

Pathwork Lecture 199: The Meaning of the Ego and Its Transcendence

1996 Edition, Original Given March 24, 1972

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

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03	<p>Greetings.</p> <p><i>Blessed be all of you, my beloved friends.</i></p> <p>The force of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • love and • truth, <p>elicited by</p> <p>your seeking,</p> <p>is pouring forth</p> <p>to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • forge another link in the chain, to • give you what you need <p>at this juncture in your path.</p>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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04

*The average state
of the human mind
is only
a fragmented piece
of total consciousness.*

*In this fragmented state
you are cut off from reality.*

*You
inevitably
live in*

- fear and*
- limitation.*

Yet

- you believe that
this is all there is to your life*

and

- you
frantically clutch
at this limited fragment.*

*You resist
the natural inner movement
of the soul
to*

- go beyond,*

to

- expand
this state,
because
the split-off
ego-consciousness
fears that doing so [i.e., fears that going
beyond and expanding this limited
state of consciousness]
will annihilate you.*

*You ardently protect
this limited consciousness,
yet this very limitation
creates*

- fear and*
- suffering.*

05	<p><i>This [i.e., Holding onto this split-off limited state of consciousness because of the separated ego-consciousness's fear of annihilation] is, broadly speaking, humanity's plight.</i></p> <p><i>It is your task, in the cycle of incarnations, to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• reintegrate this split-off ego-consciousness and</i> <p><i>to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• regain forever</i><i>• wider and</i><i>• deeper portions of</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• your real self,</i><i>• your cosmic existence, with its infinite possibilities for</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• experience,</i><i>• joy, and</i><i>• creation of the self.</i>
06	<p><i>Humanity believes that</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• this split-off ego-consciousness</i> <p><i>is</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• the real self.</i>

You identify with

your

- *brain,*

your

- *outer intelligence,*

your

- *will,*

your

- *mind,*

all those faculties

immediately available,

not realizing that

- *to whatever degree*

you now possess these [i.e., these faculties immediately

available to you now],

- *it was*

you

who

in the past

made them [i.e., made these faculties]

available for yourself

through

a deliberate effort.

For there

was a state

in which you possessed

much less

- *awareness,*

less

- *power to create,*

less

- *ability to experience joy.*

Your consciousness

was much more

- *limited and*

- *confined.*

*You had to
use
whatever consciousness you had
to*

- *enlarge your faculties and*

to

- *avail yourself of
dormant possibilities.*

*This process [i.e., This process of enlarging your faculties and availing yourself
of dormant possibilities]*

*must continue
until*

- *there is no longer
any
split-off fragment and*
- *humanity has reached
cosmic consciousness,
which means that
humanity itself
has become
one with
ultimate reality.*

*The process
of*

- *self-enlargement,*

of

- *making
apparently
foreign territory
your own domain,*

*constitutes
the Pathwork –
any valid pathwork.*

07

*Ego
means
fragmentation.*

*As I mentioned,
it is the task of all beings
who are caught in this fragmentation,
and that means anyone
in the cycle of*

- being born and*
- dying,*

*to enlarge
their*

- field of operation,*

their

- perception,*

their

- awareness, and*

their

- power to create.*

*The problem is
that in the limited state
of the separated ego,
enlargement
appears,
contrary to reality,
to be
annihilation
of*

- your very existence,*

of

- your sense of self.*

	<p>To penetrate this illusion [i.e., this illusion that enlargement of your field of operation, of your perception, of your awareness, and of your power to create, is annihilation of your very existence, annihilation of your sense of self], you need all the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• force,• commitment,• goodwill and• help available – help that you must<ul style="list-style-type: none">• want and• request.
08	<p>This is truly humanity's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• search and• struggle. <p>Only as you venture forth step by step, overcoming the inherent resistance to transcend this separated state,</p> <p>do you find out gradually that there is another life beyond the ego state.</p>

*You then find out that
this other life
is
reality
and that
this reality
is
not to be feared.*

*It [i.e., This other life, which is reality]
is good;*

*it [i.e., this other life, which is reality]
is to be
utterly trusted.*

*It means
that there is
ongoing
• life,
• self-awareness, and
ever-increasing
• joy.*

*You find out that
the limited ego state
you have
so ardently protected
is
an illusion:
the illusion of
• death and
• aloneness.*

09

*Awareness
has to be fought for.*

*It [i.e., Awareness]
does not come
• easily,
nor [does it come]
• gratuitously.*

	<p>Remaining in the isolated ego state may appear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• safe and• easy, <p>but it [i.e., but remaining in the isolated ego state] leads to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stagnation and• death – ever recurring death.
10	<p>The ego uses any number of tricks in order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to maintain its• separated,• limited state <p>and [in order]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to avoid moving beyond it [i.e., in order to avoid moving beyond the ego's separated limited state]. <p>I would like to show them to you [i.e. I would like to show you these tricks of the ego].</p>
11	<p>In the first place, the ego uses every conceivable negativity known to humanity:</p> <p>any</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fault, <p>any</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• violation of• integrity,• truth,• love, and• divine law.

	<p><i>Since all these negativities can be summed up in the triad of</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• pride,</i><i>• self-will, and</i><i>• fear,</i> <p><i>I shall show how the ego uses these traits to avoid self-transcendence.</i></p>
12	<p><i>The ego fears losing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• its present state,</i><i>meaning</i><i>• its self-awareness [i.e., meaning losing its present self-awareness],</i> <p><i>so much that the fear displaces the instinct of self-preservation.</i></p> <p><i>The ego misuses this instinct [i.e., misuses this instinct of self-preservation] to preserve its present awareness.</i></p> <p><i>Fear always distorts</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• truth and</i><i>• reality.</i> <p><i>Thus the ego maintains itself [i.e., maintains itself in its present state of limited self-awareness] with pride.</i></p>

*It [i.e., The ego]
maintains
its separateness
by creating
an artificial conflict
between*

- the self*
- and*
- others.*

*It [i.e., The ego]
says,*

*"I must prove to the world
that I am*

- admirable and*
- better than others;*

*I must
outdo others;
I must
not be worse than others;
my interests
counteract
those of others,
and vice versa."*

*All these attitudes
are pridefully
put in the service of
maintaining
the ego's separation.*

It is always

"I versus you,"

*and this inevitably
creates
a spirit of
one-upmanship.*

*Whether or not
in your current incarnation
your development
happens to be*
• *ahead*
or
• *behind*
another's,
to use this [i.e., to use this difference in levels of development]
as a wedge
between
• *your own ego*
and
• *those [egos] of others,*
is completely missing the point.

For,
in principle,
there is no difference [i.e., there is no difference or differentiation
between the development levels of two individuals' egos].

It does not even take very long on this path
to find out
that
• *one's interests*
conflict with
• *those of others*
only on
the most superficial level.

What is
really
• *right and*
• *good*
can be seen
just beneath the surface.

*According to divine law
this
deeper good
is
right
for
all concerned.*

*Therefore
all*

- *comparing and*
- *competing
to best others*
 - *increases
the separation and*
 - *sharpens
the illusion
that this pitiful existence
is all there is to life.*

13

*People's prevalent tendency
to live for the sake
of*

- *appearances,*

*rather than for the sake
of*

- *truth*
- and of
 - *real*
 - *feelings and*
 - *interests,*

*is also caused by
pride.*

	<p><i>The illusion of separation is so strong at this point that it seems more important to people</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>to create an impression</i><p><i>than even</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>to consider</i> what a<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>tragic,</i>• <i>wasteful</i><p><i>sacrifice you make to achieve an entirely imaginary gain.</i></p></p></p>
14	<p><i>All</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>masks and</i>• <i>defenses,</i>• <i>pretenses and</i>• <i>false shame of exposure,</i>• <i>embarrassment about</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>real feelings and</i>• <i>one's inner reality</i><p><i>regarding the spiritual self, belong in the category of pride;</i></p><p><i>they are tricks of the ego to maintain its limited state.</i></p></p>
15	<p><i>Self-will</i> <i>comprises</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>stubbornness,</i>• <i>resistance,</i>• <i>spite,</i>• <i>defiance,</i>• <i>rigidity.</i></p>

*All these attitudes [i.e., attitudes of stubbornness, resistance, spite, defiance,
and rigidity that comprise self-will]*

*connote
a stiffening
against
• change,
against
• expanding into
new spiritual territory.*

*These traits
express the attitude,*

*"I will stay
• where and
• as
I am."*

*This ego-trick
makes
• rigidity
appear
• desirable*

*and
makes
• open,
• flexible
movement
appear
• threatening and/or
• humiliating.*

*• Pride
and
• fear
are necessarily
coupled to
• self-will,*

*just as
• self-will
must be present
where either of the other two dominates.*

*Each of these attitudes
harbors the other two as well.*

16	<p><i>The refusal to move may be evaluated on a more superficial level in terms of personal</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>idiosyncrasies and</i>• <i>neuroses,</i> <p><i>as</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>spite against a specific</i>• <i>person or</i>• <i>people – let us say</i>• <i>parents or</i>• <i>parent substitutes or</i>• <i>general authority figures.</i> <p><i>Or there might be a spiteful attitude toward life itself.</i></p> <p><i>But on a deeper level the ego's trick [in refusing to move] is to remain isolated.</i></p>
17	<p><i>Under the category of fear belong all</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>worries,</i>• <i>anxieties, and</i>• <i>apprehensions.</i> <p><i>The ego's trick is to make change appear</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>threatening and</i>• <i>life-annihilating.</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Worrying</i> <p><i>and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>anxiety</i> <p><i>also prevent you from attaining</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>joyousness,</i>• <i>peace, and</i>• <i>freedom –</i> <p><i>the cosmic reality that opens up when the present state is expanded.</i></p>
18	<p><i>Negative intentionality is also part of the ego's trickery to preserve your</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>present</i>• <i>limited state.</i> <p><i>Whatever the specific negative intention may be, it always indicates spite [i.e., a malicious desire to harm, frustrate, or humiliate another person] –</i></p> <p><i>hence self-will, which always</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>blurs and</i>• <i>falsifies reality, denying all desirable life experience.</i>

19

**Other ego tricks
that serve to
maintain its [i.e., to maintain the separated ego's]
present "safe" position
are:**

denying

- **pleasure,**
- **bliss,**
- **joy,**
- **expansion, and**
- **creative movement into life.**

**The fear of
experiencing**

**all these states [i.e., fear of experiencing pleasure,
bliss, joy, expansion, and
creative movement into life]**

is obviously

also

a trick of the ego.

**This [i.e., This fear of experiencing pleasure, bliss, joy,
expansion, and creative movement into life]**

is

- **a well-known phenomenon
applying to all human beings**

and is

- **easy to observe.**

**More such
tricks of the ego
are:**

- **inattentiveness,**
- **lack of concentration,**
- **abstractedness,**
- **absent-mindedness.**

These attitudes

prevent

the focusing

necessary

for the ego

to transcend itself.

*To transcend
its present limited state,
the ego
requires
a good deal
of*

- *one-pointed focusing,*

of

- *being all there,
as it were.*

- *Laziness,*
- *tiredness, and*
- *passivity*
*are, too,
tricks of the ego.*

*They [i.e., Laziness, tiredness, and passivity]
make movement*

- *impossible,*
- *undesirable, and*
- *exhausting.*

We shall come back to this later.

20

- *Fear of
exposure*

and

- *denial of
real feelings
not only*
 - *stem from
pride*

but also

- *directly
perpetuate isolation
and are therefore*
 - *used as
ego tricks
to deny
oneness with others.*

*Negative reactions
to
the negativity of others
is another
trick of the ego
to maintain its isolation.*

*The moment
negativity appears,
the energy system
begins to function
to deny
the ego's expansion,
which would effect
self-transcendence.*

*The ego
denies
the joyousness
of true being
by making something more
of other people's behavior
than necessary.*

*It [i.e., The ego]
cuts off
the vision of
real life
that
exceeds
the limited present state.*

*Only
the*

- isolated*
- ego-bound*

*entity
experiences
the terror of
finiteness.*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Distrust</i> <p><i>and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>suspiciousness</i> <p><i>are not only</i> <i>part of the general fear</i> <i>that makes the ego</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>wish to remain immobile and</i>• <i>resort to trickery</i> <p><i>in order to</i> <i>defy</i> <i>the natural movement</i> <i>toward</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>the being's</i> <i>ultimate fate.</i> <p><i>While distrust</i> <i>caused by fear</i> <i>is the motivating force [i.e., While distrust caused by fear is the motivating</i> <i>force to defy the natural movement toward the being's ultimate fate],</i> <i>the ego</i> <i>simultaneously</i> <i>uses the distrust</i> <i>as a trick</i> <i>to stop</i> <i>the movement</i> <i>toward</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>union.</i>
21	<p><i>The ego assumes a</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>preposterous and</i>• <i>paradoxical</i> <p><i>position.</i></p> <p><i>It [i.e., The ego]</i> <i>is intrinsically</i> <i>unhappy,</i> <i>precisely because of</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>its finiteness,</i> <p><i>or</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>what</i> <i>seems</i> <i>finite</i> <i>in its present limited state.</i>

*It is self-evident
that
the ego
can see
only
what is within
its present scope of awareness.*

*And what it sees
is,
to varying degrees,
• limited and
• falsified.*

*Hence
the ego
• sees and
• experiences
only
finiteness:
the
• disconnected,
• meaningless
universe
in which
it [i.e., in which the ego]
is
senselessly
• suffering and
• powerless.*

*This perception of life
can alter
only to the degree
that the ego
overcomes
the temptation to stay put.*

	<p><i>But</i> <i>the paradoxical position of the ego</i> <i>is that</i> <i>it fights to remain</i> <i>in the very state</i> <i>that often makes your life</i> <i>unbearably</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• lonely,</i><i>• fearful, and</i><i>• meaningless.</i>
22	<p><i>Unfathomable death</i> <i>is</i> <i>terrifying,</i> <i>and although</i> <i>it is possible</i> <i>to deny this terror,</i> <i>it [i.e., this terror of an unfathomable death]</i> <i>cannot</i> <i>be dissolved</i> <i>as long as</i> <i>the ego</i> <i>remains</i> <i>within its present narrow confines.</i></p> <p><i>Sooner or later</i> <i>everyone</i> <i>is faced with</i> <i>this terrifying illusory end [i.e., illusory end in an unfathomable death],</i> <i>both</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• their own</i><i>and</i><i>• others'.</i>

But
even if
this terror [i.e., this terror of an illusory end in an unfathomable death]
is not
acute,
it [i.e., this terror of an illusory end in an unfathomable death]
remains

- **a gnawing force**
in your soul,
- **a force**
that must always exist
until
the ego
gives up
its resistance [i.e., gives up its resistance to its
transcendence into an expanded
state of consciousness].

In spite of
the ego's
extreme discomfort,
it clings to

- **that very condition,**
- **the very state**
that makes true vision
beyond
the imaginary line of demarcation
between
 - **life****and**
 - **death****impossible.**

This [i.e. This situation where the ego clings to its present state of consciousness
even though there is so much fear of death in this state of consciousness]
is

- **the sickness of**
the ego state and
- **the perversion of it –**
to cling to
the very thing
it battles against [i.e., to cling to this limited state of
consciousness it is in even while it battles
against the terror of death brought on by this
limited state of consciousness].

23

*All my friends
can easily recognize themselves
in this description,
for
the pathwork
makes this incongruity [i.e., the incongruity in which the ego
clings to the state of consciousness it is in even
while it battles against the terror of death
brought on by this state of consciousness]
very obvious.*

I believe it will greatly help you all

- *to see your plight
in this light and*
- *to know that
this is a universal state
which you are called upon
to transcend.*

*On this path
you must*

- *be concerned with, and*
- *grope for
an understanding of,
 - *how
to transcend the ego, and*
 - *what that [i.e. what “transcending the ego”]
really means.**

24

• *Isolation and*
• *separateness*
are,
• *without a doubt*
and
• *without exception,*
• *tragic*
and
• *ironic –*
• *tragic*
because unnecessary [i.e., tragic because isolation and
separateness are unnecessary],
and
• *ironic*
because the ego
clings to
• *what it*
hates
and
• *what*
hurts it most.

It [i.e., The ego]
lacks
the
• *discipline and*
the
• *perseverance,*
the
• *commitment and*
the
• *faith*
to venture beyond
its present scope of awareness.

Suffering
must exist
as long as
you
• *cling to this state*
and
• *indulge in it.*

*As long as
all the tricks of the ego
are*

- acted out,*
- rationalized,*
- denied,*
- perpetuated and*
- nurtured –*

*as is usually the case –
you cannot help
but suffer.*

25

You all

- know,*

*my friends, and
many of you have indeed*

- experienced it,*

that

*every step forward on the path
reveals
new vistas
that are very real,
much more real
than the previous state
that you
thought
was the
ultimate
reality.*

*Every step of the way
this newly gained reality
opens to a life*

- wider and*
- fuller*

for you.

	<p><i>The result [i.e., The result of this opening to a wider and fuller life for you as you take each next step on the path]</i></p> <p><i>is</i></p> <p><i>more</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>joy,</i> <p><i>more</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>peace,</i> <p><i>more</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>consciousness,</i> <p><i>more</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>understanding of</i> <i>the beautiful deep meaning of life,</i> <p><i>more</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>creativity and</i> <p><i>more</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>intrinsic knowledge of</i> <i>life's eternity</i> <p><i>versus</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>the illusion of</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>death,</i><i>the illusion of</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>finiteness.</i>
26	<p><i>But</i></p> <p><i>every one of these steps [on the path]</i> <i>could have been won</i> <i>only</i> <i>by a tremendous amount of investment</i> <i>on your part.</i></p> <p><i>Whoever</i> <i>still wants</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>indulgence [i.e., still wants a life of indulgence in shortcuts, in following the path of least resistance and requiring no self-facing]</i> <p><i>and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>easy,</i>• <i>cheap</i> <p><i>results</i></p> <p><i>can</i> <i>never,</i> <i>never</i> <i>attain this new state.</i></p>

*You [who want easy, cheap results]
will look wistfully
at the possibilities
yet doubt
that anything else could exist
that would warrant*

- *the effort and*
- *the lowering of your pride.*

*This doubt [i.e., This doubt that anything else could exist that would warrant your
effort and the lowering of your pride]
then becomes
the excuse for
the artificially maintained status quo.*

*This [i.e., This doubt that becomes the excuse
for the artificially maintained status quo]
is the sin against
life,
defeating
life's
natural movement
toward*

- *evolution and*
- *unification.*

27

- *Discipline,*
- *courage,*
- *humility, and*
- *the ability to
commit yourself –
these are
not
attitudes
you
do not possess,
my friends.*

*Everyone of you
possesses
every conceivable attribute in the universe.*

*The question is,
do you wish
to avail yourself
of these potentials
within you,
or [instead]
do you wish to claim*

- that you
do not possess them and*
- that someone
has to "give" them to you
magically?*

28

*You often hold
the*

- misplaced and*
- confused
idea
that*
 - self-discipline
hampers your freedom,
and, conversely,
that*
 - a free person
does not need
self-discipline.*

*Nothing
could be further from
the truth.*

**Freedom,
in its real sense,
is unthinkable
without
discipline.**

**And, conversely,
the people**

- **who indulge themselves** [i.e., *indulge themselves in the easiest path of life, the path of least resistance requiring no self-facing or self-reflection*]

and

- **who reject discipline**
 - are inevitably**
 - **dependent,**
 - **weak,**
 - **powerless,**
 - and consequently**
 - **afraid.**

They [i.e., *People who indulge themselves in the easiest path of life, the path of least resistance requiring no self-facing or self-reflection, and who reject all discipline*]

**lack
freedom.**

**Freedom
can be gained
only to the degree
one uses
voluntary
self-discipline –**
uses it [i.e., *uses voluntary self-discipline*]
for

- **one's own sake**

and not to

- **appease and**
- **appear good**

in the eyes of others.

The latter attitude [i.e., the attitude of appeasing others and trying to appear good in the eyes of others]

often leads

either to

- *actual*

or [to]

- *imaginary*

discipline

being imposed upon the person

by others.

When such imposition [i.e., imposition of discipline upon the person by others] happens –

and this is of course undesirable –

it is always

a result of

the denial of

- *voluntary self-discipline,*

which goes together with

- *self-responsibility.*

29

Every

expansion

must be fought for

with self-discipline,

by overcoming

the embedded resistance

against

expansion.

The discipline

must be used

- *for*

stringent recognition of

the ego tricks

and

- *against*

giving in to them.

*This expansion
is always
a step beyond
a known territory.*

*The ego
has evolved
to its present state,
which varies, of course,
from person to person,
as a result of
what humanity
has already achieved.*

*The "territory"
people have gained
determines*

- their degree of functioning,*
- the scope of their*
 - experience and*
 - awareness.*

30

*When I speak of "territory,"
I mean
a state
of*

- awareness*

*and [a state]
of*

- available*
 - creative life force and*
 - influx from the real world,*
all of which
make experiencing life
 - deeper and*
 - more meaningful.*

*The word "territory"
is thus
not to be understood*

- in a geographical sense,*

but

- in a total sense.*

	<p><i>The fences around this territory indicate the degree of the ego's self-transcendence [i.e., the degree to which ego- imposed fences have limited the ego's self-transcendence].</i></p>
31	<p><i>Every incarnation, on whatever level, requires increasing the scope of one's "field of operation."</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• To widen the fences around the fragmented ego,</i><i>• to bring in more reality from the world beyond the illusory confinement</i> <p><i>is the task.</i></p> <p><i>Indirectly, this [i.e., this widening of fences around the fragmented ego and bringing in more reality from the world beyond the illusory confinement] applies to all levels.</i></p>

Even the

- *most mundane,*
 - *outer,*
 - *physical and*
 - *intellectual*
 - *knowledge and*
 - *skills*
- to be acquired*

increase in some way
your present ability to

- *function and*
- *experience life,*

and thus
indirectly
contribute to
the ultimate task
of
self-transcendence.

The acquisition
of new

- *knowledge and*
 - *skills*
- also demands*
the cultivation of the
attitudes
necessary for
self-transcendence.

Every bit of

- *new knowledge or*
 - *a new skill*
- yields,*
 - *directly or*
 - *indirectly,*

more
 - *spiritual power and*
 - *awareness,*

more
 - *experience of joy and*
 - *realization of*
 - *your own adequacy and*
 - *your potential.*

32

**To acquire
new**

- **knowledge or**
- **skills,**
on whatever level,
always means
overcoming
laziness.

**It [i.e., Acquiring new knowledge or skills, on whatever level,]
means**

self-discipline:

the more

- **desirable a new aspect of life is,**

the more

- **real and**
- **durable**

it is [i.e., the more real and durable

a new aspect of life is],

the more

- **you must invest in it [i.e., the more you must invest in
this new aspect of life].**

**It [i.e., Acquiring new knowledge or skills, on whatever level,]
means**

- **trial and error, and**

- **the ability to**

convert

- **failure**

into

- **success.**

**It [i.e., Acquiring new knowledge or skills, on whatever level,]
means**

- **perseverance,**

- **patience,**

- **faith.**

	<p><i>It [i.e., Acquiring new knowledge or skills, on whatever level,] means</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• overcoming fear</i> <p><i>until</i></p> <p><i>the new thing</i> <i>becomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• one's own natural possession,</i> <p><i>until</i></p> <p><i>it [i.e., until the new thing]</i> <i>becomes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• part of the personality,</i><i>• second nature, so to speak.</i>
33	<p><i>The ego's task</i> <i>is always</i> <i>first</i> <i>to accept</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• the difficulties,</i><i>• the hardships</i> <p><i>of the learning process.</i></p> <p><i>Only when</i> <i>the ego</i> <i>has learned</i> <i>the more mechanical aspects</i> <i>of this process</i></p> <p><i>can</i> <i>the influx of</i> <i>the spiritual self</i> <i>make</i> <i>the new acquisitions a</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• spontaneous,</i><i>• living,</i><i>• effortless</i> <p><i>experience.</i></p>

• *Ego*
means
• *effort*;

• *spiritual self*
means
• *effortlessness*.

This desirable effortlessness
is not given
by magic, however,
for this would mean
that
the ego
is not being
• *transcended*
but [rather the ego is being]
• *avoided*.

The ego
must change its
• *lazy,*
• *resistant*
attitudes
in order
to
• *transcend itself*
to
• *become able to*
unify with
the
cosmic,
greater self.

The ego
must lay
the arduous groundwork
until
the real self
can come through.

*This [i.e., The ego's need to lay the arduous groundwork
until the real self can come through]*

*can be noted
in every*

- *activity or*
- *skill.*

*First
there is
always
effort.*

*It [i.e., The work of transcending the ego]
becomes*

*pleasurable
only when*

it [i.e., only when the work of transcending the ego]

- *seems,*
- and*
- *actually is,
"happening through you."*

34

*If you are learning
a manual task,
the manual rules
have to be learned
until
they become part of the ego;*

*if [you are learning]
a mental task,
mental knowledge
has first to be painstakingly acquired,
often through
quite mechanical processes.*

Then [i.e., When the new knowledge has been painstakingly acquired]

- the new knowledge
will become
the person's own*

and

- the spirit can use
this newly expanded
• vision,
• knowledge,
• skill,
• energy, and
• accomplishment
to play
creatively.*

An artist

*who wants to bypass
the effortfulness of
learning the ground rules
can never unfold
any creative ability,
no matter
how real*

*it [i.e., how real the artist's creative ability]
may initially be.*

*These creative abilities
will wither
because
that person
wants to cheat life.*

35

*The spiritual path itself
demonstrates
the identical principles.*

*As mentioned before,
the ego
must*

- learn and*
- adopt*

*attitudes
compatible with
the*

- universal,*
- divine*

ones.

*This is, as you know,
not easy.*

*The inspiration
of the spiritual self
is blocked off
to the degree
the ego
is blindly involved in
its negativity,
including*

- laziness,*
- pride,*
- self-will,*
- fear,*
- wish to cheat life, and*
- escapist tendencies.*

*But as these [negative] tendencies
are*

- honestly recognized and*
- gradually given up,*

*the influx of
the world of
eternal*

- truth,*
- love, and*
- beauty*

becomes possible.

36

The arduous task of

- *making the ego flexible*

always comes first:

- *teaching it [i.e., teaching the ego],*
- *bending,*
- *changing it [i.e., bending and changing the ego];*
- *making it [i.e., making the ego]*
 - *receptive and*
 - *vibrant;*
- *letting new*
 - *life energy and*
 - *creativity*

*flow through it [i.e., letting new life energy and creativity
flow through the ego]*

by

 - *identifying and*
 - *abandoning*

the ego's tricks.

*Whether it [i.e., Whether the change in the ego]
takes shape as*

new

- *knowledge,*

new

- *skills,*

or

- *a new attitude toward*

- *life and*

- *the universe,*

this change

always means

a new territory

has become your own.

37

People
truly wither away
when they
remain in the narrow confines
of their present state
because

- *they feel it [i.e., they feel their present state]*
is safe and
- *they think they have*
eliminated
the need for
 - *effort and*
 - *investment.*

They [i.e., People, when they remain in the narrow confines of their present state,]
do not permit
life
to regenerate them.

Regeneration
can happen
only where
inner movement exists.

It always seems frightening
at first
to go beyond
the ego's present confines.

The new territory
is

- *foreign,*
- *unknown.*

	<p><i>People</i> want to avoid the unknown, and they would rather</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• cower in fear of it [i.e., rather cower in fear of the unknown] <p>than</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have the courage to• learn about it [i.e., than have the courage to learn about the unknown] <p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• make it their own [i.e., than have the courage to make the unknown their own]. <p><i>To make</i> the unknown known,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• outside <p>as well as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• inside, <p>is the beauty of the spiritual path.</p>
38	<p><i>The ego</i> is under the illusion that to stay in the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stagnant,• narrow <p>confines of the already known territory – for regardless of how much wider it may be [i.e. how much wider one's known territory may be] compared to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the territory of others, <p>it is still narrower as compared to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• one's potential – <p>is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• easy and• relaxing.

To

- ***pull yourself up by your bootstraps***
- and**
- ***move beyond [i.e., to move beyond your current confined stagnant state] seems terribly tiresome.***

This feeling [i.e., This feeling that to move beyond your current confined stagnant state would be terrible tiresome]

is illusory

because

- ***the stagnant state is really a contraction,***

and

- ***contraction is by no means relaxing and restful,***

although it may

seem so [i.e., contraction may seem relaxing and restful] to the confused mind.

True restfulness

is always

- ***alive and***
- ***effortlessly moving.***

This [i.e., True restfulness, a state in which one is always alive and effortlessly moving]

is impossible

in a state of contraction.

You can verify this

by looking around you.

The people

who do the least

are always

the most tired.

	<p><i>And the people who do most are always most • energized and • relaxed – provided their activity does not serve as an escape from the self.</i></p>
39	<p><i>Harmonious movement is not • tiring or • exhausting, although you may experience such symptoms [i.e., you may experience symptoms of tiredness or exhaustion] at first, because to go from • stasis to • motion on any level first requires accepting a temporary effort with • self-discipline, • faith, • courage, and • humility until • the effort becomes • effortless.</i></p>

Spiritual movement
is
effortless.

By
• *spiritual movement*
I mean
• *the movement*
of
• *ultimate reality,*
of
• *the totally unified entity.*

The stagnation
is really
very effortful,
because
it [i.e., because stagnation]
requires
• *an enormous and*
• *often unconscious*
effort
in order to
sustain
the resistance
against
the soul's
natural inclination
to follow its destiny.

This unconscious effort [i.e., This unconscious effort to sustain the resistance
against the soul's natural inclination to follow its destiny]
then manifests as
• *tiredness,*
• *exhaustion,*
• *weakness,*
which furnish the excuse [i.e., the excuse of being tired or weak]
to remain still longer
in the status quo.

The ego
uses the results
of its own errors [i.e., the results of its errors being tiredness,
exhaustion, and weakness]
as tricks.

40

• *All life*
is
movement,
and
• *movement*
is
not effortful
when the entity
is in harmony with
life.

But
movement
seems
temporarily
effortful
until
this harmony [i.e., until this harmony with life]
has been established
by
reorienting
the ego.

[When the ego has been reoriented]
You then
move
within
the rhythm
of your own life stream.

When you
can
feel
the rhythm of your life stream,
• you have
already
acquired
a certain amount of
self-awareness and
• you are
already
within
the expansive movement.

41

*Those who are on paths such as yours
will find that*

- *some parts of them
are already joining the cosmic movement;*
- *other parts
still*
 - *resist and*
 - *stagnate.*

*Your
moving parts
are
the aware parts.*

*These [moving] parts
are capable of recognizing
the significance of the resistance.*

These [moving] parts can meditate

- *on seeking a deeper understanding
of your task in life;*
- *on the meaning of your life
in the light of this lecture.*

*You will find
greater motivation
to request guidance
so that*

- *your stagnating parts
will yield to*
- *the moving parts.*

*Little by little
you will
energize
the contracted consciousness
that has
separated itself
from the whole.*

42	<p><i>When I speak of ego, I do not wish to imply that it should be totally</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• negated,</i><i>• denied, and</i><i>• insulted.</i> <p><i>The ego</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• is part of divine consciousness and</i><i>• holds all aspects of the greater self from which it has separated itself, even if they [i.e., even if aspects of the greater self which the ego holds]</i> <p><i>are</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• distorted and</i><i>• misused</i> <p><i>[i.e., distorted and misused by the ego].</i></p> <p><i>The basic</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• energy and</i><i>• consciousness of the ego is made of the same substance with which you ultimately reunite.</i>
43	<p><i>The ego must be healthy in order to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• venture beyond its present confines,</i> <p><i>to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• transcend itself, and</i><i>• learn and</i><i>• own</i> <p><i>as yet unknown spiritual territory.</i></p>

*It [i.e., The ego]
needs to
expand
its*

- *knowledge,*
- *experience, and*
- *creative potential.*

*In order to do this [i.e., In order to expand its knowledge, experience,
and creative potential],
the ego
must adopt
attitudes
compatible with
its original nature.*

*All the
• tricks of the ego,
all the
• negativity and
• evil
that are embedded*

*only
in the ego,*

*have to be recognized
with a
• very incisive,
• sharp
self-honesty
for what they are.*

*• Denial,
• rationalization, and
• projection
must be given up.*

*The searchlight
must be
ruthlessly
turned
on the little self.*

*Only when you
use your ego consciousness
to put
the strong light of truth
on other areas of your ego consciousness
can you adopt*

- *healthy,*
- *truthful*

attitudes.

*Only
a healthy ego
can*

- *transcend itself and*
- *unify with*

*the naturally healthy
divine consciousness.*

44

The

- *weak,*
- *sick,*
- *distorted*

*ego
very often
wants to give itself up
simply because
it cannot bear itself any longer.*

*It [i.e., The weak, sick, distorted ego]
adopts*

*various forms of escape,
such as*

- *drugs or*
- *other means of*

false transcendence.

But

*such [i.e., But false]
ego transcendence
is*

- *highly dangerous and*

is

- *just a variation of insanity.*

*For insanity itself
is the attempt of the ego to*

- *lose or*
- *transcend
itself*

*because
it can no longer*

- *bear
itself.*

In all these

- *false and*
- *dangerous*

*attempts [i.e., In all these false and dangerous attempts by the ego to lose or
transcend itself],*

*the entity
always*

seeks to avoid

- *effort,*
- *pain,*
- *inconvenience, and*
- *those aspects of life*
 - *with which it does
not agree or*
 - *which it does
not understand.*

It [i.e., The ego or entity]

*seeks to cheat,
using shortcuts,
which*

- *can never work and*

which

- *exact a very high price.*

	<p><i>Consequently [i.e., Because using shortcuts never works and exacts a very high price],</i></p> <p><i>the entity may hold on even tighter to the</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• immobile,</i><i>• rigid state,</i> <p><i>perhaps for many incarnations,</i></p> <p><i>thus [i.e., thus by holding on even tighter to the immobile, rigid state for many incarnations]</i></p> <p><i>making</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• healthy ego transcendence</i> <p><i>as impossible as</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• the false kind [i.e., the false kind of transcendence – via drugs or other means of false transcendence].</i>
45	<p><i>You can succeed only</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• by using the healthy part of the ego to shed light on the sick part;</i><i>• by using the honest part of the ego to shed light on the dishonest part.</i> <p><i>Then [i.e., Then when you use the healthy part of the ego to shed light on the sick part and use the honest part of the ego to shed light on the dishonest part]</i></p> <p><i>ego transcendence takes place in the safest possible way.</i></p>

*Then [i.e., Then when you use the healthy part of the ego to shed light on the sick part
and use the honest part of the ego to shed light on the dishonest part]
you acquire
new territory:
a territory
that was at first
frighteningly*

- *foreign,*
- *unknown, and*
- *apparently dark*

but will become

- *familiar and*
- *light.*

*With this
new safety,
a sense of
eternality
is created in the self.*

The deepest

- *feelings,*
- *knowledge, and*
- *experiences*

*of life's continuum
will*

- *grow and*
- *automatically eliminate*

an enormous amount of

- *pain and*
- *fear.*

*But
this growth
cannot come cheaply.*

*It [i.e., This growth]
requires
full*

- *investment and*
- *commitment*

on your part.

*And whoever
does this [i.e., whoever makes this full investment and commitment]
genuinely
must reap the fruits*

	<p><i>in a most concrete way.</i></p>
46	<p><i>The greater your efforts become, the more of a spiritual force you</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>lawfully elicit and</i>• <i>make your own.</i> <p><i>Every step of</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>truth and</i>• <i>goodwill</i> <p><i>activates</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>automatically and</i>• <i>inexorably</i> <p><i>the</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>power and</i>• <i>creative spiritual force</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>within and</i>• <i>around</i> <p><i>you.</i></p>
47	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Blessings and</i>• <i>love</i> <p><i>for all of you, my dearest ones.</i></p>

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