

## THE DEFENSE

Greetings, my dearest friends. God bless each one of you. Blessed is your path. Blessed are your efforts.

We have discussed your defense mechanisms repeatedly. We have worked on this subject considerably, and you have learned, to a degree, to recognize their presence. However, you do not yet fully understand what happens to your entire system when you become defensive. Such knowledge will be very useful for your further work and self-observation. It will mean a great deal to you to understand the processes of your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual nature, and specifically what happens on all these levels of your personality when you are defensive. You have begun to observe a hard knot, or wall within, when you withdraw in fear and close yourself up, meaning to protect yourself. However, this defensive reaction is so imbedded in you, and has become so much second nature, that most of the time you are unaware that you are on the defensive. Therefore you have to understand more about this subject. Be on the lookout, and become more intensely aware of the defensive reaction so that you may get over it.

When you are on the defensive, you are frightened; you feel threatened and endangered. There certainly are realistic dangers, and the human system is equipped to deal with them. If an actual attack is made on you, all your faculties will withdraw from their usual preoccupations and will be directed to and concentrated on this one danger. In order to deal with an urgent issue at the moment, you need all your faculties to focus on that one point.

Then your entire system goes through a change for the single purpose of dealing with the emergency. In such a moment, your glandular system releases a certain substance that shoots through your entire nervous system, speeding up your blood pressure and accelerating your pulse beat. All this happens for the purpose of focusing your faculties on the danger point, to heighten the speed of the appropriate reaction, and to quicken the power of your perception. When you are in real danger, this is good and important, for otherwise, with only your normal reactions and perceptions at your disposal, you could not muster the energy that is necessary to protect yourself. With the glandular reaction, however, you will develop more strength -- physical or mental -- than you normally have in order to defend yourself. Or you will quickly judge and decide whether defense by counterattack or flight is the better way to deal with the particular danger.

In an average life, such actual dangers occur only every once in a while. The substance released from your glandular system contains a certain poison which will not damage you if your defense mechanism works only in those rare instances. After the danger is over and your system goes back to normal functioning, the poison is absorbed and dissolved. This poison is a necessary stimulant for the moment, but if the stimulation is permanent, damage to your system is

unavoidable. It is the same with certain medicines that are important for a cure, but if you form a habit of taking them, you will be damaged in the long run.

When you are on the defensive in psychological conflicts, for irrational, unrealistic reasons, your glandular system does not question the validity of the reason. The poisonous substance is released the moment you are frightened, and every time you are on the defensive, you are frightened. Therefore, it is important that unrealistic fears should cease, and being on the defensive for no valid reason be ruled out of your life, otherwise the poisonous substance will affect your bloodstream and nervous system, and physical damage will accrue in one way or another. According to individual makeup and the physical resistance of the various organs, damage will appear sooner or later, more or less noticeably, in this or that part of the body. This is the physical side.

As to the mental side of your nature, when you are in actual realistic danger, all your mental faculties will automatically concentrate -- with the help of the poisonous stimulant -- on the issue at hand. You cannot concentrate on anything else. You will not be capable of harboring thoughts of truth and wisdom, except those that deal with the danger of the moment, and with protecting yourself. All other considerations, which are otherwise important for a harmonious and meaningful life, will be excluded. If this reaction happens in isolated moments of actual danger, it is good and purposeful. When the actual, realistic danger is over, you can return to normal, and your thought processes can again concentrate on the many aspects of life, on others and on yourself, all of which have nothing to do with protecting yourself from danger.

However, if you are constantly, or often, in a psychological state of warding off danger and attack at a time when there is actually no danger of attack, the development of your mental faculties is bound to suffer. Your concepts will remain immature and limited, even if you happen to have a good brain. Your outlook will be much too limited to deal with life adequately.

All this happens in such a subtle and insidious way that you are utterly unaware of it. You cannot tell the difference between actual and unreal threats, because the state of being on the defensive has become second nature. This hinders your vision of truth about others, about life, and about yourself. It prohibits you from seeing your possibilities and potentials in making proper choices. All this comes about because your entire mental system is geared to ward off an imaginary danger and to defend yourself from it. Thus the same processes are operative when the danger is imaginary as when you are in actual danger. In actual danger, your heightened perception makes you decide whether to launch a counterattack, or, if this is hopelessly dangerous and futile, to run away and protect yourself by hiding. There is no room for consideration of anything else. A similar procedure occurs when your defense mechanism functions in a neurotic, unreal situation. You choose either the pseudo-solution of aggressiveness, or withdrawal from life, or appeasement, which robs you of your integrity. All these defenses stem from your fright of being exposed to the possibility of danger. You live in a constant state of war, with most of your mental faculties focused on defending yourself, which does not leave you sufficient room to deal with life adequately. You can easily see that such powerfully one-pointed concentration is only necessary in the rare instances of actual danger, but extremely damaging and limiting when there is no such danger.

The emotional side of your nature, when faced with actual danger, feels only fright and anger. In the rare instances of real danger, it is good that this is so, because these two emotions produce the necessary impetus and strength to defend yourself. All other emotions are withdrawn at that

moment. If you were at such moments capable of having all sorts of other feelings, the necessary strength to defend yourself would be absent. However, when the danger is over, the normal and integrated person can quickly return to a state wherein many other emotions can be felt, apart from fear and anger.

If you are constantly on the defensive, however, the predominant feelings are fright and anger. I hardly need to discuss how damaging this is for you and for your surroundings. Whenever you are hurt, you erroneously believe yourself to be under attack. You think there is a danger to your safety. Thus you immediately repress the hurt -- your primary reaction -- and you substitute anger and hostility for it. You begin to allow your defense mechanism, whatever your individual pseudo-solutions are, to go to war. Needless to say, you are no longer in truth. The hurt you experienced, unpleasant as it may have been, is no real danger and does not call for elaborate defenses, infinitely more damaging than the original hurt could ever be. Also you are no longer aware of the original hurt, but only of the secondary reaction -- the anger. Repressing the truth institutes a process of self-alienation, of psychological self-estrangement.

You can all begin to see how predominant this defensiveness is. It may be subtle and not easy to detect, but once you are on the right track, you become more acutely aware of its permanent existence. You not only defend against hurt as a supposed mortal danger, but also against frustration of your will, and thus against anything that does not go according to your wishes. All this represents, unconsciously, a threat to your safety, which in reality is null. Frustrations may be undesirable, but not necessarily dangerous. Yet a defense mechanism, by its very nature, is a process of warding off danger. When the process is used for actual danger, it is meaningful; when it is not, your entire system is put out of balance. Your faculties are limited to a degree you cannot fully comprehend as yet. In other words, your instinct of self-preservation is at work when not required. Whenever instincts which were originally destined to meet a specific danger are used in other situations, the human psyche is distorted and put out of balance.

Looking now at the spiritual side of your nature as you face actual danger, it again is necessary that your capacity of feeling be limited to the moment. Remember that the whole range of your feelings is reduced to fright and anger precisely because this enables you to protect your physical safety. Such concentration does not leave room for feelings of love, warmth, affection, understanding, and compassion. Therefore in moments of danger you withdraw into yourself, gathering your forces for counterattack or flight. You no longer reach out into the world; you no longer try to bridge the gap between yourself and others. Eliminating the separation between yourself and others, or communication and union are not your immediate concerns. In moments of actual danger such positive feelings would be detrimental. When the danger is over you go back to feeling all the warm, good, outgoing, and outreaching feelings. The same is true about your creativity, another side of your spiritual nature. No matter how creative a person may ordinarily be, in moments of acute danger the creativity is temporarily suspended and returns only after the danger is over.

When you are more or less permanently defensive because you believe, erroneously, that any hurt or frustration, any criticism or rejection is a danger you must guard against, you limit the range of your feelings. You also limit the potentials of your creativity, your ability to reach out into life and communicate with others, to love and to understand, and to feel and express yourself. In short, your spiritual life is gravely impaired. By such self-imposed limitation you isolate yourself more and

more, and institute the very patterns which cause others to hurt and frustrate you again and again because you unknowingly reject them. Therefore you need to defend yourself more, and two full-fledged vicious circles are set into motion. One is a vicious circle within yourself, and the other a vicious circle between yourself and others, which triggers your defense-mechanism and causes both parties to mutually reject each other.

While you defend yourself unnecessarily because no actual danger exists, you are releasing poisonous substances into your physical body. You are limiting your range of thought and feeling and you short circuit your creative processes. You do not see the manifold possibilities of life and of communication with people. Instead you isolate yourself with your busy defense against an unreal danger. Actual dangers in which you need all your defensive equipment are encountered very rarely. You do not have to learn how to use your defenses. They are automatic processes in every human being. Even a child will have automatic reactions without having been taught.

I wish to make one more important point: the more you use the instinctual faculties for unreal danger the less they will work effectively and spontaneously when required for real protection. Therefore, a person whose inner system is constantly geared for defense against unreal dangers is often incapable of coping with real attack and threat. He or she is paralyzed, helpless, and actually becomes a prey, behaving like a victim when he actually is not. This condition can never be remedied by bolstering the defenses for real danger. That will not work. However, your defenses will be automatically reactivated if and when you learn to stop defending when there is no need to do so.

This is why we have to eliminate the unreal defense against an unreal danger. Such "dangers" are emotional hurt, rejection, frustration of your will, and criticism. When you feel accused of something true, half-true, or untrue, you feel in mortal danger. If you translate your emotional reactions to such criticism, you will readily see that your feelings say, "I am in danger."

Now, let us examine the truth of the matter. Are you really endangered or threatened because of hurt, frustration, or criticism? You, yourself, will have to verify that this is not so. Even unjustified criticism cannot endanger you, provided your attitude toward it is mature and realistic. Is it not true that the criticism, against which you so strenuously defend yourself, often threatens to expose something you do not wish to face? Perhaps it is uncomfortable for you to consider changing, or you believe that, if the truth came out, you would not be loved and worthy of respect, and you defend yourself against what is true, even though the truth may come from people who are, in their own way, as imperfect as you.

The supposed mortal danger you are compelled to ward off is often truth itself, my friends. And you defend against it by pointing out the truth in the other person, which that other also does not want to see. Maybe one is stronger and the other weaker, but what difference does that make, since everyone has their own rhythm and value system. No one can be compared with another. Evaluation on that basis is never valid. Thus two parties point out truths about each other, and each may be correct to a degree, while not wanting to see the full truth about their own side.

You erroneously believe that if your weaknesses, or at least certain specific weaknesses, were exposed, others would have a right to reject you and not love you. And this you cannot bear. So, to ward off the imaginary danger, you use all your defense mechanisms to preserve your status as a

lovable human being. You use such heavy fighting equipment only to your own detriment, for it is never true that people reject a person due to a fault or weakness alone.

If you observe life around you closely, you will find out without a doubt that hiding the truth is what causes rejection. This is why a free admission of the worst fault or distortion will bring forth acceptance, while a defense against exposure brings forth contempt, dislike, rejection, and fear, and is bound to make the other person defensive. If free admission is not yet possible, perhaps because the truth is not yet fully seen, then the willingness to see, which can only come when one does not go on the defensive, will have a similarly favorable effect. Only after you have tried this new reaction will you see how much more constructive and advantageous honesty is.

Whenever you are on the defensive, your primary aim cannot be truth. When it comes to real dangers, the real danger is the truth of the moment, but when it comes to unreal dangers, the truth lies somewhere else. You do not ask yourself at such moments, "Is it right? Is there a grain of truth in it?" Your concern at the moment is, "Am I right, or is the other person right?" It is this limited concept of "I-versus-the-other-person" that befogs the issue of what is right or true.

Your defense may often be a basic way of life of not involving yourself, and only when you are called upon will you choose a more direct defense. Then you either try to run away, or hedge the issue and put it on another level, where you can prove yourself right. Your third option is a counterattack, pointing out the other person's shortcomings. There is a great difference between doing this as a defense of one's own undesirable traits, or doing it in truth and for the sake of truth.

It should be easily understood that defensiveness is not truth-producing. It does not give truth and reality any breathing space. Wherever a defensive wall is put up, your concern at that moment is to ward off an accusation which you believe might bring rejection, frustration, and hurt. At that moment, it becomes more important for you to prove that the accusation is unjustified, even if it contains elements of truth, rather than to find the elements of truth the accusation contains. Thus you run away from truth, and therefore from yourself and from life. Pretense and self-deception, self-alienation and isolation must be the result.

Defensiveness not only damages your physical body, but limits your thoughts, your range of emotions, your concepts and your creativity, your spiritual life, your ability to relate to others, your inner freedom, your concern with truth, and therefore also your ability to love and respect yourself and others. All this is due to a completely erroneous concept of perfectionism, in which you believe that your value and acceptability are at stake because you have imperfections.

If people would learn to deeply probe within to find and eliminate this defensive wall, so much hardship could be avoided in day-to-day communications. People would not dislike each other so easily. They would not fear each other. The erroneous feeling that you are the target of an attack against which you have to defend, often makes you fear and dislike others. So does the erroneous hurt you suffer when something is brought out which you feel diminishes your value. Another cause of fear and dislike of others is the erroneous feeling of inadequacy when life and others do not respond to your wishes and frustrate you. Such unfulfillment is not half as painful as the error of believing yourself to be inadequate. The criticism would not damage you at all if you were aware that others will not like you less because you have this fault, and that you are willing to face it.

In a state of defensiveness you do not perceive, experience, or think truthfully or reasonably. You do not feel feelings of warmth, affection, and understanding. Therefore, you are not in reality, and you cannot really communicate. Your system is focused on one small point as you defend yourself against an imaginary danger. In this state a vital part of life and reality is left out of consideration.

Defensiveness can take many forms, as you know, in ways that are so subtle as to make them unnoticeable to others until a direct "attack" is launched. The defensiveness may be much stronger in calm, reticent people who quietly go their own ways than in some people whose defenses are more obvious. For them the fear of attack is so great and the confidence in themselves to handle it is so small that they are constantly in flight from life and from other people. But whether the defense is outer aggressiveness or withdrawal and flight, both are equally damaging and have the same negative results. Both alternatives make reaching out toward the other person, toward truth, involvement, and life itself impossible. These alternatives force you to stay on your guard and be blind to life, other people, and yourself. Thus the harm you inflict on yourself and on those around you, creating disharmony and separation, are impossible to describe fully.

When you are on the defensive you cannot fulfill the needs of others, not to speak of your own. When you discover that the need to defend yourself is an illusion and stop defending, the sense of liberation you experience is impossible to convey. You simply have to live it to know the joy of it. Let go and receive whatever comes to you. Look at it quietly with the intention not to ward it off, but to see the truth. This attitude will change your reactions. Your emanations will have a different quality. Your whole life will become different.

If you can learn to detect, observe, and understand -- and therefore eventually eliminate -- your defensiveness, you will be freed of an illusion. There is no greater hardship, no greater prison than illusion. There is nothing more destructive on this earth than people unnecessarily defending themselves. There is nothing that creates more disharmony, more untruth, more hostility, and more friction, in personal as well as in public life, than defensiveness.

QUESTION: You say that the body releases poisons which damage the physical system. On this path, is it possible to heal such damage?

ANSWER: Of course it is possible. If and when the defensiveness is eliminated, further poisons will cease to contaminate the system. This in itself will bring relief. However, it is possible that the damage is already so considerable that the results of the past cannot be entirely eliminated from the body. Whether this is or is not the case depends on many variables impossible to enumerate now. But, in principle, it is possible.

QUESTION: Do you mean that we should just listen to someone who criticizes?

ANSWER: Calmly listen and evaluate: Could there be some truth in the criticism? Observe your inner reaction of fright. You will soon discover that your fright is unjustified, even if the criticism is wrong. Nothing can happen to you; you are not in danger.

QUESTION: But what if we get annoyed at being unjustly criticized?

ANSWER: The very feeling of annoyance is the proof of your defensiveness. Without defense, you would not be annoyed. How could you be? You would simply evaluate the criticism and decide whether there may be some truth, a little truth, or no truth in it at all. All too often, you are convinced that it is unjustified before you even give yourself the chance to find the possible grain of truth in it. If there is no trace of truth in it, why would you have to get annoyed? What can this criticism do to you that causes annoyance? Have you ever analyzed it from this point of view? Justified or unjustified criticism cannot really harm you, unless you think you cannot be loved and respected if something to be criticized is found in you.

QUESTION: What if it is a lie? If it is untrue?

ANSWER: I said that before. It cannot harm you if you look at it calmly. Your defense against it does the harm. The lie itself, or the erroneous judgement, could never harm you. The less defensive you are, the more adequate you will be to straighten out an outright lie or misunderstanding. I do not mean to imply that you must never defend yourself against a flagrant lie, or harmful rumor. This falls under the category of realistic defense, which can be adequately handled only to the degree that unrealistic defensiveness is absent.

QUESTION: If the accusation covers a betrayal and you have a natural anger about it, your anger may cover self-defense, but it is also a natural reaction against someone who has made promises to you who have fulfilled your part only to find that you are betrayed. What you were promised and have hoped for does not come true. Is this not a cause for natural anger?

ANSWER: Before we deal with the term of what is "natural" and "unnatural," I would like to say again that I did not imply that people should take any injustice or betrayal without doing whatever is necessary, constructive, and productive to ward it off. There are many instances when it is wrong to sit back and do nothing. This would be sick; it would be playing the martyr, making a mockery of justice.

It is interesting to note that the more defensive a person is, the less equipped he is to employ constructive defense or attack, and the more he will tend to victimize himself and become a martyr. There exists a proper and healthy aggressiveness and assertiveness. When aggressiveness is healthy and when not cannot be determined by a general rule. The difference is too subtle and can only be found in truthful self-examination. Actual dangers are not only physical in nature; they also occur on other levels. I can only emphasize again that the freer you are of unrealistic defensiveness, the better you will be able to cope with a danger through healthy defense. Often when the two defenses intermingle, the unhealthy weakens and undermines the healthy one and diminishes its positive effect.

Now as to what is "natural." It is certainly "natural" to have immature, unproductive reactions, because everyone else has them too. But that does not mean they are really healthy, or that it is not possible to grow out of them -- not forcefully, by superimposition, not by feeling guilty that childish reactions still exist within, but in the way that I always advocate. Is that clear?

QUESTIONER: Yes. First you must clear up your emotional entanglement in the relationship, and then you will deal with it realistically.

ANSWER: Yes, that is right. You see, your unhealthy emotional involvement makes it impossible for you to rightly evaluate the situation, and therefore you cannot deal with it as you would otherwise.

QUESTION: I think what our friend said about the lie is also a realistic danger?

ANSWER: Yes, it could be. I said that. It all depends on whether we deal with facts and actions, or with the more subtle trends, attitudes, and qualities. But when it comes to this work, to voicing one's impressions and feelings about others, the truth of the matter cannot necessarily be established at once. It requires probing to see whether or not there is some grain of truth in what the other person says, even if it is brought out in a distorted way, perhaps due to his or her own problems, or merely to human limitations. In such cases, it cannot easily be stated that "this is a lie," because these things are very subtle.

QUESTION: You were talking about situations in which our emotions flare up. How about human beings whose emotions are dulled and curbed, and who have no reactions?

ANSWER: When a human being gets into that state, it is a result of being overdefensive. Outwardly and consciously, emotions may be dulled to a considerable degree, but inwardly they still exist. They smolder underground and do their damage. That is why it is so important in this work to bring the emotions to the surface. Only then can they be dealt with properly.

As long as you do not feel your hate, for example, you cannot rid yourself of it. It has to come out of repression and reach surface awareness in order for you to understand its origin and then to free yourself from it. It is the same with the defensive wall. As long as you are unaware of it you can do nothing. Therefore, the first consideration is to use the methods of this work to bring into awareness what was hitherto submerged. However, there is no person entirely devoid of emotions. They are on the surface, but never named, and their significance is never questioned. These few surface emotions will furnish sufficient material with which to work first. Even people whose approach is predominantly intellectual and who deliberately dull their feelings, still have certain feelings. The more defensive human beings are, the more limited the scope of emotions they can feel. But they can make an effort to pinpoint them. In such cases the predominant emotions will be fright and anger. The people may be unaware that these are emotions because they are so used to explaining them away.

QUESTIONER: Yes, but the person whose emotions are above board has an easier time to observe them.

ANSWER: Yes, certainly. This is why it is of primary importance to become aware of all the emotions you were not conscious of. Only then can we go into the kind of problems we are dealing with now.

QUESTION: In my private work, my helper and I found that I have an inadequate concept of a human being. What is a human being?

ANSWER: If I were to answer that, it would probably take me at least a month of continuous talking. This, I think, may be the best answer for you to adjust your concept to a more truthful one. Compare this statement with the limited concept you have when you say, "he is this or that," or "she is thus and thus." Realize the infinite variety, the manifoldness, the contradictoriness, the unlimited possibilities and potentials of thought, and the range of feelings in every human being. Every human being has, in both a positive and a negative aspect, every emotion, trend, or characteristic you can name. The reasons why the same quality displays its positive facet at one time and its negative at other times are among the difficult intricacies of the human psyche. The more you understand the limitless possibilities and potentials of any human being, the further do you come in understanding a particular human being. On the other hand, the more you believe, either consciously or unconsciously, that a human being is only this or only that, in other words, the more limited your concept is, the less will you understand about others.

In a strange way, the unconscious aim of human beings is to limit the human personality, because they believe that if there is less to a human being, it is easier to know one another. This is not true. The more you realize the infinite possibilities and aspects, the more understanding and insight you will have. This is the best answer I can give you. Any description, no matter how detailed, would not do it justice. It would be limited, and it would be an oversimplification.

QUESTION: After a person has become greatly aware of his hidden currents -- let's say, he has become aware of seventy-five percent of them and can see how they work -- what can he do to train the subconscious mind? Or is it necessary?

ANSWER: I will repeat what I have said many times. Merely observe the wrong, childish, untrue, and distorted reactions and concepts. The more you observe them, the better you will be able to learn why your emotions are not functioning according to reality and truth. Get a clear understanding of how they are erroneous, inadequate, destructive, disadvantageous, and unrealistic. Compare these reactions with your knowledge -- as yet only theoretical -- of the realistic, truthful, and productive reactions, without trying to force yourself to feel the latter. Merely compare and understand why one way of reacting is unproductive and unrealistic, while the other is productive and realistic. Fully acknowledge that you are not yet capable of feeling and reacting in the desired way and without guilt, without any forcing current, and fully accept yourself as you are, recognizing your immaturity. If you do this, without being angry and impatient with yourself, your emotions will eventually begin to absorb the knowledge of your brain that heretofore could not penetrate into your emotions. It will give you peace simply to observe the childish emotions in action, while knowing, and getting to understand more and more fully, why and how they are unproductive.

QUESTION: You wanted to talk about the background of the seven deadly sins.

ANSWER: I would suggest that you prepare a list of them. I said last time that this topic cannot just be added on to a lecture because it would take too long. Put down each of them and ask about each separately, and then I will answer. That will form a lecture in itself.

QUESTION: In the traditional Scriptures of Judaism and Islam, the texts are specific regarding the consumption of fish, flesh, and fowl. It is commanded that "of their flesh shall we not eat." Christianity has no ban against pork. In the fifteenth verse of Matthew, Jesus said, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth the man, but that which cometh out of the mouth." However,

during Lent, dietary restrictions are observed by Christians. My two questions are: Are the dietary laws based on that which is unclean, or on that which is holy; and what is the meaning of Lent and of the counting of the days?

ANSWER: To your first question: The dietary laws were given at a time when human beings' scientific and hygienic knowledge was so insufficient that such information was connected with religion. Merely sanitary, or health reasons dictated them. In certain periods of history, under different circumstances, the laws were changed. Nowadays, it is unnecessary for religion to set up such rules. At no time did these laws have anything to do with spiritual life. They were merely safeguards to protect health. If humanity at this time still clings to them as a spiritual necessity, it shows a gross misunderstanding of what true spirituality is. It shows the superficial approach of humanity: people's disinclination to think. Your science today may find certain conditions that make it necessary to observe certain laws as long as the specific conditions prevail. When the conditions change, the laws will be eliminated. To persist in keeping them without any purpose or reason would be senseless.

As to your second question: The original symbolic meaning of the time of Lent was to give people a period of going into themselves, of purifying their systems, not only physically, but on all levels. Again, the outer is merely a symbol of the inner. A combined purification of body and soul is often healthy, provided it is done in an individual way and not merely by adhering to dogma. Under whatever guise dogma appears, it shows rigidity and lack of self-responsibility in thinking for oneself. Thus it becomes something dead. The living spirit has gone out of it. The original symbolic meaning was that of purification, contemplation, a time of looking within the self and preparing for a new influx, a new strength with which to reach out.

May you all become more and more aware of your defenses. May you understand what they do to your entire system, to your thinking process, to your faculty of feeling, to your physical system, and to your spiritual life. May you thus become capable of letting go, of receiving, examining, discriminating, and objectively looking at an issue without defending yourselves. May you no longer think and feel in terms of "right versus wrong" and become thereby capable of experiencing others and reaching out to them. The defense makes you withdraw from others and no longer reach out. May the blessing that is extended to you again this evening help you particularly in this respect for your further work and help you to free yourselves of the most damaging obstructions within. Be blessed, each one of you. Receive our warmth and our love, each one of you. Be in peace. Be in God.

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