction and
• severity
were generally accepted
as the right way [to treat and raise children].*

*[In these earlier times]
The parents'
unresolved problems
found an outlet
in such rules and
they
acted out
their pent-up hostility
by following
the existing [temporary] value system.*

*[By contrast,]
In recent times,
the norm [i.e., norm of more recent temporary values] has been
• permissiveness,
• lack of discipline,
• indulgence.*

*This does not mean that [in recent/current times]
the parents' pent-up hostility
does not communicate itself
to the child.*

*They [i.e., the parents] follow the new [temporary] values
by using
• indulgence and
• permissiveness
to compensate for
their latent hostility.*

Conforming to the new rules [i.e., conforming to the new rules of the new temporary value system of permissiveness] may outwardly appear as love.

[And] Real love may [actually and] certainly exist as well, but to the degree it [i.e., to the degree the parents' real love as an eternal value] is diluted

**• by guilt for the hostility which is not recognized, as well as
• by the guilt for not really conforming to present values,
the [parents']**

• pleasurable indulgence and

• permissiveness

will create

as many

**• problematic conditions
in the child's psyche**

as

• hurts and

• frustrations

do.

22

If parents

- are not sufficiently
motivated by love and**
- are not farsighted enough
to restrict the child, if necessary,**

then their

- guilt,**
- confusion and**
- inability to cope with
the problems**

that a child represents

will create

an inner disturbance.

To atone for
having common human failings,
such as

- impatience or
- irritation,

parents may
• overindulge and
• pamper
their child.

The child may experience this [indulgence and pampering] as
• favorable and
• pleasurable
at the moment,
but there may be a negative effect.

It is not
• the act or
• its consequences
alone
that create the damage,
but [rather the damage to the child is created by] the
• guilt,
• confusion and
• conflict
of the parents.

The identical act [by the parents]
may derive from
• overindulgence [i.e., false love compensating for parents' guilt],
or from a
• clear,
• unconfused
psyche [i.e., real love].

The effect on the child
depends on whether
it is one
or
the other.

	<p><i>Moreover, the child's</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>inborn health</u> or</i>• <i><u>its lack</u> [of inborn health]</i> <p><i>determines whether [or not]</i> <i>it is <u>affected by</u></i> <i>the parents' <u>unresolved problems.</u></i></p> <p><i>This applies</i> <i>not only</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>to <u>inflicted hurt,</u></i> <p><i>but equally</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>to <u>pleasurable overindulgence.</u></i> <p><i>It [i.e., the parents' positive or negative behavior] too will have</i> <i><u>no adverse effect on the child's psyche</u></i> <i><u>if no corresponding problems exist</u> [in the child's psyche].</i></p>
23	<p><i>Now let us examine</i> <i>what the <u>specific effects</u></i> <i>of <u>apparently pleasurable circumstances,</u></i> <i>such as growing up in a</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>permissive,</u></i>• <i><u>pampering,</u></i>• <i><u>indulgent</u></i> <i><u>environment,</u></i> <p><i>are.</i></p> <p><i>The psyche gets <u>accustomed to it</u> [i.e., accustomed to a permissive, indulgent environment],</i></p> <p><i>and when <u>life later</u></i> <i><u>prohibits similar gratification,</u></i> <i>the personality is <u>driven to seek</u></i> <i><u>to duplicate</u></i> <i>the <u>pleasurable state</u></i> <i><u>it once enjoyed.</u></i></p>

*He or she seeks
what was experienced as
love
during childhood,
over and over again,
but cannot find it
because other people [who, unlike the child's parents, are],
not bound by guilt [and hence],*

- will have no need to atone for it and therefore
- will not provide such pampering.

*The inability to repeat
what one once had
causes*

- hurt,
- anger and
- hostility.

*The insistence on having
• the protection [from life's inevitable pains and disappointments], and
• the real [love] as well as
• [the] pseudo-love
enjoyed in childhood,
is connected with the
• hurts and
• frustrations
suffered [later in life].*

*In other words,
just as the parent
may overindulge the child
to substitute for feeling
• irritated [with the child], and
• unwilling to tackle the problems the child has,
so may the child [later in life]
use the compulsive need
for overindulgence [in its life]
to compensate for
the negative currents [irritation, guilt, etc.]
in the parents
that it unconsciously feels – and
sometimes even consciously
experiences.*

24

*It is time, my dear friends,
to examine those aspects in your childhood
which you experienced
in a pleasurable way.*

*It took considerable insight into yourself
to uncover the*

- hurts and
- frustrations.

A child is apt to take

- for granted, and
- as a permanent condition,
what it experiences.

If the child is hurt,
it may

- suffer from it,
- rebel against it,

*but a child
cannot evaluate
its life circumstances
in objective terms.*

*The same holds true
with the pleasurable aspects.*

*Both [painful and pleasurable aspects of experiences]
are part of the general climate
the child does not question.*

Therefore you need considerable

- probing and
- self-examination

*to become specifically aware
of these [painful and pleasurable] elements.*

*The experience of the work
that some of you have already done in the past,
pertaining to the*

- hurts and
- pain

during childhood,
*will now prove useful in that
it will be easier to become aware of*

- the opposite,

the pleasure.

	<p><i>This [work with positive aspects of childhood experiences] will <u>require</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>attention,</u>• <u>concentration, and</u>• <u>self-examination.</u>
25	<p><i>When you make some headway in this respect, you will <u>discover</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>how important it is to understand the totality of your present personality,</u>• <u>how much the past plays a role in your</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>mental and</u>• <u>emotional</u><u>makeup.</u> <p><i>You will see how you <u>strive to reproduce</u> not only your <u>feelings</u> about what you <u>did not have</u>, but also [your <u>feelings</u>] about what you <u>did have</u>.</i></p> <p><i>In other words,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>you not only attempt to <u>correct</u> what you <u>lacked</u> in your <u>childhood</u>,</i>• <i>but you also try to <u>re-create</u> what you <u>did have</u> then [in your <u>childhood</u>].</i> <p><i>This angle is <u>vastly overlooked</u> in the <u>exploration of</u> <u>human psychic disturbances</u>.</i></p>

26

*I again emphasize that
[outer] conduct alone
does not indicate whether
the action taken is*

- right and
- constructive.

[Rather,] *The*

- inner conditions,
- motivations and the
- underlying unification of the psyche
make all the difference.

In one instance
it may be right to

- be lenient,

in another [instance]
[it may be right] to

- restrict and even
- punish.

*Those who depend on
outer rules
to tell them*
what alternative to choose
on what occasion,
must be

- lost and
- confused, and

their actions will prove
unsuccessful.

But those who

- know themselves and
- understand their inner problems
will also know
what choices to make,
even long before
their inner problems
are completely resolved.

One is then in a position

- to act and
- to be
in accord with
eternal values.

	<p><i>This applies</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>to the <u>treatment of children</u> as well as</i>• <i>to any other</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>human relationship</u> or</i>• <i><u>situation.</u></i> <p><i><u>Confusion</u></i> <i>always signals that</i> <i><u>knowledge about the self</u></i> <i>is missing.</i></p>
27	<p><i>So, my friends,</i> <i><u>examine this new angle.</u></i></p> <p><i>Be on the lookout for the following:</i> <i>to the degree you</i> <i><u>felt unloved</u> [by the parent and therefore in pain],</i> <i>to that degree</i> <i><u>guilt-driven-pseudo-love</u> [giving you pseudo-pleasure]</i> <i><u>will have damaged you.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Both</u> [guilt-driven pseudo-love and the absence of any love]</i> <i><u>play a role</u></i> <i>only because <u>psychic unrealities</u></i> <i>were <u>already in you</u></i> <i><u>before you were born into this life.</u></i></p> <p><i>You will see that</i> <i>a great deal of</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>anger</u> and</i>• <i><u>resentment</u></i> <i><u>exist</u></i> <i>not only</i> <i>in connection to what you <u>did not have,</u></i> <i>but also</i> <i>in respect to what you</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>did have</u> and</i>• <i><u>wish to continue having.</u></i></p>

28	<p>Offhand, you may wonder</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what the <u>connection between tonight's two topics</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">[1. <u>Shame about aspects you do not want to see about yourself and are afraid to share with your helper or with others]</u>[2. <u>How factors that are apparently favorable and positive in childhood can be as responsible for inner distortions as factors that are painful in childhood.</u>] <p>is, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>why I have chosen to discuss them in one lecture.</u> <p>But once both subjects are more profoundly understood, the connection is quite evident.</p> <p>It may be constructive, my friends, if I now let you participate. Can any of you see a connecting link? Who has an idea?</p>
29	<p>PARTICIPANT: I think it would be a very <u>shameful feeling not to be grateful for what was meant to be good,</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• if you <u>didn't feel it was good,</u> or• if you were given something you <u>did not want.</u></p>
30	<p>ANSWER: This may be quite true, but what I was actually referring to was <u>not that you were given</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• something you <u>did not want,</u><p>but</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• something you <u>very much enjoyed;</u><p>however, you may be as <u>unaware of the damage</u> [caused by something you enjoyed] as [you are unaware of the damage] <u>of a hurt.</u></p></p>

31	<p>PARTICIPANT: <i>If a girl loves her father very much she may ask for the same love in a man, later. The child may experience the love for the father, almost in a sexual way, and later she wants the same love [i.e., love in a sexual way] from the man, but can't get it, then she may have a shame in this respect [i.e., shame about wanting sexual love from the man].</i></p>
32	<p>GUIDE: <i>This is a good example.</i></p>
33	<p>PARTICIPANT: <i>If parents are neglectful in some ways and, through their guilt, are particularly indulgent toward a child when it is sick, the child will want the sickness in order to get the love.</i></p> <p><i>Later in life, when the person is sick, he will be</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>disappointed and</i>• <i>hurt</i> <p><i>when the love is not forthcoming.</i></p> <p><i>At the same time, he will be ashamed for using sickness to get love.</i></p>
34	<p>GUIDE: <i>This is a good example, too.</i></p>

PARTICIPANT:
*You may also be ashamed
when you are told
you are loved as a child,
but don't feel it.*

GUIDE:
Yes.

QUESTION:
*Shame is always
connected with guilt,
isn't it?*

ANSWER:
Not always.

It is also possible to feel

- *shame
without guilt, and*
- *guilt
without shame.*

35

PARTICIPANT:
*When the child receives an allowance
and he feels guilty for keeping it,
while not actually deserving it,
he later feels shame
for receiving a salary.*

GUIDE:
*Such a case requires
further understanding
of why this*

- *guilt and*
- *shame*

*for having received an allowance
exists.*

36	<p>PARTICIPANT: <i>I know a case of an <u>adopted child</u> where the parents gave the child <u>too much leeway,</u> <u>continuously admiring it.</u></i></p> <p><i>This was probably due to lack of real love.</i></p> <p><i>Later, when the child was about eighteen years old, he became even more demanding and the parents could not gratify these demands. I think the child was ashamed of not having his real parents.</i></p>
37	<p>GUIDE: <i>This may be so.</i></p> <p><i>These are partly good examples.</i></p> <p><i>Such participation will help you to assimilate my words better.</i></p> <p><i>Let me now show you, in principle, the connection between</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>the damage of pleasurable childhood experience</i><i>and</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>shame.</i></p>
38	<p><i>If a human being wants to <u>reproduce pleasurable childhood conditions</u> <u>in later life,</u> it indicates</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>a desire to remain a child.</i><i>It indicates</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>greed and</i>• <i>lack of self-responsibility.</i></p>

*This may be difficult for some
to admit,
particularly for those who
pride themselves on
being mature adults.*

*Most people
• wish to be regarded as mature,
while at the same time
• desiring the advantages of childhood.*

*The
• desire to be a child [and receive the pleasure received as a child], as well as
• anger for the frustration [in not receiving the pleasure received as a child
when one is an adult],
must create shame.*

*This tendency
completely contradicts
the ideal [i.e., being mature and receiving pleasure as an adult]
which [i.e., being mature and receiving pleasure as an adult]
• is superimposed [as an image over the personality] **and**
• is presented
• to the world and
• to the conscious self.*

39

*As you know,
the idealized self-image
denies all limitations.
It pretends possessing
all that the personality
feels is lacking.*

*The pretense of
the idealized self
is the crux of the matter.*

*The pretense [of the idealized self]
not only hides
• what the child felt to be missing in its life [and hence was painful],
but also [hides]
• what it did have [and was pleasurable] **and**
• what it wants to continue having.*

*If you examine your
idealized self,
this double pretense
must be found.*

*Underneath [your idealized self]
lies its opposite.
To reveal it [i.e., to reveal the opposite beneath the idealized self]
seems a dreadful admission.*

*You cannot discover
the shame
if you do not
envisage
the exact opposite
of your pretense.*

*It is this opposite [beneath the pretense of the idealized self]
• which creates the deep shame and
• which is also connected to both
• pleasant and
• unpleasant
childhood conditions.*

40

*The consideration of
the exact opposite of
the idealized self-image
should now be taken into this work
by all of you.*

*Look for
• the shame, and
• how it also connects to
certain pleasurable circumstances
in childhood.*

*Perhaps you were praised
for some real qualities [you actually had to some degree, but]
you suspected
you did not possess
to the same degree
your parents claimed.*

*Or maybe you
still think these [very real] qualities [you have]
are absent,
because they are diluted
with your various
• self-doubts and
• distortions.*

*Find what is
specifically significant
for you.*

*If you
• study this lecture and
• work through it,
I promise that your
• liberation and
• progress
will be considerable.*

*This will indeed be the crux of understanding
• what makes you suffer, of
• what alienates you from
• life and
• yourself, of
• what makes you
• puzzled and
• confused.*

*With this approach
you have a direct key,
my dearest friends,
each and every one of you,
each in a different way.*

*For some friends
this exploration may be premature.
Many other aspects
may have to be explored first.*

*It is not always a matter of
the length of time, though.*

	<p><i>Occasionally,</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>someone who has been on the path a <u>shorter period</u> may discover certain aspects</i>• <i>another individual will come across only after <u>more extended work</u>.</i> <p><i><u>It all depends</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>on the <u>type of character</u> and</i>• <i>on <u>psychic conditions</u>, as well as</i>• <i>on the <u>attitude to one's problems</u>.</i> <p><i><u>Wherever you stand now,</u></i> <i><u>take this into consideration.</u></i></p>
41	<p><i>Are there any questions pertaining to this lecture?</i></p> <p><i>QUESTION:</i></p> <p><i>If a <u>child was</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>a favorite and</i>• <i>in a <u>privileged position</u>,</i> <i>is it that <u>later</u></i> <i>he may</i> <i><u>unconsciously</u></i> <i><u>claim a similar privileged position?</u></i> <i><u>That he wants special consideration?</u></i>
42	<p><i>ANSWER:</i></p> <p><i>Yes, indeed.</i></p> <p><i>This may be</i> <i><u>absolutely unconscious,</u></i> <i>for it may be <u>diametrically opposed</u></i> <i>to <u>one's idealized self</u>.</i></p> <p><i>If the <u>child</u></i> <i>held this <u>special position</u></i> <i>because it was</i> <i>a good child,</i> <i><u>being good</u></i> <i>then becomes an <u>integral part</u></i> <i>of the <u>idealized self</u>.</i></p>

Goodness

means also

- self-sacrifice and
- unselfishness.

*Yet this [self-sacrifice and unselfishness]
contradicts the claim for
special treatment.*

*In this inner confusion
so much is*

- obscure and
- repressed.

When all the various

- inner demands and
- attitudes

are out in the open, the

- clarification,
- liberation and
- relief

must be great.

*I tell you, my friend,
you are on the way,
you are almost there.*

With

- asking this question, and
- the light that flickered in now,
you are almost there.

*You will also understand
your specific God-image.*

43

Love streams

to each one of you.

It is a vibrant force of reality.

May all of you

*who make such valiant efforts
in self-confrontation
realize how*

- meaningful and
- significant

these efforts are.

Continue -- all of you!
Life will thank you for it,
but I do not mean this in the sense of a
• rewarding or
• punishing
God.

[Rather,] The cosmic forces
with which you come into harmony
by truthful self-examination
respond according to law,

while
• self-deception and
• lack of awareness
cannot bring you into harmony
with the cosmic forces.

Be blessed,
every one of you,
so that your continuous efforts
will be strengthened,
so as to become
• freer and
• happier.

Be in peace,
be in God!

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