Pathwork Lecture 236: The Superstition of Pessimism

This lecture is given in an expanded poetic format, what I call a Devotional Format 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 Format so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry – that is, devotionally.

The blessings to me in developing this format have been truly profound, and my wish is that this Devotional Format will be a blessing to others. I invite you to slowly read and ponder this format 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 and italicized. [My adds of commentary/clarification/interpretation are in brackets, italicized, and not bolded.] To learn more of my Devotional Format and see the lectures I have done in this way, go to https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/

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- Greetings and
- blessings,
  - my very beloved friends.

You are
  - bathed
    in the
    - love of God,
    in the
    - Christ force
      that awakens
        in your
        innermost being.

This
  - love and
  - strength
    reaches into
    your very being.
You can feel it [i.e., You can feel this love and strength, the Christ force]
if you
open
your
• inner
gaze and
your
• inner
hearing
to
the
• sound and
the
• beauty and
the
• aliveness
of this
new force [i.e., of this new Christ force]
that is awakening
all over the universe.

You have journeyed
into
your inner being
on this path.

You have become aware of
many
• obstructions and
• negativities
that you did not know existed.

Only as you know them [i.e., Only as you know these many obstructions and negativities within you]
do you also
make the connection
that
it is with those negative attitudes
that
you
create negative experience.
Tonight I wish to give you
  a new realization
  about
  a special kind of attitude
  that I will call
  the superstition of pessimism.

Once it [i.e., Once this attitude I call “the superstition of pessimism”]
  is conscious,
  it [i.e., Your consciousness of this inner attitude within you that
  I call “the superstition of pessimism”]
  will aid you tremendously
  in eliminating
  further obstructions to
  realizing
  your
  divine being.

When you reach
  a certain level of awareness
  you will come across an attitude that says,

"If I believe in
  the positive,
  • I will be
    disappointed,
  and
  • I may chase it [i.e., I may chase the positive]
    away
    by my very belief in it [i.e., by my very belief in the positive
    as a possibility].

It may be smarter
  to believe
  • that nothing good
    can happen to me,
  • that I cannot ever
    change,
  • that I cannot ever
    grow out of
    my obstructions."
This [i.e., This negative attitude toward the positive as even a possibility for your life] is
  • a game,
  • a kind of deliberate but destructive playfulness,
    which is based on nothing but superstition.

The obvious kind of superstitiousness is on a much more primitive level and
  • most of you do not adhere to such beliefs.

But
  • a much subtler superstitiousness does exist in all of you.

Find within you the voice that says,

"I dare not believe in the good.

It [i.e., The good] may not happen."

It is sufficient to ascertain no more than
  • this voice,
  • this "word"
    you speak into yourself.
The superstition of pessimism begins as a superstitious destructive playfulness, but then you get lost in its very painful effects.

You may really believe in what you first assumed as a safety measure [i.e., a safety measure against disappointment should you not realize the good or positive you wish for].

However, • denying the positive and • believing in the worst to appease the gods, as it were, is destructive.

You do not know the power of such thoughts.

There is no playing with such power [i.e., There is no playing with the power of negative thoughts] without grave consequences.

There is no such game [i.e., There is no game involving playing with negative, denying, or destructive thoughts] that does not have a grave effect.
The power of this game [i.e., The power of this game involving playing with negative, denying, or destructive thoughts] needs to be made conscious.

It [i.e., The need to make conscious the power of this game involving playing with negative, denying, or destructive thoughts] can apply to many things in your life.

When you have an illness, it [i.e., the need to make conscious the power of this game involving playing with negative, denying, or destructive thoughts] may apply to the healing.

When you find yourself alone and unloved, you may playfully – safely, as you think – express the belief that it will always be that way.
When you lack
   • funds or
   • a fulfilling profession
you say into yourself,

"I had better believe it [i.e., I had better believe that my lack of funds or lack of a fulfilling profession] must be that way, so maybe then it [i.e., so maybe then funds I desire and a fulfilling profession] can come to me unexpectedly."

It is as though you hoped for
   you hoped for some idealized parental figure
   • to assuage your doubts,
   • to come forth and tell you,

"No, no, my child, it [i.e., the situation regarding your funds and profession] is not that bad, it [i.e., the situation regarding your funds and profession] is all going to be wonderful."

Without knowing it, you dictate into your soul a belief that really creates circumstances that prove that belief.
You then "forget" that you had started this game [i.e., you “forget” that you had started this game by believing that having richness of funds or a fulfilling profession was impossible for you without some idealized parent figure or “god” to give you such things and to make all things wonderful for you] in a spirit of
• superstition
or perhaps
in a spirit of
• emotional manipulation.

You become so involved in what you have unwittingly created [i.e., so involved in the lack of funds or the lack of a fulfilling profession that you have unwittingly created] that you really begin to believe that
• the negative is
• the reality.

What started out as a
• superstitious safety measure gradually becomes
• belief
  on another level of your consciousness.

• The belief creates
• the reality and you stay in exactly that position.
This [i.e., This ATTITUDE in which what begins as a superstitious safety measure to prevent disappointment and leads to the BELIEF that having richness of funds or a fulfilling profession is impossible for you without some idealized parent figure or “god” to give you such things, a belief that CREATES the REALITY of lack of funds or a fulfilling profession],

my friends, is a subtle attitude that you previously could not see in yourself.

However, • the work you are doing and • the progress you are experiencing have made many of you capable of pinpointing this particular kind of superstition.

All such trickery of the mind is very dangerous.

The danger lies in the misuse of • the word, the power of • your thinking, the power of • your self-indoctrination.
When you encounter this self-deception in you [i.e., When you encounter this SELF-DECEPTION in you in which what begins as a superstitious defense or safety measure to prevent disappointment from having lack of funds or lack of a fulfilling profession you desire and which leads to the BELIEF that having richness of funds or a fulfilling profession is impossible for you without some idealized parent figure or “god” to give you such things, a belief that CREATES the REALITY of lack of funds or a fulfilling profession],

my dearest friends,

• halt and
• question yourself about
  its [i.e., about this self-deception’s]
  effects upon your life.

• Distance yourself from your life
  and
• observe what you are doing.

Connect with
  the level of intentionality
  behind it [i.e., behind this self-deception].

The next step will be:

"I want to
  stop
  this kind of self-trickery.

I cannot trick life.

I choose to be honest.

What I say to myself
  must be
  what I really mean
  on the deepest level of my being.

It [i.e., What I say to myself]
  must correspond to
  the truth of life."
As you thus counter the habitual trickery of the superstition of pessimism, where it may exist in you, you challenge it [i.e., you challenge the habitual trickery of the superstition of pessimism] with your decision to find a new pathway to your mind's activity.

The next step is the most crucial one.

It [i.e., This next step] may sound very simple and it actually is very simple, however, it [i.e., however, this next step] may seem to require a tremendous amount of courage –

the courage to believe in the good.
This [i.e., The courage to believe in the good] is truly one of the abysses of illusion.

Without assurances of the outcome you will have to venture into an unknown land where you believe in the positive.

Assert your faith in the ever-benign universe.

Express the truth that all possibilities exist.

It is your choice which one of the many roads you wish to travel,

• the road of defeatism, denial, negative expectation,

or

• the road of faith in the beautiful unfoldment of limitless possibilities that is the innate nature of life.

These [limitless] possibilities are anchored in your own soul.
There is nothing that you cannot realize.

There is nothing you cannot experience if you truly give yourself to it.

Remove the anchor that holds you back from this flowing expansion.

Allow the involuntary processes with their limitless creative possibilities to carry you and bring you to ever new shores of fulfillment.

Assert your courageous faith in the best of your inner spirit.

The courage lies in bridging the gap between

- the assertion of the faith [i.e. the assertion of your courageous faith in the best of your inner spirit]

- until it [i.e., until your courageous faith in the best of your inner spirit]

- bears fruit

- and is realized.
The temptation to lean on the old superstitious negative beliefs is that you need not invest in a waiting period of uncertainty.

You speak the negative belief and it [i.e., and the negative belief] occurs.

You have the questionable certainty of immediate results that you are so keen on.

On the other hand, the journey to faith in the possibilities of positive unfoldment requires

- a growing period,
- a ripening.

This [i.e., This required growing period and ripening] is necessary simply because your mental processes have been so accustomed to negative beliefs that they have to readjust themselves so they can take root in the new land of

- beauty and
- abundance.
You are
• changing
  from
• one land of inner being
  into
• another [i.e., into another land of inner being],
• establishing
  new
• roots
  and
• new

• growth.

A period of gestation
is necessary
that requires
the same kind of faith
  inexperienced gardeners possess,
• sowing
  seeds
  and
• waiting for
  plants to sprout,
  without ever having seen
  the process work.

It is the same
  with you.

Your courage
lies in
  believing
  in
• the best your innermost being
  has to offer and
  in what
• life
  has to offer.

That assertion
  of faith [i.e., That assertion of faith in what the best your innermost being
  has to offer and assertion of faith in what life has to offer]
  is a substantial step
  that needs to be reinforced.
Now, my friends, here is a pitfall I wish to warn against.

• The courage to believe in positive life unfoldment can very easily be confused with

• wishful thinking.

There is a
• subtle and yet
• very distinct difference between

• wishful thinking and

• a virile faith in the positive.

You all indulge very easily in wishful thinking.

Then, to be "realistic" – because you already know the disappointing results of wishful thinking – you revert into the superstition of pessimism.
Let us be very clear about the difference between wishful thinking and the realism of positive belief.

There is one very distinct, clear, simple, and important factor that will simplify matters for you in order to distinguish between wishful thinking and the realism of positive belief.

Wishful thinking is spinning dreams of fulfillment without having to pay a price: without any change of personality or attitude or approach or thinking or feeling or acting or being.
You daydream that this or that desirable fulfillment will
  • magically and
  • gratuitously come your way
  • without any investment in
    • life and
    • the process of creation,
  • without contributing to
    the evolutionary process by committing to
    your purification.

Wishful thinking is a passive dreaming in which you hope against hope that something will happen to you
  • that is desirable and
  • that does not require you to remove the very block that prevents the desirable
    • event or
    • state.

The less you invest in the effort that could make desirable events or states a reality,
the less you believe in their actual manifestation.
The more you justify the superstition of pessimism,
the less desirable your life becomes.

Increasingly you wish to escape from it [i.e., escape from your undesirable life]
by spinning daydreams that substitute for reality.

This [i.e., Spinning daydreams that substitute for reality] consumes a lot of creative energy that could be invested in • real living and • fulfillment.

Daydreams are just the other side of the superstition of pessimism.

So you see, my friends, • the superstition of pessimism and • the daydreaming are • very closely interrelated and • not at all mutually exclusive.

You may • on the same day or even • within one hour indulge in • daydreams • and then perhaps in a matter of minutes indulge in • the superstition of negativity.
You could accomplish the very thing you daydream about – consuming a tremendous amount of • energy and • mischannelled creativity – if only you made a total commitment to • life and • self, giving your best to both [i.e., giving your best to both life and self], which are one.

When you fail to realize the daydream, your disappointment reinforces the superstition of pessimism.

What was begun as • a game then reinforces • the negative belief.

The vicious circle accelerates, and you find it ever more difficult to extricate yourself.

You swing back and forth from • the superstition of negativity to • the wishful daydream.
The more you indulge in the wishful daydream to escape from the negativity [i.e., to escape from the negativity brought on by your belief in the negative – by your superstition of pessimism], the less you can truly experience:
- beauty,
- fulfillment,
- abundance,
- love,
- joy,
- peace and
- excitement.

Wishful daydreams are often spun by a diminished ego rather than by the desire that comes from:
- your higher self,
- your inner spirit.

In these dreams [i.e., In these daydreams] a diminished ego seeks a false medicine against its own underdevelopment.
For example, rather than visualizing yourself in a productive vocation, 
• joyfully and 
• meaningfully contributing to life, or 
visualizing your 
• success and 
• abundance for the sheer enjoyment of 
the fruits of your labor as a valid expression of life, you dream of yourself as a great person in order to impress 
• others, perhaps 
• your family or 
• those who have slighted you.

Even in these ego gratifications, however, the original facets of true value are contained.

Your dignity is a reality that you 
• look for and often 
• displace, confusing 
• it [i.e., confusing the reality of dignity] with 
• the petty pride of the limited ego.
The true value
   of your inner spirit
  aims for
   rich fulfillment
     of
      • love,
      • abundance,
      • friendship,
      • communication,
     even for
      • recognition and
      • respect.

But
in a daydream
it [i.e., love, abundance, friendship, communication,
   recognition and respect]
   all comes
     in a fairy tale manner
       that does not really convince you,
         so of course
           you cannot believe in it [i.e., you cannot believe in the
             authenticity of any of the love, abundance, friendship,
             communication, recognition or respect you receive].

Many of you
may have observed in the course of your pathwork
that
  at the beginning of your path
  you still had
     the habit
       of indulging considerably
         in daydreaming.

Perhaps
even without
  • really noticing it or
  • intentionally trying to stop it,
    you lost the desire for it [i.e., you lost the desire for daydreaming].
The more you deal with the reality of your being, the more real life becomes.

The temptation to manufacture wish-fulfilling daydreams diminishes.

Yet many of you still indulge in it [i.e., still indulge in daydreaming], at least in certain areas of your life.

Where this is the case [i.e., Where you still indulge in daydreaming], look deeper.

Find the level where you also still indulge in the superstition of your negative beliefs.
You can pursue this thought [i.e., this thought of finding the level where you still indulge in the superstition of your negative beliefs] and discover yourself hoping, in a very subtle way, that someone will come along and give you fulfillment gratuitously, without
• any effort on your part, without your
• removing the obstructions to the fulfillment or even • attempting to see that they [i.e., without your attempting to see that the obstructions to the fulfillment] lie within yourself.

You hope that
• a super-authority will reassure you that it [i.e., You hope that a super-authority will assure you that the fulfillment you desire in life] will happen just like in your daydreams,
• you don’t have to • earn or • acquire it [i.e., You hope that you don’t have to earn or acquire the fulfillment you desire in life],
• it [i.e., You hope that the fulfillment you desire in life] will be given to you.
Just
  • ascertaining
    these random fleeting thoughts [i.e., ascertaining these random fleeting thoughts, such as your hope that a super-authority will assure you that the fulfillment you desire in life will happen, just like in your daydreams, or as your hope that you don’t have to earn or acquire the fulfillment you desire in life, or your hope that the fulfillment you desire in life will simply be given to you]

and
  • making them
concise
will
  • allow you
   to see their absurdity
   and
  • help you
   to give them up.

You will realize that
abundance
is available
only to the degree
you wish to
  • squander yourself into life,
giving as generously
  of your inner riches
to this whole process
as [the degree] you wish to
  • receive from
  life's abundance.

You encounter
the difficulty
of sustaining
  • happiness and
  • pleasure
so many times.
You have begun to open the road to it [i.e., to open the road to happiness and pleasure] through working on your purification.

As the results [i.e., As more happiness and pleasure, the results of your working on your purification.]

begin to stream into your being – both
• outwardly
and
• inwardly – you shrink back.

This [i.e., This shrinking back when confronted with more happiness and pleasure] is not simply an old habit.

It [i.e., This shrinking back when confronted with more happiness and pleasure] is the result of still being committed to
• the imaginary safety measure of the superstition of pessimism and, simultaneously, to
• wishful daydreaming.

The very thing that is your inner richness can create myriad kinds of fulfillment.

• You withhold your inner richness and yet
• strive for results through
  • the superstition of pessimism and
  • wishful daydreaming.
You ignore
the inexhaustible wells of yourself
which could enrich
every minute of your life.

The enormous
• change and
• growth
  that has already occurred
  in so many of you
  has brought results
  that you
  still
dare not believe.

Much more
• fulfillment,
• happiness,
• pleasure and
• abundance
  exist in your lives.

But
  in those areas
  which are still blocked
  you reject
  pleasure
  because
  it [i.e., because pleasure]
  feels uncomfortable.

At least
  you are now
  fully aware of this [i.e., fully aware that, to you, pleasure
  still feels uncomfortable],
  which is obviously
  immeasurably important.
This message may help you to make further connections, so that you will
• eliminate all further obstructions to real happiness rather than
• dream about gratifications.

If you use the material in this lecture,
• observing it in you and
• applying what I have said, it will make a difference in your transformational work.

You will truly become capable of transforming a negative belief because
you can see it [i.e., because you can see that negative belief] as a trick on a very subtle level.

Give up that trick.

Have the courage
• of positive belief in your own richness
and
• of the positive intentionality to give of this richness to the best of your ability.

You will create the courage necessary to have faith in the best that life can ever be.
My dearest friends,
you in this community of human beings
are fulfilling
an all-important noble task.

The creative processes of the universe
depend on
every individualized entity.

Every tiniest step of
• goodwill within you,
every intent
• to be in truth,
• to face the truth
• to confront the worst in you and
• to transform it [i.e., to transform the worst in you]
into its original best

adds to
the great reservoir
of creative forces
that
• flow and
• push themselves
forever more
as manifestations
into all of life.

Each step in your growth
aids not only
your own
• happiness and
• fulfillment,
important as this is,
but is also
a powerful force
akin to nuclear energy,
generated by
• your community and
• other such nuclei,
that
• spreads and
• multiplies,
so that the Christ force
gains an ever-greater impetus.
QUESTION:
This lecture seems to apply to my life very much now.

It seems almost miraculous.

The business venture I've started
looks as if it's going to be a success.

I have blocked so much of
the positive,
yet
something very good is happening.

Now that it's happening,
I feel that I'm going a lot into my ego.

I find myself thinking
that I'm better than others.

I would like you to comment on this.

ANSWER:
That [i.e., Thinking that you're better than others]
is of course
how you destroy.

What you can do
when you discover yourself in that way of thinking
is to very
• simply and
• firmly –
  yet without pushing effort –
formulate another thought.

The thought might be:

"I do not wish to set myself
above others.

If a part of me
desires this [i.e., If a part of me desires to set myself above others],
I do not want it."
I pray to the divine forces within me to help me create another kind of attitude and therefore another reality.

If I want to be better than others, I must also feel undeserving to get the slightest fulfillment. I am not better than others and I am not worse than others."

All human beings are wonderful manifestations of divinity.

One flower is not better than another flower.

One bird is not better than another bird.

The mountain is not better than the sea.

The pine tree is not better than the oak.
Think of
  • yourself
  and
  • other people
    in those terms [i.e., in terms of you and other people not being better or worse than one another]
    and
    assert
    your goodwill
    to let others
    be their best.

Then
  you can let
  yourself
  be your best
  so you can
    • truly enjoy
      the fruits of your efforts
    and
    • feel deserving of them [i.e., feel deserving of the fruits of your efforts].

QUESTION:
All my life,
  it seems I have done exactly
  what the lecture was all about
  because
    I didn’t want to deal with disappointments.

But I also felt
  that
  I
  must
  have it [i.e., I must have success and fulfillment],
  I can’t bear
  not having it [i.e., I can’t bear not having success and fulfillment].
I was afraid
not only of
• failure,
but the
• meaning of failure.

Is it [i.e., Is success and fulfillment in the form and areas I wish it]
something that I was
• not meant to have, or
• what?

I found this superstition [i.e., this superstition of pessimism and failure]
• safe
but I see
• how it has limited me.

ANSWER:
It has [i.e., Your superstition of pessimism and failure has limited you].

The most productive attitude
about
the possibility of not getting the wish fulfilled
in this particular form
would be somewhat like the following:

"If such and such a desire
is not fulfilled
now,
I have the courage to
• confront myself and
• find out the meaning."

The meaning [i.e., The meaning of an unfulfilled desire]
is not something
• bad
nor does it imply
that you are
• undeserving or
that there is something
• terrible
that you need to fear.
It [i.e., An unfulfilled desire] may mean many different things.

It [i.e., An unfulfilled desire] may mean that there are certain obstructions within you that you need to know about, not just for the sake of
• this particular fulfillment,
but even more importantly for the sake of
• your total unfoldment as an entity, so as to become
• fully unified and
• whole.

You have
• intelligence,
• openness and
• goodwill
within you
to learn.

This [i.e., Learning to use the intelligence, openness, and goodwill you have within you] can be a glorious experience.

If what you desire does not happen
• now
• in this particular way,
what will make you
• happy and
• whole
will happen in another way that may possibly turn out better.
Pursue
the truth
of your potential
and state,

"I can take a
• momentary disappointment and
make it [i.e., and make this momentary disappointment]
• a stepping stone.

I need not fear
that it [i.e., need not fear that my desires, that the fulfillment
of the truth of my full potential]
may not be
• now,
• in this particular way.

There are
many ways [i.e., There are many ways that my desires and the truth
of my full potential can be fulfilled]."

With this attitude
you will create
a relaxed inner climate
so that
attaining the result [i.e., so that attaining fulfillment of your
desires and realizing your full potential]
will
not be
a question of do or die.

Such a demand [i.e., Such a do-or-die demand for the immediate fulfillment of
your desires and realizing your full potential]
creates an
unbearable tension
that is often
a direct block
to the fulfillment of the desire.
A
  • relaxed and
  • growth-producing
    attitude
    would
    • let you off the hook [i.e., the hook of a do-or-die demand for the
      immediate fulfillment of your desires and
      realizing your full potential]

    and
    • make it possible for you
      to believe in
        the best.

You will
  open the doors
  to finding out
  a great deal about yourself.

This [i.e., This finding out a great deal about yourself]
  will be infinitely richer than
  the mere fulfillment of your wish
  could ever have been.

QUESTION:
In reference to one word you used
  that I'm struggling with –
  can you amplify
  • what the elements of courage are
    and
  • where courage might be
    felt represented
    in the body?
**ANSWER:**

Yes.

The elements of courage are the

- ability and
- willingness
to
- experience
  - pain or
  - disappointment
and
- learn from it [i.e., learn from such pain or disappointment]
and
- use it as a threshold [i.e., use such pain or disappointment as a threshold].

That is courage.

It is courage to

- risk all that [i.e., to risk pain or disappointment as you venture forth into a new situation]
rather than
- stand still and
- have the safety
  of a little back door open,
  never venturing forth completely into a new situation.

That is courage.

To love is courage because the loved one may not always respond according to your
- desires and
- self-will.
To give is courage because the petty heart in its negativity still believes that when you give
• you will lose and
• no one will give you anything in return.

It is courage to risk finding out that your negative beliefs may not be true.

It takes even more courage to not be discouraged.

You feel courage in all of your body, as you feel love in all of your body, for courage is an essential part of love.
• Every cell and
• every pore
  • vibrates and
  • resonates
  with every divine attitude
  that you can possibly allow to express itself
  through
  your
  • mind,
  your
  • will,
  your
  • soul,
  and so through
  your
  • entire body.

I will close this meeting
with a prayer
that
the God in you
expresses.

As I have done once before,
I ask you to
• listen to
  your inner God and
• hear the words
  that resonate
  within you.

As I say the words
pick up
the echo within.

This will help you
to attune
  your listening inner ear
to the voice of God,
  filling you with messages
    such as these:
I [i.e., God] am  
• working through you.

I am  
• in all your thoughts,  
  if you wish to hear Me.

I am  
• in all you see,  
  if you wish to see Me.

I am  
• in all the words you speak,  
  if you wish Me  
  to express through you.

I am  
• in all your actions,  
  if that be your commitment.

And  
  • I am  
and  
  • I manifest through you,  
  you rediscover  
  life  
  in new terms.

You will  
see that life  
is  
a glorious oneness  
in which there is  
nothing to fear.

What need you fear  
if you  
  • discover Me?

What need you fear  
if you  
  • identify with Me?
Know that
you
are God.

As such [i.e., As God]
you
can never die.

Give that
which is you
now,
in your
• thinking,
in your
• being,
in your
• perceptions
to Me.

As you give yourself
to Me,
so must you be
eternal.

Listen for a minute
into yourselves
while I stay with you.

You are richly blessed,
my beloved friends.

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