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THE DESIRE FOR HAPPINESS AND THE DESIRE FOR UNHAPPINESS

Greetings! God bless all of you. Blessed be this evening. With great happiness I resume my contact with you, and I will continue with the teachings and lectures that had to be interrupted for a time. This interruption could have been a fruitful one, if you so desire.

The wish for happiness exists in every living being. However, the concept of happiness varies according to the development of each individual. Due to a distorted concept of happiness, another desire comes into existence in the human soul, which is often overlooked. And that, strange as it may seem, is a desire for unhappiness. I shall now discuss the connections, the chain reactions set in motion by a wrong concept of happiness.

The desire for happiness is a primary emotion, whether the concept is right or wrong, true or distorted; while the desire for unhappiness is not a primary, but a secondary emotion, caused by the wrong concept of happiness.

This desire for happiness is already in existence when the human entity is born. It exists in the small infant. The infant's idea of happiness is fulfillment of all its desires, instantly and in exactly the way it wants. Regardless of how adult a person may be, a remnant of this remains with him for the rest of his life.

All wrong concepts are distortions and misunderstandings of the right concept. Happiness in the wrong concept is expressed in the following way: "Only if I can have what I want, the way I want it, and when I want it, can I have happiness. I will be unhappy in any way other than this." Included in this is the demand for absolute approval, admiration, and love by everybody. The moment anyone seems to fail in meeting this requirement, the world of the person in question crumbles. Happiness becomes an impossibility, and not just for the time being but forever after. This, of course, is never the intellectual conviction of an adult human being, but emotionally it holds true because everything seems hopeless, and the mood is despair in varying degrees.

The undeveloped being feels in terms of black or white. It knows no in between. Either there is happiness or there is unhappiness. If things happen in accordance with his wishes, then the world is bright. But if the tiniest little thing goes against the will, then the world looks black.

When the infant is hungry but for a few minutes, these minutes are eternity, not only because of a lack of time concept, but also because the infant does not know the period of hunger will be over in a very short time. So the baby is in absolute despair, as you can observe in a crying child. The issue over which the baby cries seems in no way related to the anger, fury, and unhappiness. With the adult human being, this part of the personality, freely expressed in infancy, remains hidden in the psyche and continues to register similar reactions. Only the reasons change, and the outer

display becomes modified or even completely covered by rational and reasonable behavior. But this in no way proves that the inner reaction has truly been eliminated or that it has come to terms with itself in a process of inner maturity and growth.

Very early, the infant realizes that happiness in the way desired is impossible. The child feels dependent on a cruel world which denies him what he thinks he needs and could have if the world were less cruel.

If you think it through logically, you will find that this primitive and distorted concept of happiness actually amounts to a desire for omnipotent rulership, unquestioned obedience by the surrounding world, a special place elevated way above all other beings since others are supposed to fulfill what the person desires. When this wish cannot be gratified -- and it never can be -- the frustration becomes absolute.

It is impossible, of course, for any human being to remember these early emotions, for you have no memory of your first few years. That these reactions continue to exist without exception in all human beings is a fact, and you can find these emotions by various ways in the work you are doing on this path. You can find it by observing certain of your past and present reactions, by analyzing them from this point of view. First, discover where this infant still exists in you with the same desires and feelings and reactions. Focus your attention on this particular aspect of your personality. You will then have reached a point from where you can start to outgrow the unrealistic, unrealizable concept of happiness, and build the proper, mature, realistic, and realizable concept which will be infinitely more gratifying. Until you have experienced the infant in you, you cannot understand certain conflicts in you which are the chain reaction effects of this fundamental, distorted concept.

The more the child grows and learns to live in this world, the more he realizes that the omnipotent rulership he wishes is not only denied but is also frowned upon, so that he learns to hide this desire until the hiding has progressed so far that he himself is no longer aware of it. Two basic reactions follow. One is: "Perhaps if I become perfect, as the world around me asks me to be, then I will have approval enough to enable me to attain my goal." Striving for such perfection then sets in. Needless to say, my friends, although we are all in agreement that all beings should strive for perfection, this kind of striving is wrong. It is wrong because of the motive. Here, the person does not strive for perfection in order to love better and give more. He does not strive for the sake of perfection itself, but seeks a selfish end. And it is wrong further because he wants to reach that goal of perfection right away, since happiness through omnipotent rulership is desired at once. To reach immediate perfection is, of course, utterly impossible. It forfeits the healthy acceptance of one's own inadequacies which enables the personality to learn the healthy kind of humility, of accepting his being as neither more nor better than the rest of mankind.

Thus the frustration becomes a double one. The first desire -- omnipotent rulership in order to be happy -- is not realized. And neither is the second desire -- that of attaining perfection in order to obtain the first desire. This, in turn, causes an acute feeling of inadequacy and inferiority, of regret and guilt. For the child does not know yet that no one is capable of attaining such perfection. It thinks itself unique in this respect and has to hide this shameful fact. Even when the person is adult and consciously knows better, this reaction, not having been aired, continues to live locked in the soul. The unconscious personality argues: "If I could be perfect, I would have what I want.

Since I am not perfect, I am worth nothing." The second conscience, as I once termed it, goes on whipping and whipping the person, trying to hold up to him this unrealizable goal so that each failure causes additional despair and guilt, increasing his feelings of inferiority and inadequacy.

On the other hand and at the same time, there is another reaction. The personality cannot and does not want to assume the entire blame, and therefore blames its surroundings. Thereby a particular vicious circle comes into existence. Inwardly it argues as follows: "If they allowed me to be happy the way I want to be by loving me and approving of me completely, by doing what I wish, then I could be perfect. With that, the obstacle that now stands in the way of the world giving me what I want would be removed. Therefore, it is "their" fault. My failures are due only to the denial they constantly inflict upon me." Therefore the vicious circle works like this in one direction: "I need to be perfect in order to be loved and to be happy"; and in the other direction: "If I could have the place of rulership I need in order to be happy, then it would not be difficult for me to be perfect." Both are made impossible by the world. For this, the person blames the world on one hand, and the self on the other. Moreover, he resents that he is not loved as he is. It seems to him that he ought to be loved unconditionally. This aspect reveals again that you feel that the unconditional surrender you demand would put you into the position of rulership you think you need in order to be happy.

The wrong concept of happiness inevitably causes a wrong concept of love as well. Let me recapitulate briefly the wrong concept of happiness: "I can only be happy if things go my way." The mature concept of happiness in its highest unfoldment is: "I am independent of outer circumstances, regardless of what they are. I can be happy under any circumstances because even the disadvantageous or unpleasant events will have a purpose, bringing me that much nearer to complete freedom and infinite happiness." Thus even difficult times will have the power to make you happy. I grant you that as long as you are incarnated on earth, this can only be experienced in small degree, but nevertheless, with very mature and developed beings, it happens at least to some extent. Unhappiness does not "throw" them but holds a seed of growth. At least in their case, such times are not useless and felt as emotionally hopeless, but are fought through with courage until the sun can shine brightly again. With the mature concept of happiness and therefore of life itself, it is not cause for utter despair that one cannot always be happy. One truly accepts that life holds both happiness and unhappiness. So when unhappiness comes along, the mature person's world does not seem to end as it does with the emotionally immature in this respect. Pain is not something to be shunned at such high costs that the pain resulting from this avoidance becomes worse than would have been the pain the person tried to avoid. Nor does the mature person seek and invite pain and unhappiness just to avoid the helpless feeling of being laid open to it against his will. But the immature person often does, and this leads us to the desire for unhappiness. We will come to this in a moment.

First let us consider the concept of love. The wrong concept -- inherent in the wrong concept of happiness -- is as follows: "If I am loved, I am paid homage, I possess a subject" -- as a ruler possesses his subjects. If you very honestly observe your own reactions, now and this day, you will find similar feelings existing in you although you may never have had the courage to acknowledge it. The right concept of love is not only and always and necessarily, "I love, regardless of whether or not you love me." Of course, this is the ideal on its highest level. But very few human beings are indeed that far. If you are not that far, there is no sense in trying to force yourself into something your feelings cannot yet follow. Trying it by force may have a very bad effect in various ways. The

compulsion, the inability to follow it through in reality would increase your feelings of failure and guilt. This, in turn, would lead to a tendency toward self-destruction. Moreover, the desire for this ideal, unselfish love can easily be distorted by the unhealthy desire to suffer, which we will discuss in a moment. So if you are not loved and find it impossible to love in return, simply recognize it without guilt. If you have departed from your infant desire for rulership, you will be able to take it with equanimity and without resentment towards the person who does not seem to love you. On the plane in which most of you are, love is a give-and-take. It is a two-way street. But contrary to the childish concept, love in its right concept does not demand a subject which blindly gratifies one's own will, but needs and desires an object.

My friends, before I go on with this lecture, let me add here the following remarks. I am sure that none of you who hear or read these words will have any quarrel with them, but all will agree. You will be able to think of the many instances you sincerely felt according to the right concept -- or thought you felt that way. Yet I ask you, try to find the instances when you are incapable of feeling according to the right concept of love and happiness. There is no exception. These instances can be found in all of you if you really try. Try to recognize when you wanted a subject and not an object. Find out by what emotions, desires, and reactions you can discover this to be true. To make this recognition, you only need the proper interpretation of your reactions and feelings in certain incidents, on certain occasions.

Now we come to the desire for unhappiness -- how it arises out of this complex and utterly universal basic phenomenon in the human soul. As I said, the human personality finds it more and more impossible to find happiness according to this wrong concept, the only one he knows. Instead of finding the right way by changing the wrong concept into the right one, the personality only too often struggles against the tide, trying to force life into this wrong concept. When this proves impossible, another way out is sought which seems a solution but which proves even more damaging in the long run. Unconsciously the person argues: "Since happiness is denied and unhappiness is inevitable and inflicted on me against my will, I may just as well make the best of it and turn a liability into an asset by trying to enjoy unhappiness." Superficially this may appear to be a smart solution, but of course it never is. Although certain aspects of unhappiness can be enjoyed in an unhealthy way, there are bound to be other aspects that are extremely painful and cannot be enjoyed at all. But, of this, the personality is ignorant to begin with. He did not bargain for it, and when it happens, he fails to see its connection with the process described here. Since the entire process is unconscious anyway, the unenjoyable aspects of unhappiness are never connected with the fact that it was self-provoked. But there are certain aspects of suffering that are enjoyed by humanity although this will never be consciously acknowledged, unless one is on a path of self-finding such as you are on now. It takes time, effort, and extremely good intent to bring this to the surface.

Strangely enough, in a very distorted way, this desire for unhappiness seems to approach a state of being beyond the experience of most human beings, belonging to a much higher state of development. Some of you have heard of the concept that pleasure and pain are one above a certain level. This vague knowledge still exists in the superconscious memory but is distorted by wrong motivations, by misunderstood basic principles, and by unrealistic approaches to life. Thus it is lived out in an extremely unhealthy and damaging way.

The psyche argues: "Since I cannot avoid unhappiness, I may just as well enjoy it. Furthermore, I want to alleviate the humiliation that the unhappiness is inflicted upon me against my will, as a helpless prey. In reality, I call forth the unhappiness myself; consequently, I am not quite so helpless."

Needless to say, my friends, none of these thoughts are ever conscious. They are entirely unconscious arguments. You can only trace these emotions and reactions by certain methods in the work, by learning how to analyze your findings from a new angle. You will then find patterns of how you go on and on in subtle, hidden ways, provoking people and bringing about certain situations so that you can collect unhappy incidents, injustices, injuries, wrongs, and hurts. Once you find out how you have provoked all this in ever so subtle ways, you will also be able to find what you enjoy about it in a certain way, no matter how much you loathe some aspects of it in your conscious mind. All this seldom happens in a very obvious way although sometimes it is quite noticeable to others, but not to you. Most of the time, it happens so subtly that it completely escapes your attention unless you truly wish to notice it.

This "way out" also uses the following inner argument: "Since there is only black or white, and white is denied to me, let me enjoy the all-black." This inner process sets the entire chain reaction into renewed momentum. Because the desire for unhappiness is unconscious, the injuries collected in the process of provoking this unhappiness make you feel even more inadequate, the world even more cruel and unfair.

I should like to emphasize again that the enjoyment you derive from the unhappiness you provoke is never felt to be truly and wholly enjoyable. If it were, the solution would be a true and realistic one. But since it is neither, you suffer while, at the same time, you enjoy certain aspects of the unhappiness you produced. You might enjoy, for instance, the provocation itself in such a subtle way that this, too, escapes your attention. Or you might enjoy the self-pity that ensues.

Let us suppose, for instance, that you are in a situation in which you are to meet a new friend. How often do you approach such a meeting with defiance, a negative attitude, doubt, and any number of other destructive feelings? Superficially, one may say that this simply displays pessimism. But by going to the core of your feelings, you will find a hidden corner where you do not want to experience a happy occurrence, and you sabotage it by all these negative attitudes. If you truly wanted a happy outcome, you would display an inner readiness which would be bound to bring success. Often, in the measure the inner readiness is lacking, in that same measure you overcompensate with a superficial outer readiness, which, however, can never make up for the truth within yourself. In some instances, even that superficial outer mask is lacking. And yet when the unhappy outcome is accomplished, you delude yourself into thinking it was really not you who had brought it about. If you analyze your emotions in such an incident, or in similar ones, you will discover without a doubt that this lack of inner readiness, this tiny little inner voice saying "no," does exist in you regardless of how much you desire the happy outcome consciously. Since the happy outcome would still be a compromise as compared with the complete rulership you unconsciously wish to exert, you prefer to destroy that which is within the realm of the possible, and ask for pain and suffering instead. Once you find all that out and experience it to be a truth in yourself as you have experienced other truths in the course of work on the path, you will then be well on the way to outgrowing the prison of self-inflicted suffering due to errors and false concepts.

This is very important for all of you, my friends, for it is universal and all-encompassing. The time has come now that all of you who work on this path investigate this as closely, as honestly as you know how.

It is often said that self-destruction -- that is, the desire for unhappiness -- is the result of deep-rooted guilt feelings. This is only partly true. It is much rather the other way around. There is no greater guilt feeling and shame in the human soul than the guilt due to provoking and collecting unhappiness. You may ask why this should cause more guilt than anything else. Yet it is so, my friends. I might safely say that the guilt and shame due to provoking unhappiness and collecting miseries is the mother of all guilt and shame and is at the root of all other guilt feelings. All the feelings of guilt and shame you have found so far are superficial levels and cover-ups for this real guilt. The proof of this is that the guilt feelings you have unearthed and acknowledged still linger on. They have not disappeared. Had you found the real reason, the guilt would have had to disappear, for then a change of attitude would inevitably have occurred. As long as a finding, a true finding, still leaves you unable to change your respective attitude so that the healthy emotions could begin to grow, that finding is not yet sufficiently basic. A basic truth has yet to be discovered.

Most of you are ready now to approach this part of your soul. Of course, it cannot be done alone. When you find and are ready to face all this within yourself, when you truly experience these emotions and live them, your life will gradually begin to change in many ways because by recognizing again and again the ways in which you call for unhappiness, you will cease to call for it, realizing that there is no longer any need for it. You will cease to desire to be a ruler when you achieve a more mature outlook on life. In the measure that you discover the desire for rulership within yourself and learn to give it up voluntarily, in that measure you will give up provoking unhappiness and misery. It is not easy to come to the point where you really experience all these emotions, where it ceases to be an intellectual theory. As long as it is a theory only, it will not help you one bit. As long as you observe this tendency in others only but not in yourself, it will not help you either. But with the proper method and, most of all, with your will to find this in you, after a time, after some effort, after some painful recognitions and the overcoming of your resistance to it, you will find the confirmation of every single word I have said to you here -- every single word. It is necessary that you find these feelings now. If you find them, experience them, lift them out of their hiding place, and come to terms with them, then you will hold a major key in your hands.

I repeat: there is no exception, there is no human being who is completely free of what I have just described. It may manifest in different ways in different human beings. It may exist in different degrees. One person may provoke unhappiness and collect misery to a high degree, while another may express his demand for rulership more openly. Many variations exist, governed by temperament, personality, and character trends -- and also by certain environmental factors in the formative years. But it exists, at least to some degree, in everybody. The extent of this basic human deviation is determined by the ability of the growing human being to come to terms with the world of reality, accepting it in exchange for the world of utopia the infant desires. Intellectual conviction and outer behavior are in no way an indication of the inner attitude.

Perhaps you may have guessed that this universal human attitude or inner process just described is not an "image" -- neither a personal nor a mass image. It underlies all images. It is a basic condition. The personal or mass images affecting the individual are always determined by the particular way the basic condition described here is expressed, and to what extent it can or cannot be

assimilated or come to terms with as the personality grows. If you consider all your personal images with this in mind, you will easily see how this basic condition influences and underlies all of them.

I have occasionally mentioned in the past, particularly in one lecture about the vicious circle, that self-punishment and self-destructiveness are very strong factors in the human make-up. If you add what I have told you tonight, the vicious circle referred to will become clearer and more understandable to you. I have wanted to explain self-destructiveness in more basic terms, since we are approaching a deeper level in your work.

I have also mentioned on some recent occasions, in some private sessions, "the idealized self." I did not go into detail on this subject, but waited to do so in this lecture. You will now understand the meaning of that term. Learn to analyze your idealized self -- what your unconscious wants it to be, to accomplish, and to what purpose. By analyzing your daydreams and desires of the past or present, you will always find the same common denominator: the desire for perfection in order to attain happiness, in order to be the ruler of your own world that surrounds you. Offhand, you will undoubtedly say, "No, I do not have the slightest wish to rule over others, that is not true." But what do your many emotions amount to? Do you not wish to be perfect in order to have people do exactly as you please? Do you not wish to be loved and approved by everyone, without exception? Do you not wish to be perfect in order to be better, outstanding, more admirable than other people? If you are honest with yourself about your emotions considered from this new slant, you will have to admit that your answer must be "yes" although you certainly never expressed a desire for rulership in these terms. The rulership principle is inherent in every soul, and it needs to be faced, my friends, before you can really outgrow your chains. Without recognizing this, you cannot recognize your desire for unhappiness, your provocations in that direction. And it is of great importance that you face and see this in its true light.

If you can really accept yourself -- in your most deeply seated emotions, not merely in theory and with your intellect -- as one in the string of humanity, being as imperfect as the next one, being liked by some, disliked by others, approved of by some, disapproved of by others, you have truly reached maturity, and you will no longer find it necessary to damage yourself by inviting misery. But how few people are capable of doing this! You always suffer acutely when you are disapproved of. It may even rob you of sleep at times or of your peace of mind. You find it so unbearable to be disapproved of that you cannot even admit to the slightest wrong. You fight and fight against any such admission. Why? It would destroy the picture of your idealized self. Your life seems at stake, for all happiness seems to slip out of reach if you cannot maintain the picture of your idealized self. This is the infant reacting in you; your brain tries to assimilate the clamor of the infant in a rationally acceptable way. But this does not bring you peace. Peace will be yours only if you learn to see, face, and give up this infant concept of happiness, rulership, and perfection.

You ferociously hold onto this basic condition, not realizing how high a price you pay for it, not realizing you would not need to suffer if only you were willing to acknowledge it all and give up this concept and desire. By bringing the infant in you out into the open, it can be taught to be willing to let go of something useless. By keeping the infant in hiding, it would go on destroying your life, no matter how hard you try on outer levels, no matter how much you absorb with your brain.

The idealized self is always an expression of this basic condition, regardless of what shape or manner it takes with the individual personality.

Some of you may wonder where all this ties in with the God image. Since the God image is so basic in the personality and this too is basic, how do these two combine? In your work on the God image (whether you call it God image or Life image actually makes no difference; for some people the latter expression may be more adequate), you have found mostly one particular aspect of it: the unreasonable fear you have of God, the monster that this god, created by your misconceptions, appears to be to your subconscious mind. As you know, in your God image, this God seems unjust, inadequate, weak, and therefore arbitrary and cruel. As such, he is to be feared. You know that these emotions exist, regardless of your conscious concept. This aspect of the God image ties in quite easily with the subject just discussed. Since you want happiness according to your idea, and life denies it, or God denies it, therefore God is to be feared all the more. For it seems senseless to you to be denied what you wish. It seems unfair and unreasonable. So you can easily see the connection here.

But there is one further aspect of the God image that has not yet been found, or at least fully recognized, by many of my friends. And that is the following: "Since I can attain happiness only by being an omnipotent ruler, I have to be a god myself. Therefore I want to be God. Why should I submit to this cruel, vindictive, vengeful, inadequate God who inflicts so much suffering on us? I could do it so much better. I would be more benign than he is if my will were done, if I were loved and approved of. I have no intention of being cruel if people do what I want. Therefore I know better than God, and so I want to assume rulership of my little universe." Now whether that universe is the nursery, the house, the circle of friends and acquaintances, or the town or the country makes no difference. One's universe is always as large as the scope of the inner eye and the reach of perception -- not that of the outer knowledge of man. Again I say, you never think these thoughts consciously and in such crass terms. But by checking and analyzing your emotions as to their real content, you will find they amount to just that. I would like to recommend that you try to find this aspect of the God image in you, my friends, if you have not clearly found it yet.

I will be glad to help all of you individually to find and trace this basic condition brought to your attention tonight. With each one of you, the way may be different. We have to find with each, the approach best suited. So this will be the new phase, and a very important one, to enter into at this time. Are there any questions on this subject?

QUESTION: Would you say that enjoying unhappiness is the same as "Weltschmerz?"

ANSWER: This is just one aspect out of many others, as self-pity, for instance. But the crasser form of enjoying unhappiness is enjoying the process of provoking the situation that will bring on unhappiness.

QUESTION: Would you elaborate on the statement that pain and pleasure are the same?

ANSWER: Do you mean in the healthy and developed form? For in the unhealthy deviation they are not the same.

QUESTION: No, I mean in the healthy way.

ANSWER: I will try to find the right words, for it is difficult to convey in the limited human language something that can hardly every be experienced by a human being and is therefore outside the realm of his understanding. Let me try to put it this way. Regardless of the outer event, good or bad, the personality who has reached this state remains unaffected by negative results and is therefore truly independent. Pain, or what would cause pain to a person not having reached this state, will have a creative, uplifting effect, causing inner growth and additional strength and freedom. While pain is known to be inevitable, it is not looked for. It is taken in stride and allowed to serve a constructive purpose. When this purpose is fulfilled, it ceases to be pain. With a human being who is truly advancing on this path, this can be observed to some degree. A painful event comes your way. You will at first suffer. But instead of extending the period of suffering unduly by wallowing in a feeling that it is senseless, not realizing what can be learned from it, you will fairly soon come to the point where this painful occurrence gives you an important new recognition about your soul, freeing you forevermore of some chains of ignorance and darkness. The moment this recognition is reached, the pain ceases even though the outer condition that caused the pain still prevails. Thus the very incident that has caused you acute pain before the recognition now becomes a source of joy. And here I mean healthy and constructive joy, leaving no bitter aftertaste.

The higher the development of the entity, the shorter the period of suffering and the faster the moment sets in where the negative incident ceases to be painful until, finally, the moment of recognition and joy occurs at the same time as this "painful" experience takes place. When this is reached, pain and pleasure become truly one. Then one has outgrown the world of opposites.

You must not expect in this life to reach the point where pain instantly turns into pleasure. In fact, this would be a dangerous expectation since it approaches so very much the unhealthy element of looking for pain, that is in you anyway. Moreover, it would lead to the nonacceptance of life as it is in your reality, in your realm, namely a mixture of both pain and pleasure. Only by fully accepting both can you come out of inviting pain in an unhealthy way. And thus steadily, though slowly, you will approach the point where pain will no longer be. So do not even search for that. Simply try to make the painful experience a constructive one. That is the best, the only way for now.

QUESTION: Would you say with that statement that the martyrs of the Catholic Church, for instance, have gone into that dangerous state of confusing it?

ANSWER: Very often, indeed.

QUESTION: In other words, what the human being can do, if I understand it right, is to take it as a philosophical concept?

ANSWER: Yes. Beware of trying to strive for it now, for it may be exactly the opposite of what you really want and need for your soul.

Be blessed, all of you, this entire group. May divine light and strength, truth and love flow through you and lighten your burdens. Be in peace, be in God!

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