

Pathwork Lecture 57: The Mass Image of Self-Importance

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This Pathwork lecture is rendered in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Format** of the lecture. In this sense it is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and when this is the case, I ask you to ponder the words for **your own interpretation**.

I did this Devotional Format so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry -- **devotionally**. *I invite you to slowly read and ponder this format of the text – with an open heart to experience the Pathwork Guide’s Presence, Wisdom and Love emerging from among the words. May the Pathwork Guide’s Wisdom come to live you.*

For clarity: The **original text** is in **bold, italicized, and mostly underlined**. [My interpretations and intended clarifications are in brackets, italicized, mostly underlined, but never bolded.]

To learn more of my Devotional Format and to access the lectures I have rendered in this form, go to <http://www.garyvollbracht.com/quotes/pathwork-lectures-expanded-versions/>

Blessings on your journey, Gary

¶	Content
03	<p><u>Greetings,</u> <u>my friends.</u></p> <p><u>God bless</u> <u>all of you,</u> <u>God bless this hour</u> [i.e., <u>God bless this time</u> <u>we now spend together in this lecture</u>].</p>
04	<p><u>We have often discussed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>inferiority feelings and</u>• <u>their true origin.</u> <p><u>This</u> [i.e., <u>Having feelings of inferiority</u>]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>is an important trend</u> <u>in human nature and</u>• <u>needs further understanding</u> <u>in your work of</u> <u>self-finding.</u>

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I think you understand clearly by now
that
the real reasons for inferiority feelings
are hidden.

Subconsciously
you do register
your

- *imperfections and*
- *inadequacies*

and,

although you do not want to

- *face them* [i.e., *do not want to face your imperfections*
and inadequacies]

and

- *come to terms with them,*
your knowledge of them [i.e., *your knowledge of your imperfections*
and inadequacies]
- persists.*

You cannot eradicate that [i.e., *You cannot eradicate your knowledge*
of your imperfections and inadequacies].

So you

seek relief

from this unpleasant feeling [i.e., *you seek relief from this unpleasant*
feeling of having imperfections and inadequacies].

You believe,

mistakenly,

that this [i.e., *that relief from this unpleasant feeling of having*
imperfections and inadequacies]

can be accomplished
by receiving

- *attention,*
- *admiration, and*
- *approval.*

	<p><u>Many of you have found out by now</u> <u>that</u> <u>no matter how much approval you receive,</u> <u>the relief [i.e., the relief from the unpleasant feeling of having</u> <u>imperfections and inadequacies that you get from approval]</u> <u>is, at best,</u> <u>a very temporary one [i.e., a very temporary relief].</u></p>
05	<p><u>In this connection [i.e., In connection with finding relief from the unpleasant feeling</u> <u>of having imperfections and inadequacies through the approval of others],</u> <u>I would like to discuss</u> <u>a particular mass image</u> <u>about the self.</u></p> <p><u>This mass image [i.e., This particular mass image that I am about to discuss]</u> <u>exists at all times,</u> <u>regardless of</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>civilization,</u>• <u>geography,</u>• <u>historical period, or</u>• <u>environment.</u></p> <p><u>There are</u> <u>other mass images</u> <u>bound to</u> <u>[only] certain</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>times and</u>• <u>civilizations.</u></p> <p><u>[However,]</u> <u>Those [mass images]</u> <u>which</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>are universal and</u>• <u>encompass</u> <u>all humanity</u> <u>are a product of</u> <u>a particular blend of</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>human imperfection</u><u>and</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>humanity's desire to reach perfection.</u></p>

06

**Such a universal mass image [that encompasses all humanity]
is the following:**

"If I receive

- **attention or**
- **approval or**
- **admiration,**

**all my worth is established
not only in**

- **the eyes of the world**

but in

- **my own eyes.**

**If I cannot get it [i.e., If I cannot get attention or approval or
admiration from others],**

then

I

am

inferior."

Needless to say that

**this [i.e., this notion that if I cannot get attention or approval or
admiration from others then I AM inferior]**

is

- **a wrong conclusion**

and

not

- **a conscious**
- **thought,**

but

- **an unconscious**
- **emotional attitude.**

None of you

**will fail to verify this emotion [i.e., this emotional attitude of "I AM inferior"]
within yourself.**

07

Since this [i.e., Since this emotional attitude of “I AM inferior” if I cannot get attention or approval or admiration from others]

is

- an image,

it is

- illusory.

The purpose of this work

is to free you of

the illusory.

For

no illusion

can bring you

- harmony,
- peace, and
- freedom.

All

that is illusory

is bound to create problems for you.

The particular illusion

of this image [i.e., The particular illusion of this image that “I AM inferior” if I cannot get attention or approval or admiration from others]

- has many repercussions

and

- creates a chain reaction of harmful results

for

- yourself

as well as for

- others around you.

08

At this point,

I might emphasize once again –

so as to avoid all possible misunderstanding –

that

the remedy [i.e., the remedy to this image that “I AM inferior” if I cannot get attention or approval or admiration from others]

is **NOT** in

- defiance and
- rebellion

against

your dependence on

other's opinions of you.

Unconsciously,

- you rebel [i.e., you rebel against your dependence on other's opinions of you]

just as frequently as

- you plead for
 - admiration and
 - approval.

Both [i.e. Both your rebellion against your dependence on other's opinions of you and your pleading for admiration and approval from others to assuage your illusory feeling attitude of “I AM inferior”]

exist simultaneously

in many a soul.

Both

- are equally harmful and
- are the result of
 - the same unhealthy basic misconception.

09

Let us go back to
this particular mass image.

We, in our world,
can hear

your souls
shrieking for attention.

The earth sphere
produces this loud noise for us.

When we approach
your plane,
all souls
send forth
this loud

- calling and
- clamoring,

inaudible
to your ears.

But you can imagine
how noisy it is
for us.

The voice of the soul is
a loud one.

All
emotions
produce sounds,
but
the loud voice claiming self-importance
does not produce a very harmonious sound.

10

The outer manifestation
of this mass image [of self-importance]
varies
according to

- temperament and
- individual characteristics;

according to

- other trends,
- healthy or
- sick,

which determine the

- strength and
- manner

of the manifestation [i.e., of the outer manifestation
of this mass image of self-importance]; and
according to

- environment and
- education.

All this together [i.e., This situation with all these various factors and aspects taken together]

determines just

how

- *noticeable,*

how

- *strong,*

how

- *obvious*

the cry for approval is

and in

- *what area*

the need of self-importance exists.

If the demand for approval

is obvious to other human beings,

it does not necessarily mean

that such a person [i.e., that a person in whom the demand for approval is more obvious]

is spiritually less developed

than another

in whom the same trend [i.e., the trend of demanding approval]

is

more

- *hidden and*

more

- *subtle.*

Rather, it is a question of

the degree of suppression [i.e., the degree of suppression of the demand for approval, the degree of suppression being less for one in whom the demand for approval is more obvious to others].

11

By working on this particular trend [i.e., this trend of demanding approval]

all of you

will eventually

find that part in you

that

- *demands to be elevated to first place,*

that

- *desires to be special.*

**It is not sufficient to call it [i.e., to call the demand for approval, the demand for being elevated to first place, the demand for being special]
pride.**

You will have to go further than that.

**Why
do you
feel
a need for pride?**

**Because of
the wrong conclusion [i.e., the wrong conclusion that “I AM inferior” if I cannot get approval or admiration from others]
of the image I have just explained [i.e., the mass image of self-importance].**

It [i.e., The wrong conclusion that “I AM inferior” if I cannot get approval or admiration from others, which is the wrong conclusion of the mass image of self-importance]

leads you to believe

that

- **when you are extra-special in the eyes of the world, your inferiority feelings will vanish;**

that

- **when others agree with what you
 - do,
 - believe, and
 - think,**

you gain in worth in your own eyes.

**Of course,
you do not think all this
consciously.**

But

**if you analyze
the meaning of
your emotions,
this [i.e., others thinking you are special and agreeing with you means
you are truly worthy]
is what they amount to [i.e., is what your emotions amount to].**

	<p><u>Thus,</u> <u>you use pride</u> <u>as</u> • <u>a defensive measure</u> [i.e., <u>as a defense against</u> <u>feeling your sense of unworthiness</u>], <u>as</u> • <u>a means to an end</u> [i.e., <u>as a means to establish your sense of</u> <u>worthiness in the world</u>].</p> <p><u>This</u> [i.e., <u>Because you use pride as a defensive measure and as a means to an end</u> <u>and therefore think you need pride to establish your sense of worthiness</u>] <u>is why</u> <u>the realization</u> <u>that pride exists in you</u> <u>never really helps to eliminate it.</u></p>
12	<p><u>You may</u> <u>not have been aware of</u> <u>your pride</u> <u>before,</u> <u>but after some efforts on this path</u> <u>you discover,</u> <u>perhaps with a shock,</u> <u>that you, too,</u> <u>possess pride.</u></p> <p><u>But no matter how often</u> <u>you then tell yourself,</u></p> <p><u>"This is pride,</u> <u>I must not be proud,"</u></p> <p><u>it does not help</u> [i.e., <u>just knowing that you have pride and</u> <u>should not have pride does not help you eliminate your pride</u>].</p> <p><u>You have to go to</u> <u>the next stage of self-understanding</u> <u>by realizing</u> <u>why</u> [i.e., <u>realizing WHY you have pride</u>].</p>

	<p><u><i>You will have to understand fully that you unconsciously believe that your pride serves</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• to gain something for you</i> <p><u><i>or</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• to save you from some imagined disaster.</i> <p><u><i>When you discover the error of this assumption, you can then get rid of</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• the pride,</i><i>• the vanity,</i><i>• the self-importance:</i> <p><u><i>you comprehend that</i></u></p> <p><u><i>there is no need for it [i.e., there is no need for pride, vanity, or sense of self-importance].</i></u></p>
13	<p><u><i>In order to grasp all this [i.e., In order to grasp that there is no need for pride, vanity, or sense of self-importance],</i></u></p> <p><u><i>it is essential that you become fully aware that</i></u></p> <p><u><i>the part of your personality where you harbor</i></u></p> <p><u><i>this wrong conclusion [i.e., the part of your personality where you harbor this wrong conclusion that pride is absolutely needed as a defensive measure against feeling your sense of inferiority and unworthiness and also that pride is absolutely needed to establish your sense of worthiness]</i></u></p> <p><u><i>indeed exists.</i></u></p>

*You have to get so far
that you actually
hear*

the inner voice

- *shrieking for and*
- *demanding*

*approval [i.e., shrieking for and demanding approval by those
around you, approval by those who are important to you].*

*You have to observe
the occasions*

*when this voice [i.e., when this inner voice shrieking for and demanding
approval by those who are important to you]*

*speaks up
louder than usual.*

*You have to question
emotions*

that you have never questioned before.

What is

- *their meaning [i.e., What is the meaning of these emotions] and*

what is

- *the desire behind them [i.e., What is the desire behind these emotions]?*

*Only when you find the answer [i.e., the answer to the question of what is the
meaning of these emotions you have never questioned before]*
will you be aware of

the mass image of self-importance

in

your own soul.

14

In this mass image [i.e., In this mass image of self-importance]

there is

• *you*

on one side,

and

• *the rest of the world*

on the other.

Many subtle emotions

will, upon analysis,

reveal to you

that this is exactly

what goes on in you.

This realization

is of great importance.

But again,

it [i.e., this realization of the mass image of self-importance in you

in which you see yourself on one side and the rest

of the world separate from you on the other side]

is only

a beginning of continuing search for

further

• *understanding and*

• *connections.*

You will see

how this image [i.e., how this mass image of self-importance in you

in which you see yourself on one side and the rest

of the world separate from you on the other side]

brings you

many

• *conflicts and*

• *problems.*

As long as

you do not know

how harmful

a condition is,

you cannot have

the necessary incentive

to eliminate

that condition.

And as long as
you are unaware
that the condition even exists,
how can you
see its effects?

First
you have to become aware of
this

- basic,
- universal

condition [i.e., become aware of this condition of the mass image of
self-importance in you in which you see yourself on one side
and the rest of the world separate from you on the other side]
in yourself,

and then
you have to
connect

- the effects of this condition

with

- various conflicts.

You will thereby
come to see
many of your problems
in an entirely new light.

You will realize
that many of your difficulties
need never exist
if you
were free of
this particular misconception.

15

This mass image [i.e., This mass image of self-importance in you in which you see yourself on one side and the rest of the world separate from you on the other side]

takes on many forms
in your
unconscious.

Therefore,

the outer manifestation [i.e., the outer manifestation of this mass image of self-importance in you in which you see yourself on one side and the rest of the world separate from you on the other side]

varies too.

People seek

admiration
in various ways.

One person

may believe that
material wealth
will gain him
greater stature in the eyes of the world.

With someone else,

other values
serve to gain that

- *admiration and*
- *approval.*

I might say

the majority of my friends
fall into the latter category [i.e., the category where values other than material wealth will be the means by which a person seeks to gain his or her needed admiration and approval].

With some people

the means [i.e., the means by which these people seek to gain their needed admiration and approval]
might be
a particular

- *accomplishment or*
- *talent.*

With others again,

it may be [i.e., the means by which they seek to gain their needed admiration and approval may be]

- good character,
- decency
- loyalty
- intelligence.

With most

the means to get

- approval and
- admiration

is a composite of many attributes,

supposed to serve the same end [i.e., to serve the establishment of one's sense of worthiness in the world].

There is even a category of people

who use

misfortune

as a means to gain

sympathy –

and, of course,

sympathy

stands for approval, too.

Other sick currents

also

- affect the image [i.e., affect the mass image of self-importance]

and

- twist it

into a particular direction.

	<p><u>The image</u> [i.e., <u>The mass image of self-importance in you in which you see yourself on one side and the rest of the world separate from you on the other side</u>] says that <u>without</u> <u>the approval of the world around you,</u> • <u>you are lost.</u></p> <p><u>You believe</u> • <u>you lose</u> <u>the firm ground under your feet,</u> that • <u>your whole world</u> • <u>stands</u> or • <u>falls</u> <u>by what other people think of you.</u></p>
16	<p><u>Again, I ask you</u> <u>not to confuse</u> • <u>the opposite manifestation</u> [i.e., <u>the manifestation “I care nothing for what other people think”</u>] <u>with</u> • <u>a healthy reaction.</u></p> <p><u>“I do not care what people say,”</u> <u>is rebellion.</u></p> <p><u>And where there is</u> • <u>rebellion,</u> <u>there is still</u> • <u>bondage.</u></p> <p><u>The rebellion</u> [i.e., <u>The rebellion in “I do not care what people say about me.”</u>] • <u>tries to break loose of</u> <u>the bondage</u> [i.e., <u>the bondage of needing the approval of others in order not to feel unworthy or inferior</u>], <u>but it</u> [i.e., <u>but the rebellion</u>] • <u>chooses</u> <u>the wrong way to go about it</u> [i.e., <u>the wrong way of breaking the bondage of needing the approval of others</u>].</p>

You believe you
rebel against
• a world
that tries to force you
into behavior patterns.

But this, too,
is an error.

You actually
rebel against
• your dependency on
the world's opinion.

Therefore [i.e., Since you actually rebel against
your dependency on the world's opinion],
the remedy
lies in your discovery
• why
you are so bound [i.e., discovering why you are so dependent on
the world's opinion];

• what misconception
leads you to the bondage [i.e., discovering what misconception
makes you so dependent on the world's opinion].

Then, and then only [i.e. Only when you discover WHY you are
so dependent on the world's opinion],

can you
free yourself of the
• bondage and
• compulsion
so that you
need no longer rebel.

Nor do you have to make
painful efforts
in an attempt to gain something
that is
not
your salvation.

Also,
in such a dependency [i.e., in such a dependency on the opinions of others]
you often become
untrue
to yourself,
and this [i.e., and this being untrue to yourself],
more than anything else,
causes
inferiority feelings.

Often,
you cannot
both

- please the world

and

- be true
to your
 - innermost self and
to your own
 - inner life plan.

Nor can you
please
all
people.

But
since you are
so dependent on approval,
whenever you
have to take a stand
that makes it impossible
to be approved by
all,
your soul
gets into a turmoil.

- These

and

- many other
conflicts
arise out of
the mass image of self-importance.

17

You can easily see
that this mass illusion,
existing in every human,
may
at times
compel you to
sell your soul.

This [i.e., Selling your soul]
may happen
in many subtle ways,
and I venture to say
that there is hardly a person
who has not done so at times [i.e., who has not sold
his or her soul at times].

I can assure you
that there is
no exception [i.e., no exception to people selling their souls]

- *among you here, or*
- *anywhere else, for that matter.*

But
you have to find
individually
that part in you
which is bound by
the image [i.e., bound by the mass image of self-importance
where you depend upon the approval of others
for your sense of self-worth and sell your soul].

You will find
at least some areas in you
where the image exists [i.e., where the mass image of self-importance
in which you depend upon the approval of others
for your sense of self-worth exists] –
no matter
how

- *subtly,*

how much

- *hidden or*
- *covered up with*
 - *worthy motives and*
 - *plausible rationalizations.*

	<p><u>The subtler</u> <u>the form of manifestation</u> [i.e. <u>the subtler the form of manifestation of the mass image of self-importance in which an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of others for your sense of self-worth in that area</u>], <u>the more difficult it will be</u> <u>to find the affected part.</u></p> <p><u>But find it</u> <u>you will,</u> <u>for sure,</u> <u>if</u> <u>you really want to.</u></p>
18	<p><u>If you</u> <u>• observe your reactions</u> <u>in your everyday life and</u> <u>• analyze them honestly,</u> <u>you will come to</u> <u>the very point I am showing you:</u></p> <p><u>you will recognize</u> <u>the mass image</u> [i.e., <u>the mass image of self-importance in which an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of others for your sense of self-worth in that area</u>] <u>with which</u> <u>you, too, are inflicted.</u></p> <p><u>In that part of your being</u> <u>you feel</u> <u>exactly the way I described.</u></p> <p><u>Try to put your</u> <u>feelings</u> <u>into precise words.</u></p> <p><u>That</u> [i.e., <u>Putting your feeling into precise words</u>] <u>in itself</u> <u>will be</u> <u>a great relief</u> <u>for your soul.</u></p>

	<p><u><i>You can safely assume that you are not the only one with this image [i.e., this mass image of self-importance] – you share it with all other human beings.</i></u></p>
19	<p><u><i>Find your bondage to public opinion, no matter how subtle.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Then find, further, why you need the</i></u> • <u><i>dependency [i.e., WHY you need the dependency on the opinions and approval of others]</i></u></p> <p><u><i>and</i></u> • <u><i>pride,</i></u></p> <p><u><i>or rather, why you think</i></u> <u><i>you need it [i.e., WHY you THINK you need the dependency on the opinions and approval of others and pride].</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Crystallize the wrong conclusion.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Once you get that far, you will have begun to loosen a heavy chain that has held you prisoner of the world of illusion.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Then [i.e., Once you have crystalized the wrong conclusion and thereby have begun to loosen a heavy chain that has held you prisoner of the world of illusion] you can begin the process of emerging free.</i></u></p>

This [i.e., This process of emerging free once you have crystalized the wrong conclusion and thereby have begun to loosen a heavy chain that has held you prisoner of the world of illusion]

can be done

only

by

• *analyzing,*

by

• *understanding*
your reactions.

Always

go behind

the emotion

you have just unearthed

and

clothe it [i.e., clothe the emotion you have just unearthed]
in concise language.

Ask yourself

why,

based on what reasoning,

you hold

the particular conviction

you have just unearthed.

Right or wrong,

find out

why

you are convinced of it.

If there were

no conviction,

you would

not have held on to it

for so long.

You know
that your
unconscious
reasons too,
although
its [i.e., your unconscious'] reasoning
is often faulty.

Now you have to become
consciously
aware of
such [i.e., such heretofore unconscious] reasoning processes.

What is important
is that you
experience
the existence
of this image [i.e., this image of self-importance in which
an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of
others for your sense of self-worth in that area]
within you.

20

When you
experience it [i.e., When you EXPERIENCE this image of self-importance in
which an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of
others for your sense of self-worth in that area],
then
the time is ripe
for you to understand
many of your conflicts
that often involve

- actions

and

- reactions

on the part of the world
that seem

- unjust and
- uncalled-for.

I assure you, my friends,
you can find this image [i.e., *you can find this image of self-importance in which an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of others for your sense of self-worth in that area*]

behind
every
conflict,

- *outer*
- or*
- *inner.*

Sometimes
the connection [i.e., *the connection between this image of self-importance and an outer or inner conflict*]

is

- *indirect;*

at other times,

- *very obvious.*

Your personal images
are
always
connected with
the universal mass image of self-importance.

21

I would now like to mention
a very frequent occurrence
that happens to practically everyone
at least a few times in their lives,
in one form or another.

This occurrence
is hardly ever understood,
and the

- *existence and*
- *influence*

of the mass image [i.e., *of the mass image of self-importance*]
is rarely connected with it.

And yet it [i.e., And yet the understanding this occurrence and its relationship to the existence and influence of the mass image of self-importance] is so vital, for only through such understanding can you find the solution.

This example is not directed at anyone in particular.

It [i.e., This example] applies to everyone

- at certain times,
- in connection with certain events.

22

There are few people who have not experienced

- grief and
- disappointment

because they felt betrayed.

They have displayed utmost

- loyalty and
- decency.

In spite of this, the betrayal took place.

Moreover, as it is bound to happen, the offender in turn will claim to have been betrayed to justify himself.

The one betrayed [i.e., The one who originally felt betrayed]
is accused [by the one whom he felt originally betrayed him]
of having done the very thing
he has so painfully experienced
as a victim [in being betrayed originally by the betrayer].

Therefore
the hurt [to the one who originally felt he had been betrayed]
is double.

The betrayal
would not be half as difficult to bear
if he were not,
in addition,
accused
of having perpetrated a

- **disloyal or**
- **dishonest**

act of some sort.

The pain of the accusation [i.e., The pain of being accused of betraying the other]
is the more gnawing
of the two [i.e., is more gnawing than the pain of having been betrayed
by the other].

He [i.e., The one who originally felt betrayed but now is accused of
betraying the other]
searches within,
but cannot find
anything
to blame himself for.

Yet
a deep uncertainty remains [i.e., a deep uncertainty about whether or not
he actually betrayed the other in some unconscious way remains].

Why [i.e., Why all this uncertainty about who betrayed whom and how]?

23

You on this path
who have benefited from
many a spiritual

- *truth and*
- *teaching*

through

- *this channel or*
- *others,*

know that
no mishap
can ever occur
that you have not caused in some way
yourself.

You know
intellectually
that this is true.

You may even
confirm it
through
personal experiences.

Yet
when certain events occur,
you do not find
the connection [i.e., *the connection between the mishap and*
how you, in some way, participated in causing the mishap]
easily.

The example cited
may be one such occasion:
you simply cannot find
the point of connection
between

- *what happened*

and

- *a cause in you.*

	<p><i>[In the example cited]</i> <u>You know</u> <u>you have been</u> <u>• betrayed and</u> <u>• disappointed</u> <u>and on top of it</u> <u>you are accused of having done something</u> <u>that you did not do.</u></p> <p><u>In actual fact,</u> <u>you did</u> <u>nothing</u> <u>that you could be blamed for.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>• Your actions</u> <u>were correct,</u><u>• your intentions</u> <u>were the best.</u>
24	<p><u>Now let me show you, my friends,</u> <u>how</u> <u>the particular mass image of self-importance,</u> <u>strengthened by various</u> <u>personal images,</u> <u>may be responsible for</u> <u>such an occurrence,</u> <u>which is</u> <u>especially painful</u> <u>since you do not see</u> <u>how you</u> <u>attracted it.</u></p>

This mass image [i.e., *This mass image of self-importance*]

makes you

- *strive and*

- *fight*

to be

- *in the first place,*

to be

- *special* [i.e., *to be in a special place*],

so that

you can collect

whatever your soul

thinks

it needs.

In order to

reach

that special place [i.e., *In order to reach that special place*

that you are striving and fighting to be in],

your actions

would have to be

anything but

- *decent,*

- *loyal, or*

- *idealistic:*

they [i.e., *your actions*]

would have to be

- *ruthless,*

- *selfish –*

and would often have to

- *betray*

the very

- *thing or*

- *person*

you desire to be loyal to.

To gain

this special place of approval,

you feel

tempted

to do the very thing

you in fact

abstain from [i.e., *you feel tempted to be ruthless to get this special place of approval, but you do not in fact give in to this temptation to be ruthless to get this special place of approval*].

25

Being a

- **decent and**
- **honest**

individual,

you do not give in to

the temptation [i.e., you do not give in to the temptation to be ruthless to get this special place of approval because you are a decent and honest individual].

You feel it [i.e., You feel the temptation to be ruthless]

- **vaguely,**
- **without real awareness of its** [i.e., of the temptation's]
 - **significance and**
 - **meaning.**

In fact,

you are so afraid

when you feel

- **such a temptation** [i.e., such a temptation to be ruthless to get the special place of approval you are striving to get]

and

- **such emotions**

that you cover it up quickly [i.e., you quickly cover up the temptation to be ruthless].

You do not want to acknowledge

that it [i.e., that such a temptation to be ruthless and selfish to get the special place of approval you are striving to get]
exists in you.

Your conscience

neither allows you

- **to act in accordance with the temptation,**

nor does it allow you

- **to become fully aware of it** [i.e., to become fully aware of the temptation].

In order to

counterbalance the influence of

the mass image of self-importance,

you overcompensate

by scrupulously proving

- **the decent side in you,**
- **the side you intend to obey.**

26

**What is the result
of this conflict** [i.e., this conflict between wanting to be ruthless on the
one hand and yet wanting to be decent and kind on the other]?

Due to
the unconscious nature
of the inner battle,
the outer happening
responds to
• your unconscious negative side [i.e., your desire to be ruthless to get
what you need for approval by others]
and not to
• the positive side [i.e., your desire to be decent and kind],
even though
the positive [i.e., your desire to be decent and kind]
has won out
in your
outer actions.

This is according to
an unalterable law [i.e., the unalterable law of cause and effect – it is the
unconscious cause, not the conscious action, that causes the effects].

I have often told you that.

You have experienced it [i.e., You have experienced the unalterable law of
cause and effect]
in some ways
on your path of self-purification,
but
there are many areas left
where you are
as yet
unable to apply this truth.

If the battle you are fighting
is not
consciously
understood
in its
full significance,
outer events
will follow in such a way
as if
the selfish side [i.e., the selfish and ruthless side of you that
you had so carefully hidden from view]
had won out.

The
outer result
MUST respond
to the impulse [i.e., to the impulse or temptation to be selfish
and ruthless]
which is
unconscious.

27

The more
you advance on this path,
the more
you will see
that you are
not
asked to accept anything I say
as a
dogmatic statement.

[Rather,]
You will
experience
the utter truth of these statements
yourself.

But you can do so [i.e., But you can experience the truth of these statements yourself] only if
you have
the honesty to

- *search for,*
- *verify, and*
- *acknowledge*

the negative side
you so bravely battle against.

This [negative] side
will cause you trouble
until you

- *come face to face with it,*
- *acknowledge it,*
- *allow it to exist –*
not by
 - *giving in to it*

nor by

- *trying to change it*
after you have recognized its existence,

but by

- *seeing its reality*
at the point where you are.

When you do that [i.e., When you see its reality at the point
where you are on your path],
you can take the next step
by asking yourself

- *why*
that negative tendency exists in you.
- *Why*
does this temptation exist?

You will invariably
come up with the answer
that you
desire an elevated position
in the eyes of the world
in order to convince yourself
that your
inferiority feelings
are unjustified.

You believe,
deep in your heart,
that you need all this [i.e., that you need an elevated position
in the eyes of the world]
in order to survive –
not

- physically,

but

- emotionally.

And, to get it [i.e., to get the elevated position in the eyes of the world that you
think you need in order to survive emotionally],
it seems necessary
to

- betray others,

to be

- ruthless,
- disloyal, or
- selfish.

But as long as
your good intentions [i.e. as long as your good intentions to be
a decent and kind human being]
prevent you from
even recognizing
this temptation [i.e., this temptation to be ruthless,
disloyal, or selfish],
the outer occurrence
will, as I said,
respond to the negative side [i.e., respond to your unconscious ruthless,
disloyal, or selfish side],
even though
you have not given in to it [i.e., even though you have not
given in to the temptation to be ruthless, disloyal, or selfish].

Not knowing this [i.e., Not knowing that the outer occurrence will respond to
your unconscious negative side],
it [i.e., the negative outer occurrence]
seems like
an injustice to you.

	<p><u>And it is actually</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the injustice</u> <u>that hurts you</u> <p><u>more than</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the disappointment</u> <u>in a particular person.</u>
28	<p><u>This [i.e., This negative outer occurrence you experience at the hands of the other]</u> <u>may still</u> <u>seem</u> <u>unjust to you.</u></p> <p><u>You may think,</u></p> <p><u>"As long as</u> <u>I have not given in to the temptation [to be ruthless, disloyal, or selfish],</u> <u>why do the consequences</u> <u>have to be</u> <u>as though</u> <u>I had actually committed</u> <u>the wrong act?</u></p> <p><u>Isn't the most important thing</u> <u>that my</u> <u>actions</u> <u>are right?"</u></p> <p><u>No, my friends.</u></p> <p><u>Feelings</u> <u>are actions too,</u> <u>although they [i.e., although feelings]</u> <u>do not manifest</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>in the same way and</u>• <u>with the same quick results</u> <u>as outer actions do.</u>

Nevertheless,
every
• thought and
• attitude,
whether
• conscious
or
• unconscious,
is a
definite act.

But
the more
unconscious it is [i.e., the more unconscious the act,
thought, attitude, or feeling is],
the greater
the consequence

and therefore
the more
puzzling the outcome.

29

By facing
the negative side [i.e., the selfish, ruthless side of you],
you evidence
the bravest emotion there is:
that of
self-honesty.

Therefore,
you do not have to
be ashamed
that this battle [i.e., this battle with your negative side]
is going on in you.

It [i.e., This battle with your negative side]
is to your credit.

But you will fight the battle [i.e., you will fight the battle with your negative side]
much more effectively
by allowing it [i.e., by allowing your negative side and your battle with it]
to enter your conscious mind.

You will then [i.e., *By allowing your negative side and your battle with it to enter your conscious mind you will then*]

come to understand
to a fuller degree
all

the laws of

• *the soul,*

the laws of

• *human relationship, and*

the laws of

• *the universe.*

Then [i.e., *Then when you come to understand the laws of the soul, of human relationship, and of the universe*]

• *you will no longer*
feel

that an injustice has been done to you

and

• *your hurt*
will be alleviated

to a considerable degree.

Also,

there is a good chance
that no further

• *betrayal and*

• *accusation*

will occur.

Because

once the negative side
of your battle

has become conscious,

it [i.e., *the negative side of your battle*]

will lose power.

30	<p><u>But if such an outer event [i.e., if a painful or negative outer event] does recur, you will feel very differently about it.</u></p> <p><u>You</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>will learn a lot from such an event [i.e., such a painful or negative outer event]</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>will be</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>strengthened rather than</u>• <u>weakened.</u> <p><u>You</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>will feel something very constructive about it, and you</u>• <u>may be able to turn the course of events in a positive direction.</u>
31	<p><u>When you</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>experience the existence of this mass image [of self-importance] in you – not just</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>intellectually</u>• <u>emotionally –</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>recognize the underlying erroneous concept that has thus far governed you [i.e., The erroneous concept that “I AM inferior” if I cannot get approval or admiration from others, which is the wrong conclusion of the mass image of self-importance], you will have made a major step forward in the direction of inner freedom.</u>

32

*The example I gave [i.e., the example regarding betrayal]
is just one of many possible ones.*

Believe me, my friends,

whenever you

experience

something

that

• hurts and

that

• you do not understand,

whenever you

feel unjustly treated

because

you cannot find

any wrongdoing on your part,

search

in this direction [i.e. in the direction of the mass image of self importance].

Bring out

the mass image of self-importance.

You can only do so [i.e., You can only bring out the mass image of self-importance]

by

• feeling

the need to be special, and

• understanding that

you feel so [i.e., that you feel the need to be special]

not

• out of malice,

not

• because you wish to belittle others –

who must automatically become smaller

if you succeed in becoming bigger –

and not

• out of pride

for the sake of pride,

but

• out of the mistaken idea

that

being special

means

survival for you.

When you
recognize this trend [i.e., this trend where you feel your need to be special
for your emotional survival],

you will also
free yourself from
destructive self-accusations [i.e., self-accusations that you are trying to
belittle others or that you are operating out of malice or pride].

You will simply know

- that you have harbored
a wrong concept, and
 - that your emotional survival
does not
depend on
 - other people's opinion of you,
- but
[depends] solely on
 - your own opinion of yourself.

The more
you cater to
the opinion of others,
the less
you think of yourself,
deep in your soul.

Hence
a vicious circle,
always built on a false premise,
is activated within you.

33

Again, I say:
all this cannot be understood
on a purely intellectual level;

it will benefit
only those
who develop the habit
of questioning the significance
of their various emotional reactions.

	<p><u>Yet these words [i.e., the words of this lecture]</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>may leave valuable impressions</u> <u>in others too [i.e., in those who have not yet developed the habit of questioning the significance of their various emotional reactions]</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>may come to fruition</u> <u>at a later time,</u> <u>when the path is voluntarily undertaken.</u>
34	<p><u>Before we turn to your questions,</u> <u>I would like to say a few words</u> <u>to some friends</u> <u>who have never</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>found their way here and</u> <u>who have never</u> <u>had any personal contact with</u> <u>this group,</u> <p><u>but</u> <u>who</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>read the lectures with interest.</u> <p><u>Attention has been brought to us</u> <u>that some of them</u> <u>try, on their own,</u> <u>to reach the depth of their souls</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>by themselves, or</u> • <u>with some friends.</u> <p><u>Their good intent is appreciated.</u></p> <p><u>But I should like to tell them</u> <u>that it is not really possible</u> <u>to succeed</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>by oneself,</u> <u>or even</u> • <u>with someone else</u> <u>who has not had</u> <u>personal experience</u> <u>in this particular method.</u> <p><u>The method of the work itself</u> <u>cannot be conveyed by the lectures.</u></p>

The lectures
serve as
• general material,
but they
cannot give
• the method itself.

You will do
no harm
in working by yourself,
but you will
not really get very far.

I would therefore suggest to those friends [who only read the lectures
with interest, working by themselves or with friends],
do not hesitate
to get in touch with those members of this group
who are qualified to help.

If they [i.e., If those who are working by themselves]
are really interested in
using this method,
whether

• for others

or

• for themselves,

this [i.e., working with members of the group who are qualified to help]
will be necessary.

35	<p><u><i>And now, my friends, let us turn to your questions.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Do you have any questions about this lecture?</i></u></p> <p>QUESTION: <u><i>I cannot understand which alternative to take between</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>being dependent on other people's opinion and leaning too much in the direction of catering for approval,</i></u><u><i>or</i></u>• <u><i>going to the opposite extreme [i.e., disregarding all opinions of others].</i></u> <p><u><i>I cannot see how to compromise.</i></u></p>
36	<p>ANSWER: <u><i>It is not a compromise.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>You have difficulty in finding the right middle way perhaps? {Yes.}</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Let me try to show you how this comes about [i.e., how finding the right middle way comes about] in a very natural way.</i></u></p>
37	<p><u><i>You are not expected to decide what the right middle way is.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>You couldn't do that [i.e., You could not "decide" what the right middle way is].</i></u></p> <p><u><i>The moment you would have to do that [i.e., the moment you would have to "decide" what the right middle way is], there would already be something compulsive about it.</i></u></p>

There cannot be
a choice
for you,
such as:

"I go that far
in this direction,
and then I go this far
in the other direction."

This [i.e., This "choosing" which direction and how far to go in a particular matter]
would be something
• forced and
• unnatural.

The necessity
for you to
make a decision
does not apply to
• weighing and
• measuring
the right middle way.

It [i.e., The necessity and process of your "making a decision"]
applies much rather to
your
• facing yourself
honestly and
• entirely forgetting,
for the time being,
the question:

"What am I supposed to do?"

38

I might say that
this "What am I supposed to do?"
stands in the way of
arriving at recognitions [i.e., arriving at honest recognitions
about the self].

It [i.e., This questioning, “What am I supposed to do?”]
prevents you from
finding the truth about yourself.

It [i.e., This questioning, “What am I supposed to do?”]
blocks you [i.e., blocks you from finding the truth about yourself].

First,
do not think about that [i.e., do not think about, “What am I supposed to do?”]
at all.

The outer action
may not change at first,
even after you have made your recognition [i.e., even after you have made
your honest recognition about what is true about yourself].

But
your inner motives
will change [i.e., your inner motives will change as you
come to recognize the truth about yourself].

In some cases,
your outer actions
will change automatically,
but this will be fruitful
only if
it [i.e., only if the change in your outer actions]
is a natural result of
your inner growth.

The first thing you should be concerned with
is understanding
yourself:

- your**
 - **emotions,**
- your**
 - **motives,**
- your**
 - **desires and**
 - **fears.**

All these can be
brought to light
in every incident
that bothers you.

39

Once you have reached
a certain point in self-recognition,
you become aware of
the false concepts
you harbor unconsciously.

Each time
such a false concept
• is observed
and therefore
• becomes
more
and more conscious,
you will be
less
and less under
• bondage and
• compulsion.

By understanding
your
• wrong conclusion,
you will become
more aware of
the
• right conclusion.

If you go on that way,
you will
• be increasingly able
to observe your
emotional reactions and
you will
• understand them [i.e., understand your emotional reactions]
better.

Then
a point will come
where you realize that
your
• wrong concept
is
• useless and
• harmful.

When it [*When the point where you realize that your wrong concept is wrong, useless, and harmful*]

comes,

discard it [*i.e., discard your wrong concept*] –

not

• **outwardly,**

but truly

• **within yourself** –

and

you will be

free.

False concepts

are always

held on to

in the mistaken assumption

that they are

• **useful or**

• **protective.**

Once you realize

that this is not so [*i.e., that your false concepts are neither useful nor protective*],
you will

no longer

hold on to them.

You will then be able to say to yourself:

"I no longer

need approval

so desperately

that I sometimes

• **violate myself,**

• **become untrue to myself,**

or else

• **defy dependency**

by rebelling against it [*i.e., by rebelling against my sense of dependency for approval*].

I can now

stand on my own feet.

My
• inner life and
• value
is not dependent on others.

It [i.e., My inner life and value]
depends on
my own self-respect
which I can
• further and
• live up to
only
by being fully aware of myself."

Once you have
gained this freedom,
the right middle way
will not be something
you have to laboriously figure out;
it [i.e., the right middle way]
will develop
• naturally
• without your even thinking about it.

The right way
will just be there
because
you no longer
have to prove anything
• to anyone else
or
• to yourself.

40

*If you have a tendency
to depend too much
on other people's opinion,
it is because
you have to
prove something to
• them.*

*And if you
• rebel against this bondage [i.e., against bondage to other people's opinion]
and
• turn into
the opposite extreme
with a defiant
"I don't care" attitude,
then you
prove something to
• yourself [i.e., prove to yourself that you do not care about
the opinions of others].*

*Both extremes
come from an attempt
to prove something.*

*When there is
no longer a need in you
to prove anything,
the right middle way
will be as natural as breathing.*

*Do you think of
having to breathe
less or more
in order to get the proper supply of oxygen into your lungs?*

No.

- *You breathe
automatically.*
- *It [i.e., Breathing]
is a completely natural process.*

[In breathing]

You have found
the right middle way
without having to

- deliberate and
- choose:

- not too much and
- not too little,
- just enough
to give you what you need
so as to maintain your health.

The same applies to
any
soul process.

Do you understand?

41

QUESTIONER:
Well, to a certain extent.

I wonder if all that applies
• intellectually
as well as
• emotionally?

ANSWER:
Very few people
think
in terms of this
mass image [of self-importance]
intellectually,
my dear.

It [i.e., This mass image of self-importance]
is rarely
on the surface,
since
all images
are of an
unconscious
nature.

You may ask
anyone, at random,
whether he believes
in his intellect
that his

- life and
- happiness

depend on
what other people think of him.

Everyone
prefers
to be thought well of by others.

That is natural.

But

- the degree of dependency [on the opinions of others],
- its consequences, and
- the extent to which a person goes
to meet
the demands of the image [i.e., the mass image of self-importance]
is usually
completely unconscious
until
a serious self-search
is undertaken in this direction.

42

QUESTIONER:
I feel

- consciously and
- very definitely
that other people's opinions
are very important.

ANSWER:

I wonder

whether you realize

consciously

- **to what degree**

**this [i.e., to what degree the opinion of others]
is important for you,**

and

- **what this dependency**

causes you

- **to do or**
- **to forsake.**

But

the more

**conscious it is [i.e., the more conscious your dependency on
the opinion of others is],**

the better

for you

in the sense of

**being able to think about it
objectively.**

43

QUESTIONER:

I thought it is more difficult

if a wrong conclusion

goes so far

that it is

in the

- **intellect**

as well as

in the

- **emotions?**

ANSWER:

On the contrary.

Your intellect

**is more accessible to
reasoning.**

Once you have
understood,
once
intelligence
is at work,
a wrong concept
can be corrected.

But when
one is consciously
convinced of
the right thing,
it is often difficult
to break through
the separating wall
between

- reason

and

- emotion.

The resistance
to face the fact
that one holds an opinion
that does not correspond to
one's

- conscious and
- reasonable

thoughts
is an obstacle.

However,
you do not have to struggle with it
if you admit to yourself
that your concept is wrong.

44

QUESTION:
May I ask
how this
mass image [of self-importance]
affects the individual's
God-image?

ANSWER:
God-images
have many forms.

But whatever they may be,
the connection
between
• the mass image of self-importance
and
• the God-image
is this:

it [i.e., the connection between the mass image of self-
importance and the God-image]
creates
a further conflict in the psyche.

The stronger
• the mass image of self-importance
and the stronger
• the God-image,
the more
the personality
will be disturbed,
because
two conflicting
• needs and
• compulsions
• work against
one another and
• cause
a short-circuit.

	<p><u>In cases that are less crass, where one image [i.e., either the God-image or the mass image of self-importance] is much stronger than the other, the conflict will exist, of course;</u></p> <p><u>it [i.e., the conflict brought about by the stronger of the two images, either the mass image of self-importance or the God-image] will create many disturbances, but each [i.e., each disturbance] would be due to one particular wrong concept [i.e., either wrong concept due to the God-image or the wrong concept due to mass image of self-importance].</u></p> <p><u>But when</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>• the God-image</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>• the mass image of self-importance</u> <p><u>work against one another, the person who has this conflict cannot handle life any more.</u></p>
45	<p><u>The existence of these two images [i.e., the God-image and the mass image of self-importance] together causes a vicious circle.</u></p> <p><u>One current is:</u></p> <p><u>"I need to be in first place, I need special consideration."</u></p> <p><u>Because of religious mass images about God, one feels all the more</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>• guilty and</u><u>• inferior</u> <p><u>[i.e., guilty for having to be in "first place" and "special"].</u></p>

Guilt

cannot remedy

this situation [i.e., Guilt cannot remedy your guilt and sense of being inferior to others before God because of your need to be in “first place” and “special”].

You can only do so [i.e., You can only remedy your sense of guilt and sense of being inferior to others before God because of your need to be in “first place”] **if you understand the cause of it.**

The guiltier

you feel,

the less

you dare to look into

the cause [i.e., the cause of your guilt and the cause of your sense of being inferior to others before God], **and**

the stronger

you are compelled

to wish a wrong attitude away, so to speak [i.e., wish away a wrong attitude, the attitude, which is the very cause of your guilt and sense of being inferior before God], **by looking away from it** [i.e., by looking away from this wrong attitude].

46

Thus

the following vicious circle is created:

• **the guiltier**

you feel,

• **the more**

you need approval

in the belief

that it [i.e., that approval by others]

will alleviate

your feelings of

• **guilt and**

• **inferiority.**

• **And the more**

you clamor for such approval,

• **the guiltier**

you feel [i.e., the guiltier you feel for clamoring for

such approval even more than before].

This conflict
arises out of
two different directions:

one direction is

- **the God-image,**

the other direction is

- **the real self in you**

which

- **registers and**

- **observes**

everything and

- **tries to convey to you**

- **that you are mistaken,**

- **that this** [i.e., that trying to relieve your feelings of guilt and inferiority before God by getting even more approval from others]

is the wrong way [i.e., wrong way to relieve your feelings of inferiority].

But its voice [i.e., But the voice of the real self in you]

- **is misunderstood and**

- **is identified as**

the voice of the God-image [instead of the voice of the real self in you].

Thus the contrary pull [i.e., the pull from the message that getting approval from others is the wrong way to relieve your feelings of guilt and inferiority before God],

which draws you away from

the mass image of self-importance

comes from two sides:

- **the side of the real self** [which is the true message]

and

- **the illusory side,**

where the false God-image rules,

[and these two, the real self in you and the false God-image,]

- **do not coincide,**

they

- **are not at peace**

with one another.

Do you understand? {Yes.}

47

Receive our blessings.

Accept from us
the strength
to look for that part in you
that causes you so much trouble.

It is the part in you
where you
separate
• yourself
from
• your fellow human beings,
out of
• wrong conclusions,
because of
• imagined needs.

Find it [i.e., Find that part in you where you separate yourself from your fellow
human beings, that part that causes you so much trouble]

and
• your entire outlook
will change.

- You will
become objective,
- you will
be in reality.

The mere awareness
of this part of your being,
where you are caught in the mass image [of self-importance],
will change your life.

48

Receive our
• **love and**
• **blessings,**
each one of you.

Continue on this path,
• **grow**
in it,
• **rejoice**
in it.

Be in peace,
be in God!

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