Pathwork Lecture 177: Pleasure – The Full Pulsation of Life

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/

Gary Vollbracht

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>03</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Greetings to all my friends here who are gathered together to obtain • nourishment and • truth, in whatever way they need it at the moment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tonight’s lecture deals with the topic of pleasure – the • meaning and • significance of pleasure in the • universal scheme, as well as for the • individual human entity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Religion
   speaks of the
   ultimate bliss of being.

However, most of the time
   this [i.e., this “ultimate bliss of being”]
   is completely misunderstood.

The bliss of being
   is believed to be a state
   totally different
   from the
   • human state
     of ultimate pleasure, or
   from the
   • human potential
     for it [i.e., from the human potential for ultimate pleasure],
     whether it [i.e., whether ultimate pleasure]
       be realized or not.

Therefore
   bliss
   seems very remote from
   the actual human experience.

It [i.e., Bliss]
   appears
   to be something
   • totally disembodied
     and
   • obtainable only eons later.

This kind of bliss
   appears so
   • unreal and
   • distant from what people consider
     truly desirable

   that it [i.e., that this kind of bliss]
     remains at best
     a vague theory.
In truth,
there is essentially
no difference
between the ultimate
• spiritual
state of bliss
and the
• human
potential for it [i.e., the HUMAN potential for
that ultimate SPIRITUAL state of bliss].

Only
the degree of intensity [i.e., Only the degree of intensity of bliss]
varies,
for no human being
is capable of
the depth of experience
which is possible for an
• unstructured,
• highly developed
consciousness.

But
• pleasure
remains
• pleasure.

Spiritual pleasure
is not
bodiless,
for even
unstructured consciousness
is not formless.

Unstructured consciousness
creates
so-called "subtle bodies"
of streaming energy
in the purest form.

Therefore this energy form
is without obstruction;
it [i.e., this energy form of the so-called “subtle bodies” of streaming energy]
is
pleasure itself.
The human body
in its gross matter
represents
an obstruction
that can be overcome
only when
• the total personality
attains harmony with
• the energy streamings of cosmic origin.

A liberated human being
with little or no
• blocks and
• inhibitions,
without
• distortions and
• negativity,
is capable of
a high degree of pleasure,
for the energy of
• the subtle bodies
penetrates
• the surface body.

We have often spoken about the fact
that
the simultaneous
• longing for pleasure
and the
• fear of it [i.e., the fear of pleasure]
constitute
one of your
most basic inner struggles.

You know this
from your own
experience.
Tonight we shall discuss
• the legitimate need for pleasure and
• its [i.e., and pleasure’s] purpose for the human entity.
I will show that
this need [i.e., that this NEED for pleasure]
is not only
• not in opposition to true spiritual self-realization – as many people falsely believe –
but is in fact
• one of its [i.e., one of true spiritual self-realization’s] necessary prerequisites.

Or to put it differently,
whoever blocks
• pleasure must, perforce, also block
• the deep connection with the spiritual self.
Conversely,
only those who are free enough to let go in one respect [i.e., to let go in respect to, say, blocks to the deep connection with the spiritual self]
are free to do so in the other [i.e., to let go in respect to, here, blocks to pleasure].

These apparently two experiences –
• spiritual self-realization and
• the capacity for pleasure – become one and the same.

They [i.e., spiritual self-realization and the capacity for pleasure] are
• interactive and
• interdependent.
We shall also talk about the obstructions that barricade you from the deep experience of pleasure supreme.

What are these obstructions [i.e., obstructions to the deep experience of pleasure supreme]? What hinders the realization of that state [i.e., What hinders the realization of that state of pleasure supreme] which will always be the goal of your greatest longing, whether or not you are aware of it?

In your own soul, you
• obstruct this longing [i.e., you obstruct this greatest longing for pleasure supreme] and
• are therefore at war within yourself.

I do not wish to dwell too long on the cosmic meaning of pleasure, to avoid the danger of making it [i.e., to avoid the danger of making pleasure] appear too remote from your life in the here and now.
This [i.e., This “pleasure being only a COSMIC reality that is too remote from your life on earth to be experienced and have meaning in the here and now”]
is not so at all, for all cosmic reality is applicable at any state in the now.
But it is easy to
• misread and
• misapply the meaning of cosmic pleasure.
Only when you reach the point where you can open the inner flow to remove all
• obstructions and
• blocks so that you experience a high degree of bliss will you deeply know that
• human pleasure is essentially the same as
• the cosmic state of bliss, that
• spiritual and
• physical pleasure are one – not opposites.
Pleasure,  
in the real sense,  
is  
intensely  
• fleshly  
and  
intensely  
• spiritual.

There is  
no division  
between the  
• fleshly  
and  
• spiritual  
state.

This is why  
there is no need to dwell too much on  
the philosophical aspects  
of pleasure  
in the scheme of creation.

The only thing I would like to mention about  
cosmic reality  
in this respect [i.e., in respect to 1) pleasure and to 2) there being no  
division between the fleshly and the spiritual state]  
is that  
the ultimate state  
of  
• liberation,  
of  
• cosmic being,  
is  
total pleasure.

So  
• pleasure  
is  
• the ultimate reality.
Bliss is not –

as religion seems to imply
in its misunderstood interpretations –
a reward for
having been "good."

Bliss is the natural state of a unified being in harmony with • itself and • the universe.

When we speak of pleasure, we must also be clear about what we mean.

[By “pleasure”]
I do not mean pleasurable pastimes of the mind.

[By “pleasure”]
I do not mean • shallow substitutes and • escapes.
[By “pleasure”]
I mean
a state of
• physical
and
• spiritual
bliss
that is
experienced
in every particle
of one's
• body
and
• soul,
of the
• outer
and
• inner
being –
with
all
• sensations and
• faculties
• alive,
• awake, and
• feeling.

This blissful state
is very much
• here
and
• now.

Yet this state is also
the ultimate spiritual reality
of
every
entity.
It [i.e., This blissful state]
is your birthright,
my friends.

Your longing for it [i.e., Your longing for this blissful state]
is the most
• real
and
• healthy
movement
within yourself.

It is only your
• confusions and
• dualistic splits
that create your
• misconceptions,
• fears, and
• shames
that are so superfluous.

Let us now come to
the meaning of pleasure
for the human being
on all levels of existence.

The pleasure we speak about here
is, as I said,
• a total experience,
not
• a divided experience.

It is
not a
• physical experience
with the
• spiritual side
left out,
nor is it a
• spiritual state
that does not include the
• physical state.
[In the pleasure we speak of here]

Your entire being
• vibrates and
• pulsates,
  • undividedly,
  • in harmony with
    • yourself,
    • the universe –
      and hence with
    • another human being.

There is
  no
• division in you,
  no
• No-current,
  no
• doubt about
  the rightfulness of your bliss,
  no
• ifs and buts because your bliss
  interferes with the world around you.

You feel
  no
• guilt or
  • hesitation.

On the contrary,
you will
  feel deeply
  that
  the greater your
    • ecstasy and
    • joy,
  the more you
    • contribute to the world.
When you reach this inner awareness [i.e., this inner awareness of the pleasure we speak of here] – not a
  • theoretical,
  but an
  • experiential awareness –
you will create the following conditions within yourself:

You will make
  the total experience of pleasure a
  • spiritual
  and
  • practical goal.

You will act
  unceasingly
  on behalf of this goal.

You will
  • remove
  all inner obstructions and
  • patiently explore
  your unconscious
  to bring the obstructions to light.

You will devote
  • time and
  • effort
  to this venture.

You will feel increasingly that
  • personal
  • fulfillment and
  • pleasure
  further
  • spiritual growth and
  • self-realization,
  and
  vice versa.
The capacity to love

- intimately
- and
- completely
with your
- body,
- soul, and
- spirit
will be the goal
that simultaneously
advances
your self-purification –
for one cannot exist
without the other [i.e., for love
cannot exist without self-
purification and vice versa].

I will say more about this later.

Let us first discuss what
full pleasure means
on all levels of
the human personality.

On the physical level:
- physical health and
- well-being
are
- regulated by and
- dependent on
the state of pleasure
the body
is capable of
allowing.
[On the physical level, continued]

• The streamings of pleasure are
  the simultaneous forces of
  • life,
  • health,
  • self-renewal and
  • regeneration.

Therefore
  • health and
  • longevity
  result from
  the capacity for
  pleasure.

Conversely,
  to the degree you
deny yourself
  • pleasure –
  due to
  • shames,
  • fears,
  • misconceptions,
  • negativities,
  • impurities –

  to that degree you
cut off your body from
  • the wellspring
  of the universal flow.
You have often heard me say that each human entity is a microcosm of an entire universe within, representing the macrocosmic universe [i.e., the entire universe within, of which each human entity is a microcosm, represents the macrocosmic universe without].

The same laws and conditions apply to both [i.e., apply to both the entire universe within AND to the macrocosmic universe without].

Therefore, if your inner universe is in harmony with itself, the universal flow of spiritual healing power, life, health and pleasure that permeates the entire creation can also permeate you.

You become part of the universe and the universe is part of you.
You transcend
the structural limitations
even while
you are still within
your body.

The
• universal,
• unlimited
  abundance
  of ever self-renewing life
  will become
  a part of you –
  in a relative way,
  because
  you are still in the body.

This [i.e., This universal, unlimited abundance of ever self-renewing life
becoming a part of you]
  happens in an
  absolute way
  only when
  the body is transcended.

But do not think that
the feelings you experience
in an
unblocked
• body and
• soul
  cease to exist
  when you die.

On the contrary,
the body feelings
• come from
  the subtle bodies and
• can manifest [i.e., and the body feelings can manifest]
  because
  the body blocks
  are removed [i.e., because the body blocks
  are removed when you die].
When bodily existence is transcended, the identical feelings [i.e., the identical feelings coming from the subtle bodies] will manifest ever so much stronger because they [i.e., the identical feelings coming from the subtle bodies] are even less blocked by the gross matter of physical life.

It is important to understand that feelings of
- pleasure and
- bliss that you register in your body [during your earth life] will not cease in an existence beyond the earth life.

They [i.e., The feelings of pleasure and bliss that you register in your body in your earth life] will only be intensified [i.e., intensified in an existence beyond the earth life].
You will be more capable of sustaining the feelings of
• pleasure supreme,
• ecstasy,
• bliss,
• love, and
and what is called
• sexuality
  in this earth sphere –
[and what is called in existence beyond this earth sphere – ]
• a total fusion with another being.

Here I am talking about entities who have put
• false fears and
• obstructions behind them;
  otherwise [i.e. if these entities have NOT put false fears and obstructions behind them during their earthly existence]
  their
  • spiritual existence
will not be different from their
  • earthly one.

Any kind of physical
• illness or
• deterioration,
including physical
• death,
is a manifestation of
• division,
• conflict, and
• denial of pleasure.
Spiritual unfoldment must bring an increase of pleasure and not [i.e., and spiritual unfoldment does NOT require], as many authoritarian religions want to have it, • denial and • sacrifice of pleasure.

This concept of martyrdom is a total misunderstanding of spiritual truth.

But the truth can be understood only when pleasure • is no longer felt to be negative,

when it [i.e., when pleasure] • is no longer at the expense of another human being,

when it [i.e., when pleasure] • no longer carries destructive currents.

Anyone can confirm that the degree of • deeply experienced pleasure determines • energy and • well-being.

This is not something you have to take at face value.

You can experience it yourself.
Now let us go to
a deeper level [i.e., deeper than the physical level]
in exploring
the importance of pleasure.

On the
• psychological level,
the importance of pleasure
is at least as great as
on the
• physical [i.e., as on the physical level].

How can you
shoulder
• mature self-responsibility?

How can you
accept
• the difficulties of
the temporary reality
which
  • surrounds you and
which is, in effect,
  • the expression of
your present state within yourself?

How can you
cope with
• the frustrations that come your way?

In the last analysis, of course,
frustrations come your way
due to your
inner limitations.

Nevertheless,
you have to
accept your limitations,
and that [i.e., and accepting your limitations]
is not easy.
How can you
want to give up
the various ways
in which you
• violate and
• impair
your integrity,
in which you want to
• secretly cheat life,
in which you
• want others
to carry the burden of responsibility
for your mistakes?

How can you
truly commit yourself to
• integrity,
• truth,
• deepest honesty and
• a positive approach to
• yourself and
• life?

How can you
wish to abandon
• negative pleasure,
• the pseudo-satisfactions of
your
• pretenses,
your
• role-playing,
your
• defenses?
How can you begin to wholly and consciously commit yourself to the reality of living, not for the sake of appearances but for the sake of what is, if you are not aware of the fact that the deepest bliss awaits you just as a result of abandoning these pseudo-satisfactions and pleasures, these poor substitutes [i.e., abandoning these poor substitutes for true satisfactions and pleasures]?

As long as you are convinced that these substitutes [i.e., these substitutes for true pleasure, namely, your negative pleasure, role-playing, defenses, pretenses, secretly cheating life, letting others carry the burden of responsibility for your mistakes, violating your integrity, and not accepting “what is,” including not accepting your limitations and frustrations] are all the pleasure you can have and that living a decent life implies sacrifice, you cannot even believe in pleasure.
This difficulty [i.e., This difficulty of not even believing in genuine true pleasure] is intensified because you cannot bear pleasure exactly to the degree that you cling to all these false ways of life. You become capable of taking in genuine pleasure only to the degree you give up the • false, • negative pleasure.

You must find a way to break through the vicious circle in which you are caught, which goes like this:

The less you truly want to give up all the subtle • falsities and • destructive defenses, the less you can accept • pleasure; therefore you cannot believe in it [i.e., cannot believe in pleasure]; therefore you cannot want to give up that which obstructs you from experiencing it [i.e., from experiencing pleasure]; therefore neither the • will and • commitment to experience pleasure, nor the giving up of • destructive, • life-inhibiting patterns can exist.
Accepting

- reality and
- mature self-responsibility
  seems
  an insurmountable hardship
  if not accompanied by
  pleasure
  as a by-product.

But

- to the degree you
  insist on
  being an
  irresponsible child –
  - wanting to make others
    pay for
      your
      actions or
      inactions,
  - wanting to
    secretly,
    neurotically
    cheat life –
  - to the degree you
    impair your integrity,

  to that degree
  you cannot
  experience
  pleasure.

Your innermost being
  does not make it possible [i.e., does not make experiencing pleasure possible].

Your energy
  is engaged in
  negative inner activities.
By the same token, 
• to the degree that you 
  • assume 
  • self-responsibility, 
• to the degree you 
  • respect and 
  • love 
  • yourself 
    • because 
    • you no longer 
    • cheat 
      • even in the subtlest of ways, 
• to that same degree 
  you become 
  • more 
    • and more capable of 
    • experiencing 
      • pleasure. 

The more 
• you can look forward to a 
  • full and 
  • blissful 
    • existence, 
• the less hard it will seem 
  to 
  • give up 
    • these destructive patterns 
      • on the deepest level imaginable, 
  to 
  • stand on your own feet, 
  to 
  • accept necessary frustrations.
The equation of
  • the acceptance of
    full autonomy
  with
    • the capacity for
      pleasure
      is extremely important to comprehend.

One [i.e., One, say full autonomy]
  is not possible
  without
    the other [i.e., here, full autonomy is not possible without
      the capacity for pleasure, and vice versa].

If being a
  • deeply self-responsible and
  • decent
    person
    in the truest sense
    seems to imply that
      pleasure
      must be renounced,
  then
    • pleasure
    • cannot really be desired,
  or if
    • it
      is [i.e. or if pleasure is desired],
      then only [i.e., then pleasure is then desired only],
      in an
        unhealthy way,
        as a reward to
          • the "good child"
        from
          • an authority figure
            one depends on.
You will want
  • selfhood,
  • autonomy,

in the truest sense of the word –
  however hard it may first seem to attain it –
when you know that
  your fear of pleasure
  will disappear
  proportionately to
  your self-purification.

To the degree
  you assume
    what initially appears as
      the hardship of adulthood
        with all that this implies,
something in you
  will
    • ease up and
    • feel
      less
      and less threatened.

Instead
  you will become open to
    pleasure
      in its
        • deepest and
        • fullest
          meaning.

All of you can meditate about
  the connection
    between
      • emotional maturity
        with all its meanings
    and
      • the realization of
        personal pleasure.
This [i.e., This connection between emotional maturity and the realization of personal pleasure] is very logical, my friends.

You know that you can truly love only when you are self-responsible, not when you cling to someone else, when you are dependent on someone else.

Such dependency may have the superficial appearance of love, but you have already experienced in your work on this path that nothing could be further from the truth.

Dependency • stems from fear and • creates greater fear, leading inevitably to • resentment and • hate.

You try very hard to conceal these feelings [i.e., conceal these feelings of resentment and hate], because it is threatening to hate the person one needs and depends on.
Love is possible only
when you are
• free,
when you are
• a self unto yourself
without depending on another.

And pleasure is possible only
when you
• love.

As I said before,
• sexual pleasure without
• love
  • is very incomplete
  and
  • must always wind up
    in a dead-end street.

There will always be something missing [i.e., something missing in
sexual pleasure when it comes without love].

It [i.e., Sexual pleasure that comes without love] is an expression of
inner division of
• the spirit,
• the soul, and
• the body.

Total unification of pleasure exists
when you
• love
and
when you are
• a sexual being,
because
then you are also
• a spiritual being.
This [i.e., When you love, are a sexual being, and hence are a spiritual being] means that you have
• emotional
and
• mental
integrity.

Therefore
• pleasure
and
• spirituality,
• pleasure
and
• decency,
• pleasure
and
• emotional maturity,
• pleasure
and
• physical health
are all
• intricately and
• intimately
connected.

Now let us consider the obstructions to pleasure.

Some of you who
• are here for the first time
and
• are unfamiliar with the depths of our work
may not know at all what I am talking about when I mention the fear of pleasure.
Offhand, you all
• want pleasure and
• long for it [i.e., long for pleasure],
• strive for it [i.e., strive for pleasure].

You believe you
• want pleasure,

but you ignore the fact that you also
• do not want it [i.e., do NOT want pleasure],

that you also
• fear it [i.e., fear pleasure] desperately.

My friends here, who
• are already somewhat advanced on this path and
• have explored their hitherto unconscious being to a sufficiently profound degree,

have found indeed that they are often terrified of pleasure.

Perhaps they fear it [i.e., Perhaps they fear pleasure] even more than [they fear] negative feelings
• within themselves or
• from others.
Elsewhere I have pointed out the connection between

- the fear of
  - negative feelings about
    - yourself,
    - about
      - others,

and

- the fear of
  - pleasure within you.

For only because you fear pleasure do you inadvertently but logically want the opposite – the unpleasure.

Thus you fear the result of your negative desire [i.e., you fear the result of your desire for unpleasure].

Deep inside, you know that what you want [i.e., here wanting unpleasure] will be so.
The less conscious you are
of what you want,
the more you must fear
the result [i.e., you must fear manifesting that of which you are unconsciously wishing for – here unpleasure].

Hence,
fear of death always connotes an unconscious death wish.

Conversely,
pleasure is made possible when the state of
• mind and
• emotions is
  • quietly confident,
  • calmly
  • expectant and
  • receptive,
  • patient and
  • unanxious,
  • unhurried and
  • unworried.

Otherwise your battle against your own fear of pleasure will consciously manifest in an
• excessive striving for pleasure,
in an
• anxiety about not being able to realize it [i.e., about not being able to realize pleasure],
in a
• pessimism or even
• hopelessness about it [i.e., hopelessness about never having pleasure].
Such pessimism [i.e., Such pessimism about never experiencing pleasure] makes you fluctuate between two damaging extremes: either
• resignation
or
• compulsive,
• blind,
and consequently
• inappropriate overactivity.

This [i.e., This fluctuation between two damaging extremes: either resignation or compulsive, blind, inappropriate overactivity] obstructs the attainment of pleasure to a considerable degree.

Fear of pleasure must be made conscious in order to battle it [i.e., Fear of pleasure must be made conscious in order to battle against the fear of pleasure].

One of the first obstructions to look for is the dichotomy of
• anxious striving versus
• hopeless resignation, arising from an unconscious rejection of the desired result – whether [i.e., whether the desired result that is unconsciously rejected be]
• pleasure or
• anything else, for that matter.
Hence
awareness of
being afraid of pleasure
must be transformed into
• acute and
• direct
  awareness of
    the fear [i.e., the acute and direct awareness of
      the fear of pleasure].

This [i.e., This acute and direct awareness of the fear of pleasure]
  is
not easy,
but it [i.e., but this acute and direct awareness of the fear of pleasure]
  is
certainly possible
on this path.

Anyone who seriously desires it
can bring
what is
  unconscious
  into awareness.

31

I said in the last lecture [i.e., Lecture 176 - Overcoming Negativity]
that you must make
your
  • negative
    creations,
your
  • negative
    pleasure
    conscious
    to overcome them.

You must also be in touch with [i.e., You must also make conscious]
your
  • denial of
    pleasure.
I might safely say that no human being is completely free of such denial [i.e., free of such denial of pleasure].

The degree [i.e., The degree to which a human is free of his or her denial of pleasure] varies, but it [i.e., but a person’s freedom from his or her denial of pleasure] is only a question of degree.

I ask even those of you who are relatively free from fear of pleasure not to overlook those areas within where you shrink away from pleasure as though it [i.e., as though pleasure] were a danger.

• Meditate and • commit yourself to wanting to be aware of it [i.e., commit yourself to WANTING to be aware of those areas within where you shrink away from pleasure].

Then the next step can be taken:

the exploration of the • validity or • invalidity of this fear [i.e., of this fear of pleasure], so that you can finally want to give up the • fear and • obstruction to pleasure to an ever-increasing degree.
Only when you are acutely conscious of how you
• fear and
• deny your pleasure will you stop making others responsible for your deprivation, which makes you keenly suffer [i.e., making others responsible for your deprivation makes you keenly suffer, and it can be stopped only when you are acutely conscious of how YOU fear and deny your pleasure].

The deep inner burden of being
• puzzled and
• hopeless about attaining what you deeply yearn for will dissolve.

This burden [i.e., This deep inner burden of being puzzled and hopeless about attaining what you deeply yearn for] is
• subtle and
• unpronounced.

Once you can ascertain in full consciousness,
"I am afraid of pleasure,"
the hopelessness will disappear.
[Once you can ascertain in full conscious, “I am afraid of pleasure”]

You will feel 
the two forces within yourself:

• one 
pulling you 
  • toward pleasure,

• the other 
[pulling you] 
  • away from it [i.e., away from pleasure].

You will feel 
these two forces 
on all levels of your being:

  in your 
    • mind,

  in your 
    • feelings.

When the battle [i.e., When the battle of inner forces pulling you TOWARD pleasure fighting against inner forces pulling you AWAY FROM pleasure] goes on 
unbeknownst to your conscious mind, it is 
extremely painful.

When you know of its existence [i.e., When you know of the existence of this battle between inner forces pulling you TOWARD pleasure and inner forces pulling you AWAY FROM pleasure], you can begin to settle the conflict.
Once the struggle [i.e., Once the struggle between inner forces pulling you TOWARD pleasure and inner forces pulling you AWAY FROM pleasure] is

• conscious,

it [i.e., the struggle between these two inner forces] can be met,

but not when it [i.e., but not when the struggle between these two inner forces] is

• unconscious.

This is why becoming conscious of any inner condition is such an important undertaking for any human being.

You can never free yourself of

• the vague anxiety and
• the feelings of
  • hopelessness and
  • inadequacy
  which result from your not knowing that you
  • deny what you want,
  • wish [i.e., that you wish for what you want] on the one hand
  and
  • fear [i.e., and fear what you want] on the other.
As it is impossible to overcome your
destructiveness and
negativity
without knowing that you want
to be negative,
so it is impossible to settle this struggle [i.e., it is impossible to settle this struggle between inner forces pulling you TOWARD pleasure and inner forces pulling you AWAY FROM pleasure]

unless you
know and
feel and
experience
that this fight goes on within you.

Just as with the negativity I discussed in the last lecture [i.e., Lecture 176 - Overcoming Negativity],
you will also have to find out the further consequences of your denial of pleasure.
You are afraid of pleasure because:
- your holding on to the negativity,
- your not wanting to give up
  - negative and destructive patterns of
    - behavior and
    - feelings,
makes the real pleasure not only
- undeserved in your own unconscious estimation,

but also actually
- frightening.

It is too frightening for you to be open to pleasure,

for your negativity creates
a state of
- soul
and
- body
  that is essentially incompatible with pleasure.

Your negativity creates
- tension,
- separateness,
- contraction.
It [i.e., Your negativity]
• comes from
  an excessive
  ego-orientation
and
• is therefore
  totally alien to
  a state of pleasure.

Negative pleasure
  is always
  more geared to
  • gratifying
    ego goals
  than
  • fulfilling the
    • real and
    • legitimate
    need
    of the entity
    for
    bathing in
    the light of
    pleasure supreme.

It [i.e., Negative pleasure]
harbors
  the three attitudes
  that are at
  the root of
  all
  • destructiveness and
  • deviation:
    • pride,
    • self-will and
    • fear.
I said many years ago that where there is
- pride,
where there is
- self-will,
where there is
- fear,

there must be
a state of
- contraction.

Contraction cannot be fully given up, ever,

no matter
- what approaches of therapy are used
and

no matter
- how good they may be [i.e., no matter how good these approaches of therapy may be],

if
- pride,
- self-will, and
- fear
are not abandoned.

In
- pride,
- self-will, and
- fear
the ego-structuring becomes more
- tight and
- rigid.
Self-will says,

"Me, me, me!"

meaning
the
• little me,
the
• little self.

That self [i.e., That little self; that little me]
• puts its stake only
  into the
• outer,
• conscious
ego personality
and
• completely
• disregards,
• ignores, and
• rejects
  the Universal Consciousness of which
  you are an expression.

Unless
• the total person
is unified with
• the greater consciousness that transcends the ego,
holding on to the ego becomes imperative.
The ego
would not be so emphasized
if
the false belief
did not exist
that
the self
is annihilated
the moment
the ego
is not
the sole ruler of human life.

Hence,
when
you identify
exclusively
with the ego,
you can
neither identify with
• the greater consciousness,
nor [identify] with
• the feelings in your body,
for
they [i.e., for the greater consciousness
and the feelings in your body]
go together.

• Direct experience of
spontaneous feelings
in your body
is as much
an expression of
the universal truth of being

as the
• guidance,
• inspiration, and
• knowledge
that
spontaneously flow into you
when you identify with
your being
that extends beyond
the ego consciousness.
The tight ego structure says:

"It is
my ego world
that counts.

This [i.e., My ego world]
is all there is to me
and therefore
I cannot give it up [i.e., I cannot give up my ego world].

Otherwise [i.e., If I dare to give up my ego world]
I cease to exist."

With this attitude,
pleasure
becomes
impossible,

for
• total,
• real
pleasure
depends on
the ability of the ego
• to let go of
  itself and
• to let itself
  be
  • carried and
  • lived
  by
  • a greater power
    within
    the
    • body
    and
    the
    • soul.
Pride says,

"I am better than you."

This [i.e., “I am better than you”] means
  • separateness,
  • one-upmanship,
  • everything
    that is opposed to
    a state of love.

Pride may also manifest as,

"I am
  • worse than
    others,
I am
  • worthless,
I have
  • no value.

But
I must hide this fact [i.e., I must hide this “fact” that
  I am worse than others and
  I am worthless and have no value],
so
I must
pretend
    that
I am more."

Of course,
  these thoughts
    are not articulate,
but
they [i.e., but these thoughts “I am worse than others and am worthless
  and I have no value and therefore must pretend that I am more”]
may not be
altogether
unconscious.
• Distorted pride, as opposed to
  • healthy dignity,

• is always
  • comparing
  and
  • measuring
    • the self
    with
    • others

and [i.e., and, therefore, distorted pride, unlike healthy dignity,]
• is thus
  perpetually
  in illusion.

For
  no true evaluation of
  a person’s worth
  can ever come from this attitude [i.e., can ever come from this attitude
  of always comparing and measuring the self with others].

It [i.e., This attitude of always comparing and measuring the self with others]
  is a
  • hopeless and
  • endless
    chase
    for an illusory goal
    that leaves the personality
    not only
      • exhausted,
    but also
      • more
        and more frustrated.

• The chasm
  between
    • the self
  and
    • others
  widens forever more,
• love
  becomes less possible
  and hence
  • pleasure
    further removed.
It does not matter whether you
• actually think
  you are
  more than others
or
• only pretend [i.e., or only pretend that you are more than others]
  in order to
  hide your feelings of
  worthlessness.

It is all the same.

This attitude [i.e., This attitude of always comparing and measuring
  the self with others]
cannot produce love –
  and how can
  true pleasure
  ever be realized
  in a loveless state?

Love
  is not a command
  that is supposed to
  deprive you.

Love
  is the most selfish
  of all attitudes,
  for it
  brings
  the greatest
  of all pleasures –
  • physical
  as well as
  • mental and
  • emotional
  pleasure.

It [i.e., Love]
simply
  feels good
  in itself.
Love
opens you up.

[When you love]
You
* flow and
* pulsate
  in a state of
  * peace,
  * security,
  * vibrancy,
  * excitement,
  * stimulation and
  * utter confidence.

Your
* innermost being
and your
* outer limbs
  feel
  * sweet and
  * fulfilled
  when you love.

But when you are in
an ego state of
pride,
you must be
* tense,
* anxious,
* contracted.

You cannot
pretend
when you are in
a relaxed state,
and pride
always
* leads to and
* requires
  pretense
  of some sort.
A
• relaxed,
• struggle-free and
• unpretending
  state
  is the
  absolute prerequisite to
  • pleasure.

41

Fear
  is
  a total contraction.

It [i.e., Fear]
  cannot trust
  • anyone,

  neither
  • the self
  nor
  • the universe.

Therefore [i.e., Because fear cannot trust anyone –
  neither the self nor the universe,]

  the self
  that is in fear
  cannot
  let go of
  itself.
Pleasure
is unrealizable
when the personality
is bound to
the ego
in
• self-will,
• pride and
• fear –
bound
• in the negative creations,
• in the struggle
within itself
that
• denies
its own negativity
and so
• does not know it exists [i.e., so because
the personality (ego) denies its own
negativity, the personality does not
know that its own negativity exists].

The personality
does not know
the nature of
its own suffering.

The self
is bound in
the struggle of
• wanting
and
• fearing
the same thing.

Unawareness of this struggle
leads to
• frustration and
• discontent,
as well as to
• blaming others for the lack.
This [i.e., This frustration, discontent, and blaming others for the lack of what one wants that occurs when one is unaware of the inner struggle of wanting and fearing the same thing]

in turn elicits
- resentment,
- bitterness,
- anger, and
- defiance.

The resulting confusion is torment for the soul.

As I said, the realization of pleasure you all deeply long for comes from letting go of all of these destructive attitudes.
Let me recapitulate:

for pleasure,  
_a totally relaxed inner state_  
is needed,  

but  
- relaxation  
  is not  
  - passive apathy,  
  - paralysis or  
  - inertia.

**True relaxation**  
is a  
- constant,  
- harmonious  
  movement.

*It* [i.e., True relaxation]  
is  
_the movement of_  
_the universe._

*Any human entity*  
_who is sufficiently free_  
to be in  
_the unified state of_  
pleasure  
- _will feel the cosmic pulsating rhythm_  
  and  
- _will be in harmony with it* [i.e., will be in harmony with  
  the cosmic pulsating rhythm].

43

*The pleasurable rhythm*  
of  
*the universe*  
is in  
each  
*microcosmic universe.*
It [i.e., The pleasurable rhythm of the universe that is in each microcosmic universe]
requires
being very finely attuned to the cosmic rhythm within.

It [i.e., The cosmic rhythm within]
follows the soul movements – not
• the distortions [i.e., not the soul movements that are distortions],

but
• the reflections of the greater cosmos [i.e., but the soul movements that are the reflections of the greater cosmos].

In order to be thus attuned [i.e., In order to be thus attuned to the cosmic rhythm within that follows those soul movements that are reflections of the greater cosmos],

• an inner calmness must prevail.

• All agitation of the mind must settle down.

• The turbulence must cease.
Then [i.e., Then, when thus attuned to the cosmic rhythm within that follows those soul movements that are reflections of the greater cosmos, and when inner calmness prevails, when the mind has settled down, and when turbulence has ceased]

another kind

of movement within you

will make itself known

that is

neither

• active

nor

• passive

in the outer sense,

but it

combines

• an inner activity

of the most pleasurable rhythm

with

• an inner

• calm receptivity

and

• apparent motionlessness.

Such receptivity [i.e., This inner calm receptivity and apparent motionlessness]

is not

• contradictory to

movement,

but

• an intrinsic part of

it [i.e., but rather this inner calm receptivity and apparent motionlessness is an intrinsic part of this new kind of movement].

What appears to be a

• contradiction

on the

• ego level

becomes a

• unification

on a

• different wavelength.
In that state [i.e., In that state, where what appears to be a contradiction on the ego level becomes a unification,]

there can be
  no
  • division or
  • struggle against the self,
  no
  • pushing or
  • tense striving.

In that state [i.e., In that state, where what appears to be a contradiction on the ego level becomes a unification,]

there is
  no
  • harassment from time,
    for there is
    timelessness,
    even now
    while you are in the body.

Of course,
this state [i.e., Of course this state, where what appears to be a contradiction on the ego level becomes a unification,]
cannot be attained
at all times.

But it [i.e., But this state, where what appears to be a contradiction on the ego level becomes a unification,]
can be attained again
and again,
leaving you each time
  a
  • stronger,
  • more unified,
  • more complete
  person,
  with
  your ego
  • fully intact,
  • more integrated with the greater self.
• Evolution,
• growth, and
• self-development
must bring you to
more frequent realizations
of this state [i.e., more frequent realizations of this state, where what appears to be a contradiction on the ego level becomes a unification,],

which [i.e., this state which] is most
• significantly and
• intensely
experienced
in a love relationship.

But in different ways
you will experience this state [i.e., you will experience this state, where what appears to be a contradiction on the ego level becomes a unification,]
in
• all you do and
• all you are,
as you
• live,
• move, and
• have your being
in the
Universal Consciousness.

45

Wherever you are
at any given moment,
you can transcend
this one instant,
no matter
how unpleasurable
it is.
If you go sufficiently deeply into yourself to fully explore the you in this moment, in this situation – if you do not escape from it – this very moment of unpleasure must turn into its ultimate nature:

pleasure supreme.

It is not easy to do this [i.e., It is not easy to go sufficiently deeply into yourself to fully explore the you in this moment, in this situation, which is needed for this very moment of unpleasure to turn into its ultimate nature: pleasure supreme] when you are separate in your perception of yourself,

even after you have experienced some of the • truths and • states I mentioned.
In such a state of disconnectedness [i.e. In such a state of disconnectedness in which you are separate in your perception of yourself],
go into yourself
requires
• probing and
groping
to find
the right measure of
• self-discipline,
• self-facing,

and
• summoning your goodwill
to
• see
the truth
and
• change
the destructiveness.

It [i.e., Going into yourself]
also requires
both a
• patient letting go
and a
• waiting,
• trusting
expectancy.

You have to
find
the right
• answers and
• attitudes,
of
• struggling
and
• not struggling,
both in
• the right way
and [in]
• the right measure.
Remembering
    a former similar state of your mind
    will be of little help.

The truth
    must be
    recaptured
    each time anew.

Memory
    will only help you
    to know
    that
        the truth
        • can
        be attained
        and
        • is not
        an illusion.

No,
    it is
    not easy
    to
        • transcend
        your
            NOW
        and
        • tune into
        your
            inner cosmic rhythm.
But
  • the more often
    you attempt it [i.e., the more often you attempt transcending your NOW and tuning into your inner cosmic rhythm],
  • the more often
    will it [i.e., the more often will transcending your NOW and tuning into your inner cosmic rhythm]
    become possible,
    until
    • this [i.e., until transcending your NOW and tuning into your inner cosmic rhythm]
      eventually
      becomes
      your
      • normal state
      and
      • disconnectedness
      • the exception.

The difficult times
  will
  increasingly
  serve the purpose of
  bringing you toward
  your inner center
  where
  pleasure supreme reigns.

These difficult moments
  will then be
  the catalysts
  they are meant to be
  to ready
  your whole person
  for the state of
  unconflicted pleasure
  that is within you.
• Accept
  the pain
  that you have created
  through your
  • misconceptions and
  • destructiveness,

and
• do not
  • cringe or
  • run from it [i.e., or run from the pain that you have created]

but
• explore it [i.e., but rather explore the pain that you have created].

• Hold still

instead of

• fighting against it [i.e., instead of fighting against the pain]
  with your
  • subterfuges,
  • negativities,
  with your
  • games,
  • roles,
  and
  • pretenses,
  with your
  • projections
  and your
  • escapes.

• Truly look at
  yourself.
- The attainment of pleasure
  and
- the state of being in pleasure
  will
  - ultimately and
  - increasingly unfold for you.

**You will become an integral part of it** [i.e., You will become an integral part of pleasure].

That [i.e., Becoming an integral part of pleasure] **must be the aim.**

---

**Pleasure**

is,

- at one and the same time,
  - the ultimate
    - spiritual
    and
    - human
goal.

**It** [i.e., Pleasure]

is also

- the curative agent
  without which you cannot heal.

---

**I think you begin more and more to realize**

- such a path
  is not to be
dreaded
  as a difficult chore.
**Every step** [i.e., Every step of such a path as this pathwork] is
the most joyful thing
in
itself [i.e., the most joyful thing even in, of, and during the
process and experience of taking each step],
not only because it
• ultimately
  brings liberation,
but even
• while you are struggling [i.e., struggling during the step],
and each time you win,
such a path brings you
bliss
in varying degrees.

**The exact degree** [i.e., The exact degree of bliss you experience]
depends on
your ability to
overcome
your resistance.

---

**Be in**
the state of bliss
that is
• your birthright,
  that is
• the ultimate destiny
  for
  all of you.

**Realize**
the truth
that there is
nothing to fear.

**Be blessed.**
For information to find and participate in Pathwork activities world wide, please write:

The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
Visit: www.pathwork.org

The following notices are for your guidance in the use of the Pathwork® name and this lecture material.

Trademark/Service Mark
Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

Copyright
The copyright of the Pathwork Guide material is the sole property of The Pathwork Foundation. This lecture may be reproduced, in compliance with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy, but the text may not be altered or abbreviated in any way, nor may the copyright, trademark, service mark, or any other notices be removed. Recipients may be charged the cost of reproduction and distribution only.

Any person or organization using The Pathwork Foundation service mark or copyrighted material is deemed to have agreed to comply with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy. To obtain information or a copy of this policy, please contact the Foundation.