

Feeling all Feelings – The Gateway Prayer

This incredibly clear and beautiful “Gateway Meditation” from Pathwork Lecture #190 *Importance of Experiencing All Feelings, Including Fear – the Dynamic State of Laziness* provides us the path to joy and bliss – but requires us to go through our deeply engrained and often unconscious and buried negative feelings. **The Lecture warns us that no path is a valid spiritual path that avoids this need to go through our deeply held negative emotions.**

32	<p>Many years ago in a lecture called "The Abyss of Illusion" I said that the path of self-realization and unification contains many junctures where it is necessary to let the self fall into what appears to be a bottomless abyss. Falling into it threatens to annihilate the entity. I said that up to a certain point in the individual's evolution, he or she crouches in front of this abyss, holding on and not daring to jump. The individual is very, very miserable in this state, but still believes that the pseudo-safety of this cramped, fearful position is preferable to annihilation. Only after finally summoning sufficient trust to risk the jump can the person find out that he or she actually floats. Many such junctures are necessary for making the discovery all over again that it is safe to jump.</p>
33	<p>The same applies to letting yourself fall into the apparent abyss of your blocked feelings -- painful, frightening feelings. Unless you do so, you will remain in the crouched, uncomfortable position in which it is really quite impossible to live and enjoy yourself. The necessary faith to take the jump can be activated by confronting the issue squarely and examining what is at stake. You have to give consideration to the fundamental question which can be summed up as follows: "Is there really a bottomless pit of negativity, destruction, and evil at the foundation of the human condition? Or are these aspects of a distortion that need not exist?"</p> <p>If the universe is benign and trustworthy, good and safe, then you cannot and need not fear to let yourself be what you are.</p> <p>There are many junctures where a human being's faith is put to the test. You have to face the discrepancy between what you claim to believe and what you actually do believe. If you believe in humanity's ultimate spiritual nature, then you have nothing to fear. If you do not, it is necessary to be aware of this underlying doubt and confront its real nature. Having your doubts in the open will, at least, protect you from the illusory nature of your faith in humanity and its spiritual destiny.</p> <p>If you then come out with the conviction that you really believe human nature is ultimately bad, destructive, fearsome, and chaotic, the true motive and reason for this belief must also be examined. Such confrontation with what one truly believes versus what one thinks one believes must always be honestly worked through. This is true for any single issue of importance.</p> <p>Help and guidance can and should also be activated through meditation for this specific purpose.</p>

34	<p>Also state in your meditation that you wish to be aware of your special methods of avoidance, and that you no longer want to deceive yourself in this regard. It is <u>better</u> to go on <u>avoiding the jump</u> into the abyss <u>and</u> knowing that you do so <u>and why</u>, than to deny your fear of it and pretend to be unafraid.</p> <p>By freely admitting your fear, you are more in touch with yourself than when you deny the fear. By confronting the validity of the fear, you may often find that the real reason behind the fear is shame and its partner, pride. Denied pride and shame often create fear. The idea that it is humiliating to have certain feelings or be in certain vulnerable states, along with the idea that you ought not to be where you are, and the feeling that your past suffering as a child is due to your being unacceptable and unlovable, all create the tendency to deny the state you are in. The pressure of this denial then creates fear, and the fear in turn requires the person to concoct theories to justify the fear. If people <u>convince</u> themselves that it is indeed <u>dangerous</u> to <u>feel their feelings</u>, this conviction may bring about a <u>breakdown</u> and a <u>crisis</u> that is merely a result of this deep conviction.</p> <p>It says in Scripture, "According to thy belief it will be done unto thee." This is not a magical process. If the fear of feeling your feelings is very strong, it leads to terror, and the terror can bring the person into an acute state of crisis. But the true underlying core feeling is often merely shame/pride and the misconception that the childhood pain existed because of personal inadequacy which the individual is too ashamed to expose.</p>
35	<p>Crossing the barrier of embarrassment, humiliation, shame, and pride will often dissolve fear. You must confront and squarely face these issues. Only thus can the way be smoothed to let yourself go into yourself.</p> <p>Meditation is a requirement without which the way becomes unnecessarily difficult. Such an approach and attitude will build the climate you need to go into the abyss of fright, loneliness, helplessness, pain, and the anger generated by the suffering you had to endure. <u>Every tear not shed is a stoppage</u>. Every protest not voiced sits in you and makes you express it where it is inappropriate.</p> <p>All these feelings seem like <u>bottomless pits</u>, <u>but</u> once you jump into them you are bound to find that there is deep inside of you that divine nucleus which dwells in you and of which you are an expression. It is a light, a warmth, an aliveness, and a security. All these are stark realities but can be experienced only when you go through the heretofore denied reality of avoided feelings.</p>
36	<p>Your spiritual self with all its joy, safety and peace is right behind the <u>sadness</u> and <u>pain</u>. It cannot be activated by a direct act of will, nor by practices and actions that leave out the necessity to experience all your feelings. But your spiritual center does manifest inexorably as a <u>byproduct</u>, the <u>result</u> of the <u>direct act of will to go through your denied feelings</u>.</p>
37	<p>I will end this lecture by telling you that the fear is not real. It is truly an</p>

	<p>illusion, but you must go through it by feeling it.</p> <p>Through the gateway of feeling your weakness lies your strength;</p> <p>through the gateway of feeling your pain lies your pleasure and joy;</p> <p>through the gateway of feeling your fear lies your security and safety;</p> <p>through the gateway of feeling your loneliness lies your capacity to have fulfillment, love and companionship;</p> <p>through the gateway of feeling your hate lies your capacity to love;</p> <p>through the gateway of feeling your hopelessness lies true and justified hope;</p> <p>through the gateway of accepting the lacks of your childhood lies your fulfillment now.</p> <p>When you experience all these feelings and states, it is essential that you do not delude yourself into believing they are caused by anything you experience or fail to experience now. Whatever the now brings forth is only the result of the <u>past</u> which still resides in your system.</p>
38	<p>Through these gateways you will find <u>true life</u>.</p> <p>All the many temptations that beckon you to follow paths which imply that it is possible to find the spiritual reality of yourself without going through these gateways are wishful thinking.</p> <p>There is no way around what has accumulated in you and has poisoned your whole system -- your spiritual, your psychological, and often also your physical system. This poison can be eliminated only by feeling what you hoped you could avoid feeling.</p> <p>Then a new energy influx comes in ever greater measure.</p> <p>Many of you have experienced to some degree what I am saying here, and therein lies your growth. But you all have to go further in this regard.</p> <p>The self-punishment for hatred and spite, for cruelty and greed, for selfishness and one-sided demands upon others must be released so you can go into the terror of your fear, your shame, your pain. When you stop fighting this, you will become real, open, and truly alive.</p>