Pathwork Lecture 57: The Mass Image of Self-Importance

1996 Edition, Original Given October 9, 1959

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.*

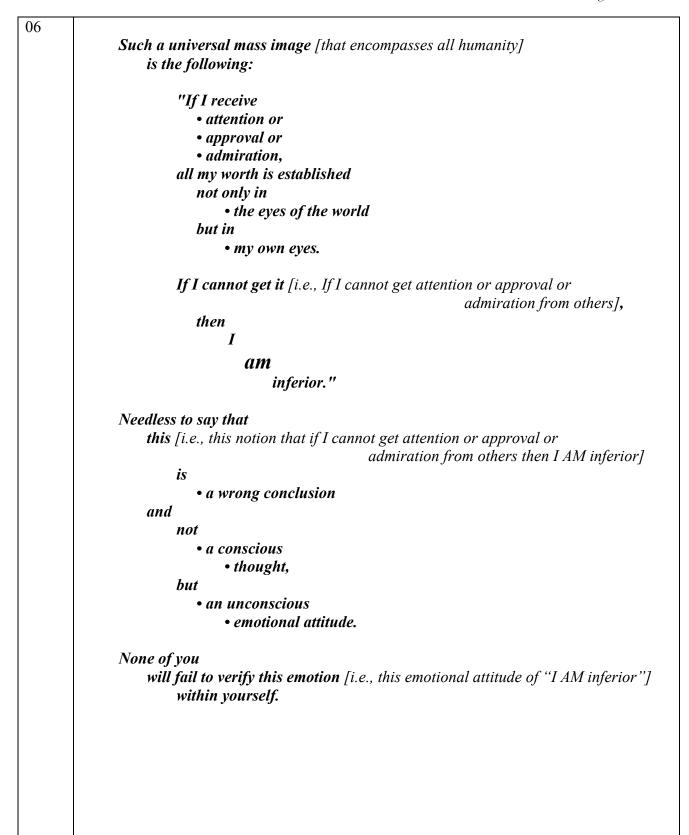
For clarity: The **original text** is in **bold and** *italicized*. *[My adds of commentary/clarification/interpretation are in brackets, italicized, and <u>not</u> <i>bolded.]* To learn more of my Devotional Format and see the lectures I have done in this way, go to <u>https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/</u>

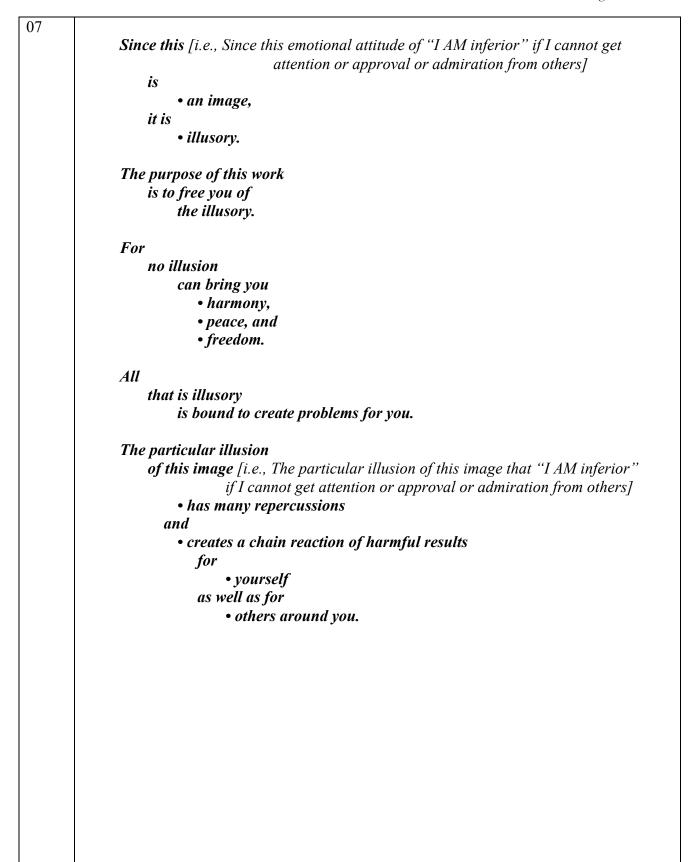
Gary Vollbracht

9	Content
03	
	Greetings,
	my friends.
	God bless
	all of you,
	God bless this hour [i.e., God bless this time
	we now spend together in this lecture].
04	
	We have often discussed
	• inferiority feelings and
	• their true origin.
	This line Having factings of information
	This [i.e., Having feelings of inferiority]
	• is an important trend
	in human nature and
	• needs further understanding
	in your work of
	self-finding.

	at the real reasons for inferiority feelings
	are hidden.
Subco	nsciously
yo	ou do register
	your
	• imperfections and
and,	• inadequacies
unu,	although you do not want to
	• face them [i.e., do not want to face your imperfections
	and inadequacies]
	and
	• come to terms with them,
yo	ur knowledge of them [i.e., your knowledge of your imperfections
	and inadequad
	persists.
Ү өи со	annot eradicate that [i.e., You cannot eradicate your knowledge
100000	of your imperfections and inadequac
se	ek relief from this unpleasant feeling [i.e., you seek relief from this unplea. feeling of having imperfections and inadequ
You be	elieve.
	istakenly,
	that this [i.e., that relief from this unpleasant feeling of having
	imperfections and inadequac
	can be accomplished
	by receiving
	• attention,
	1 • .• 1
	• admiration, and • approval.

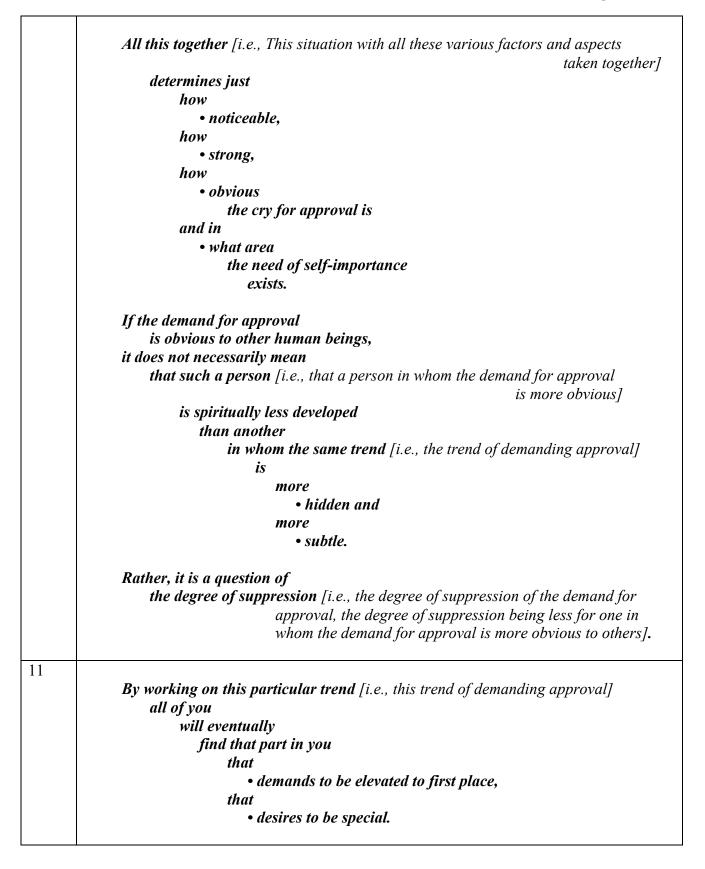
	Many of you have found out by now that
	no matter how much approval you receive,
	the relief [i.e., the relief from the unpleasant feeling of having
	imperfections and inadequacies that you get from approval]
	is, at best,
	a very temporary one [i.e., a very temporary relief].
5	
	In this connection [i.e., In connection with finding relief from the unpleasant feeling
	of having imperfections and inadequacies through the approval of others],
	I would like to discuss
	a particular mass image
	about the self.
	This mass image [i.e., This particular mass image that I am about to discuss]
	exists at all times,
	regardless of
	• civilization,
	• geography,
	 historical period, or
	• environment.
	There are
	other mass images
	bound to
	[only] certain
	• times and
	• civilizations.
	[However,]
	Those [mass images]
	which
	• are universal and
	• encompass
	all humanity
	are a product of
	a particular blend of
	human imperfection
	and
	• humanity's desire to reach perfection.
	numuny 5 desire to reach perjection.

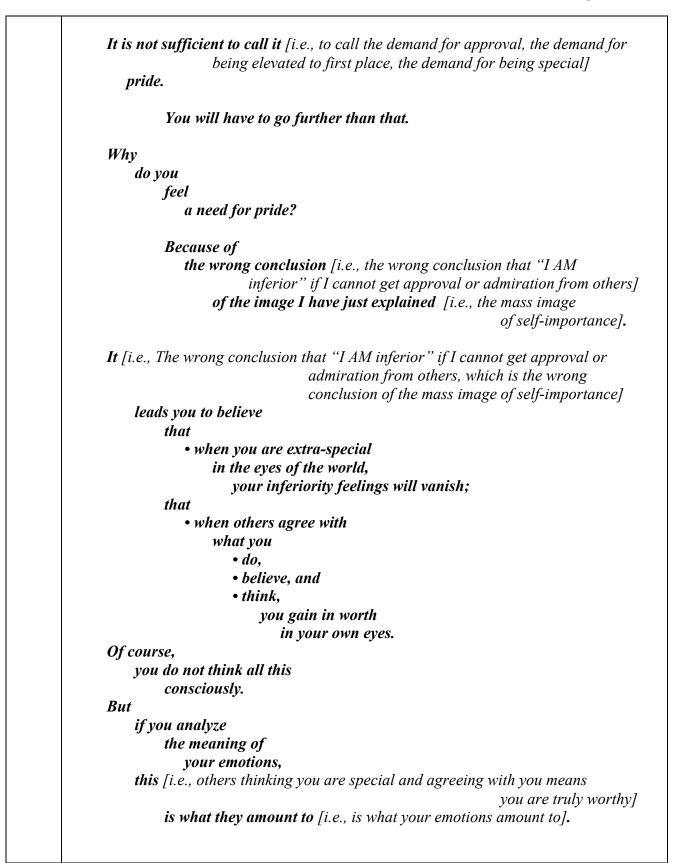




08	
	At this point,
	I might emphasize once again –
	so as to avoid all possible misunderstanding –
	that
	the remedy [i.e., the remedy to this image that "I AM inferior" if I
	cannot get attention or approval or admiration from others]
	is not in
	• defiance and
	rebellion
	against
	your dependence on
	other's opinions of you.
	Unconsciously,
	• you rebel [i.e., you rebel against your dependence on other's opinions of you]
	just as frequently as
	• you plead for
	• admiration and
	• approval.
	Both [i.e. Both your rebellion against your dependence on other's opinions of you
	and your pleading for admiration and approval from others to
	assuage your illusory feeling attitude of "I AM inferior"]
	exist simultaneously
	in many a soul.
	$\mathbf{D}_{-4}\mathbf{I}_{-}$
	Both
	• are equally harmful and
	• are the result of
	the same unhealthy basic misconception.
09	
	Let us go back to
	this particular mass image.
	We, in our world,
	can hear
	your souls
	shrieking for attention.
	The earth sphere
	produces this loud noise for us.

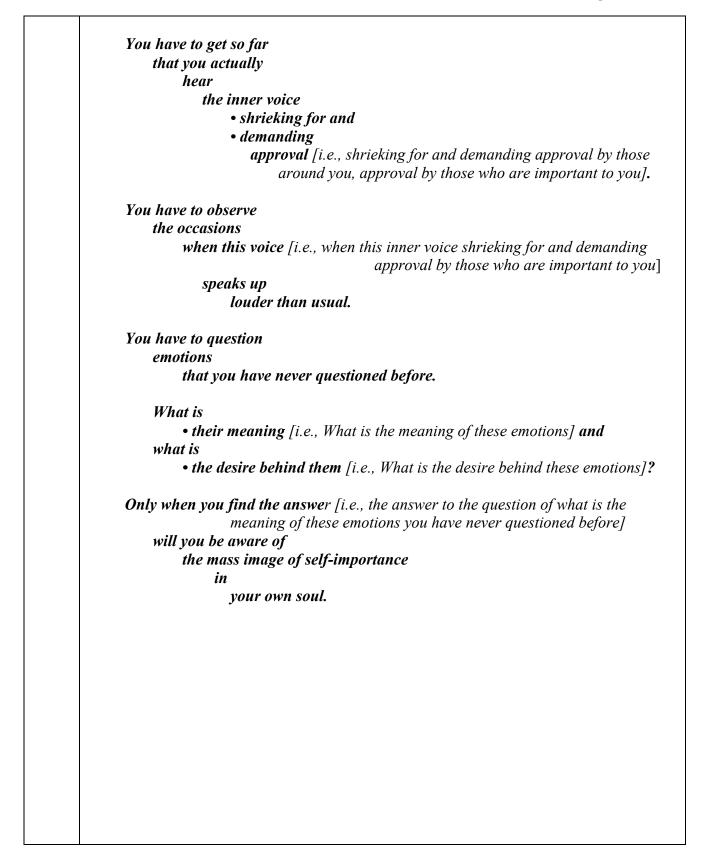
	When we approach
	your plane,
	all souls
	send forth
	this loud
	• calling and
	• clamoring,
	inaudible
	to your ears.
	But you can imagine
	how noisy it is
	for us.
	The voice of the soul is
	a loud one.
	All
	emotions
	produce sounds,
	but
	the loud voice claiming self-importance
	does not produce a very harmonious sound.
10	
	The outer manifestation
	of this mass image [of self-importance]
	varies
	according to
	• temperament and
	• individual characteristics;
	according to
	• other trends,
	• healthy or
	• sick,
	which determine the
	• strength and
	• manner
	of the manifestation [i.e., of the outer manifestation
	of this mass image of self-importance]; and
	according to
	• environment and
	• education.

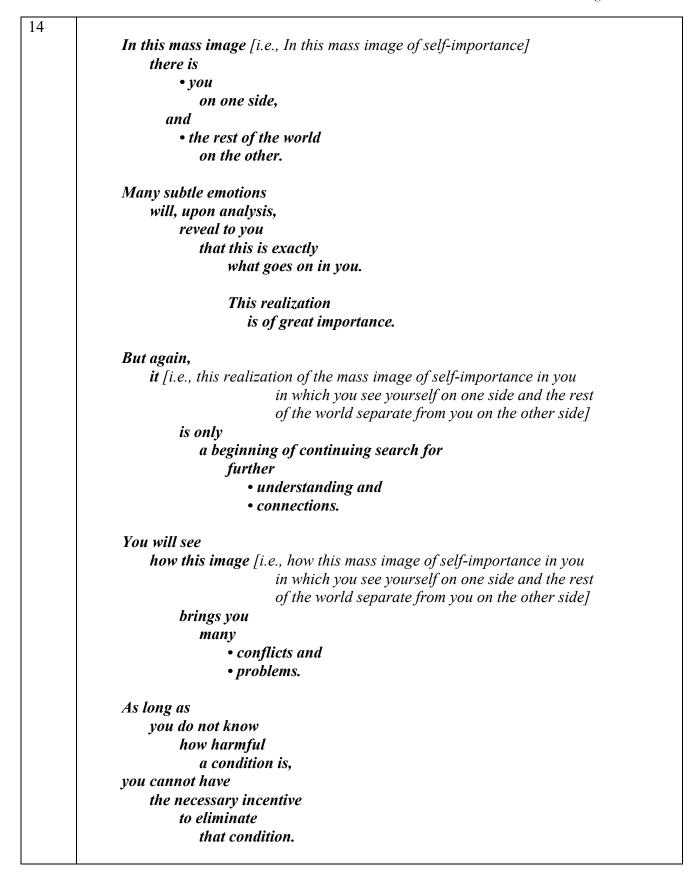




	Thus,
	you use pride as
	• a defensive measure [i.e., as a defense against feeling your sense of unworthiness],
	as
	• a means to an end [i.e., as a means to establish your sense of worthiness in the world].
	This [i.e., Because you use pride as a defensive measure and as a means to an end and therefore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

	You will have to
	understand fully
	that you
	unconsciously
	believe that your pride
	serves
	 to gain something for you
	or
	• to save you from
	some imagined disaster.
	When you discover
	the error of this assumption,
	you can then
	get rid of
	• the pride,
	• the vanity,
	• the self-importance:
	you comprehend
	that
	there is no need for it [i.e., there is no need for pride,
	vanity, or sense of self-importance].
13	
	In order to
	grasp all this [i.e., In order to grasp that there is no need for pride,
	vanity, or sense of self-importance],
	it is essential
	that you become
	fully aware
	that
	the part of your personality
	where you harbor
	this wrong conclusion [i.e., the part of your personality
	where you harbor this wrong conclusion that pride is
	absolutely needed as a defensive measure against
	feeling your sense of inferiority and unworthiness
	and also that pride is absolutely needed to establish
	your sense of worthiness]
	indeed
	exists.





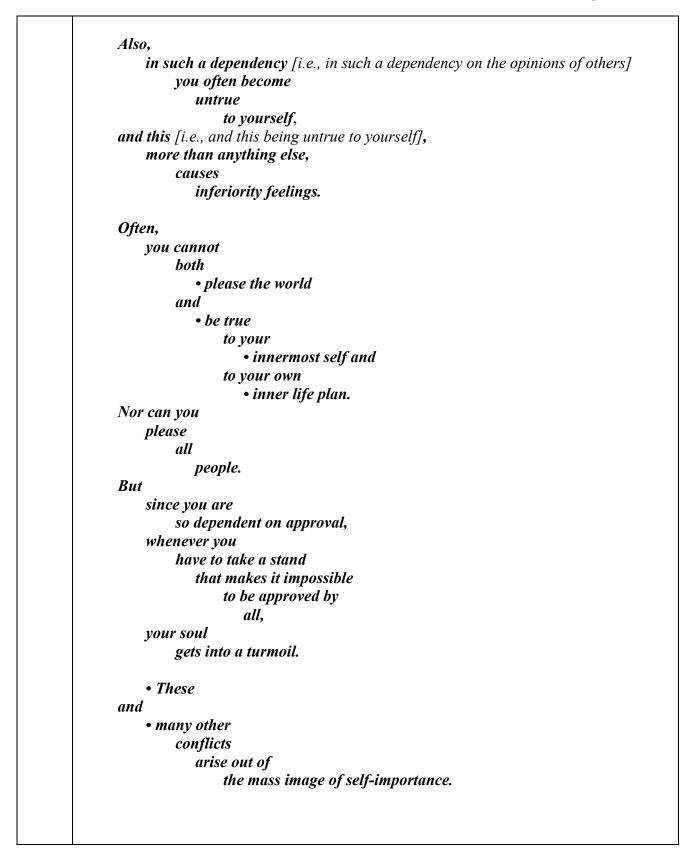
And as long as you are unaware that the condition even exists, how can you see its effects? First you have to become aware of this • basic, • universal condition [i.e., become aware of this condition of the mass image of self-importance in you in which you see yourself on one side and the rest of the world separate from you on the other side] in yourself, and then you have to connect • the effects of this condition with • various conflicts. You will thereby come to see many of your problems in an entirely new light. You will realize that many of your difficulties need never exist if you were free of this particular misconception.

15	
15	
	This mass image [i.e., This mass image of self-importance in you in which you see
	yourself on one side and the rest of the
	world separate from you on the other side]
	takes on many forms
	in your
	unconscious.
	Therefore,
	<i>the outer manifestation</i> [i.e., the outer manifestation of this mass image of self-
	importance in you in which you see yourself on one side and
	the rest of the world separate from you on the other side]
	varies too.
	People seek
	admiration
	in various ways.
	in various ways.
	One person
	-
	may believe that
	material wealth
	will gain him
	greater stature in the eyes of the world.
	With someone else,
	other values
	serve to gain that
	• admiration and
	• approval.
	I might say
	the majority of my friends
	fall into the latter category [i.e., the category where values other than
	material wealth will be the means by which a person seeks
	to gain his or her needed admiration and approval].
	With some neonle
	With some people the means file, the means by which these people sock to gain their needed
	the means [i.e., the means by which these people seek to gain their needed
	admiration and approval]
	might be
	a particular
	 accomplishment or
	• talent.

With others again, it may be [i.e., the means by which they seek to gain their needed admiration and approval may be] • good character, • decency • loyalty • intelligence. With most the means to get • approval and • admiration is a composite of many attributes, supposed to serve the same end [i.e., to serve the establishment of one's sense of worthiness in the world]. There is even a category of people who use misfortune as a means to gain sympathy – and, of course, sympathy stands for approval, too. Other sick currents also • affect the image [i.e., affect the mass image of self-importance] and • twist it into a particular direction.

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

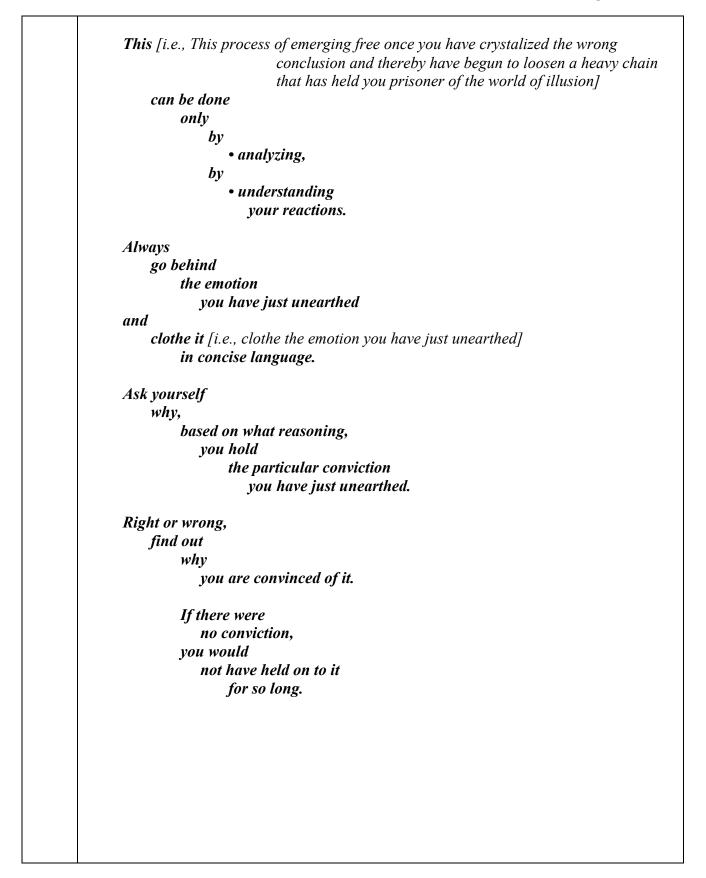
You believe you rebel against • a world that tries to force you into behavior patterns. But this, too, is an error. You actually rebel against • your dependency on the world's opinion. *Therefore* [i.e., Since you actually rebel against your dependency on the world's opinion], the remedy lies in your discovery • why you are so bound [i.e., discovering why you are so dependent on the world's opinion]; • what misconception *leads you to the bondage [i.e., discovering what misconception* makes you so dependent on the world's opinion]. *Then, and then only [i.e. Only when you discover WHY you are* so dependent on the world's opinion], can you free yourself of the • bondage and • compulsion so that you need no longer rebel. Nor do you have to make painful efforts in an attempt to gain something that is not your salvation.



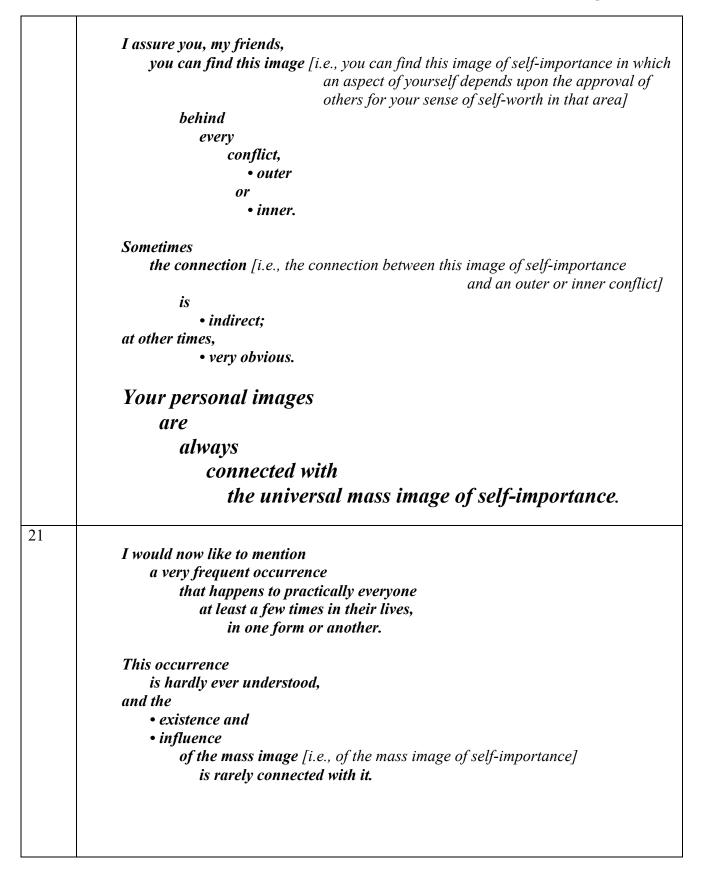
17	
	You can easily see
	that this mass illusion,
	existing in every human,
	may
	at times
	compel you to
	sell your soul.
	This [i.e., Selling your soul]
	may happen
	in many subtle ways,
	and I venture to say
	that there is hardly a person
	who has not done so at times [i.e., who has not sold
	his or her soul at times].
	I can assure you
	that there is
	no exception [i.e., no exception to people selling their souls]
	• among you here, or
	• anywhere else, for that matter.
	But
	you have to find
	individually
	that part in you
	which is bound by
	<i>the image</i> [i.e., bound by the mass image of self-importance
	where you depend upon the approval of others
	for your sense of self-worth and sell your soul].
	for your sense of self-worth and self your soulf.
	You will find
	at least some areas in you
	where the image exists [i.e., where the mass image of self-importance
	in which you depend upon the approval of others
	for your sense of self-worth exists] –
	no matter
	how
	• subtly,
	how much
	• hidden or
	• covered up with
	• worthy motives and
	 plausible rationalizations.

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

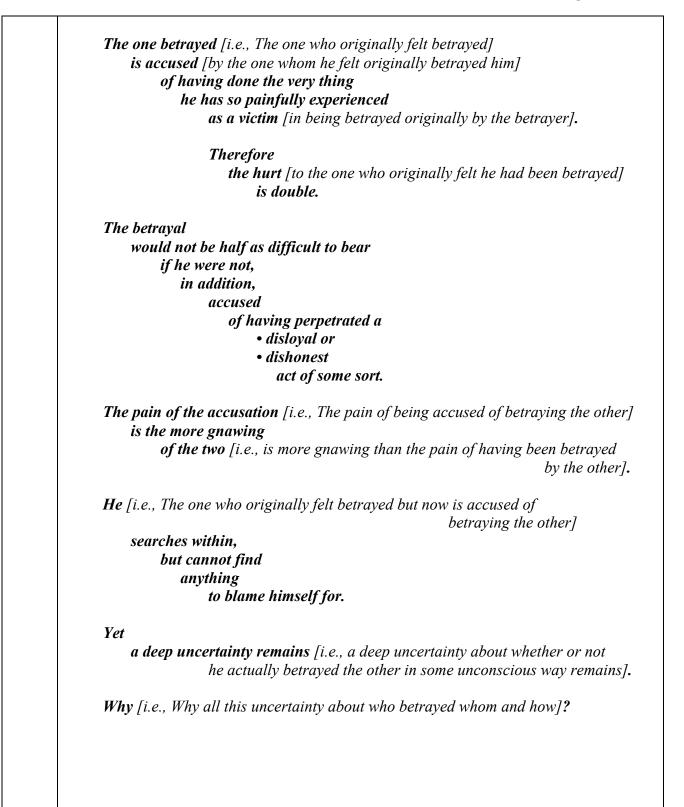
	You can safely assume
	that you
	are not the only one
	with this image [i.e., this mass image of self-importance] –
	you share it
	with all other human beings.
	and the second se
19	
	Find your bondage
	to public opinion,
	no matter how subtle.
	Then find, further,
	why
	you need the
	• dependency [i.e.,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



	You know
	that your
	unconscious
	reasons too,
	although
	its [i.e., your unconscious'] reasoning
	is often faulty.
	Now you have to become
	consciously
	aware of
	such [i.e., such heretofore unconscious] reasoning processes.
	What is important
	is that you
	experience
	the existence
	of this image [i.e., this image of self-importance in which
	an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of
	others for your sense of self-worth in that area]
	within you.
0	
	When you
	experience it [i.e., When you EXPERIENCE this image of self-importance in
	which an aspect of yourself depends upon the approval of
	others for your sense of self-worth in that area],
	then
	the time is ripe
	for you to understand
	many of your conflicts
	that often involve
	• actions
	and
	• reactions
	on the part of the world
	that seem
	• unjust and
	• uncalled-for.

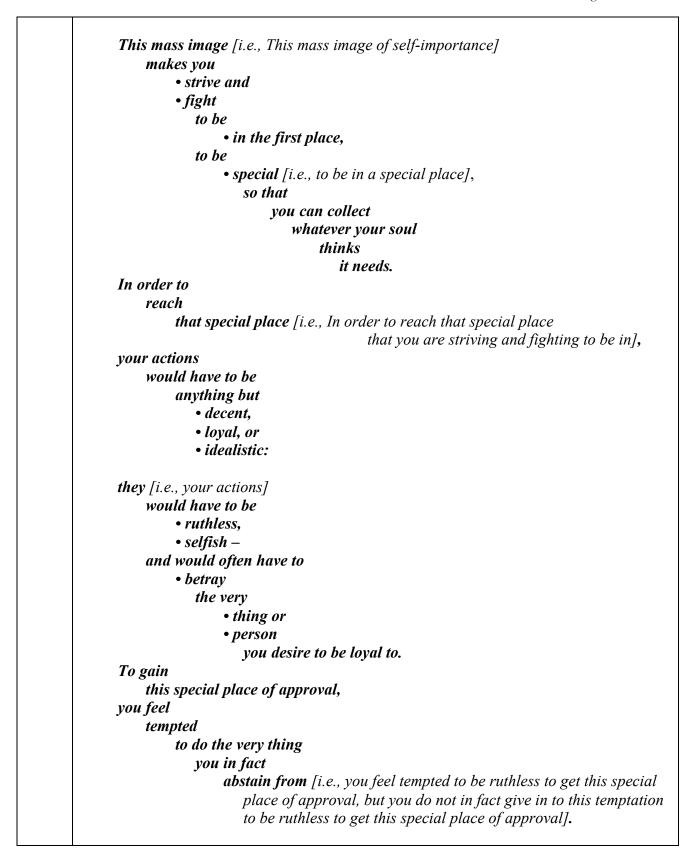


	And yet it [i.e., And yet the understanding this occurrence and its relationship to the existence and influence of the mass image of self-importance] is so vital, for only through such understanding can you find the solution.
	This example
	is not directed at
	anyone in particular.
	It [i.e., This example]
	applies to everyone
	• at certain times,
	• in connection with certain events.
22	
	There are few people
	who have
	not experienced
	• grief and
	• disappointment
	because they felt betrayed.
	They have displayed
	utmost
	• loyalty and
	• decency.
	In spite of this,
	the betrayal took place.
	Moreover,
	as it is bound to happen,
	the offender
	in turn
	will claim
	to have
	been betrayed
	to justify himself.



23 You on this path who have benefited from many a spiritual • truth and • teaching through • this channel or • others, know that no mishap can ever occur that you have not caused in some way yourself. You know intellectually that this is true. You may even confirm it through personal experiences. Yet when certain events occur, you do not find the connection [i.e., the connection between the mishap and *how you, in some way, participated in causing the mishap*] easily. The example cited may be one such occasion: you simply cannot find the point of connection between • what happened and • a cause in you.

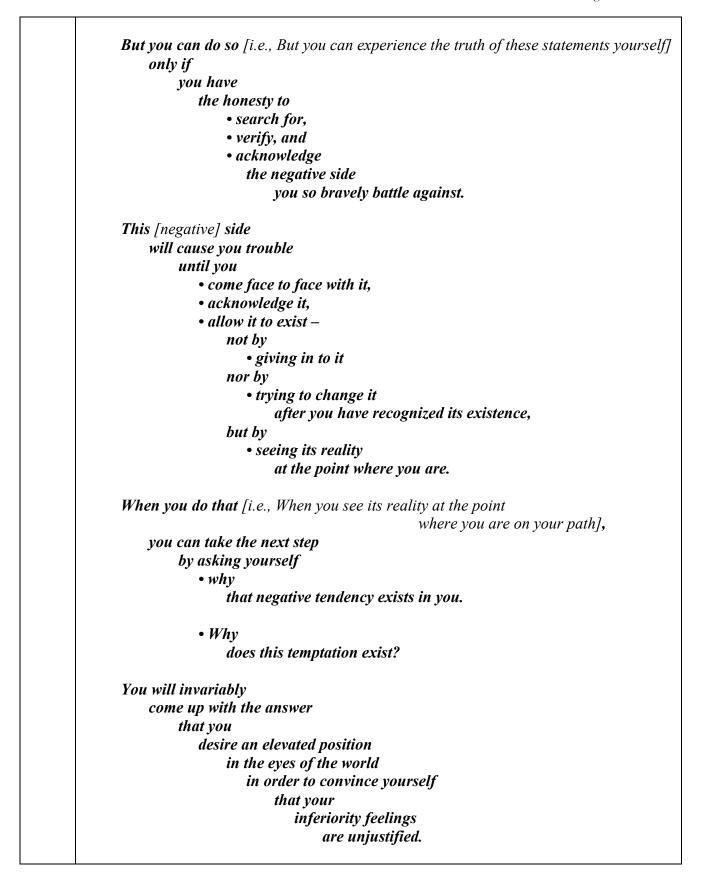
	[In the example cited]
	You know
	you have been
	• betrayed and
	• disappointed
	and on top of it
	you are accused of having done something
	that you did not do.
	In actual fact,
	you did
	nothing
	that you could be blamed for.
	• Your actions
	were correct,
	• your intentions
	were the best.
24	
	Now let me show you, my friends, how
	the particular mass image of self-importance,
	strengthened by various
	personal images,
	may be responsible for
	such an occurrence,
	which is
	especially painful
	since you do not see
	how you
	attracted it.



25	
	Being a
	• decent and
	• honest
	individual,
	you do not give in to
	<i>the temptation</i> [<i>i.e.</i> , you do not give in to the temptation to be
	ruthless to get this special place of approval
	because you are a decent and honest individual].
	<i>You feel it</i> [i.e., You feel the temptation to be ruthless]
	• vaguely,
	• without real awareness of its [i.e., of the temptation's]
	• significance and
	• meaning.
	In fact,
	you are so afraid
	when you feel
	• such a temptation [i.e., such a temptation to be ruthless to get the
	special place of approval you are striving to get]
	and
	• such emotions
	<i>that you cover it up quickly</i> [i.e., you quickly cover up the <i>temptation to be ruthless</i>].
	You do not want to acknowledge
	that it [i.e., that such a temptation to be ruthless and selfish to get the
	special place of approval you are striving to get]
	exists in you.
	Your conscience
	neither allows you
	• to act in accordance with the temptation,
	nor does it allow you
	• to become fully aware of it [i.e., to become fully aware of the temptation].
	In order to
	counterbalance the influence of
	the mass image of self-importance,
	you overcompensate
	by scrupulously proving
	• the decent side in you,
	• the side you intend to obey.

Due to
the unconscious nature
of the inner battle, the outer happening
responds to
• your unconscious negative side [i.e., your desire to be ruthless to what you need for approval by others
and not to
 the positive side [i.e., your desire to be decent and kind],
even though
<i>the positive</i> [i.e., your desire to be decent and kind]
has won out in your
outer actions.
This is according to
<i>an unalterable law</i> [i.e., the unalterable law of cause and effect – it is the unconscious cause, not the conscious action, that causes the conscious action, that causes the conscious action, that causes the conscious action
I have often told you that.
You have experienced it [i.e., You have experienced the unalterable law of
cause and effect in some ways
on your path of self-purification,
but
there are many areas left
where you are
as yet
unable to apply this truth.

	If the battle you are fighting
	is not
	consciously
	understood
	in its
	full significance,
	outer events
	will follow in such a way
	as if
	<i>the selfish side</i> [i.e., the selfish and ruthless side of you that you had so carefully hidden from view]
	had won out.
	The
	outer result
	must respond
	to the impulse [i.e., to the impulse or temptation to be selfish
	and ruthless] which is
	unconscious.
	unconscious.
27	
_,	The more
	you advance on this path,
	the more
	you will see
	that you are
	not
	asked to accept anything I say
	as a
	dogmatic statement.
	[Rather,]
	You will
	experience
	the utter truth of these statements
	yourself.

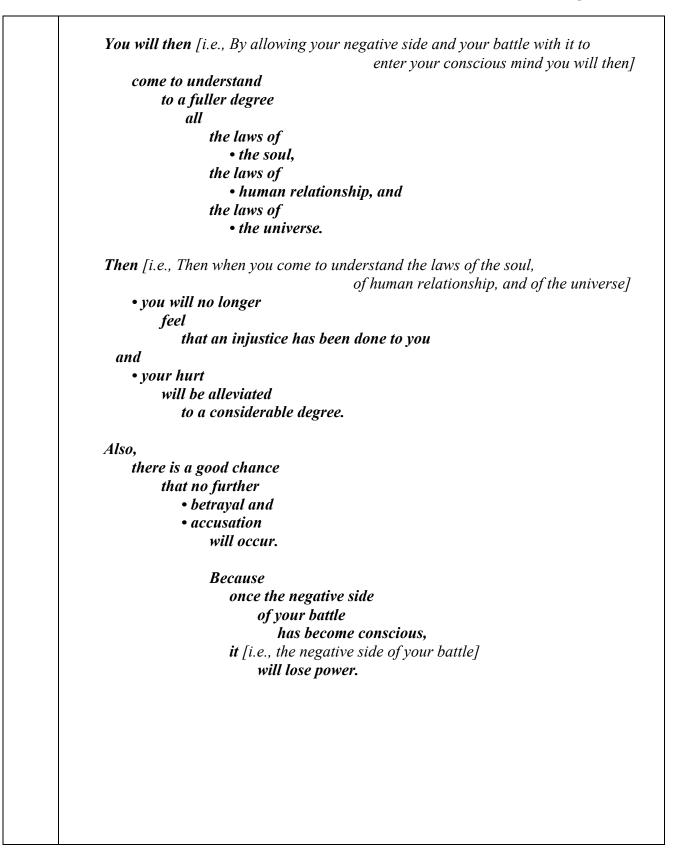


You believe. deep in your heart, that you need all this [i.e., that you need an elevated position *in the eyes of the world*] in order to survive – not • physically, but • emotionally. And, to get it [i.e., to get the elevated position in the eyes of the world that you think you need in order to survive emotionally], *it seems necessary* to • betray others, to be • ruthless. • disloyal, or • selfish. But as long as vour good intentions [i.e. as long as your good intentions to be a decent and kind human being] prevent you from even recognizing *this temptation [i.e., this temptation to be ruthless,* disloyal, or selfish], the outer occurrence will, as I said, respond to the negative side [i.e., respond to your unconscious ruthless, disloyal, or selfish side], even though you have not given in to it [i.e., even though you have not given in to the temptation to be ruthless, disloyal, or selfish]. *Not knowing this* [i.e., Not knowing that the outer occurrence will respond to your unconscious negative side], *it* [*i.e.*, *the negative outer occurrence*] seems like an injustice to you.

	And it is actually • the injustice that hurts you more than • the disappointment in a particular person.
28	This [i.e., This negative outer occurrence you experience at the hands of the other] may still seem unjust to you.
	You may think, "As long as I have not given in to the temptation [to be ruthless, disloyal, or selfish], why do the consequences have to be as though I had actually committed the wrong act?
	Isn't the most important thing that my actions are right?" No, my friends.
	Feelings are actions too, although they [i.e., although feelings] do not manifest • in the same way and • with the same quick results as outer actions do.

Т

	Nevertheless,
	every
	• thought and
	• attitude,
	whether
	conscious
	0r
	• unconscious,
	is a
	definite act.
	But
	the more
	unconscious it is [i.e., the more unconscious the act,
	thought, attitude, or feeling is],
	the greater
	the consequence
	and therefore
	the more
	puzzling the outcome.
29	
_>	By facing
	<i>the negative side</i> [i.e., the selfish, ruthless side of you],
	you evidence
	the bravest emotion there is:
	that of
	self-honesty.
	Therefore,
	you do not have to
	be ashamed
	that this battle [i.e., this battle with your negative side]
	is going on in you.
	It [i.e., This battle with your negative side] is to your credit.
	But you will fight the battle [i.e., you will fight the battle with your negative side]
	much more effectively
	<i>by allowing it</i> [i.e., by allowing your negative side and your battle with it]
	to enter your conscious mind.



30	
	But if such an outer event [i.e., if a painful or negative outer event]
	does recur,
	you will
	feel
	very differently about it.
	You
	• will learn a lot from
	such an event [i.e., such a painful or negative outer event]
	and
	• will be
	• strengthened
	rather than
	• weakened.
	Weukeneu.
	Уои
	• will feel something
	very constructive about it,
	and you
	• may be able
	to turn the course of events
	in a positive direction.
	in a positive affection.
31	
51	When you
	• experience
	the existence
	of this mass image [of self-importance] in you –
	not just
	• intellectually but also
	• emotionally – and
	• recognize
	the underlying erroneous concept
	that has thus far governed you [i.e., The erroneous concept that "I AM
	inferior" if I cannot get approval or admiration from others, which is
	the wrong conclusion of the mass image of self-importance],
	you will have made
	a major step forward
	in the direction of
	inner freedom.

32	
	<i>The example I gave</i> [i.e., the example regarding betrayal]
	is just one of many possible ones.
	Believe me, my friends,
	whenever you
	experience
	something
	that
	• hurts and
	that
	• you do not understand,
	whenever you
	feel unjustly treated
	because
	you cannot find
	any wrongdoing on your part,
	search
	<i>in this direction</i> [<i>i.e. in the direction of the mass image of self importance</i>].
	Bring out
	the mass image of self-importance.
	You can only do so [i.e., You can only bring out the mass image of self-importance]
	by
	• feeling
	the need to be special, and
	• understanding that
	you feel so [i.e., that you feel the need to be special]
	not
	• out of malice,
	not
	• because you wish to belittle others –
	who must automatically become smaller
	if you succeed in becoming bigger –
	and not
	• out of pride
	for the sake of pride,
	jor the sake of pride,
	but
	• out of the mistaken idea
	that
	being special
	means
	survival for you.

	When you
	recognize this trend [i.e., this trend where you feel your need to be special
	for your emotional survival],
	you will also
	free yourself from
	<i>destructive self-accusations</i> [i.e., self-accusations that you are trying to
	belittle others or that you are operating out of malice or pride].
	You will simply know
	• that you have harbored
	a wrong concept, and
	• that your emotional survival
	does not
	depend on
	• other people's opinion of you,
	but
	[depends] solely on
	• your own opinion of yourself.
	your own opinion of yourseig.
	The more
	you cater to
	the opinion of others,
	the less
	you think of yourself,
	deep in your soul.
	Hence
	a vicious circle,
	always built on a false premise,
	is activated within you.
33	
	Again, I say:
	all this cannot be understood
	on a purely intellectual level;
	it will benefit
	only those
	who develop the habit
	of questioning the significance
	of their various emotional reactions.
	of men various emotional reactions.

	Yet these words [i.e., the words of this lecture]
	• may leave valuable impressions
	<i>in others too</i> [i.e., in those who have not yet developed the habit of
	questioning the significance of their various emotional reactions]
	and
	• may come to fruition
	at a later time,
	when the path is voluntarily undertaken.
34	
	Before we turn to your questions,
	I would like to say a few words
	to some friends
	who have never
	• found their way here and
	who have never
	 had any personal contact with
	this group,
	but
	who
	 read the lectures with interest.
	Attention has been brought to us
	that some of them
	try, on their own,
	to reach the depth of their souls
	• by themselves, or
	• with some friends.
	Their good intent is appreciated.
	But I should like to tell them
	that it is not really possible
	to succeed
	• by oneself,
	or even
	• with someone else
	who has not had
	personal experience
	in this particular method.
	The method of the work itself
	cannot be conveyed by the lectures.

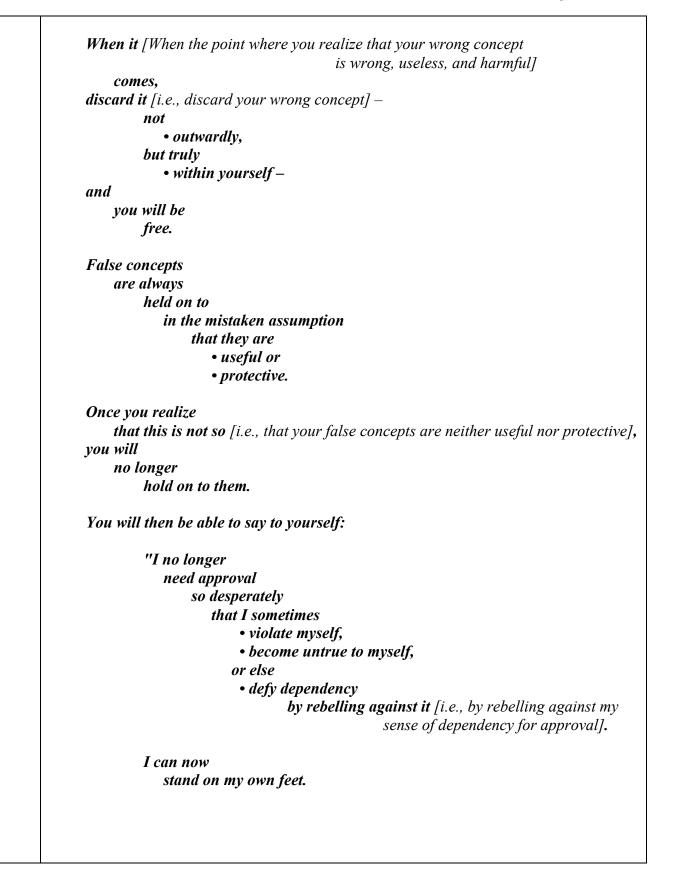
The lectures serve as • general material, but they cannot give • the method itself. You will do no harm in working by yourself, but you will not really get very far. I would therefore suggest to those friends [who only read the lectures with interest, working by themselves or with friends], do not hesitate to get in touch with those members of this group who are qualified to help. *If they* [*i.e.*, *If those who are working by themselves*] are really interested in using this method, whether • for others or • for themselves, *this* [*i.e.*, working with members of the group who are qualified to help] will be necessary.

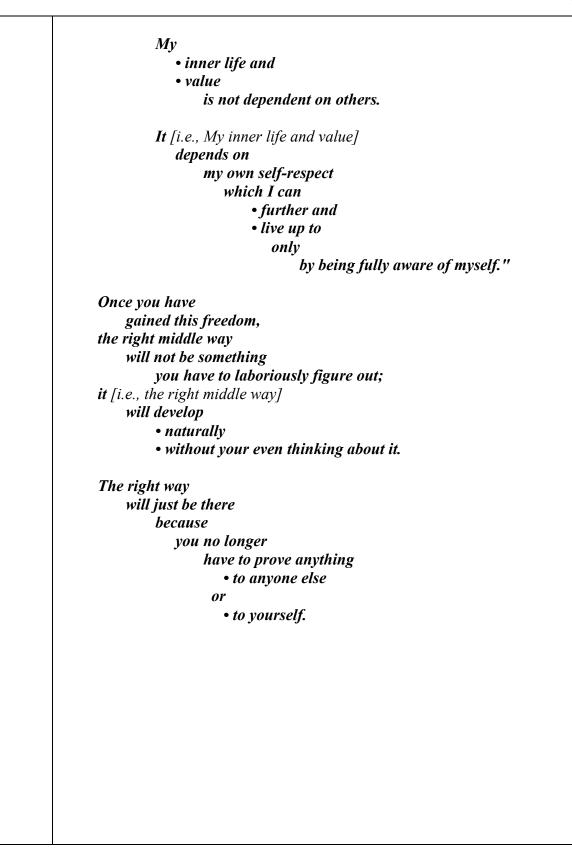
35	
55	And now, my friends,
	let us turn to your questions.
	tet us turn to your questions.
	Do you have any questions about this lecture?
	Do you have any questions about this tecture.
	QUESTION:
	I cannot understand
	which alternative to take
	between
	• being dependent on other people's opinion and leaning too much
	in the direction of catering for approval,
	or
	• going to the opposite extreme [i.e., disregarding all opinions of others].
	going to the opposite exiteme [i.e., disregarding all optitions of others].
	I cannot see how to compromise.
	I cunnot see now to compromise.
36	
50	ANSWER:
	It is
	not a compromise.
	not a compromise.
	You have difficulty
	in finding
	the right middle way perhaps? {Yes.}
	Let me try to show you
	<i>how this comes about</i> [i.e., how finding the right middle way comes about]
	in a very natural way.
37	
57	You are not expected to
	decide
	what the right middle way is.
	what the right intuite way ist
	You couldn't do that [i.e., You could not "decide"
	what the right middle way is].
	The moment
	you would have to do that [i.e., the moment you would have to "decide"
	what the right middle way is],
	there would already
	be something
	compulsive
	about it.

	There cannot be
	a choice
	for you,
	such as:
	"I go that far
	in this direction,
	and then I go this far
	in the other direction."
	<i>This</i> [i.e., This "choosing" which direction and how far to go in a particular matter]
	would be something
	• forced and
	• unnatural.
	The necessity
	for you to
	make a decision
	does not apply to
	• weighing and
	• measuring
	the right middle way.
	It [i.e., The necessity and process of your "making a decision"]
	applies much rather to
	vour
	• facing yourself
	honestly and
	• entirely forgetting,
	for the time being,
	the question:
	ine question.
	"What am I supposed to do?"
38	
	I might say that
	this "What am I supposed to do?"
	stands in the way of
	arriving at recognitions [i.e., arriving at honest recognitions
	about the self].

It [i.e., This questioning, "What am I supposed to do?"] prevents you from finding the truth about yourself.
<i>It</i> [i.e., This questioning, "What am I supposed to do?"] <i>blocks you</i> [i.e., blocks you from finding the truth about yourself].
<i>First,</i> <i>do not think about that</i> [i.e., <i>do not think about, "What am I supposed to do?</i> <i>at all.</i>
The outer action
may not change at first,
even after you have made your recognition [i.e., even after you have may your honest recognition about what is true about yourself]
But
your inner motives
will change [i.e., your inner motives will change as you
come to recognize the truth about yourself].
In some cases,
your outer actions
will change automatically,
but this will be fruitful
only if
<i>it</i> [i.e., only if the change in your outer actions]
is a natural result of
your inner growth.
The first thing you should be concerned with
is understanding
yourself:
your
• emotions,
your
• motives,
your
• desires and
• fears.
All these can be
brought to light
in every incident
that bothers you.

39 Once you have reached a certain point in self-recognition, you become aware of the false concepts you harbor unconsciously. Each time such a false concept • is observed and therefore • becomes more and more conscious, you will be less and less under • bondage and • compulsion. By understanding your • wrong conclusion, you will become more aware of the • right conclusion. If you go on that way, you will • be increasingly able to observe your emotional reactions and vou will • understand them [i.e., understand your emotional reactions] better. Then a point will come where you realize that vour wrong concept is • useless and • harmful.





40	
	If you have a tendency
	to depend too much
	on other people's opinion,
	it is because
	you have to
	prove something to
	• them.
	And if you
	• rebel against this bondage [i.e., against bondage to other people's opinion] and
	• turn into
	the opposite extreme
	with a defiant
	"I don't care" attitude,
	then you
	prove something to
	• <i>yourself</i> [i.e., prove to yourself that you do not care about the opinions of others].
	Both extremes
	come from an attempt
	to prove something.
	When there is
	no longer a need in you
	to prove anything,
	the right middle way
	will be as natural as breathing.
	Do you think of
	having to breathe
	less or more
	in order to get the proper supply of oxygen into your lungs?
	No.
	• You breathe
	automatically.
	• It [i.e., Breathing]
	is a completely natural process.

	[In breathing]
	You have found
	the right middle way
	without having to
	• deliberate and
	• choose:
	• not too much and
	• not too little,
	• just enough
	to give you what you need
	so as to maintain your health.
	The same applies to
	any
	soul process.
	Do you understand?
41	
	QUESTIONER:
	Well, to a certain extent.
	I wonder if all that applies
	• intellectually
	as well as
	• emotionally?
	ANSWER:
	Very few people
	think
	in terms of this
	mass image [of self-importance]
	intellectually,
	my dear.
	It [i.e., This mass image of self-importance]
	is rarely
	on the surface,
	since
	all images
	are of an
	unconscious
	nature.

	You may ask
	anyone, at random,
	whether he believes
	in his intellect
	that his
	• life and
	• happiness
	depend on
	what other people think of him.
	Everyone
	prefers
	to be thought well of by others.
	That is natural.
	But
	 the degree of dependency [on the opinions of others], its consequences, and
	• the extent to which a person goes
	to meet
	the demands of the image [i.e., the mass image of self-importance]
	is usually
	completely unconscious until
	a serious self-search
	is undertaken in this direction.
42	
	QUESTIONER:
	I feel
	• consciously and
	• very definitely
	that other people's opinions
	are very important.
	ure very important.

	ANSWER:
	I wonder
	whether you realize
	consciously
	• to what degree
	this [i.e., to what degree the opinion of others]
	is important for you,
	and
	• what this dependency
	causes you
	• to do or
	• to forsake.
	But
	the more
	conscious it is [i.e., the more conscious your dependency on
	the opinion of others is],
	the better
	for you
	in the sense of
	being able to think about it
	objectively.
43	
	QUESTIONER:
	<i>I</i> thought it is more difficult
	if a wrong conclusion
	goes so far
	that it is
	in the
	• intellect
	as well as
	in the
	• emotions?
	ANSWER:
	On the contrary.
	Your intellect
	is more accessible to
	reasoning.
	U

	Once you have
	understood,
	once
	intelligence
	is at work,
	a wrong concept
	can be corrected.
	But when
	one is consciously
	convinced of
	the right thing,
	it is often difficult
	to break through
	the separating wall
	between
	• reason
	and
	• emotion.
	The resistance
	to face the fact
	that one holds an opinion
	that does not correspond to
	one's
	• conscious and
	• reasonable
	thoughts
	is an obstacle.
	However,
	you do not have to struggle with it
	if you admit to yourself
	that your concept is wrong.
44	
44	QUESTION:
	May I ask
	how this
	mass image [of self-importance]
	affects the individual's
	God-image?
	Gou-image.

```
ANSWER:
God-images
    have many forms.
But whatever they may be,
    the connection
        between
           • the mass image of self-importance
        and
           • the God-image
               is this:
                      it [i.e., the connection between the mass image of self-
                                               importance and the God-image]
                          creates
                              a further conflict in the psyche.
The stronger
    • the mass image of self-importance
and the stronger
    • the God-image,
the more
    the personality
        will be disturbed,
           because
               two conflicting
                   • needs and
                   • compulsions
                       • work against
                          one another and
                       • cause
                          a short-circuit.
```

	In cases that are
	less crass,
	where
	one image [i.e., either the God-image or the mass image of self-importance] is much stronger than the other,
	the conflict
	will exist, of course;
	will exist, of course,
	<i>it</i> [i.e., the conflict brought about by the stronger of the two images, either the mass image of self-importance or the God-image] <i>will create many disturbances,</i> <i>but each</i> [i.e., each disturbance]
	would be due to
	one particular wrong concept [i.e., either wrong concept due to the God-image or the wrong concept due to mass image of self-importance].
	But when
	• the God-image and
	• the mass image of self-importance
	work against one another,
	the person who has this conflict
	cannot handle life any more.
45	
	The existence of these two images [i.e., the God-image and the mass
	image of self-importance]
	together
	causes a vicious circle.
	One current is:
	"I need to be in first place,
	I need special consideration."
	Because of
	religious mass images about God,
	one feels
	all the more
	• guilty and
	• inferior
	[i.e., guilty for having to be in "first place" and "special"].

	Guilt
	<i>cannot remedy</i> <i>this situation</i> [i.e., Guilt cannot remedy your guilt and sense of being inferior to others before God because of your need to be in "first place" and "special"] .
	You can only do so [i.e., You can only remedy your sense of guilt and sense of being inferior to others before God because of your need to be in "first place"] if you understand the cause of it.
	The guiltier you feel, the less you dare to look into the equal is a the equal of your quilt and the equal of
	<i>the cause</i> [i.e., the cause of your guilt and the cause of your sense of being inferior to others before God], and <i>the stronger</i>
	you are compelled to wish a wrong attitude away, so to speak [i.e., wish away a wrong attitude, the attitude, which is the very cause of your guilt and sense of being inferior before God],
	by looking away from it [i.e., by looking away from this wrong attitude].
46	Thus the following vicious circle is created:
	 the guiltier you feel, the more you need approval in the belief that it [i.e., that approval by others] will alleviate your feelings of guilt and inferiority. And the more you clamor for such approval, the guiltier you feel [i.e., the guiltier you feel for clamoring for
	you feel [i.e., the guiltier you feel for clamoring for such approval even more than before].

This conflict arises out of two different directions: one direction is • the God-image, the other direction is • the real self in you which • registers and • observes everything and • tries to convey to you • that you are mistaken, • that this [i.e., that trying to relieve your feelings of guilt and inferiority before God by getting even more approval from others] is the wrong way [i.e., wrong way to relieve your feelings of inferiority]. *But its voice* [i.e., But the voice of the real self in you] • is misunderstood and • is identified as the voice of the God-image [instead of the voice of the real self in you]. *Thus the contrary pull* [i.e., the pull from the message that getting approval from others is the wrong way to relieve your feelings of guilt and inferiority before God], which draws you away from the mass image of self-importance comes from two sides: • *the side of the real self* [which is the true message] and • the illusory side, where the false God-image rules, [and these two, the real self in you and the false God-image,] • do not coincide, thev • are not at peace with one another. Do you understand? {Yes.}

```
47
              Receive our blessings.
              Accept from us
                  the strength
                       to look for that part in you
                          that causes you so much trouble.
                              It is the part in you
                                  where you
                                      separate
                                         • yourself
                                     from
                                         • your fellow human beings,
                                             out of
                                                • wrong conclusions,
                                             because of
                                                • imagined needs.
              Find it [i.e., Find that part in you where you separate yourself from your fellow
                               human beings, that part that causes you so much trouble]
                  and
                       • your entire outlook
                          will change.
                       • You will
                          become objective,
                       • you will
                          be in reality.
              The mere awareness
                  of this part of your being,
                       where you are caught in the mass image [of self-importance],
                          will change your life.
```

48		
	Receive our	
	• love and	
	• blessings,	
	each one of you.	
	Continue on this path,	
	• grow	
	in it,	
	• rejoice	
	in it.	
	Be in peace,	
	be in God!	

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