

Gems from the Guide

237 In Midlife and Feeling Tired, Busy, and Bored? (L96)

In this quote from L96 *Questions and Answers and Additional Comments on Laziness as Symptom of Self-Alienation*, the Guide speaks about **alienation from our real selves** with its **symptoms**. Perhaps the symptoms the Guide mentions here are those of midlife, maybe they are the symptoms of the so-called “**midlife crisis**.” Our “first half” of life (say, from age 20 up to 35 or even 50 or beyond), with its years of high hope, ambition, and energy, may be behind us. Perhaps now we are **feeling tired and bored with life**. **Guilt for laziness** may be **offset by overactivity**, but **nothing satisfies**. What’s the problem? Is this the early onslaught of “old age”? What’s up?

(See also these paragraphs of L96 on *pages 6 - 12 of the Devotional Format*:
<https://www.garyvollbracht.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/L096GaryDevotional.pdf>)

- 06** We discussed some of the symptoms of self-alienation such as: not relating to yourself and to others as you and they are in your true selves; not experiencing yourself in your true strength; not identifying with yourself and your deep inner reality but instead with the superimposed layers of your personality; relying on public opinion rather than on your own convictions, on pseudo-solutions and defense-mechanisms that you have laboriously built up over the course of years.
- 07** So many people are held back from living by a feeling of tiredness and even apathy. This can make you feel angry and guilty about what you would commonly call laziness. It, too, is a symptom, one of the many effects of self-alienation. It is generally assumed that laziness is simply a fault. This is a very superficial evaluation, however. Laziness is not a fault to be commanded away by sheer will. But you will get over it if you look deeply and understand its true significance as a consequence of self-alienation. For if you are truly anchored in the center of your being, you will not be lazy. You will not feel apathetic. You will not desire to remain idle. You will enjoy your periods of rest and relaxation, but this has nothing to do with laziness or apathy. You will enter the full flow of life, approaching each day and each activity with zest. The more you are alienated from yourself, the less possible is this. The less you are alienated from yourself, the more you will participate in and experience life in its fullness. The necessary energies will constantly regenerate and replenish themselves.
- 08** Losing energy is not a question of age -- not in reality, my friends. Although it is true that a young person has a certain store of energy that spends itself no matter how many obstructions exist, once this energy is spent, self-alienation hinders its regeneration. Thus you see the outer manifestations and judge them -- assuming that energy wanes with advancing age -- rather than seeing the true underlying cause. The moment you think this way, you are in error, my friends. Such erroneous thinking shuts a door. You believe an illusion, a superficial manifestation.

- 09** When you understand the previous lecture in its entirety -- and this you can do only by applying it to yourself -- then you will realize that what you often judge quickly and superficially as "old age" is nothing but a product of your self-alienation.
- 10** Compulsive overactivity comes from the same root as energy loss and is only a superimposition. It is your fight against the laziness you disapprove of. You do not know how to fight constructively by understanding the source, so you battle one of the many symptoms instead of the cause. Needless to say, that remedy is precarious. Compulsive overactivity as well as laziness and apathy stem from an identical root. You will find in the overactive person a nostalgic desire to do nothing.
- 11** Your strength, energy, and zest for life can be replenished only within the center of your individuality, when you no longer believe in pretense and illusion. The work you are doing on the path -- provided you are truly willing -- must lead you to this result, which is such a constant joy and makes life truly meaningful and productive. Only then will you find the activity that is in itself meaningful for you so that you are at one with it. Only then will you unfold your destiny.
- 12** There is no human being who does not operate on pretense at some level. We have gone into that at length in many of the previous lectures and in your private work. It is now important that you connect the pretense with self-alienation and with all its ramifications. Find the subtle pretense, for that is the only key to becoming aware of your real self.