

CONFLICTS IN THE WORLD OF DUALITY

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

On this path, you are going through various phases. Broadly speaking, the first level we investigated of your unconscious mind is the level in which you harbor wrong impressions and conclusions that were formed into rigid generalizations of different aspects of life, which we call images. Some of these in themselves may be insignificant, yet they are important enough to distort your life in many ways.

Behind or below this more superficial level of your subconscious, we penetrated into a level wherein is waged a battle between opposites, the world of duality. This creates in your life a tremendous confusion. The confusion of duality exists in many respects. It concerns the big issues as well as the seemingly lesser ones. The great opposites are life and death, happiness and unhappiness, love and selfishness, light and darkness. Your confusion comes about because an attitude towards life, supposed to lead to the desired goal, often brings (at least in part) the undesired one. It takes a great deal of self-honesty and awareness to understand this phenomenon and detect the inner error of action and reaction on your part that is responsible for this confusing result.

Religion symbolizes these opposites as the struggle between God and the Devil. The confusions indicated are said to be Satan's means of confusing mankind so that it can no longer distinguish between God's way and the Devil's. That which is intrinsically selfish and destructive on a superficial level often appears as righteous and holy, and vice versa. This represents the great battle between the forces of light and the forces of darkness, which humanity erroneously imagines to be raging outside of himself, while he, merely a victim, is caught in the middle.

Choosing between everyday alternatives that confront you often generates confusion in you. These are not crassly "good" or "bad," and they both stem from the same basic struggle in the human soul.

Modern psychology has recognized the same fundamental problem. It calls it the life instinct versus the death instinct, or the pleasure principle versus the reality principle. In connection with the reality principle, however, there also exists a confusion. It is so often not clear which stands for God and which for the Devil. Is the pleasure principle selfish and therefore destructive? Can you indulge in it without hurting others? And is the reality principle duty, responsibility, work, achievement, and therefore constructive? On the other hand, you are told that God is happiness, bliss, light; and the pleasure principle makes you yearn for that. Whether you know it or not, right here you are engulfed in one of mankind's major confusions. It will take a great deal of further work on your part before you gain more clarity and insight. But for the moment, it would be most constructive for you to become aware that this confusion exists in you in the first place.

In all the conflicts you have managed to become aware of in the course of the work you are doing on this path, the underlying conflict is always related to this world of duality. Behind your images and misconceptions, you always find conflict. In one way or another, you always find that you are torn between two (and sometimes more) attitudes, ways of life, alternatives. By stripping them of their superimposed motivations, at the core you are bound to find the basic opposites.

But this level in which you are torn in confusion between the opposites is still not the core. There is something behind this which is the origin of the world of duality, just as the world of duality is the place of origin of your images. Strangely enough, this underlying origin becomes, on the next level, one side of the opposites. In other words, that which is a unified core, on the next level of consciousness, splits into two opposites. And this underlying core is your longing for complete happiness, light, love, bliss, peace. The original longing is for happiness supreme, but life on earth prohibits such fulfillment. This prohibition creates the world of duality and therefore your conflict. But it is equally true to say that the world of duality created the prohibition, created life conditions on earth that made of "reality" something that opposes the pleasure principle, to speak in psychological terms, or in spiritual terms, that opposes the divine principle of bliss.

This puts you into a vicious circle. How to get out of it, how to find your way into the light of truth -- these are the significant questions. In the first place, you have to understand, at least in part, what is responsible for man's having created a duality out of a single core. Life on earth contains physical death. Even if we remove many of life's miseries as unnecessary and as created out of confusion, physical death still remains. And physical death remains a mystery. It is unknown and therefore frightening, in spite of religious faith. It seems to be an end and, as such, is in crass opposition to man's longing for life. And life, in essence, means bliss. All the religious explanations, however true they may be, are still conjecture. Thus by following through in logical sequence, we can see that the fear of death creates the world of duality; and the world of duality creates a reality that is prohibitive of man's longing for complete fulfillment. This narrows down the margin and leaves us with the problem of death. By coping with it, we can break the vicious circle.

Mankind has tried to cope with this problem for as long as it has existed. Unfortunately though, the way man tried was bound to failure. It is just as unsatisfactory as when you make unconscious attempts to solve a so-called psychological problem in your life by short-cuts, evasions, and being afraid to face the issue squarely. Instead, you superimpose ready-made answers which may even be true as such, but they are not true for you because you have not arrived at them out of strength and courage that come only through facing the issue, but rather by avoiding it out of fear and weakness. This is one way of trying to cope with the problem. The majority of religious people, clinging to faith out of fear, is a prototype of those who would attempt this way.

Another attempt is negation. It is the negation of the very thing one longs for most, in the terror of not ever getting it, and thus rushing right into what one fears most. This self-destructiveness can be found on all levels. It works in your attitude towards less significant aspects of life, but it is basically your way of "coping" with the problem of death. The prototype is the atheist, materialist. Both types do not realize that in essence they are doing the same thing. They must be violently opposed to one another because each type represents the opposite of what he unconsciously thinks to be his solution for coping with the great problem. None has found the answer. The answer must come out of the self. It can only come by courageously facing these

problems, these questions, these confusions, these fears, and examining your way (up until now) of "coping" with the problem.

When I speak of the longing for God, this is very distant and very abstract. When you imagine divine bliss such as a spirit being may enjoy, your automatic association, perhaps unconscious, is usually quite different from the happiness that you, as a human being, long for. You imagine it as something dull, sterile, boring, uninteresting. There are many people who believe the very presence of unhappiness makes happiness flavorful. Of course, this is not so. Since the word "happiness" implies so much vague and faraway spirituality, let us choose another word. Let us choose the word "pleasure supreme," on all levels of your being. Your deep-rooted longing for this "pleasure supreme" is constantly in conflict with reality as you know it on earth, and this is the result of your inability to come to terms with death.

Modern psychology claims that this deep-rooted longing stems from man's desire to return to the mother's womb when he lived in a state of being, without worry, responsibility, and hardship. The more he grows, the more is he faced with these realities of life and therefore the stronger does the struggle become. But in truth, this longing goes back further. It stems from the fact that man has imbedded in his spirit the vague memory of a life in another state of consciousness when he knew nothing but "pleasure supreme," bliss supreme, without any opposite. Gradually, by stages and to a degree, you can recapture this stage even while you are still an incarnated entity. It is not enough to remove your images and wrong conclusions. But by doing so, you are bound to encounter the level of the world of duality. Once you comprehend this at its deepest core, you come face to face with your struggle against death, or against antipleasure, if I may call it that.

As I indicated before, there are two major ways of the unconscious attempt to cope with death. Both are based on negation -- one by evasion, the other by deliberately going into it. In both alternatives, you tensely struggle against it. You struggle no less when you deliberately choose death out of cringing fear, in a negative spirit of weakness, but it is altogether different in the face of healthy acceptance, out of strength.

When I use the word "death," I do not mean merely physical death alone. I mean all the negative aspects of life, everything that opposes your pleasure drive. It even means more than unhappiness. It also means loss, change, the unknown. The unknown may contain something better than the state you are in, but by the very fact that it is unknown, it becomes terrifying. All that signifies death in little ways. There is no human being who does not die many deaths every day.

Now, your attitude towards death, in all its aspects, determines your ability to live and to experience pleasure. The healthier your attitude towards death is, the more the life force can flow through you. That means the healthier and more enduring is the gratification of your pleasure drive.

The first step is for you to detect how tremendously you struggle against death. You must become fully aware of it, just as you need to become fully aware of the constant longing for pleasure supreme. Both may indeed be very hidden. Find which of the two attempts you have chosen to cope with death, either evasion or that which you fear and which you incline to out of fear itself. Both are always present in each human being, but one may be predominant. In the latter attempt, you sabotage the happiness that you could have because you are so afraid of losing it again or of not

getting it to the extent of your desire. This happens in the spirit of "it is unavoidable anyway, so I might just as well get it over with." A crass example of this procedure is suicide.

So you are constantly torn between two unsatisfactory and damaging attempts to negate death. These artificial, forceful, cramped attempts bring you so much nearer what you want to avoid and also to forfeiting what you wish to gain. So it is not in the acceptance itself of death that you find strength and cure. It is how you do so. If you do so out of fear and negativity, both leading to self-destructiveness, it is altogether different from the healthy, strong acceptance of the inevitable. By facing it squarely, not cringing from it, you will learn to come to terms with it as you should, thereby freeing the life force in you which remains bottled up so long as you do not learn to cope with death in a healthy way.

On the one hand, you dimly sense that in acceptance lies solution. And yet, you also sense in acceptance lies annihilation. That confuses you, but as long as this confusion is not brought out into consciousness, you cannot begin to find your way out of the maze.

Out of this confusion, man often resorts to religion in any of its varied forms. But in this spirit, it happens out of evasion and fear, out of negation, and out of cowardice to confront that which he fears most. Thus religion, no matter how true may be what he believes, will not really help him, just as the wrong kind of acceptance does not help him. This kind of religion will not help because it is accepted out of weakness, which is a pollution of his motives. He deeply senses the untruth of his motivations and despises himself for it. Moreover, the superimposed faith has no real power to help him. He accepts God and everything that that implies, not out of real conviction nor out of deep truthful, genuine insight, but because he is afraid. Thus the enemies of religion are often right when they state that it is an "opiate." By the same token, the enemies of materialism are right when they are against it. This is so not only because the materialistic view of the world is not truth, but also because the motivation of accepting it is equally as wrong as the "opium of religion."

The more we look into this subject, the more do we find that the solution lies in facing the unknown, in confronting the fear of it, and in learning the strength to die. He who knows how to die, knows how to live.

Needless to say, you do not have to wait for actual physical death to occur in order to learn this. Not only your occasional conscious fear of death, or derivations of it, can help you, but also all the other aspects of death that comprise daily living. He who does not know how to die, cannot live. He cannot reconcile the opposites. He cannot reconcile the dualism in his own soul. Hence he cannot free the life force that lies in him unutilized.

So take your faith, too, my friends. Do not be afraid to recognize that, to a greater or lesser degree, it is an intellectual superimposition you cling to out of your weakness and fear. The very strength this frank admission will give you will enable you to build a real, a genuine faith, a conviction, a knowledge, and to have an inner experience of the truths which so far you have known only intellectually. This will come after you have learned, to some degree, to cope with death in its full sense. As long as your ability to die is based on superimposed knowledge that life goes on and death is an illusion, your faith is built on sand. But if you take the great courageous step to face your unbelief, your uncertainty, your fear, and come to terms with that -- accepting the unknown, if and when it becomes necessary, and building up this strength -- only then will true conviction and the

experience of spiritual truth become part of you. It will become part of you because you then learn to live. The life force will be released, and a great measure of your longing for bliss will be fulfilled while still on earth.

Seek, and you will find an area of your being that clings to life only in order to avoid death. This motivation contains negation, and thus the life force is negated too. But if you face and come to terms with death, your embracing of life will be done in positive spirit, and that alone will solve the problem of duality, since duality arises out of negation. Along the road of development and growth, this problem, at some time, has to be tackled. For some sooner, for some later, but come it must for everyone.

Do not be afraid that you are disloyal in facing your faith, where it is superimposed out of terror. Then you can cultivate the greatest of all strength in the knowledge, in the acceptance, of the uncertainty of dying every day a little bit, not out of evasion, not in negativity, but as an integral part of life. In the measure that you grow in this direction will the life force flow through you and give you a foretaste of what real happiness, pleasure supreme, true security is, even while still in the body.

Many aspects of civilized life stand in the way of the supreme bliss that could be had to some degree, even on earth. But they are a direct result of the inner duality, which in turn is an outcome of the inability to die. Civilized life constantly imposes on you the alternatives between pleasure and unpleasure. For instance, let us consider work -- work that is not always according to your creative abilities and inclinations and therefore not according to your liking or pleasure. Moreover, conditions of working with all their "musts," all their various aspects as a result of political, economic, and sociological factors which again are a result of the inner duality -- these necessitate a struggle for living that encourages ambitiousness, drives, compulsions. In addition, they often confront one with rather unnecessary obligations -- they may be necessary within the framework of your present life on earth. All this creates a reality principle that stands in crass opposition to the longing for and fulfillment of the happiness that could be yours. This individual inner problem under discussion here has collectively brought about a state of civilization that makes life unnecessarily difficult for you. And as each person begins to face this problem, he helps to change this world and these conditions in an ever so subtle but nonetheless very decisive way. Your often unpleasant reality is in many respects unnecessary and shows up as a collective manifestation of the inner duality. As you begin to cope with this problem within yourself, you become able to cope with this unnecessary reality, not only in a much better way, but you also help to change it.

There is another conflict and confusion in this respect, which I wish to touch upon at this time. In the course of this work, you may have become acutely aware of the desire for happiness, love, fulfillment -- or to put it in the words I used tonight, for pleasure supreme. You have discovered that much of this longing is your unfulfillment as a child, which now manifests as exaggerated craving. You learn to distinguish between the healthy wish for mature love and the childish craving need for being loved. In this awareness, you free yourself to some extent of this craving need. Nevertheless, it is necessary for you to understand where this excessive demand comes from. Tonight's words will help you to explain why the child has such an excessive need. It must come from somewhere, and, as I said, it comes from the vague memory imbedded in the spirit. You may now pose the question, "If this wish has a spiritual origin, why then is it unhealthy?" The answer is partly because it is impossible to have such excessive demands gratified on this earth with the reality that mankind has created. Nor is the answer complete when we say that childish craving

is one-sided, while mature love is the willingness to give and love as much as one wishes to receive. For, in the adult, the childish craving subtly merges with the mature love capacity so that the individual's argument will always be, "If only I would find such a love, I would be willing to give my all." And this is often true. Hence, the answer must be still deeper. The difference between the immature desire and craving, and the mature wish for love and pleasure supreme is not determined by intensity, but by the time element, on one hand, and by the illusion of self versus the other person, on the other hand.

There is often conflict wherein the gratification of an instinct towards wish fulfillment may at the same time prove damaging to another person. It may make you selfish. Thus, you have to decide between your pleasure, which is divine purpose, or unselfishness, which is divine purpose as well. How is one to cope with this duality? You may remember a recent lecture I gave on "The Great Transition in Human Development." In it, I showed you the illusion of self versus the other. There is no such thing. You cannot truly experience bliss at the expense of another. But the realization of this truth will only come as you proceed on this path through all the steps I lead you. This wider vision will be attained by a reflection on the time element. Instant gratification -- the child's way -- often poses the alternative between one's own pleasure versus that of the other. However, in a wider range of vision, this ceases to be true. The more mature a person is, the better will he be able to connect cause and effect even if they do not stand close together. Time is a product of your world of illusion; therefore the length of time existing between cause and effect makes a great deal of difference in your comprehension and evaluation. The more a person spiritually and emotionally matures, the more does he outgrow illusion in all aspects, and although he is still in time, he begins to sense its illusory character. Practically, this manifests in his ability to see cause and effect even if they do not follow in direct succession. If they do follow one another in direct succession, even a very small child begins to connect it and learns from it. The process of growth is therefore determined also by the ability to connect cause and effect even when separated with respect to time.

In order to learn this, you have to connect past and present causes and effects. This you learn anyway in your work on the path. But also, you have to cultivate patience if it concerns the present. If your instinct towards wish fulfillment of your pleasure interferes with another person or if, for other reasons, you cannot at once receive the gratification you long for in cultivating this wider outlook and in taking the instantaneousness out of the wish (though in itself healthy), you will come to see the law taking its natural course. You will begin to lift yourself out of time, at least to some degree. So the problem of happiness versus selfishness exists only in the relative time element.

When your longing for happiness is not instantly fulfilled, this, too, appears as "death." It often feels like bleak misery, and in that sense it is apparently death to you. When you give up instant gratification in the attitude of nevertheless wishing to obtain what you seek in principle, this corresponds to the healthy way of coping with death. The giving up only of the wish itself corresponds to the unhealthy acceptance of death. And as you become stronger in the healthy way, you are bound to experience that you do obtain it eventually, in the measure that you grow. In that way, you cannot help but also become aware of the illusion of actual physical death, not by intellectual superimposition, but by your strength of coping with the little by little, everyday dying, which is confronted in the healthy manner.

Once you overcome this conflict, the pathway will be smoothed towards the real strength of living which lies in the strength of dying.

Are there any questions with regard to this subject?

QUESTION: Can you show us how to approach this subject in our everyday life, in this work? How can we learn to eliminate time?

ANSWER: This is a misunderstanding. You cannot eliminate time so long as you live on earth. You can only develop a different understanding, a wider vision. Cause and effect move closer together, and therefore the illusory character of time lessens in your perception of it. You begin to sense something behind your time. The best practical approach, to begin with, is the process you are using in this work. You have all begun working in this path with the conviction that so many mishaps in your life were caused by other people's faults or by an unkind fate. As you proceeded, you found, not as theory but as fact, how reactions or attitudes of your own were responsible for such occurrences. This came to you as a wonderful revelation. You may not have such success in every aspect of your life as yet, but you have begun, and you can now connect cause and effect. You were incapable of doing this before since cause and effect were not close together. Careful investigation, however, has revealed the connection. The more problems you find, and therefore resolve, the closer you come to sensing the illusory character of time. So in this respect, you have a new assignment of work to enter into, and the more you do so, the closer will you automatically come to sense another dimension behind time. I do not want to use the word eternity. This other dimension behind time is still not the ultimate, for behind this is still something else, and still something else for which I have no words at my disposal. Sensing the illusory element of time will show you that there is no conflict between your happiness and the happiness of another.

As to the practical approach in learning to face death in your everyday life, it is so self-explanatory that I need hardly go into it. Work first towards the recognition and awareness of the basic current of your longing for pleasure supreme, as well as of your apprehension of death in all its facets. By looking at your various moods and emotions, this should not prove too difficult. It is a matter of focusing your attention on it. Your daily little fears, apprehensions, and anxieties all represent a form of personal death. Then see how you really react to it. Make sure in what respect you use either of the two wrong ways in your emotional approach. Learn to become aware of everything you cringe from. Do not repress it. You will then begin to see that you fear not only the negative, but you also fear change because it is unknown to you. It is the great battle between another pair of opposites. One is the surging spirit going forward, the other is the supposed safety in sameness. Stagnation is a distortion of the timeless element of being.

You may say you are aware of your longing for happiness, as well as of your fear of the negative. No, my friends, not one of you is aware of even the minimal extent of the existence of these two currents in you. So much is "conditioned away," if I may use this expression. This work must bring into clearer focus the awareness of what you basically long for and what you fear. As this awareness grows, you will understand what I am talking about tonight.

QUESTION: I do not understand what you mean by saying our reality is negative for us so that we cringe away from it. This is what I understood you to say.

ANSWER: There is physical death and sickness; there is the world of matter, bound to decay. There is struggle and work for daily subsistence. There are obligations imposed upon you that you may not like. Life is constant change that brings losses and unknown factors which create anxiety in you. All these factors seem to block the way towards what you wish -- the gratification of your wish of pleasure supreme. You do not like it, but it is your reality at this stage of evolution.

QUESTION: Can you explain a little more clearly how healthy acceptance opposes unhealthy acceptance, as for instance in a martyr?

ANSWER: The unhealthy way contains, above all, a spirit of defeatism. As I indicated before, the very fear of an occurrence makes you rush into it. Your repressed desire for the exact opposite of what you fear, whether or not it is avoidable, makes you abandon the very desire. The healthy way is: "Yes, death is unwelcome. I really do not know what will happen, and therefore I do not like it. But it is part of life, and when it comes my way, I will be strong enough to accept it. Others have gone through it, so will I. I meet it in full awareness of my uncertainty. I am now aware that I still fear it, but what cannot be avoided, I will learn to accept and thus eventually lose my fear." This also applies, of course, to every other negative facet of life, and can be practiced every day. It is very difficult to put into words. Perhaps it will help you to understand by visualizing a soul movement of tensing and letting go. When you struggle away from something frightening, you tense up and pull away. This very pull in tension, pushes you into it. Courage, an honest facing of the self, and a relaxed attitude will produce the strength. The lack of these attributes will either push you into it or make you run from it. Both have the same end result, namely negation.

QUESTION: What is your attitude towards the ascetic? Is he running away from it all? Does he face up to reality? Or is he avoiding it?

ANSWER: In general, an ascetic tries to buy himself out of what he fears. He forfeits all pleasure and happiness by self-imposed hardship. In other words, he chooses unnecessary hardship because he so greatly fears another hardship.

QUESTION: How about the spiritual ascetic?

ANSWER: Exactly the same. It is so often a great self-deception and a complete denial of the life force. The principle of death is feared so much that the life force is completely negated. It is a very self-destructing and damaging form of "coping" with death.

QUESTION: How do you account for the supreme pleasure that comes from mastery in achievement and accomplishment of the so-called unpleasant problems?

ANSWER: Here again, it depends on the motive and the way it is done. If it is genuine and healthy, the process I have described has been lived. Since the duality is a result of negation, one can only find the way out of duality by no longer negating, but facing up to it. This will then show the unity behind the duality so that pleasure and pain become one.

But there are also imaginary, superimposed, and therefore unhealthy ways of doing this, and these are illusions.

QUESTION: Doesn't the healthy state deny the unpleasant emphasis?

ANSWER: No. I would say it is just the opposite. Death ceases to be, but this happens in a genuine way only after it has been fought through by facing the fact that for you it still exists. By denying it, you may run into the danger of negation and evasion. If the end result is artificially clung to, it has the very opposite effect. You cannot deny that which still exists for you.

QUESTION: Is it life and death, or life or death?

ANSWER: It is life and death.

QUESTION: Therefore it could not be unpleasant; otherwise it would be life or death. So death must be a pleasure. Doesn't the healthy attitude therefore deny the unpleasant emphasis?

ANSWER: Let us not confuse the end result with the pathway towards getting to this end result. Many religious philosophies have taught this truth. But the end result has been used in order to shy away from facing that which still seems unpleasant, if for no other reason than that it is unknown. Before you can truly experience that death is pleasure -- in a healthy way -- you first have to go through your own distortion in which it seems bleak and frightening. Only after going through it, will you then come to the realization that life and death are one, that pleasure and pain are one.

QUESTION: Is it not equally an illusion to think that the problems of everyday living and the crass things you come across are unpleasant? Aren't they pleasant for him who has mastered them? Therefore this does deny the unpleasant principle, except in terms of an unhealthy state of attitude?

ANSWER: Once you have arrived at that state, you will find it so. But until a person can arrive at that state, it would be dangerous for him to try to talk himself into it. Too much of this has been done already. One has to be very careful since evasion and self-deception are always so close at hand. The temptation is so great for mankind that he fears to face the truth. Truth is never unpleasant, but it may often appear so in your state of temporary reality and distorted vision. Man has to strip himself of a truth that he himself has not yet arrived at and meanwhile face the untruth that still lives in him. He has to come to the very difficult abyss of illusion that, for him, is still an abyss.

QUESTION: I think this has to do with an interpretation of the word "deny." If you interpret "deny" as meaning that it does not exist, then it is false. But if denial is interpreted to mean that it is not a real factor, then it has another meaning.

ANSWER: Yes, that is very true. But you see there are so many human religious denominations that originally had this truth when they taught denial of death. But man, due to his inclination to arrive at the end result through short cuts in order avoid the unpleasantness of facing the illusory abyss, clings to such words and misuses them. The result is superimposed faith, clung to out of fear and weakness. So let us be careful and always keep in mind that what seems most frightening -- death in all its aspects -- must be faced before it denies itself.

This was no easy lecture, my friends. It will give you much food for thought and material for progress. Whatever is unclear, do not hesitate to ask. If there are sufficient questions of importance, we may arrange another question period according to your need.

Be blessed, each one of you. Divine strength and love envelops you. This is a reality. May you feel it and carry it with you into your lives. Be blessed. Be in peace. Be in God!

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