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/](https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/)

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<table>
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| 03 | *Greetings,*  
     *my dearest,*  
     *dearest friends.*  
     
     *God bless you.*  
     
     *Blessed is this hour* [i.e., *blessed is this time we now spend together in this lecture*.] |
| 04 | *When I offer you blessings,*  
     *what do these words mean to you?*  
     
     *Do you hear them* [i.e., *do you hear the words “I offer you blessings”*]  
     *perhaps as mere words*  
     *• without meaning,*  
     *• without reality?*  
     
     *Blessings*  
     *have a*  
     *very definite reality,*  
     *my friends.* |
If you were but
free,
really free
of
• all your barriers,
• all the layers
  that prevent you
    • from feeling,
    • from living, and
    • from experiencing life
to the fullest,
these blessings
would be
a reality for you.

You would
feel
• the actual stream,
• the current of love
  that flows
to each and every one of you
• from a world of
  • light and
  • freedom,
• from a world of
  • harmony and
  • truth,
• [from] a world of
  • love.

But
this stream of love
is often
unable
to
• reach and
• penetrate
you.
You may not
  • perceive and
  • experience

  it [i.e., you may not perceive and experience this stream of love] because the senses
  that are destined
  for such perceptions
  are dulled by your
  • fears,
  • shame, and
  • urgent wishes,
  and by your
  • defenses.

And all of these factors, the
  • fear,
  • shame,
  • urgent wishes and
  • defenses
  are based on
  • error,
  • confusion, and
  • misconception.

How often
  have I discussed this in our times together!

But all too often
  you merely
  hear
  but
  do not
  • truly understand and
  • experience
  my words.

They [i.e., my words about blessings and the stream of love]
  can become
  real
  only if and when
  you find
  their particular truth
  within yourself.
And, my friends, 
this [i.e., this finding my words’ particular truth within yourself] cannot be done by
intellectual
  • deductions and
  • findings,
but only when
you allow yourself
  • to feel,
  • to live through
your emotions
and thereby
determine
  the specific misconceptions
  you have harbored
    all your life.

Awareness of
your untruth
brings you much nearer
  • to the love current
    coming to you
      from without and
  • to the love current
    within yourself.

Within each individual
there exists
a well of
  • wisdom and
  • love.

It [i.e., This well of wisdom and love]
is a treasure
depth within you
  which can come to the fore
only as you become aware of
  all those aspects of yourself
    that bar access
to the treasure.
You are accustomed to look for
• truth,
• guidance, and
• solutions to your problems
  outside yourself –
  perhaps
  • through wise teachings,
  • through a helping hand.

But

the most
• reliable and
• realistic
  answers
  come from
  inside
  yourself.

In order to tap the well [that is deep inside yourself, the well of wisdom and love],
outside help
is necessary,
but it [i.e., but this outside help]
is valuable
only if
it succeeds
in bringing you to
the inner source, [i.e., the well of wisdom and love].

Apart from this path of
• self-confrontation,
is there an
  additional way
  to help you
  tap the well?

Yes, there is.

You must
• seek calmness,
• outside and
• inside.
Every day,
  enter into a meditation
  to become very still
  so that
    the inner noise
    that covers
      the well of
        • wisdom and
        • love
    makes itself
      precisely
        known to you.

After translating
  this [inner] noise into
  concise thoughts,
  such meditation
  will finally
  bring out of
    that well of wise guidance [i.e., that deep inner well of
      wisdom and love]
      warm feelings
        of
          • love and
          • affection and
          of
            • understanding
              for others,
        without
          your own urgent needs
            blurring out
              the realistic perception
                of others.
If you want to
• disregard and
• bypass
  the inner noise of
  • fears,
  • shames,
  • defenses, and
  • urgent needs
  and come directly
to the well of calmness,
you will not
really reach
the inner treasure.

You may think so [i.e., you may think you have reached the inner treasure],
but this [i.e., but this “thinking” that you have reached the inner treasure]
does not make it [i.e., does not make actually reaching the inner treasure]
real.

The momentary
existence of
• the barrier and
• the noise
has to be
  • acknowledged
    in relaxed openness
  and then
  • translated
    into meaning.

That is the way,
my friends.

Such daily periods of
becoming calm,
so as
to determine
the meaning of
the barrier to the calm,
will help you greatly,
and this [daily] practice
most definitely
must not be neglected.
We have discussed before how harmful barriers are.

The emphasis then was on how harmful barriers are on yourself and not on how harmful barriers are on you in relationship to others.

Yet, as you know very well, your
• unhappiness and
• confusion
  is always connected with
  the difficulty
  of coping with
  your fellow-creatures.

Therefore we will now use the knowledge you have gained about yourself through your work on this path and apply it to your relationship with others.

When you calmly observe your reactions to others, you are bound to become acutely aware of
• an inner tension,
• a cramped closing up.

This [inner tension and cramped closing up when with others] prevents you from meeting others
• freely and
• openly,
• without restrictions.
Then [i.e., With this inner tension and cramped closing up]
you cannot
reach out
• without grabbing and
• without urgent demands.

You cannot
give
• without fear.

[Conversely]
When you are
willing to meet others
with love,
then, and only then,
can your life be
really fulfilled,
no matter
how worthy
your various activities
may be otherwise.
The fear
says always,
"But what about
all the people
who take advantage
of such
• warm,
• loving
feelings?

If I
• do not guard myself and [if I]
• allow myself to feel,
I will suffer."

It is true
that your inner well [i.e., your deep inner well of wisdom and love],
with
• its wise guidance,
• its reliable intuition,
cannot function
when it is thickly covered
with layers of
untruth.
[Now] By covering it [i.e., by covering your deep inner well of wisdom and love] even more thickly by [not only covering it with untruth but also] prohibiting feelings, you do not free that well within that cannot lead you astray if it is unblocked.

So the remedy must be sought by allowing the layers that cover up this well [i.e., this well of wisdom and love within] to be penetrated by your conscious understanding.

When such profound communication with others, based on understanding your own blocks to the well of truth, does not take place, you are isolated.

You cannot possibly be happy.

We have discussed many aspects which prevent deep communication with others.

Let us now discuss three further aspects which need deeper understanding, because they constitute an inner "no" to loving.
As you will see,
this inner "no"
is not only due to
fear
of
• suffering,
• hurt, and
• disappointment.

The three aspects [that constitute an inner “no” to loving]
to be considered
can be found
in almost all human beings to some degree.

Yet,
one of these three aspects
might be
• predominant
while the other two
may be of
• lesser importance.

No matter how little
you feel that they apply to you,
look into yourself
and
closely
watch
your emotional reactions.

When you translate them [i.e., translate your emotional reactions]
to meaning,
you are bound to find
that
• one or the other or
• all three
of these aspects [that constitute an inner “no” to loving]
exist in you
in various degrees.
The first aspect [of the three aspects that constitute an inner “no” to loving] is a fear that you may be forced to do something you do not want to do if you allow yourself to feel as you naturally tend to [feel toward others in various situations].

You fear that you have
• to sacrifice when
  • you have no desire to do so or
• to give in [and satisfy the desires or needs of another] when it is
  • disadvantageous or
  • inconvenient.

You believe that the only way to safeguard yourself against the
• excessive, and perhaps even
• childish demands of others is by curbing your natural feelings [toward others], thereby cutting off the love current [reaching out toward others] from within.

Conversely, you believe that if you were to allow yourself these natural feelings [toward others], you would be forced to give in [and satisfy their needs or desires].
You see no other alternative [either 1) you curb your natural feelings toward others so you will not be drawn in and be tempted to succumb to excessive and childish demands of others, or 2) you feel fully your natural feelings toward others and risk being coerced into succumbing to and satisfying the demands of others].

Hence, by seeing only these two alternatives [either 1) curb your feelings to save yourself, or 2) feel your feelings and lose yourself], you

undermine the organic process of emotional growth,

manipulating your feelings in a most

• negative and
• destructive

way,

with grave repercussions

• in your psychic life and
• in your relationship with others.

I name but two such repercussions [in your psychic life and relationships with others]:

• one is a deep-seated guilt for this deliberate prohibition to loving [others], and
• another is a subsequent lack of

• self-confidence and
• self-respect.

To atone for not loving [others], one often does much more for others than one would ordinarily, and then as a consequence, one is really taken advantage of.

Since all you do is done without love,[or rather is actually done] as a substitute for the [natural] love withheld, your actions [since they are not done in real and true feelings of natural love] do not remove your guilt [for not loving].
This proves, once again, how you cannot help but wind up in the very situation you strive to avoid by false and unrealistic means [i.e., by overcompensating for withholding real love], based on wrong conclusions [i.e., the wrong conclusions that such overcompensating actions atone for your withholding love].

All the emotions that stem from the misconception that your real feelings will get you into trouble –
• guilt,
• resentment for doing what you now do compulsively as a substitute for loving,
• lack of self-respect –
• create confusion and
• make you incapable of coping with close relationships.

You are either constantly involved [with another] in a negative way [i.e., by overcompensating for not loving, etc.], or
• you
  • withdraw and
  • live in bitter isolation which, in turn, breeds frustration [for not having your real needs for love being met].

These, then, are the barriers to your well of
• wisdom,
• love, and
• intuition – [the inner well which is] the source of your true inner guidance.
How then does the situation look when viewed truthfully?

It is very possible, indeed, to love without having to
• fulfill every demand,
without having to
• give in.

Is it not better to be selfish – if that's what you wish to be – in your actions,
while [at the same time] still
• loving and
• feeling?

Is it not • much better and actually • much less selfish [to be selfish in your actions while still loving and feeling] than doing everything possible [to appear to be “loving”], but without loving [truthfully from your inner well of love]?

It is much easier to assert your • rights and • wishes, whether they are • right or • wrong, • selfish or • unselfish, if you love.
When you do not love, self-assertion becomes very difficult, because your gnawing guilt [for not loving] either paralyzes you [and prevents you from asserting yourself or expressing your objections], or, if you manage to voice your objections [in forceful self-assertions], they [i.e., your objections and forceful self-assertions] will come out in a very hurting way.

Your refusal to comply with a demand [of another person] cannot really hurt another, provided you love [that other person].

Therefore [if you feel your natural love for that other person] to • disagree or • refuse to comply will no longer be threatening [to that other person].

You can do it [i.e. You can disagree or refuse to comply with that other person] in a • relaxed, • easy, and • unproblematic way.

Your ability to love will make you feel more lovable and so you will be able to say "no" outwardly, because the inner "no" to • loving and • feeling has been removed.
All this does not mean that you should artificially try to force love where it [i.e. where love does not naturally exist [in you].

This [i.e., Trying to force love toward another where it does not naturally exist in you] would be useless, as you know.

[Instead of striving to force your love toward another person,]

Strive [instead]

to detect that

• fine and

• subtle current,

• often at first quite covered up,

• in which you withdraw from your

• organic,

• natural feelings,

stunting them [i.e., stunting your fully feeling your natural feelings]

deliberately, as it were.

Once you

• come across this current [in which you withdraw from feeling your feelings] and

• become more aware of it [i.e., more aware of this current of withdrawing],

you can let it [i.e., you can let this current of withdrawing from feeling your natural feelings]

go.
The knowledge and understanding that the two alternatives of either
• forcing love [where love does not naturally exist]
or
• withdrawing from your natural feelings [altogether]
are not the only ones [i.e., these two are not the only alternatives]
will stop the prohibition [against feeling your natural love for others].

You will gain a new freedom with the most • joyful, • strengthening, and • liberating results.

If there are no • warm, • loving feelings to begin with, just see what feelings are there.

You will find all the negative emotions we have discussed.

These [negative emotions] have to be • acknowledged and • understood, not • pushed away or • suppressed.
When you understand them [i.e., When you understand the negative emotions] sufficiently, the
• warm,
• natural feelings of affection are bound to come out eventually.

For these loving feelings [toward others] are already in you.

They do not have to be given to you.

They [i.e., these natural loving feelings] are only buried under the negative emotions which do not allow the positive emotions [including the natural feelings of love] to come to fruition because you harbor the simple misunderstanding that your natural feelings [positive or negative] should not be experienced.

Since this misunderstanding [that your natural feelings should not be experienced] is not out in the open, it [i.e., this misunderstanding] is not amenable to correction.

This is why the misunderstanding [that your natural feelings should not be experienced] has to be made known first.

You have to see clearly why it [the misunderstanding that your natural feelings should not be experienced] is a misunderstanding.

Then you can proceed.
If you
truly experience
the flow of feelings
as they come up,
you will probably go through
the following sequence:
• The misunderstanding [that your natural feelings
should not be experienced]
causes
the deliberate cutting off
of naturally arising feelings;
• this in turn results in
• guilt,
• fear,
• uncertainty,
• anger,
• resentment,
• helpless rage, and
• confused fluctuation
between
• giving in too much
and
• being too severe.

You have to
fully experience
all these
• feelings and
• confusions
before you can
actually
feel
the reality of
the love in you.

At first,
the love
will manifest
only
• occasionally,
• weakly,
• not dramatically.
When it does [i.e., When love does manifest, though only occasionally and weakly],
• be aware of it,
• let it flow, and
• see
  what a wonderful effect
  it has
• on you and
• on those around you.

For instance,
their excessive demands
may immediately diminish
when they sense
a love current
coming from you.

For their demands
are often an
• unconscious,
• blind
  plea
  for love.

Their demands
are a substitute
for what they really seek [which is, genuine love].

Once
genuine love
is given,
the demands
are bound to diminish.
The second aspect [of the three aspects that constitute an inner “no” to loving] is this:

As you know from our work in the past, almost everyone has the wish to
• be accepted and
• belong to a symbolic superior world.

When this seemingly superior world happens to be
• unfeeling,
• undemonstrative, or
• even tough,
you do not dare to let yourself feel your natural feelings [especially those of love], for fear of being despised by the people whose approval you seek.

This fear [of feeling your natural feelings] is especially strong when you have
• natural,
• warm feelings for someone you are convinced you should reject according to the • imagined, or • real, code of this superior world.

If you do that [i.e., if you reject the person for whom you have warm feelings], the damage you do to yourself has the gravest consequences.
Chances are
that those people [in this “superior” world]
actually feel
very differently
from the way you think.

Perhaps they would
• respect,
• like, and
• accept
you much more
if you were a
• kind and
• loving
person
who does
not
• deny and
• betray
the best in yourself
in order to get approval.

They may
not be aware of
these reactions [i.e., not be aware that they would respect you more
if you were true to yourself: being a kind and loving person],

but since
the unconscious currents [here, their unconscious respect for you for
being true to yourself: being a kind and loving person]
are a reality,
their response [i.e., giving you respect for your being a loving person]
would prove this to be so [i.e., prove that they actually respect you
more for being true to yourself: daring to be a loving person].

Only when you
have the courage
to be yourself [by daring to allow your love to be expressed toward others]
can you find out the truth.

For some,
it takes much more courage
to be their
• loving selves
than their
• self-assertive,
• "strong"
selves.
But let us suppose the superior world of your aspirations is actually the way you think it is [i.e., thinking they would despise and mock you for being a kind and loving person].

Does this not mean that those people are just as immature in this respect as you are?

To emulate such immaturity [that is present in these “superior” people who mock loving] cannot ever produce • self-respect and • certainty in your personality.

All it can do is create • self-contempt and • guilt, which must rob you of the firm ground under your feet that only being yourself can provide.

To simulate strength by • betraying your real self, • withholding love from the weaker ones whom you are supposed to reject, produces the same self-hate you feel as • when you lack • courage and • self-assertion, • when you submit in evident weakness.
This pseudo-strength is, in
  • reality and
  • essence,
    just as weak
    as submitting.

Those of you who belong in this category deny the best in you for the sake of approval.

You deliberately set up a process of self-alienation by the simple act of
  • discouraging your
    • natural,
    • warm feelings and
  • artificially producing toughness.

Again, all this is not conscious.

You may not be at all aware of these inner processes, but if you look closely at some of your reactions, you may well discover that what I say holds true for you.
Perhaps you are aware of it [i.e., aware of your inner process of betraying yourself] already to some degree, but have never quite thought about it in these terms.

• To do so [i.e., To think about self-betrayal in these terms of being lack of courage by your having to fit into a “superior,” but cold-hearted, structure],
• to carry the significance of these reactions further, is bound to give you a more comprehensive view, and thus change these very childish attitudes [about having to “fit in”].

• When you have the courage to be true to your real self,
• when you dare to love a person the "superior world" decrees you should despise, you will discover that the whole division of
  • a "superior world"
  and
  • an "inferior world" is an illusion.

This discovery will
  • set you free and
  • give you a strength you cannot envision now.
For those of you who have not yet delved deeply into the labyrinth of your being, what I say might sound
• rather far-fetched, or
• even silly.

But for some of my friends these words will help to dissolve some very crippling misunderstandings about
• life and
• people.

The third aspect [of the three aspects] of the inner "no" against loving may at first sound paradoxical.

People who have this [third] aspect predominantly have such a great need for
• fulfillment and
• love
that non-fulfillment [of these needs for fulfillment and love] presents a special
• fear and
• threat.

Their "remedy" is a strong forcing current [to assure that their needs for being loved are met].

Needless to say, this remedy is
• unproductive,
• even destructive.
The forcing current prohibits a free giving of love.

In its own devious way it [i.e., the forcing current] causes an inner "no" to giving in a
  • relaxed and
  • calm way.

It [i.e., The forcing current]
  • grabs and
  • demands.

Such a person wants to give, but
  • does so compulsively, to have his or her demands fulfilled,
  • not
    • wisely and
    • in sensitive awareness of what the other
      • needs and
      • wants.

Therefore the giving is not free, nor is it genuine.

This type of person is often the opposite of the type I discussed before [i.e., opposite to the type of person who has the first of the three aspects that constitute an inner “no” to loving and], who represses feelings [i.e., represses the genuine love toward others that arises naturally from deep within].
The two types [i.e., those with the first aspect of the inner “no” to loving – who represses feelings – and secondly, those with the third aspect of the inner “no” to loving – who has such a terror of not receiving love that he or she exhibits a forcing current and gives “love” compulsively in order to receive love and feel fulfillment] often get into conflict with one another.

- The demands and
- the forcing current [of the person with the third of the three aspects constituting the inner “no” to loving]
  frighten away the other person [i.e., frightens away the person who represses feelings],
  even if the demands [for love from the one with a forcing current] parade under the guise of "giving."

Those [of this third type] who are starved [for love and fulfillment] and therefore terrified by [the other’s] refusal [to love them] are blind to others.

All they feel is their own need [for love and fulfillment].

They have no room for calmly looking at the other person and sensing the other's needs.

The idea of being refused [i.e., being refused love by the other] is devastating to them, yet they court rejection by their urgency [and forcing energy].

When it [i.e., when rejection] comes, all they experience is the confirmation of their worthlessness.
Their distorted view prohibits a true evaluation of the situation in question, yet their defeat [in not receiving the love they crave] has nothing to do with their worthlessness.

The other person’s fears and problems may be as responsible for it [i.e., for the rejection] as their own blindness when

- the world and
- others appear to them only in terms of
  - their [own] worth or
  - lack of it.

The subsequent powerful forcing current [they use in compulsive giving and demanding love], employed to dispel the dreaded worthlessness, becomes then the means of confirming their worst fears.

The true remedy for those who belong predominantly in this [third] category is threefold.
First

they need to

• face their lack of belief in themselves and
• find out the real reasons for it,
  such as

  their lack of [genuine] loving [which is behind their lack of
  belief in themselves – believing they do not love and because
  they believe they do not love they judge that they are worthless]

  which [lack of loving] is often disguised
  by an over-eagerness
  to give [i.e., to give “love” to others in various ways]
  for the purpose of
  receiving love
  as a child wants to be loved.

Second,

they have to

• find the distorted concepts [such as, “I am worthless,”] and
• understand
  why they are distorted [i.e., come to understand that they are not,
  in fact, worthless].

Third,

they must allow themselves to

• experience
  all the feelings
  as they come up
  in the process of their self-search.

Chances are that

underneath the conscious urgent need [for love and fulfillment],
they will find

a reason for prohibiting
  their real [and genuine] feelings for
  • affection and
  • loving
  [they naturally have toward others].

This [inner natural feeling of affection and loving toward others]
may be so hidden that, offhand,
they may deny it [i.e., deny that they have any feelings of love toward others]
utterly.
All they feel
is their need to
be
loved
which they confuse with
their genuine feelings of affection
for
others [i.e. confuse their need to be loved with what are actually their own genuine feelings of affection for others that they think (wrongly) are their own needs to be loved].

The latter [i.e., their genuine feelings of affection and love for others] are
• much less urgent,
• much calmer
emotions,
not at all self-centered,
the way the need [to be loved] is.

These mature feelings [of genuine love for others] exist [in them],
but they [i.e., these genuine feelings of love for others] have been prohibited from developing
and this [prohibition against letting genuine feelings of love for others mature]

must be made conscious.

Repeated unfulfillment
hurts so much more
than it needs to
because of
a childish inability
to stand frustration.

Before fulfillment can come,
the various steps I have outlined need to be followed through.

All this [development] takes time.
More disappointments may come,
but now they can
• be utilized for the work [of development] and
• serve as
  wonderful means
  for discovering
  more about the self.

In the meantime,
what one can learn,
in full awareness,
is
• to swim with the tide,
• not to resist it [i.e., not resist the tide]
  by a wild struggle
  of your soul's forces.

Maturity will come
as you teach your soul
to be able to
stand frustration
without
• repression or
• anger.

This [maturing that comes with withstanding frustration without repression or anger]
has the healing effect of
bringing the pendulum
into a more balanced position.

Out of
• the overactivity of the forcing current,
• the wild struggling,

  a serenity is generated
  which brings the person closer to
  the state of
  being.
I cannot emphasize strongly enough that all the 
frustrated emotions, 
causing 
• the urgency [to act and to give in order to receive love] and 
• the starvation [for love and fulfillment], 
• have to be allowed to 
simmer on the surface, and 
• have to be translated 
into 
• concise 
• meaningful 
words.

In individuals 
of the "love-starved" variety 
another reaction exists 
that also has to be 
• brought to awareness and 
• faced.

Sometimes, 
when the needs are [actually] fulfilled, 
the "love" [i.e., the love one has for another] 
wears off.

This [i.e., this “love” for others wearing off] 
should furnish proof that 
what they 
thought 
was love [for the other] 
is 
• not love, 
• but a starving need [to be loved] – 
certainly a great difference [from truly loving the other]!

These people [having the third of the three aspects that 
constitute an inner “no” to loving] 
are as incapable of 
fulfilling other people's needs [for love through their compulsive giving in order to get love] 
as those belonging to the other two types.
They [i.e., those of this third type, those starved for love] feel infringed upon by others [who do not respond to their compulsive “loving” or to their giving, giving, giving in order to receive love] and back away from them.

Recognition of this fact [i.e., in recognition that they back away from those who do not respond to their compulsive “loving” and giving] is of primary importance.

In this hidden countercurrent [i.e., in this hidden pulling back from others], they are just as afraid to let down their guard [i.e., their guard against allowing love to others] as are • the repressive and • the "superior" types [i.e., as are types one and two], only their [i.e., the type three’s] fear is covered up by the manifest [and desperate] need [to be loved].

All they [i.e., all the type threes] can see is • what they want, or • what they fear will happen to them [if they don’t get the love they want], • nothing else.

They are torn between these two alternatives [i.e., torn between striving for what they want and fearing what will happen to them if they don’t get what they want], interpreting every outer happening in terms of either • needing or • fearing.

In neither alternative do they see the reality.
Now, my friends, this is
   • food for thought and
   • material for further work,
     for each and every one of you.

I venture to say that with most people
a combination of
   all these three aspects [that constitute an inner “no” to loving, i.e.,
       1. Repressing feelings out of fear of obligation that would result
       2. Wanting to be in a “superior” world that does not value love
       3. Starving for love and forcing love and giving to get love]

exists in some way,
   but with many
     one aspect is
       • quite obvious and
       • not difficult to verify.

There is no one
   • who is here, or
   • who is reading these words,
     for whom
       [at least] one of these aspects
     is not immediately applicable.

If you work with these aspects [that constitute an inner “no” to loving],
   you cannot help but
     register further results.

These lectures are directed
   to those levels of your being
where such
   irrational attitudes
   exist.

   They are not addressed
   to your
     rational thinking.
And now, my friends, let us turn to your questions.

**QUESTION:**
Can you elaborate on the difference between
• pity
and
• compassion?

As one gets older
and sees so many of one's friends suffer,
what is the proper attitude?

**ANSWER:**

I will be glad to give additional help on this question, if I can, although this topic has been repeatedly discussed in the past.

However,
if I were to say
what the right feeling should be in theory,
it would not help you at all.

All you would then do would be to
• further manipulate your feelings and
• superimpose attitudes that are not genuinely yours.

You know that this [manipulating of feelings and superimposing attitudes] cannot possibly be a healthy procedure.

It is important for you to acknowledge what you really feel, whether
• right
or
• wrong.
In addition to what I said [in the past] about the difference between
  • pity
  and
  • compassion,
I now want to present an explanation indicating why
  one feels
  • pity
instead of the much more productive feeling of
  • compassion.

Whenever you are crushed by the devastating emotion of pity,
  which inhibits
  • your strength and
  • the help you can give,
  you can be quite sure that you are somewhere negatively involved.

For instance, pity may be a projection of your fear that the fate the other suffers may come to you.

Or you may feel guilty about something you are not aware of.
A universal attitude
is that of
feeling a certain satisfaction
at another's misfortune,
not only
• about [your] not having to bear that same fate,
but also
• about the other
  • being punished and
  • having difficulties.

This [universal attitude]
is, of course,
entirely irrational,
but the attitude
contains considerations such as this:
"If others have hardship too,
• I am not so bad,
• I am not the only one who suffers,
  therefore
  I am
glad
  that others suffer too."

This reaction [in you in response to another's suffering]
often produces
such
• shock and
• guilt

that it [i.e., that this universal attitude and reaction
in you to another's suffering]
is
• entirely repressed and
• overcompensated
  by a
    • weakening,
    • unproductive
      pity.
The pity, then, makes you feel absolved [of the “sin” of being glad about another’s suffering]
because in pitying you suffer with the other person, though in a destructive way.

If you can
- discover and experience your genuine reactions [i.e., the reaction of being glad at another’s suffering], recognizing that you are a human being
  - with many unpurified emotions,
  - with many childish, selfish, and shortsighted attitudes – and learn to accept them [i.e. accept your unpurified emotions and childish, selfish, and shortsighted attitudes]

without
- condemning,
- condoning, or
- justifying yourself –

then you can understand what misconceptions are behind these unreasonable attitudes.
Then they [i.e., then these unreasonable and immature emotions and attitudes] will gradually dissolve, to the degree you truly understand them.

Pity will transform into compassion, and therefore [with pity having been transformed into compassion] giving constructive help to suffering people will be possible, whether • through action, or • just by communicating your [now transformed] true feelings [of compassion].

QUESTION:
In the past you discussed the close connection between • cause and • effect.

Are we then to believe that we are living in a world of causality where • identical effects stem from • identical causes?

ANSWER:
Of course this is a world of causality.
As for the
  • identical causes
producing
  • identical effects,
    that depends on
    what exactly you mean by
    identical.

What may appear
  identical causes
  may, in reality,
  not be identical at all.

The act
  may be the same,
  but the individuals
  are different.

Let us take
  a crass example, like
  murder.

Let us assume that
  two people commit murder,
  even for the same motive.

Yet,
  • their backgrounds
    that led to these
    feelings,
    that led to this
    action,
  as well as
    • their overall development,
    • their
      • personality and
      • character traits
        may be different.

  • Their reactions after the act
    may not be identical.
Consequently
the effect –
not necessarily
• the outer effect,
but
• the effect upon the two individuals in question –
may not be at all identical.

But if you mean that
this law of cause and effect
is
to the finest detail
• an
  • organic,
  • infinitely just and
  • harmonious
  process,
  • a balancing factor
  in the entire universe,
  so exact in its workings
  that
    • error or
    • injustice
      is utterly impossible,

in that sense
• identical effects
stem from
• identical causes.

Why it should be
so hard
for human beings
to accept
that they live in
a world of causality
is not easy to understand.
When you really look at
• the world and
• the events in it,
you are constantly confronted with
the living reality
of cause and effect.

In the
smallest daily issues
cause and effect operate,
but
• you are so used to it,
• it is so much part of your daily life
that you take it [i.e., that you take the law of cause and effect]
for granted.

You have lost the ability
to see the operation
of cause and effect
with the newness that is necessary
in order to derive
deeper understanding.

Were humans able to see
what happens constantly,
it would not be so difficult for them
to realize
that the same law [of cause and effect that operates constantly
in the smallest daily issues]
must exist also
in a wider context.

They would
not assume
that a different law operates
merely because
• in one case
cause and effect are close together,
while
• in other cases
they are separated by time.
Time has no bearing on it [i.e., time has no bearing on the law of cause and effect]; it [i.e., time] only discloses
• the cause
or
• the effect to you.

Sometimes human beings can see both [cause and effect].

Sometimes they can see only one or the other.

If people were to
• follow through logically and
• see the ultimate consequences of this [law of cause and effect] phenomenon, they would realize
that their inability to see either
• cause
or
• effect does not change the fact that
• cause
and
• effect are interdependent.
When you uncover cause and effect sufficiently in your own personal life, then what is called faith, but what in reality is an experience of a truth, comes into being.

Then it [i.e., then faith] is no longer a question of superimposing doctrines or postulates.

Various happenings and results have puzzled you when you saw no cause for them.

By getting to know yourself better, you discover causes for many effects.

You discover the connections [between causes and effects] as indisputable facts.

This [discovery of connections between causes and effects as indisputable facts] gives you not only freedom and strength, but also shows you causality in its true light.
You then know
    that the same law of causality
    must hold true also
    where you
cannot know
the causes
    whether
• in your own life, or
• in the lives of others, or
• in the world, or
• in creation generally.

My dearest friends,
    may these words
    fall on fruitful soil.

May you all
    come a tiny little step closer
    to seeing your own barriers
that shut out
• truth,
• love, and
• reality.

For that [i.e., for seeing your own barriers that shut out truth, love, and reality]
is the most constructive step
toward removing them [i.e., toward removing your own barriers].

The human error
    is always that
you want to
• deny the barrier's existence and
• push against it,
    which only strengthens the block.

You want to remove it
    without seeing
what that obstacle really is.
Once you
  • become aware [of the barrier] and
    • understand what it [i.e., understand what the barrier] is made of,
      you realize that
        it cannot
          be pushed away by force.

It can
  dissolve
    only gradually,
      depending entirely on
        the degree to which
          this barrier is understood.

Again a
  • warm stream and
    • current
      of love
        is reaching toward
          each one of you.

Make yourselves
  inwardly calm.

Detect
  • your fears,
    • your guards,
      • your shames,
        • your embarrassment,
          • your resistance against feelings.

As you do so,
  this stream [of love]
    will be able to reach you much better.

It will send
  some aspect of its force
    into your hearts
      where it will fill you
        with
          • a light,
            • a strength,
              • a hope.

Be in peace,
  be in God!
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