Pathwork Lecture 91: Questions and Answers

This lecture is given in an expanded poetic format, what I call a Devotional Format of the lecture, and in that sense, this is my interpretation of the intent of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and I ask you to ponder the words for your own interpretation. I did this Devotional Format so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry – that is, devotionally.

The blessings to me in developing this format have been truly profound, and my wish is that this Devotional Format will be a blessing to others. I invite you to slowly read and ponder this format of the text – with an open heart to experience the Guide’s Presence and Love emerging from among the words such that the wisdom comes to LIVE you.

For clarity: The original text is in bold and italicized. [My adds of commentary/clarification/interpretation are in brackets, italicized, and not bolded.] To learn more of my Devotional Format and see the lectures I have done in this way, go to https://www.garyvollbracht.com/pathwork-lectures/pathwork-lectures-devotional-format/

Gary Vollbracht

<table>
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| 03 | **Greetings,**  
|     | *my dearest friends.*  
|     |  
|     | **God bless**  
|     | *every one of you.*  
|     |  
|     | **Blessed is this hour** [i.e., Blessed is this time we now spend together in this lecture]. |
| 04 | **If you have a sufficient number of questions** [Note: see the invitation for questions in the closing comments of Lecture 90: Moralizing, Disproportionate Reactions, Needs, given two weeks previously on October 13, 1961],  
|     | it would be good, at this time,  
|     | to interrupt the sequence of lectures.  
|     |  
|     | **You have received a great deal of material**  
|     | that you could not possibly have absorbed  
|     | • intellectually,  
|     | let alone  
|     | • emotionally –  
|     | not even to a small degree.  

by Eva Broch Pierrakos
Edited by Judith and John Saly; Devotional Format Posted 12/26/20
• True,
• emotional
  absorption
  often comes much later,
  so it would be impossible
  to wait for that [i.e., impossible to wait for true, emotional
  absorption before continuing with the sequence of lectures].

To overcrowd you at this time
with a rapid succession of
difficult material
is not advisable.

So, if you have some questions,
I shall answer them to the best of my ability.

**QUESTION:**
I am confused about
moralizing with myself
regarding
certain superstitions.

On the one hand,
  I know that these superstitions
  are damaging to me,
on the other,
  I now know that
  moralizing [i.e., moralizing by saying these superstitions are BAD]
  is not good either.

**ANSWER:**
In your work you have found out
why
  you wish to hold on to these superstitions.

I do not have to go into the details.

The fact that you even ask this question now
is interesting
  from the point of view of your discovery in this respect [i.e., point of view
  of your discovery in respect to having found out WHY you do this].
You want to hear me say that you

**moralize** [i.e., that you MORALIZE by “wrongly” judging yourself BAD for having damaging superstitions]

so you can [i.e., so you can, instead of stopping having superstitions,]

continue holding on to a
• very damaging
  and
• **useless defense mechanism** [i.e., holding on to the superstitions].

**QUESTIONER:**
You know me very well.

**QUESTION:**
In a previous lecture about **emotional growth and its function** [Ref: Lecture 89, given September 29, 1961],
a question was asked as to how to handle very wild emotions at a time when one has no helper available.

But what does one do if the emotions are so
• deep-seated,
  so deeply
• buried and
• repressed,
  for such a long time,
  that they simply will not come out to the degree one would like?

**ANSWER:**
It is very important indeed to be able to recognize this fact [i.e., to recognize that you have emotions that are so deep-seated, so deeply buried and repressed, for such a long time, that they simply will not come out to the degree you would like], and it indicates substantial progress.
Such recognition [i.e., Such recognition that you have emotions that will not come out the degree you would like],

in itself,
indicates
insight.

More frequently,
a person does not know that further emotions
• are buried and
• demand to come out in spite of resistance.

Your awareness of this certainly means
• insight and
• progress.

The moment this insight exists the way is opened, even if
at the moment you are still unable to do anything about it.

In the first place, you should
• rejoice about this self-recognition,
rather than
• feel bad that you cannot accomplish what you want instantly.
Instead of pressuring yourself into a state of bad conscience [i.e., pressuring yourself into a state of feeling guilty for having emotions that will not come out to the degree you would like], relax in the knowledge,

"I know where I stand,
I know that something in me still resists,"

and then go about finding out why you resist [i.e., finding out WHY you resist bringing out these repressed emotions in you].

Why are you afraid of letting out your emotions to the full extent?

Usually you will find that one of the reasons is the fear that you will be unable
• to control yourself,
• to handle these emotions,

and that you will be forced
• to give in to them.

Another reason for resisting is that the full scope of one's repressed emotions comes as a shock because it is so contrary to one's idealized self.
The moment you can
• sense
and
• acknowledge
these factors [i.e., The moment you can sense and acknowledge these reasons that make you FEAR letting out your deepest and repressed emotions, FEAR that if you did let them out you would lose control of yourself and be forced to give in to them, and FEAR that these heretofore repressed emotions, if let out, would reveal aspects of yourself that are too contrary to your idealized self-image],
you can handle the situation,
because
now
you know these reasons [i.e., these reasons for fear] to be
• unreal and
• invalid.

You have learned, for instance,
that you can
be aware of emotions
without having to
act on them.

You also know that
if lack of control exists,
then certainly
you have
less control
when
• they are repressed, and
• you are unaware of their existence,
than
with clear
• awareness and
• understanding
about them.

With this
• knowledge and
• intent,
you have nothing to fear
in that direction [i.e., in the direction of feeling and expressing your deeply repressed emotions and emotional reactions].
As to the fear of discovering that you are not your idealized self-image, you also know how to approach this.

You have to learn to accept yourself on the basis of your
• real values,

which you can only find once you take the courageous step of giving up the
• false Values of the idealized self.

QUESTION:
I feel the emotions, and they are like a stone in the pit of my stomach.

I just can't let them out.

I know they are there, but it is like a congestion.
ANSWER:
I think it is wonderful
• that you have this awareness [i.e., this awareness of the SENSATIONS of these emotions, as if there is a stone in the pit of your stomach],
• that you do not repress this insight.

This [i.e., This awareness of these sensations] is of great value;

it is very constructive.

It does not matter that it [i.e., that coming to deeper awareness of these heretofore repressed emotions] takes a little more
• time and
• work.

You have nothing to fear.

The only cause for worry is to be utterly unaware of these things.

QUESTION:
If the conscience is the voice of the higher self speaking to us, how do you distinguish between
• this conscience and, say,
• guilt feelings?
ANSWER:

In a past lecture [See Lecture 50 The Vicious Circle, given two-and-a-half years earlier on April 24, 1959]

I discussed
two kinds of conscience,
but I will gladly answer you again
since it was a long time ago.

In the meantime [i.e., In the two-and-a-half-year period since then],
further
• insight and
• understanding
was gained,
so that now,
with some of the new approaches,
a deeper understanding can be reached.

As I explained at the time,
there are
two kinds of conscience:
• the conscience of
  the higher self,
and
• an artificially constructed,
• superimposed
  conscience
  which derives from
  the idealized self.

The moralizing I discussed
is a part of
this latter conscience [i.e., part of this superimposed conscience].

Whenever you do not live up to
the super-standards [i.e., the super-standards of the idealized self]
you impose upon yourself,
it may
appear as
the voice of conscience [i.e., it may APPEAR as
the voice of the conscience of the higher self].
The only way you can distinguish between the two [i.e., distinguish between the conscience of the higher self and the artificially constructed, superimposed conscience] is by the way you feel about them.

There is a very distinct difference as to how you experience the one or the other.

Any words I could give you, any rule I could pronounce, would be very misleading.

But I can describe the emotional experience of each.

If it is the voice of the higher self, the real conscience, then there will be no destructive hopelessness, despair with oneself, anger at oneself, impatience.

There will be no negative feeling.
[If it is the voice of the higher self, the REAL conscience]

There

will be

• an insight into
  
  one's tendency toward
  
  childish
  
  • selfishness or
  
  • greed or
  
  • whatever else,

but

without being depressed about it.

Simultaneously,

there will be a

simple desire

to act

on a more mature level –

not because

• one must be perfect,

not because of

• the fear not to be perfect,

but simply because

• one wants to [i.e., one simply WANTS to act
  in a more mature way].

There is

no compulsive anxiety

about the issue.

It is a clear decision [i.e., It is a clear decision to act in a more mature way]

without pressure

which makes you

feel

thoroughly good,

even if it

does mean

• giving up a
  
  shortsighted childish advantage,

even if it

does mean

• the recognition of
  
  undesirable trends in one's character.
On the other hand, when the voice of the idealized self-image speaks [i.e., when the voice of the SUPERIMPOSED CONSCIENCE speaks], many of these negative feelings will be present.

You will feel
• guilty
  about
  existing negative trends
  while still
  wanting to have it your way.

You will feel
• fear and
• anxiety
  at the thought
  that you act
  according to the child in you.

This conflict [i.e., this conflict between feeling you OUGHT TO already be your idealized self, yet also feeling so GUILTY about your still existing childish negative trends,]
will create
more
• anxiety,
more
• tension and
• impatience
  with
  • yourself and
  • others.

Should you then decide to carry out the right act, it will make you feel resentful, rather than at peace with yourself.
At the same time, the mere fact that you • have faults, that you are • confused as to the • right or • wrong course, that you may • make a wrong decision and thereby • incur • criticism or • frustration, will plunge you into despair.

All this is proof that you have heard the voice of the idealized self-image [i.e., the voice of the superimposed conscience].

The answer as to which of the two consciences you are dealing with can come only if you account for your emotional reactions.

Of course, both [i.e., BOTH the REAL conscience and the SUPERIMPOSED conscience] may possibly exist • side by side, • simultaneously.
In this case [i.e., In this case where BOTH the REAL conscience AND the SUPERIMPOSED conscience exist side by side, simultaneously], the right action should not be stopped because in your self-accounting you have discovered that • negative motivations, • moralizing, and the • idealized self happen to want the same thing as the higher self.

You should go on doing that which is right, while working on the negative aspect until you can free yourself from it through understanding yourself.

Do not automatically refrain from a constructive action merely because you have discovered a • negative motivation or a • destructive impulse inverted into a • forceful compulsive superstandard.

QUESTION:
Why do I feel so exhausted all the time?

I have seen doctors and they don't find any physical reason.
ANSWER:

This condition [i.e., This condition of feeling exhausted all the time for seemingly no medical or physical reason] applies to many people, indeed.

One of the general reasons – and it certainly is the case with you – is that a great deal of emotions are repressed.

You crush not only destructive emotions which you dare not face and acknowledge within yourself so as to come to terms with them, but also [i.e., but you also crush] valid and constructive desires and aims.

You do not heed them out of a general fear of disapproval and a lack of belief in the validity of your aims.

You feel that just because you want it, it cannot be valid.

The repression of these two sets of emotions [i.e., The repression of DESTRUCTIVE emotions and CONSTRUCTIVE emotions] consumes a great amount of energy.
The energy you thus lose produces a negation of life.

There is a feeling of
• futility about life,
• hopelessness,
• fear
• coping with life’s difficulties.

It might be said that the tiredness comes from this [i.e., from this feeling of futility about life, of hopelessness, from this fear of coping with life’s difficulties], but this would be an over-simplification.

The chain reaction goes a little further.

In other words, because of repression of
• negative emotions,
as well as of [i.e., as well as repression of]
• positive goals,
a
• futility,
• lack of self-confidence,
and therefore the fear of coping with life’s difficulties exists.

The tiredness is a result of it [i.e., is a result of this futility, of this lack of self-confidence, and therefore is a result of the fear of coping with life’s difficulties].
Also,

- the futility is a result of
  - the tiredness,
- the tiredness is a result of
  - the futility –

and

- both [i.e., and both futility and tiredness] are a result of
  - repression [i.e., repression of your constructive and destructive emotions].

Do you understand?

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**QUESTION:**
Yes.

*How can I overcome it* [i.e., How can I overcome the repression of my constructive and destructive emotions]?

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**ANSWER:**
My dear,

there is only one way [i.e., there is only one way to overcome the repression of these emotions] –

and that is an

- extensive search of
  - self-finding,
  - self-realization,
  - facing oneself,

followed by the

- reconstruction of certain personality traits.

This is not easy,

*but it is the only way.*

There is no

- quick and
- easy

answer.
QUESTION:
I have a question about killing anything that is alive.

I have a little girl
and, naturally, I have taught her that
it is bad to kill anything.

However,
what do you do when there are
vermin in the house?

ANSWER:
Well, my dearest friends,
I have answered such questions before
and I will again.

This view of
not killing something,
even if it is destructive
like vermin, for instance,
would be
• extreme fanaticism,
and
• an utter misunderstanding of truth.

There is a lower kind of animal life
that
is
destructive,

and if you would all abide by
the rigid rule
that nothing must be killed,
you would
destroy yourselves.

You would
not kill germs either.

Germs, too,
are life-organisms,
only smaller.
You cannot see them [i.e., you cannot see germs]
with your ordinary eyes,
but life is there.

Now where does it all end?

If a
• small,
• destructive
  life-organism
  is maintained
  because of such a rule [i.e., a rule never to kill any life organism],
it would eventually
destroy the
• bigger,
• more important
  life-organism.

By allowing an organism
to live
due to a rule
not to kill,
you would kill just the same,
though you would not see the act,
since the procedure is drawn out.

Here you have a typical example of
how
• dangerous and
• fallacious
  it is to
  follow rules blindly.
By doing so,
you end up doing the very thing
the rule forbids [i.e., here, killing the more important life-organism
by NOT killing the destructive life-organism].

This applies to
any truth.

• Truth
carried too far
  unthinkingly,
necessarily becomes an
  • untruth.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Truth is never a rigid rule that can be pursued to the end.</th>
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<td>It [i.e., Truth] is</td>
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<tr>
<td>• dynamic and</td>
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<td>• flexible</td>
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<td>and therefore</td>
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<td>always requires</td>
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<td>the middle road</td>
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<td>which can only be attained by responsible</td>
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<tr>
<td>• thinking and</td>
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<td>• evaluating.</td>
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<th>Rigid dogma is based on such rules.</th>
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<td>• The life has been extracted out of the living spirit of</td>
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<td>• truth,</td>
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<td>and</td>
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<td>• the letter of the law has been substituted [i.e., substituted for the LIVING SPIRIT of truth].</td>
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<td>Because people are</td>
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<td>too lazy to think</td>
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<td>and</td>
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<td>too cowardly to make their own decisions based on their own evaluations,</td>
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<td>they want to adhere to a dead ruling.</td>
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<td>Then [i.e., Then, by following a dead, rigid rule.]</td>
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<td>they feel good about doing the right thing.</td>
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Truth
   is not that comfortable.

It [i.e., Truth]
   has to be fought for
   constantly
   through
   • accounting,
   • thinking,
   • deciding,
   • weighing.

It [i.e., Truth]
   requires
   • a sense of self-responsibility
   and
   • courage.

This applies to everything,
   including the subject you asked about [i.e., the subject of killing vermin].

I can foresee another question.

It is:

   On what level of animal life
   are we to stop?

How do we know?

There are
   • so many considerations,
   • so many factors we ignore.

How can we decide
   which animal life
   is predominantly
   • destructive [i.e., is predominantly destructive and needs to be killed]
   and
   which
   is predominantly
   • constructive [i.e., is predominantly constructive
   and needs to be kept alive and protected]?
This [i.e., This deciding on which animal is destructive and needs to be killed and which animal is constructive and needs to be kept alive and protected] also depends on conditions of a particular civilization and on environmental factors.

There is no easy answer here.

But again, fanaticism and rigidity will not be the answer.

The answer is evolutionary development.

The time has not yet arrived when humankind is ready to give up killing higher animal species, but it is not too distant, at least from our point of view.

The time will come when humankind will no longer need to eat meat.

However, until such time, many other things will first have to change.

The next step will be the strict observation of avoiding unnecessary cruelty [i.e., unnecessary cruelty to animals].

This step [i.e., This step of avoiding unnecessary cruelty to animals] cannot be skipped by forbidding meat-eating.
Until such time [i.e., until such a time when people avoid unnecessary cruelty to animals],

you can only find
within yourself
the answer to such questions [i.e., questions involving whether one should kill or should not kill living creatures for food, for example].

Probe yourself.

Where do you tend toward rigid fanaticism?

Where do you tend to be irresponsible?

Every issue demands
• a different attitude,
• a new accounting,
and
• a thinking through.

QUESTION:
Would you care to elaborate on the distinction between
• pseudo-euphoric states of elation
and
• genuine elation?

The question has been answered by many authorities, but may we hear what you have to say about it?
ANSWER:
The first
and most important measure
in order to establish the answer to this question [i.e., this question about
the distinction between pseudo-euphoric states of elation
and genuine states of elation]
is to ask oneself
what was
the motive
for wanting
such a state of elation.

Of course, the first answer [i.e., the first answer regarding your motive for
wanting to experience such a state of elation]
will always be
"because I wanted to
• communicate with God.

I wanted it in order to
• develop myself."

But do you
really develop
because
you experience this state [i.e., you experience this state of elation]?
Not if it [i.e., Not if this state of elation]
is artificially produced.

The only way to distinguish
between
• genuine [i.e., genuine states of elation]
and
• pseudo-elation
is the honest answer to
whether or not
• an escape from the difficulties of life played a role;
whether there is
• a desire for pleasure supreme
that cannot be attained through healthy means
because too much
• fear and
• inhibition
exist in the soul.
A true answer [i.e., A true answer to the question as to WHY you WANT such an experience of elation]

- always, and
- only, be found if one goes to the roots of oneself and

finds these factors [i.e., finds whether or not an ESCAPE from the difficulties of life played a role; whether or not there is a desire for PLEASURE SUPREME that cannot be attained through healthy means because too much fear and inhibition exist in the soul].

If you have a particular preoccupation with this subject [i.e., with this subject of experiencing states of elation], this in itself should give rise to suspicion.

The predominantly healthy soul will have no particular desire for such euphoric states of elation.

Your desire [i.e., Your DESIRE, if you are a predominantly healthy soul.] will rather be to procure all the pleasure this life contains by making your soul as healthy as possible.

You will find God in that way [i.e., You will find God from your desire to procure all the pleasure THIS LIFE contains by making your SOUL as HEALTHY as possible].
You will not need, nor want, to skip a full life-experience [i.e., NOT want to SKIP the step of procuring full life-experience and all the pleasure THIS LIFE contains by making your SOUL as HEALTHY as possible]
    under the well-sounding pretext that your aim is communion with God.

If you want this [i.e., IF you want ONLY direct communion with God],
    • there is a fear in you to meet life full face
      and
    • you therefore want to avoid it [i.e., want to avoid life].

True spiritual states of elation come
    • undesired and
    • unexpected.

They follow suit after life has
    • truly been lived,
      and
    • not avoided.

They [i.e., True spiritual states of elation] are very rare indeed.

They [i.e., True spiritual states of elation] do not represent a shortcut.
They [i.e., True spiritual states of elation] are not the result of avoiding life and still desiring development and progress.

Many wish this very impossibility [i.e., Many wish for this very impossibility of avoiding life while at the same time desiring development and progress].

They try to accomplish it [i.e., They try to accomplish development and progress] by forcing themselves into states of elation that cannot be genuine.

The person who walks the stony, narrow road of real self-facing will, for the longest time, have no such experience whatsoever [i.e., NO experiences of states of elation whatsoever].

He or she will not even crave it [i.e., NOT even GRAVE a state of ELATION].

If there is no longing for it [i.e., no longing for a state of elation], this might indicate a healthy state of mind.
The absence of longing [i.e., The ABSENCE of LONGING for a state of ELATION], means
  • an acceptance of life
  and
  • a healthy ability
to cope with life,
or at least a
  • confidence and
  • intention
that the ability to
cope with life
will be gained,
in all its [i.e., in all of life’s]
  • favorable
  and
  • unfavorable
  aspects,
  acquiring thereby [i.e., acquiring, BY coping with
life in all its favorable and
unfavorable aspects],
  the ability for
  • happiness,
  • love and
  • pleasure.

Super-states of euphoria
usually avoid all that [i.e., AVOID all that COPING with life in all its
favorable and unfavorable aspects].

If they [i.e., If super-states of euphoria] are
genuine,
they come,
as I said,
only
after
having tackled life
with all its facets.
However, my friends, it is also possible that such a state [i.e., such a state of elation or euphoria] is a combination of
• escape [i.e., escape from the realities of life]

and a
• real foretaste of genuine spiritual experience.

A combination of mixed inner trends may have led to this mixture.

If the genuine element [i.e., If the GENUINE element or particle of a state of elation or euphoria] is there at all,

it [i.e., this GENUINE element or particle of a state of elation or euphoria] will lead you away from seeking such experience for the sake of an unconsciously wanted shortcut.

You will rather [i.e., You will, RATHER THAN SEEKING experiences of states of ELATION so as to take a shortcut to growth and development,] be more determined than ever to give up all inner resistance to face yourself to the utmost [i.e., to face yourself to the utmost in order to further your growth and development].

You will recognize that your desire for communion with • God existed because you wanted to avoid a communion with • yourself.
• Courage
and
• humility
to face oneself
with all one's limitations
will have
increased
if only
a particle
of such an experience [i.e., if only a particle of such
an experience of states of elation or euphoria]
were
real.

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I repeat:

To the extent that such experience [i.e., To the extent that such an
experience of states of elation or euphoria]
was
genuine,
to that extent
must the subsequent road
lead
away from
such euphoric states.

Does that answer your question?

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QUESTION:
Yes. But, for instance,
• in prayer
and
• in meditation
one gets, at times,
such
• inner peace
and
• inner happiness,

• a borderline elation.
ANSWER:
- Peace,
- calm,
and
- happiness
  could not possibly be called
  a euphoric state of elation.

Again,
as in the question regarding the two kinds of conscience [i.e., 1) higher self or divine or real conscience and 2) superimposed conscience from the idealized self-image, the need to be perfect now],
you should examine what you feel about this peace.

Account for the feeling.

In other words,
is the peace
  a result of an unhealthy passivity?
Does it [i.e., Does this “peace”]
  contain elements of giving up
    • inner
  or
    • outer action?

Does it mean you now feel that you do not have to do anything further in order to make a go of life?

Such unhealthy passivity
  is as much an indication of distortion
as an unhealthy
  • overactivity,
  • haste,
  • pressure, and
  • compulsion.
The truth combines
• activity
and
• passivity
in a relaxed way.

The
• knowledge
and
• intent
to live life actively
does
not include
inner unrest.

When the feeling
of healthy peace exists,
strength
• gathers
and
• results in
confidence
that you will
• overcome your obstructions
and
• live life fully.

Then
the peace is
genuine.

If, on the other hand,
the peace is a
• momentary,
• pleasant,
• relaxed
feeling,
but after it is gone,
no strength remains
which is constructively used,
then the peace
was a
false one.
Real
• peace and
• strength
  usually follow
  unpleasant self-recognitions
  that one has
  accepted fully.

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**QUESTION:**
Isn't lastling improvement also a yardstick?

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**ANSWER:**
Yes. What I said before leads to lasting improvement.

Such lasting improvement is bound to come
  if such an experience [i.e., if such an experience of states of elation]
  strengthens the
  • intent and
  • execution
  of
    • finding
      one's obstructions
  and finally
  • resolving them.

To expect lasting improvement simply because you have had such an experience [i.e., simply because you have had such an experience of states of elation or euphoria] is a misunderstanding.
The truth is that
the experience [i.e., that the experience of states of elation or euphoria]
influences one's
• actions and
• attitude
to obtain improvement
through one's
• efforts,
• courage, and
• humility.

There is a
• subtle
• but important difference
in this outlook.

In addition,
such an experience [i.e., such an experience of states of elation or euphoria]
is almost always
the result of
serious efforts
in the right direction,
and these [i.e., and these serious efforts in the right direction]
in turn must produce
further efforts.

Moreover,
it is certainly not easy to
judge
what constitutes
improvement.

As you all know,
actual change
is such a
very gradual process
that
• it passes by
  almost unnoticed
and
• you only discover it
  much later.
A quick change
in one's personality
is rarely to be trusted.

On the other hand,
it may mean
great improvement
if you can
begin
to accept yourself
as you are,
for this [i.e., for this accepting yourself as you are]
is the basis on which to work.

This [i.e., This coming to accept yourself as you are]
may be unnoticed by anyone else.

Real improvements
are often subtle.

QUESTION:
My question has already been answered in part.

It has to do with
improvement on the path.

Does the improvement occur
automatically
through self-recognition,
or is there any value in
certain disciplines
that call for
* resolutions,
or
* promising oneself
not to repeat certain patterns?
ANSWER: Promising oneself not to repeat certain patterns may be quite risky, because you cannot help these patterns as long as you do not find the reason for them.

Once you have found their existence, you have yet to understand their
- inner,
- though false, necessity.

For you, they [i.e., For YOU, these patterns of behavior that you repeat] are a necessary defense.

As long as
- these factors [i.e., As long as these patterns of behavior that are a necessary defense for you] are not thoroughly understood and
- you have not recognized that the defense is
  - destructive and
  - ineffective,

that in fact it [i.e., that in fact the defense] brings you the very thing you wish to defend against,

such promises to yourself would be useless.
If you
  stopped the pattern
  without the necessary understanding,
you would experience
  extreme anxiety.

_This_ [i.e., _This resulting anxiety that results from stopping the pattern
  WITHOUT the necessary understanding of its cause],
in turn,
  would produce
  other destructive patterns.

Or, if you
  continued helplessly in the pattern
  despite the given promise,
you would
  • feel angry at yourself and
  • be discouraged.

Or else,
you may be in such a conflict about the matter
  that you
  repress awareness of
  the repetition.

You repeat it
  in such a subtle way,
  perhaps in a
  slightly different way,
  that you
  • are
  no longer aware of it
  and
  • have to make the recognition
  all over again.

_Hence,_
  _promises of this sort_ [i.e., _promises to yourself
to give up a certain negative pattern_]
  are not to be advised.
However, discipline of a sort is necessary.

For instance,
• admonishing yourself to face yourself honestly,
  again and again;
or
• resolving that change
  • takes time and
  • needs a great amount of understanding;
or
• not letting up on efforts of self-observation and
• taking account of one's actions and
• reactions.

Discipline is also needed to be aware whenever the patterns repeat in variations.

The answer to your question [i.e., your question about improvement on the path] is a combination of
• discipline in the sense I have indicated and of
• allowing oneself to unfold in one's entire nature.

Only this combination can produce growth, and growth cannot be speeded up.
The necessary step before a destructive pattern can be dispensed with is understanding:
- the inner defense
- and
- the need for it.

The consequence [i.e., The consequence of this initial step of UNDERSTANDING both the inner defense and the need for it] before a destructive pattern can be dispensed with will be mature acceptance of the results of this destructive defense until such time as the psyche is ready to do without it.

This [i.e., This mature acceptance of the results of this destructive defense] is a necessary preliminary.

Without it [i.e., Without this mature acceptance of the results of this defense], maturity [i.e., maturity of growing out of this defense as you see the results of its destructiveness] is impossible.

This stage [i.e., This stage of SEEING, UNDERSTANDING, and ACCEPTING the destructive consequences of your defensive pattern and then CHOOSING to let go of the defense because of its destructiveness] cannot be shortened.

Once you are truly ready to let go of the pattern, you will no longer need promises to yourself [i.e., promises to yourself NOT to give in to the defensive destructive pattern by sheer willpower].

You will not
- wish to do it [i.e., NOT wish to use the destructive defensive pattern],
- feel it [i.e., NOT feel an urge to use the destructive defensive pattern],
- act by it [i.e., NOT act out the destructive defensive pattern].
You will quite naturally grow out of it [i.e., grow out of the destructive defensive pattern].

You see, my friends, you have so often a wrong attitude in the hurried approach toward your development.

This hurry indicates, on the one hand, a strong idealized self-image, that is, "I must be perfect already."

This only fortifies the non-acceptance of yourself as you happen to be now.

On the other hand, the hurry also indicates this:

"As long as I am imperfect, I have to experience • imperfect situations, • unfulfillment and • frustration.

Therefore, I must become perfect in a hurry, so as to be perfectly happy."

This includes the childish attitude we have discussed frequently of not accepting life as it really is.
The child wants heaven on earth.

It is true that at this stage you have already evolved from the state of demanding happiness from

- life
- and
- others,

- resenting it when not given to you,
- and
- disclaiming any responsibility for your wants.

You have realized at this point that you are the master of your fate.

But you still do not accept that life has to be taken as an imperfect business.

The ability to derive happiness from it [i.e., from life] even though it is not perfect,

- to accept yourself as average,

is the greatest sign of

- growth
- and
- maturity.
In a private session some time ago, I said to one of my friends, and I repeat it here publicly:

You have heard many aspects of what constitutes
• maturity
and
• immaturity.

One of the great milestones on the road to maturity is the ability to give up being
• special or
• grandiose
and to accept yourself as
• being average,
• living an average life.

If you can derive happiness out of the
• ordinary
and out of
• being ordinary,
then you have truly come a long way.

If you do accept
• yourself
and
• life in that way,
you will no longer have to whip yourself into perfection.

You will no longer need
• heaven on
• earth.
You will view
your own progress
with equanimity.

You will
no longer feel
any
• frustration or
• unhappiness
  as a disaster.

You will give yourself
time to grow.

It goes without saying that
if the compulsion
to be
• happy
and
• perfect
  is eliminated,
you will
be
• much happier
  and
• more perfect
  than you were before.

Thus you will approach your progress
with the right kind of discipline –
  not by
• attempting perfect action,
  but by
• giving up the resistance
to face
  what is usually
• right in front of you
  and yet
• hardest to see.
You may be quite determined to find yourself.

You expect some deep important insights of devastating impact, while the little ordinary things that reveal so much about your problems are right in front of your eyes and you do not see them.

To see what is right there requires
- discipline
and
- wanting to see it.

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**QUESTION:**
Isn't prayer a kind of discipline to keep oneself in a certain chosen direction?

49

**ANSWER:**
Yes. Prayer is a good way not to give up one's efforts in the right direction.

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**QUESTION:**
How does a person go about re-establishing an emotional experience about God?
I am not speaking about [i.e., I am not speaking about an emotional experience of] the God of religion, but about [i.e., but I am speaking about an emotional experience of] the God that is.

I know that motives [i.e., I know that MOTIVES for wanting to re-establish an emotional experience of the God that is] are important.

I may want to worship God, which is probably not existent in me.

Or I may want it [i.e., Or I may want an emotional experience of the God that is] for the idea of getting something, which is in me.

Or I may want it [i.e., Or I may want an emotional experience of the God that is] for an intellectual comprehension.

I think there might be some need for a father.

Those are my motives.

I have a few ideas as to where I can get this sense of God.

I tried it • through my work, • from books.

Now • what do I do, • where do I go in order to develop this feeling for God?
ANSWER:
As for the motives you cited [i.e., As for the motives you cited for re-establishing an emotional experience of the God that is],

they are true,
but by no means all.

The last one you mentioned [i.e., you think there might be some need for a father]
• is a much stronger factor than you realize
and
• contains many aspects that you still ignore.

Moreover,
you may not like to hear
that you
not only have
• negative motives of which you seem so proud,
but there is also a very
• healthy motive, a real
• spiritual need which you
  • disregard and
  • do not even want to recognize.

But for the moment,
the motives [i.e., the motives for re-establishing an emotional experience of the God that is]
are of secondary importance.

It is fine that you can enumerate some of them [i.e., that you can enumerate some of these motives for re-establishing an emotional experience of the God that is],

but it [i.e., but being able to enumerate some of the MOTIVES for re-establishing an emotional experience of the God that is]
does not matter at this point.
The first consideration is to find out

- how
  you attain this inner experience [i.e., HOW you attain this inner experience of the God that is],

- what
to do [i.e., WHAT you DO to attain this inner experience of the God that is],

- where
to go [i.e., WHERE you GO to attain this inner experience of the God that is].

There is only one way [i.e., there is only ONE WAY to attain this inner EXPERIENCE of the God that is]—
to attain
- selfhood.

You cannot have a
- genuine God-experience
  and
- trust
  and
- belief
  in God
  if you do not
  - trust and
  - believe
  in yourself.

To the degree that you
  do so [i.e., To the degree that you TRUST and BELIEVE IN YOURSELF],
you will
  not only
  trust
  - other people,
  but you will also
  trust
  - God.
So my advice is,
    do not search for God
    in
      • churches or
      • temples.

Do not search for Him
    through
      • knowledge,
      • books, or
      • teachings.

Search for Him
    in
      yourself

    and
      God
        will reveal Himself.

God is
    in
      you.

• Trust,
• faith,
• love,
• truth –

    all these exist
    in
      you.

No

outer knowledge
  provides you with a
  genuine God-experience,

and, for that matter,
  you would not even accept it [i.e., you would NOT even ACCEPT
  such outer knowledge about God].

If you would [i.e., IF you would ACCEPT such OUTER knowledge about God],
  it would happen out of
unhealthy motives,
  just as much as the opposite [i.e., just as much as resisting and
NOT ACCEPTING such OUTER knowledge about God
would happen, also for unhealthy motives].
Learn first
to trust
yourself,
in spite of
the many reasons you think you
• cannot or
• should not.

This path [i.e., Pathwork]
in itself
must
eventually
give you a
very healthy trust in
yourself.

And that [i.e., And that very healthy TRUST in YOURSELF]
is all you need
in order to find God.

There are so many people
who
cling to
God
just because they
do not trust
themselves.

This [i.e., This clinging to God, just because one does not trust oneself] is
the wrong
• kind of faith,
the wrong
• approach.

This kind of faith [i.e., This clinging to God, just because one does not trust oneself] is truly built on
sand.
It [i.e., This clinging to God, just because one does not trust oneself] is
false religion
that leads to
• obedience
and
• fear.

It [i.e., This clinging to God, just because one does not trust oneself] is so destructive,
reinforcing
• weakness
instead of
• strength.

That kind of religion you should avoid.

Not only is it [i.e., Not only is this clinging to God, just because one does not trust oneself]
found in
• well-known religious denominations,
it can also be
found in
• individuals
  who are not affiliated with
  any religion.

It [i.e., This clinging to God, just because one does not trust oneself] is a
• subtle and
• pervasive
  poison.

QUESTION:
I have noticed that when I confess my faults to another it
• seems to give them relief
and
• helps them face themselves.

Would you care to comment on this?
ANSWER:
Yes, this is very true.

It is very obvious why this is so.

You see in their
• aloneness and
• separateness people believe deep down in their emotions — although they know differently in their minds — that they are the only ones who have all these
• weaknesses and
• faults.

They feel themselves
• ostracized,
• different,
• separate — and therefore it is a great relief to actually be approached by a human being who has the strength to
• face and
• pronounce similar
  • weaknesses,
  • faults, or
  • limitations.
That [i.e., That confession by you that you have similar faults]
    • gives courage
    and
    • makes it so much easier
      to face the self,

    while the
    • irrational and
    • unconscious
      belief
      that you are the only one [i.e., that you are the ONLY ONE
        who has these weaknesses, faults, or limitations]
      leads to
      further repression.

My dearest friends,
    be blessed,
    each one of you.

May these answers
    help again
      to bring you a step forward
        into the right direction.

May a small grain [i.e., May a small grain of truth from
    these answers to your questions]
    take root in yourselves.

May it [i.e., May this small grain of truth that takes root in yourself]
    help you to
      absorb
        all the material you have received,
          even though
            some of it [i.e., some of this material]
              will be realized
                only much later.
Persevere, my friends, and you will grow into human beings who can
• love,
• respect and
• like yourselves

while you are still
• human,
• ordinary –

and thus
enjoy life
without feeling that
you have to be perfect.

This [i.e., This ENJOYING life while you are still an ordinary human, without feeling that you have to be perfect]
will
not lead you into
the opposite wrong extreme of
• laziness,
without the desire to
• change and
• grow.

Soon, you will perhaps
sense the difference in inner motivation
between the urge for development because you
• use a whip on yourself –
while feeling that you do not deserve
• happiness
but rather
• punishment because you are imperfect –

and the urge for development because you
• freely wish it [i.e., because you FREELY WISH development and growth].
Be blessed,
all of you
and
your dear ones.

Be in
peace.

Be in
God!

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