

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 77
1996 Edition
January 6, 1961

SELF-CONFIDENCE: ITS TRUE ORIGIN AND WHAT PROHIBITS IT

Greetings, my dearest friends. I bring blessings for each one of you. Blessed is this hour.

The subject tonight will be self-confidence. What is self-confidence? When your real being, your real self, your intuitive nature manifests, there is no uncertainty in you, no doubt about your right reaction or action, and no wavering. Your instant and spontaneous reaction is of such a nature that you know deep down, "This is right, this is so." That has happened to all of you, at least occasionally. Under certain circumstances your real being could express and manifest, unhampered by the disturbing layers that usually cover your real self. Whatever the occasion, you lived up to it. You coped with it in the only way possible, and you knew without a shadow of doubt that this was so.

The truly healthy and mature human being nearly always reacts this way, and when this occurs, genuine self-confidence is automatically established. For it is only when your intuitive nature guides you that you can trust yourself. From this part of your being you have nothing to fear from the overlayers of error, illusion and compulsion you have. They can only lead you into further illusion and error, and therefore into unrest.

The ultimate aim of this work of self-search is to free you from the superimposed layers so that your real self can take the reins and govern your life. Thus it is easy to see that your conflicts, images, misconceptions and inner problems prohibit your real self from manifesting. At this point we have to understand the basic cause of the problems.

In the course of the work you are doing, you may have often wondered, "Where is my real self? What is it?" And you think of this real self as though it were something remote that can only come to the fore after you search for it in faraway places -- within yourself, of course. It is a mystery to you; you are slightly awed and somehow imagine that the real self is something utterly strange and new. Therefore, you fear it just a little bit. But nothing could be further from the truth. You know your real self. You have nothing to fear from it. It is not far away -- in fact it is close by, right under your nose, so to speak, only most of the time you do not realize it. You make no use of it and prefer to express the other self which you have become used to, but which is not the real you. It consists of the compulsive drives and impulses which you unconsciously think you have to express in order to be happy, or just to survive. Whatever comes from this level does not express your real feelings. Your real feelings come from your real self, which is right underneath the tense, compulsive, emotional behavior pattern. Once you stop believing, as you unconsciously do now, that the compulsive drive is necessary, and use instead your real feelings, your intuitive nature will emerge.

After some constructive work is done and valid insights have been attained, you are bound to become aware of this compulsive current, and feel it distinctly, almost as a separate foreign

substance within yourself. You will then understand that all your wrong conclusions and images are a product of this current, which I have also called the forcing current. It is based on a fundamental misunderstanding about life.

In order to get a comprehensive view of the subject, it is necessary that I repeat certain points. For those of you, my friends, who have already found within yourselves what I discuss here, my words will fortify your findings, bringing them into stronger focus. Others who have not found this current, and do not realize what a fundamental aspect this is, may be helped to arrive at the point that is so necessary obtain freedom, to lose inhibitions and uncertainties, and allow the real self to emerge. But I emphasize again; mere intellectual knowledge will never bring freedom.

What causes all your conflicts and deviations is your desire to be happy, or to be loved. Being loved is a necessary requirement for being happy and therefore constitutes a major part of your compulsive drives. Subdivisions, divisions of this drive, such as the desire to be approved of and admired, may take the place of your desire to be loved; it may also be an additional factor. There is also a second aspect. The child in you imagines that you can only be happy if your will is done. At times, this may simply mean that your will is to be loved and admired. At other times you may feel unhappy if your dear ones have shortcomings that you disapprove of, or if their opinions vary from yours, or if you are prohibited from pursuing a certain aim. The child in you thinks that this prevents your happiness.

You emerge from childhood with the rarely conscious conviction: "In order to be happy, my will has to be done." As long as you have not recognized this hidden conviction, you cannot arrive at the liberation you desire. The more your intellect conflicts with your hidden emotions, the more difficult it will be to unearth this deep-rooted misconception, which creates a tight, tense current -- the forcing current. It creates constant struggle, tension, and anxiety. The more unaware you are of it, the more potent it is within your psyche. Unconsciously, you feel that getting your will is a matter of life or death. Not to get it represents the abyss; not to get it spells annihilation for you -- unconsciously, of course. This fear is so strong that you often do not permit yourself to admit you have not got your will: you try to pretend that what you really wanted is no longer desirable. This is not merely pride, but it is based on the misconception that not getting what you want means terror, darkness, and unhappiness.

Simultaneously, the evolving conscious part has realized that you cannot always get what you want and this creates an additional element of conflict. You seek ways to overcome the threat of not getting your will, but since the means are sought unconsciously rather than in the light of awareness, and since they are sought under the misconception that getting your will and being happy is one and the same thing, these unconscious strivings are not only inefficient, but they bring further conflict.

On the one hand, these inner strivings are directed toward finding fulfillment. On the other, you are in constant fear of not succeeding and unconsciously you labor to hide the "failure" from yourself. Thus a current is set up, flowing in two directions. One calls for your pushing ahead, trying to force life, people, and circumstances to succumb to your will, to conquer the reality in which everything cannot go according to your desires. There are various ways in which you try to do that. Often you choose several ways at once, never realizing that they are mutually exclusive and would defeat your purpose even if it were possible to always get what you want. This is why you

often have much less than life would actually grant you, creating the preposterous situation that the means employed to always get what you want cause you to get less than you would have without this struggle. The second direction of this current concerns your fear of not getting what you want, or even the conviction that you never will, and causes you to adopt means which are so defeatist and negative that, again, you sabotage what you ordinarily could have.

Both the underlying belief that you must either always get what you want, or that you can never get it, as well as the various means by which you try to force or defend against these wrong conclusions, are unreal. All the impulses and drives you employ in their service are equally unreal, imaginary, and therefore ineffective and damaging. They are the superimposed layers, which cover your real self. Your real self functions in reality. It cannot manifest in a self-created world of illusion, in a world based on wrong assumptions. That is why, whenever your intuitive nature manifested in your life and you experienced a deep and peaceful certainty, at that moment you must have been free of the forcing current.

Your real self and your real feelings are the same as creation, God, life, fate, the cosmic life force, the stream of life, or reality. In reality you are not unhappy if you do not always get your will, you are not unhappy if everyone does not love and admire you, you are not unhappy if others do not always agree with you, or have faults you cannot tolerate. Nor is it reality that you can never get what you really wish, that you can never be loved and respected, that life and the world is hostile to you and prohibit you from unfolding the best you have to offer. You do not have to fight; nor do you have to retreat and withdraw so as to avoid the danger of life. You do not have to beg, cry, submit and sell your soul in order to get what you want. Nor do you have to defend yourself against constant defeat -- another supposed fact your subconscious often takes for granted. Your real self knows all this. But as long as you repeat your useless struggle, it cannot evolve. In your world of unreality, unreal and untrue impulses operate. They can no more function in reality than real feelings can in a world of unreality.

Is it surprising then that you lack self-confidence? Your innermost self knows perfectly well that on this level you cannot trust yourself. Such trust would not be justified, for the superimposed layer, based on untruth, can only lead you to unsatisfactory pseudo-solutions. Only if you free yourself of the idea that you always have to get your will in order to be happy, will you be free of the "I want" current. And only when that is gone will you operate on the level that is real. You will know that happiness can be yours, but not always the way you want it, and when you want it. In reality it does not make you unhappy to wait and occasionally to give up. Your unhappiness is an illusion.

If you are in harmony with the stream of life, giving yourself up to it, whatever comes your way will smoothly carry you forward. While you are in unreality, you know two alternatives, which are both equally wrong. The one is, "I can be happy only if everything happens the way I want it when I want it." The other alternative is, "Since so many times I could not get what I wanted, this means I can never get it, therefore I can never be happy." You operate on a level of illusion, and where there is illusion, or untruth, there must be constant uncertainty, tension, anxiety, struggle, and doubt. A part of you deeply feels that you have nothing secure to hold on to. And, in a way, you are right: as long as you remain in illusion, you cannot hold onto reality, which alone is secure. The only safety lies in the eternal, flexible truth of the life stream, which is eternally independent of small wish-fulfillments.

If you cannot trust yourself, you cannot trust life, the world, or God. So, my friends, once you have established this inner reality by removing the untrue premise and forever taking leave of it, you are bound to trust yourself, and therefore the life stream. Only then will you realize how this stream provides you with exactly what you need at each stage of your life. You will give yourself up to it, since it and your real self are one. This does not mean a fatalistic, passive attitude in which you wait without ever doing anything. It automatically creates the right balance between activity and passivity.

Those of you who have encountered the tense nucleus which loudly claims, "I want" will feel my words; you will derive a deep understanding from them and they will give you a new outlook. Those of you who have not yet found the nucleus will do so sooner or later, if you persevere in this work. Find the harsh, tense, rigid, and at the same time wavering current of "I want." Find also all the means you resort to, either to get it, or to protect yourself from the horror of not getting it.

I have often mentioned certain attitudes, which also apply here. So far, you may not have understood that these attitudes are the result of the forcing current. One such attitude is submissiveness. When you are submissive you cling, and hope for the love of others. To obtain it, you forsake your own self and your own opinions, and do not stand up for yourself. You always put yourself at a disadvantage, losing your dignity and self-respect. All this is covered with the rationalization of unselfishness, sacrifice, and your ability to love. In truth, you just use the forcing current in the most blatantly self-centered way. You simply try to make a bargain and say, "If I submit to you, you must love me and do my will." Although outwardly you appear meek and flexible, inwardly just the opposite is the case. It is necessary that you find this aspect in you, no matter how hidden. It is also necessary that you understand it. Submission must never be confused with love. It may look similar, but the inner content is very different. When you try to appease the other person, you want something. In fact, you grab for it, not waiting for it to be given freely. The stronger the submissiveness, the stronger the forcing current, which expresses your desire to get your way.

There is another attitude, often chosen when people are more inclined to be hopeless of ever getting from others what they consider necessary. The only hope they see is in their using all their power, all their selfish, ruthless drives, to defeat the enemy who always stands in their way. They become hostile because they think the entire world is hostile and aggression is the only means of getting the happiness they desire. Needless to say, the opposite effect is the result: they are bound to antagonize people so that these actually do become hostile to them. This only strengthens their wrong conclusions. They do not see that they have caused this condition, and are constantly aggravating it. This can be so hidden that at first it would seem impossible to trace. In fact, often the stronger the hostile attitude is, the more it is covered up. It is also possible that this attitude exists only in isolated parts of the personality. It may need a great deal of self-search and analysis of your real reactions, going to the roots of their significance, until you find the existence of this attitude. When you find an attitude of battling in fear against annihilation, for instance, you can be sure that this trend must exist within your psyche. In other cases, such a fear may be unconscious and may apply only to certain aspects of your life, while in a larger part of your personality you feel at ease with the world. That again may be difficult to trace.

While a submissive person is obviously dependent, the one with a hostile attitude deceives himself or herself into believing that he or she is independent, standing alone and fighting alone, never bending to the will of others. They never realize that they are just as dependent as the submissive type, only they choose different means to pursue their conviction that they must get what they want in order to be happy. Their way is to reject emotions, affection, and what they may consider softness. To them all this represents danger. Instead of real or pseudo-positive emotions, they will manufacture a hardness and aggressiveness inside themselves that is no more real than the submissive kind of "love."

Another way of coping with the basic will to be happy is the attitude I have so often called withdrawal. In this case, people are convinced of never attaining happiness, and this seems to be such a tragedy that they protect themselves by pretending they do not want anything from others, life, or the world. They withdraw into isolation, never experiencing the dreaded defeat, never realizing what a poor bargain they have made with life. They may protect themselves from disappointments and failures, which in reality would not hurt half as much as they now imagine. They could experience happiness and the joy they think they do not miss, whereas now they vegetate without any real life experience. Although a person with this predominant attitude may appear more cheerful and well-adjusted than another, deep down there is a greater hopelessness. Otherwise he or she would not have resorted to such drastic means. I have pointed out before that all three aspects exist in most people in some combination and this creates additional conflicts in the soul. If people resort to several means, hoping to be guarded fully without risking anything, they will be pulled into opposite directions.

Still another way of trying to cope is by crippling your real feelings. This also happens with the three attitudes described before. You never allow your feelings to function freely or naturally. Either you whip them artificially into a more dramatic state, exaggerating them for reasons that seem to you expedient. The expediency is, of course, another way of manipulating the other person to feel obligated to love and obey you. Or else, if you fear defeat, you do not allow either your intuition or your real feelings to guide and carry you safely through the stream of life. Instead you artificially cramp, prohibit, and squash your natural feelings. Maybe your real self would cause your real feelings to recede too in a particular situation. But this is a very different procedure and has a very different effect on your personality than the artificial manipulation, even if the goal is the same. At other times, the goal may not be the same and what you do based on your limited view is not only unnecessary but also damaging.

Your real self knows. Trust it. Your superimposed compulsive behavior pattern is completely blind. The one is haphazard. It may be right or wrong, but you remain insecure. It is an unnatural forceful procedure. The other is in harmony with your nature and your life. Therefore, whatever happens is organic and right. If it is right to feel for someone, you do not need to increase your emotions artificially. You will feel as strongly as you should when you allow your personality to develop freely. This cannot happen with all the deviations and basic false premises.

In an artificial manipulation you prevent your soul from growing in harmony with your innermost self. You prevent your innermost self from evolving. You prevent your feelings from maturing, from manifesting. All this you may not yet be aware of, but in the course of this work, you will find it to be true. It is important to understand the implications of the artificial manipulation of your feelings, either making them bigger or making them smaller than they are. The

negative result is that you prohibit the growth of a living organism, for feelings are that. Any living organism not left alone, but constantly manipulated, will suffer a very crippling effect. This is what you do with your real feelings. You do so when you exaggerate and dramatize a positive feeling about a person. And you do so when you talk yourself into resentment and contempt for a person because you believe that this is protection against the tragedy of being rejected. Finally, it is not surprising if you no longer know what you really feel and want, and who you really are. Your feelings are the expression of your being. If you constantly prohibit your real feelings from functioning and substitute artificial ones, you cannot know them, and therefore you cannot know your real self.

There is only one way to find the real self that you are so ardently looking for in your work. First become aware of the forcing current, the current of "I want" on the one hand, and "I fear that I will not get what I want" on the other. Once you are clearly aware of how this current manifests in you, you will be able to let go of it. Then, and then only, can you give it up. If you do that again and again, soon you are bound to become aware of the feelings of your real self which slowly rise to the surface after you have banned them in fear for such a long time. You did not trust them; therefore you could not trust yourself. You can reverse that process only by becoming aware and then removing the element that you substituted.

You will clearly distinguish between the real feelings underneath and the compulsive manipulations, drives, and impulses which you confuse with your feelings. The real feelings are calm. They do not mind being patient. When they express themselves, there will be no doubt, no wavering. Since they are one with the stream of life, they will carry you in the right direction and you will have no doubt if you are willing to trust them.

How can you have self-confidence if the only thing that can truly give it to you -- your real self, your real feelings -- is not allowed to function, and if instead you use substitutes that leave you in a state of inner frenzy? Those who are outwardly calm and well balanced are not necessarily free of this aspect. In fact, it may only be more hidden, and perhaps even more damaging. But I venture to say that the frenzy exists in each person unless it has been found and dissolved in your work. Unless you become aware of it, feeling it almost like a separate element in you, you cannot relinquish it.

Once you reach that state, you will experience feelings which are almost impossible to convey in words. The relief of a burden you have unnecessarily carried will be so tremendous that your joy and liberation will be a strongly felt reality. What you have so far experienced only on isolated occasions, the manifestation of your intuitive nature, will become more and more a constant reaction. You will have the deep inner knowledge -- not in your brain but in your solar plexus -- that your reaction, or your knowledge, or your decision is right, feeling neither guilt nor pride nor doubt. You will spontaneously be the best you can be: poised and unrepressed. You will say the right thing at the right time and know when not to speak. You will be relaxed and concentrated at the same time, fully aware and alive to the moment and its requirements. You will know that nothing that should be yours could fail to come to you. You will not need to be in a frenzy about it, worrying whether or not you do too much or too little. You will do what is necessary and eliminate that which is unnecessary, without fear and worry.

This serenity sounds like an ideal impossible to attain on earth, and I do not say that you will reach it overnight. But gradually and surely you will increase it, having unavoidable setbacks less and less frequently. Eventually it will become your real nature, as it truly is, once you dissolve the fearful and tense inner clamoring, "I want, I must." When the tension is relaxed, you float, you do not fear, you have no doubt, and you recognize clearly what an illusion your struggle has been. You will no longer need it. You will shed it like an old, dirty, heavy cloak you have no use for. Your potential will become reality. You will be poised within yourself and in life. You will not need to exaggerate. You will not believe that you must have everything or you have nothing. You will find happiness, but will know that not everything need go according to your wishes. You will not believe people are "good" or "bad," neither depending on them too much nor distrusting them and standing alone in a seemingly hostile world. You will judge in reality, seeing what is valuable and trustworthy, but not "needing" it. And you will also see the weaknesses of people, without being personally threatened, and without generalizing this human aspect. Right now you are doing all of this constantly, no matter how much it is camouflaged.

Your right, spontaneous, uninhibited expression depends solely on whether or not, or to what degree, you become aware and then let go of the forcing current, "I want." This work is a path within the path. Once you have the distinct awareness and feel the current, visualizing it as a foreign substance, you are on the halfway mark of this aspect of your development. Then the next step will not be quite so difficult.

Now, are there any questions?

QUESTION: I feel this forcing current in me. I know that I want certain conditions, while I intellectually know that I can't have them. How can I give up the forcing current? In what way do I work?

ANSWER: The first requirement is to feel its existence. Just verify it. And then ask yourself specific questions. What is it that I want? Why? A clear and precise answer to these questions is of utmost importance. Know what you want in any given moment, and why. Moreover, why does the attainment seem so important? Consider whether it is really as important as you now think. Ask yourself, what would happen if I did not get it? Consider this alternative with a fresh outlook. Sometimes it may be necessary to concentrate temporarily on something else that appears to have no bearing on the subject, but in the end you will see the connection. The work itself guides you in the proper direction, as my friends have often noticed.

When you have considered the illusion of the importance of your wish fulfillment and your feelings still remain as tense and unfree as before, there must be something hidden that you have not yet found. You will see that the intensity of your feelings is out of proportion with your intellectual view of its importance. Emotionally, it seems that your life depends on it, while you know perfectly well that it does not. This will show you the discrepancy between the issue and the intensity of your feelings. When you realize this, you may be quite shocked.

If after ascertaining realizing your wishes and seeing the discrepancy between them and your actual needs the intensity still remains, consider whether the fulfillment of the desire would mean to you an imaginary protection against an imaginary danger. Needless to say, you have to find your

particular imaginary danger. Unless you are aware of this, you cannot let go of the "weapon" of your forcing current.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that in this work you cannot get any real results by absorbing general knowledge. It does not suffice that you know, and even feel, that you have the forcing current in you. You have to find the exact, specific way in which it works, what the issues are, and in what way you try to overcome the obstacles to your childish concept of happiness. This may not only vary with each person, but it also varies with the same person. One day your forcing current manifests in one way, the next day in another. You may find two or three ways simultaneously which conflict with one another. All this is very individual, and it is necessary to find out how these different ways are expressed in you. In fact, when you have a real insight, you will probably even forget at the moment to identify it as the forcing current. Only afterward will you see what it was. Perhaps this is one way of distinguishing real and false recognitions. In the former, you hardly realize what it is you seek and find at the moment. In the latter, you struggle to use knowledge you have heard and try to apply it artificially.

When an emotional obstinacy is discovered in the course of this work and you are perfectly aware of its unreasonableness without being able to help it, then, as I said before, you must be afraid to let go of the attitude because it is supposed to be a protection against something you fear. It is an armor. So it becomes imperative that you find out specifically what the danger is that the stubborn holding on to the "I-want-current" is supposed to save you from.

Of course the answer is that the child in you believes that you will avoid the abyss of unhappiness by holding on to this current. But again, this general answer is not sufficient because many individual variations are possible in which this is experienced in the subconscious. Perhaps the only way you can discover the truth within is by using completely different words. You have to find it all afresh. And then you may, perhaps, see that it amounts to just what I say here. Unconsciously, you may think of your forcing current in different terms, so that emotionally my words may have no meaning for you.

Incidentally, my friends, I would greatly welcome questions, especially from those friends who do not yet have the opportunity to get private help for their individual work, who still have to wait -- the time will come if they persevere. They need it more than the others who are already well launched on this path; they can do much to prepare themselves for receiving more intensified help. It would be constructive for all of you, even those who already work with a helper, to ask what to do as preparatory work. This will also be beneficial for those friends who cannot attend personally but read these lectures. So give up your shyness and inhibitions. The more you participate with questions, the better it is for your inner readiness and for the shedding of your inhibitions. This will be of substantial benefit that you cannot yet evaluate.

QUESTION: Isn't it that sometimes we want to nurse our resentments for certain people and that's why we seek their faults? What do we do about that?

ANSWER: This is a very constructive question. When you want to have resentments, the most obvious and first question would be, why? Once you realize that you want to have such resentments, it will not be so difficult to find out why. As always, this should be approached as dispassionately and with as new an outlook as though questions of this sort had never been asked.

Disregard the ready answer that would say, because of this or that fault in the other person. This is not the reason. You have to find out what your imagined advantage is when you are aggressive and hostile.

QUESTION: An armor, so as not to be on the defensive?

ANSWER: If you are afraid of being on the defensive, you must find yourself guilty, otherwise you would not have to protect yourself by going on the offensive.

QUESTION: Yes, but it also gives self-confidence and self-trust.

ANSWER: Actually, it does not give you self-confidence if you resent another person and you are helplessly caught in the resentment. Your emotions become so strong that you cannot handle them anymore. This does not make for self-confidence. But in your unreality you may believe it does, simply by avoiding looking for what you feel guilty about. If you attack in order to hide something, it will make you as helpless as the object of your attack. Thus you are caught in a whirlpool, losing self-government.

It is often the case that one resents in the other what one actually resents in oneself. If you look at what particularly irritates you, you will inevitably find that, perhaps in a distorted or modified way, you have a very similar aspect or attitude. The stronger you dislike it in yourself, the more you project the dislike on others. The more it is hidden, the more you may overcompensate for it by going in the opposite extreme outwardly. But since any ungenue solution has a negative effect, so must this, too. One of the symptoms is that you particularly resent the same thing in others. The remedy, therefore, lies in finding that in you which is still hidden and then, through understanding its imagined necessity, dissolving it. In that moment, you will no longer have such strong reactions toward others. Is that clear?

QUESTION: Yes. I also think that it is a cover for the procedure, "If there is a hurt anyway, I'd rather have a self-inflicted hurt than be hurt by someone else."

ANSWER: Yes, that may often be the case too. I have touched upon the subject of self-destructiveness in the past, but in the light of our new knowledge I would be glad to discuss this element again. Please bring it up another time.

My dearest friends, let me part from you tonight with the assurance, once again, that this is a benign universe, that you have nothing to fear if you come out of your illusion, if you give up the fear, as well as the error, that your little self can be the judge of what brings you happiness. Let your big self, your real self that is so much nearer than you believe, guide you in the stream of life. All people on this earth who have found ways of exploring the realms of the subconscious, whether in psychoanalysis or in any other form of psychotherapy, if truly successful, discover the old, old truths of metaphysics and spirituality. The more successful your earth methods become, the more will they integrate with the basis of all religions. For the divine laws work eternally within the psyche and this will be more and more discovered to be so.

Go in peace, my friends. Rejoice in the knowledge that reality must make you happy. Be blessed, be in God!

Edited by Judith and John Saly

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