

02 Pathwork Lecture #157 –1996 Edition
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**INFINITE POSSIBILITIES OF EXPERIENCE HINDERED BY
EMOTIONAL DEPENDENCY**

03 Greetings, my dearest friends. Again, I shall try to help you to move on from where you may be stuck. Although each one of you may have a different problem to encounter in yourself at this moment, this lecture will converge into the one truth you all need now so you can proceed in your development without hindering yourselves too much. So, let us understand certain fundamental factors as they exist in you and in the universe.

04 It is being said by all great spiritual teachings that creation is infinite in its possibilities and that humanity's potential for realizing these infinite possibilities of happiness exists in the inner depths of each person's being. Almost all of you have heard these words. Some of you may believe them, at least in principle; others may have their doubts about accepting them even in theory. Let us now try to overcome some of the difficulties in understanding these principles.

05 First of all, it is necessary to understand that no one person creates anything new. It is also impossible for anything new to come into existence. However, it is possible for a person to make manifest something that already exists. It is a fact that everything, absolutely everything, exists already on another level of consciousness. The word everything cannot convey the scope of this concept. When one speaks about God's infinity or about Creation's infinity, this is part of the meaning. There is no state of being, no experience, no situation, no concept, no feeling, no object that does not already exist. Everything in the world exists in a state of potentiality which already contains the finished product within it. I can see that this idea is not easy for human beings to embrace, for it is so contrary to your way of thinking, being, and experiencing on your average level of consciousness. But the more you can deepen your thoughts on this subject, the easier will it become for you to perceive, to sense, and to grasp it. Knowing and understanding this principle of creation -- that all exists already and that human beings can make these existing possibilities manifest -- is one of the necessary prerequisites to experiencing the fullness of life's infinite potential.

06 Before you can create new possibilities of unfoldment and entirely new ranges of experience in your personal life, you must first learn to apply these laws of creation to the problem areas of your life where you feel troubled, limited, handicapped, or trapped. Healthy unfoldment of the real self follows the creation of a healthy personality. This

can happen once you learn and comprehend that the laws of creation can work only if you apply them first to the troubled areas of the personality.

07 Whatever possibility you can conceive of, you can realize. Suppose you are immersed in a conflict from which you cannot see a way out. As long as you do not conceive of a way out, you truly cannot realize the already existing possibility of a resolution. If your concepts about the way out are hazy or unrealistic, so will be the temporary solutions that will appear to you as the only possibilities. The same applies to your life as a whole. If you truly comprehend that an infinite number of possibilities exist in any given situation, you can find solutions where it was hitherto impossible to do so.

08 It is your prerogative as human beings to make use of these laws of creation and to reach out so that these infinite possibilities can unfold, enabling you to partake fully of life's offerings. If your life seems limited, it is only because you are convinced your life must be limited. You cannot conceive of anything more than what you have experienced up until now and are experiencing in the present. This is precisely the first handicap. Therefore, in order to expand your own possibilities of happiness, your mind must grasp the principle that you cannot bring something to life if you cannot first conceive of it. This sentence should be truly meditated on, for understanding this concept will open new doors for you. You should also understand that there is a vast difference between conceiving of further possibilities of expansion or happiness on the one hand, and daydreaming on the other. Wistful, resigned daydreaming that grabs fantasy as a substitute for drab reality is not at all what is meant here, and is in fact a hindrance to the proper conceiving of life's potentials. You need to have a vigorous, active, dynamic concept of what is possible in reality. When you know that something you wish to bring about exists in principle, you have made the first step toward realizing it.

09 Therefore, I invite every one of you to contemplate what you truly conceive of as possibilities for your life. If you examine yourself closely, you will find primarily that you conceive of negative possibilities which you naturally fear, wish to avoid, and defend yourself against. When you use most of your psychic energies to defend yourself against possible negative experience, your motivation is negative.

10 Negative motivation does not necessarily imply a destructive intent. For that matter, a positive motivation in this context could also mean a very destructive intent or aim. The avoidance of a feared possibility implies negative motivation. Upon close examination of your mental and emotional processes you will find that you are negatively motivated to a considerable extent. This is one of the first obstructions which enclose you in an imaginary and unnecessary prison. This applies, of course, to all levels of your personality. It applies to the mental level, where you cannot really envisage the infinite vistas of experience, of expansion, of stimulation, of all sorts of wondrous and happy possibilities you have a prerogative to achieve in this life. It exists on the emotional level, where you do not allow the spontaneous and natural flow of your feelings, where you fearfully, anxiously, and suspiciously hold back. It also exists

on the physical level, in that you do not permit your body to experience the pleasure it is destined to experience. All these are limitations which you artificially and needlessly inflict upon yourself.

11 The next obstruction to expanding your life and creating the best of all possible lives for yourself is the following cluster of misconceptions which are widespread in the world: "It is not possible to be really happy! Human life is very limited. Happiness, pleasure, and ecstasy are frivolous, selfish aims which truly spiritual people must abandon for the sake of their spiritual development. Sacrifice and renunciation are the keys to spiritual development." We do not have to further elucidate these deeply-lodged misconceptions which are often more unconscious than conscious. But it is necessary for you to discover the subtle way in which you abide by such general concepts, no matter what you consciously believe. You may discover these subtle reactions by observing your reluctance to take steps to realize a perfectly harmless and normal fulfillment of a genuine need or a truly constructive aim. You feel as though something were holding you back, paralyzing your efforts. Although there are often a number of other reasons for this reluctance as well -- some of which we shall discuss shortly -- it is also often true that you have simply accepted a negative idea that really makes no sense and has no good purpose.

12 Fear of happiness, of pleasure, of wide expansion into one's life experiences is based on ignorance that such fulfillment could exist or that you possess all the powers, faculties, and resources to create and bring about what you wish. It is also based on misconceptions such as, "Pleasure is wrong," or "It is selfish to want personal fulfillment." Fear of happiness is also based on the fear of being annihilated and dissolved if you ever trusted the flow of the universal forces and went with them. Such trust necessitates letting go of the ego-will and the ego-forces, and then surrendering to the beneficial forces of your deep nature.

13 Every single human being in this world harbors an attitude of fear and weakness. Because this corner of the personality usually induces a strong shame, it is kept secret, often even from the conscious mind. Many a different device is invented in order to hide this weakness and dependency which makes you feel utterly helpless, unable to assert yourself, and even unable to protect your truth and integrity. When it comes to this area of the soul one is constantly compelled to sell out and betray oneself in order to ward off disapproval, censure, and rejection. The need to be accepted by others is usually less shameful than the means to which the personality resorts to placate and appease others. The ways of defending yourselves are psychologically so fundamental that you cannot get far in your self-purification work unless you work on seeing how they function in your life. All the defense mechanisms you have discovered and perhaps even begun to remove are either your ways of obtaining what you consider to be the apparently vital acceptance of others, or your ways of hiding your shameful submission, often by an apparently opposite attitude of indifference, hostility, or compulsive and blind rebellion and over-aggressiveness.

- 14** Few things give human beings as much pain and shame as this inner, fearful, weak spot which makes them feel impotent and compelled to sell out. You already know, my friends, that this area of the personality has remained a child. The child does not yet know that the whole of the personality has grown up and is indeed no longer helpless and dependent. Infants and young children truly are helpless and dependent on the parents. But in the childish corner of your being you either do not know or do not want to know that this is no longer true.
- 15** The young child is dependent on its parents for all the basics of life: shelter, food, affection, protection, and, last but not least, for the very necessary supply of pleasure. A human being cannot live without pleasure. To deny this truth is one of the most harmful errors. Body, soul, mind, and spirit wither without pleasure. As an adult you are able to find through your own efforts and resources your own shelter, food, affection, and safety, so you are also able to do the same with pleasure. In all these areas you must have contact, cooperation, and communication with others in varying degrees. You cannot provide yourself with any of these necessities without interacting with other people. But this interaction is entirely different from the passive, weak dependency of the small child. The thoroughly adult person uses his or her own best forces, intelligence, intuition, talents, observation, and flexibility to get along with others in giving and taking. Your adult sense of fairness makes you sufficiently pliable to give in. And your sense of self makes you sufficiently assertive not to be stepped on and abused. The often fine balance in these forces of communication cannot be taught. It can only come through personal growth.
- 16** The child is incapable of achieving this balance. It is rigidly one-sided in its insistence to receive, for this is its need. The same applies to pleasure. The child must have the parents' permission to establish and utilize the source of all pleasure deep within itself. Through the parents' permission the child will develop the strength and security to make meaningful contact. When you still need another person to permit you to experience pleasure, you are still in the position of the child or infant. I repeat, this never implies that anyone can do without others, but for adults the emphasis is shifted. Mature adults find within themselves an inexhaustible well of wonderful feelings. Insecurity and weakness cannot exist when these feelings are activated.
- 17** When part of your development is arrested, you wait for another person, a parent-substitute, to make it possible for you to draw on the deep source of your own rich feelings. You know of and yearn for these pleasurable feelings, but you do not know that you are no longer a child dependent on others for being allowed to activate and express these rich feelings. This is your human tragedy, for you thus move into a vicious circle. Whenever a misconception is accepted as truth, immediately a vicious circle comes into being paralyzing the pleasure forces, which are a good part of the energy available to you. Your life thus becomes dull and lusterless.
- 18** To deny the intense pleasure of being, the pleasure of feeling the energy flow of your body, soul, and spirit, is to deny life. When a child suffers such denial, its psyche receives a shock from the repeated absence of pleasure and therefore the repeated

presence of unfulfilled yearning. The shock prevents growth in this one area so that the whole personality grows lopsidedly. Your adult conscious mind ignores the fact that a crying, demanding, angry, and helpless child still exists within you. Your adult believes that you have grown up entirely. Yet on the unconscious level where this child exists, you are unaware that you have grown up and no longer need parental permission or a parent substitute as your source of pleasure and life. You do not know that you are free to move toward pleasure, toward your own fulfillment, toward the realization of your own powers to obtain whatever you want and need. This is one of the most fundamental splits in the human personality.

19 Let us now look a bit closer at this hidden corner of your psyche where all of you have remained children. Where do you ignore this fact and where does your inner child ignore the rights and powers of your adult state? The particular vicious circle I mentioned before is this: When you do not know that everything in the universe already exists, and that you can re-create it all by manifesting it in your own life, you feel dependent on an outside force or authority for all your wants and needs. Because of this distortion of the facts, you wait for fulfillment from the wrong source. Such waiting keeps your need perpetually unfulfilled. The more unfulfilled it is, the more urgent the need becomes. The more urgent the need, the greater your dependency, your hope, and the more frantic your attempts to please the other who is supposed to fill your need. You then become desperate; the more you try, the less you fulfill your need precisely because your attempts are unrealistic. Consciously you know none of this; you do not know what forces drive you nor even in what direction you are driven. You become desperate because in your urgency to have the need fulfilled you betray yourself, your truth, and the best in you. Your frustrated striving and your self-betrayal create a forcing-current.

20 The forcing-current may manifest in a very subtle way and may not be overt at all, but the emotions are all cramped up with it. This must inevitably affect others around you and have its lawful and appropriate consequences. Any forcing-current is bound to make others resist and shrink back, even if what they are forced to do is for their own benefit and delight. Thus the vicious circle continues. The continued frustration, which you believe to be caused by the other person's mean refusal to cooperate and to give, brings into your soul rage, fury, perhaps even vindictiveness and varying degrees of cruel impulses. This, in turn, weakens the personality even more as guilt comes up. You conclude that your destructive feelings must be hidden so as not to antagonize this other person whom you perceive as the source of life. The net of entanglement becomes tighter and tighter; the individual is completely ensnared in this trap of misconceptions, distortions, and illusions with all the destructive emotions that follow suit. You find yourself in the preposterous position of craving the love and acceptance of a person whom you hate and resent for having left you unfulfilled for so long. This one-sided insistence on being loved by a person one deeply resents and wishes to punish increases the guilt, for the ever-wakeful presence of your real self flashes its reaction into a mind that is unable to interpret and sort out the messages of the real self from those that come from the child inside.

- 21** The fact that your need is not fulfilled by the other also weakens your conviction that you have a right to the pleasure you so much desire. You vaguely suspect that you may be wrong to even want this pleasure. Thus you begin to displace the original, natural need and desire for pleasure into other channels where they are sublimated. Other, more or less compulsive, needs come into existence. All the while you are torn between the force of the deeply hidden original need and the doubt that you have a right to its fulfillment. The more you doubt, the more dependent you become on reconfirmation by an outside authority -- a parent-substitute, public opinion, or certain groups of people who represent the last word of truth to you.
- 22** The more this vicious circle goes on, the less pleasure remains in the psyche, while unpleasure accumulates. Such a person must increasingly despair about life and doubt that fulfillment is possible. There comes a point when a person inwardly gives up.
- 23** There is not a single human being who does not harbor within such a weak area, at least to some degree. In this secret corner, you feel not only helpless and dependent, but also deeply ashamed. The shame is due to the methods you employ to placate the person who at any given period is supposed to fulfill the role of the authority and grant you what you need in the way of pleasure, safety, and self-respect.
- 24** The forcing-current says, "you must," and you make demands on others to be, feel, and do what you need and desire. These demands may not manifest outwardly at all. In fact, on the surface you may totally lack self-assertion. Your inability or difficulty to healthily assert yourself is a direct result of having to hide the underlying shameful and threatening forcing-current. It is threatening because you know quite well that if it shows openly, it will evoke great censure and disapproval and possibly even overt rejection.
- 25** I invite all of you to vigorously face this area in yourselves. Some of you have done so already; others are still struggling with it and have only half-heartedly admitted its existence. Perhaps some of you may still have to face up to it. But all of you must tackle it if you wish to realize life's and your own best potentials, and if you wish to discover your own infinite powers to create infinite goodness in your life.
- 26** The stronger the "you must" is secretly thrown at others, the more you inactivate your own powers. The result is that you become paralyzed and inactive in body, soul, and mind. This inactivity keeps you from moving into your own nucleus, the place where all realistic promise and all potential for every kind of fulfillment and delight exists. You inadvertently make yourself hang on to others which must elicit hate in you. Finding the treasure of your own nucleus, on the contrary, makes you free. Then contact with others becomes a delightful luxury that elicits love.
- 27** By continually using inner, covert pressure on others because you believe you are dependent on them, you diminish your available energy supply. If energy is used in its natural, correct, and meaningful way, it never exhausts itself. You know this, my

friends. Energy only exhausts itself when it is wrongly used. There are innumerable methods which human beings use in order to switch on this forcing-current. They include compliance in varying degrees, passive resistance, spite, withdrawal, refusal to cooperate, forceful outer aggression, intimidation, and persuasion through false strength and assumption of an authority role. Deep down they all mean, "You must love me and give me what I need." The more blindly you are involved in this way of being, the more you weaken and then further alienate yourself from the center of your true inner life, where you find all that you can ever need and want.

28 In order to reorient the soul forces toward health and restore their true nature, the following has to happen: let go of the particular person or persons from whom you expect your life fulfillment and whom you simultaneously resent for this very fact. You must all recognize that you place expectations and make demands on others which no one else but you yourself can fulfill. All you need and long for, including real love, can only come when your soul is fearless, and you know that the strength of your feelings with which you can give and receive love is located within you. For as long as you hang onto another person in the way of a child, denying the adult you are, you enslave yourself in the true sense of the word. The more you do this, the less you can either receive or give, and the less real feelings of any sort about any vital experience can find their home within you.

29 Because fear and anger take up most of the room in your psyche, it is essential to let out these negative emotions in the way you learn to do in the Pathwork where no one is harmed. Letting out fear and anger makes room for the good feelings. So many of you are still locked and paralyzed. Expressing fear and anger is the last thing you want to do. Even if you admit to such negative emotions in principle, you still prefer to act them out in unconsciousness rather than expressing them directly and taking the responsibility for them. You still claim a false perfection -- even though you do not really believe that it exists in you any longer -- in order to favorably dispose others toward you. Also, you cling for dear life to negative emotions because you fear positive feelings. This is yet another aspect of the same vicious circle.

30 The less you see yourself as responsible for the negative feelings you still possess as well as for your right and ability to create happiness, the more you must live in fear. Consequently, the more you must do something to eliminate that fear. Thus negative motivation comes about. You live a makeshift life of avoidance rather than create an expansive, unfolding life filled with positive experience and pleasure. You aim to avoid the threat of expressing your own negative feelings because they would spoil your obtaining from others everything which you must in fact obtain from within yourself. You stake your salvation on others from whom it can never come.

31 Your reorientation to life -- apart from the fundamental necessity of recognizing all these negative aspects -- must always begin with the willingness to let go. This cannot be forced upon one who has not been made aware of the dependency itself in very exact ways. But once this is the case, it becomes possible to give up what one has been so tightly holding on to. This loosening up must occur to bring about a change in

the balance structure of soul forces so that benign circles can begin to perpetuate themselves.

32 You also need to be willing to dispense with your rationalization that appears to make your case seem justified. For you can always succeed in presenting your life to yourself and to others as though your wishes, needs, and demands on others are not only justified, since there is nothing wrong with them, but are also beneficial for the other person. This may even be quite true, as far as it goes. What you want, in principle, may indeed be good and within your right. But when using a hidden, emotional forcing-current, you go about seeking satisfaction in the wrong way and not granting the other person the same freedom you wish for yourself. You do not give the other person the right to freely choose whom to love and accept or the right not to be rejected and hated for asserting this freedom. You do not even give the other the right to be wrong without being hated and totally denied. This is a freedom which you very much wish for yourself, and you deeply resent others when they do not grant it to you. You are unable to defend yourself in an adequate way in such cases only because on certain emotional levels you do not grant this same freedom to others. When you look very closely you will find this to be true. And when you do so, your sense of fairness and objectivity will help you to give up what you so desperately hold on to, even while you emotionally still believe that your life depends on getting the other to feel and do as you wish.

33 Once you have learned this initial condition, allowing for the number of inevitable relapses that must forever be newly observed, you will make a huge step toward that source of your inner being where you are not chained in weakness and anxiety, or in fear and anger. You all chafe at some leash around your neck that keeps you dependent and anxious in a situation in which you cannot find the strength to assert yourself, in which you find yourself absolutely caught and unable to see a way out because each possibility seems wrong. You know that none of the visible alternatives give you that good feeling about yourself, that resilient strength and well-being, in which even difficult steps become feasible because you know they are right for you. Most of you have at least occasionally experienced this state of inner knowingness when your real self was freely operative within you. It is our aim to bring out that real self completely.

34 In order to liberate the real self, you must find that area of your life where you are most bound and most anxious. Ask yourself what it is you want from the other when you are so bound, so resentful, so afraid, so weak, so unable to be yourself. Experience this leash which can be given up only when you stop wanting from others what you must supply for yourself. Verbalize concisely to yourself whatever you find you need from others. This will bring you nearer to letting go. You will then know that this is precisely the compulsive need with which you enslave, weaken, and paralyze yourself. When you let go, you will experience a new, resilient strength coming out of you that suddenly conciliates apparently insoluble problems. You will become free as you let free. Only when you can lose on the ego-level can you win on the level of the real self, where the power is to create a good life.

- 35** Conversely, your inability to give up, to be fair, to let others free, your insistence to win and have your way, and your refusal to lose on the ego-level make it impossible for you to win where it counts and where you would find your real strength. Jesus Christ meant this when he said that he who wants to live must be willing to lose his life. In one of my very first lectures, I spoke of this when I said, "You must give up what you want to gain."
- 36** Here we are dealing with levels of consciousness. I hope it is quite clear that no sacrifice or renunciation is required. What is meant is that you cannot obtain what you want, and what you indeed should have, by pressuring an outer source with all your efforts. The emphasis must shift. If you insist that you must win on the wrong level, you cannot truly win. If you can lose on that ego level, you will win. You will then inevitably come into that nucleus of yourself where every conceivable power exists. As you grant others the right to be, whether it is convenient to you or not, to that extent you will truly find your own rights.
- 37** It is a steady growing process to find these rights. The process will first manifest by your no longer selling out or downgrading yourself. You will find genuine, good defenses against abuse and you will feel good about them. Later you will discover your ever-increasing right for pleasure and happiness. You will find that you move toward visions of what your life could be, toward possibilities you never dreamed could exist. You will suddenly permit yourself pleasure. You will no longer cramp up against it, as you inadvertently continue to do now. You will stop undermining the spontaneous processes, and you will learn to trust them. This will open a richness of life and a security that truly are heavenly. By letting go and giving up your inner forcing-current, you will experience the beauty of free, unforced relationships. When you live in the old dependency pattern, you force others to make them do what you want. Thus you have mutual forcing-currents. This weakens you and creates a host of negative emotions which cause you to lose contact with the nucleus of your real being, as well as with your good feelings. When you can lose gracefully, you will find a treasure within, a new way of life which is an entirely new venture on which you are just embarking. The areas in your life where you feel so weak and so trapped will cease to exist.
- 38** Reach into your inner being and communicate with it for the purpose of eliminating this weakness in you that binds you and that wastefully and needlessly holds you back in your life. No matter how much you may glorify this holding back, it serves no good purpose. All of you do hold back in one way or another, just as humankind has done for millennia, by saying that pleasure is wrong and frivolous and unspiritual. You may have your own private excuse to beautify your weakness and apparently make an asset out of it. Yet in following this reasoning you cannot really come face to face with yourself. Only by coming face to face with your weakness and dependency, with your forcing-current that says to others "you must," can you also come face to face with your strength and beauty, and with all the potentials that exist in you in a way you cannot even fathom yet.

39 Be blessed by the great strength that is here now, but even more so by the great strength that dwells in you. Be in peace. Be in God!

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