

# Pathwork Lecture 31: Shame

1996 Edition, Original Given June 6, 1958

This Pathwork lecture is rendered in an **expanded poetic format**, what I call a **Devotional Version** of the lecture. In this sense it is **my interpretation** of the **intent** of the lecture. I may have interpreted portions differently from you, and when this is the case, I ask you to ponder the words for **your own interpretation**.

I did this Devotional Version so I can take the words into my heart, phrase by phrase, much as I would in reading poetry -- **devotionally**. *I invite you to slowly read and ponder this rendition of the text – with an open heart to experience the Pathwork Guide’s Presence, Wisdom and Love emerging from among the words. May the Pathwork Guide’s Wisdom come to live you.*

*For clarity: The original text is in bold, italicized, and mostly underlined. [My interpretations and intended clarifications are in brackets, italicized, sometimes underlined, but never bolded.]*

To learn more of my Devotional Version and to access the lectures I have rendered in this form, go to <http://www.garyvollbracht.com/quotes/pathwork-lectures-expanded-versions/>

*Blessings on your journey, Gary*

¶	Content
03	<p><b><u>Greetings</u></b> <b><u>in the Name of the Lord.</u></b></p> <p><b><u>I bring you blessings,</u></b> <b><u>my friends,</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><u>to each one of you and</u></b></li><li>• <b><u>to all your dear ones.</u></b></li></ul>
04	<p><b><u>When we spirits</u></b> <b><u>observe</u></b> <b><u>human beings,</u></b> <b><u>we can see</u></b> <b><u>how badly</u></b> <b><u>you need</u></b> <b><u>spiritual nourishment.</u></b></p>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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- Your body  
is nourished,  
as is
  - your intellect
- and even
  - your emotional nature –  
though the latter not always with  
the best possible food.

But when it comes to

- spiritual nourishment,  
most human beings  
starve themselves.

There is a great confusion about  
what spiritual nourishment  
really means.

It does  
not merely mean to

- read,
- hear, or
- learn  
about
  - spiritual truth or
  - law,
- about
  - God and
  - His creation.

It does  
not even mean

- prayer and
- meditation  
which, of course,  
if done in the right way,  
is also  
a very important part  
of spiritual nourishment.

However,  
the most important substance of spiritual food is

- self-development.

Your  
• innermost self,  
your  
• divine spark,  
is  
constantly  
crying out  
for this food [i.e., crying out for self-development],  
but  
your conscious being  
refuses  
to hear the cry [for self-development].

When you are  
• sad or  
• depressed,  
when you are  
• dissatisfied  
with your life  
whether for  
• actual and  
• rational  
reasons  
or not,

it is  
always  
because  
your spirit  
is starved.

Only that person  
can be  
truly  
• happy and  
• fulfilled  
who  
partakes of  
this most important food:  
spiritual development.

For there is  
no human being alive  
who has not the opportunity  
to become happy.

It [i.e., your happiness]  
is in your hands,  
my friends.

But

you so often

- turn the wrong way;

you

- seek happiness in the wrong direction;

you

- blame others for your misfortunes;

you

- blame fate,

you

- blame God;

you

- blame the alleged injustice of the world.

But

you

- do not take the one and only step  
that leads you to fulfillment  
through  
a deep sense  
of having lived your life  
the way your Creator had it in mind for you  
in this particular incarnation.

It varies, of course,  
with each individual,  
for not everyone  
has to fulfill an incarnation  
in the same way.

The same

- work or
- effort

is not expected  
of everyone.

But  
the one thing  
you should keep in mind,  
my friends,  
is that  
if you are not quite happy  
in spite of occasional outer difficulties,  
you have  
denied your spirit  
some of the nourishment  
it craves –  
most probably  
in the right way  
of  

- self-development and
- self-recognition.

Anyone  

- hearing or
- reading

these words  
has sufficient means  
to acquire this food [of self-development and self-recognition].

05

In my previous lectures I have mentioned  
several attitudes  
in the human soul  
which are what you might call  
God-eclipsing.

Last time I explained that  

- pride,
- self-will, and
- fear
  - underlie
    - all faults and
    - are responsible for
      - all unhappiness
      - all untruth

that exists  
in the human soul.

	<p><u>To continue this series of lectures on self-development, I will discuss tonight a new subject:</u></p> <p><u>shame.</u></p>
06	<p><u>There is a</u> • <u>right kind</u> <u>and a</u> • <u>wrong kind</u> <u>of shame.</u></p> <p><u>The</u> <u>right kind</u> <u>of shame</u> <u>is</u> <u>true repentance.</u></p> <p><u>Without</u> <u>this [right] kind of shame,</u> <u>there could</u> <u>never be</u> <u>an incentive for</u> <u>self-development.</u></p> <p><u>Without it [i.e., without this right kind of shame],</u> <u>no one</u> <u>would ever</u> <u>undergo</u> <u>the noble fight, my friends,</u> <u>against</u> <u>one's lower self;</u></p> <p><u>no one</u> <u>would take</u> <u>the path of purification</u> <u>if this [right kind of] shame</u> <u>did not exist within.</u></p>

True repentance  
is therefore  
• constructive and  
• very positive.

But there is also  
shame of the  
wrong kind.

Human beings  
so often  
confuse  
the two kinds of shame  
that now  
I want to devote some of our time together  
to this subject.

07

What is  
the wrong kind  
of shame?

We might call it  
a guilt-complex  
which, of course,  
is entirely  
• destructive and  
• negative.

What do  
your emotions  
actually say –  
even though you certainly do not consciously think so –  
when you have  
the wrong kind of shame?

They [i.e., your emotions] say:

"I am  
hopelessly bad,  
and there is  
nothing  
that can be done about it."

*With this attitude [that you are hopelessly bad and nothing can be done about it]*

*you*

*not only*

- *wallow in self-pity,*

*but*

- *express a sluggishness  
that prohibits*

*your working actively on*

*the elimination*

*of that which is wrong*

*within you.*

*Furthermore,*

*this attitude [that you are hopelessly bad and nothing can be done about it]*  
*becomes*

*more*

*and more*

- *unreasonable and*
- *unjust,*

*for you*

- *demand and*
- *expect*
  - *respect and*
  - *love*

*from others*

*although*

*you do*

*not*

- *respect and*
- *love*

*yourself.*

*Mind you, this [lack of respect and love for yourself]*  
*is not*

*because of*

*your shortcomings.*

*In the deepest regions of your being*  
*you*  
*cannot*  
*respect yourself*  
*because of*

- *the wrong attitude,*
- *the wrong kind of shame*  
*that makes you*
  - *passive*  
*where you should be*
    - *active.*

08

*Thus,*  
*you find yourself*  
*in a vicious circle:*

*the more you*  
*deny to yourself*  
*the experience*  
*of the constructive shame*  
*that would make you*

- *lift yourself up and*
- *work on yourself*  
*with realistic self-recognition –*  
*the foundation of*  
*self-development –*

*the more you*  
*despise yourself.*

*The more you*  
*do that [i.e., the more you despise yourself],*  
*the more you*  
*need to demand*

- *love and*
- *respect*  
*from others*  
*to make up for*  
*the lack of*  
*self-respect.*

	<p><u>The</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>blind,</u></li><li>• <u>unconscious, and</u></li><li>• <u>immature</u></li></ul> <p><u>side of you</u> <u>believes that</u> <u>if you receive</u> <u>sufficient appreciation</u> <u>from others,</u> <u>it will make up for</u> <u>the lack of</u> <u>self-respect</u> <u>you can</u> <u>never truly possess</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>unless</u> <u>you fulfill</u> <u>the basic spiritual laws</u> <u>within your own soul and</u></li><li>• <u>unless</u> <u>you do the maximum</u> <u>of what can be expected of you</u> <u>in self-development</u> <u>according to</u> <u>your overall spiritual development.</u></li></ul>
09	<p><u>I know, my friends,</u> <u>that no one</u> <u>thinks these thoughts</u> [i.e., <u>no one thinks that if others would show you</u> <u>sufficient appreciation and respect, it would make up for your</u> <u>lack of self-respect and you would not have to develop yourself</u> <u>and thereby legitimately and naturally achieve true self-respect]</u> <u>consciously,</u></p> <p><u>but</u> <u>if you would</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>test your emotions,</u></li><li>• <u>examine their demands</u> <u>as to what they actually</u><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>mean and</u></li><li>• <u>express,</u></li></ul></li></ul> <p><u>this is what you would find.</u></p>

Remember –  
and this is very important –  
your lack of self-respect  
is not due to  
your  
• faults,  
• weaknesses,  
• shortcomings, and  
• sins –  
no matter what they may be –  
but it [i.e., but your lack of self-respect]  
is due to  
your  
• wrong kind of shame.

The moment  
you exchange  
• the wrong shame  
for  
• the right [shame],  
I can promise you  
that  
in the measure this change [from the wrong to the right kind of shame]  
takes place,  
you must develop  
• true and  
• justified  
self-respect  
long before  
the faults in you  
have disappeared.

You do  
not have to be perfect  
in order to  
respect yourself.

All you have to do [to respect yourself]  
is to adopt a  
• realistic and  
• constructive  
attitude  
toward  
your imperfections.

The more  
your self-respect  
is established,  
the less  
you will crave  
for the respect of others,  
for you are then  
resting secure  
within yourself.

And this [i.e., And resting secure within yourself]  
will so change  
your

- inner attitude and

your

- emanations

that you will have  
a different effect  
on others;

this [i.e., your different effect on others due to your resting secure within yourself]  
will make it  
so much easier for the people around you  
to actually give you the

- love and
- respect

you desired in the first place.

10

Perhaps it has not occurred to you  
that  
the wrong kind of shame

- comes from  
your pride and
- furtheres your pride  
even more.

*This [i.e., the fact that the wrong kind of shame comes from and furthers your pride] may sound paradoxical at first.*

*Let me explain it this way:*

*Your lower self with all its shortcomings is a factor to reckon with if you do not want to escape your present reality.*

*The more you try to escape the facts of your life, the sicker your soul must become.*

*By having the wrong kind of shame, you do escape reality, for what your emotions express is that you will not accept yourself as you really are.*

*The moment you hopelessly despair about the lower side of your nature, you have not accepted yourself as you are.*

*It [i.e., hopelessly despairing about the lower side of your nature] means you are lacking the humility of courageously facing everything about yourself – and that is pride.*

11

Let me stress once again:

Intellectually  
you know  
that you are imperfect,  
but emotionally  
you don't.

Often there is  
a wide chasm  
between  
what you

- know and
- think

consciously  
and  
what your emotions

- claim and
- desire.

It is  
not at all difficult  
to make the emotions  
conscious  
if only  
you are willing  
to take the trouble  
to translate them [i.e., to translate your emotions]  
into  
concise thoughts,  
but it [i.e., but this translation of emotions into concise thoughts]  
needs a little effort.

Your emotions  
claim perfection  
before  
this perfection  
can be yours.

You place yourself  
higher  
than the efforts  
you have so far taken  
would warrant.

At the same time [that you place yourself higher on the ladder toward perfection than the efforts you have so far taken would warrant],

you do

- know,

or at least

- feel,

that you are

not there yet.

Instead of

consciously recognizing this fact [i.e., recognizing that you are not as high on the ladder toward perfection as you think you are]

and slowly

working up to the point

where you want to be,

you become angry

at

- the world and

at

- yourself  
for being

what you are

and refuse

to make the inner effort

to become

what you want to be.

So

the wrong kind of shame

means

- pride,
- laziness,
- injustice, and
- escape from your present reality.

This [pride, laziness, injustice, and escape from your present reality]

is what makes you

feel guilty, my friends,

and not

the actual faults

you may possess.

*These [i.e., the actual faults you may possess]*  
*would never make you*  
*feel guilty,*  
*provided*  
*you adopted*  
*the right kind of shame*  
*in which*  
*you accepted yourself*  
*in humility*  
*as you are at present,*  
*not fleeing*  
*from your reality,*  
*and thus building up*  
*from there [i.e., from where you are now] –*  
*slowly,*  
*step by step.*

*It [i.e., this way – accepting where you are and building up slowly from there]*  
*is the only*  
*• realistic and*  
*• constructive*  
*way*  
*to*  
*• change and*  
*• develop.*

12

The wrong attitude  
brings further hazards,  
however.

Because of  
• your pride and  
• your need for  
• respect and  
• love  
from others,

you  
begin to withdraw from  
what you really  
• think and  
• feel  
about yourself and  
hide it [i.e., hide what you really think and feel about yourself]  
behind a wall,  
so to speak.

You dare not  
stand up for  
who you really are  
because  
your emotions  
say that  
if you were yourself,  
you would be despised.

As I said before,  
the more  
you lack  
self-respect,  
the more important  
the respect of others  
becomes to you.

So  
you create  
a mask self.

In some subtle way,  
you become  
a fake.

And that [i.e., And becoming a fake], in turn,  
makes you  
even more despondent  
and you  
despise yourself  
even more.

The vicious circle  
• continues  
in full force and  
• carries you into  
deeper emotional conflicts  
until  
you develop the  
• courage and  
• humility  
to break it.

Please do not confuse  
standing up for  
who you really are  
which includes your lower self,  
with  
giving in  
to the impulses of your lower self  
in your deeds.

There is a vast difference  
between  
that [i.e., between giving in to the impulses of your lower  
self in your deeds and behavior]  
and  
a simple  
• recognition and  
• acceptance  
of what you are,  
without  
building up  
a different personality  
for the outside world  
to appear better.

One often establishes  
a fake "real self"  
for the very reasons explained here [i.e., in order to appear  
better than you are].

13

As long as  
you feel  
• sad,  
• bitter,  
• defiant, or  
• disharmonious in any way  
when you encounter  
your faults,  
you have  
not yet  
accepted yourself  
as you are.

Again  
you have to strive for  
the middle path.

• Accepting [your faults and imperfections]  
does not mean  
• wanting to  
stay  
in a state of imperfection.

It [i.e., accepting your faults and imperfections]  
means  
that you  
first  
have to learn  
to accept  
your state of imperfection.

*You should also find out  
whether you  
desire  
to be cherished for  
your shortcomings  
as a compensation for  
your  
imagined  
inability to*  
-  

- *change*  
*and thus [i.e., as a compensation for your imagined inability to  
change, and thus, as a compensation  
for your imagined inability to]*
- *come to  
cherish yourself.*

*When you have made  
such and other  
unreasonable emotions  
conscious,  
it will be easy  
to direct them [i.e., to direct your now-conscious emotions]  
into proper channels.*

14

*When you are capable of  
really and truly  
accepting yourself  
as you are,  
not desiring to appear  
better than you are,  
you have fulfilled  
the basic requirement  
to be on this path,  
my friends.*

*Before that [i.e., before your are capable of really and truly accepting yourself],  
you are  
not on it [i.e., you are not on this path called pathwork] as yet,  
but merely in  
a state of preparation  
for entering the gate  
leading to it [i.e., entering the gate leading to this path called pathwork].*

	<p><i><u>In other words,</u></i> <i><u>as long as</u></i> <i><u>there is the wrong kind of shame in you,</u></i> <i><u>you cannot</u></i> <i><u>advance on this path;</u></i></p> <p><i><u>you have to exchange it [i.e., exchange the wrong kind of shame]</u></i> <i><u>for</u></i> <i><u>the right kind of shame.</u></i></p>
15	<p><i><u>The wrong kind of shame</u></i> <i><u>will create</u></i> <i><u>a state of mind</u></i> <i><u>that is</u></i> <i><u>not only</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>extremely unhealthy,</u></i> <i><u>as I outlined just now,</u></i></li></ul><i><u>but will also</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>make you feel</u></i> <i><u>more</u></i> <i><u>and more</u></i> <i><u>alone.</u></i></li></ul></p> <p><i><u>Whenever you</u></i> <i><u>feel</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>lonely and</u></i></li><li>• <i><u>not understood,</u></i></li></ul><i><u>please realize</u></i> <i><u>that, at least to some degree,</u></i> <i><u>the condition I have described [regarding having the wrong kind of shame]</u></i> <i><u>must be responsible for it [i.e., must be responsible for your loneliness</u></i> <i><u>and for your not being understood]</u></i></p> <p><i><u>and not</u></i> <i><u>other people's</u></i> <i><u>lack of</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>love and</u></i></li><li>• <i><u>understanding.</u></i></li></ul></p>

No matter  
how incapable of love  
the people around you may be,  
you would  
never  
feel lonely  
if this wrong attitude [i.e., this wrong kind of shame where you rely on respect  
from others to compensate for your own lack of self-respect]  
were not  
somehow  
prevailing within you.

So do not  
seek  
a remedy [to your loneliness and feeling you are misunderstood]  
from without,  
but [rather] turn around within  
and look at yourself  
from this point of view [i.e., from the point of view that you harbor  
the wrong kind of shame].

16

You, whoever you are,  
may feel  
ashamed of something.

Whether it be  
• big  
or small,  
• grave  
or unimportant,  
is not the point.

You cover it [i.e., you cover what you are ashamed of] up;

you hide it;

you appear  
to be without  
that something  
of which  
you are ashamed.

*This [hiding of that of which you are ashamed]*  
*is the wall*  
*that separates you*  
*from others.*

*But in this way [i.e., by hiding that of which you are ashamed]*  
*you can never be sure*  
*that you are*  
*really*

- *loved and*
- *appreciated.*

*For*  
*this little voice in you*  
*keeps saying:*

*"If they only knew*

- *how I really am and*
- *what I have done,*  
*they would not love me."*

*That [belief that if others really knew you*  
*they would not love you]*  
*makes you*  
*feel*

- *alone,*
- *suffering, and*
- *cold.*

*You think that*  
*all the affection given to you*  
*is destined for*  
*the person you*

- *appear to be*

  
*and not for*  
*the person you*

- *really are.*

*Of course you are*

- *insecure and*
- *lonely*

  
*in that state.*

*But only you*  
*can change it [i.e., only you can change that state] –*  
*no one else.*

17

It will be easy  
for you to see  
that the only remedy  
for this  
constant state  
of  
• loneliness,  
of  
• insecurity, and  
of  
• growing self-despise

is the one step  
that appears  
hardest to you,  
namely  
to break down the shame  
and stand up for  
what you really are.

The more  
you try  
• the other way,  
• the way of subtle deception,  
the deeper  
your dilemma  
will be.

You have seen that.

So it is up to  
you  
to take  
the one courageous step of  
becoming yourself  
and [thereby]  
gaining  
true  
• security and the  
true  
• appreciation  
of your friends.

For they [i.e., For your friends]  
who are  
• spiritually developed and  
• capable of love  
will most certainly  
not love you less;  
quite the contrary.

And they [i.e., And your friends, on the other hand,]  
who are  
• immature  
and therefore  
• incapable of love  
will not be  
retracting their love for you  
since  
• they never really gave it [i.e., never really gave you love]  
• nor did you ever really own it [i.e., nor did you really own their love].

For such people [i.e., those who are immature and incapable of love]  
find themselves  
in exactly the same spot  
as you are in now:  
• craving for  
• affection,  
• respect, and  
• love  
to assuage  
their own  
lack of self-respect,  
• absent  
because they too  
do not have the courage  
to be themselves.

Their kind of love  
was an illusion  
in the first place.

So the only way  
to build a secure ground  
on which to stand  
is to  
stop the pretense  
you have laboriously cultivated  
all your life.

This seems  
a hard step  
at first,  
my friends.

18

Again, I want to stress that  
you are not expected  
to tell your secrets  
to everyone you meet.

Choose  
the right person  
to open up to;

choose the person  
who can help you.

Then choose the people  
with whom  
you are really close  
and those  
who know you  
as you really are.

Otherwise,  
you can  
never  
be yourself.

It [i.e., opening up honestly to another]  
is not a question of  
what you

- say,

but rather of  
what you

- feel;

a question of  
your

- inner attitude.

In order to  
adjust your emotions  
from

- the wrong kind of shame

to

- the right kind,

all you have to do  
is delve into  
your emotions  
and, as I so often say,  
translate them [i.e., translate your emotions]  
into

- clear-cut
- concise

thoughts.

Then,  
when you see  
the unreasonableness  
of the immature side of your soul,  
you can readjust them [i.e., readjust your emotions].

Only when you do that [i.e., only when you see the unreasonableness of  
the immature side of your soul and readjust  
your emotions accordingly]  
will you be able to take the next step.

Only then [when you have readjusted your emotions]  
will you have

- security and
- self-respect.

For as long as  
you hide behind  
a wall of  
falsity,  
you must  
despise yourself –  
[despise yourself]  
much more than  
a brother or sister of yours  
who may have many more weaknesses  
but  
who has the courage to  

- live without pretense and
- act according to the real self

[will despise himself or herself].

It is  
not  

- how good you are or
- how many weaknesses you still have

that determines  
your self-respect.

Self-respect –  
and as a result of it also  
the respect of others –  
can only be measured by  

- how true you are to yourself,

or  

- how much you  
  - deceive and
  - escapeyourself,

or  

- how much you  
hide behind  
a wall of pretense.

*This wall of pretense [you hide behind]*  
*is not something easily recognizable*  
*from the outside.*

*It [i.e., the wall of pretense you hide behind]*  
*is something*  
*subtle within*  
*that*  
*only you yourself*  
*can find,*  
*by*

- *testing and*
- *probing*
  - *your emotions and*
  - *their meaning.*

19

*True repentance*  
*in the positive sense*  
*means*

- *to simply take stock of the self and*
- *to accept its weaknesses*  
*in their present state,*  
*with*  
*the deep desire*  
*to change.*

*At the same time*  
*you need to acknowledge*  
*that*  
*the change can only come*  
*by*  
*again*  
*and again*

- *recognizing*  
*the deeply ingrained faults and*
- *comparing*
  - *the faulty reactions*

*to*

- *the ideal state.*

*Thus*  
*you learn humility.*

20

The moment  
you do not wish  
to appear  
• better or  
• more  
than you are,  
even in your own eyes,  
you will have  
taken yourself down  
from the high place  
in which  
you have put yourself.

You can  
start  
rebuilding  
only after  
you have torn down  
the false edifice.

If you have the courage to  
• stumble  
a thousand times  
over  
the same faults and  
• forever lift yourself up  
to try again,  
then  
• you pay God the debt  
you owe Him;  
then  
• you are worthy  
of His grace;  
then  
• you are  
truly  
on the path.

Then

you rid yourself of

- pride and
- falsity

long before

you are

perfect

in all the details

of your personality.

Thus

you approach perfection

much faster than you think,

in spite of

some of your

stubborn shortcomings

that linger on.

In that way

you

must

win.

But

if every time

after having stumbled again

over

the same fault

- you become

so despondent

that you

despair of yourself,

wishing to give up, and

- you consider

self-acceptance

to be senseless,

then

you have the

- destructive and

- weakening

kind of shame,

which will

never

get you anywhere.

For as long as  
you despair so easily,  
there is  
too much pride  
in you,  
and then the  
• healing,  
• curative  
action  
of being able  
to observe your own weaknesses  
in the true light  
of what they are,  
neither  
• exaggerating  
nor  
• diminishing  
them,  
will  
not  
be able to affect  
your soul.

21

So, my friends,  
do not despair  
if you have  
no success  
for quite a while  
in overcoming  
your weaknesses.

You may perhaps  
understand now  
that  
here [in the right kind of shame and right kind of self-acceptance]  
you have  
a great curative agent  
for remedying  
something  
[that is] even more important  
than  
the actual weakness  
you are treating.

You will learn  
the right kind of  
• shame and  
• self-acceptance,  
which  
• brings humility,  
• overcomes pride, and  
• shows you  
how to live  
in your own reality.

If you were  
soon  
very successful  
in overcoming  
your individual faults,  
it might make you  
even prouder,

and pride [here, that is, pride of having overcome some of your faults]  
is more harmful  
than  
many other faults.

Apart from that [i.e., apart from pride that might arise  
if you soon overcame the faults you are so battling against],  
the faults  
you are battling against  
have been ingrained in you  
often for many incarnations,

so you  
cannot expect  
to get rid of them  
within a few years.

**However,**

- **if you**  
**are capable of**  
**facing these weaknesses;**
- **if you**
  - **meet them** [i.e., **meet your weaknesses**]  
**with**
    - **open eyes and**
    - **a healthy attitude and**
  - **learn**  
**even while**  
**you are still stumbling over them;**
- **if you have**  
**the humility**  
**to face yourself**  
**knowing where you really belong –**
  - **not too low,**
  - **nor too high –**

**then**

**even though**  
**you are still imperfect,**  
**you are laying the foundation**  
**to a very**

- **healthy and**
- **normal**

**inner attitude.**

22

- **Think and**
- **meditate**  
**about this,**  
**my friends.**

It is  
not sufficient  
to just  
• hear or  
• read  
my words  
once,  
for that [i.e., reading or hearing my words only once]  
will not be  
the kind of spiritual food  
that helps you to discover  
where  
• your feelings  
still deviate from  
• the ideal state.

Find the echo [of my words]  
within you  
to direct you  
in your  
daily  
• strivings and  
in your  
daily  
• spiritual work.

When you do that,  
you will be giving yourself  
the food  
your spirit needs.

23

Perhaps you now begin to sense  
why it is so necessary  
to be able to talk  
openly  
about yourself  
to  
• a qualified person  
and then  
to  
• the people  
you are really close to.

For as long as  
you keep things hidden  
within you,  
everything  
gets out of proportion.

You may  
• exaggerate one thing  
and  
• underestimate another.

But a person  
who is  
detached from  
• your problems and  
• your inner struggles  
may see things [in and about you]  
in the right light.

As I have often said  
in private sessions,  
there is a spiritual law  
which applies equally to  
• psychoanalysis  
and  
• confession.

It is  
the law of brotherhood.

The moment  
you open up  
to another person,  
you risk  
an act of humility.

At  
• that moment  
with  
• that person  
you do not want to  
appear  
more perfect  
than you are.

That [i.e., wanting to appear to another person more perfect than you are]  
is one of  
the most harmful  
human tendencies,  
my friends.

When you show yourself  
to one person  
as you are,  
you will  
instantly  
feel  
the relief  
your spirit  
has cried for,  
even if  
that person  
does not give you  
a single piece of advice.

24

Your spirit  
suffers  
when you  
act against  
its laws.

And you feel better  
all of a sudden  
when you are able  
to humbly  
reveal yourself.

The law of brotherhood  
is working.

Something in you says,

"At this moment  
I do not want to  
appear  
better than I am.

I want to  
show myself  
as I am;

I do  
not  
strive for  

- respect and
- love

that I think  
is not really due me  
because of  
the things  
of which I am ashamed."

Though  
you are  
wrong in that too,  
for  

- love and
- respect

are due  
every  
living creature,  
but you think  
they [i.e., love and respect]  
are not due you  
because of  
something  
you keep in hiding.

And in this distorted view [distorted because you keep part of yourself in hiding]  

- you suffer  
loneliness and
- you go on pretending  
in some subtle way [i.e., pretending by keeping some part of yourself in  
hiding in order to appear more perfect than you are].

*The wrong kind of shame*  
*also violates the law of brotherhood.*

*Thus you may see once again*  
*how*  
*every*  
*inner feeling*  
*can be right*  
*when it comes from*  
*the godself.*

*However,*  
*the same [inner feeling]*  
*can be distorted*  
*by luciferic powers.*

*It is so*  
*also*  
*with shame [i.e., shame can be right when it comes from the godself or it*  
*can be wrong when it is distorted by luciferic powers].*

25

*So I say to you, my friends,*  
*when you*  
*really and truly*  
*desire*  
*to develop along this path*  
*you will*  
*find guidance*  
*at a certain point.*

*You will be*  
*almost pushed into a corner*  
*where you will*  
*open up*  
*for your own salvation.*

Of course,  
you always have  
your free will  
and this [free will]  
we spirits  
will  
• respect  
at all times and  
• never violate it,  
even if  
we do know  
what may seem  
so difficult  
for you to express.

But  
you  
have to do the talking.

We  
will not do it  
for you.

You are  
always  
free, therefore, to  
• refuse and  
• retire deeper  
into your corner and  
• resent that  
you are being pushed  
in this direction.

However,  
you can also  
take the opportunity  
and  
• step out of your hiding place,  
• open your eyes, and  
• see that herein  
lies your salvation.

It is up to you.

26

When guidance appears  
in the form of  
an unpleasant test,  
you cannot  
fully understand  
what is happening.

Yet it [i.e., the guidance appearing in the form of an unpleasant test]  
is there  
to help you do  
what is necessary.

Such an  
opening up  
of your personality  
is healing.

You think of  
these experiences  
as hardships.

Once you understand, however,  
why  
they are necessary  
you will cease to see them  
in that way.

You are like  
children;  
you do not know  
what is good for you.

And God's helpers  
who are all around you  
constantly –  
particularly with the person  
who is willing  
to take this path of purification –  
manage to  

- guide and
- inspire

people [i.e., people around you and others who influence you]  
to create situations  
which afford you the opportunity [for development].

**But**  
**you**  
**have to decide**  
**with your free will**  
**whether or not**  
**you want to**  
**learn from them** [i.e., learn from the situations brought to you by other people, people who are guided and inspired by God's helpers to create situations for your growth and purification].

**You can either**  
**• open your eyes**  
**to the significance of the situation,**  
**or you can**  
**• shirk from**  
**the issue and**  
**• refuse to recognize**  
**the call,**  
**for it is**  
**a call!**

**Decide,**  
**my friends.**

- Do you want to**  
**take your courage**  
**into your own hands,**
- or**
- do you think**  
**that you can advance on this path**  
**without summoning the courage**  
**to follow the call?**

27

**I can promise you one thing.**

**After you have made the decision**  
**to take this path,**  
**you will already**  
**feel**  
**a foretaste**  
**of the spiritual rebirth**  
**that must come sooner or later**  
**when a certain phase is reached.**

The greater  
• the effort and  
• the apparent difficulty  
of  
• recognizing the call and  
• following it,  
the more  
• relief,  
the more  
• victory,  
the more  
• happiness,  
the more  
• self-respect, and  
the more  
• inner  
• joy and  
• peace  
will you  
feel  
after  
• the test is over and  
• you have  
fully understood  
how to go on  
from there.

This, my friends,  
I beg you  
to remember very well.

Do not choose  
to forget these words,  
secretly thinking that  
if you manage  
to evade the issue  
the situation  
will cease to exist.

Read my words  
every day,  
whenever  
you are faced with such a decision.

28

We deal  
not only  
with what you  
consciously  
• know and  
• hide.

That is comparatively easy.

Once you are able  
to reveal  
consciously hidden  
• thoughts and  
• feelings,  
you need,  
with our help,  
to try to find what  
unconscious currents  
lie behind them.

That is then  
the work to be done.

Of course,  
you cannot do so [i.e., you cannot find the unconscious currents behind your  
consciously hidden thoughts and feelings]

alone;

and  
you cannot do so  
unless  
you have displayed the courage  
to bring into the open  
what you  
do  
know.

Most people carry  
hidden unconscious factors  
equally active as the  
conscious ones [i.e., equally active as the hidden conscious factors].

Those [i.e., the hidden unconscious factors]  
are a little more complicated to find.

	<p><i><u>The first prerequisite [to finding the hidden unconscious factors behind the hidden conscious factors]</u></i></p> <p><i><u>is to be</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>free and</u></i></li><li>• <i><u>open</u></i></li></ul> <p><i><u>enough</u></i></p> <p><i><u>to be able</u></i></p> <p><i><u>to talk about</u></i></p> <p><i><u>everything</u></i></p> <p><i><u>pertaining to your person.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>You can never reach</u></i></p> <p><i><u>the hidden</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>motives,</u></i></li><li>• <i><u>currents, and</u></i></li><li>• <i><u>emotions</u></i></li></ul> <p><i><u>without that [i.e., without being able to talk about everything</u></i></p> <p><i><u>pertaining to your person].</u></i></p>
29	<p><i><u>If you</u></i></p> <p><i><u>fulfill the necessary requirements,</u></i></p> <p><i><u>help will be given to you –</u></i></p> <p><i><u>that you can be sure of.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>The help you need</u></i></p> <p><i><u>is</u></i></p> <p><i><u>the grace of God.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Without it [i.e., without the grace of God]</u></i></p> <p><i><u>you cannot reach your</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i><u>unconscious and</u></i></li><li>• <i><u>stubbornly hidden</u></i></li></ul> <p><i><u>shames</u></i></p> <p><i><u>blocking the way.</u></i></p>

**But**

**if you wait for**  
**the grace of God**  
**in**

- **defiance and**
- **anger,**  
**saying to yourself,**

- **"Why can't I have it [i.e., Why can't I have grace]?"**

- **Why someone else**  
**and not me?**

- **I have suffered so much.**

- **I am due for it now;**

- **I have tried so hard,"**

**then you**

**push away**  
**the time for grace,**

**because**

**your attitude**  
**is not humble.**

**You take it upon yourself**  
**to judge,**

**and**

**you cannot judge.**

**You have no way**  
**of judging**

- **how much you have suffered, and**

- **when the grace is due, and**

- **how hard you have tried,**  
**especially in comparison with others.**

	<p><u><i>You lack</i></u> • <u><i>comparison;</i></u> <u><i>you even lack</i></u> • <u><i>complete self-recognition,</i></u></p> <p><u><i>for as long as</i></u> <u><i>you cannot delve into</i></u> <u><i>what your unconscious</i></u> <u><i>hides,</i></u> <u><i>you do not</i></u> <u><i>know yourself.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>And how can you</i></u> <u><i>dare to</i></u> • <u><i>judge and</i></u> • <u><i>compare</i></u> <u><i>if you don't even</i></u> <u><i>know yourself?</i></u></p>
30	<p><u><i>When you</i></u> <u><i>nurse a spirit of</i></u> <u><i>true</i></u> • <u><i>humility and</i></u> • <u><i>patience,</i></u></p> <p><u><i>then</i></u> <u><i>the grace,</i></u> <u><i>my dear ones,</i></u> <u><i>will be much nearer.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>If you have difficulties,</i></u> <u><i>try to concentrate on this.</i></u></p>

*If you cannot advance,  
although you are  
• working and  
• doing your best –  
and many do not advance  
because they are not working  
the way they could,  
so it is not the lack of grace – and  
if there are blocks  
you cannot seem to penetrate,  
ask yourself,*

*"How humble is my attitude?"*

*Nurse these words  
instead of  
turning away from God  
the moment  
things become difficult for you.*

*This is my advice  
for my dear, beloved friends.*

31

*I should like to discuss  
one more subject  
before we turn to your questions.*

*I have already mentioned  
that you are  
ashamed of your faults.*

*Most of them [i.e., most of your faults]  
you wish you did not have.*

However,  
there is also  
another category [*of faults besides those faults you wish you did not have*],

and it will be important  
to look at your faults  
from this new point of view,  
namely,  
that you have some faults  
which you are in love with.

This [*i.e., having faults you are in love with*]  
explains why  
you do not get ahead  
in some particular respect  
of your development.

You do not  
admit it,  
but you are actually  
quite proud of  
some of your faults.

Of course,  
as long as  
this is true,  
you cannot possibly  
overcome them [*i.e., overcome the faults you are in love with*].

Find out  
how this  
applies to you.

Once you are aware  
that you are  
emotionally attached to  
some of your faults,  
pray that God  
may help you  
to recognize

- why this is so and
- what lies behind it.

	<p><u>Pray that</u> <u>you may be able</u> <u>to see this attitude</u> [i.e., <u>the attitude of loving some of your faults</u>] <u>in an objective light,</u> <u>so as</u> <u>to develop</u> <u>the right kind of shame</u> <u>about it.</u></p>
32	<p><u>Check</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>all your faults and</u></li><li>• <u>your emotional reactions to them</u> [i.e., <u>emotional reactions to all your faults</u>] <u>in all honesty.</u></li></ul> <p><u>As you go through your list,</u> <u>you will see</u> <u>that there are</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>some faults</u> <u>you really do not like and</u></li><li>• <u>others</u> <u>you cherish in some way.</u></li></ul> <p><u>Then,</u> <u>when you feel that attachment</u> [to a particular fault you cherish in some way], <u>ask yourself:</u></p> <p><u>"How would I react</u> <u>if another person</u> <u>were to display</u> <u>the same fault</u> <u>either in</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>the same way</u></li></ul> <p><u>or perhaps in</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>a slightly different way?"</u></li></ul> <p><u>You are actually</u> <u>often</u> <u>quite irritated</u> <u>when another human being</u> <u>displays the same fault</u> <u>you are somewhat proud of</u> <u>in yourself.</u></p>

Once you approach the fault  
from this point of view [i.e., from the point of view of how you would  
see others having this fault],  
you will  
lose the pride  
you take in it.

As long as  
the pride persists,  
however,  
you cannot possibly  
overcome the fault.

33

I will be very happy  
to let you present to me  
any fault you choose  
for analysis.

I will show you  
how  
every one of them  
is connected with

- pride,
- self-will, and
- fear.

I will show you

- how to analyze the fault,
- how it leads to other faults, and
- what is connected with it –

and in this way  
help you  
to better  
self-understanding.

I will show you  
how to

- meditate on it [i.e., how to meditate on a particular fault] and
- proceed,

in this particular way,  
with the spiritual work  
on your path.

I will also show you  
how  
every single  

- fault,
- weakness, or
- imperfection

is a  
direct hindrance  

- to love –

and therefore [direct hindrance]  

- to God.

I will also point out  
what the  
underlying  
good quality  
behind each fault  
is,  
for there is  
no fault  
that is  
not  
a distortion  
of something  

- good and
- pure.

Try this [i.e., try to find how your faults  
are a distortion of something good and pure]  
as an exercise yourself;

apply it to  
your  
faults,  
for  
your spiritual work  
is useless  
if it is  

- abstract and
- impersonal.

Where you are unable to do so [i.e., unable to see your faults as a distortion of  
something good and pure],  
bring the faults here.

34	<p><i>Now are there any questions in connection with this subject before we turn to your other questions?</i></p> <p><b>QUESTION:</b> <i>You stressed the point that <u>one should open up to a qualified person.</u></i></p> <p><i>Could you elaborate on <u>the problem</u> <u>of a person</u> <u>who has the desire</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>• <u>to open up and</u></i></li><li><i>• <u>to be humble,</u></i></li></ul><p><i>but does so <u>indiscriminately</u> and therefore</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>• <u>no good</u></i></li></ul><p><i>is coming from it – only</i></p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>• <u>harm and</u></i></li><li><i>• <u>repercussions?</u></i></li></ul></p></p>
35	<p><b>ANSWER:</b> <i>Yes,</i> <i>you see that this [i.e., that this opening up to others indiscriminately] is, of course, the opposite extreme [of opening up to one person you trust], and you know that all extremes are wrong.</i></p> <p><i>Such a person [i.e., a person who opens up to others rather indiscriminately] has a deep need for which the spirit cries.</i></p>

The  
real need [of the spirit]  
is not recognized  
and therefore  
the wrong satisfaction  
is sought.

However,  
the case you mention  
is not  
as much of an extreme  
as you think.

Often  
a human being  

- opens up  
about many little things,

and even  

- exposes  
actual shortcomings,

so as  
to keep  
the real issue  
hidden.

36

**QUESTION:**  
But what if  
that same person  

- masks  
the true faults and
- invents  
artificial guilts  
to divulge?

37

**ANSWER:**  
**That happens.**

**You see,**  
**it will not do any good**  
**to tell such a person**  
**to choose to open up**  
**to the right people,**  
**because**  
**he will never know**  
**who**  
**the right people**  
**are.**

- **The intuition**  
**is lacking,**
- as well as**
- **the sound intellectual judgment.**

**Neither faculty [i.e., neither the intuition nor the intellect]**  
**can function well**  
**as long as one**

- **rationalizes and**
- **covers up**

**the true reasons [for indiscriminate opening up to other people].**

**Such a person**  
**has to be brought**  
**to first recognize**  
**this fact [i.e., to recognize the fact that the true reasons for indiscriminate**  
**opening up must be discovered before one can discern who the**  
**who the right people are to whom to open up].**

**That, of course,**  
**can only be done**  
**very slowly.**

**And it**  
**cannot be done at all**  
**if the desire**  
**is not there.**

**But**  
**the desire**  
**can grow.**

38	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Be blessed,</u></b> <b><u>all of you.</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Be in God.</u></b></p>
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