

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

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03	<p><u>Greetings</u> <u>in the Name of the Lord.</u></p> <p><u>I bring you blessings,</u> <u>my friends,</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>to each one of you and</u>• <u>to all your dear ones.</u>
04	<p><u>When we spirits</u> <u>observe</u> <u>human beings,</u> <u>we can see</u> <u>how badly</u> <u>you need</u> <u>spiritual nourishment.</u></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">• <u>blind,</u>• <u>unconscious, and</u>• <u>immature</u> <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">• <u>unless</u> <u>you fulfill</u> <u>the basic spiritual laws</u> <u>within your own soul and</u>• <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>
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">• <u>test your emotions,</u>• <u>examine their demands</u> <u>as to what they actually</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>mean and</u>• <u>express,</u> <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">• <i><u>extremely unhealthy,</u></i> <i><u>as I outlined just now,</u></i><i><u>but will also</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>make you feel</u></i> <i><u>more</u></i> <i><u>and more</u></i> <i><u>alone.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Whenever you</u></i> <i><u>feel</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>lonely and</u></i>• <i><u>not understood,</u></i><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">• <i><u>love and</u></i>• <i><u>understanding.</u></i></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"><i><u>• free and</u></i><i><u>• open</u></i> <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"><i><u>• motives,</u></i><i><u>• currents, and</u></i><i><u>• emotions</u></i> <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"><i><u>• unconscious and</u></i><i><u>• stubbornly hidden</u></i> <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>You lack</u> • <u>comparison;</u> <u>you even lack</u> • <u>complete self-recognition,</u></p> <p><u>for as long as</u> <u>you cannot delve into</u> <u>what your unconscious</u> <u>hides,</u> <u>you do not</u> <u>know yourself.</u></p> <p><u>And how can you</u> <u>dare to</u> • <u>judge and</u> • <u>compare</u> <u>if you don't even</u> <u>know yourself?</u></p>
30	<p><u>When you</u> <u>nurse a spirit of</u> <u>true</u> • <u>humility and</u> • <u>patience,</u></p> <p><u>then</u> <u>the grace,</u> <u>my dear ones,</u> <u>will be much nearer.</u></p> <p><u>If you have difficulties,</u> <u>try to concentrate on this.</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">• <u>all your faults and</u>• <u>your emotional reactions to them</u> [i.e., <u>emotional reactions to all your faults</u>] <u>in all honesty.</u> <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">• <u>some faults</u> <u>you really do not like and</u>• <u>others</u> <u>you cherish in some way.</u> <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">• <u>the same way</u> <p><u>or perhaps in</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>a slightly different way?"</u> <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>QUESTION: <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"><i>• <u>to open up and</u></i><i>• <u>to be humble,</u></i><p><i>but does so <u>indiscriminately</u> and therefore</i><ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• <u>no good</u></i><p><i>is coming from it – only</i></p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>• <u>harm and</u></i><i>• <u>repercussions?</u></i></p></p>
35	<p>ANSWER: <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;"><u>Be blessed,</u> <u>all of you.</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Be in God.</u></p>
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