

02 Pathwork Lecture #161 –1996 Edition
March 15, 1968.....

**UNCONSCIOUS NEGATIVITY ENDANGERS SURRENDER OF EGO
TO INVOLUNTARY PROCESSES**

03 Greetings. Blessings, my dearest friends who are here and who listen to my words. May you be as deeply affected in your unconscious by this lecture as you are in your conscious mind. May you open your heart and your deep inner being so that deep understanding will become possible -- understanding which is not necessarily connected with intellectual grasp, although the latter is usually the first step.

04 In recent lectures I have concentrated, in one form or another, on helping you to understand the relationship between ego-consciousness and universal intelligence. We shall continue to do so, directly and indirectly. For no human being can truly be healthy and in balance within themselves and the forces around them unless a harmonious interaction exists between the ego and the universal intelligence within.

05 When you are primarily identified with and functioning out of the ego, you must be in imbalance. You must be enmeshed in problems. It is equally correct to state that if you have unresolved inner problems, such an imbalance is inevitable. For, no matter what side you look at, in the end it always adds up to the same: the ego must learn to let go of itself. No matter how much intellectual knowledge you have about the lesser role the ego plays compared to the universal intelligence, such intellectual understanding alone will never suffice. Therefore you have to look for new avenues and new approaches within yourselves to find it possible to let go in a healthy, harmonious way.

06 Tonight's lecture will deal, once again, with this topic. I hope I will open a few more doors for some of my friends. Whenever the ego is in predominant control of the business of living and the life functions, it dries up, starves, withers -- it literally dies off. For it cannot replenish itself at the source wherefrom all life springs. That source is the divine universal self within each individual being. The process of death itself should appear in a new light for you when you look at it from this point of view. The spiritual entity that is incarnated as a human is precisely the human being in the state of overall consciousness, condensed into the coarse matter which is the substance of material existence. Humans are incarnated in matter because a separated part of the overall consciousness -- which we call the ego -- is disconnected from the total being, the universal self. This disconnectedness causes the ego state, thus material life, and therefore the cycle of life and death. If a human being overcomes the separation, then

the process of dying must equally be overcome. If there is no longer fear of letting go of the ego, a melding with the universal forces becomes possible. This is not a faraway state, to contemplate in a hereafter. It is possible any time, any place, since it is a question of one's state of consciousness.

07 There are various states and processes in material life which afford humans the possibility of replenishing themselves from the universal source. One of the most automatic, generally accessible of these states is sleep. Human beings who are deeply troubled are so because they are too enmeshed in their ego. Insomnia occurs precisely because the ego is too predominant and the involuntary forces of life cannot take over. They are hindered by the ego -- perhaps the unconscious ego, but nevertheless the ego, which does not want to relinquish any of its controls. If all involuntary forces are feared and rejected, the various ways in which a temporary submerging into the real self can occur are blocked off. Incidentally, those states also vary as to the degree and intensity of the submergence. Each state fulfills a specific function and taps different channels to the universal self. For instance, sleep merely affords rest from ego tensions and ego chores. The type of strength flowing into the personality during this particular immersion into the universal forces has different characteristics from the types of strength that come from other states of immersion into the divine ocean of being. When a person's ego is overactive, sleep cannot come. Even this most primitive and universal form of replenishment ceases to function.

08 Another state of replenishment is mutual involvement and love between the sexes. Healthy, intense self-forgetfulness makes it possible for the ego to dip into the vast sea of universal power and beauty. This happens through the encompassing love for and acceptance of another "sphere" which is another being. The total accepting of, the transcending goodwill toward and consequent melting into another being is precisely the kind of attitude compatible with the universal forces. This melting leads to an experience that involves all levels of being: mental, emotional, spiritual and physical. Therefore it is the most total spiritual experience humans can have. In other states where the ego can let go of itself, the experience is hardly ever that inclusive of all of one's being.

09 You are most replenished as you partake most completely of universal reality. Then you are nourished with the creative substance in all its splendor. The ego is truly immersed and temporarily given a much lesser place of functioning, only to reemerge stronger and better than ever -- more flexible, wiser, and filled with the pleasure supreme that all human beings long for. Once the ego dips into the vast ocean of universal force, the personality can never be the same. Not only is it enriched beyond measure, but its capacity to submerge, surrender and be blissful -- to love and to be in truth -- grows proportionately. The most effective and intense form of melding the ego with the universe is through another entity, via the capacity to forget and transcend oneself.

10 Another state is deep meditation. This is not a cerebral exercise of the mind, but a giving oneself up to the divine, to the intelligence and truth of the universal forces,

not just generally -- that is too easy and can be deceptive -- but specifically where the personal hurdles bar the way because one fears the truth within the self. When you have overcome the hurdles because your love of truth is greater, and thus surrender to the greater truth becomes possible, the ocean of wisdom can replenish your being. As the truth is accepted and assimilated, the new wisdom can open all other doors as well.

11 In each of the experiences I have described the ego transcends itself, lets go, gives itself up, and partakes of something greater within. In the ideally healthy life all of these experiences are sought and more or less regularly pursued. The individual makes these experiences possible through the right attitude, readiness and active interests. If this is the case, eventually one's entire life will be activated by the greater intelligence and power within, until it and the ego are one. Greater intelligence takes over everything, so that the ego is always flowing, flexible, relaxed, and permeated by the knowledge, power and pleasure of the real self. Every activity, no matter how mundane, is permeated by the real self, which works freely. You no longer need any effort to overcome fear and resistance before contacting the real self.

12 The more the ego is dipped into the greater Being, the more life will replenish itself. To the extent these experiences are hindered because of obstructions in the personality which the ego is unwilling to remove, to that extent life dries out and various degrees of death set in. Actual physical death is the natural end result of a process of drying out, of separating the self from the source of all life.

13 It is very important for you to understand this deeply, my friends, for then we can go a step further. We can then investigate why humans are so deeply frightened of precisely that which represents and gives life; why they react and even believe it to be death, annihilation, the end of their being. Why do you persistently -- either consciously or vaguely unconsciously -- believe that the kind of experiences I mentioned are dangerous because then ego control is abandoned, the self immersed into a vaster consciousness and lawfulness? Why do you consciously or unconsciously hinder these experiences? For you do so, no matter how much you also strive for them. The longing to contact the real self cannot ever be eradicated from the human heart, no matter how much conflict, confusion and fear may exist. Why do humans cling to those attitudes that hinder replenishment, dry out the psyche, cause death, and make life unpleasurable and bleak? Why do they believe those attitudes represent life and safety?

14 These are indeed puzzling questions. We have investigated this topic and have found many reasons or pseudo-reasons why people believe they must protect themselves from the very thing that makes them alive and vibrant with well-being. We have seen superficial false conclusions and short-sighted character attitudes of defeatism that make people so destructive that they would rather forfeit their life than "give in" -- or so it appears to them. But as you can easily see, there comes a point on everyone's path when this becomes the most important threshold to cross in the evolutionary process.

- 15** Before we go into this more deeply, however, I wish to say once again, in this context, that the human need to transcend the ego, to let go of it, is so great that when the distorted, fearful personality hinders this natural process, unnatural processes are sought. This is why people yearn for the sensations drugs give, why a person suffering from insomnia will resort to sleeping pills rather than remove the block of the ego and transcend it. This is also why the person whose ego is in predominant control -- and therefore does not obtain sufficient relief and replenishment -- is compelled to pursue self-destructive aims. Every act of self-destructiveness is a gesture of courting death, of walking toward it. Death is the great relief the personality seeks when all other avenues of relief from ego control fail, due to the personality's stubborn refusal and false ideas. All self-destruction is a slow form of suicide. Death is unconsciously longed for to the precise degree that it is feared; the longing is there because the perpetual wakefulness of an isolated ego becomes unbearable. Thus humans find themselves in ambivalence. On the one hand, they fear letting go of the ego in the healthy way, on the other, they strive to let go of the ego in an unhealthy way. This is one of the dualities that constantly accrue from the state of separateness.
- 16** Let us come, my friends, to the fundamental reason why you fear the healthy, blissful state in which you allow the involuntary forces to guide and "live you," as it were; why you cannot trust the wisdom and greater order of the real self, of the divine being in you. Needless to say, the reasons for that are at first quite unconscious. It is an important step on everyone's path to bring them into the clear daylight of consciousness. For as long as the personality tries to force a change before the destructive attitude is quite conscious, nothing real can be accomplished. Change is impossible due to the still unconscious obstructions.
- 17** The fundamental cause of the condition of predominant ego control is that there is a lawfulness that makes it indeed hazardous for the ego to let go of itself as long as the ego is attached to attitudes which are incompatible with the laws of the greater reality. If you truly understand this sentence, you will have your key. In other words, wherever you pursue and hold onto destructiveness, it becomes absolutely impossible to let go of the ego in a healthy, safe, and life-giving way. An ego is healthy only when its attitudes are loving, generous, open, trusting, as well as realistic and self-assertive. All of this is part of the greater reality and lawfulness of the divine substance. Violation of these attitudes nurtures hate, separateness, distrustfulness, illusion, weakness, the tendency to damage the self and forego its best interests. Such an unhealthy ego is striving for the precise opposite of the lawfulness of the divine within. It is not equipped to take care of itself and, consequently, life must be fraught with fear and insecurity. The longing for escape from the tension of the ego, as well as from perpetual unpleasure, may lead to unhealthy ego liberation and insanity, since the liberated ego is unsupported by anything that can give it real sustenance. This, too, is very important to grasp in its full significance.
- 18** Those of my friends who have made sufficient progress on their path to have come face to face with their own destructiveness will perhaps understand a little more of what I am saying than those who are as yet unaware that they are destructive -- that

they do not wish to be positive, to give their best to life in whatever area they are still unhappy, unfulfilled and in conflict. This lack of awareness makes it quite impossible to step over the threshold. It is absolutely necessary for you to see yourself in your own destructiveness. See yourself in that way for a while, with the detached, objective self-evaluation that comes from deep self-acceptance and determination to do away with self-glorification and illusions about the self. The claim to be more than what one is must be absolutely abandoned before such healthy self-observation can exist.

19 If the ego -- also the unconscious part of the ego-self -- is attached to a destructive attitude, it is incompatible with the universal forces. Therefore when it lets go of itself, it is unsupported -- it has no hold, no security, nothing to rely on and becomes totally disorganized and disintegrated. An ego that is not sustained, guided, and inspired by the real, universal self cannot cope with anything. It becomes completely disassociated from any intelligence. Therefore, in a way, the ego is almost "right" in not letting go. As long as the destructiveness is not given up, it at least retains a modicum of sanity. The exaggerated self-governing of an aggrandized ego condition is preferable to disintegration, which is inevitable when the outer, ego personality is incompatible with the universal self. If the superior universal forces are not trusted, an ego that gives itself up has nothing else. There is no intelligence, no logic, no lawfulness other than the ego's when the ego mistrusts the universal forces. No matter how limited the separated ego intelligence is in comparison with the greater self, it still possesses some reason and some grasp of a limited reality. Without the ego, the will cannot function either, if the greater divine will is negated or unconsciously defeated. This is why there is such a deep fear of letting go.

20 My friends, this is a tremendously important thing for you to understand at this point, for it enables you also to approach yourself from the other end, as it were. Namely, whenever you feel yourself unable to let go, you can now realize that deep destructive forces and attitudes are still rampant in you. Somewhere within you exists a will to be negative and destructive. This will is quite deliberate, once you become aware of it. There is nothing that forces you against your will. This only seems so as long as you deny the destructiveness because you do not wish to admit something so contrary to your self-image. The destructiveness causes fear and insecurity because you do not wish to face and acknowledge it, let alone give it up. Knowing this puts you in an entirely different position toward yourself; self-delusion is eliminated. Thus the destructiveness is lessened, no matter how much you still want to be destructive in certain areas.

21 By destructiveness I mean the many, often very subtle ways in which the ego-self clings to separating attitudes -- perhaps not wanting to expand and love others, or perhaps wanting to be vindictive, and punishing others with one's own suffering. These are subtle, vague feelings, fleeting attitudes -- so elusive they almost seem non-existent, until one catches them and looks them squarely in the face. Then they become quite distinct. Perhaps the destructive attitude is to secretly think, "No one knows what I really think and feel, therefore it does not count." This is a very prevalent attitude toward one's undesirable tendencies. One glosses over them and vaguely assumes that

their secrecy invalidates them. Any effect they produce in spite of their secrecy is felt as gross injustice, in the sense of "They did not know what I felt, only what I pretended to feel, and if I had felt as I pretended then their reaction would indeed be unjust." This thinking harbors the illusion that life can be cheated. As such, it reflects one's most significant and telling attitude to life. It tells the story that one does not give oneself honestly to the business of living but makes appearance and pretense the criteria according to which one wishes to be judged and reap results. Trust in life is impossible under such circumstances.

22 Catch those moments and see how you do not take life seriously, how you do not lend yourself wholly and fully to whatever you do. This activity of catching one's little hidden dishonesties is the kind of constructiveness that is compatible with the divine substance. The moment you approach yourself with a sincere attitude that says: "I want to give my very, very best to the process of living, to every aspect of my life, and contribute the very best forces that are within me. Wherever I do not do this and am too blind to be aware of it, I wish the universal intelligence in me to guide me to this awareness. I wish to pay attention to it." With such a sincerely meant attitude something new is set in motion right at that moment!

23 Generally and specifically, wherever the problem areas and the daily difficulties lie, it is most important to approach life in this manner. The more you cultivate such attitudes, the more the ego-self becomes compatible with the real self. Therefore fear of letting go of the ego diminishes proportionately, since one then has something much larger and more reliable to trust in. By calling upon and activating the divine will through the manifestation of the real self one cannot help but convince oneself of its reality, wisdom, and utter goodness. One cannot help discovering its all-encompassing love that knows no conflict. Divine will works toward everyone's fulfillment, bliss and happiness. This undivided intelligence and inexorable fulfillment is deeply safe and trustworthy. But as long as the ego's aims, attitudes and inclinations are diametrically opposed to the laws of the universal intelligence, how can one trust in the universal intelligence? Therefore, whenever you feel insecure and shaky within yourself, anxious and frightened -- when you underestimate your values -- it must be because of a destructive attitude, a negativity you are as yet unwilling to relinquish.

24 When you feel anxious, ask yourself: "Where am I destructive? Where am I negative? Where do I refuse to accept the universal law, so that I do not give myself to the divine within me?"

25 In the last analysis, my friends, happiness always amounts to the basic virtues religion preaches. In the very last, culminating point it is always a question of love, which, of course, is always the key to the universe. But preaching it for thousands of years has not really helped and has often made people more hypocritical. They deluded themselves that they were loving while underneath they often were not. They covered feelings opposite to love with a superficial veneer that gave the appearance of love. Such cover-up is often mere self-deception, since most of the time others are not deceived.

- 26** How often do you claim that your weakness is love, when inwardly you are seething with resentment and vindictiveness? You claim that your possessiveness and dominating will to control is love, but inwardly you merely want to win and have your own way. You claim that an arrogant, unhealthy pride is self-love, when inwardly you merely wish to be better than others and not give an inch to them. These self-deceptions have to be unmasked, my friends. Even among those of you who pursue this path and have made great progress in self-realization, there are still some who are blind to such areas.
- 27** Wherever people hold on in blind self-deception to such attitudes, they do not want to give of themselves and thus violate the law of love. The violation of the law of love is that which ultimately ails everyone who is troubled. This is what must be investigated in everyone who suffers from unhappiness. "Where is the violation? Where do I keep myself separated? Where do I impair my integrity -- in a direct or indirect way? Where do I delude myself about myself? Where do I not want to give of myself -- in some way?" These are the questions that must be asked and answered. The answer often lies in a different direction and is true in a different way than you had thought.
- 28** Ego-existence -- being totally attached to the ego levels of the personality -- causes fear and insecurity. It is such an insufficient life, so finite. This is frightening, for no one really wants to end being. But the separated ego must end. Only by finding your way back within the self into the greater truth -- into the reality that is the law of love as it is also the law of truth -- can your ego safely give itself to the divine being within.
- 29** Are there any questions about this topic?
- QUESTION: I am becoming aware of some negative chain reactions in myself and of the harm they do. I realize now that I have no feelings but act according to reflexes. I also recognize how I manipulated myself in producing false fears. The moment I could fully see this, the compulsion stopped somewhat. The only time I have some good feeling is when I read these lectures. I am able to work with them. I think I understand them. I also have good feelings when I meditate. I can feel, at times, the creative force about to flow through my whole body -- and I stop it. What can you say about all this?
- 30** ANSWER: Actually I already said it in this very lecture. The answer is really in it. I could add, though, that you would have to look and find in what particular respect you violate the law of love. Now that the false, pretended love has been removed and disclosed as weakness and desire to placate others so as to use them for your own ends, it will not be quite so difficult to do this. You have to find out in what way you cling to a negative attitude. This is precisely why you fear the involuntary forces of spontaneous good feelings. To the degree you cling to negative attitudes, and therefore negative feelings, to that degree you must fear the positive ones. On that level you have

made a choice. You would rather indulge in resentments and self-pity, in making cases against others, in the illusion of being injured. All this affords you a certain pleasure you are unwilling to give up. Well, the price one pays is high, very high indeed. As long as you choose this pleasure -- with all its pain, guilt, discomfort and insecurity -- you forfeit the good feelings without any conflict about them that are your birthright. The good feelings must actually appear frightening as long as bad feelings are cherished. To the extent you abandon the claim to be constantly injured -- your self-pity, self-victimization, resentments, blame of others whom you make responsible for your condition -- to that extent exactly, you will not fear good feelings.

31 QUESTION: I found out that it is almost impossible for me to trust completely - on any level. The deeper I go, the deeper I find this. Sometimes it is not apparent at all. This must connect of course with not wanting to let go of the ego. What I would like to know is if certain areas are cleared of negativity, is it then automatic that you trust completely, without effort?

32 ANSWER: Yes, it is automatic. It is like a see-saw, or a scale. I discussed this "see-saw" process several times. Many of my friends on the path have actually experienced it happen. Let us take self-dislike as an example. It need not and cannot be deliberately abandoned. Whenever this is attempted it fails. To the extent the justified reasons for self-dislike are removed, the self-dislike stops itself. So it is with trust. You will trust automatically when you find the justified reasons for distrusting yourself. The process is always an automatic reestablishment of balance. The best thing you could do in such a state is strengthen yourself daily by a very specific meditation. Say into yourself, "I want to give up all destructiveness. If I cannot do so yet, I herewith request the real self, the divine substance in me, to help me see where I am stuck and help me out of it. For this is what I want." If you feel yourself not wanting it, do not gloss over this all-important, crucial obstruction. Rather take that as the point of departure. Then say into yourself, "I would like to find out exactly why I do not want the good. What blocks me from wanting it?" In whatever area it may be, say "I wish I could want it. What is it? I want to give my very best to this specific phase of where I am stuck." If you proceed in this way, success must come. It is hopeless only when you look away from the point where you are stuck.

33 QUESTION: Since yesterday I am aware of a very deep tendency of disliking people, almost inadvertently. It is frightening to me how this separating attitude makes it impossible for me to appreciate people at all. It was suggested to me yesterday in my private session that I should not try to get out of it before exploring its origin and ramifications. Could you comment on this?

34 ANSWER: Yes. Such dislike of people -- including yourself, of course, since this is inextricably bound together -- is also a question of distrust. Therefore, in this exploration, I would first advise you to look at the following: You assume many of the things happening to you to be so bad that no redeeming circumstances exist for you. The interpretation you give to those incidents is exaggerated and distorted a hundredfold. You need to look at everything that hurt and upset you in the past, as far

as you can remember -- as well as in the present -- with a new consideration. You need to take into consideration that another meaning exists than the one you automatically assume. Everything you see has a finality and exclusiveness for you that permits no other possibility but the most devastating one. You need to recognize this attitude in its full significance and desire to change it. Seeing reality can then be cultivated. Whatever you see in someone or in a situation is for you the whole thing. It never occurs to you that, apart from it being quite different from what you assume, it is at best only part of the whole picture. Ask yourself about anything you assume, "Is this the whole truth? Is this all there is to it, or could there be other aspects that I ignore because I close myself to a wider reality?" This is one area where you can broaden your vision and expand your horizon. For you still experience like an infant who only sees the moment, and that is all.

35 Second, I would advise you to ask yourself whether you want to like people. What is the answer? Feel into yourself.

36 QUESTION: My mental processes tell me I need to like people, but I feel resistance. Where do I go from here?

ANSWER: This is your conflict. It is so wonderful when a person is aware of such a conflict, for the very great majority of people have similar conflicts but are not aware of them. Awareness is the necessary prerequisite to find the way out of suffering. It makes it possible for you to look at the side that says no. Ask yourself why not. Instead of theorizing -- no matter how correct these general theories would prove to be -- it will be more helpful to come up with the specific answer, as it applies to you. Ask yourself with a fresh, new approach why you do not wish to like people, and do not be afraid to give yourself childish, irrational, illogical answers. Allow anything that comes forth. Then you will know the truth about the no.

37 It is always the same. Before a person can develop their capacity to love, they must first have the willingness to do so. As long as that is lacking nothing can be done. The willingness to do so is the crux. It must exist on all levels for love to be whole. If it only exists superficially and not in the depths of their feelings, the manifestations the person then experiences will correspond to it. You are unaware of your unwillingness to love and then complain about the results and feel yourself victimized. As long as you waste your energies on complaining and feeling victimized you are in a vicious circle. The destructive projections and blaming of others consumes the energy you need for loving and wanting love, as well as for looking at the self and finding out what is amiss. When you ask yourself why you do not wish to love and answer it precisely and honestly, you will know why your capacity to love does not function. And consequently you will understand your loneliness and no longer believe that a trick of fate is being played on you. So this is a wonderful step here. I will not tell you why you do not wish to love. The answer must come from yourself. That indeed is possible. All I can say is, misconceptions and destructiveness hang on to you because you hang on to them. Once they are out in the open it will be relatively easy for you to overcome them.

38 This lecture can become a milestone indeed for some of you, my friends. It can represent the culminating point you have needed. I can see that something is happening within some of you where a basic destructiveness will be abandoned through your squarely facing it. Then the divine can be activated. This transition is the most significant thing that can happen in an individual's life. Nothing, absolutely nothing, can equal this process. Those who lack the courage to look at themselves in truth, to abandon self-illusions and delusions, cannot come to such a transition. You cannot abandon a negativity you ignore you have. You cannot give up a destructiveness you deny exists in you. Truth leads to love, and love without truth is impossible. They are indeed one.

39 My dearest beloved friends, everyone of you here: A great power is available and becomes more and more available -- not dependent on any other beings, but flowing from your own innermost self. It will flow forth at all times and nourish and replenish you wherever you have freed yourself from the shackles of ego domination. Be blessed, body, soul and mind. Be penetrated, all of you, with the love and the truth of the universe, so that they can help liberate you. Be in peace, be in God!

For information to find and participate in Pathwork activities world wide, please write:

The Pathwork® Foundation
PO Box 6010
Charlottesville, VA 22906-6010, USA
Call: 1-800-PATHWORK, or
Visit: www.pathwork.org

The following notices are for your guidance in the use of the Pathwork® name and this lecture material.

Trademark/Service Mark

Pathwork® is a registered service mark owned by The Pathwork Foundation, and may not be used without the express written permission of the Foundation. The Foundation may, in its sole discretion, authorize use of the Pathwork® mark by other organizations or persons, such as affiliate organizations and chapters.

Copyright

The copyright of the Pathwork Guide material is the sole property of The Pathwork Foundation. This lecture may be reproduced, in compliance with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy, but the text may not be altered or abbreviated in any way, nor may the copyright, trademark, service mark, or any other notices be removed. Recipients may be charged the cost of reproduction and distribution only.

Any person or organization using The Pathwork Foundation service mark or copyrighted material is deemed to have agreed to comply with the Foundation Trademark, Service Mark and Copyright Policy. To obtain information or a copy of this policy, please contact the Foundation.