

Pathwork Lecture 139: Deadening of the Live Center Through Misinterpretation of Reality

1996 Edition, Original Given January 7, 1966

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 Vollbracht

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03	<p><u>Greetings,</u> <u>my dearest,</u> <u>dearest friends.</u></p> <p><u>Blessings</u> <u>for every one of you.</u></p> <p><u>Blessed</u> <u>be this evening</u> [<i>i.e., <u>blessed be this time we now spend together</u></i> <i><u>in this lecture</u></i>].</p> <p><u>May your understanding of this lecture</u> <u>open</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>your mind and</u> • <u>your vision</u> <p><u>so that</u> <u>you all advance a further step</u> <u>in your</u> <u>self-realization.</u></p>

by Eva Broch Pierrakos

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04

One of the
most difficult accomplishments
is to
fully understand

- the present situation,
- how it is
a direct creation
of the individual.

Just because
this understanding [of the present situation and of how it is a
direct creation of the individual]
could be

- immediate and
- near,
it seems distant.

Just because
the connection [between the present situation
and the individual's role in its creation]
is so easily available,
it seems that
to obtain it [i.e., to obtain the connection]
would require
much

- effort and
- struggle.

Once one
discovers the knack of it,
it becomes

- easy and
- natural, and

it is

- obvious
that the connection [between the present situation
and the individual's role in its creation]
has been there
all along.

Even those of my friends
who have been involved in the pathwork
for a considerable time,
still

- overlook
what is most significant and
- fail to see themselves
as they are.

They do not understand
their present situation,
what it means
in terms of
their own
innermost being,

because
the mechanism of escape [from their own innermost being]
is often
so deeply entrenched.

This lecture,
once again,
is destined

- to shake you up,
- to make you more aware,
- to awaken you
to
 - yourself and
 - your
immediate
outer situation.

05

Whenever
you find yourself
in a situation [in life or in your self]

- that is not desirable,
- that leaves you
unfulfilled in any way,

your
usually vague discontent
causes you
to strive for
another situation.

	<p><u>A</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>clear-cut goal-directedness and</u>• <u>precise concept of a better way of life</u> <p><u>can succeed</u> <u>only</u> <u>when</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the present situation,</u> <u>with its lack,</u> <u>is totally understood.</u> <p><u>Striving toward</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>a different situation</u> <p><u>when</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the present situation</u> <u>is not fully understood</u> <p><u>must result in</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>failure and</u>• <u>frustration.</u>
06	<p><u>How can</u> <u>the present situation</u> <u>be fully understood,</u> <u>my friends?</u></p> <p><u>That can only happen</u> <u>by becoming</u> <u>fully aware</u> <u>of what you</u> <u>really miss.</u></p> <p><u>You must</u> <u>put into words</u> <u>precisely</u> <u>what you would</u> <u>want</u> <u>to be different in your life.</u></p> <p><u>This must be</u> <u>the first awareness.</u></p>

The second awareness
must be
the extent to which
you suffer
from what you miss.

For that [i.e., For the extent to which your suffer from what you miss],
too, is often

- pushed aside and
- not acknowledged.

How much
do you
really miss
what you miss?

Do not
glibly content yourself
with a

- vague,
- general

acknowledgement.

The full intensity
of partly-repressed

- longings and
- frustrations

must be aired out.

The third awareness, in this respect,
must be
a total comprehension
of your
present situation.

And that, of course, means –
after the above acknowledgements –
to ascertain
why
you endure
your present situation.

	<p><i><u>It is</u> essential that you profoundly understand how the present situation is a direct outcome of who you are.</i></p>
07	<p><i>I have discussed this many times in the past. I repeat it now not only to connect it with the lecture to follow, but also because I see among you, my friends – despite your good progress – that this is still vastly overlooked.</i></p> <p><i>Therefore, I invite all of you to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>follow this simple formula</i> [i.e., <i>the simple formula that your present situation is a direct outcome of who you are</i>] and• <i>give your total attention to</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>what you</i>• <i>feel and</i>• <i>experience</i><i>right now, and</i>• <i>why this is so.</i>
08	<p><i>How is your</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>outer situation</i> <p><i>a symbolic representation of your</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>inner state of being?</i>

When you
finally connect with the fact
that your
• outer state –
no matter how undesirable it may be –
is exactly
a result of
what you
• are,
• think,
• feel, and
• want,
you will
immediately
understand that your
• outer situation
cannot be any different [from what it is right now].

When you
deeply know
that it [i.e., that your current outer situation]
cannot be any different,

then
you have
totally
• exploited,
• assimilated and
• comprehended
your
• present Now,
your
• total situation.

• This comprehension,
• this analyzing in depth
results in
knowing
that
• any present situation
must be a
direct link to
• the inner being.

You will find
that
the present situation
is an
exact result
of the sum total of
your personality.

This includes, of course,
[not only the unfavorable circumstances in your life but also]
the favorable circumstances.

When you
• overlook and
• neglect
the enjoyment
of all the good circumstances
in your life,
you must be
commensurately
unaware of
your values.

As you learn
in each moment
to
• value,
• appreciate and
• enjoy
what life offers you,
you must
simultaneously
become aware of
• the good in you,
your
• values and
• assets.

This [awareness of the good in you, your values and assets]
will give you
greater strength
to come out of

- *vicious circles and*
- *self-generating negative attitudes and*

will make
the understanding of the
undesirable
situation
more realistic [and balanced, not one-sidedly negative]
as it relates to
your inner personality.

You will gain
a more rounded picture

- *of your total person and*
- *of your life.*

09

As long as
you are

- *vague and*
- *hazy*

about what you miss, and
as long as
you

- *deny*

what you miss,
you cannot
possibly
understand your life.

Understanding
one's life
in this fashion [i.e., by knowing precisely what you miss and
the extent to which you miss it]

is the key
to changing it [i.e., changing your life]
into a more

- *desirable and*
- *fulfilling*

manifestation.

10

Most of you,
my friends on this path,
have

occasionally
understood

- your lives and
- yourselves

as

- one unit,
in the way mentioned here.

These [occasional] moments [of understanding your lives and yourselves as one unit,
i.e., understanding that your outer situations reflect your innermost selves]

are always

deep experiences of

- the reality of being, of
- vibrant aliveness,
- light and
- truth.

To achieve this

seems

so difficult

just because

it is so

- immediate and
- near.

It seems

so much easier

to wish for something

- vaguely different [from your current situation],

or even

- precisely different [from your current situation] –

in an attitude of

- discontent and
- tense struggle,

in a mood of

- complaining,
- resentment, and
- self-pity.

Meanwhile,

you ignore:

- a) the intensity
of the real longing;
- b) the presence of
reservations to
this real longing;
- c) their "reasons" [i.e., the "reasons" for
the reservations to this real longing];
- d) the consequent
 - thoughts,
 - feelings,
 - emanations,
 - attitudesin
 - inner and
 - outerbehavior; and
- e) how these [thoughts, feelings, emanations, attitudes, and behaviors]
must
 - affect others,and thereby
 - createthe present situation.

You often

overlook

that

the present situation

is a result of

many years of

deeply entrenched patterns

of

- thinking,
- acting and
- feeling

and [hence the present situation] cannot change

instantly

after some recognitions [of some of the long-ago causes behind
your present situation]

have been made.

The effect
of these recognitions [of long-ago causes behind your present situation]
is diluted
when they do not bring
an immediate result.

To expect
instant results
is

- a childish demand from life,
- an angry refusal to cooperate with life's laws,

which are
most certainly
contained in the reasons for
the unfulfillment itself.

This [childish demand for instant results and
angry refusal to cooperate with life's laws]
also causes you
to overlook
the good

- that is in your life and
- that you fail to
 - enjoy and
 - appreciate.

11

When you ignore
the oneness
between your

- innermost self

and your

- outer situation

it is
always
because
you run away
from
yourself.

You do not

- really and
- totally

want

to see yourself

as you are,

but [rather]

look at yourself

only

- in a limited way and
- with reservations.

Ask yourself,

all of you,

- do you truly

wish to see yourself

totally,

as you are?

- Do you

cultivate such an aim

by expressing this desire [to truly see yourself totally as you are],
particularly

in moments of

- discontent and
- disharmony?

- Or [instead] are you

quick

to glibly furnish rationalizations

for your disharmony?

- Or do you

actually admit

that it [i.e. that the cause of your disharmony] **must be in you** –

because you know enough about

the truth of these matters –

but [then] let it go at that,

without

the willingness

to really look?

The simple formula
of expressing the
• deep and
• full
• intention and
• desire
to see the
full truth
about oneself
at all times
is still
not sufficiently used.

So much
greater liberation
could exist
if this [intention to see the full truth about oneself at all times]
were followed through
• in more detail and
• with more attention of the self
to the
immediate
situation.

12

The reasons
for the strong tendency
to escape
from
• the self –
and therefore inevitably [escape]
from
• life,
with all its
good possibilities –
are manifold.

In the course of these lectures
we have discussed
many of the possible
• motives and
• reasons
for escape [from the self and therefore from life].

Let us now
pay specific attention
to one aspect [of the motives and reasons to escape
from the self and life]
that I have only
• generally and
• vaguely
touched upon,
[i.e., not touched upon specifically and more fully]
for the simple reason
that none of my friends
were quite ready
to face this aspect in themselves.

It [i.e., this aspect of the motives and reasons to escape
from the self and life I now want to discuss]
could only be
• discussed and
• contemplated
in very general terms.

The last few months
have brought
considerable progress
for a number of my friends,
and therefore
many of you
can now accept
what I have to say.

13

The aspect [of the motives and reasons to escape
from the self and life]
that I want to discuss
is not
mere hostility [that exists in you and in most human beings].

Hostility
has become
too vague a term,
almost meaningless
in its repeated use.

Let us deliberately
be as crass as possible.

In most human beings –
in some more and in some less –
there exist
elements of
cruelty.

This cruelty
is hard to face [in oneself].

But
when you
do face it,

- relief and
- liberation

must follow,
because nothing further
bars the way
to being
totally in truth
with yourself.

As long as
the cruelty
within yourself
is not fully faced,

as long as
you run away [and try to escape]
from it,

you
cannot be

- clear and
- comfortable,
- unafraid and
- relaxed

about yourself.

You
cannot be

- good friends

with yourself.

You
can be
good friends with yourself [however]
when you

- accept,
- acknowledge,
- understand and
- work
 - openly and
 - candidly

on the cruel aspects,
even before
you can
totally
eliminate them.

But as long as
you still
struggle against cruelty
in the

- wrong,
- self-defeating

way –
namely by

- denial and
- hiding –

you must be in
constant friction

- with yourself,

and therefore, inevitably,

- with life and
- with others.

Since you
cannot be comfortable
in your own skin,

- your life and
- living with yourself
will feel wrong;
- problems will appear
without solutions.

	<p><u>Solutions</u> <u>can appear on the horizon</u> <u>only in exact proportion to</u> <u>your facing</u> <u>in yourself</u> <u>what you fear most –</u> <u>and that is</u> <u>usually</u> <u>cruelty [that exists within you].</u></p> <p><u>You cannot think of</u> • <u>anything worse,</u> <u>[and can think of] nothing</u> • <u>more frightening</u> <u>than this aspect of yourself.</u></p>
14	<p><u>A reliable gauge</u> <u>to determine</u> <u>whether there is still</u> <u>unrecognized cruelty within</u> <u>is the amount of fear</u> <u>you have left.</u></p> <p><u>Consider your</u> <u>fear of</u> • <u>other people –</u> • <u>generally or</u> • <u>specifically –</u></p> <p><u>fear of</u> • <u>life,</u> <u>fear of</u> • <u>death,</u> <u>fear of</u> • <u>the unknown.</u></p>

The more
you are afraid –
of
• ruthlessness and
• separateness,
of
• rejection and
• humiliation,
of
• physical and
• mental
cruelty –

the more
must these exact same aspects [of cruelty]
slumber within yourself,
as yet
not fully acknowledged.

As long as this [unrecognized and unacknowledged cruelty within]
is the case –
regardless of
how large or small
the unrecognized aspects are –

you will be
in conflict.

You will run from
those areas in your life
which appear
• difficult and
• uncomfortable.

That they are
unpleasant for you
now
is a sign
that they contain
the very key
you need.

If only you

- *stopped running and*
- *really looked at yourself,*

you would see

- *that*

you are avoiding
certain

- *outer and*
- *inner*
situations and

- *why*

you do so.

These instances [where you are avoiding certain outer and inner situations]

harbor

the secret

you are still

unwilling to unveil,

in spite of

all your good efforts.

Yet,

as long as

you cannot

meet

- *yourself and*
- *others*

without reservations,

you cannot possibly

fulfill yourself.

It [i.e., not being able to meet yourself and others without reservations]

means

that you want to

continue deceiving yourself

by avoiding these aspects [of cruelty within yourself].

You may

vaguely

feel something like this [i.e., vaguely feel that you are avoiding something],

but

there is a great difference

between

- *that [i.e., between vaguely feeling that you are avoiding something]*

and

- *really looking into yourself.*

15	<p><u><i>Those who have begun to do so</i></u> [i.e., <u><i>Those who have begun to look deeply into themselves and face their aspects of cruelty</i></u>] <u><i>must already</i></u> <u><i>have overcome</i></u> <u><i>the worst.</i></u> <u><i>This</i></u> [i.e., <u><i>this discernment as to whether or not people have begun to look deeply into themselves and face their aspects of cruelty</i></u>] <u><i>is not necessarily</i></u> <u><i>a question</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>of time,</i></u>• <u><i>of how long</i></u><u><i>one has been in the pathwork –</i></u> <u><i>not by any means.</i></u></p>
16	<p><u><i>Let us now discuss</i></u> <u><i>why</i></u> <u><i>cruelty exists.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>After having acknowledged</i></u> <u><i>its</i></u> [i.e., <u><i>cruelty's</i></u>] <u><i>existence,</i></u> <u><i>what then?</i></u></p> <p><u><i>Before answering this question,</i></u> <u><i>I shall remind you</i></u> <u><i>of that</i></u> <u><i>innermost center</i></u> <u><i>of every human being</i></u> <u><i>which</i></u> <u><i>activates all of you</i></u> <u><i>with all you need</i></u> <u><i>to live productively.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>This live center</i></u> <u><i>furnishes you</i></u> <u><i>with</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>energy,</i></u>• <u><i>life force,</i></u>• <u><i>wisdom,</i></u>• <u><i>vision,</i></u>• <u><i>solutions,</i></u>• <u><i>love and</i></u>• <u><i>harmony.</i></u></p>

It [i.e., this live center]
exists
deep within
every
individual.

In
• a young person,
• a child,
it [i.e., the live center]
manifests as
a very vulnerable spot.

Its very aliveness
comes forth
from a
• tender and
• soft
center.

When children
are
• hurt and
• puzzled –
when they
misunderstand
the events around them –
they proceed
to toughen
this vulnerable spot
to defend themselves
against
its soft openness.

By these various
defense mechanisms,
the live center
becomes
more and
more
• overlaid,
• hidden and
• covered
by tough substances.

Without an

- adult and
- realistic

understanding –

that is, [without]

- a mature ego –

the child

cannot handle this

- soft,
- malleable

live center

in which

the most

- powerful,
- creative and
- intelligent

forces

are contained.

For its own protection,

it [i.e., the child]

must separate

- the live center

from

- its consciousness.

However,

- when the child grows
into an adult,

- when the ego
becomes mature,

the separation [of the live center from the individual's consciousness]
becomes

an unfortunate handicap.

The individual

lives in a

crippled way,

leaving out the

- best and
- most reliable

aspect

of his or her

whole being [i.e., leaves out the live center].

	<p><u>Only when</u> <u>he or she proceeds to</u> • <u>uncover it [i.e., proceeds to uncover the live center] again and</u> • <u>integrate it with</u> <u>the adult ego</u> <u>does the personality</u> <u>become</u> • <u>whole and</u> • <u>equipped to handle life.</u></p>
17	<p><u>The existence of this</u> • <u>bare,</u> • <u>vulnerable</u> <u>live center</u> <u>can be determined</u> <u>not only by</u> • <u>remembering your childhood</u> <u>with its</u> • <u>strong emotions and</u> • <u>deep experiencing,</u> <u>both</u> • <u>positive</u> <u>and</u> • <u>negative,</u> <u>but by</u> • <u>truly observing yourself [in your current life as an adult].</u></p> <p><u>You cannot fail</u> <u>to become</u> <u>conscious</u> <u>of moments</u> <u>when this vulnerable spot [i.e., your live center]</u> <u>is present.</u></p> <p><u>You can further observe</u> <u>how you then</u> <u>proceed to make it [i.e., make your vulnerable spot, your live center]</u> <u>invulnerable.</u></p>

In other words,
you continue to use the process
that was instituted in childhood [to make your vulnerable spot, your
live center, invulnerable],
but which
now operates
greatly to your detriment,
for it [i.e., for the process you used in childhood
to make your vulnerable live center invulnerable]
is the wrong way [for you as an adult]

- ***to protect yourself and***
- ***to cope best with life.***

The means
to inactivate
the live center
are various:

- ***separating and***
 - ***withdrawing,***
- ***toughening yourself,***
- ***numbing your feelings,***
- ***denying your***
 - ***real feelings***

and substituting

- ***counterfeit feelings,***

and also

- ***becoming cruel.***

All these measures
serve to make the

- ***vulnerable spot [i.e., the live center] within you***
- ***invulnerable,***

because
this seems
the only "safe" way [to protect yourself and cope with life].

18

You

- overlook and
- ignore

the fact

that the vulnerability

is the very material, as it were,
with which

to govern your life

in the most

- dynamic and
 - fruitful
- way.

For this

- vulnerable spot

is the

- live center

out of which

all

- energy and
 - wisdom
- is derived.

It [i.e., the vulnerable spot, the live center]
is that in you

which makes it possible
to fully

- experience and
- enjoy,

to

- have and
 - give
- pleasure.

The potent energy,

deriving from this live center,
can be utilized in a most

- constructive and
- meaningful

way

in the realization

that this live center

must become a conscious aspect

[if it is] to be integrated with
the ego.

	<p><i><u>If this integration [of the live center with the ego]</u></i> <i><u>is hindered</u></i> <i><u>due to</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>misunderstanding and</u></i>• <i><u>ignorance,</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>the [potent] energy [deriving from the live center]</u></i> <i><u>will turn destructive,</u></i>• <i><u>the power inverted, and</u></i>• <i><u>the result</u></i> <i><u>must be</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>chaos,</u></i>• <i><u>separation,</u></i>• <i><u>disintegration,</u></i>• <i><u>confusion,</u></i>• <i><u>suffering, and</u></i>• <i><u>an inner</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>division and</u></i>• <i><u>numbness</u></i> <i><u>that makes life</u></i> <i><u>appear</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>difficult,</u></i>• <i><u>ugly,</u></i>• <i><u>removed and</u></i>• <i><u>senseless.</u></i>
19	<p><i><u>The activation of</u></i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>your real self, or</u></i>• <i><u>the divine center,</u></i> <i><u>is not something that you gain</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>from the outside –</u></i> <i><u>or even</u></i><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>from within yourself,</u></i> <i><u>as something faraway</u></i> <i><u>you have not yet experienced.</u></i>

There are many occasions
when you
• vaguely and
• hazily
experience
the real self,
such as in
• natural,
• unexaggerated
sadness.

But
you make sure
to deny the experience,
because
you do not know
• how to cope with it,
• how to handle it.

You
flatten the experience,
prohibiting the
• deeper,
• richer
dimensions
that come from
your innermost center.

20

As long as
the inner center
is still in the condition
it was
when you were a child,
it is not yet
in a position
to handle life.

The inner wisdom
contained in the live center
begins to manifest
only after
integration with the ego.

In the
child state,
the inner center
is just alive [but not yet engaged],
full of

- feeling,
- energy, and
- capacity

for

- experience,

for

- pleasure,

as well as
for

- yet unutilized potentials

of

- creativity and
- intelligence.

What you
must learn to do now
is:
1) observe
the existence
of the live center,
2) observe
the mechanics
by which
you

- discourage
its manifestations and
- toughen
the vulnerable spot;

3) deliberately

- stop the mechanics of
disengagement [of the live center from the ego] and
- allow the live center's
unfoldment.

	<p><u>Through</u> <u>appropriate meditations,</u> <u>integration</u> <u>between</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the live center</u> <p><u>and</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>the ego</u> <u>will take place,</u> <u>so that its [i.e., so that the live center's]</u> <u>substance</u> <u>will become</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>strong and</u>• <u>resilient</u> <p><u>without losing</u> <u>its soft aliveness.</u></p>
21	<p><u>You find yourself</u> <u>in the predicament</u> <u>of</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>possessing</u> <u>an adult ego</u> <u>with all its faculties intact,</u>• <u>yet separated from</u> <u>that vulnerable live center.</u> <p>• <u>The vulnerable live center</u> <u>is separated from</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>your wakeful consciousness –</u> <u>that is your problem.</u>

22

The more
the live center is
• unrealistically and
• inadequately
• "defended" and
• blocked,
• denied and
• covered up,
the more
do some aspects of the self
come into being
of which
one will feel
• ashamed and
• guilty.

One of the severest forms
is that of
cruel impulses.

Cruelty
will truly
cease to exist
in the depth of the human soul –
not only in
• action and
• conscious thoughts,
but in the
• unconscious emotions –

when
the live center
is not
• denied and
• hindered,
but
• recognized,
• observed, and
• allowed to function.

The intense feelings
of the live center
can then be compared to
reality,
as it [i.e., as the live center] unfolds.

The ego-faculties

will help in the process [of comparing the feelings in the live center to reality];

- reason and
 - intelligence
- will adjust
- imbalances and
 - deviation from reality.

But

when reason [instead]
is used

to deny the

- depth,
- scope and
- richness

of feelings

as they manifest

from the

live center,

the human personality

- cripples itself and
- puts itself
out of balance.

Bring together

- the manifestation of the live center,
with

- its vulnerability and
- its strength of feelings,

with

- your adult
understanding and
- ego-faculties.

23

Cruelty

can exist

only as a result of
a separation

between

- the live center

and

- the ego.

*To put it in more practical terms,
cruelty exists
because
reality
is misinterpreted,
which causes the individual
to further inactivate
the live center.*

*It is
not only the child
who misinterprets
what happens around it.*

*Where
the child
has done that [i.e., where the child has misinterpreted reality]
is precisely where
the adult
continues to do so,
right now –
• unless and
• until
all this [misinterpretation of reality]
has been
• found and
• corrected.*

*All of you,
in the areas of your difficulties,
go on
misinterpreting reality.*

*You do not perceive
what goes on around you.*

*You do not see things
the way they
really are,
but
misunderstand them.*

24

How can you
discover
such misunderstanding?

Only by
first
acknowledging to yourself
what it is
that you

- actually believe,

then

- interpreting

what that means.

This applies to
anything
that makes you
feel
disharmonious.

Ask yourself
how you
interpret
what others

- feel and
- think

about you.

25

Let us take a practical example
to make this more understandable.

You feel

- slighted,
- discriminated against,
- rejected.

As a rule
you admit this
only vaguely.

You may
say the words [admitting to feeling slighted, discriminated against and rejected],
but

you do not

fully acknowledge

• to what extent

you feel this [i.e., to what extent you feel you are being slighted, discriminated against, and rejected], nor

• why

you feel this, or

• what makes you believe

that your feelings are

• justified and

• appropriate.

You can go to the

next step

and ask yourself:

"Is this real [that I am being slighted, discriminated against and rejected],
or

do I just believe it?

Could it be otherwise?"

Even when you

do admit to

feeling rejected,

you usually

let it go at that

and you live in

• a fog,

• a haze,

in which

you do not fully examine

whether or not

it [i.e., your being rejected]

is

real.

You may
verbally acknowledge
that perhaps
it is
not
real,

but then
there is
another level
on which
you do believe
it is real.

This [other] level [where you do believe that you are being rejected]
is not
totally
• faced and
• examined.

26

Cruelty
is the
greatest stumbling block
• to self-facing,
• to living in the
• dynamic,
• adventurous
beauty
of each Now.

It [i.e., cruelty]
• is also
the greatest factor in
running away from yourself, and
• is ultimately
a result of
misinterpreting reality.

	<p><u><i>You cannot interpret reality accurately</i></u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>as long as you do not</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>clearly and</i></u>• <u><i>precisely formulate what it is that you believe – how you interpret events which seem to call for the</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>hurt and</i></u>• <u><i>defenses [against the hurt] – and</i></u>• <u><i>as long as you do not consider the possibility that the reality could be different.</i></u>
27	<p><i>I have discussed here several points which must be combined in your work:</i></p>
28	<p><u><i>Point 1:</i></u> <u><i>An undesirable situation –</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>a lack of fulfillment,</i></u>• <u><i>an emptiness –</i></u><u><i>cannot be</i></u><ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u><i>eliminated and</i></u>• <u><i>changed into</i></u> <u><i>a more desirable condition</i></u><u><i>unless</i></u> <u><i>you understand that the present situation cannot be different.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>You fully recognize that the cause is in yourself.</i></u></p>

29	<p><u>Point 2:</u> <u>Let us separate</u> • <u>the admission</u> <u>of the lack,</u> <u>which is the first point,</u> <u>from the second point –</u> • <u>the recognition of</u> <u>what</u> <u>in you</u> <u>caused the lack,</u> <u>so that</u> <u>you deeply</u> <u>experience</u> <u>the oneness</u> <u>between</u> • <u>your self</u> <u>and</u> • <u>your life situation.</u></p>
30	<p><u>Point 3:</u> <u>The cruel aspects</u> <u>in you</u> <u>represent</u> <u>the main reasons</u> <u>for all</u> • <u>resistance and</u> • <u>fear</u> <u>of self-facing.</u></p> <p><u>Often,</u> <u>these cruel aspects [in one]</u> <u>can be found</u> <u>only when</u> <u>one acknowledges</u> <u>one's fear [of seeing and facing these cruel aspects within one].</u></p>

Do not forget
the important correlation
between
fear of

- *others, or*
- *any outer facet of life,*

and
the fear of

- *your unrecognized cruelty [within].*

If you are
free from
cruelty,
you
cannot
ever
fear others.

31

Point 4:
Establish
in what moments
the live center
is bare –
as in the
vulnerable state of a child,
who has not yet
integrated

- *these*
 - *energies and*
 - *feelings*

with

- *the ego-faculties.*

32

When this integration [between the live center and the ego-faculties]
takes place,

the
vulnerable
live center

is no longer
vulnerable

in a
• negative,
• dangerous or
• debilitating
way,

but
[is vulnerable]

in a
• positive,
• wonderful
way.

It [i.e., the live center]

is
• flexible,
• alive,
• vibrant and
• full of
the strong feelings
without which
• pleasure,
• joy, and
• happiness
cannot exist.

The tremendous
• strength and
• intelligence

contained in
this vulnerable spot [i.e., this vulnerable live center]

will govern
all your
• actions and
• attitudes.

It [i.e., the vulnerable live center with its strength and intelligence]
will
cause

- thoughts and
- emotions

which
must
bear fruit
all around you.

It [i.e., the vulnerable live center with its strength and intelligence]
will
induce you
to be
totally constructive
in all
you do.

You will
want
to give your

- best and
- total attention
 - to everything
you experience,
- to all
your undertakings.

Nothing
will be done

- half-heartedly,
- with half-attention or
- divided motives.

Therefore,
the outcome
will be
more
and more

- desirable and
- fulfilling.

There is
no strain
in this attention [to everything you experience and
to all your undertakings].

You will
be carried
by a
• sweeping,
• marvelous
strength.

Instead of
covering up
the vulnerable spot,
you will
bring it out.

Instead of
shying away from
the feelings
in this vulnerable spot,
you will
widen
the area of aliveness.

You will
strengthen it [i.e., strengthen this vulnerable spot, this live center]
with
a new resiliency,
which comes from
• understanding
reality and
• correctly interpreting
what goes on
• in you, and
• in others.

33

As you begin to
integrate
• the vulnerable spot
with
• the ego,
you are
accomplishing the goal
of your evolutionary process
in this particular respect.

You have to
go through
the four points I indicated
in order to
connect
• your fears
with
• your unacknowledged cruelty.

Discover
how the cruelty
is a result of
misinterpretation.

Question closely
why
you have these
cruel impulses.

As you do so,
acknowledge
• what hurts you;
• what you would want to be different;
• what you believe others do to you,
• what life does to you.

After putting this into
precise words,
take the next step:
ask yourself
• whether you are in reality,
• whether what you believe
is true
or not.

34

*Now, my friends,
this lecture
must not remain
a theoretical study.*

*To the extent
you use it for yourself,
you will make what I say
a reality.*

*Some of you
have begun to do so
in your personal pathwork.*

*Others
have not yet begun
this particular phase.*

*I do expect –
if not tonight,
then in the next question and answer period –
that you will present me
with such problems.*

*You may begin
by expressing exactly
• what hurts you and
• why.*

*You will come
to certain recognitions.*

*Then
ask your questions,
and I will help you further.*

*Let us consider together
whether or not
the hurt is justified.*

*Is it
really
the way
you feel it to be?*

The moment
you can question
the reality
of your experiencing
• slight and
• hurt,
you have
a firm foundation
from which to proceed.

As long as you
cannot ask yourself
this question [i.e., the question whether or not the hurt is justified and
really the way you feel it to be]
because
you do not yet know
that you feel it [i.e., not yet know that you feel the hurt],
you have to seek
the proper way [to feel this hurt or slight and discern its reality]
in your momentary phase of the pathwork.

35

Some of you
may be aware of
the cruelty,
even if
only vaguely.

You can proceed from there.

Some may be
very much aware of
their fears [per se],
but are separated from
the other side of the coin [of their fears] –
namely,
the cruel impulses in themselves [which are causing the fears].

Others may be
acutely aware of
their unfulfillment –
which can be
any type
of undesirable
present situation –
but have not yet
connected this lack
with their own
innermost causes.

Still others may
have accomplished this [i.e., have connected their lack with their own causes]
to some degree,
but overlook
the rare instances
when their
true vulnerable spot
comes to the fore.

They have not yet observed

- how they manage
to get away from it [i.e., get away from their vulnerable spot,
their live center],
- how they
 - cover it up,
 - harden or
 - numb itin one fashion or another.

36

All these possibilities
exist now
for your further work.

Some of you
are aware of
one or another of these aspects,
but not of the others;
none of you
are aware of
all these aspects.

May all of you
bring these points together,
not just intellectually,
but as
deeply felt
experience.

This, indeed,
will give you

- courage and
- liberation.

None of these aspects
are equally strong
in everyone.

For example,
with some of my friends
the area of their

- illusion and
- misinterpretation of reality

is relatively small.

They

- are rational and
- see reality in many areas.

Their misinterpretation of reality
applies
only to certain areas,
which may be

so

- hidden and
- vague, so
- subtle and
- elusive,

that it [i.e., their misinterpretation of reality]
is difficult to ascertain.

Just because they are
apparently
so much in reality,
it is easy to overlook

- where they are not and
- to what extent they are not.

In a certain way,
these friends [*who are rational and see reality in many areas*]
have a more difficult time
resolving this problem [*of ascertaining where they are still in illusion*]
than those
who [, *in contrast to these who see reality in many areas, instead*]

- *overtly and*
- *obviously*

demonstrate
that they are,
even on the intellectual level,
in

- *illusion or*
- *delusion.*

The latter [*i.e., those who overtly and obviously demonstrate that they are in illusion*
even on the intellectual level]
may suffer
more acutely
until they reach
the point
of questioning their interpretation of

- *events and*
- *other people's reactions.*

Then [*finally*] *there are those*
who believe
that they are

- *reasonable,*
- *rational and*
- *realistic,*

yet are deluded
even about that.

37

The material I have given you
can indeed
be a major tool for all of you.

	<p><i>Now, do you have any questions regarding this topic?</i></p>
38	<p><i>QUESTION:</i> <i><u>I have found</u></i> <i><u>this cruelty in me</u></i> <i><u>in connection with</u></i> <i><u>revenge.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>I also feel</u></i> <i><u>my cruelty</u></i> <i><u>when I</u></i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i><u>withdraw and</u></i>• <i><u>punish others</u></i><i><u>with</u></i> <i><u>my isolation.</u></i></p> <p><i>Now,</i> <i><u>in spite of having found this,</u></i> <i><u>I feel that I cannot give it up.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>I must</u></i> <i><u>hang on to it.</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Can you help me to go on from here?</u></i></p>
39	<p><i>ANSWER:</i> <i><u>Actually,</u></i> <i><u>what I said in this lecture</u></i> <i><u>is an answer.</u></i></p>

Your particular key now
is to ask yourself

- why
you feel cruel.

- What do you
believe is done to you?

- What do you
expect might be done to you?

- What do you
expect of the other person?

- Why do you
believe the other person
 - is acting – or
 - has acted, or
 - might act –
in the way
that induces
cruel impulses in you?

- Acknowledge
precisely
what it is that you believe.

Then the next step must be to ask:

- Is it real, or
do I only believe it to be so?

40

QUESTIONER:

To me
it
seems
real....

ANSWER:

Of course.

That is exactly what I mean.

Because
it does
seem
real,
you
seem
to need
cruelty.

You have
always assumed
that it is real.

Now you must
open yourself
to the possibility
that it might
not be
as you believe.

That must be
your next step in this respect.

As long as
you let it go at that,

- in a vague attitude of
"perhaps it is not so,
but to me it
seems
real,"
- without
considering the consequences,
you will remain stuck.

When you
want
to see the truth
above all and
reach for it [i.e., reach for the truth],
it will come to you.

As long as
you remain
in a hazy climate,
you must
hold on to
the cruelty.

The cruelty
will be
your
precarious pleasure.

The pleasure [you experience from being cruel]
will cease
when you understand
the true facts.

The understanding
can only happen
when you

- want it [i.e., when you want the understanding] and
- are ready to consider
new
 - horizons and
 - possibilities

that you had never thought of.

Specifically,
ask yourself the question:
"Do

- the circumstances,
- the desires of the other person and
- the facts

bear out
what I feel,
or
might I be mistaken?

If the reality
is different from the way I

- think and
- feel

it,
I would like to see that reality.

*I open myself up
to that reality.*

I do not

- *commit or*
- *obligate*

myself

to anything

except

that I

want

to see the truth."

Then

truth must come,

and truth

must remove

- *conflict and*
- *suffering.*

That is the way.

41

QUESTION:

I am extremely aware

of

- *cruelty and*
 - *vulnerability*
- in myself.*

My feelings are so strong

when I feel slighted

that I feel the desire

to kill those

who seem to slight me.

Yet,

I also sense that my reactions

may be exaggerated.

What should I do about this

now that I have become aware of it?

42

ANSWER:

Again,

an exact answer
can be found in this lecture.

But I also wish to answer you personally.

I said before that

with some people
the area of
their unrealistic understanding is
• relatively small,
while with others it is
• much more obvious.

You belong undoubtedly
to the latter category.

This is a two-edged thing

because –
due
• to this unreality,
• to your unreal perceptions –
you
suffer more
while you are in it.

On the other hand,

it [i.e., your vulnerability and cruelty]
is so crass
that you will have an easier time
• discovering the unreality and
• finding your way out of the illusion.

Here you have

an exact example
of what I demonstrated in this lecture.

It is wonderful

• that it [i.e., that your vulnerability and cruelty]
is so open and
• that, in the short time of your work,
it has come out so strongly.

Your vulnerability
is also still
relatively accessible.

You think you defend it
by

- separating it [i.e., by separating your vulnerability]
from your ego and
- trying to numb it [i.e., numb your vulnerability]
by cruelty.

On the other hand, [in addition to using cruelty to numb your vulnerability]
cruelty
is also generated
by your misinterpretation of reality.

This [misunderstanding of reality]
is extremely

- strong and
- obvious,

therefore rather easy
to determine

once you begin to

- question it [i.e., question your understanding of reality] and
- consider the possibility [that your understanding is, in truth,
a misunderstanding instead]

in a serious way.

What you

- believe
people
 - feel and
 - think

and what they

- actually
 - feel and
 - think,

what you

- believe
they are and

what they

- actually are,
is
very,
very different.

43

Think
every day,
my friend,
about where
you feel you were
• insulted,
• slighted,
• rejected, or
• discriminated against.

Put it down
in writing,
every single instance.

I want you to do this
every day.

After
a few weeks,
or even a few days,
you will see
to what extent –
actually
almost all the time
you are in contact with people –
you
at least
anticipate
• rejection and
• discrimination,
• slight and
• disapproval.

Very often
you think it [i.e., you think the rejection, discrimination, slight, and disapproval]
already has happened,

while
in reality
nothing could be further from the truth.

When you begin to ask yourself
whether your feelings are
• true and
• commensurate with
what actually takes place – and
when you
want
to see what is
• true,
as possibly opposed to what you heretofore
• believed [to be true] –
you must
begin to
experience
• genuine and
• lasting
relief.

44

I want you to work along these lines
• by yourself
and also
• in your group.

Ask yourself
what you
believe
the other group members feel about you.

When you bring it out,
compare it
with their
actual
reactions to you.

Then also learn
• what is behind their reactions and
• why they feel what they feel.

Your entire aim
must now be
to discover
• what actually is [true]
and
• how it differs from
what you think is true.

Then
you will not need to
toughen
the vulnerable spot,
which is
the essence of
the real live center,
without which
you cannot successfully live.

When you formulate
precisely
what you
think
others feel about you – and
when you then,
with equal precision,
• formulate the possibility
that you might be mistaken and
• contemplate
other alternatives –
a new world
will open for you.

It [i.e., this new world]
will be
• a free world
in which
you can live
without fear,
• a world of light
in which
you need not be
isolated.

45

Now you feel
the whole world
is against you.

Since you feel
the whole world
is

- against you,
- out to
 - harm and
 - slight
- you,
- to
 - reject and
 - humiliate

you,

you must
toughen yourself.

Cruelty
is almost the only weapon
with which to defend yourself
against such a world.

Therefore
you must hang on to it [i.e., hang on to cruelty].

But
when you begin to see
that this is not so [i.e., see that the world is not against you],

you will
not need
the cruelty,

you will be

- relaxed and
- light,

because

- the world
will no longer
be your enemy.

• Other people
will no longer
be your enemies.

For instance,
when you pass people in the street,
observe
• the subtle, and
• yet distinct,
feeling of
• how you perceive
the strangers around you,
• how you perceive
that they are all your enemies.

Then ask yourself,
• "Is this true?
• Are they really my enemies,
or might it be different?
• Might they feel similar to
the way I feel –
• frightened and
• lost?
• And when they are angry,
maybe they hit out
as I do
at the idea
that
everyone else
is their enemy?"

Millions of people
pass each other by,
day in and day out,
each feeling they are being singled out
to be persecuted.

This is often a
• subtle,
• not even detectable,
feeling,
which, nevertheless, is there.

Once this feeling
is brought into awareness,
you can begin to question
the accuracy
of your perception.

	<p><u><i>You can thus find the way back to</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>reality,</i><p><u><i>hence to</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>truth and</i>• <i>light,</i><p><u><i>into a world which is</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>wonderful,</i>• <i>not frightening.</i></p></p></p>
46	<p><u><i>My dearest friends, may this lecture bring forth in you all that is</i></u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>healthy,</i>• <i>creative,</i>• <i>constructive and</i>• <i>real.</i><p><u><i>You will find it [i.e., you will find all that is healthy, creative, constructive and real] immediately "behind"</i></u> <u><i>that vulnerable live center, once you allow the first manifestations of its [i.e., allow the first manifestations of the vulnerable live center's] initially disquieting emotions to reach your surface awareness.</i></u></p><p><u><i>Go through this and see what will then</i></u> <u><i>manifest [after the initially disquieting emotions manifest], especially when your consciousness reaches for this possibility.</i></u></p></p>

The constant blessings
given to you
combine with this power
within you
and fill you
from
within yourself.

Be in peace.

Be in God!

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