# Pathwork Lecture 184: The Meaning of Evil And Its Transcendence

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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*Greetings,*

*blessings to all my*  
• **old and**  
• **new**  
  *friends here.*  

*And welcome*  
• **to all those**  
  *who have already made progress*  
  *in their attempt to find*  
  *the truth*  
  *of their innermost being, and*  

• **to all those**  
  *who have*  
  *not yet*  
  *taken active steps* [i.e., not yet taken active steps  
  *to find the truth of their innermost being].*
Your being here signifies a
• conscious and
• unconscious
search
for
the real meaning of your lives.

Although this lecture
is a sequel to the one I gave before the summer recess [see Lecture 183: The Spiritual Meaning of Crisis given on June 5, 1970],
it also constitutes
a new beginning.

It should be
as meaningful to
• work back from it [i.e., to work back from this lecture to earlier lectures]
as it is to
• go forward.

Human beings
are continually
confronted with
the deep problem
of how to handle
the destructive forces
residing within
• themselves and
• others.

This problem [i.e., This problem of how to handle destructive forces]
seems unending,
for ever since
the beginning of human existence,
• theories and
• philosophies
have been built around it.
Your search [i.e., Your search to find the truth of your innermost being] has always been concerned,
   • directly or
   • indirectly,
with this great issue [i.e., this great issue of how to handle destructive forces within yourself and within others].

All suffering really comes exclusively from one's own
   • destructiveness,
   • negativity, or
   • evil – whatever name you give it.

The great difficulty you are up against is that you are trying to solve this problem [i.e., this problem of suffering from one's own destructiveness, negativity, or evil]
within the system of duality.

[In the system of duality] You conceive of two opposite forces:
   • a constructive one opposed to
   • a destructive one:
      • good opposed to
      • evil.

The moment you become involved in duality you are unable to solve the problem [i.e., you are unable to solve the problem of suffering, suffering that is brought on by your own destructiveness, negativity, or evil].
[In the system of duality where you see constructive forces as “good” and destructive forces as “evil” and “unacceptable”]

You begin to
• negate,
• deny,
• evade,
• repress whatever is destructive in you.

Consequently, you are
• partly unaware of your destructiveness
and
• totally incapable of seeing how it [i.e., how your destructiveness] manifests [i.e., how it manifests and how it causes destruction and suffering].

In other words, [by denying and being unaware of your destructiveness] you are forced to act out the destructiveness indirectly – with very damaging results.

Thus your guilt compounds because the evil you hoped to eliminate only increases when it is
• repressed and
• acted out indirectly.
In this dualistic approach you become split within yourself, for you reject a whole part of yourself [i.e., you reject any part of yourself that you judge to be bad, evil, or destructive, or even any part that you judge as less than perfect and that does not fit your idealized self image, but nevertheless a part of yourself] that is the source of

- essential,
- potent
- creative
energy without which you can never be a full human being.

Your sense of awareness [i.e., Your sense of awareness of all parts of yourself] dims as you repress the undesirable part of yourself.

The less aware you are [of all parts of yourself, including the undesirable parts of yourself], the weaker you become, and therefore

- more confused and
- less able to solve
  - this [i.e., this particular problem of suffering or unfulfillment], or
  - any other problem.
The pathwork is, of course, primarily concerned with facing these undesirable parts in order to remove the self-imposed blindness [i.e., to remove your self-imposed blindness to any part of yourself you judge to be evil or not up to your idealized self-image].

You will find again and again that such confrontation [of these undesirable and undeveloped parts of yourself], rather than bringing the devastation you fear, • wakes up vital energy [i.e., wakes up the vital energy contained in these undesirable and undeveloped parts of yourself] and • makes you a more integrated person.

The problem that still remains for all of you, however, is how to cope with the undesirable [and undeveloped] material that begins to manifest [as you begin to want and dare to become aware of and to confront these undesirable and undeveloped parts of yourself].
**Meditation** [See Pathwork Lecture 182: The Process of Meditation (Meditation for Three Voices: Ego, Lower Self, Higher Self)]

is most important,
for
without the greater mind [i.e., the universal or higher self],
the little mind [i.e., the conscious ego]
is unable
to bring change.

**But it is also necessary** [i.e., it is also necessary for your conscious ego]
to have
clear
• concepts and
• outlines.

Your mental concepts
must be more
• accurate,
• aligned with truth,
otherwise
• false ideas, or
• even vagueness,
will create a block.

If, for example,
you conceive of
the greater intelligence within you
as having power
to make the destructive force
disappear,
your
• meditation
and
• request for help
will remain
unanswered.

Any
• vague and
• hazily misconceived
process
will set up a stumbling block.
Most religions take a
dualistic approach
to the great question of evil,
seeing it [i.e., seeing evil]
as a
force
opposed to
good.

The dualistic approach [which is used by most religions when dealing with the question of evil]
reinforces
• your fear of yourself [i.e., fear of the forces in you that are a part of you and that are opposed to good]
and
• your guilt [i.e., your guilt for having forces in you that are opposed good];

therefore, it [i.e., the dualistic approach to evil taken by most religions]
only increases
the chasm [i.e., the chasm between what you see as “good” and “evil”]
within your soul.

The energies [within you]
of
• fear and
• guilt
are used
to force yourself
to be good.

The
• blindness,
• compulsion, and
the
• artificial concept of life
that accompany
this forcing [i.e., the artificial concept of life that accompany this forcing energy within you to be good, manifesting as feelings of fear and guilt]
create
self-perpetuating patterns,
with
many
negative ramifications.
On the other hand [i.e., On the hand opposite to that of religion’s dualistic approach to evil],

there are also philosophies which postulate that evil
  • just does not exist;
  • is an illusion.

• This philosophy [i.e., this philosophy that evil is an illusion and does not exist] is as true as
  • its religious opposite, which recognizes
    • the danger of evil,
    • its life-defeating power, and
    • the
      • unhappiness and
      • suffering
        it brings.

The postulate that evil is an illusion is true in the sense that
  • there is innately only one great creative power.

• There is union, for all is one in the consciousness of those who have transcended duality.
As is so often true, both of these opposing teachings [i.e., both the teaching that evil is a force that is opposed to good and the opposite teaching that evil is an illusion and does not exist] express great truths, but the exclusiveness [i.e., the exclusiveness of making one teaching exclusively true and its opposite exclusively untrue] with which they are conceived and perpetuated ultimately renders their truth untrue.

The denial of evil as a reality leads to wishful thinking, further blindness, and the denial of the self; it [i.e., the denial of the existence of evil] decreases rather than increases awareness.

[With the denial of the existence of evil] A false picture of reality is created – the reality of the present state of humankind [a state where evil still obviously exists].
I recapitulate.

To deny evil

on humanity's present plane of consciousness

is

as unrealistic

as to believe that

two separate forces exist:

one

• good

and

one

• evil.

Such a belief [i.e., Such a belief that two separate forces exist at the highest level of consciousness in the universe, that is, the belief that at the level of ultimate reality there are two forces, one good and one evil]

implies that [because, in this belief, evil is part of ultimate reality in the universe]

the evil force

must be

• destroyed or

• whisked away,

as if

anything

could be made to disappear in the universe!

You must

struggle

between these two alternatives [i.e., between the alternative that evil is real in the universe, a force that is opposed to the good and must be destroyed, and the opposite alternative that evil is an illusion and does not ultimately exist in the universe]

to find the answers.

This lecture

is an attempt to help you.
Both views of evil [i.e., Both the view that evil exists and must be opposed, resisted, or destroyed and the view that evil is an illusion and does not exist]

lead to
repression;

yet acknowledging evil [i.e., yet acknowledging that evil exists and must be opposed, resisted, or destroyed]

also leads to
the possibility of
further destructiveness.

[How can acknowledging the existence of evil lead to further destructiveness?]

It [i.e., acknowledging the existence of evil that must therefore be opposed, resisted, or destroyed]

might lead to
• justifying and
• condoning
  truly undesirable things,
  such as [the undesirable behavior of]
  self-righteous acting out [in destructive actions of opposing, resisting, and destroying what one judges to be evil].

In such a case [i.e., in the case of self-righteous acting out with the destructive intent to oppose, resist, and destroy evil]

it is the guilt [for acting out in opposition and destruction]
that would be repressed [since destructive acting out in this case would be viewed as a self-righteous act against the evil of another or the self and not seen as evil],

creating
further
• splitting and
• duality.

Let us now try to
find a way to
deal with this problem
that can avoid
either one
of these pitfalls [i.e., the pitfalls of exclusivity – that EITHER evil exists and must be opposed OR evil does not exist].

Let us
try to reconcile
these two general approaches
to evil.
You have all experienced how
- threatened,
- anxious, and
- uncomfortable
you feel
when you are
confronted with
some of your
undesirable
- attitudes,
- traits, and
- characteristics.

This [negative] reaction [when you are confronted with your undesirable traits] must be understood
in a much deeper way.

Too much is
- taken for granted and
- glossed over
by
- simply giving the reaction a name
and
- then letting it go at that.

The meaning of such
- fearful,
- uncomfortable,
- anxious
reaction [when you are confronted with your undesirable traits] is plainly an expression
that says,

"Such and such [Such and such undesirable traits] should not exist in me."
All the defenses you have so painstakingly erected serve to protect you not only from • the evil of others, but primarily from • your own [evil].

If you examine the cause each time you feel anxious, you will always find that, in the last analysis, you are apprehensive of • your own evil, regardless of how threatening • another person or • an outside event appears.

If you then translate this anxiety into clear-cut words, thus verbalizing your inner thought that certain • attitudes or • feelings "should not exist in me,"
you can then confront your attitude toward evil in a much better way.

For the evil itself is not half as damaging as your attitude to it.

We shall come back to this later.
From now on, instead of habitually evading [i.e., instead of evading reactions of fear, anxiety, discomfort, and disharmony when confronted with your undesirable traits, characteristics and attitudes], [evading] which breeds
• emotional illness,
• problems, and
• suffering,
catch
• your fear [when you are confronted with your undesirable traits]
and
• the thought behind the fear:

"I should not be that way [i.e., I should not have that particular undesirable trait, characteristic, or attitude]."

If this fear [i.e., If this reaction of fear when confronted with your undesirable traits] is ignored,
the problem [or suffering or emotional illness caused by ignoring this fear] becomes worse.

Our aim on this path is precisely the
• knowing and
• acceptance
of the evil.

The word "acceptance" has been used a great deal for lack of a better one [i.e., for lack of a better word],
but
• the meaning
often gets lost behind
• the word,
so we must pay more attention to
how this acceptance comes about.
For

only when
acceptance
occurs
in the right way
can evil
be
• incorporated [i.e., integrated into your being and personality]
and
• re-formed
  in the truest sense of the word.

[When you have accepted, integrated into your being, and re-formed
the evil or the worst in you]

You can then
transform
a force
that has gone awry.

Most human beings
totally
• forget or
• ignore
  the fact that
  • what is worst in them
is essentially
  • highly desirable creative power and
  • universal
    • flow and
    • energy.

Only when
you truly realize this, my friends,
will you learn
to cope
with
every aspect of yourself.
Almost all human beings,
with very, very few exceptions,
cope with
only a small part of themselves.

They
• accept,
• know, and
• only want to know,
  a relatively small part
  of their total personality.

This limitation
  is, of course,
  a terrible loss [to them].

[Their] Not being aware of
  that within
  which is undesirable
    in its present manifestation

shuts them off
  from what is [i.e. shuts them off from those other parts of the personality that are]
  already
    • clear,
    • liberated,
    • purified,
    • good.

It [i.e., This limitation of accepting and knowing only a
small part of their total personality]
also prevents most individuals
  from
    • loving and
    • respecting
      themselves
because
  they have
    no real perception of
      their divine heritage.
Their actual, already manifest goodness seems unreal, even fake, because they refuse to tackle the destructive elements in themselves.

But what is even more important and fundamental is that shutting off this undesirable part causes it [i.e., causes this undesirable part of the personality] to remain stagnant and paralyzed so that it [i.e., so that this undesirable part of the personality] cannot change.

The price of recognizing and accepting the destructive, evil aspect of the self seems high, but it really is not [i.e., but the price of recognizing and accepting the destructive, evil aspect of the self really is not high].

By contrast, the price of denying it [i.e., the price of denying the destructive, evil aspect of the self] is enormous.
Your groping may seem at times so confusing until you find a way
• to accept your destructive
  • impulses and
  • desires
  without condoning them;

• to understand them [i.e., to understand your destructive impulses and desires]
  without identifying with them.

You must learn to evaluate such [destructive]
• impulses and
• desires
realistically, without falling into the trap of
• projection,
• self-justification,
• self-righteous exoneration while blaming others on the one hand,
or, on the other, of
• self-indulgence,
• denial,
• repression and
• evasion.
Such understanding [i.e., Proper understanding of how to identify and handle your negative and destructive impulses and desires]

requires
  • continual inspiration
    from
    the higher forces
    within
  and
  • deliberate requests
    for help
    in
    • awakening and
    • maintaining
      awareness
      • of these destructive aspects and
      • of the proper method to handle them.

Whenever you are in
  • an unpleasant mood,
  • a threatening situation,
  • confusion and
  • darkness,
you can be sure that regardless of
  the outer circumstances,
  the problem [i.e., the problem causing the unpleasant mood, threatening situation, confusion, and darkness]
  arises from
  • denial and
  • fear
    of your own destructive attitudes, and
  • your ignorance
    about how to handle them [i.e., ignorance about how to handle your own destructive attitudes].
Admitting this [i.e., Admitting both your denial and fear of your own destructive attitudes, and your ignorance about how to handle your destructive attitudes]

• brings
  immediate relief and
• deactivates
  these negative powers [i.e., deactivates the power of these destructive attitudes]
  almost instantly.

Learn by what steps you can incorporate this power [i.e., incorporate this negative power contained in your destructive attitudes]

rather than shut it off [i.e., rather than shut this negative power off by fearing and denying its existence in you].

The first step must be applying the theory that

• destructiveness,
• evil,
  is not a
  • final
  • separate
  force.
You must think about this [i.e., You must think about this theory that destructiveness or evil is not a final separate force]

not merely in
• general,
• philosophical terms.

Rather,
you must take
the specific aspects of yourself
that make you feel
• guilty and
• afraid,
and apply this knowledge [i.e., apply this knowledge that destructiveness or evil is not a final separate force]
to all that is
most distasteful
in
• yourself and
• others.

No matter
how ugly
some of those [distasteful] manifestations are –
whether it be
• cruelty,
• spite,
• arrogance,
• contempt,
• selfishness,
• indifference,
• greed,
• cheating, or
something else –

you can bring yourself to realize
that every one of these [negative, destructive, and evil] traits is an energy current,
originally
• good and
• beautiful and
• life-affirming.
By searching in this direction,
you will come to
• understand
and
• experience
how this or that
specific hostile impulse
was
  originally
  a good force.

When you understand that,
you will have made
a substantial inroad
toward
• transforming the hostility
and
• freeing the energy [i.e., freeing the energy that has been manifesting
  in the form of hostility, energy]
  that has
  • either been channeled
    in a truly
    • undesirable,
    • destructive
    way,
  • or become
    • frozen and
    • stagnant.

You must articulate clearly
the insight
that these ugly traits,
  whatever they may be,
are a power
  that can be used
  any way you wish.
This [destructive, evil] power –
the same energy
that may now manifest as
• hostility,
• envy,
• hatred,
• rage,
• bitterness,
• self-pity, or
• blame –
can become
a creative power
to build
• happiness,
• pleasure,
• love,
• expansion,
  for
  • yourself and
  • others around you.

The list of negative traits
could be extended,
  but that is unnecessary,
  for they are only variations on the same theme.

You all
know these things in yourself,
or at least you have begun to know them.

Still,
after all this time,
it is not yet possible
for any of you
to truly understand
that
• what you dislike most in yourself
is essentially a
• highly desirable,
• creative
  power.
You dislike it [i.e., You dislike what is in essence a desirable, creative power in you] because it is not desirable in the form it manifests at the moment.

In other words, you have to learn to acknowledge that:

- the way the power manifests is undesirable,
- the energy current behind this manifestation is desirable in itself, for it is made of the life-stuff itself.

It [i.e., the power behind this undesirable manifestation] contains:

- consciousness and
- creative energy.

It [i.e., the power behind this undesirable manifestation] contains every possibility to:

- manifest and express life,
- create new life.

It [i.e., the power behind this undesirable manifestation] contains all the best of life, as you experience it – and much more.
So, too,
the best of life
that has revealed itself to you
contains the possibility of
the very worst.

If you can envisage
the possibilities
of all life manifestations,
because life is
a continuous
• flowing,
• moving,
• ongoing
process,
you can
never become
fixated
on finalities,
[finalities] which create
• error,
• confusion,
• duality.

You will see that
by denying the evil in you,
you do greater harm
to
• the whole of your personality,
to
• your manifest spirituality,

than you realize.

For by denying it [i.e., by denying the evil in you],
you inactivate
an essential part of your
• energies and
• creative forces,
so they [i.e., so an essential part of your energies and creative forces] stagnate.
From stagnation [i.e., From stagnation of an essential part of your energies and creative forces],
putrefaction [i.e., putrefaction of an essential part of your energies and creative forces]
follows.

Matter
putrefies
when it
• stagnates,
when it
• can no longer move.

The same is true of consciousness:

it [i.e., consciousness]
putrefies
when it stagnates.

Life
is a
continuously flowing process.

When it [i.e., When life]
stands still,
death
temporarily manifests.

Since life
is eternal,
the death
can be
only
temporary.
This [i.e., This principle that life is eternal
but stands still temporarily when death temporarily manifests]
applies
  not only
    to
      • human beings,
      to
        • entities,
        but also
          to
            • matter and
              • energy.

As long as
  the energy flow
    is arrested,
death
  takes place
    and lasts
      until the energy flow
        is released again.

This is
  • the manifestation
and yet
  • another meaning
    of death
      on this plane of consciousness.

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The principle
  also applies to
  an object:
    when it [i.e., when an object]
      • rots or
      • disintegrates,
    the energy within it
      has been arrested.

This arrested energy must,
  at some point,
    start flowing again –
        perhaps long after this particular manifestation.
Matter is always a • condensation and • manifestation of • consciousness and • energy.

• The way the energy • flows – or • does not flow – and

• the form it [i.e., the form the energy] takes when it condenses depends on the attitude of consciousness • "behind," or, rather, [the attitude of consciousness] • intrinsic to a particular aspect of creation.

By the same token, destructiveness is another erroneous form of consciousness.
It [i.e., destructiveness] must lead, either
directly
through
acting out and [thereby]
giving it [i.e., giving destructiveness]
direct expression,
or
indirectly,
through
• denial [i.e., through denial that destructiveness is even there],
that is [through]
• stagnation,
to a negation of life.

This [i.e., This resulting negation of life] is why
some supposedly negative emotions are actually desirable.

For instance, anger can
• further life and
• be directed against the negation of life.

Denial of anger turns into
• hostility,
• cruelty,
• spite,
• self-hate,
• guilt,
• confusion
between blame of
• others
and blame of
• self;
and [denial of anger when anger can further life and be directed against denial of life] is thus
• a destructive energy current.
Death

will become
• superfluous,
will be
• overcome,

when
energy
is
• no longer stagnant,

when
it [i.e., when energy]
is
• allowed to move.

This [i.e., This movement of energy]
can happen
on the level of mind
first,

when evil
is understood to be
intrinsically
a divine energy flow,
momentarily distorted
due to
specific
wrong
• ideas,
• concepts and
• perceptions.

Thus it [i.e., Thus evil]
is
no longer
• rejected
in its essence

but [rather, evil is]
• assimilated.

This [i.e., This assimilation of evil rather than rejecting it]
is precisely
what you find
most difficult to do.
In fact, you find it [i.e., you find this assimilation of evil rather than rejecting it] so difficult that you tend to forget even those aspects in you that are already
• free of
  • distortion,
  • evil, and
  • destructiveness,
that are really
• liberated and
• clear,
that are
• good and
• beautiful and
• divine.

All your
• striving and
• goodwill
  is beautiful.
Even your
• pangs of conscience,
  notwithstanding
  the misplaced guilt,
spring from the
• best and
• most beautiful
  manifestations of consciousness.

You will
• deny,
• ignore,
• fail to experience
  this best in you
as long as you
• deny,
• ignore,
• fail to experience
  the evil in you.
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| *You distort*
  your concept of yourself
when you
  deny any part of yourself,
  no matter how ugly it may be
  in its present form.*

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| *The essential key*
  to totally integrating the evil
  is understanding
  • its original nature and
  • the indwelling possibility
  that it may manifest again
  in its original form.*

  *This [i.e., This total integration of the evil in you] must be the aim,*
  *my friends.*

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| *As long as*
  you try to become good
  by
  • denying evil,
  by
    • forcing yourself to be
      • what you cannot yet be, and
      • what you can in fact
        never be,
  you remain
  in a painful state
  of
    • inner split,
    • partial self-denial, and
    • paralysis of vital forces within you.*
I say 
"[forcing yourself to be] what you can never be,"

because

if your expectation is

  to
  • destroy or
  • magically whisk away
    a vital part of yourself and
  not to
  • accept

    the intrinsic desirability
    of all the creative energy
    contained
    in even your
    most destructive aspects

you cannot
become whole.

Cultivate

this altered attitude [i.e., this altered attitude of accepting and
assimilating the evil in you].

The new attitude of acceptance [i.e., The new attitude of acceptance of the evil
within your human personality]

does

not

mean

• condoning,
• excusing, or
• rationalizing
  your undesirable aspects.
Quite the contrary [i.e., Quite the contrary to condoning, excusing, or rationalizing your undesirable aspects]:

it [i.e., this new attitude of acceptance of your undesirable aspects]

means

• fully acknowledging them [i.e., fully acknowledging your undesirable aspects],

• giving honest expression to them,

without

• finding excuses or
• blaming others,

but not

• feeling hopeless and
• self-rejecting about them [i.e., not feeling hopeless or self-rejecting about your undesirable evil aspects]

either.

This [i.e., This new attitude of acceptance of your undesirable aspects in this positive, healing, and constructive way]

seems like

a tall order,

but it is
certainly possible
to acquire this [new, accepting, and constructive] attitude
if you

• make a sincere effort and
• truly pray that
  guidance be given to you
  for this very purpose.

When you
no longer
negate your ugliness,
you will
no longer have to negate your beauty.
There is so much beauty in every one of you that is already free.

You actually manifest beauty that you totally negate, ignore, fail to perceive and experience!

And I do not mean only potential, as yet to be developed beauty;

I mean beauty that is really present.

You can think of this [i.e., You can think of all the beauty you already manifest but that you totally negate, ignore, and fail to perceive and experience]

and pray for awareness [i.e., pray for awareness of the beauty you already manifest but fail to perceive],

as you [i.e., in the same way and at the same time you]

pray for awareness of the ugliness.
When you can perceive
  • both [i.e., both your beauty AND your ugliness],
  • not just one,
    exclusive of the other,
you will have made
  a substantial step
  toward
    a realistic perception
      of
        • life and
          of
            • yourself
    that will enable you
  to integrate
    what
      now
        tears you asunder.

By keeping
  both
    • your
      • beauty
  and
    • your
      • ugliness
        in mind
          at all times,
you will
  also see
    both sides
      in
        • others.
You tend to
• completely
  • reject and
  • negate
    people
    whose destructiveness
    you perceive, and
• react to
  • them
    exactly as you do [i.e., exactly as you react]
    toward
    yourself [when you perceive your own destructiveness].

Or you
emotionally
  react to their
    • goodness and
    • inner beauty,
while
unrealistically
  overlooking
    their ugly side.

You cannot yet grasp
the presence of
duality [i.e., the presence of beauty and good AND the presence of ugliness and evil]
in
  • yourself,
and therefore
neither can you see
it [i.e., neither can you see duality, that is, the presence of beauty and good AND the presence of ugliness and evil]
in
  • others.

This [i.e., This not being able to see duality in yourself or in others]
creates
  continual
    • conflicts and
    • strife.
Only by accepting the duality [in yourself and in others] can you truly transcend it [i.e., can you truly transcend duality, that is, truly transcend the presence of beauty and good AND the presence of ugliness and evil both in yourself and in others].

No expansion of consciousness, no integration and transcendence is possible when consciousness is dimmed, when awareness is blocked.

Awareness of the evil must be blocked off when it [i.e., when evil] is viewed as if it were totally unacceptable, when you fail to realize that evil is only a distortion of a divine creative power current.
• **Such distortion** [i.e., *Such distortion of a divine creative power current into a particular evil*] and
• **lack of awareness** [i.e., *lack of awareness that this resulting particular evil is in fact merely a distortion of a divine creative power current*]

cause you to
• deny and
• paralyze
  the creative process itself.

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*Every once in a while*  
*I refer back*  
to the main sources of  
• distortion and  
• destructiveness:
  
• self-will,  
• pride, and  
• fear.

*Offhand,*  
it may appear  
odd  
to claim  
that these three traits  
are more responsible for evil  
than the evil traits themselves,  
**including** [the evil traits of]  
• spite,  
• cruelty,  
• envy,  
• hostility, and  
• selfishness.

*How can*  
• pride,  
• self-will or  
• fear  
*be more destructive than, say,*  
• hate?

*The answer to such questions*  
is really simple.
The overtly destructive attitudes [i.e., destructive attitudes such as hate, spite, cruelty, envy, hostility, or selfishness] are never the real evil.

If you truly acknowledge them [i.e., If you truly acknowledge these overtly destructive attitudes], you remain in the flow.

• The greatest hatred,  
• the most spiteful vindictiveness,  
• the worst impulses of cruelty,  

if honestly and squarely admitted,  
neither acted out irresponsibly  
nor repressed and denied,  
but fully accepted,

will never become harmful.

To the degree they are seen, faced, and admitted, such feelings [i.e., evil and destructive feelings such as the greatest hatred, the most spiteful vindictiveness, and the worst impulses of cruelty] will diminish in intensity and must sooner or later convert into flowing, life-giving energy.
• Hate
  will turn into
  • love,
• cruelty
  into healthy
  • aggression and
  • self-assertion,
• stagnation
  into
  • joy and
  • pleasure.

This [i.e., This transformation of evil into good, destructive energies into creative and constructive energies, hate into love, cruelty into healthy aggression, and stagnation into joy and pleasure]

is
inevitable.

What I say
is no mere theory.

Many of you
have experienced
this conversion of emotions
whenever you
chanced to hit upon
the right blend
of self-acceptance.

But
you have to grope for
this realization [i.e., for this realization of a conversion of evil and destructive emotions to good and constructive emotions]
again
and again
until
it [i.e., until this realization of a conversion of evil and destructive emotions to good and constructive emotions]
• becomes
  second nature and
• is no longer forgotten.
When you
  • blindly and
  • self-righteously
  act out destructiveness,
you
do
  express evil.

By denying its [i.e., By denying evil’s] existence,
you
  stagnate
  vital creative energy,
  which putrefies in you.

By squarely recognizing the evil,
you
  neither
    • act it out,
  nor
    • deny it.

This [i.e., This squarely recognizing evil and neither acting it out nor denying it] releases
  your creative energy flow.

• Pride,
• self-will, and
• fear
  are
    • all
      forms of denial
  and are therefore
    • more dangerous
      than the evils
        they deny.
My friends on the path have experienced how true this is [i.e., experienced how one’s creative energy flows when one squarely recognizes and faces evil and neither acts the evil out nor denies the evil because of pride, self-will and fear]:

To the degree evil is properly faced,
• self-acceptance,
• self-liking,
• new energy and
• deeper
  • love and
  • pleasure ensue.

But
• pride,
• self-will, and
• fear
make this healing attitude [i.e., this healing attitude of properly facing evil] impossible.

Self-will is so bent upon its own insistence that it is unwilling to accept present reality.

It [i.e., Self-will] wishes to be already in a higher state of consciousness;

it [i.e., self-will] wants to be better than it is now.
But it [i.e., But self-will] fails because it is impossible to grow out of something one is too self-willed to admit.

Self-will creates rigidity and rigidity is contrary to the flow of life.

Self-will says,

"I do not accept reality as it is now; it [i.e., reality] must be my way, and I insist that it is [i.e., I insist that reality is my way]."

This [rigid] attitude [created by one’s self-will] makes admission of the momentary [i.e., admission of the current, temporary] truth impossible.

Pride says,

"I do not want to have such ugly traits in me."
Truth, however, requires both
• flexibility
and
• humility.

It [i.e., Truth] also requires
• courage.

Fear assumes that
• acceptance and
• acknowledgement of the ugliness will make this ugliness overwhelming.

So fear also denies the justified faith in the benign order of Creation.

If truthful admission of what truly exists would mean
• doom,
• annihilation,
• danger,
• chaos,

the logical sequence of this assumption [i.e., the logical follow-on conclusion of this assumption that truthful admission of what truly exists would mean doom, annihilation, danger, and chaos]

would then be that the world is built on
• deceit,
• pretense,
• negation.
Even though such thoughts [i.e., thoughts and assumptions that truthful admission of what truly exists would mean doom, annihilation, danger, and chaos] are hardly ever actually articulated, for they are senseless, many individuals unwittingly build their lives on these assumptions.

Their attitudes express this underlying life-orientation [i.e., this underlying life-orientation that says that truthful admission of what truly exists would mean doom, annihilation, danger, and chaos].

To give up self-will does not diminish the free spirit of self-expression.

Neither does it diminish your genuine dignity when you give up the pride that hides the evil. Evil does not • overwhelm and • take you over when you choose to abandon the fear of it.
Quite the contrary
is true
on all these counts [i.e., the truth is quite the contrary to these assumptions on all these counts: assumptions that giving up self-will, pride, and fear results in loss of the free spirit of self-expression, in loss of your genuine dignity, and in evil taking you over].

It is never
a destructive impulse itself
that presents
the real
• damage and
• harm,
but always
the attitude toward it [i.e., it is always the attitude toward an arising destructive impulse that presents the real damage and harm].

This is why people who
• incorporate and
• accept
their negative aspects
find
to their immense surprise
the contrary
of their apprehensive expectation: [i.e., instead of the diminishing of their self-respect and self-liking that they expect and that makes them apprehensive,]
their
• self-respect and
• self-liking
will [actually] increase.

So this is, my friends,
what you have to learn.
A lot of ground
must still be covered
by every one of you,
even though
the words
sound all too familiar.

So far
you are nowhere near
actually putting these words into effect.

The more
you do [i.e., the more you actually put these words into effect],
the more
• joy
will increase in your life,
the more
• instrumental
you
will become
in shaping your fate –
not through
• ego control
but through
• your real capacity
to create
with the life-energy
at your disposal.

The key
is learning
to encounter the destructive force
so that
you can
transform it [i.e., so that you can transform the destructive force] back to
its original nature,
thus incorporating it [i.e., incorporating the original nature and energy of this now-transformed destructive force in you]
into
your whole being.
Are there any questions?

QUESTION:
As this lecture says, there are things in me that I feel are
• wrong,
• evil.

Yet
• I enjoy them [i.e., I enjoy acting out these things in me that I feel are wrong and evil];

• they [i.e., these things in me that I feel are wrong and evil] feel pleasurable [i.e., feel pleasurable to me when I act them out].

But [when I act out these things that I feel are wrong and evil] I feel guilty.

For instance,
I overspend money.

I negate that aspect of myself completely.

Can you help me?

ANSWER:
This is a good example.

I hope to hear many more personal problems like this, so I can help you specifically with them [i.e., help you with your specific personal problems].
Now, what you describe is so typical.

You negate everything about your destructive impulse [i.e., you deny that this instinct to overspend exists in you and you do not allow yourself ever to act on any impulse to overspend money].

You are thus confronted with an insoluble predicament:

• either you
give up
all pleasure connected with
• overspending and
• irresponsibility in order to
become
• decent,
• mature,
• realistic,
• self-responsible and
• safe,

• or you
take pleasure from the negative trait [by acting out the negative trait of overspending and being irresponsible]

but at
the tremendous cost of
• guilt,
• self-deprivation,
• insecurity, and
• fear of not being able to run your own life.
Once you see that behind the compulsion to
• overspend and
• be irresponsible
is a legitimate yearning for
• pleasure,
• expansion and
• new experience,
this predicament will cease to exist.

In other words, you must incorporate
the essence of this wish without acting out the destructiveness of it.

You will then have much less difficulty putting the wish into effect in a realistic way that will not defeat you in the end.

You are now [i.e., You are now, before you take the new approach of incorporating the essence of this wish without acting out the destructiveness of it,]

stuck in battling with one of these typical either/or problems.
How can you really want to give up irresponsibility [and therefore really want to become responsible] if responsibility implies

- living on a narrow margin of pleasure, and
- confining your self-expression?

Since you do not really want to give up the irresponsibility, you feel guilty [i.e., you feel guilty for not truly wanting to be responsible – thinking you should want to be responsible if you were truly a “good” person].

Thus you reject that vital part of you which

- rightfully wishes to experience the pleasure of creation at its fullest,

but

- does not yet know how without
  - exploiting others and
  - being parasitic.

If, however, you can

- fully accept the beautiful force striving for full pleasure underneath the irresponsibility and
- value it as such [i.e., value this force as it beautifully strives for pleasure], you will also find how to give it expression without
  - infringing on others,
  - violating your own laws of balance.
[As you value this beautiful force in you as it slowly but surely strives to bring you pleasure]

You will
not have to pay
the needless cost of
• worry,
• anxiety,
• guilt, and
• inability to manage well.

You only pay that [i.e., You ONLY pay that cost of worry, anxiety, guilt, and inability to manage well]
when you
[forcefully and irresponsibly overspend to pursue pleasure and thereby]
sacrifice peace of mind
for a short-lived [but immediate] pleasure.

The pleasure
will be
• deeper,
• more lasting, and
• totally free of guilt
when you
combine
• its [i.e., the pleasure’s] rightfulness
with
• self-discipline.
If you can reconcile
  • desire for pleasure
with
  • self-discipline and
  • responsibility,
you will express
  the inner knowledge
  that says,

• "I want to enjoy life.

• There is unlimited abundance in the universe for every contingency.

• There is no limit to what is possible.

• There are marvelous things to be experienced.

• There are many beautiful means of self-expression.

• I can realize them [i.e., I can realize these many marvelous things in the universe that can be experienced] and
  • bring them [i.e., bring these many marvelous things] into my life
  if I can find another, not self-destructive way [or means] to
  • express and
  • obtain them.
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**Without these traits** [i.e., Without these traits of self-responsibility and self-discipline in their most profound sense],

**I must remain**  |
| **deprived and**  |
| **in conflict.**  |

**The discipline** [i.e., the self-discipline in its most profound sense]  |
| **will be much easier to acquire,**  |

**the willingness to do so** [i.e., the willingness to acquire the self-discipline]  |
| **will grow,**  |

**when**  |
| **you know that**  |
| **you have**  |
| **a perfect right**  |
| **to use it** [i.e., a perfect right to use self-discipline]  |
| **for the purpose of**  |
| **increasing**  |
| **pleasure and**  |
| **self-expression.**  |

47 My dearest friends,  |
| **I have given you new material**  |
| **that requires**  |
| **a great deal of attention.**  |

**Bring it** [i.e., Bring this material]  |
| **to bear on**  |
| **your own**  |
| **specific**  |
| **situation.**  |
Open up
your innermost being
to applying this material.

Do not apply it [i.e., Do not apply this material]
only
• theoretically,
• in general terms,
but see
really
where you
deny what is in you
out of
• fear and
• guilt,
thereby
paralyzing
the best in you.

To those of you here
who
• are discouraged and
• feel hopeless about yourselves,

I can say only,
you are in
• illusion and
• error
when you feel that way.
Realize this \[\text{i.e., Realize that you are in illusion and error when you feel discouraged and hopeless}\]

*and ask for the truth,*

_{which is_}

- _that there is no reason for hopelessness_, and
- _difficult periods need only to be_
  - _understood and_
  - _worked through_

_to make them_ \[\text{i.e., to make difficult periods in your life}_____steppingstones for_

- _opening your lives further and_
- _bringing more_
  - _light and_
  - _self-expression into them._

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Receive the
- _love and_
- _blessings_,

_my dearest friends_,

_be in peace._

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