Pathwork Lecture 183: The Spiritual Meaning of Crisis

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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| 03 | Greetings  
    and blessings  
    to every one of my friends. |
|----|--------------------------------------------------|
|    | **What is the**  
    • **real,**  
    • **spiritual**  
    **meaning of**  
    **crisis?** |
|    | **Crisis**  
    is an attempt of nature  
    to effect change  
    through  
    the cosmic lawfulness  
    of the universe. |
|    | **If change** [i.e. *If change in a personality*]  
    is obstructed by the ego,  
    the part of the consciousness  
    that directs the will,  
    crisis [*in the personality*] *will occur*  
    to make structural change [*in the personality*] possible. |

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by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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Without such structural change in the entity, no balance can be attained [in the entity].

Every crisis ultimately means such a readjustment [i.e., readjustment of the entity’s structure for life], whether it [i.e., whether crisis] appears in the form of
• pain,
• difficulties,
• upheaval,
• uncertainty, or
• merely the insecurity that comes from starting out on unaccustomed ways of living after giving up a familiar one [i.e., after giving up a familiar way of living].

Crisis in any form attempts to break down
• old structures based on • false conclusions and therefore on • negativity.

Crisis shakes loose
• ingrained, • frozen habits so that new growth becomes possible.
It [i.e., Crisis]
• tears down and
• breaks up,
  which is
  momentarily
  painful,
but transformation
is unthinkable
without it [i.e., without crisis to tear down and break up old structures
that stand in the way of an entity’s transformation and development].

The more
  painful
  a crisis is,
the more
  the will-directing part of consciousness
  must attempt
  to obstruct the change.

Crisis
  is necessary
  because
  human negativity
  is a stagnant mass
  that needs to be shaken up
  in order to be let go of.

Change
  is an integral characteristic
  of life;
  where there is life
  there is
  unending
  change.
Only those who still live in fear and negativity, who resist change, perceive change as something that ought to be resisted.

They resist life itself, and suffering closes in on them more tightly.

This happens in people's overall development as well as in specific instances.

Human beings can be free and healthy in areas where they do not resist change.

There [i.e., There in areas where they do not resist change] they are in harmony with the universal movement.

They constantly grow and experience life as deeply satisfying.
Yet these same individuals [i.e., these same individuals who are experiencing a satisfying life in areas where they do not resist change] react entirely differently in areas where they have blocks.

[Where they have blocks and resist change] They fearfully cling to unchanging conditions • inside and • outside themselves.

Where they don't resist [change], their lives will be relatively free from crises;

in the areas where they do resist change, crises are unavoidable.

The function of human growth is to free one's inherent potentials, which are truly infinite.

However, where negative attitudes stagnate, realizing these potentials is impossible.
Only crisis can tear down a structure that is built on premises which contradict the laws of cosmic truth, love, and bliss.

Crisis shakes up the frozen state, which is always negative [and built on premises which contradict the laws of cosmic truth, love, and bliss].

On the path to emotional and spiritual fulfillment you need to work intensively in order to free yourself from your negativities.

What are they [i.e., What are your negativities]?

• The misconceptions;

• the destructive emotions, attitudes and behavior patterns that arise from them [i.e., that arise from the misconceptions];

• the pretenses and the defenses.
But none of these [i.e., But none of these negativities such as misconceptions; destructive emotions, attitudes, and behavior patterns; and pretenses and defenses]

would present too much difficulty in themselves if it were not for the self-perpetuating force that compounds each negative aspect in an ever-increasing momentum within the human psyche.

All
  • thoughts and
  • feelings
  are energy currents.

Energy is a force that increases with its own momentum, always based on the nature of the consciousness that
  • nourishes and
  • directs the energy current in question.
Hence,
   if the underlying
   • concepts and
   • feelings
       accord with
       • truth and
       and are therefore
       • positive,
   the self-perpetuating momentum
   of the energy current
   will increase
   ad infinitum
   the
       • expressions and
       • attitudes
           implicit in
           the underlying thoughts.

[Conversely]
   If the underlying
   • concepts and
   • feelings
       are founded on
       • error
       and are therefore
       • negative,
   the self-perpetuating momentum
   of the energy current
   will compound,
   though
   not
       ad infinitum.
For example, you know that misconceptions create behavior patterns that inevitably seem to prove the correctness of the assumption, so that the • destructive, • defensive behavior will become more firmly entrenched in the soul substance.

All of you on the path have battled such inner entanglements.

The same principle applies to feelings.

For example, fear could easily be overcome if • it [i.e., if fear] were challenged and • its [i.e., if fear’s] underlying • misunderstanding and • mishandling exposed.
Many times
• manifest emotions are not
• direct primary emotions:
  • fear may disguise [and cover over the underlying]
    • rage;
  • depression may disguise [and cover over the underlying]
    • fear.

The problem is that fear creates more fear of
  • facing and of
  • transcending itself [i.e., creates fear of facing and transcending fear].

Then one fears this fear of fear and so on.

The fear compounds.

Let us take depression.
If the underlying causes of the original feeling of depression are not courageously exposed, you become depressed about being depressed.

You may then feel that you should be able to face your depression rather than being depressed about it, but you are not really willing—and therefore not able—to do so, and that depresses you even more.

This becomes a vicious circle.

The first depression—
or fear,
or another emotion—is the first crisis that is not heeded nor is its [i.e., nor is the first depression’s] true meaning understood.
It [i.e., the first depression] is evaded, so that depression about being depressed will be set off in the self-perpetuating vicious circle.

The consciousness of the person becomes more and more
- removed from the original feeling and therefore
- removed from itself [i.e., the consciousness of the person becomes removed from the consciousness of the person], making it more difficult to find the original feeling.

The increased negative momentum finally leads to a breakdown of the negative self-perpetuation.

Contrary to
- truth,
- love, and
- beauty, which are infinite divine attributes,
- distortion and negativity are never infinite.
They [i.e., distortion and negativity] come to an end when the pressure bursts.

This [i.e., This ending of distortion and negativity when the pressure bursts] is a painful crisis, and people usually resist it with all their might.

But imagine if
• the universe were created differently and
• negative self-perpetuation continued ad infinitum.

It could mean eternal hell.

The negative self-perpetuating principle is most obvious in the case of
• frustration and • anger.

Many people can see relatively easily that
• the frustration itself
is less difficult to bear than
• their frustration at being frustrated.
The same is true of anger at oneself for being angry or being impatient with one's impatience,

- wishing that one could react differently
- not being able to do so because the underlying causes are not
  - exposed and
  - faced up to.

Thus the "crises" of emotions such as

- anger,
- frustration,
- impatience, and
- depression
  are not recognized for what they are.

This makes the negative self-perpetuation stronger and stronger, until the inflamed boil bursts.

Then [i.e., when the inflamed boil of self-perpetuating negative emotions bursts] we have an obvious crisis.
Crisis can mean, if one's consciousness so chooses, the end of continually swelling negative self-perpetuation.

When eruption comes, the choices of
• recognizing the meaning [of the eruption or crisis and going through it]
  or
• continuing to escape [the eruption or crisis rather than going through it]

become more clearly defined.

Even if
• this eruption does not lead to
  • recognition and
  • an inner change of direction,

a final crisis is bound to come where the entity can no longer take refuge from its message.

The personality must see eventually that all
• eruptions, • breakdowns, • crises, mean to tear down the old structure so as to re-erect a • new and • better functioning one.
The "dark night" of the mystics is such a time of the breakdown of old structures.

Most human beings still fail to understand the meaning of crisis.

They continually look in the wrong direction.

If nothing would break down, the negativity would continue.

Yet it is possible after a certain amount of awakening has taken place in the consciousness that the person does not allow the negativity to become too firmly entrenched.

Thus the negativity is prevented from starting the self-perpetuating cycle.

It [i.e., the negativity] is confronted right at the start.
Crisis can be avoided by looking at the inner truth when the first inklings of disturbance and negativity manifest on the surface.

But a tremendous amount of honesty is required to challenge one's tightly cherished convictions [which are not in truth].

Such challenge [and confrontation with truth of one’s tightly cherished convictions when the first inklings of disturbance and negativity manifest on the surface] cuts out the negative self-perpetuation, the motor force that compounds the destructive, erroneous psychic matter until it [i.e., until the destructive, erroneous psychic matter] finds a breaking point.

It [i.e., such challenge of one’s tightly cherished convictions compared to inner truth when the first inklings of disturbance and negativity manifest on the surface] avoids the many vicious circles within the human psyche and in relationships that are painful and problematic.
If
• difficulties,
• upheavals, and
• pain
in the
• individual's life,
as well as in the
• life of humanity as a whole,
were viewed
from this point of view,

• the real meaning of crisis
would be understood
and
• much pain
could be avoided.

I say to you now:

Do not wait
for crisis to come
in an eruption
as the
• natural,
• balance-establishing
event
that takes place
as inexorably as
a thunderstorm must take place
when
• certain atmospheric conditions
have to be altered and
• clarity in the atmosphere
is to be re-established.

This [i.e., a thunderstorm taking place when conditions have to be altered
in the atmosphere and clarity has to be re-established] is exactly what happens
within the human consciousness.
Growth is indeed possible without intense painful "dark nights," if honesty with the self becomes predominant in the personality.

- True inner looking
- deep concern with the inner being as well as giving up pet attitudes and ideas must be cultivated.

Then [i.e., Then with honesty with the self, true inner looking and deep concern with the inner being and with giving up pet attitudes and ideas] the painful, disruptive crisis can be avoided, because no inflamed boil will form.

The process of death itself is such a crisis.

I have discussed various deeper meanings of death.

This [i.e., This boil that forms when inner issues are not found and faced] is yet another [i.e., yet another deeper meaning of death].
Superficial death –
and it [i.e., death]
is nothing else but that [i.e., nothing else but superficial] –
could be avoided
if
crisis were
• not allowed to swell
to an eruptive boil,
• but dissolved
voluntarily
with the
available
consciousness.

Superficial death
of the human body
takes place
because
the consciousness says,

• "I cannot go on any longer,"
or
• "I am at my wit's end."

Any
 crisis
 contains this thought [i.e., this thought that I cannot go on any longer].

Consciousness
always
expresses to itself,

"I can no longer deal with the situation."

If the situation is
specific,
[then] a
 specific
 crisis
 occurs in life.

If it [i.e., If the situation] is a question of
one's present incarnation as a whole,
then
physical death
will occur.
| In the latter case [i.e., when death occurs],
| the eruption
| takes the form of
| the spirit's breaking out of the body,
| until
| it finds
| new life circumstances
| in which to deal with
| the same
| inner
| distortions
| all over again.

Since
- eruption,
- breakdown, and
- crisis
always aim at
- discontinuing old ways of operating and
- creating new ones,

the process of
- death and
- rebirth
signifies
the identical principle [i.e., the process of discontinuing old ways of operating and creating new ways of operating].

People tend to oppose
going on to other ways of
- operating and
- reacting,
however.

This obstruction [i.e., this obstruction to life and development by opposing going on to new ways of operating and reacting] is so unnecessary.
It is actually this opposition [i.e., this opposition to going on to new ways of operating and reacting in various problematic situations] that creates the
• tension and
• strain of crisis,
not the giving up of the old structure itself [i.e., it is not the giving up of the old structure that creates the tension and strain of crisis, but rather it is the opposition to taking on new new ways of operating and reacting in various problematic situations].

When necessary change is not accepted willingly, you automatically put yourself into a state of crisis.

The intensity of the crisis indicates
• the intensity of the opposition [to new ways of operating and reacting in life], as well as
• the urgency of the need for change.

The greater
• the need for change,
and
the greater
• the obstruction to change,
the more
• painful the crisis is going to be.
The more
- openness and
- willingness
  there is,
    on any level,
    to change,

and
the less
- necessary the change is
  at any given moment of
    the evolutionary path of an individual,

the less
- severe and
- painful
  the crisis is going to be.

The
- severity and
- pain
  of a crisis
  is
    by no means
determined by
  the objective event.

I think most of you, my friends,
can readily verify this.
Most of you
have gone through
severe changes
outwardly.

You have
• lost a loved one,
you may have
• coped with the most
  • drastic changes and
  • objectively traumatic events –
    • wars,
    • revolution,
    • loss of
      • fortune and
      • home,
    • illness.

Yet you may
inwardly
have been
much less
• agitated and
• in pain
[in these situation of objectively severe traumatic events –
wars, revolution, loss of fortune and home, and illness]

than in situations [which are much less traumatic outwardly, that is,]
which are
outwardly
incommensurate with
the [severe] agitation
of your
inner
feelings [i.e., your inner feelings, which are quite painful and severe when compared with the much less severe outer situation].

Thus we can say that
an outer crisis
may leave you
inwardly
in greater peace
than an inner one [i.e., leave you inwardly in greater peace than an inner crisis might].
• The objectively more traumatic [outer] event hurts [inwardly] sometimes less than
  • the objectively less traumatic one [i.e., less traumatic outer event].

In the former instance [i.e., In the case where the objectively more traumatic outer event hurts less inwardly]
the necessary change [i.e., the change that is necessary for your development] takes place on an outer level, which
  your inner being
    • accepts more,
    • adjusts to better, and
  • finds a new way of dealing with.

In the latter instance [i.e., In the case where the objectively less traumatic outer event hurts more inwardly than the outer event warrants],
the need for inner change [i.e., the need for the inner change that is necessary for your development] meets with greater resistance.

Your subjective interpretation of the event makes the crisis disproportionately painful.

Sometimes one tries to find rational explanations for such a peculiar emotional intensity – explanations which can be called rationalizations.
Sometimes both
inner and outer changes and crises meet the same inner attitude.

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• When the process of the crisis is accepted and no longer obstructed,
• when one goes with it [i.e., goes with the process of the crisis], instead of fighting it [i.e., instead of fighting the process of the crisis], relief will come comparatively quickly.

Once
• the pus runs out of the boil and the attitudes are adjusted,

• self-revelation brings peace;
• understanding brings new energy and aliveness.

The healing process is at work, even while the boil erupts.
• The negation of this process [i.e., The negation of this process of the crisis],

• the inner attitude that says,

"I should not have to go through this [crisis].

Do I have to?

This and that and the other is wrong with others.

If it were not [i.e., If this and that and the other were not wrong with others],

I would not have to go through this now,''

prolongs the agony.

This [resisting and denying] attitude seeks to avoid the necessary eruption of the boil, [the boil] which consists of a painful entanglement of ever-increasing negative energy whose momentum makes it more and more difficult to alter the course.
• The ongoing negative cycle
and
• its [i.e., the ongoing negative cycle’s]
  • futile,
  • automatic
    repetition
  that
    the consciousness
    is unable to stop
generates
hopelessness.

• The repetition
and
• the hopelessness
  could stop
  only
    by no longer
    avoiding
    the necessary change.

Every
• negative experience,
every
• pain,

is the result of
a wrong idea.

A critical aspect of this work [i.e., of this pathwork]
is the articulation of
these [wrong] ideas.
And yet,
how often
all of you
still miss
the necessary recognition [i.e., recognition of these wrong ideas]
by not keeping
these incontrovertible facts [that wrong ideas cause pain]
in mind
when you meet with
an unhappy situation?
Once you take on the habit of first questioning your hidden wrong assumptions and destructive reactions when anything unwelcome comes your way, and fully open to truth and change, your life will alter drastically.

• Pain will become proportionately less frequent, and
• joy will become more and more the natural state.

• Crisis becomes superfluous; therefore, • death eventually becomes superfluous.
This [i.e., That death eventually becomes superfluous] may sound like an extreme statement especially to those who are still awed by the mystery of death – which is also that [i.e., is also the mystery] of life – but it [i.e., but the statement that death eventually becomes superfluous] is nevertheless true.

The rhythm of growth can then [i.e., can, when death eventually becomes superfluous.] proceed smoothly, without the • leaps and • bounds of breaking up negative structures in the soul substance.

We have discussed the negative aspects of self-perpetuation.

Of course, it [i.e., self-perpetuation] exists primarily on the positive side.

Let us look at love.

The more you love, the more you can produce genuine love feelings without impoverishing • yourself and • others.
[In genuine love,]

You realize
that you do not
take away anything
from anyone
by giving out [i.e., by giving out genuine love].

On the contrary [i.e., Contrary to taking anything away from anyone],
more [i.e., more genuine love] will come to
• you and
• others
from it [i.e., from your giving out genuine love].

You will find
• new ways,
• deeper ways,
• more variations of experiencing love in
  • giving and
  • receiving it [i.e., in giving and receiving love],
• being in tune with this universal feeling [of love].

The ability to
• experience and
• express love will grow in an
  • ever-increasing,
  • self-perpetuating, motion.

So it is
with every other constructive
• feeling and
• attitude.
The more
  • meaningful,
  • constructive,
  • fulfilled, and
  • joyous
    your life is,
the more
  of these attributes [i.e., the more of these meaningful, constructive,
fulfilled, and joyous attributes]
  it [i.e., your life]
  must generate.

It is an
  • ongoing,
  • never-ending
    process
    of steady
    • expansion and
    • self-expression.

The [positive self-perpetuating] principle
  is exactly the same as
  that of
  the negative self-perpetuation.

The only difference
  is that
  the positive process
  is
  infinite.

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Once you
  • establish the contact with
    your innate
    • wisdom,
    • beauty, and
    • joyousness
  and
  • allow them to unfold,

they [i.e., your innate wisdom, beauty, and joyousness]
will increase
themselves.
The self-perpetuation
takes over
once these energies
are
• released and
• admitted to consciousness.

The
initial
actualization of these powers
requires effort,
but once the process is flowing,
it is
effortless.

The more
you bring forth
of the universal qualities,
the more [of the universal qualities]
there will be
to bring forth.

Your own potentials
to experience
• beauty,
• joy,
• pleasure,
• love,
• wisdom, and
• creative expression,
my dearest friends,
are
indeed
infinite.

Again
the words
have been
• said,
• heard,
• registered.
But
  how deeply
  do you
  know
  that this is a reality?

How deeply
  do you believe
  in your
  innermost potential
    to be
      • self-creating,
    to be
      • in bliss,
    to live
      • the infinite life?

How much
  do you believe in
  your resources
    to solve all your problems?

How much
  do you trust in
  the possibilities
    that are not yet manifest?

How much
  do you believe
  it is real
    that new vistas of yourself
      can be discovered?
How much do you truly believe that you can unfold qualities of
• peace, coupled with
  • excitement,
• serenity, coupled with
  • adventure,
through which life becomes a string of beauty even though initial difficulties are still to be overcome?

How much do you really believe in all this, my friends?

Ask yourself this question [i.e., Ask yourself how much you really believe in all this].

To the extent you pay only lip-service to this belief [i.e., to this belief that you can unfold all magnificent traits], you will still feel
• hopeless,
• depressed,
• fearful or
• anxious,
• entangled in apparently insoluble conflicts with
  • yourself and
  • others.
*This* [i.e., *Your feeling hopeless, depressed, fearful, or anxious – entangled in apparently insoluble conflicts with yourself and with others*] is a sign that you do not yet believe in your own infinitely expanding potential.

*If you do not* truly believe this [i.e., *If you do not truly believe in your own infinitely expanding potential*], my dearest ones, it is because there is something in you that you desperately hold on to.

*You do not wish to expose it* [i.e., *You do not wish to expose that something in you that you desperately hold on to*] because you do not wish to • give it up or • change.

This applies to • every single one of you here, and of course to • everyone else in the world.

For who has not the "dark nights" to put up with?
Some have
    many little "dark nights"
    coming and going,
or
    their "dark night"
    is gray.

They may not be
    in a great crisis
    at any given moment,
but life
    • is gray and
    • fluctuates comparatively little.

But then there are those
    who have already
    worked their way out of this grayness.

They no longer
    want to content themselves
    with comparative safety from crisis.

They are willing,
    deep within themselves,
    to chance
    temporary upheaval
    for the sake of
    reaching
    a more desirable steady state.

They want to realize
    their potential
    for deeper
    • joy and
    • self-expression.
Then [i.e., in their attempt to realize their potential for deeper joy and self-expression]

the "dark nights"
will become more circumscribed, experienced either as
• fluctuating periods of
  • upheaval and
  • joy,
or, in some lives, • bunched up in stronger episodes.

• Utter darkness,
• loss,
• pain, and
• confusion alternate with
  • heights of golden light, carrying justified hope for an
    • eventual
    • uninterrupted state of bliss.

No matter how any one of you experiences crises, there is always a message in them [i.e., a message in these crises] for you to discover about your own life.
It is up to you not to project your experiences [of crises] outwardly, on others, which is always the most dangerous temptation.

Or, for that matter, to project them [i.e., to project your experiences of crises] into yourself in a self-devastating way, which avoids the issue just as much as when you project it onto others.

The attitude

"I am so bad, I am nothing"

is always dishonest.

This dishonesty has to be exposed, so that the crisis can become meaningful, whether it be • small or • great.
If you learn
eventually
to
• take the smallest shadow
  of your everyday life
  and
• explore its
deepest meaning,
you will handle
the little crises
in a way that makes
  the swelling of the boil
  impossible.

Hence
no painful eruption
is needed
to destroy
rotten structures.

This [i.e., Taking the smallest shadow of your everyday life and exploring its deepest meaning]
will reveal
the stark reality to you
that
universal life
untampered
is golden joyousness
  of ever-increasing beauty.

Every
smallest shadow
is a crisis,
for it [i.e., for every smallest shadow]
need not be there.

It [i.e., Every smallest shadow]
is only there
because of your turning away from
the issue
that creates crisis.
So take those
smallest shadows
of your everyday life
and ask yourself
what they mean.

What do you
not wish to
* see
and
not wish to
* change?

If you face this [i.e., If you face what you do not wish to see and change],
and truly
wish to
* face the real issue and
* make the necessary change,
the crisis
will have fulfilled its function.

You will discover
new dimensions
of the issue
that will make the sun rise,

and the dark night
will turn out to be
* the educator,
* the therapist
that
life
always is
once you try to understand it.

Your capacity
to cope with
the negativity of others
grows
only to the extent
that you can do
what I explain in this lecture.
How often do you sense negative feelings from others but cannot handle them because you are
• anxious,
• uncertain, and
• not clear about the nature of your
  • involvement and interaction with them?

At other times, you may not even sense the actual presence of hostility in others.

Their [i.e., the others’]
• subtlety and indirectness
  • confuses you,
  • makes you feel guilty about your instinctive responses [to them],

but you are even less able to handle the situation [i.e., the negative situation involving them].

This frequent occurrence is entirely due to your
• blindness to yourself and your
  • resistance to change.
When you project
all your old negative experiences
onto others,
it is
impossible for you
to have adequate awareness
of what actually goes on
in the other person,
and therefore
you cannot deal with it [i.e., you cannot deal with what actually goes on in the other person].

Many of you
have begun to experience
the magnificent change
when you handle your life in this respect
as you
• grow in your capacity
to look honestly
at what disturbs you
within yourself
and as you
• become willing
to change.

Almost inadvertently,
and as if it had nothing to do with your efforts,
a new gift
arises in you:

You see the negativity
in others
in a way
• that leaves you free,
• that permits you
to confront them,
• that is effective.

It [i.e., this new way in which you see negativity in others] has no adverse effect
on you.
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| *It [i.e., this new way in which you see negativity in others]*  
  must,  
  in the long run,  
  also be beneficial  
  for others,  
  whenever they  
  want it [i.e., whenever they want this new way that you see negativity in them]  
  to be [beneficial to them]. |

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| *When you*  
  *resist change,*  
  *fear*  
  grows  
  because  
  your innermost being  
  knows that  
  *crisis,*  
  *eruption,*  
  *breakdown,*  
  *are*  
  *inevitable*  
  *and are*  
  *steadily drawing nearer.*  
  
  *Yet*  
  *you resist*  
  *doing*  
  *what could avoid the crisis.*  
  
  *What I say here*  
  *is the story of*  
  *human life.*  
  
  *This is where*  
  *human nature*  
  *is caught.* |
[When you resist making the change needed to avoid the crisis]

The lesson
must then be repeated
until
the illusory fear of change
is exposed
as an error.

If crisis
can be understood
the way I show you here, and
if you
really meditate
to
• understand
  your own crisis and
to
• give up
  what you hold on to, and
• challenge
  the limitations
  you place
  on the particular issue,
life
will open up
almost at once.

Are there any questions
before I continue with the rest of this lecture?

QUESTION:
I have a relationship
similar to what you described.

I cannot cope with
this person's
angry rebellion.
I know I have this trait [i.e., this trait of angry rebellion] in myself, but I still react to it [i.e., I still react to this trait of angry rebellion in others] negatively.

I do not
  • communicate and
  • open up;
I do not
  • let go.

Instead, I suppress it [i.e., I suppress this trait of angry rebellion in myself].

Can you suggest what my positive response [i.e., what my positive response to this trait of angry rebellion in others] should be?

**ANSWER:**
First of all, I recommend the assertion,

"Here I am in
  • stress and
  • pain.

I am in a situation that gives me anxiety that I wish would not exist.

What is the meaning of it [i.e., What is the meaning of this stress, pain, and anxiety that this situation gives me, a pain and anxiety that I wish would not exist] for me?"
Open up anew.

Do not use the knowledge you have already gained about yourself as the answer [i.e., here, do not use the knowledge that you have this trait of angry rebellion].

It [i.e., The knowledge you have already gained about yourself that you have this trait of angry rebellion]

may even be correct, but

previous recognition can subtly serve as a barrier.

You will truly have to be willing, deep inside, to let go.

To see and to let it be.

Here I come to the further aspect of this lecture, which will also be an answer to you.

You must realize that change cannot be executed only by the ego.
The willing, conscious self alone is incapable of doing it [i.e., is incapable of executing the needed change in the self].

The difficulty of changing, and the resistance to it [i.e., the resistance to changing], come to a large extent from having forgotten that you cannot do it [i.e., you cannot effect inner change and transformation] without divine help.

Thus you go from one wrong extreme to the other.

One extreme is that you think you [alone and on your own] are the one who must accomplish inner transformation.

Since you know deep inside • that you cannot do this [i.e., that you cannot accomplish inner transformation on your own],

• that you just do not have the equipment to do it [i.e., that you just do not have the equipment to accomplish inner transformation on your own], you give up.
You feel it is hopeless to make yourself change [and inwardly transform], so you
• do not even really try,
• nor do you express the concisely formulated desire to do so [i.e., desire to change].

You are right to believe that the capacity to change is missing when you consider yourself exclusively as the
• conscious,
• willing,
  ego-self.

Resistance [to change and inner transformation] is partly an expression of avoiding the frustration of wanting something [i.e., here wanting to accomplish change and inner transformation on your own, without help] that
• cannot be done and
• must prove a disappointment.

This extreme reaction [i.e., the extreme reaction of not even wanting change and inner transformation because you know it cannot be accomplished on your own and wanting it would therefore prove a disappointment] takes place in the innermost layer of the human psyche.
So does the opposite extreme [i.e., The opposite extreme also takes place in the innermost layer of the human psyche], in which you profess the belief in:

- higher power, or
- God, who is supposed to do it all for you [i.e., God is supposed to accomplish this inner change and transformation for you without your participation in the process].

You remain in an absolutely passive state, waiting for it [i.e., waiting for the inner change and transformation to happen to you through God alone].

Again, the conscious self does not try where it should [try].

- False hope [i.e., False hope that God will accomplish your inner change and transformation for you without your participation]

and

- false resignation [i.e., false resignation that inner change and transformation will never happen since you have to accomplish it on your own and cannot]

are only two sides of the same coin:

absolute passivity.
But [on the opposite side from this absolute passivity of the conscious ego,]
the pushing ego, attempting
to go beyond
its own capacity,
must
inevitably
end
in the same passive state of
either
• falsely waiting [i.e., waiting for inner change and transformation to come from the pushing ego’s intense efforts, which it won’t]

or
• falsely giving up hope [i.e., giving up hope that its own efforts will ever bring inner change and transformation and therefore giving up effort and hope].

The pushing
• exhausts the self and
• renders it [i.e., renders the self] passive.

These attitudes [i.e., These two attitudes of either passively waiting on God for one’s inner transformation or aggressively striving to accomplish one’s inner transformation on one’s own]
may exist
• simultaneously
or
• alternately.
The way to go about making a positive change is to want it [i.e., you must WANT the positive change]; you must be willing
• to be in truth
and
• to change.

And you have to pray to the innermost divine functioning within your soul to make the change possible.

Then [i.e., When you 1) truly WANT the positive change, 2) are willing to be in truth and willing to change, and 3) have prayed to the innermost divine functioning within your soul to make the change possible] you wait for the change to take place, in a
• trusting,
• confident, and
• patient way.

This [i.e., This four-point process of 1) truly wanting the positive change, 2) willingness both to be in truth and to change, 3) praying to the innermost divine functioning within your soul to make the change possible, and 4) waiting in a trusting, confident, and patient way] is the absolute prerequisite for change.
When it does not even occur to you to
  • assume this prayerful attitude
and
  • say,

  • "I want to change [and transform],
    but my ego
    cannot do it.

  • God will do it
    through [but not for]
    me.

  • I will make myself a
    • willing,
    • receptive
    channel
    for this [change and transformation]
    to happen,"

you are basically
  • unwilling to change
and/or are
  • doubtful
  about
  the reality
  of the higher forces
  within you.

This
  • confident,
  • patient
  waiting,
  this
  • assurance and
  • trust
  that help will come
  when you are
  utterly willing
  to look at the truth,

  can be
  acquired.
It [i.e., This confident, patient waiting, and this assurance and trust that help will come when you are utterly willing to look at the truth] is not

a childish attitude
that wants
an authority
to do it for you.

Quite the contrary.

This approach conciliates

• the attitudes
  of adult self-responsibility
  that
takes action
by
  • facing the self;
by
  • wanting
    • truth and
    • change;
by
  • the willingness
    to expose
    hidden shame;

and

• the receptive attitude
  in which
  the ego
  knows its own limitations.

In this receptive attitude [in which the ego knows and accepts its own limitations]

• you let God
  into your soul
  from deep
  within yourself.

• You open up
  for it [i.e., You open up for change and transformation]
  to happen.
When this [receptive] attitude is adopted,
change becomes a living reality
     for anyone and everyone.

When
• trust and
• faith
     are lacking
     that
     the divine can actualize itself through you,
it is because you have not given yourself
     the opportunity
     to experience
     the stark reality
     of these processes.

You have denied yourself this experience [i.e., the experience of these processes].

And since you have never experienced it [i.e., never experienced the stark reality of these processes],

how can you trust it [i.e., how can you trust the reality of these processes]?
Also, since you have
this or that
little back door,
which
you wish to keep in reserve,
so that
you
still do not need to
enter into life
• fully and
• committedly,
you cannot
experience
the marvel
of the reality
of the Universal Spirit
within yourself.

Since you
are not honest
with life,
you cannot
really
believe in
the power
of the Universal Intelligence
• dwelling in you
  at all times,
• which goes to work
  the instant
  you make room for it.

Total commitment
to it [i.e., Total commitment to the Universal Intelligence dwelling in you]
is necessary,
without reservation.

This commitment
is the absolute prerequisite
for your discovery
of its [i.e., of the Universal Intelligence’s]
reality
within you.
Even if you do not know

• what the outcome will be,
• whether or not God’s way will be agreeable to you,

the commitment must be made.

Not knowing the total answer right now is part of it [i.e., is part of this commitment to the Universal Intelligence].

All such considerations [i.e., All considerations of such facts as: you do not know what the outcome will be, you do not know whether or not God’s way will be agreeable to you, or you do not know the total answer right now] avoid

• full commitment

and

• keep you holding on to the
• old,
• distorted,
• cheating way of life,
while still wanting to reach for the

• new,
• liberated,
• free way

in which you are

• whole,
instead of inwardly divided and
• racked by the pain of this [inner] division.
But you cannot have it both ways.

Your commitment to the Ultimate Creator must become
• total,
• applied to the most seemingly insignificant aspect of daily living and being.

You must be totally committed to
• the truth,
because then you are also committed to
• the Universal Spirit.

If you thus commit yourself [i.e. commit yourself to truth and to the Universal Spirit], you will
• let go of the old accustomed shore and
• float momentarily in what seems uncertainty.

But you will not mind this [i.e., you will not mind floating in what seems uncertainty].
[As you let go of the old accustomed shore and float in uncertainty, remaining committed to truth and to the Universal Spirit]

You will feel safer than ever before, when you were holding on to
• the old shore,
to • the false structure
  that must be torn down.

You will soon know that there is nothing to fear.

This courage [i.e., This courage to let go of the old shore and the false structure] has to be summoned, only to find that this [way of living – committed to truth and to the Universal Spirit] is really the • safest and • most secure way possible to live:
  to • expand and
to • vibrate
  in life.

It actually requires no courage at all [to live this new way – committed to truth and to the Universal Spirit].

Then [i.e., Then when you let go of the old shore and the false structure and instead live committed to truth and to the Universal Spirit], and only then, will the "dark nights" turn into instruments of light.
QUESTION:
This lecture
   is very close to where I am.

I have just begun to discover
   the meaning of crisis.

I feel I
   either
      • have to take refuge somewhere
   or
      • I have to ride through the storm,
         which I feel I am doing now.

ANSWER:
This recognition
   is very good.

It touches upon
   the age-old alternatives of
      • taking refuge
   or
      • driving through.

It is perhaps
   the most important question
   on the evolutionary path
   of each entity.
You remain in the cycle of
• death and rebirth,
• pain and struggle,
• conflict and strife –
  • physically as well as
    • spiritually and
      • psychologically –

precisely because you cling to the illusion that
• going through [the crisis or storm] can be avoided
and
• taking refuge [from the crisis or storm] will do some good.

Actually, taking refuge [from the crisis or storm] does not do any good;
on the contrary, it [i.e., taking refuge from the crisis or storm] increases
the critical tension [in the crisis or storm].

The momentary relief [of taking refuge from the crisis or storm rather than going through the crisis or storm]
is illusion of the most serious nature.
It is so [i.e., It is so that taking refuge rather than going through the crisis or storm is illusion of the most serious nature] because

the crisis
inevitably comes later on,
but by then
[the crisis] is no longer connected with its source
and therefore it [i.e., the crisis] hurts more.

When you make up your mind, however, saying,

"I will
not take refuge [i.e., I will not take refuge from the crisis or storm],
I will go through it [i.e., I will go through the crisis or storm],"

the resources
within the human soul
will become
almost instantly
available.

These resources [within the human soul]
remain obscure
to those
who still tend to
take refuge [from the crisis or storm].

They [i.e., those who still tend to take refuge from the crisis or storm] then

• feel weak and
• do not believe in
  their own capacities
to actualize
  the infinite powers
  of the Universal Spirit.
They [i.e., those who still tend to take refuge from the crisis or storm] do not know
• their potential,
• the strength [i.e., the strength and power of the Universal Spirit within] that will arise,
• the inspiration that will come.

Only when you decide to
• go through [the crisis or storm] and
• ask for help [from the Universal Spirit within]
  in meditation
do these resources [i.e., do these resources of the Universal Spirit within] become available.

Then [i.e., Then when these resources of the Universal Spirit within become available]
you will sense
  an awakened trust
  that the conscious ego
  is not alone.

It [i.e., The conscious ego] is not
  the only faculty available
  to deal with the issue [i.e., the issue of the crisis or storm].

I emphasize again that a person
• may be oriented this way [i.e., oriented to go through the storm or crisis
  and ask for help from the Universal Spirit within rather than take refuge from the storm or crisis]
in some areas,
• while remaining
  • closed and
  • unwilling [to go through the crisis rather than seek refuge from it]
in other areas.

You will experience
• life and
• yourself accordingly.
It is important that you simply want to do the best you can.

It is not important whether or not you make "mistakes," whatever they may mean.

The struggle itself is
- what counts and
- what must bring conciliation.

The consequent
- blessing,
- strength, and
- growing wholeness of the personality cannot be put into words.

You want "ideal solutions," so you always agonize on the threshold of this total commitment.

But what are ideal solutions?

They [i.e., ideal solutions] mean nothing if they are not based on the growing wholeness of a person, which comes to pass through the process described here.
I bless you
and ask you
• to open up
  • your innermost being,
  • your whole soul,
  • all your psychic forces,
• to let go of
  the cramp
    that denies
      • truth and
      • change,
therefore [that denies]
  • self-expression and
  • light.

Open up
  in this way,
to let
  the blessed power [of the Universal Spirit]
    constantly
      present within you
        permeate
          your whole being.

This power [of the Universal Spirit within]
  is strongly activated
    in such gatherings,
      • when you come together,
      • when you
        • receive help and
        • open up to one another
          for yet another channel of help [i.e., the channel of help
          from one another].
Continue your growth,  
in the spirit of this lecture,  
so that  
• your wholeness,  
• your connectedness with the universe,  
will  
• grow and  
• give you  
more of the joy  
that is  
inherently  
your birthright.

Be blessed,  
be in peace.

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