

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 56  
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## CAPACITY TO WISH -- HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY MOTIVES IN DESIRES

Greetings, God bless all of you, my dearest friends, blessed is this hour.

The creative life force or principle is all around you. It is all-powerful and all-good. If you could but tune in on it, you on this earth plane could enjoy perfect happiness in every possible respect. For this creative life force does not wish you anything but good -- if I may put it that way. It is ready to give you joy, strength, vitality, and happiness. As far as the universe is concerned, there need be no hardship or unhappiness.

What I would like to discuss tonight is what are the prerequisites that enable you to tune in on this force, and what keeps you from it? There are many answers to that. One of them, which I would like to discuss particularly tonight is the capacity to wish. This may sound much simpler than it is. But whenever your capacity to wish is hindered, whether consciously or subconsciously, fulfillment cannot come to you. You may desire a particular fulfillment with all your might, outwardly, yet there are unconscious factors involved within yourself that work against this wish fulfillment.

Let us determine, first of all, the difference between healthy and unhealthy desire motives. We will not concern ourselves with desires that are obviously unhealthy because they are destructive. We will delve into the deeper regions of the mind and soul where deviations exist in a very subtle and unobtrusive way. You may have a perfectly legitimate desire, yet it may be unhealthy. Unhealthy and tense desires are always linked with fear. That is why in certain teachings you hear so much about the state of desirelessness which is, on the plane where most of you are, an impossibility. So we can only try to find the difference between what makes a desire healthy and what makes it unhealthy. One explanation is this: whenever you desire something for the sake of itself, it is healthy. But when you desire something as a means to an end, it may be unhealthy. If this is the case, your desire automatically becomes tense. It becomes a need, and therefore fear must follow in its wake.

Let me give you an example. If you desire financial security for the sake of enjoying that state, there is nothing unhealthy about it even though many of you may think this is a selfish desire. This we will discuss separately a little later. But if you desire financial security for the sake of impressing others or to alleviate an inherent feeling of inferiority, then it is unhealthy. Then it becomes a need for something other than what financial security itself stands for. The goal then is distorted to serve a need other than that which the goal was supposed to fill in a healthy way. This circumstance may be entirely unrecognized. You may feel only a pressing need. Rational and valid explanations as to why the desire is so pressing may be found in abundance, while underneath the true motive remains hidden. And this hidden motive always causes the fear that you might not get what you need. The

more unconscious the motive, the more unhealthy the desire, and the more it will stand in the way of your fulfillment.

You may say, "Why, I know many people who certainly desire money for very unsavory purposes, and yet they are successful. They use their wealth for power over other people, to be important, yet they seem to succeed." This may be so, my friends. But there are many reasons for it. It may be that such a person has less of a conscience. The further your development has progressed, the stronger your conscience becomes and registers very accurately when a wrong motive is involved and therefore puts prohibitive currents in the way. With a person of lesser development, this conscience process may be absent. Hence his wish capacity can function even though the motive may be an impure one. The mere fact that the impure and selfish motives become conscious causes the wish capacity to function better because, as I said, the more unconscious the wrong motives, the more powerful the prohibition. Or the person may be constituted in such a way that the self-punishing and self-destructive forces, put in motion by wrong motives, affect not the financial, but another area of his life. However, you are not able to connect the two; in fact, the person himself may be unable to see the connection.

In contrast to the constructive life force, there is the destructive life force, emanating from confusion, ignorance, and wrong motives. Your personality registers extremely accurately all desires, tendencies, and motives. Although you may not be consciously aware of this registration, unconsciously it is there. If you have certain wrong and confused motives that may be self-serving and to the detriment of others -- be it ever so subtle -- destructive currents are the result. These destructive currents either prohibit the particular conscious wish itself, or they affect another fulfillment, the desire for which may or may not be conscious. Deep within yourself, you know there is something wrong, and therefore you say to yourself (though not in conscious thought): "I do not deserve that which I wish."

A great deal of confusion exists in mankind about what is selfish and what is unselfish. Suppose you desire perfect health. In your asking for it in prayer or simply in your consciousness about it, in your awareness of desiring such a state, you may feel somewhat like this: "This is selfish. I have no right to desire something so strongly that benefits merely me. Who am I to deserve this?" As a result your wish capacity does not function fully. In such reasoning -- unconscious as it may be -- there is so much falsity and error, my friends.

You often think something is selfish that in reality has nothing to do with selfishness. But where you are really involved in your petty vanity, while you place disproportionate importance on your own person, you do not realize at all that you are egocentric or selfish. To desire health because in your strength and vigor and vitality you can fulfill more, you can give more to others and to yourself is certainly not selfish in the least even though it seems to serve just you. But let us even suppose that you do not actually desire health in order to benefit others directly (it will come to that indirectly and automatically), but you just want to enjoy it. Then even this need not be selfish.

But should you desire health for the purpose of harming others, be it ever so subtly, then it is selfish. And when I say harm, I do not mean the obvious. I mean, for instance, that the desire to impress others is also harmful. What happens when you impress others in a certain way? Envy may result -- and you may enjoy this envy. It makes you feel strong and powerful at the expense of

another person's smallness. Now, this may not apply often to the question of health, but, generally speaking, this is the case whenever you have the need to show off to others.

Thus we come back to the point we first raised: the goal is not desired for the sake of itself but to serve something else -- namely, your need to impress others, to make yourself bigger and "better" and enviable in the eyes of others. So you see, a wrong and harmful motive of a desire need not be outright wickedness or a material disadvantage you wish to inflict on another person. Your petty vanity, your need to be above others, even in a subtle, unpronounced way, suffices to twist your motives and make them unhealthy. Hence your fulfillment is blocked, your wish capacity hampered.

In order to avoid all possible misunderstanding, let me emphasize again that not in all cases do the self-punishing currents affect a conscious desire even though this desire may contain unhealthy motives in addition to healthy and conscious ones. Self-destructive and self-punishing forces, brought forth by the psyche the moment a wrong motive is registered, may affect another wish fulfillment you cherish. It may even concern a fulfillment of a wish you are not conscious of.

You may be burdened with certain difficulties in your life which you just take for granted although this does not preclude your resentment and rebellion against them. It just never occurs to you to desire a different state of affairs in a constructive and positive way -- which includes the seeking and understanding of the inner block and prohibition you set up. Only then can you truly express a wish without hindrances resulting from inner misconceptions.

You who are on this path will find it very useful to clarify what your true desires are. You will then find quite often that what you consciously desire, you do not desire completely -- without doubt and restriction, without misgivings and compromise. There is a part in you which wants the fulfillment, but there also is a part that does not. It is the purpose of this search to become aware of this latter part and to investigate the reasons for the hesitation and uncertainty.

Self-punishment for hidden wrong motives is only one reason for prohibiting certain elements of your wish capacity. There is, for instance, the further reason that whatever you desire requires a price to be paid. You know that, we discussed this often enough. Unconsciously you may not be completely ready to pay the price -- the true price, not the outer one. The outer one is often overemphasized as a compensation for the inner disinclination to pay the price in a deeper and more real sense. Thus the situation with you is twofold: outwardly and consciously you tensely desire something, while inwardly and unconsciously you hesitate and do not wish a certain part of it. The stronger this unconscious part is, the tenser your outer straining becomes. You are unaware that unconsciously you do not find the fulfillment quite worthwhile if it cannot be had without the particular price involved. The goal becomes of doubtful value.

Wherever you have hidden reasoning in your subconscious, you are immature. You know that very well by now. And the immature wants the impossible. A child cannot have an adult sense of responsibility, which includes at all times the awareness that everything requires a price. The immature part of your personality hopes against hope that perhaps, after all, it will be possible that you get what you want without the necessity to pay the price. Until you become certain this cannot be, you postpone the wish fulfillment by setting up blocking elements.

It is of great importance that you find these inner, hidden reasonings, investigate them closer and come to terms with them on the basis of your more mature intellect. Find specifically: what are your desires? Why do you desire such? What would be the required price? Are you ready, completely, without reserve, to pay this price? Do not force yourself to say, "Yes, I am ready," when, emotionally, you are not. That would not do at all. As long as you are not truly ready, without compulsion, it would not work anyway. But at least you will now understand why you cannot have what you desire in only part of your personality. You will realize that no one but you prohibits the fulfillment. This will be healthy and will help you avoid further wrong impressions about God, fate, and life. You will give yourself time to grow into the necessary state of development, where to pay the price will not be something difficult or seemingly disadvantageous. You will be able to work calmly on the reasons, now out in the open, as to why it seems so hard to pay the price -- a particular one or to accept this principle in general. When you investigate along these lines, you will also find wrong, impure, selfish, and unhealthy motives for your desires -- motives directed otherwise than toward the goal itself. By finding and facing them squarely, you will automatically eliminate a certain degree of self-destructiveness within yourself.

I realize that those friends who are not really on this path of active self-search will interpret these words on an outer level. Therefore it may seem repetitious to them, for I have often said similar words. But those of my friends who are continuously working and approaching deeper levels of their soul, they will find that what I say here has new meaning and value. Those of you who do the work of self-search, check your emotional reactions to your specific desires. I cannot stress emphatically enough how important this will be for you. Then you can go on from there. You will not find relief until and unless you find that in you which prohibits the fulfillment.

Needless to say, there may be several reasons for it: the feeling of being undeserving, your disinclination to pay the price, as well as a number of other reasons we have no time to go into tonight. But you will find that these two factors are very basic, and all other factors -- directly or indirectly -- stem from these two.

Let us get back once more to the feeling of being undeserving. This is, needless to say, nothing else but an inferiority feeling. Such feelings are rarely based on what you think of yourself consciously. Often you do not even know why you have such feelings of inferiority. They may not coincide at all with your conscious opinion of yourself. You do not know why you feel so inferior, and this makes it feel so hopeless for you. If only you knew why, you could adjust to it if it should concern something in you that you cannot change. By accepting it, you would cease to have the gnawing feeling of inferiority, or you could go about changing it if it can be altered. But since you do not know what it is, you find yourself in a hopeless state. No certainty is ever as hard to bear as uncertainty -- and you are uncertain as to the reason for your inferiority feelings.

Let me tell you, my friends, you never, never have inferiority feelings for that which you cannot change. No matter how hard it may be, it does not in itself push you into the despair that is the by-product of inferiority feelings -- provided your attitude about it is healthy, without hidden elements. Remember that at all times. The real reasons of your inferiority feelings are these little deviations that result from your trying to deceive yourself. These deviations are registered, but as long as this registration takes place subconsciously only, they manifest as a feeling of inferiority. That is why a person loses his inferiority feeling in the measure that he finds his unconscious deviations and comes to terms with them.

Let me come back to the example of desiring financial security. Suppose you desire it so that you can impress those who have humbled you (or who you think have). This wrong motive, which you may be unaware of, will then cause inferiority feelings in you even though the very goal of this desire is just to eliminate these feelings. In other words, you seek the wrong remedy in blindness, ignorance, and immaturity.

You can be quite certain, my friends, that there is no other reason for inferiority feelings than self-deceit -- deceit about your own motives, why you want or do certain things. When you face squarely that which is you, imperfect as a desire or action or attitude may be, the inferiority complex must cease in the measure that you gain objective clarity about yourself. You will then no longer find it necessary to desire things as a means to another end, to desire a thing in order to accomplish something else.

If you desire wealth because you want to be wealthy, it is not a means to an end. But if you desire wealth so as to alleviate an inferiority complex, you want it to fulfill something that stands in no direct relationship to the goal itself. By so doing, you are running around in one of those famous vicious circles; because of the wrong motive, you feel even more inferior. And in order to eliminate this feeling, you strengthen the wrong motive, believing that this might be the remedy.

The only way to break this hopeless task of running around in such circles is to begin to see clearly yourself, your motives, your desires, and what you really want them to do for you. Deliver clear vision concerning it, with all the honesty you can muster. So you see, my friends, nothing needs to stand in your way to complete fulfillment, but the deviations and self-deceptions do. If you could but clear that up, you could tune in on this great invigorating force at your disposal. It is all around you and within you. It exists impersonally, as impersonally as all spiritual laws. He who can tune in on it, can have access to and benefit from it. He who has not found the means -- the currents and the switches in himself which enables him to tune in -- will live here while this force will be over there. He will go by it without being able to be affected by it.

I have shown you again how important it is to know yourself in the deepest regions of your being. A superficial knowledge cannot be enough. You can see further the implications that this offers. If you could truly understand what I say here, you would realize that these impersonal laws are kind and all good. It is no unkindness that it is left to your free will either to seek the contact with them or to stagnate in the old way, in the old blindness.

Yes, there is personal spiritual help too, such as we are allowed to give. It is for all those who truly manifest a desire to grow and change. They receive the personal help without which they cannot attain the necessary tools to remove that which stands in their way. With this personal help, they will one day be capable to partake of the impersonal benign forces available to all beings in the universe. Cosmic principles, forces, and laws exist impersonally for all alike. And as I said, if you would but realize the significance of this, the terrible, terrible God image mankind generally has would automatically vanish. Whenever you are in a difficult situation, in hopelessness and longing, in despair and depression, as long as this God image exists in you, you somehow, perhaps unconsciously, blame this God. You believe somehow it was He who has punished you. Or you think, at best, He has considered it necessary; it is a test for you. This is only partly so. You can say it is a test in the sense I have often explained -- that your errors can be your medicine if you have the

proper attitude to want life and self-responsibility. Otherwise, hardship will not even be a test. In the long run, yes. For, one day, you will come to the point when you search the answer within yourself and not outwardly. Then, what you have experienced in the past will take on new meaning. It will become retroactive medicine and, in this way, a test. But it will not be medicine until you reach the point of complete understanding of what self-responsibility means.

About self-responsibility too, there can be so much misunderstanding. We always have to struggle to save you from your misunderstandings. We have to try to prevent a truth from being used by subconscious, immature, and unhealthy reactions. For then, it will no longer be a truth. In the case of self-responsibility, such distortion can happen by associating this concept with unhealthy self-blame, guilt, and inferiority feelings. In other words, the opposite happens of what should happen. You might use the term self-responsibility to nourish your guilt and inferiority feelings. You might say to yourself, "Since I am responsible for myself, I am guiltier still." This is most destructive; it is very wrong, my friends. It is a complete misunderstanding. I know this may sound contradictory and confusing to some of you. But those who have followed me along this way for a while will know this subtle and fine difference. Declaring yourself responsible for your life and seeking the remedy for past erroneous attitudes and concepts is an utterly constructive and strengthening activity. But feeling that because you are responsible for your life, you are all the more guilty and inferior and therefore more hopeless than ever is destructive and weakening.

My dear friends, let these words give you renewed incentive and understanding to find yourself. Although you will certainly not be able to tune in on this great universal force in all aspects of your life right away, slowly and gradually, little by little, you will begin to eliminate that which prevents you from it. In this way, you will approach the necessary contact to partake of this wonderful force so that you will be inside of it instead of outside of it.

You will not experience this as a sudden change. But as many of you will confirm, you approach the life force and invigoration by the mere fact of being utterly and completely honest with yourself in a constructive way. Most of you have experienced this occasionally. You know now what a wonderful feeling this is. The greater resistance you have to face that which is ready to come to the surface, the greater relief you will experience. And although you will have to say to yourself, "Yes, these motives or attitudes are wrong," in further honesty you will know that you are as yet incapable of feeling differently. But this self-honesty will give you strength, security, and self-respect. It requires not only the honesty to see that there are wrong motives and attitudes in you but also the additional honesty of knowing that you cannot change this at once. This is the most constructive inner action you can possibly adopt.

After you have made a recognition of importance, beware of the attitude of believing you can immediately change your emotions simply because now you can see and evaluate them clearly. Have the further honesty and wisdom to realize that growth occurs slowly. Use and cherish the recognition, and wait for your emotions to mature. By "using and cherishing" your findings, I mean that you do not let them slip into hiding again -- then the work would have to be done all over again. It may then be easier than the first time, but it is still a waste of time that can be avoided by remaining aware of your findings without haste or pressure, simply cultivating the awareness. It needs this constant reminder because discoveries slip back so fast to where they came from.

Nor should you imagine, by forcing your emotions, by being impatient with yourself, that you can jump over the period of growth. Remain aware of your recognitions, and use them in your daily observation of your reactions. Be aware that they cannot change at once. The growth occurs through such observation from different angles and aspects. If you can follow this through, it will not depress you to be aware of imperfect reactions or selfish emotions.

I assure you that if a negative recognition about yourself depresses you, there must be something wrong in your attitude. Therefore it should be brought to me, or it can be gone into in your image sessions. The emphasis will then have to be shifted from the significance of the recognition itself to your attitude as a whole to negative findings in yourself. I repeat, if you have the proper attitude, the more "disadvantageous" the recognition, the more relief and liberation it will cause you. If this is not the case, you have to look into the reason why it does not bring liberation, and find out where and how your attitude is faulty. In such a search, you may find many chain reactions which may at first seem to lead you away from the original subject. But it is of the utmost importance that they are considered and dealt with. When this is cleared up, recognitions of your lower nature will become a joyful event.

Consider this too, my friends. All this should help you on your path. Now just one more word of advice concerning your work in self-search. Many of you believe that to find yourself, to explore the subconscious, you have to dig for knowledge so completely out of reach, out of your consciousness, that you do not know where to begin and look for anything. This may leave you at a loss. Also, you expect to find something staggering. Yes, this may happen once in a while, although in a slightly different way than you think. But as a rule, you should not approach it in such an attitude. And I address these words not only to those who are just at the beginning; often this is unclear also to my friends who have been on this path for quite a while.

Do not approach this search with the idea of finding something you have had no inkling of. It is much simpler than that. By observing your everyday reactions and emotions in the most mundane matters, you will find the answer. You are so conditioned to pass them by, not to pay any attention to them -- how you react to other people, or in certain situations of your life, etc. -- that much passes you by that could be of the greatest value in your work. Instead, learn to investigate these reactions, and ask yourself what the meaning and further significance of them may be.

What do they imply? What lies behind the emotions you register in the most casual incidents of your life? What is the emotion you register just at first, and what is behind it? You are not expected to look for something far away and deeply hidden. This will come too, but begin with that which actually is on the surface and not at all unconscious. You merely did not pay any attention to it so far. Begin to pay attention to it now. From there on, you will gradually proceed to what is hidden on deeper levels. The exploration of the subconscious happens just as gradually as growth. It is no sudden plunge.

And now, my friends, I am ready for your questions.

QUESTION: I wondered if you could explain about the different movements that are now in existence which claim a short cut is possible to partake of the life force, by simply exchanging a truth for an untruth, etc.

ANSWER: Unfortunately, it is not as simple as all that, for the human personality is a very, very involved and complicated machinery, if I may put it this way. If it were merely a question of substituting a truth for an untruth, it would be fine. But do you realize what truth is at all times? You have to find truth. And before you can find the great universal truth, you have to find your own truth. That is the only way you can get to universal truth. You cannot get it outwardly by learning things or by exercising certain rites or whatever it may be. You can only get it by looking at yourself. And I hardly need to say -- you will all readily agree with me -- that it is not an easy matter to find your own truth, your distorted and temporary "truth." What may appear true to you today -- and it may be true, at that, on a certain level, it may be half-truth or quarter-truth -- may no longer hold true tomorrow when you have gained additional knowledge, not only generally speaking but also about yourself. Only after you have removed all the layers of falsity and half-truth, of distortion and confusion, can the great universal truth, as well as the life force, have access to your soul.

I do not say that many of these new movements do not bring some good. I will explain when such short-cut methods are successful. There is no human being who is in untruth and deviation or imperfection in all areas of his personality. Complete imperfection in a human being exists no more than complete perfection. This earth plane incarnates only those where there is a mixture. Therefore you all have some healthy elements in you. If a person comes to a movement, such as you describe, and learns certain factors and practices where he was healthy anyway and where he may just have needed a little outer push, so to speak, he will respond. But he cannot respond wherever uncleared areas are concerned. There is no short cut. I would say, this path is a short cut. It is the shortest "cut" there is. Time is relative. The years you need to know yourself and thus gain a certain firm stronghold on life is very little time indeed.

These movements you describe may have their good points and their truths. They may also be beneficial for mankind in waking him up to wider awareness. And they may also be helpful wherever a person has a healthy element within himself to begin with, but for lack of incentive and because of intellectual ignorance on the subject, it could not unfold. But where deviations, complications, confusion reign in the soul, there is no other way than the labor of the search and the pains of growth. It is good that way, it could not be any other way. If you think objectively about it, you will surely see that it cannot be any other way.

I am sorry that we cannot deal with more questions tonight. Perhaps we will have more time for questions next time.

Let me bless all of you with the particular strength to unfold your wish capacity, the strength to purify it. Receive this strength so that you can tune in on this great, universal force, ready at your disposal if you but learn how to use it. Be blessed with this strength, my friends, so that little by little you will all enjoy the glory that life can be, even on this earth sphere. Learn to enjoy the serious and honest labor, too, that leads to it. Do not seek for miracles, tricks, and short cuts to happiness. It cannot be. Be blessed, be in peace, be in God!

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