Pathwork Lecture 81: Conflicts in the World of Duality

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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### 03
**Greetings.**

*God bless all of you,*

*my dearest friends.*

*Blessed is this hour* [i.e., blessed is this time we now spend together].

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### 04
**On this path**

you are going through various phases.

Broadly speaking,
so far
we have investigated the first level of your unconscious mind.

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by Eva Broch Pierrakos
Edited by Judith and John Saly; Devotional Version Posted 4/1/15
It [i.e., this first level of your unconscious mind] is the level on which you harbor wrong impressions and conclusions formed into rigid generalizations about different aspects of life.

We call these [generalized] rigid forms in the soul images.

Some of these [rigid generalized forms in the soul, or, images, in the first level of your unconscious mind] may be in themselves insignificant, yet they are important enough to distort your life.

We have penetrated into the world of duality, which is below this superficial level of your subconscious mind [i.e., below the superficial layer of your subconscious mind where images reside].

It is on this deeper level where the battle between the opposites is waged.

The battle [between the opposites in this deeper level, in the world of duality, below the superficial layers of the unconscious where images reside] creates a tremendous confusion in your life.
This confusion [created by the world of duality, by the battle between opposites in the deeper levels of your unconscious]

concerns
• the big issues as well as
• the seemingly lesser ones.

The great opposites [in the world of duality]
are
• life
  and death,
• happiness
  and unhappiness,
• love
  and selfishness,
• light
  and darkness.

Your confusion comes about because
a certain attitude toward life,
  • that is supposed to lead to
    • the desired goal,
  • often brings with it [i.e., brings with the desired goal],
    at least to some degree,
    • the undesired one [i.e., the undesired (opposite) result along with the desired goal].

It takes a great deal of
• self-honesty and
• awareness
to
• understand this phenomenon [of duality] and
• detect
  the inner error of
  • action and
  • reaction
  responsible for
  this confusing result [i.e., for the result that a certain attitude brings both desired and undesired outcomes].
Religion symbolizes the struggle between opposites [in the world of duality] as the struggle between • God and • the devil.

The confusions [i.e., the confusions that result when a certain attitude brings both desired and undesired outcomes] originating from this duality are said to be Satan's trick to deceive humankind so that it [i.e., so that humankind, in its confusion from duality in which a certain attitude brings both the desired result and the undesired opposite result] can no longer distinguish between • God's way and • the devil's [way].

That which is intrinsically • selfish and • destructive often appears on a superficial level as • righteous and • holy, and vice versa.
The distortion of truth into falsehood is part of the great battle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness which human beings erroneously imagine to be raging outside themselves; they [i.e., human beings] tend to believe that they are merely victims caught in the middle [of this battle raging outside themselves].

Having to choose between everyday alternatives that confront you often generates confusion. These alternatives are not crassly "good" or "bad"; [rather] they both [i.e., both alternatives that one has to choose between] stem from the same basic struggle [i.e., the struggle of choosing between dualistic opposites] in the human soul.
Modern psychology has recognized the same fundamental problem, calling it
• the life instinct
  versus
• the death instinct,
or
• the pleasure principle
  versus
• the reality principle.

In connection with
• the reality principle [versus the pleasure principle],
  however,
  there is also confusion.

So often people are not clear which principle [i.e., which of the two principles, either the pleasure principle or the reality principle] stands
• for God and
which
• for the devil.

Is
• the pleasure principle
  • selfish and therefore
  • destructive?

Can you indulge in it [i.e., can you indulge in the pleasure principle] without hurting others?

And does
• the reality principle stand for
  • duty,
  • responsibility,
  • work,
  • achievement,
and is therefore constructive?
On the other hand, you are told that God is
• happiness,
• bliss,
• light,
and [yet at the same time]
• the pleasure principle
makes you yearn for that [i.e., the pleasure principle makes you yearn for happiness, bliss, and light, all aspects of God].

Whether you know it or not, right at this point you are engulfed in
one of humanity's major confusions [i.e., the confusion of ‘if God is happiness, bliss, and light, how can my longing for these Godly qualities, longings of the pleasure principle in me, possibly be ‘selfish’ and ‘destructive’ and hence of the devil?’].

Underneath all the conflicts you have discovered through the work on this path is
a larger conflict
always related to your world of duality.
Behind [and beneath the superficial level of consciousness where] your
• images and
• misconceptions
[reside] you always find conflict.

[On this deeper level of consciousness] In one way or another, you find that you are torn between several alternatives.

By stripping away any superimposed motivations, at the core you are bound to find the basic opposites [of the world of duality within you].
But

this level of duality

on which you are torn between the opposites

is still

not the core.

Behind it [i.e., behind and deeper than this level of duality on which you are torn between the opposites]

is

the origin

of the world of duality,

just as

the world of duality

is where your images originate.

Strangely enough,

this underlying source [beneath the world of duality]

becomes

on the next [deeper] level [of consciousness]

one side

of the two opposites.

In other words,

• the source,

which is

• a unified core,

on the next level of consciousness [i.e., on the level of consciousness more superficial than the level of consciousness of the source, and hence on the level of consciousness more superficial than the level of consciousness of the unified core]

dsplits into two opposites.

This underlying core [i.e., the source, a unified core, which underlies the world of duality]

is

your longing for

• complete happiness,

• light,

• love,

• bliss,

• peace.
The original longing [of the soul at its core] is for happiness supreme, but life on earth [i.e., life in the world of duality] prohibits such fulfillment.

This prohibition [against fulfilling the original longing of the soul] creates
- the world of duality,
  and therefore
- your conflict.

It is equally true, however, to say that
- the world of duality created the prohibition [against fulfilling the original longing of the soul].

It [i.e., the world of duality] created life conditions on earth which made "reality" something that opposed the pleasure principle, to speak in psychological terms; in spiritual terms, that "reality" on earth opposes the divine principle of bliss.

This [opposition between “reality” on earth and the divine principle of bliss the soul longs for] puts you into a vicious circle [in your dualistic life on earth].

How to
- get out of it [i.e., how to get out of the vicious circle] and
- find your way into the light of truth is the relevant question [for your life on earth].
In the first place, you have to understand what is responsible, at least in part, for the human being's creation of duality out of a single core [that underlies the world of duality].

Life on earth [in the world of duality] necessarily involves physical death.

Even if we remove many of life's miseries • as unnecessary, • as created out of confusion, physical death [nevertheless] still remains.

It [i.e., physical death] is still • a mystery, • unknown, and therefore • frightening, in spite of religious faith.

It [i.e., physical death] seems to be an end; as such it is in crass opposition to the [soul’s] longing for life.

And life, in essence, means bliss.
All the religious explanations [concerning death and the possibilities for life continuing after death], however true they may be, are still conjectures [and theories in the soul’s life on earth].

Thus, by following through in logical steps, we see that

• the fear of death creates
  • the world of duality [i.e., the world of opposites] and
  • the world of duality [created by the fear of death] creates
    • a reality that says no to humanity's longing for complete fulfillment [and bliss, in other words, the world of duality creates a reality on earth that says, “No, you can never have complete fulfillment and bliss on earth”].

This leaves us with the problem of death.

It is by dealing with it [i.e., by dealing with the problem of death] that we can break the vicious circle [created by the world of duality on earth that says “No” to humanity’s longing for complete fulfillment].

Humanity has tried to cope with the problem of death for as long as it [i.e., as long as humanity] has existed [on earth].
Unfortunately, these attempts [to cope with the problem of death in the world of duality on earth]
• were unsatisfactory and
• were bound to fail,
  just as your
  unconscious attempts
  to solve
  psychological problems
  by
  • shortcuts and
  • evasions
  are doomed to fail.

Instead of facing the issue [of death] squarely,
you superimpose
ready-made answers [to the problem of death]
which may be
  true as such,
but they [i.e., the ready-made answers to the problem of death]
are not true
  for you personally,
  because
  you have not arrived at them [i.e., you have not arrived
  at the answers to the problem of death]
  using the
  • strength and
  • courage
  that come only
  from
  facing the issue [of death yourself].

You chose rather
the way of avoidance
out of
  • fear and
  • weakness.

This [avoidance out of fear and weakness]
is one way
  of trying to deal with
  the problem [of death].
Many religious people who cling to faith out of fear are examples of those who want to avoid confronting the reality of death on this earth.

Another attempt to deal with the problem of death [as an alternative to avoidance of facing the problem of death through a superficial “faith”] is through negation of the very thing for which one longs most deeply.

Humanity longs for • bliss and • eternal life, but many who desire it are terrified of not attaining it [i.e., terrified of not attaining bliss and eternal life].

Therefore they rush right into the negation of what they long for most [i.e., they deny that what they long for most even exists in reality].

This self-destructiveness [in this denying that what they long for most even exists] can be found on all levels.
It [i.e., this self-destructiveness, this denying that what you long for most in life exists] manifests
in your attitude toward
less significant
aspects of life,

but
is basically
your way of coping with
the problem of death.

• The atheist/materialist and
• the superficially religious
who wants to avoid death
by superimposed faith
are two prototypes.

Neither realizes
that each
is doing essentially
the same thing,
that is,
throwing away
what they most desire.

They violently oppose each other,
because
to each one
the other
represents
the opposite of
what he or she believes to be
the solution to
the great problem [of death].

Yet neither [the atheist/materialist nor the superficially religious]
has found the answer [to the great problem of death],
since that [answer]
must come
from
• the self,
from
• within.
It [i.e., the answer to the great problem of death]
comes only by
• courageously facing
  these
  • problems,
  • questions,
  • confusions and
  • fears, and
• examining
  how you
  have tried
  • up to now
  • in your particular way
to cope with them.

My speaking of
the longing for God
may sound
• distant and
• abstract.

When you
try to imagine
the divine bliss
that spirits enjoy,
your automatic association
produces something
that is usually
quite different from
the happiness
which you
as human beings
long for.

You imagine
the bliss of heaven
as something
• dull,
• sterile,
• uninteresting.
There are many people who believe that the very presence of unhappiness is what gives happiness its flavor.

Of course, this is not so.

Since the word "happiness" to most of you connotes such vague and distant spirituality, let us use the phrase "pleasure supreme on all levels of your being" instead.

Your deep-rooted longing for this "pleasure supreme" is constantly in conflict with reality as you know it on earth.

This is the result of your inability to come to terms with death.
Modern psychology claims that this deep-seated longing [for pleasure supreme] stems from the desire to return to the womb, where the fetus lived in a state of being, without

• worry,
• responsibility, or
• hardship.

The more the entity grows, the more it has to face the realities of life; therefore the struggle [of life] becomes more intense [as the entity grows].

But the longing of the human being goes back further than the mother's womb.

The truth is that you all have imbedded in your spirit the vague memory of a life in another state of consciousness [prior to your existence in your mother’s womb],

when you knew nothing but supreme bliss without any opposing alternative.
You can recapture this state [of extreme bliss without any opposing alternative]
  • gradually,
  • by stages, and
  • to a degree,
    even while you are still an incarnated entity [on earth].

It is not enough to remove your
  • images [i.e., your rigid generalized forms in the soul] and
  • wrong conclusions
    [that reside in a more superficial layer of your consciousness than the layer of consciousness in which your world of duality, or opposites, resides].

However, as you do so [i.e., as you remove your images and wrong conclusions],
  you are bound to encounter the level [of consciousness underneath this level, the level of consciousness] of the world of duality.

Once you comprehend it [i.e., once you comprehend the world of duality] at its deepest core,
  you come face to face with your struggle against
    • death, or
    • "anti-pleasure,"
      if I may call it that.

As I indicated before, there are two major ways
  in which the unconscious attempts to cope with death.
Both [ways for the unconscious to cope with death]

are based on

negation [i.e., based on saying something does not exist in reality]:

• one by
evasion [i.e., by escaping what exists, here escaping
the reality of death by the religionist],

• the other by
deliberately going into
what you are most afraid of [and thereby denying the existence
of its opposite, here the denying eternal life by the atheist].

In both alternatives
you struggle
desperately
against death.

You struggle
no less
when you
deliberately
choose death
out of cringing fear,
in a negative spirit
of weakness.

It is an altogether different choice
to accept death
• in a healthy way,
• out of strength.

When I use the word
"death,"
I do not mean
merely
physical death.

I refer to
• all
the negative aspects of life,
• everything
that opposes
your pleasure drive.
In that sense [i.e., in the sense that the word death refers to all negative aspects of life as well as everything that opposes your pleasure drive]

death also means
- loss,
- change, and
- the unknown
  that may actually contain something better than
  the state you are in,
  but by the very fact that
  it is unknown,
  it becomes terrifying.

There is no human being
who does not
die
many little deaths
every day.

Your attitude
toward death
in all its aspects
determines
your ability to
- live and
- experience pleasure.

The healthier
your attitude
toward death,
the more
the life force
can flow through you,
and therefore
the more
- healthy and
- enduring
will be the gratification
of your pleasure drive.
Your first step
is to detect
how much
you struggle against
• death.

Become fully aware of this,
just as you need to become
fully aware of
the constant longing for
• pleasure supreme.

Both [i.e., both the struggle against death and the longing for pleasure supreme] may be very hidden.

[Then, after awareness of your struggle against death.] Find which of the two ways you have chosen to cope with death –
• evading it [i.e., evading death by the religionist], or
• rushing into it [i.e., accepting death, denying eternal life by the atheist].

Both are present in every human being, but one or the other may be predominant.

In the latter attempt [i.e., in your attempt to rush into death], you sabotage the happiness that you could have because you are too afraid of
• losing it [i.e., too afraid of losing the happiness] again, or
• not achieving it [i.e., too afraid of not achieving happiness] to the degree that you desire.

You say,
• "Death, or
• loss,
is unavoidable anyway,
so I might just as well get it over with [and rush into death or loss]."

An extreme example of this is suicide.
You are torn between two
• unsatisfactory and
• damaging
attempts
to negate death [i.e., denying the reality of death either by evading it or by rushing into it because you deny eternal life and bliss].

These
• artificial,
• forceful, and
• cramped
attempts
bring you so much nearer to what you want to avoid [i.e., death, or your fear of death], and
you forfeit that which you wish to gain [i.e., you forfeit pleasure supreme on every level of your being that your soul longs for].

So it is not in acceptance [of death] itself that you find
• strength and
• healing,
but in how you choose to accept death.

Acceptance [of death]
mixed with
• fear and
• negativity – both of which lead to self-destructiveness – is altogether different from a
• healthy,
• strong
acceptance of the inevitable.
• **Squarely facing it** [i.e., squarely facing death in its inevitability],
• **not cringing from it** [i.e., not cringing from death in its inevitability],
  you will come to terms with it [i.e., you will come to terms with death in its inevitability], thereby freeing the life force in you, which remains bottled up as long as you do not learn to cope with death in a healthy way.

You sense that the solution [to the problem of death] lies in acceptance [of death in its inevitability].

But you also believe that in acceptance [of death] lies annihilation.

As long as this confusion [about the meaning of the acceptance of death as acceptance of annihilation] is not brought into consciousness, you cannot begin to find your way out of the maze [which this confusion brings to the problem of death].

Faced with this confusion [about the problem of death], people often resort to religion in any of its varied forms.

But they do it [i.e., they resort to religion] in the spirit of
• evasion and
• fear.
Thus [i.e., when religion as a solution to the problem of death is used in a spirit of evasion from death or out of fear of death] religion,
no matter how true its teachings,
will not really help [in addressing the problem of death],
just as the wrong kind of acceptance [of the inevitability of death] does not help [in addressing the problem of death].

This kind of religiousness [i.e., the kind of religiousness based upon evasion from death or fear of death] will not help [in addressing the problem of death] because it [i.e., because religion, even when its teachings are true] is accepted out of weakness,
which pollutes people's motives [which are then based upon evasion and fear rather than on the truth of their own real inner conviction of a deep genuine insight].

Deeply sensing the untruth of their motivations [i.e., sensing that their motivations are evasion and fear rather than a response to the truth of their own current real inner conviction of a deep genuine insight, and hence out of integrity with their own current truth], they despise themselves for it [i.e., despise themselves for holding to a religion whose teachings do not match their own current inner truth].

Moreover, the superimposed faith [i.e., the “faith” now superimposed upon what they really currently believe is true] has no real power to help them [in facing the problem of death].
They accept
• God, and
• everything that belief in God implies,
  not out of
  • real conviction,
  nor out of
  • a deep, genuine insight,
  but because
  • they are afraid [i.e., afraid to face death without “confessing” their superimposed faith, that is, afraid to face death without telling themselves they “accept” God and everything that belief in God implies, even though they sense that on some level deep down, if they are honest, they do not really believe this as their current innermost truth and reality].

Thus,
the enemies of religion
are often right when they say that religion
is an opiate.

By the same token,
the enemies of materialism
are right when they reject the materialistic point of view,
not only
  because it [i.e., not only because the materialistic point of view] is not true,
but also
  because
  the motivation
  for accepting it [i.e., the motivation for accepting the materialistic point of view]
  is fear.

The more we look into this subject,
the more we find that
the solution [to the problem of death] lies in
• facing the unknown and
• confronting the fear of it [i.e., confronting the fear of the unknown].
The task is
learning
the strength to die,
for only the person
who knows how to die
knows how to live.

Needless to say,
you do not have to wait
to experience
actual physical death
in order to
learn
how to die.

Not only
can your occasional
conscious fear of
anything
that connotes death
help you [learn how to die],
but also
all the other aspects of death
that comprise daily living [can help you learn how to die].

If
you do not know
how to die,
you cannot
live
because
you cannot
reconcile the opposites
that constitute
the dualism
in your own soul.

Hence
you cannot
free the life force
that lies within
unutilized.
So examine
your faith,
too, my friends.

Do not be afraid
to recognize that,
to a greater or lesser degree,
it [i.e., your faith]
also
is an
intellectual superimposition
to which
you cling
out of
• weakness and
• fear.

Such a frank admission
will give you
the very strength
to build
• a genuine faith
that is also
• a conviction and
• a knowledge.

It [i.e., this genuine faith, this conviction, and this knowledge]
will come from
an inner experience
of the truths
which so far
you have known
only
intellectually.

This [genuine faith, this inner experience
of the truths you have heretofore known only intellectually]
certainty will come
after
you have learned
to cope with death
in the fullest sense.
As long as your ability to accept death is based on the superimposed knowledge:
• that life goes on and
• that death is an illusion, your faith is built on sand.

But if you take the great, courageous step to face your unbelief, your uncertainty, and your fear, and come to terms with them by accepting the unknown if and when it becomes necessary, you will
• build up your strength and make room for true conviction and the experience of spiritual truth.

Then it [i.e., your true conviction of spiritual truth made possible by experiencing it] will become part of you because you then learn to live [by accepting the unknown, without fear, whenever that is necessary].

[Without fear of the unknown,]
• The life force will be released and a great measure of your longing for bliss will be fulfilled while still on earth.
Seek and you shall find
an area of your being
that clings to life
only in order to avoid death.

This motivation [for living, for clinging to life out of fear of facing and coming to terms with death]

• is negative and
• negates [i.e., denies the existence of]
  the life force itself.

But if you
• face and
• come to terms with death,
  your embrace of life [rather than being motivated by fear of facing death, and hence motivated negatively, and denying the existence of the life force itself]
  will have
  a positive spirit.

This [embracing of life with a positive spirit that releases the life force, rather than embracing life out of fear of death and thereby denying the existence of the life force]
alone
  can solve the problem of duality,
  since duality arises out of negation.

The problem of duality has to be tackled eventually along the road of
• development and
• growth.

For some it will surface sooner,
for others later,
but it [i.e., the problem of duality]
  must come for everyone.
Do not fear that you are being disloyal to your faith when you face that part of it which is superimposed on your terror of death.

For only then [i.e., only when you face that part of your faith that has been superimposed over your fear of death] can you truly become strong, from knowing and accepting the uncertainty of death in small ways, every day.

This strength does not come
- from evasion [i.e., denying the existence of death or of fear of death], or
- from anything negative.

You will know that death is an integral part of life.

To the extent that you grow in this direction the life force will
- flow through you and
- give you a foretaste of what real
  - happiness,
  - pleasure supreme, and
  - true security is,
    even while you are still in the body [on earth].
Many aspects of civilized life stand in the way of the supreme bliss that could be had to some degree even on earth.

They [i.e., the aspects of civilized life that stand in the way of supreme bliss] are a direct result of the inner duality, which in turn comes from the inability to die.

Civilized life constantly imposes on you the alternatives of

• pleasure and
• unpleasure.

Let us consider, for instance, work that is not always according to your creative abilities and inclinations, and therefore not according to your liking or pleasure.

Moreover, the conditions of working, with all their "musts" which stem from political, economic and sociological factors, which again are themselves a result of the inner duality, necessitate a struggle for living.
This [struggle for living] encourages
- ambitiousness,
- drives, and
- compulsions.

In addition, these [many factors related to work] often confront one with obligations which may only be necessary within the framework of your present life on earth.

In these ways a reality principle is created that stands in clear opposition to the
- longing for and
- fulfillment of the happiness that could be yours.

Here individual inner problems have collectively brought about a state of civilization that makes life [on earth] unnecessarily difficult.

Thus your often unpleasant reality is in many respects unnecessary, and shows up as a collective manifestation of the inner duality.
As each person begins to face this problem [of duality] within, he or she helps to change the world and these conditions in ever so subtle but nonetheless decisive ways.

As you focus on this problem [of duality] within yourself, you become able to cope with the unnecessary duality in a much healthier way.

Simultaneously you also help to change the overly harsh collective reality principle.

Now I wish to touch upon another conflict and confusion.

In the course of this work you may have become acutely aware of the desire for happiness, love, fulfillment, or — to put it in the words I used tonight — pleasure supreme.
You have discovered that much of this longing comes from your unfulfillment as a child, now manifesting as exaggerated craving.

You learn to distinguish between
• the healthy wish for mature love
  and
• the childish craving need to be loved.

With the help of this awareness [of the distinction between the healthy wish for mature love and the childish craving need to be loved] you free yourself to some extent from the craving [to be loved].

Nevertheless, it is necessary for you to understand also the origin of the excessive demand [to be loved].

The need [to be loved] comes from a vague memory [of a time prior to your incarnation that is] imbedded in the spirit.

Now you may ask, "If this wish [to be loved] has a spiritual origin, then why is it unhealthy?"
Part of the answer is that it is impossible to gratify such excessive expectations [to be loved] on this earth given the reality that humankind has created.

Nor [when answering the question “If this excessive childish wish to be loved has a spiritual origin, then why is it unhealthy?”] is it enough to say that childish craving is one-sided, while mature love is willing to

• give and
• love as fully as one wishes to receive.

In the adult,

• the childish craving [to be loved completely and exclusively] subtly merges with
  • the mature love-capacity, so the individual's justification [to receive such complete love] remains that, "If I could only find such completely satisfactory love, I would be willing to give my all."

This is often true.

But the answer [to why longing for such perfect love is unhealthy] lies still deeper.
The difference between
- the immature desire and
- the craving [to be loved] on the one hand,

and
- the mature wish for
  - love and
  - pleasure supreme on the other,

is not determined by
- intensity of feeling,

but by
- the time element, and
- the prevailing illusion of
  - self versus
  - the other.

Often
- the gratification of an instinct or
- the fulfillment of a wish may produce a conflict because
  it may simultaneously prove damaging to another person.

[In such a situation.] It may make you selfish.

Thus,
you feel you have to decide between
- pleasure [i.e., the pleasure supreme your soul longs for] and
- unsselfishness [which allows you to sacrifice your pleasure for the benefit of another],

both of which are part of the divine purpose.

How is one to cope with this duality?
You may remember a recent lecture
I gave on the great transition in human development
[Lecture 75 - The Great Transition in Human Development from Isolation to Union].

In that lecture I showed you
the illusion of
• self
versus
• the other.

There is no such a thing as
a true experience of bliss
at the expense of another.

Realization of this truth
will come
only as you proceed on this path,
through all the steps I lead you.

This wider vision
will be attained
also
by a reflection on
the time element.

Instant gratification –
the child's way –
often sets
• one's own pleasure
against
• the other's.

However,
from an expanded vision,
this ceases to be true.
The more mature one is,
the better one will be able to connect
• cause and
• effect even if they are not close together.

Time is a product of your world of illusion,
and therefore the length of time between
• cause and
• effect makes a great deal of difference in your
• comprehension and • evaluation of things.

The more a person matures
• spiritually and • emotionally,
the more the aspects of illusion are outgrown.

Although still in time,
such a [spiritually and emotionally mature] person begins to sense time’s illusory character.
Practically, this [sense of time’s illusory character]
manifests
in the ability to see
• cause
and
• effect
even if
they do not follow in direct sequence.

When they [i.e., when cause and effect]
do follow closely [i.e., when the effect follows its cause almost immediately],
even a very small child
begins to make the connection [between cause and effect]
and learns from it.

The process of growth therefore
is determined also
by the ability to connect
• cause
and
• effect
even when
they are separated in time [i.e., even when the effect follows its
cause but only long after its cause occurred].

To learn this,
you have to connect
• past
and
• present
• causes
and
• effects
[i.e., you have to connect present effects to past causes].

You learn this anyway
in your work on the path.

But
you also have to
cultivate patience
as far as the present is concerned.
• If your instinctual drive toward wish-fulfillment interferes with another person's happiness or
• if for other reasons you cannot at once receive the gratification you long for, you can [then take this opportunity to] cultivate this wider outlook.

Take the instantaneousness out of the wish which in itself is healthy, and you will:
  • begin to see the law [of cause and effect] taking its natural course, and
  • find that you can lift yourself out of time at least to some degree.

So the difficult choice between:
  • happiness [i.e., your soul’s real longing for pleasure supreme] and
  • unselfishness [i.e., sacrificing your happiness for the benefit of another] exists only in the relative time element.

When your longing for happiness is not instantly fulfilled, this, too, appears as a kind of death.
It [i.e., times and situations when your longing for happiness is not instantly fulfilled]
can often feel like bleak misery,
and in that sense seems like death to you.

When you
• give up instant gratification
• but retain the attitude of keeping alive, in principle, the wish to obtain what you seek,
you are using the healthy way of coping with death.

The giving up of the wish itself is really an unhealthy acceptance of death.

As you become stronger in the healthy way, you are bound to experience that you do obtain what you want eventually.
[As you become stronger in the healthy way,]

You cannot help
but become aware
also
of
the illusion of
actual physical death,
not by
• intellectual superimposition,
but by
• your strength
that comes from
coping with the
• little-by-little,
• everyday
dying,
which you confront
in the healthy manner.

Once you overcome
this [daily] conflict [by dealing with everyday little deaths in a healthy way],
the pathway will be smoothed
toward that
real strength of living
which lies in
the strength of dying.

38

Are there any questions on this subject?

QUESTION:
Can you show us
how to approach this subject
• in our everyday life and
• in this work?
How can we learn to
eliminate time?
<table>
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| **ANSWER:**  
This is a misunderstanding.  

You cannot  
* eliminate time  
as long as  
you live on earth.  

You can only  
develop  
• *a different understanding* [of time],  
• *a wider vision* [of time].  

Cause and effect  
move closer together,  
and therefore  
the illusory character of time  
lessens in your perception.  

You begin to sense something  
behind time.  

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| **The best practical approach**  
with which to begin  
is the process  
you are using  
in this work [i.e., in this pathwork].  

You all began working on this path  
with the conviction that  
so many mishaps in your life  
were caused by  
• other people's faults, or  
• an unkind fate.  |
As you proceeded, you found,
  • not as theory
  • but as fact,
    how
    • reactions or
    • attitudes
      of your own
      were responsible for
      such occurrences [i.e. were responsible for
                     mishaps in your life].

This came to you as a wonderful revelation.

You may not have as much success in other areas of your life, yet,
  but you have begun,
  and you can now connect
    • cause
      and
    • effect.

You were incapable of doing this before,
  since
    • cause
      and
    • effect
      were not close together.

Careful investigation, however, has revealed the connection.

The more problems you find, and therefore resolve, the closer you come
to sense the illusory nature of time.
So in this respect you have a new work assignment [i.e., the work assignment of finding more and more problems and mishaps in your life and resolving them by first seeing them as effects from causes you set in motion and then discovering what the actual causes behind these effects were],

and

• the more you work on it [i.e., work on this assignment]
• the closer will you come automatically to sense another dimension behind time.

I do not want to use the word eternity [to name this other dimension].

This other dimension behind time is still not the ultimate, for behind this [other dimension behind time] is something else still, and beyond that is yet something else, for which there are no words at my disposal.

As to the practical approach in learning to face death in your everyday life, it is so self-explanatory that I hardly need to go into it.
Work first toward the
  • recognition and
  • awareness
  of the basic current of
    • your longing for
      pleasure supreme, as well as
    • your apprehension of
defeat
      in all its facets.

This is not too difficult;
it is a matter of
  focusing your attention.

By looking at
  your various
    • moods,
    • emotions,
    • fears,
    • apprehensions, and
    • anxieties –
      which all represent
        a form of personal death –
you will see
  how you really react to
death.

Find out
  which
    of the two wrong ways
      of coping [with death]
    you use
      in your
        emotional response [i.e., either, on the one hand, evading
dead or, on the other hand, denying eternal life and
pleasure supreme and thereby accepting death in the
wrong unhealthy way].

Learn to become aware of
  everything
    from which you cringe;
    do not repress
      this fear.
You will then begin to see that you fear not only the negative, but also change, because it [i.e., because change] is unknown to you.

This [fear of the unknown when facing change] is the great battle between another pair of opposites.

One [side of the pair of opposites] is the surging spirit going forward, the other [side of the pair of opposites] is the supposed safety in sameness.

Stagnation is a distortion of the timeless element of being.

You may say that you are aware of your longing for happiness as well as of your fear of the negative.

No, my friends, not one of you is aware of even the slightest degree to which these two currents exist within you.
So much is "conditioned away," if I may use this expression.

This work [i.e., this pathwork] brings into clearer focus the awareness of
- that for which you basically long,
  and also
- what you fear.

As this awareness grows, you will understand what I have been talking about.

QUESTION:
I do not understand what you mean by saying our reality is negative for us, so that we cringe from it.

ANSWER:
There is
- physical death and
- sickness, and
- the world of matter, bound to decay.

There is
- struggle and
- work for daily subsistence, and
- obligations imposed upon you that you may not like.

Life is
- constant change, bringing
  - losses and
  - unknown factors that create anxiety in you.
All these seem to block the way
toward the gratification of your wish for pleasure supreme.

You do not like it, but it is your reality at this stage of evolution.

**QUESTION:**
Can you explain a little more clearly how
• healthy acceptance differs from
• unhealthy acceptance, for instance in a martyr?

**ANSWER:**
The unhealthy way contains, above all, a spirit of defeatism.

As I indicated before, the very fear of something makes you rush into it.

Your repressed desire for the exact opposite of what you fear, whether or not it [i.e., whether or not what you fear] is avoidable, makes you abandon the very desire [for the exact opposite of what you fear; for example, you abandon your desire for pleasure supreme].
The healthy way [to accept death]
is to say,
"Yes, death is unwelcome.

I really do not know
what will happen [in death]
and therefore
I do not like it [because death is unknown].

But it [i.e., but death]
is part of
life,
and when it comes my way,
I will be strong enough to accept it.

Others have gone through it [i.e., others have gone through death],
and so will I.

I will meet it [i.e., I will meet death]
in full awareness of
my uncertainty [about what happens in and after death].

I am now aware
that I still fear it [i.e., I still fear death],
but I will learn to accept
what cannot be avoided,
and thus
I will
eventually
lose my fear [of death]."

This applies also
to every other
negative facet of life,
and can be practiced
every day.
It is very difficult to put [this healthy way to accept death and other negative facets of life] into words.

Perhaps it will help you to understand by visualizing a soul movement of
• tending and 
• letting go.

When you struggle away from something frightening, you
• tense up and
• pull away.

This very pull in tension pushes you into it.

• Courage,
• an honest facing of the self, and
• a relaxed attitude will produce
  the necessary strength.

[Conversely]
The lack of these attributes will either
push you into what you fear [by negating its opposite] or make you run from it.

Both [i.e., both going headlong into what you fear on the one hand, and running away from what you fear on the other hand] have the same result, namely, negation [i.e., the denial as real of what is real].
QUESTION:
What is your attitude toward the ascetic?

Is he running away from it all?

Does he face up to reality or is he avoiding it?

ANSWER:
In general, an ascetic tries to buy himself out of what he fears.

He forfeits all
• pleasure and
• happiness
by self-imposed hardship.

In other words, he chooses unnecessary hardship because he so greatly fears another hardship.

50

QUESTION:
How about the spiritual ascetic?

ANSWER:
Exactly the same.

Asceticism is so often
• a great self-deception and
• a complete denial of the life force.
[In asceticism]

The principle of death
is feared so much
that the life force
is completely negated [i.e., the life force is declared to be unreal].

It [i.e., asceticism] is a very
• self-destructive and
• damaging
way
of coping with death.

**QUESTION:**
How do you account for
the supreme pleasure
that comes from
mastery in
• achievement and
• accomplishment
of the so-called
unpleasant problems?

**ANSWER:**
Here again,
it depends on
• the motive [for mastery in achievement of unpleasant problems] and
• the way it [i.e., the way the mastery in achievement of unpleasant problems] is done.

If it [i.e., if the motive and the way it is done in the mastery in facing unpleasant problems] is
• genuine and
• healthy,
the process I have described
has been lived.
Since the duality is a result of negation [i.e., result of denying that the unpleasant problem is unpleasant], one can only find the way out of duality by no longer

- negating [i.e., denying that the unpleasant problem is, in fact, unpleasant],

but

- facing up to it [i.e., facing up to the unpleasantness of the unpleasant problem].

This [facing up to the unpleasantness of the unpleasant problem] will then show

- the unity

behind

- the duality,
  so that
  - pleasure
  and
  - pain

become one.

But there are also

- imaginary,
- superimposed,
and therefore

- unhealthy
  ways

of doing this [i.e., there are imaginary, superimposed and unhealthy ways of facing an unpleasant problem],

and these are illusions.

**QUESTION:**

Doesn’t the healthy state deny the unpleasant emphasis [i.e., deny the unpleasantness of the unpleasant problem]?

**ANSWER:**

No, I would say it is just the opposite.
Death

cesses to be,

but this happens

in a genuine way

only after

it [i.e., only after death] has been worked through

by facing

the fact

that it [i.e., that death, and its unpleasantness]

still exists

for you.

By denying it [i.e., by denying death and its unpleasantness],

you may encounter

the danger of

• negation and

• evasion.

If

belief in the end result [i.e., if belief in the end result that life continues and there is no death in reality, or the end result that an unpleasant problem is not ultimately unpleasant]

is artificially clung to,

it has the very opposite effect.

You cannot deny

that which still exists for you.

53

QUESTION:
Is it

life and death,

or

life or death?

ANSWER:
It is

life and death.
QUESTION:
Therefore
it [i.e., death]
could not be
unpleasant,
otherwise it [i.e., if death were unpleasant
the answer to this question]
would be
life or death [rather than life and death].

So death
must be
a pleasure.

Doesn't
the healthy attitude
therefore
deny
the unpleasant emphasis [concerning death]?

ANSWER:
Let us not confuse
• the end result
with
• the process
of arriving at it.

Many religious philosophies
have taught this truth [about death being a pleasure rather
than an unpleasure].

But
the end result
has been used
to avoid facing
that which still seems unpleasant,
[unpleasant] if for no other reason
than that it is
unknown.
Before you can truly experience that death is pleasure in a healthy way, you first have to go through your own distortion, in which death seems
• bleak and
• frightening.

Only after going through that [i.e., only after going through the experience that death seems bleak and frightening] will you come to the realization that
• life
and
• death are one,
that
• pleasure
and
• pain are one.

QUESTION:
Is it not equally illusory to think that
• the problems of everyday life and
• the crass things you encounter are unpleasant?

Aren't they [i.e., aren't the problems and crass things you encounter] pleasant for he who has mastered them?
Therefore this [fact]
does deny
the unpleasant principle,
except in terms of
an unhealthy attitude.

ANSWER:
Once you have arrived
at that state,
you will find it so.

But
until
a person arrives there
it would be dangerous
to try to talk one into it.

Too much of this [talking one into its being true that death is not unpleasant] has been done already.

One has to be very careful,
since
• evasion and
• self-deception
  are always
  so close at hand.

The temptation
is so great
because
humanity
fears
to face the truth.

Truth
is never
unpleasant,
but it may often appear so [i.e., truth may often appear unpleasant]
in your state of
• temporary reality and
• distorted vision.
People have to
• let go of a truth
  that they themselves have not yet discovered
and at the same time
• face the untruth
  that still lives within.

You have to look into
the very difficult abyss of illusion,
as long as it is still an abyss for you.

COMMENT:
I think it has to do with the interpretation of the word "deny."

If one means [by the word “deny”]
that something doesn’t exist, then one is wrong.

However, if by [the word] denial one means
• that something is not real,
• that it is an illusion, that is different.

ANSWER:
Yes, that is very true.
But you see,

there are so many religions
which originally
possessed this truth [that “there is no death”]
when they taught
the denial of death.

However,
due to an inclination
to arrive at the result [that “there is no death”]
through shortcuts
in order to avoid
the unpleasantness of
facing the illusory abyss [of facing the illusion of death],

humanity clings to
such words as
"there is no death"
and misuses them.

The result is
superimposed faith
that is embraced
out of
• fear and
• weakness.

So let us
be careful
and always keep in mind
that what seems
most frightening –
death
in all its aspects –
must be faced
before it [i.e., before death]
denies
itself.
This was not an easy lecture, my friends.

It will give you
• much food for thought and
• material for progress.

Be blessed,
each one of you.

Divine
• strength and
• love
    envelops you.

This love
is a reality.

May you
• feel it and
• carry it with you
    into your lives.

Be blessed.

Be in peace.

Be in God!
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