**Pathwork Lecture 44: The Forces of Love, Eros, and Sex**


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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<td>Greetings in the Name of the Lord.</td>
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<td>I bring you blessings, my dearest friends.</td>
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<td>Blessed is this hour [i.e., blessed is this time we now spend together in this lecture].</td>
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<td>Tonight I would like to discuss three particular forces in the universe:</td>
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<td>• the love force as it manifests between the sexes,</td>
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<td>• the erotic force, and</td>
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<td>• the sex force.</td>
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These are three distinctly different forces that manifest differently on every plane, from the highest to the lowest.

Humanity has always confused these three principles.

In fact, it is little known that three separate forces exist and what the differences between them are.

There is so much confusion about this that it will be quite useful for my friends to hear what the reality is.

The erotic force is one of the most potent forces in existence and has tremendous momentum and impact.
It [i.e., the erotic force] is supposed to serve as the bridge between
• sex
and
• love,
yet it rarely does.

In a spiritually highly developed person, the erotic force carries the entity from the
• erotic experience, which in itself is of short duration,
into the
• permanent state of pure love.

However, even the strong momentum of the erotic force carries the soul
• just so far
and
• no farther.

It [i.e., the strong momentum of the erotic force] is bound to dissolve if the personality does not learn to love, by cultivating all the
• qualities and
• requirements necessary for true love.
Only when love has been learned does the spark of the erotic force remain alive.

By itself, without love, the erotic force burns itself out.

This of course is the trouble with marriage.

Since most people are incapable of pure love, they are also incapable of attaining ideal marriage [i.e., the marriage in which the spark of the erotic force remains fully alive].

- Eros seems in many ways similar to love.

It [i.e., eros] brings forth [natural spontaneous] impulses a human being would not have otherwise: impulses of unselfishness and affection he or she might have been incapable of before.
This [i.e., this automatic spontaneous impulse of unselfishness or affection of eros]

is why
  • eros

is so very often
  confused with
  • love.

But
  eros [because of its potent automatic spontaneous nature]
  is just as often
    confused with
    the sex instinct
    which,
      like eros,
        also manifests
          as a
            great [spontaneous] urge.

Now, my friends,
  I would like to show you what
    the spiritual
      • meaning and
      • purpose
        of
          the erotic force
            is,
              particularly
                as far as humanity is concerned.

Without [the experience of] eros,
  many people
    would
      never
        experience
          the great
            • feeling and
            • beauty
              that is contained in
                real love.
[Without the experience of eros]
They [i.e., many people] would never get the taste of it [i.e., the taste of real love] and the yearning for [real] love would remain deeply submerged in their souls.

Their fear of love would remain stronger than their desire [for love].

Eros is the nearest thing to love the undeveloped spirit can experience.

It [i.e., eros] lifts the soul out of • sluggishness, out of mere • contentment and • vegetation.

It [i.e. eros] causes the soul • to surge, • to go out of itself.
When this [erotic] force comes upon even the most undeveloped people they [i.e., these most undeveloped people] become able to surpass themselves.

[For example:]
• Even a criminal will temporarily feel, at least toward one person, a goodness he has never known.

• The utterly selfish person will, while this feeling lasts, have unselfish impulses.

• Lazy people will get out of their inertia.

• The routine-bound person will
  • naturally and
  • without effort
  get rid of static habits.

The erotic force will lift a person out of separateness, be it only for a short time.
Eros
gives
  • the soul
    a foretaste
    of unity and
teaches
  • the fearful psyche
    the longing
    for it [i.e., for the longing for unity].

The more strongly
  one has
  experienced
  eros,
the less contentment
  will the soul find
  in the pseudo-security
  of
  separateness.
Even
  an otherwise
  thoroughly self-centered person
may be able to
  make a sacrifice
  during the
  experience
  of eros.

So you see, my friends,
eros
  enables people
  to do
    • things
      they are
disinclined to do
      otherwise [i.e., disinclined to do without eros];
    • things
      that are closely linked
      with love.

It is easy to see why
  • eros
is so often confused with
  • love.
How then is
• eros
different from
• love?

Love is a
permanent state
in the soul.

Love can only exist
if the foundation for it
is prepared through
• development and
• purification.

Love does not
come and go at random;

eros does
[i.e., eros does come and go at random].

Eros hits
with sudden force,
often taking a person
• unaware and
• even unwilling
to go through
the experience.
Only if
the soul
• is prepared
to love and
• has built
the foundation for it [i.e., built a foundation for love]
will eros
be the bridge
to the love
that is manifest
between
• a man
and
• a woman.

Thus you can see
how important
the erotic force is.

Without
the erotic force
• hitting them and
• getting them
out of their rut,
many human beings
would never
be ready for
a more conscious search
for the breaking down of
their own walls of separation.
The erotic experience
• puts the seed into the soul and
• makes it [i.e., makes the soul] long for unity, which is the great aim in the Plan of Salvation.

As long as the soul is separate, • loneliness and • unhappiness must be its lot.

The erotic experience enables the personality to long for union with at least one other being.

In the heights of the spirit world, union exists among • all beings – and thus with • God.
In the earth sphere, the erotic force is a propelling power regardless of whether or not its [i.e., whether or not the erotic force’s] real meaning is understood.

This is so [i.e., It is so that the erotic force is a propelling power] even though it [i.e., the erotic force] is often
• misused and
• enjoyed for its own sake, while it lasts.

[When the erotic force is misused.] It [i.e., the erotic force] is not utilized to cultivate love in the soul, so it [i.e., so the erotic force] peters out.

Nevertheless, its effect [i.e., though the erotic force itself peters out because it is not utilized to cultivate love in the soul, nevertheless the effect of the erotic force]

will inevitably remain in the soul.

Eros
• comes to people suddenly in certain stages of their lives,
• even to those who are afraid of the apparent risk of adventuring away from separateness.
People who are afraid of
• their emotions and
afraid of
• life as such

will often
do anything in their power
to avoid –
• subconsciously and
• ignorantly –
the great experience
of unity.

Although this fear [i.e., this fear of emotions and life as such, this fear of the experience of unity]
exists in
many human beings,

there are few indeed
who have
not
experienced
some opening in the soul
where eros could touch them.

For the
fear-ridden soul
that resists
the experience [of unity],

this [i.e., eros]
is
good medicine
regardless of the fact that
• sorrow and
• loss
may follow
due to
other psychological factors.
However, there are also those who are over-emotional, and although they may know other fears of life, they are not afraid of this particular experience [i.e., they are not afraid of the experience of unity made possible by eros].

In fact, the beauty of it [i.e., the beauty of unity experienced in eros] is a great temptation to them and therefore they hunt greedily for it [i.e., they hunt greedily for the beauty of unity experienced in eros].

They look for one subject after another, emotionally too ignorant to understand the deep meaning of Eros.

They • are unwilling to learn pure love, and • simply use the erotic force for their pleasure

and when it [i.e., when the erotic force with one subject] is worn out [as it must without love] they hunt elsewhere [i.e., they hunt for other possible subjects with whom to experience the erotic force anew].
This [i.e., using the erotic force for pleasure only rather than as a bridge to love] is an abuse and cannot continue without ill effects.

Such a personality will have to make amends for the abuse – even if it [i.e., even if the abuse of the erotic force] was done in ignorance.

In the same vein, the over-fearful coward will have to make up for trying to cheat life by • hiding from eros and thus • withholding from the soul a medicine, valuable if used properly.

Most people in this [latter] category have a vulnerable point somewhere in their soul through which eros can enter.

There are also a few who have built such a tight wall of • fear and • pride around their souls that they • avoid this part of life experience entirely and so • shortchange their own development.
This fear [of the erotic force] might exist
  • because in a former life
    they had an unhappy experience with eros,
  or perhaps
  • because the soul has greedily abused
    the beauty of the erotic force
    without building it into love.

In either case, the personality
  may [now] have chosen
  to be more careful.

[However,]
If this decision is too
  • rigid and
  • stringent,
the opposite extreme will follow.

In the next incarnation circumstances will be chosen in such a way that a balance is established until the soul reaches a harmonious state wherein there are no more extremes.
This balancing in future incarnations always applies to all aspects of the personality.

In order to approach this harmony to some extent at least, the proper balance between reason, emotion, and will has to be achieved.

• The erotic experience often mingles with the sexual urge, but it does not always have to be that way.
These three forces –
  • love,
  • eros, and
  • sex –
often appear
  • completely separately,
while sometimes two mingle,
such as
  • eros and sex, or
  • eros and love
to the extent the soul is capable of love, or
  • sex and a semblance of love.

Only in the ideal case do all three forces mingle harmoniously.

The sex force is the creative force on any level of existence.

In the highest spheres [i.e., in the highest level of existence], the [very] same sex force creates
  • spiritual life,
  • ideas, and
  • concepts and principles.
On the lower planes [i.e., the lower levels of existence], the
  • pure and
  • unspiritualized
  sex force
  creates
    • life as it manifests
      in that particular sphere;

  it [i.e., the pure and unspiritualized sex force on the lower planes]
  creates
    • the outer shell or
    • vehicle
      of the entity
        destined to live
          in that sphere.

The pure sex force
  is utterly selfish.

Sex
  without
    • eros and
  without
    • love
  is referred to
    as
      animalistic.

Pure sex [i.e., sex without eros and without love]
  exists
    in all living creatures:
      • animals,
      • plants, and
      • minerals.
Eros begins with the stage of development where the soul is incarnated as a human being.

And pure love is to be found in the higher spiritual realms.

This does not mean that eros and sex no longer exist in beings of higher development, but rather [means] that all three [i.e., sex, eros, and love] blend in harmoniously, are refined, and become less and less selfish.

Nor do I mean that a human being should not try to achieve a harmonious blend of all three forces.
In rare cases,
  • eros alone,
without
  • sex and
  • love,
exists
  for a limited time.

This is usually referred to as
  platonic love.

But sooner or later
  with the somewhat healthy person,
  • eros
and
  • sex
will mingle.

[Here]
The sex force,
  instead of being
    suppressed,
is taken up
  by the
    erotic force
and
  both [the sex force and the erotic force]
flow
  in
    one current.

The more
  the three forces
remain
  separate,
the unhealthier
  the personality is.
Another frequent combination, particularly in relationships of long standing, is the coexistence of:
- genuine love
- sex,
- but without eros.

Although love cannot be perfect unless all three forces [i.e., unless the sex, erotic, and love forces] blend together, there is a certain amount of [love in the form of]
- affection,
- companionship,
- fondness,
- mutual respect,
and a sex-relationship that is crudely sexual without the erotic spark which evaporated some time ago.

When eros is missing, the sexual relationship must eventually suffer.

Now this is the problem with most marriages, my friends.
There is hardly a human being
who is not puzzled
by the question of
what to do
to maintain the spark in the relationship
which seems to
evaporate
the more
• habit and
• familiarity with one another
sets in.

You may not have
posed the question
in terms of
three distinct forces,
yet you
• know and
• sense
that
something goes out of a marriage
that was present at the beginning;

that spark
is actually
eros.

You
• find yourself
in a
vicious circle and
• think that
marriage
is a
hopeless proposition.

No, my friends,
it is not,
even if
you cannot
as yet
attain
the ideal.
In the
ideal partnership
of love between two people
all three forces
have to be represented.

With love
you do not seem to have much difficulty,
for in most cases
one would not marry
if there did not exist
at least
the willingness
to love.

I will not discuss at this point
the extreme cases
where this is not so [i.e., cases where two people marry
without at least a willingness to love].

[Rather, here]
I am focusing on a relationship
where
• the choice [to marry]
is a mature one
and yet
• the partners cannot
get around the pitfall
of becoming bound by
• time and
• habit,
because
elusive eros
has disappeared.
With sex it is very much the same [as with love].

The sex force is present in most healthy human beings and may only begin to fade – particularly with women – when eros has left.

Men may then [i.e., Men may, when eros has left the woman,] seek eros elsewhere.

For the sexual relationship must eventually suffer unless eros is maintained.

How can you keep eros?

That is the big question, my dear ones.

Eros can be maintained only if it is used as a bridge to true partnership in love in the highest sense.

How is this done?
Let us first look for
the main element
in the erotic force.

When you analyze it [i.e., When you analyze the erotic force],
you will find that it [i.e., you will find that the main element in the erotic force] is

• the adventure,
• the search for
  the knowledge of
  the other soul.

This desire [for the knowledge of the other soul]
lives in
every created spirit.

The inherent
life-force [within every created spirit]
must
finally
bring the entity
out of its separation.

Eros
strengthens
the curiosity
to know
the other being.

As long as
• there is
  something new
to find
  in the other soul and

as long as
• you reveal yourself,

eros
will live.
The moment
you believe
you
  • have found
    all
    there is to find [in the other soul], and
  • have revealed
    all
    there is to reveal [about yourself],

eros
  will leave.

It is as simple as that
  with eros.

But
  where your great error
  comes in
is that
  you believe
  there is
    a limit to
    the revealing
      of any soul,
        • yours or
        • another's.

When a certain point of
  usually quite superficial
  revelation
    is reached,
  you are under the impression
  that
    this is all there is,
    and
    you settle down
      to a placid life
        without further searching.
Eros has carried you this far with its strong impact.

But after this [initial] point, your will to
• further search the unlimited depths of the other person and
• voluntarily reveal and share your own inward search determines whether [or not] you have used eros as a bridge to love.

This [i.e., your will to further search the other and further reveal to the other what you find out about yourself in your own inward search], in turn, is always determined by your will to learn how to love.

Only in this way [i.e., only by your will to learn how love by your further searching of the other and by further revealing what you find out about yourself in your own inward search] will you maintain the spark of eros in your love.
Only in this way [i.e., only by your will to learn how love by your further searching of the other and by further revealing what you find out about yourself in your own inward search]

will you
continue to
• find
the other and
• let yourself
be found.

There is
no limit [to this discovery of the other, and to revealing of yourself],
for the soul is
• endless and
• eternal:
  a whole lifetime
  would not suffice
  to know it.

There can
never
be a point
when
• you know the other soul entirely, nor
when
• you are known entirely.

The soul
is alive,
and
nothing that is alive
remains static.

It [i.e., the soul]
has the capacity
to reveal
even deeper layers
that already exist.

The soul is also
in constant
• change and
• movement
as anything spiritual
is [in constant change and movement]
by its very nature.
Spirit
  means
  life
and
  life
  means
  change.
Since
  soul
  is spirit [and spirit means life and life means change],
the soul
  can
  never
  be known utterly [i.e., since the soul is in constant change, there is always something new to know about the soul].
If people had
  the wisdom,
  they would
  • realize that [there is always something new to know about the soul]
  and
  • make of marriage
    the marvelous journey
    of adventure
    it is supposed to be,
    forever finding
    new vistas,
  instead of
  • simply being carried
    as far as you are taken
    by the first momentum of eros.
You should
  • use this potent momentum of eros
    as the initial thrust
    it is, and
  • then find through it [i.e., find through this initial thrust of eros]
    the urge to go on further
    under your own steam.
Then you will have
  brought eros
  into
  true love
  in marriage.
Marriage
is intended by God
for human beings and
its [i.e., marriage’s]
divine purpose
is not merely
procreation.

That [i.e., procreation]
is only
one detail.

The spiritual idea
of marriage
is
• to enable the soul
to reveal itself and

• to be constantly on the search
for the other

• to discover
forever new vistas
of the other being.

The more
this happens,

• the happier
the marriage will be,

• the more
• firmly and
• safely
it will be rooted, and

• the less
it will be in danger
of an unhappy ending.

Then
it [i.e., then the marriage]
will fulfill
its spiritual purpose.
In practice, however, marriage hardly ever works that way.

You reach a certain state of
• familiarity and
• habit
and you think you know the other.

It does not even occur to you that the other does not know you by any means.

He or she may know
• certain facets of your being,
but • that is all.

This search for • the other being,
as well as for • self-revelation,
requires inner • activity and • alertness.
But since people are often tempted into inner inactivity, while outer activity may be all the stronger as an overcompensation, they are being lured to sink into a state of restfulness, cherishing the delusion of already knowing each other fully.

This is the pitfall.

It is the beginning of the end at worst, or at best a compromise leaving you with a gnawing, unfulfilled longing.

At this point the relationship turns static.

It is no longer alive even though it may have some very pleasant features.
| Habit is a great temptress, pulling one toward sluggishness and inertia, so that one does not have to try and work or be alert any more. |

| Two people may arrange an apparently satisfactory relationship, and as the years go by they face two possibilities. The first [possibility] is that either one or both partners become openly and consciously dissatisfied. |
[One or both partners become dissatisfied]

For
the soul
needs
• to surge ahead,
• to find and
• to be found,
so as to
dissolve separateness,
regardless of
how much
the other side of the personality
• fears
  union
  and
• is tempted by
  inertia.

This dissatisfaction
is either
• conscious –
  although in most instances
  the real reason for it [i.e., the real reason for the dissatisfaction]
  is ignored –
or it is
• unconscious.

In either case,
• the dissatisfaction
is stronger than
• the temptation of
  the comfort
  of
• inertia and
• sluggishness.
Then [since the dissatisfaction is stronger than the temptation
of the comfort of inertia of staying in the marriage]
the marriage
will be disrupted

and one or both partners
will delude themselves
into thinking
that
with a new partner
it will be different,
particularly after eros
has perhaps
struck again.

As long as this principle [i.e., the principle that eros is kept alive by bridging over
to love through the process of evermore discovery
and revealing of souls]
is not understood,
a person
may go
from one partnership
to another,
sustaining feelings
only as long as
eros
is at work.

The second possibility [when dissatisfaction in a marriage arises]
is that
the temptation
of a semblance of peace
is stronger [than living with the pain of dissatisfaction].

Then the partners
may
• remain together and
may certainly
• fulfill something together,
but
a great unfulfilled need
will always lurk in their souls.
Since men are by nature more active and adventurous, they tend to be polygamous and are therefore more tempted by infidelity than women. Thus you can also understand what the underlying motive for men's inclination to be unfaithful is.

Women tend much more to be sluggish and are therefore better prepared to compromise. This is why they tend to be monogamous. Of course, there are exceptions, in both sexes. Such infidelity is often as puzzling to the active partner [i.e., the one who leaves the marriage] as to the "victim" [i.e., the one who is left behind by the active partner who leaves the marriage]
They [i.e., the active partners who leaves the marriage] do not understand themselves.

[Hence]
The unfaithful one [who leaves the marriage] may suffer just as much as the one whose trust has been betrayed.

In the situation where compromise is chosen [i.e., both partners choose to stay in the marriage, even though they are dissatisfied in it], both people stagnate, at least in one very important aspect of their soul development.

[Of course]
They find refuge in the steady comfort of their relationship.

They may even believe that they are happy in it [i.e., happy in their relationship], and this may be true to some degree.
The advantages [in such a comfortable relationship] of
• friendship,
• companionship,
• mutual respect, and
• a pleasant life together
  with a well-established routine

outweigh
the unrest of the soul,

and
the partners
may have enough discipline
  to remain faithful
  to one another.

Yet
an important element
of their relationship
  is missing:

the revealing of
  soul to soul
  as much as possible.

Only when
two people
do this [i.e., do the mutual work of revealing to each other soul-to-soul]
can they
• be purified together

and thus
• help each other.
Two developed souls, who

* have a knowledge of purification
  in their subconscious,
* though they may ignore
  the various steps
  of these [Pathwork] teachings,

can yet

* fulfill one another
  by
  • revealing themselves,
  by
  • searching the depths
    of the other's soul.

Thus

* what is in each soul
  will emerge
  into
  their conscious minds,
and [with increased consciousness]

* purification
  will take place.

Then

* the life-spark
  is maintained

so that

* the relationship
  can never
  • stagnate and
  • degenerate into a dead end.
For you who
• are on this path [i.e., Pathwork], and
• follow the various steps of these teachings,
it will be easier
• to overcome the
  • pitfalls and
  • dangers
    of the marital relationship and
• to repair damage
  that has occurred unwittingly.

Should you find yourself
alone,
you may,
with
• this knowledge and
• this truth,
repair the damage
that you have done
to your own soul
by harboring
wrong concepts
in your unconscious.

You may discover
your fear
of the
great adventurous journey with another,
which will explain
why you are alone.

This understanding [of why you are alone]
• should
  prove helpful and
• may even
  enable your emotions
  to change sufficiently
  so that
  your outer life
  may change too [i.e., in your outer life you may manifest
  a satisfying relationship with another].
This [i.e., changing sufficiently so that you manifest a satisfying relationship] depends on you.

Whoever is unwilling to take the risk of this great adventure cannot succeed in the greatest venture humanity knows—marriage.

In this way [i.e., by exploring each other’s soul and by revealing each other’s soul to the other], my dear friends, you not only
• maintain eros, that vibrating life force,
but you also
• transform it [i.e., transform eros, that vibrating life force,] into true love.

Only in a true partnership of
• love and
• eros
can you discover in your partner new levels of being you have not heretofore perceived.

And [in this true partnership of love and eros] you yourself will be purified also by
• putting away your pride and
• revealing yourself as you really are.
In this way [i.e., in this true partnership of love and eros],
your relationship
will always
be new,
regardless of
how well
you
think
you know each other
already.

All
masks
must fall,
not only
• the superficial [masks]
but
• the real [and much deeper masks],
which you may not even have been aware of.

Then
your love
will remain
alive.

It [i.e., your love]
will never
• be static;

it [i.e., your love]
will never
• stagnate.

You
will never
have to
search elsewhere [i.e., you will never
have to search for another partner].
There is so much to see and discover in this land of the other soul [the soul] • you have chosen, [the soul] • whom you continue to respect but • in whom you seem to miss the life spark that once brought you together.

You will never have to be afraid of losing the love of your beloved;

this fear [of losing the love of your beloved] will have justification only if you refrain from risking the journey of self-revelation together [i.e., if you refrain from risking walking and sharing the path of self-development together].

This, my friends, is marriage in its true sense and the only way it can be the glory it is supposed to be.
Each of you should think deeply about whether you are afraid to leave the four walls of your own separateness.

Some of my friends are unaware that to stay separate is almost a conscious wish.

With many of you it is this way: you desire marriage because • one part of you yearns for it — and also because • you do not want to be alone.

Quite • superficial and • vain reasons may be added to explain the deep yearning [for marriage] within your soul.
But

aside from

• this yearning [for marriage] and

aside from the

• superficial and

• selfish

motives

of your unfulfilled desire

for partnership,

there must also be [a counter force opposing marriage, which is]

• an unwillingness

to risk the

• journey and

• adventure

of revealing yourself.

An integral part of life

remains to be fulfilled by you –

if not in

• this life,

then in

• future lives.

Only when

you meet

• love,

• life, and

• the other being

in such readiness

will you be able

to bestow

the greatest gift

on your beloved,

namely

your true self.

And then

you must

inevitably

receive the same gift

from

your beloved.
But to do that [i.e., to give and receive the same gift, one’s true self, to and from your beloved],

a certain
  • emotional and
  • spiritual
  maturity
  has to exist [in both of you].

If this maturity is present [in you], you will
  intuitively
  choose
  the right partner,
  one who has, in essence,
  the same
  • maturity and
  • readiness to embark on this journey [as you yourself have].

The choice of a partner who is unwilling [to embark on this journey with you] comes out of
  the hidden fear [in you]
  of undertaking the journey yourself.

You
  magnetically
  draw
  • people and
  • situations
  toward you
  which correspond to
  your
  subconscious
  • desires and
  • fears.

You know that.
Humanity, on the whole, is very far away from this ideal [marriage], but that does not change • the idea or • the ideal.

In the meantime you have to learn to make the best of it.

And you who are fortunate enough to be on this path [called Pathwork] can learn much wherever you stand,

be it only in understanding why you cannot realize the happiness that a part of your soul yearns for.

To discover that [i.e., to discover why you cannot realize the happiness you long for]

• is already a great deal and • will enable you in • this life or in • future lives to get nearer to the realization of this idea.
Whatever your situation is, whether you
• have a partner or
• are alone,

search your heart
and it will furnish you
the answer to your conflict.

The answer [i.e., the answer to your conflict in this matter of marriage] must come
from within yourself,

and in all probability
it [i.e., the answer to your conflict in this matter of marriage] will relate to
your own
• fear,
• unwillingness,
and your
• ignorance of the facts.

Search
and
you will know.

Understand that
God's purpose in the partnership of love is
• the complete mutual revelation of one soul to another –
not just
• a partial revelation.
Physical
    revelation
    is easy for many.

Emotionally
    you share
    to a certain degree –
    usually
    as far as
    eros
    carries you.

But then
    you
    lock the door,
and
    that is the moment
    when your troubles begin.

There are many
    who are
    not willing
    to reveal
    anything.

They
    want to
    remain
    • alone and
    • aloof.

They
    will not touch
    the experience
    of
    • revealing themselves and
    of
    • finding the soul
    of the other person.

They avoid this
    in every way they can.
My dear ones,

once again:

understand

how important

the erotic principle is

in your sphere.

It [i.e., the erotic principle]

helps many

who may be

• unwilling and
• unprepared

for the love experience.

It [i.e., the erotic principle]

is what you call

• "falling in love," or
• "romance."

Through

eros

the personality

gets a taste

of what

the ideal love

could be.

As I said before,

many

use this

feeling of happiness [in eros]

• carelessly and
• greedily,

never passing

the threshold into

true love.
True love demands much more of people in a spiritual sense.

If they do not meet this demand [required by true love], they forfeit the goal for which their soul strives.

- This extreme of hunting for romance is as wrong as the other [extreme], where not even the potent force of eros can enter the tightly locked door.

But in most cases, when the door is not too tightly bolted, eros does come to you at certain stages of your life.

Whether you can then use eros as a bridge to love depends on you.
It [i.e., using eros as a bridge to love] depends on
your
• development,
your
• willingness,
your
• courage,
your
• humility, and
your
• ability to reveal yourself.

Are there any questions in connection with this subject, my dear friends?

QUESTION:
Yes.

It is so difficult
for a woman
to talk to a man.

Men don't answer
when one tries
to get into a conversation
touching
the emotional understanding.

That [i.e., a conversation touching emotional understanding] makes it very,
very difficult for the woman.

ANSWER:
Here is
a great error, my dear.
But let us first establish one fact that should be well understood.

- Woman is by nature more emotionally inclined.

- Man is by nature more spiritually,
or on a lower level, more intellectually inclined.

By that I do not mean that he has to be what you call an intellectual.

It is simply that usually the reasoning faculty is stronger in men.

Because of this the revealing of his emotions is a very difficult step for a man.

In this a woman can help him.

The man will help the woman in other ways.
The mistake
you make
is in
thinking that
• revelation and
• the meeting of souls
  is brought about
  by talking.

Oh, it [i.e., talking]
may be
• a temporary crutch,
it may be
• one detail;
or rather
it may be
• simply a tool,
• a means of expressing
  certain facets.

But this is all [talking is].

It is
not
in the talking
that you
• find the other soul or
that you
• reveal yourself,

though this [i.e., though talking]
may be
a part of it.

It is in the
being

that this
• whole and
• basic
  attitude
  is determined.
**It is**

- **the woman**
  - who is stronger
  - emotionally.

For her, it is usually easier to muster the courage to
- *meet*
  - soul to soul
and
- *touch*
  - the deepest core
  - of longing
  - that is also
  - in man.

If she can
- *use her*
  - intuition and
- *reach*
  - that [intuitive] part
  - of her partner,

he will respond.

Provided he has the maturity.

He must respond.

Whether this response comes occasionally through a conversation or not, is not so important.

It is not a question of whether a verbal discussion serves in reaching the other soul.
Certainly,
• speaking
  is
  a part of it,

 together with
• all
  the other faculties.

But
the ability
to speak
 about things [including speaking about emotions and feelings]
is not
 the determining factor.

First
the inner basis [of truly and deeply feeling all your feelings]
 has to be established.

Then
you will be
 flexible enough
to use
 all
  the faculties
  God has given you.

To
• find and
• meet
  the other soul
means
 going into
  the state
  of inner being [including truly and deeply
  feeling all feelings];

 the doing [including speaking]
is only
• an incidental result,
• a mere detail
  which is part of
  the outer manifestation.

Is that clear?
QUESTION: 
Yes, it is clear.

And I think it is wonderful.

In other words
it is the task
of the woman
to find
the other soul?

ANSWER:
It may often be
that it is easier
for the woman
to take
the first necessary steps [of self revelation]
after
eros
is no longer capable
of maintaining
its own momentum.

But
both
need to have
the basic willingness
to go on the journey together.

As stated before,
the woman
often finds it easier
• to reveal herself,
• to let the emotions come out.

The mature woman
who is
earnestly willing
to undertake the adventure
of true marriage
will have the
• mature and
• healthy
instinct
to find the right partner.
The same applies to the man, of course.

Once this willingness [to undertake the adventure of true marriage] exists in both, either one may lead the way.

It does not make any difference who starts.

It may often be the woman,

but it may also be the man at times.

Whoever starts it, a time will come when the other one will also • lead and • help.

In a relationship that is • alive, • healthy, and • flexible,

it [i.e., the leading, initiating, helping] must • alternate and • change constantly.
At any given time,
whoever is
• the stronger,
• the leader,
will help
in the liberation
of the other.

For
• this soul-revelation
is
• a liberation –
  • liberating
    the other soul
    from
    the prison of loneliness, and
  • liberating
    the self.

This prison [i.e., this prison of loneliness]
may even
appear
comfortable
if you
• live and
• stagnate
  in it long enough.

One should
not wait
for the other to start.

Whoever
is more
• mature and
• courageous
  at a particular instant
  • will start, and
  • will thus raise
    the maturity
    of the other
    which may then
    surpass his or her own.
Thus
• the helper
  becomes
  the helped;

• the liberator
  becomes
  the liberated.

QUESTION:
When you talk about
  the revelation
  of a soul
  to
  • another,
  do you mean that,
  on a higher level,
  this is the way
  the soul
  reveals itself
  to
  • God?

ANSWER:
It [i.e., the soul revealing itself to another and the soul revealing itself to God] is
the same thing.

But before
  you can truly
  reveal yourself
  to
  • God,
  you have to learn to
  reveal yourself
  to
  • another beloved human being.

And when you do that,
  you reveal yourself
  to God too.
Many people want to start with revealing themselves to the personal God.

But actually, deep in their hearts, such revelation to God is only a subterfuge because it is
- abstract and
- remote.

[In this action of revealing oneself only to the personal God]

No other human being can
- see or
- hear what they reveal.

They are still alone.

[In this action of revealing oneself only to the personal God]

One does not have to do the one thing that
- seems so risky,
- requires so much humility and thus
- threatens to be humiliating.
By revealing yourself to
  • another human being,

you accomplish so much
that cannot be accomplished by revelation to
  • God
    • who knows you anyway, and
    • who really does not need your revelation.

When you find
  • the other soul

and
  • meet
    it [i.e., meet the other soul],

you fulfill your destiny.

When you find
  • another soul,

you also find
  • another particle of God,

and if you reveal
  • your own soul,

you reveal
  • a particle of God

and give
  • something divine to another person.
When eros comes to you,
it will lift you up far enough so that you will
• sense and
• know
  • what it is in you that longs for this experience and
  • what is your true self, which is longing to reveal itself.

Without eros, you are merely aware of the lazy outer layers.

Do not avoid eros when it wants to come to you.

If you understand the spiritual idea behind it [i.e., the spiritual idea behind eros], you will use it [i.e., you will use eros] wisely.
God will then [i.e., God will, when you do not avoid eros but use it wisely,]
be able to
• lead you
and
• enable you
to make the best of
helping
• another being and
• yourself
on the way to
true love,
of which
purification
must be
an integral part.

Although
your purification work
• through
a deeply committed relationship

manifests differently
than it does
• in the [purification] work on this path [i.e., Pathwork],

it [i.e., purification work through a deeply committed relationship]
will help you
toward a purification
of the same order [as the work on this path called Pathwork].

QUESTION:
Is it possible for a soul to be so rich
that it can reveal itself to more than one soul?

ANSWER:
My dear friend, do you say that facetiously?

QUESTION:
No, I do not. I am asking whether polygamy
is within the scheme of spiritual law.
**ANSWER:**

No, it [i.e., polygamy] certainly is not [within the scheme of spiritual law].

And when someone thinks it [i.e., thinks polygamy] may be within the scheme of spiritual development, that is a subterfuge.

[In the situation you mention – polygamy]

The personality is looking for the right partner.

Either the person is too immature to have found the right partner, or the right partner is there and the polygamous person is simply carried away by eros' momentum, never lifting this force up into the volitional love [– love] that demands

- overcoming and
- working

in order to pass the threshold [from eros to pure love] I mentioned before.
In cases like this [i.e., cases of the polygamous personality],
the one
with an adventurous personality
is
• looking
  and looking,
• always finding
  another part
  of a being,
• always
  revealing himself or herself
    • [but] only so far
    and no further, or
  perhaps
    • each time revealing
      another facet
      of his or her personality [to each different partner].

However,
when it comes to
the inner nucleus,
the door is shut.

[Hence, for this relationship, the revealing goes only so deep,
ever reaching the inner nucleus, and then is stopped, and]

Eros then
departs [that relationship]
and
a new search
is started.

Each time
it [i.e., each new relationship]
is a disappointment
that can only be understood
when you grasp these truths.
Raw sexual instinct
also enters into
the longing for
this great journey,

but
sexual satisfaction
begins to suffer
if the relationship
is not kept on the level
I show you here.

It [i.e., raw sexual satisfaction]
is, in fact,
inevitably
of short duration.

There is
no richness
in revealing oneself
to many.

In such cases,
one either
• reveals
  the same wares
  all over again
  to new partners,

or, as I said before, one
• displays
  different facets
  of one's personality [to each partner].

The more partners
you try to share yourself with,
the less
you give to each.

That is
inevitably so.

It cannot be different.
QUESTION:
Certain people believe that they can
• cut out
  • sex and
  • eros and
  • the desire
    for a partner
and
• live completely for
  • love
    of humanity [as a whole].

Do you think it is possible
that man or woman can swear off
this part of life [i.e., swear off sex, eros, and the desire for a partner]?

ANSWER:
It is possible, but it is certainly not healthy or honest.

I might say that there is perhaps one person in ten million who may have such a task.

That may be possible.

It may be in the karma for a particular soul who
• is already developed this far,
• has gone through the true partnership experience, and
• comes for a specific mission.
There may also be
certain karmic debts
which have to be paid off.

In most cases –
and here
I can safely generalize –
avoidance of
partnership
is
• unhealthy.

It [i.e., avoidance of partnership]
is
• an escape.

The real reason [a person avoids the experience of partnership]
is
fear of
• love,
fear of
• the life experience,
but
the fearful renunciation [i.e., but the fearful renunciation of
the experience of partnership]
is rationalized
as a sacrifice.

To anyone who would come to me
with such a problem,
I would say:

Examine yourself.

• Go below the surface layers
  of your conscious
• reasoning and
• explanations
  for your attitude
  in this respect [i.e., your explanations in respect to
  your attitude about renouncing the
  experience of partnership in a true marriage].
• Try to find out whether you fear love and disappointment.

• Isn't it more comfortable to just live for yourself and have no difficulties?

• Isn't really this [i.e., Isn't your fear of love and disappointment, your comfort in living for yourself with no difficulties] what you feel deep inside and what you want to cover up with other reasons?

• The great humanitarian work you want to do may be for a worthy cause, indeed, but do you really think one excludes the other?

• Wouldn't it be much more likely that the great task you have taken upon yourself would be better fulfilled if you learned personal love too?

If all these questions were truthfully answered, the person would be bound to see that he or she is escaping [i.e., escaping life and love by renouncing personal love in a true marriage].
Personal
• love and
• fulfillment
is man's and woman's
destiny in most cases,
for
so much can be learned
in personal love
that cannot be attained
in any other way.

And to form a
• durable and
• solid
relationship
in a marriage
is the greatest victory
a human being
can achieve,
for it is
one of the most difficult things there are,
as you can well see
in your world.

This life experience [in a true marriage]
will bring the soul
closer to God
than
lukewarm good deeds.
QUESTION:
I was going to ask a question in connection with my previous one:

Celibacy
is supposed to be
a highly spiritualized form of development
in certain religious sects.

On the other hand,
polygamy
is also recognized
in some religions –
the Mormons, for instance.

I understand what you said,
but how do you justify
these [two extreme] attitudes
on the part of people
who are supposed to look for
unity
with God?

ANSWER:
There is
human error
in every religion.

In one religion
it may be
one kind of error,
in other religions
another.

Here you simply have
two extremes.
When such
  • dogmas or
  • rules
   come into existence
   in the various religions,
   whether at one extreme or another,

it is always a
  • rationalization and
  • subterfuge
   to which
   the individual soul
   constantly resorts.

This [rationalization and subterfuge]
  is an attempt
  to explain away [by rationalizations and subterfuges]
  the counter-currents
  of the
   • fearful [in the case of celibacy] or
   • greedy [in the case of polygamy]
   soul
  with
  good motives [i.e., the “good” motive of celibacy
  to explain away the fear of life and love in the fearful soul
  of the celibate person, and the “good” motive of polygamy to
  rationalize the greedy soul of the polygamous person].

There is
  a common belief
  that
  anything pertaining to
  sex
  is
  sinful.

The sex instinct
  arises
  in the infant.
The more immature
the creature,

the more sexuality
is separated from
love,

and therefore [the more immature the creature]
the more selfish
it [i.e., the more selfish sexuality of the immature creature]
is.

Anything
without
love
is
"sinful,"
if you want to use this word.

Nothing
that is coupled
with love
is
• wrong -- or
• sinful.

There is
no such thing
as
• a force,
• a principle, or
• an idea
that is
in itself
sinful -- whether
• sex or
• anything else.
In the growing child who is naturally immature, the sex drive will first manifest selfishly.

Only
  • if and
  • when the whole personality grows and matures harmoniously will sex become integrated with love.

Out of ignorance, humanity has long believed that sex as such is sinful.

[For this reason]
It [i.e., sex] was kept hidden, and therefore this [sexual] part of the personality could not grow up [with the other parts of the personality].

Nothing that remains in hiding can grow; you know that.
Therefore,
even in many grownups,
sex
remains
• childish and
• separate
from love.

And this, in turn,
led humanity
to believe
more and more
that
• sex
is a sin and
that
• the truly spiritual person
must
abstain from it.

Thus
one of those oft-mentioned
vicious circles
came into existence.

Because of
the belief
that
sex
was
sinful,

the [sex] instinct
could not
• grow and
• meld with
the love force.
Consequently,

sex

in fact

often is

• selfish and
• loveless,
• raw and
• animalistic.

If people would realize –

and they are beginning to do so increasingly –

that

• the sex instinct
  is as
  • natural and
  • God-given
  as
  • any other universal force
• and
  in itself
  • not
    more sinful
    than
    any other existing force,

they would then

break

this vicious circle

and more human beings

would

let their

sex drives
• mature and
• mingle
  with
  • love – and
  with
  • eros,
    for that matter.
How many people exist
for whom
sex
is
completely separate
from
love!

They
not only
• suffer from
  bad conscience
  when
  the sex urge
  manifests,

but they also
• find themselves
  in the position of
  being unable
  to handle
  sexual feelings
  with the person
  they really
  love.

This occurs
quite often
in some measure,
although
it does seem
extreme.

Because of
• these distorted conditions and
• this vicious circle,
humanity
came to believe
that you
cannot find God
when you respond to
your sex urges.
This [i.e., the belief that you cannot find God when you respond to your sex urges] is all wrong;
you cannot
  kill off something
    that is
      alive.
You can only hide it [i.e., only hide something that is alive]
  so that
    it will come out
      in other ways
        which may be
          much more harmful.
Only in
  the very rarest cases
does
  the sex force
    really become
      sublimated
        so as to make
          this creative force [i.e., to make this sex force]
            manifest
              in other realms.
Sublimation
  in its real sense
    can never occur
      when there is
        • fear and
        • escape
          involved,
            as is the case with
              most human beings [in regards to sexuality].
Does that answer your question?

QUESTIONER:
Perfectly,
  thank you.
QUESTION:
If two young people
• fall in love and
• marry
and
they
• are not well matched and
they
• don't understand each other,
is it possible
that these two people
could go on this journey together
and have a good marriage?

ANSWER:
[Yes.]
If both
are willing to
• learn love
  for one another and
• gain maturity
  together.

Even where
an immature choice
was made,
it could still become
a successful marriage,

but

only if
both
• are willing and
• are clearly aware of
  what marriage
  is supposed to be.

If both
lack the
• will and
• sense of responsibility
  for that,
they will not have the desire
  to make such a journey together.
QUESTION:
How does friendship between two people fit into this picture?

ANSWER:
Friendship is brotherly love.

Such friendship can also exist between man and woman.

Eros may want to sneak in, but
  * reason and
  * will
can still direct the way in which the feelings take their course.

* Discretion, and
* a healthy balance between
  * reason,
  * emotion, and
  * will
are necessary to prevent the feelings from going into an improper channel.
QUESTION:
Is divorce against spiritual law?

ANSWER:
Not necessarily.

We do not have fixed rules like that.

There are cases when divorce is
• an easy way out,
• a mere escape.

There are other cases when divorce is
• reasonable because
  • the choice to marry was made in immaturity and
  • both partners lack the desire to fulfill the responsibility of marriage in its true sense.

If only one is willing – or neither – divorce is better than
• staying together and
• making a farce out of marriage.
Unless both are willing to take this journey together, it is better to break clean than to let one prevent the growth of the other. That [i.e., one preventing the growth of the other by staying in the marriage], of course, happens. It is better [however] to terminate a mistake than to remain indefinitely in it without finding an effective remedy.

One should not, however, leave a marriage lightly. Even though it [i.e., even though the marriage] was a mistake and does not work, one should try to find the reasons and do one's very best to search out and perhaps get over the hurdles that are in the way.
Since they [i.e., since the hurdles that are in the way of a good marriage] are due to inner mistakes, the partners could try to make the best of it, if both are in any way willing.

One can learn a lot from one's
• past and
• present mistakes.

To generalize that divorce is wrong in any case is just as incorrect as to say that it [i.e., divorce] is always right.

One should certainly do one's best, even if the marriage is not the ideal experience that I discussed tonight.

Few people are
• ready and
• mature enough for it [i.e., for the ideal marriage experience].
You can
make yourself ready
by trying to
• make the best
  of your past mistakes and
• learn from them.

My dearest friends,
think carefully
about what I have said.

There is
much food for thought
in what I told you,
• for each of you
  here, and
• for all those
  who will read my words.

There is
not a single person
who cannot learn something from them.

I want to close this lecture
with the assurance to all of you
that we in the spirit world
are
deeply grateful to God
for your
• good efforts,
for your
• growth.

It [i.e., your growth] is
our greatest
• joy and
our greatest
• happiness.
And so, my dear ones,
receive the blessings of the Lord again;

may your hearts
be filled

by this wonderful strength
coming to you

from the world of

• light and
• truth.

Go

in

• peace and

in

• happiness,

my dear ones,

each one of you.

Be in God!
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